# ESWATINI OBSERVER

THE WEEK IN FOCUS

**Weekly Digest | October 16–30, 2026**
Extended edition

A selection of stories from the October 16–30 reporting period, covering public spending, international engagement, youth enterprise, health, creative innovation and local football.

## NEWS

### Govt wage bill overruns by E773m – Report

October 30, 2026 | Nokuphila Haji

A Public Service performance report puts government's April–September wage bill at E6.271 billion, exceeding projections by E773.6 million before pension contributions. The report attributes the main spike to July back-pay and allowances under Phase 2 of the salary review, highlighting continuing pressure on personnel expenditure.

https://www.eswatiniobserver.com/govt-wage-bill-overruns-by-e773m-report/



Public Service Minister Mabulala Maseko. Source: Eswatini Observer; courtesy image.

### PM off to Commonwealth meeting, COP31

October 30, 2026 | Nokuzola Thwala

Prime Minister Russell Mmiso Dlamini has departed to represent His Majesty King Mswati III at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Antigua and Barbuda, according to the report. He is also expected to attend COP31 in Türkiye, with investment, development partnerships and climate resilience among the issues highlighted.

https://www.eswatiniobserver.com/pm-off-to-commonwealth-meeting-cop31/



Image accompanying the Prime Minister's departure report. Source: Eswatini Observer.

## Minister Savannah Maziya joins continental push for cyber resilience

October 29, 2026 | Eswatini Observer

ICT Minister Savannah Maziya addressed the Africa Cybersecurity Indaba in Sandton, advocating stronger cross-border cooperation and trusted digital services. Discussions examined resilient infrastructure, financial security and skills as governments and businesses become more dependent on interconnected systems.

https://www.eswatiniobserver.com/minister-savannah-maziya-joins-continental-push-for-cyber-resilience/

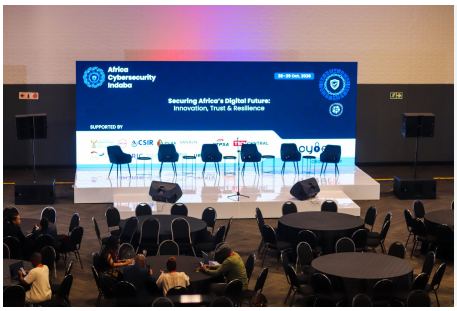



Image accompanying the Africa Cybersecurity Indaba report. Source: Eswatini Observer.

# BUSINESS

## City youth business project delivers 22 jobs

October 29, 2026 | Musa Simelane

Mbabane's Youth Grass Cutting Project created 22 additional jobs over four months, expanding its workforce from 12 operators to 34 young people. A council partnership with the Youth Enterprise Revolving Fund provided E480 000 in loans, alongside training in business management, procurement and workplace safety.

https://www.eswatiniobserver.com/city-youth-business-project-delivers-22-jobs/



Image accompanying the Mbabane youth enterprise report. Source: Eswatini Observer.

## FSRA awards E15 000 in fight against financial scams

October 28, 2026 | Musa Simelane

The Financial Services Regulatory Authority awarded a combined E15 000 to three winning teams in its Youth Skit Competition. Team Abundance placed first among 52 submissions, using creative storytelling to help communities recognise digital deception and financial fraud.

https://www.eswatiniobserver.com/fsra-awards-e15-000-in-fight-against-financial-scams/



FSRA CEO Ncamiso Ntshalintshali with the top three competition teams. Source: Eswatini Observer.

## SBC revenue falls 5.4%, loan book shrinks

October 27, 2026 | Musa Simelane

SBC Limited’s reviewed half-year results show group revenue down 5.4% and its gross loan book down 6.2% for the six months ended June 30. Earnings per share nevertheless rose from 11 to 12 cents, while residential occupancy reached 99%, reflecting mixed performance across its operations.

https://www.eswatiniobserver.com/sbc-revenue-falls-5-4-loan-book-shrinks/



Illustration accompanying the SBC results report, identified by the source as created with AI assistance.

## Exam pressure should not push learners towards tobacco, nicotine products

October 27, 2026 | Regina Ssemwogerere | Letter

SADAT Communications Officer Regina Ssemwogerere urges parents and schools to help learners manage examination stress without tobacco or nicotine. Her letter encourages supportive study environments, rest and healthy routines, warning against the belief that cigarettes or vapes are a safe concentration aid.

https://www.eswatiniobserver.com/exam-pressure-should-not-push-learners-towards-tobacco-nicotine-products/



Image accompanying the letter on examinations and nicotine use. Source: Eswatini Observer.

