

SWAZILAND — GENERAL

1991

Fear and danger lurk among innocent green hills

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THE young Mozambican hitch-hiker was visibly tense, answering the usual questions about destination, home town and job in monosyllables. He constantly shifted his eyes from the road ahead to the roadside to right and left.

His tension was infectious, especially when he confirmed in another short answer that there had been shooting on the road a few kilometres away from the border post at Namacha the week before. He did not elaborate.

Registration plates, heading for Maputo. Most of the South African vehicles, especially the cars, had Natal plates, and the white passengers in several of these were obviously families, possibly Portuguese with Mozambican connections from 20 years ago.

Some may have been the trendy youngsters from South Africa who, according to diplomats in the Mozambican capital, are increasingly taking holidays in Maputo.

Nobody stopped on the road even though groups of Frelimo soldiers were posted every few kilometres. Homesteads were surrounded by neatly cultivated fields on the gentle descent through open hills, bright green after recent rains, toward the coast. But apart from the soldiers, and the hurrying cars, the road was deserted.

Just 25 km from the border along a heavily pot-holed road, a sharp turn south on to a better road marks the approach to the Maputo suburb of Matola.

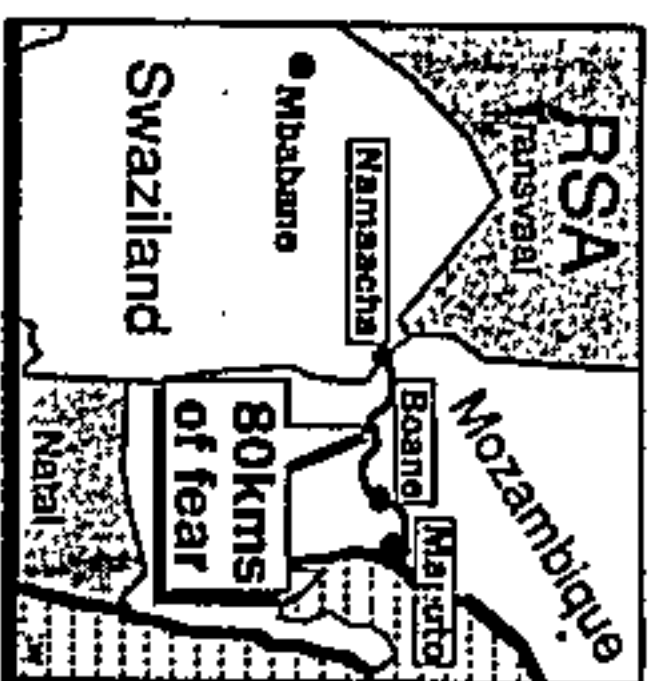
The young hitchhiker still seemed tense, and his anxiety began to appear ridiculous. A trouble-free 40-minute drive was over, a leisurely prawn lunch at the Costa do Sol lay ahead. What on earth had he been worried about?

At the lunch a senior diplomat was less dismissive.

"Nationals of our country are forbidden under any circumstances to drive that road," she said, adding that she regarded the 80-km drive as foolhardy.

Justification for her point of view came early in the afternoon, about two hours later, on the return journey to Swaziland. Police at a roadblock in the outlying town of Boane, almost

Bandits and insurgents make travel on the road between Swaziland and Maputo a potentially hazardous undertaking. NORMAN SOWERBY, Swaziland correspondent of The Star's Africa News Service, tells what it is like to take the gamble.



those innocent green hills? and nobody could travel it that day. "Maybe tomorrow," he said. It was no use arguing that it had been fine a few hours before. About 15 cars were turned back.

The next day the man at the roadblock was more cheerful. "No problem, you can drive," he said.

But approaching the final 25-km stretch before the border it became clear that there certainly had been problems not long before.

There were larger groups of Frelimo soldiers posted every few kilometres along the road, some carrying rocket launchers, some with light machine-guns dug in at the roadside. Some had their shirts off, looked dishevelled, and rested

on the banks of the road. They all looked as though they had finished a hard day's work. Small trees and bushes which had lined the road attractively the day before were smashed to the ground. The pot-holes seemed more frequent.

One or two of the burnt-out cars beside the road seemed unfamiliar. Had they been there the day before?

When a burnt-out bakke with a Transvaal registration loomed up right in the centre of the road, there was no doubt there the day before.

Frelimo soldiers waved on any car which seemed likely to linger, and it became clear that we were driving through a recent battlefield.

It does not help to know that a ceasefire agreement has been signed between the Frelimo government and members of the rebel Renamo movement, as peace talks go on in the capital. The ceasefire applies only to the Beira and Limpopo corridors from Zimbabwe, not to the roads from Swaziland and South Africa. Anyway, the corridor ceasefire has been violated several times by Renamo, according to the government.

The Swaziland-Maputo route is still probably the most convenient for South African goods vehicles, businessmen and tourists such as those who used it over the past Christmas and New Year holidays.

But Swaziland's Police Commissioner, Sandile Mdziniso, says it is also a road travellers use at their own risk.

5 Ministers ³¹² face sacking

MBABANE - Five Swazi Cabinet Ministers face dismissal this week.

A Swazi newspaper reported they are to be replaced. *Duma 15/11/91*

They are Interior Minister Mr Senzenjani Tshabalala, Labour Minister Senator Ben Nsibandze, Health Minister Dr Fanny Friedman, Agriculture Minister Mr Siphos Mamba and Education Minister Chief Siphos Shongwe.

Swazi rulers criticised as army of jobless grows

MANZINI. — An organisation claiming to represent Swaziland's growing army of unemployed people has accused the tiny country's royalist government of corruption, negligence, abuse of power and crimes against humanity and called for the endorsement of a Bill of Rights and the establishment of a comprehensive trade union body.

The Swaziland National Association of Unemployed People, in a highly critical statement issued by its Manzini branch chairman, Mr Arafat Matsebula, said the kingdom's growing rate of unemployment was shocking.

Mr Matsebula said the "massive growth of unemployment" in Swaziland could be attributed to "repressive laws, undemocratic economic policy, grave violation of man's most important rights, and generally by the government's negligence".

SUPREME POWER

Swaziland has been ruled in terms of supreme power assumed by the then King Sobhuza II since 1973. The executive authority exercised through the Cabinet is now vested in his son King Mswati III, who was crowned in 1986. Political parties opposing the ruling royalist Imbokodvo National Movement are not permitted.

Mr Matsebula said as long as the country's people were denied their right to self-determination,

the goal of development in economic, social and cultural fields would not be achieved.

A Bill of Rights was required to give all citizens the right to participate in administration of state and public affairs, thereby "moving away from the authoritarian ruling system".

HIGH CRIME RATE

Swaziland's present political system "gives way to oppression and exploitation. As a result of this situation, unemployment, corruption, abuse of power, political repression and high criminal rate continue to loom over society.

"These anti-social practises will continue unchallenged until the undemocratic stigma is completely removed from the Swazi society," said Mr Matsebula.

His lengthy statement never once referred to the monarchy directly, but at one point suggested that the Swazi people's rights would not be guaranteed as long as "the looting of our economic wealth and exploitation of our labour by both the elite and the corrupt government" continued.

The creation of a "new democratic society where the people will freely determine their political status, freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development", was urgently required.

Mr Matsebula also proposed the establishment of "a mother

body" of trade unions to represent working and unemployed people, who should resolve in 1991 to challenge the government's "undemocratic economic policy and unconcern".

He also called on the army and police to defy violent orders directed against the Swazi people and for the launch of an international campaign to solicit support from the outside world. — Sapa.

Hunger strikers in hospital

MBABANE — Five Swazis detained without trial have been taken to hospital after a 12-day hunger strike. They are university lecturer Ray Russon, lawyer Dominic Zulu and students Sabelo Dlamini, Mphandlana Shongwe and Boy Magagula. — Star Africa Service.

Two were still weak after a 17-day hunger strike last month, hospital sources said.

The five were detained

Hunger strikers

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MBABANE - A group of five Swazis being held in detention without trial have been transferred to hospital after a 12 day hunger strike protest.