## KIDNEY HEALTH AWARENESS: Protecting your silent workhorses

October 26, 2026 | Dr Advocate Dlamini | Health feature

Ekuphileni Clinic's kidney-health Q&A explains why early kidney disease can go unnoticed and discusses risks including diabetes and high blood pressure. It highlights screening, physical activity and careful use of painkillers, encouraging higher-risk readers to seek personalised advice from a healthcare professional.

https://www.eswatiniobserver.com/kidney-health-awareness-protecting-your-silent-workhorses/



Image accompanying the kidney-health feature. Source: Eswatini Observer.

## Owen spot-on on trousers ban

October 25, 2026 | Mbongeni Mbingo | Opinion

Mbongeni Mbingo supports Education Minister Owen Nxumalo's proposal to review restrictions on schoolgirls wearing trousers. The column argues that uniform rules should respect equality, dignity and practical needs, and calls for consultation with learners and families. It is commentary, not confirmation that the policy has changed.

https://www.eswatiniobserver.com/owen-spot-on-on-trousers-ban/



Image accompanying Mbongeni Mbingo's school-uniform opinion column. Source: Eswatini Observer.

# ENTERTAINMENT

## ‘Only Make Waves’ takes Eswatini’s creative innovation beyond music

October 27, 2026 | Bahle Gama

Founded by Nakiso and Nocktik, Only Make Waves combines music distribution, events and merchandise to help independent creatives reach audiences and develop businesses. Its planned Konnekt initiative links creative practice with technology, entrepreneurship and skills exchange.

https://www.eswatiniobserver.com/only-make-waves-takes-eswatinis-creative-innovation-beyond-music/



Msimisi Dlamini, professionally known as Nakiso. Source: Eswatini Observer.

## Movie lovers get their own DStv package

October 27, 2026 | Lusito Gule

MultiChoice Eswatini announced a Movies and Series package priced at E500 per month, with the revised line-up due to launch on November 5. The report says Access will become Starter and Family will become Select as the company reshapes viewing options around audience preferences.

https://www.eswatiniobserver.com/movie-lovers-get-their-own-dstv-package/



MultiChoice Eswatini Managing Director Phumi Drummond addressing the media. Source: Eswatini Observer.

## Kota Festival organisers keep their promise

October 26, 2026 | Dudu Dube

Malkerns Country Club hosted a colourful mix of food, live music and family entertainment at the Kota Festival. The report says all advertised artists appeared, while Vusi Nova's tribute performance of Zahara's Loliwe provided one of the event's most emotional moments.

https://www.eswatiniobserver.com/kota-festival-organisers-keep-their-promise/



Mlindo the Vocalist performing at the Kota Festival. Source: Eswatini Observer.

# SPORTS

## ‘Ingwenyama Cup must embrace technology’

October 30, 2026 | Sabelo Gwebu

His Majesty King Mswati III urged the Ingwenyama Cup to explore digital broadcasting, electronic ticketing, performance analytics and improved competition systems. Speaking at the prize presentation, he also highlighted digital archiving as a way to preserve cultural heritage while broadening the tournament’s reach.

https://www.eswatiniobserver.com/ingwenyama-cup-must-embrace-technology/



His Majesty King Mswati III speaking at the Ingwenyama Cup prize presentation. Source: Eswatini Observer.

## Archbishop Lukhele, please save Swallows

October 27, 2026 | Mphikeleli Msibi | Sports opinion

Mphikeleli Msibi appeals to Archbishop Bheki Lukhele to reconsider supporting Mbabane Swallows amid reported salary difficulties. The columnist calls for a sustainable arrangement with stronger accountability, arguing that protecting the club matters to players, supporters and the wider football community.

https://www.eswatiniobserver.com/archbishop-lukhele-please-save-swallows/




Archbishop Lukhele celebrating with Swallows players during his previous involvement. Source: Eswatini Observer.

## Gina can play all positions – ‘Sly’

October 26, 2026 | Sabelo Gwebu

Moneni Pirates coach Selaotse ‘Sly’ Mosala praised Ncomo Gina’s adaptability after the midfielder scored in a 2–2 draw with Mbabane Swallows. Tactical changes helped Pirates recover and take the lead before Trevor Kunene’s late equaliser ensured the points were shared.

https://www.eswatiniobserver.com/gina-can-play-all-positions-sly/



Image accompanying the Moneni Pirates match report. Source: Eswatini Observer.

## Editor’s Note

This extended edition covers **October 16–30, 2026**, bringing together 15 selected articles across our five regular sections. All selections fall within the requested period; no “Closest Available” substitutions are required.

Public finances and digital resilience lead the news selection, while youth enterprise and consumer protection feature prominently in business. Our features consider learner wellbeing, kidney health and school-uniform policy, alongside creative enterprise, entertainment and football.

Letters and opinion columns are labelled and reflect their authors’ views. Announced plans and proposed policy reviews are not presented as completed changes. Financial figures and event details are attributed to the linked reporting; health summaries are general information, not individual medical advice. The SBC illustration retains the source’s AI-assistance disclosure.

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