Two of the five were reportedly still weak after a previous 17 day hunger

strike in December.

The five were detained soon after they were acquitted in the High Court in November last year on charges of high treason and of belonging to an illegal political party.

Sowetan 23/1/91

Swazi Havelock mine faces closure after subsidy loss

SWAZILAND's oldest mining operation, the Havelock asbestos mine, is on the verge of closure after the government decided this week to withdraw the subsidy on which the mine depended.

The mine's closure could potentially provide a new market for SA producers.

Havelock chairman Pat Hart — who is also CE of SA asbestos-producing companies Gefco and Msauli — said yesterday a Swazi government task force appointed

MATTHEW CURTIN

to investigate the mine's viability three weeks ago had recommended the government end its financial support, worth more than R15m in loans over the past two years. Outstanding money owed to Havelock as part of the most recent loan of R6m was suspended.

Hart said Havelock's future was "now in the hands of its shareholders".

Despite the discovery of R200m worth of ore reserves in 1990, high operating costs, aggravated by a lack of development, cast doubt on its future. It employs about 1 800 people of the 2 200 in the mining industry. Swaziland derived more than 40% of its mineral revenue from asbestos in 1989.

The mine is 40% owned by Tibiyo Taka-Ngwane Royal Trust, 40% owned by private Swazi investors, and 20% owned by British-based Turner & Newall plc.

Treason

MBABANE - Swazi prime minister Mr Obed Dlamini is to meet seven people who were acquitted on charges of high treason last year, but claim they have been harassed and victimised ever since. (312)

Swazi MP flees country in fear

Sowetan 4/3/91

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MBABANE - Outspoken Swazi parliamentarian Phillip Dlamini has fled the country in fear of being detained under the kingdom's controversial 60-day detention-without-trial law, a Swazi newspaper reported yesterday.

The Times of Swaziland said Dlamini had fled to an unidentified "neighbouring" country for asylum after orders were issued on Friday that he be fired from the Simunye Sugar Company where he was personnel manager.

The newspaper quoted Dlamini as saying the orders came "from above".

He said he was in parliament at the time the orders were issued.

The Times said the politician, who allegedly made serious allegations against the government in parliament this week, telephoned the newspaper at the weekend to say he was "safely out" of the country.

Dlamini alleged in parliament there was a sinister group of influential politicians which had "hijacked the government." He claimed the group had taken over the power of the prime minister and cabinet.

He also led other parliamentarians in a verbal protest against the tabling of a R45 million defence budget.

The paper quoted Dlamini as saying senior officials from Tibiyo, the Swazi national investment organisation - the major shareholder in SSC - arrived at the sugar company on Friday with orders that he be fired, his company car be seized and that he be evicted from the company house.

In his telephone call, Dlamini said he feared he was about to be detained under the detention-without-trial law. - *Sapa*.

Swazi MP is fired

3/2

MBABANE - A Swazi MP who fled his country fearing victimisation for his outspoken criticisms in parliament was ordered to be fired from his job by the "higher authority" - King Mswati or senior royal advisers.

Mr Themba Dlamini, general manager of Tibiyo taka Ngwane, an organisation which has a major shareholding in the Simunye Sugar Corporation where the MP Mr Philip Dlamini worked confirmed the dismissal order. *Sowetan 11/3/91*

Simunye executives said they were told to fire Dlamini last week.

Dlamini fled the country last week, and then telephoned a local newspaper from "a neighbouring country". He said he had heard about the dismissal order while in parliament, and decided to flee because he feared he would be detained without trial.

Rio Tinto gets 312

Swazi gold rights

8/2 9/3/91
MBABANE — Rio Tinto, a subsidiary of the UK-based RTZ Corporation Plc, has been granted exclusive rights, for a period of five years, to explore for gold in northwest Swaziland.

The agreement was signed in Mbabane on Thursday by the chief executive of Rio Tinto, Mr Al Leroy, and the chairman of Swaziland's minerals committee, Mr Gwece Dlamini.

The terms of the contract call for Rio Tinto, at the end of the five period to provide the minerals committee with a feasibility report and the mining plan.

— Sapa.

Swazi detainees renew

MBABANE - Two Swazi political detainees are back in hospital after a renewed hunger strike protest against their imprisonment without trial, reliable sources reported at the weekend.

Three students, a university lecturer and a lawyer were arrested after their acquittal in November on charges of high treason and of belonging to an illegal political party.



hunger strike

Sowetan 12/3/91

They have been held ever since under Swaziland's 60-day detention without trial order, which requires no reason to be given for arrest, and can be renewed indefinitely.

All five have staged hunger strikes, one lasting for 17 days, and all five have been in hospital in-

tensive care at some stage. The current strike is by lawyer Dominic Mngomezulu and student Boy Magagula, who completed their 12th day without food yesterday.

They were taken to hospital during the weekend.

The sources also said that the remaining three, lecturer Ray Russon and students Sabelo Dlamini and Maphandlana Shongwe have said they will go on hunger strike on Thursday, when they will have completed 120 days in detention.

Family sources said

the five have received assurances that their case is being considered, but government has so far made no official response.

The five seem to be organising their protests in a relay system, with some starting new fasts as others recover. - Sowetan Correspondent.

Swazi MP snubs SA businessmen

Sowetan 13/3/91

MBABANE - Swaziland's Minister of Commerce Mr Nkomeni Ntiwane will not attend a trade and economy conference organised by South African business organisations to be held in the kingdom from tomorrow.

Sponsors of the conference are the South African Chamber of Business, the South African Foreign Trade Association and the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Speakers have been invited from almost a dozen black African

countries. (3/2)

The Swazi head of state, King Mswati, has been invited to open the conference, and Prime Minister Mr Obed Dlamini has been asked to speak.

Ignore

Officials of the Swazi Commerce Ministry and local business organisations were not originally invited, and have decided to ignore the conference.

Ntiwane said yesterday: "The conference has nothing to do with the preferential trade area grouping or the Southern

African Development Co-ordination Conference. My Ministry has nothing to do with the conference. I am not even going there."

Swazi Chamber of Commerce executive director, Mr David Price, also said his members would not attend.

Organisers agreed that local groups were not invited originally because of an oversight. There is now speculation on whether King Mswati and the Prime Minister will take up their invitations. - *Argus Africa News Service.*

King Mswati

Sowetan
14/3/91
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snubs talks

MBABANE - Con-trovesy has hit a conference designed to promote sub-saharan regional co-operation, with Swaziland's King Mswati and most Swazi government officials pulling out of the conference at the last moment.

King Mswati was scheduled to make the opening speech at the BMW sponsored conference on African Sub-Saharan Economy and Trade yesterday.

Swazi Prime Minister Obed Dlamini was to be guest speaker at a Gala dinner tonight for leading business figures from

South Africa and 17 African and European countries - but now both men will be boycotting the conference.

No official reasons have been given for the sudden change in the king's plans. However, it is believed that he may initially have accepted the invitation to open the conference without considering the political implications arising from the fact that he is the present chairman of the Preferential Trade Area for East and Southern Africa, a UN-sponsored group that

bars South Africa.

A further complication was that conference organisers had offended some government ministers and leading Swazi business figures by not inviting them.

With a Swazi cabinet reshuffle in the offing, the conference may have suffered by becoming a political football.

Despite the controversy, many of the conference guests and

organisers remain optimistic that the conference represents the first official and open gathering of South African and African businessmen - and a first step in formalising the existing "under the counter" trade between South Africa and Africa.

Ron Haywood, deputy director general of the SA Chamber of Commerce, who is to open the conference, said he saw the conference as a continuation

of contacts between South Africa and African business organisations that began last year when Saccob was invited to be an observer at meetings of the PTA and the Chamber of Zimbabwean Industries.

"This conference takes that process a step further, getting down to workshops and logistical details."

"I believe that there are tremendous opportunities for South African business in Africa, not just for sales but for joint ventures in which we can supply vital skills and infrastructure," and *Sowetan Africa News Service* vice.



Swazi king snubs economic conference

MBABANE — An international conference on regional economic co-operation got off to a bumpy start yesterday when it emerged that Swazi King Mswati III and his prime minister had refused to address the meeting.

The conference — attended by 230 delegates from 13 African countries, including representatives from the Southern African Development Co-ordinating Conference — is aimed at exploring possibilities for sub-Saharan economic co-operation.

TIM COHEN

Organising committee chairman Francois Marais said yesterday he was informed last week by Swazi Commerce, Industry and Tourism Minister Nkomeni Ntiwane that the king had declined to open proceedings. The king was concerned about "taking a high profile at the conference" in view of his chairmanship of the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) — which excludes SA. Most of the delegates are SA businessmen.

312 Marais said Ntiwane also felt the Swazi Chamber of Commerce had been slighted by not being invited to help organise the conference.

Swazi Prime Minister Obed Dlamini was due to deliver a speech at the gala dinner last night, but he too did not attend.

The conference is being hosted by the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Nafcoc), the SA Chamber of Business (Sacob) and the SA Foreign Trade Organisation (Safto).

Strange things happen in shadow of power

Sowetan 15/3/91

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WHEN a Member of Parliament considers it advisable to flee into exile although he has apparently done nothing illegal it would suggest that an extraordinary situation exists in his country.

The flight from Swaziland of Mr Philip Dlamini is in fact only one of several indications that the situation prevailing there is indeed extraordinary.

Dlamini telephoned a local newspaper from Botswana to say he had fled because he feared being jailed without trial - a fate that has overtaken several Swazis in recent years.

Fear

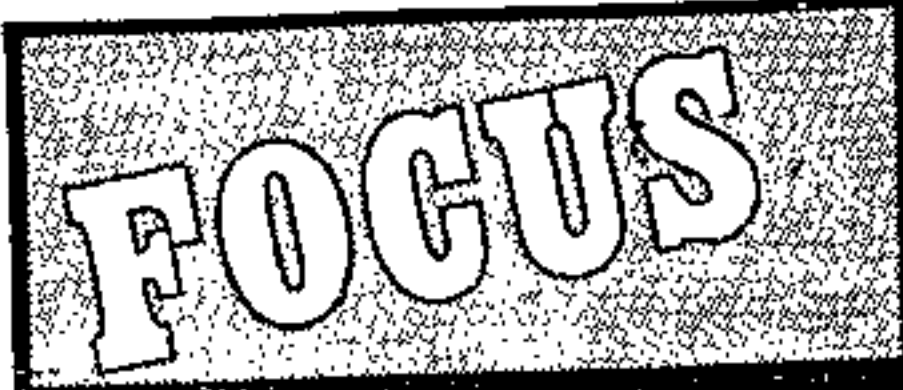
His fear had been sparked by his having been fired from his job as personnel manager of a sugar corporation. The corporation has disclosed that the order for his dismissal came from "higher authority" - a euphemism generally understood to mean King Mswati, Swaziland's absolute monarch, or someone acting in his name.

The order came after Dlamini had asserted in Parliament that a secret group with more power even than the Prime Minister was making major decisions, including the decision last year to fire a cabinet minister holding a key portfolio.

Victim

He did not name the minister but no Swazi was in any doubt that he was referring to the removal of Reginald Dladhla as Minister of Justice and his replacement by Zonke Khumalo, a former deputy prime minister who was involved in a police investigation in 1981 into the misappropriation of government funds.

On the face of it, Dlamini ap-



pears to have been the victim of efforts to prevent him asking awkward questions in Parliament about how Swaziland is being governed.

While he was hiding out in Botswana, efforts were being made to further the case of another Swazi who claims to have been the subject of attempts to keep him silent.

Peter Forbes, a white Swazi with three generations of roots in the country, had approached Lord Forbes, head of Scotland's Forbes clan, for assistance and protection after he had allegedly received threats of death if he went ahead with a court action to sue the Swazi government for R20-million.

From the ancestral home at Balforbes in Aberdeenshire, Lord Forbes wrote to King Mswati asking him to protect Peter Forbes and ensure him safe access to the courts.

Forbes' proposed court action is aimed at obtaining compensation for losing his extensive business interests in Swaziland after he was jailed without trial in 1978.

He believes the purpose of his detention was to prevent him from exposing high-level corruption in the country.

In addition to compensation, Peter Forbes is seeking the return of his Swazi citizenship, which has been formally denied him by the Swazi authorities since he was taken to a hospital in Johannesburg during a hunger strike he embarked on in an effort to force them to give reasons for his detention without trial.

Other Swazis have more recently also resorted to hunger

strikes in Matsapa prison to protest against their incarceration without trial.

A lecturer at the University of Swaziland, Ray Russon, was detained along with three students at the university, Sabelo Dlamini, Boy Magagula and Maphandlana Shongwe, and a lawyer, Dominic Mngomezulu, after they were acquitted last November of charges of high treason and of belonging to a political party, which are banned in Swaziland.

All five have gone on hunger strikes, one of them for more than 14 days, to protest against being imprisoned without trial.

Jailed

As was the case with Forbes, they are being held under a law that empowers the government to detain people for 60-day periods, which can be renewed indefinitely, without giving reasons.

But while Forbes believed he was jailed to silence him, there is no clarity about why the others are being held.

The most likely explanation appears to be that there is a desire in some quarters to discourage Swazis from agitating for a multi-party government rather than the all-powerful monarchy that now prevails.

Safe

There is no visible link between incarceration of the five, the flight of Dlamini the MP and the efforts of Forbes to gain safe access to the courts.

The only thing that appears to be common to all three cases is that they evidently demonstrate the readiness of some in Swaziland to go to extraordinary lengths to suppress public knowledge, open debate and due process of the kind that is taken for granted in Western democracy.

Where does the king stand in



KING MSWATI

all of this? Squarely in the middle, it seems, for since he has absolute power he must be assumed to have absolute responsibility for whatever happens in the shadow of that power.

Like his father, King Sobuza, Mswati is guided to some extent by a group of advisers. But the identities of the advisers seem to be as obscure in his case as they were in his father's.

The allegations of Dlamini the MP suggest that a new set of advisers might have replaced or joined the old group. His firing and subsequent flight suggest in addition that they are not anxious for their identities or activities to be disclosed. - Sowetan Correspondent

Political comment in this issue by Aggrey Klaaste and Deon du Plessis. Newsbills by Sydney Matlhaku. Sub-editing and headlines by Ivan Fynn. All of 61 Commando Road, Industria West, Johannesburg.

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'Disappointed' US slams Swazi detentions without trial

MBABANE — The United States government yesterday issued an unprecedented statement deploring Swaziland's use of detention without trial legislation and urged the kingdom's government to charge detainees currently held or release them.

The strongly worded state-

ment came after reports this week that five detainees, who have already served 120 days, had their detention orders renewed for another 60 days.

All five were acquitted of charges of high treason and of belonging to an illegal political party by the High Court in November. They were detained

shortly afterwards. 312

The US condemnation, the first public reaction by any diplomatic mission in Swaziland, described the detentions as "deeply disappointing".

The US is a major aid donor to the kingdom. — Star Africa Service.

MP who fled is seeking asylum

GABORONE — The Office of the President has confirmed the presence in Botswana of Philip Dlamini, the MP who fled from Swaziland for fear of being detained there without trial.

Mr Dlamini is expected to seek political asylum.

His flight has caused concern in political circles in Swaziland.

Mr Dlamini's fears of detention arose from statements he made in Parliament. He called for details of military expenditure, which traditionally have never been questioned, and he also asserted that major decisions were being taken by a kind of "shadow Cabinet" with powers exceeding even those of the prime minister. (312)

One of those decisions, he said, related to the sacking of the former justice minister and his replacement by a politician previously involved in controversy.

— Africa Service.

Gerald L'Ange reports on indications of extraordinary events in Swaziland

Something rotten in the state ^{3/2} . . ?

Star 18/3/91.

WHEN a Member of Parliament considers it advisable to flee into exile although he has apparently done nothing illegal, it would suggest an extraordinary situation exists in his country.

The flight from Swaziland of Philip Dlamini is in fact only one of several indications that the situation prevailing there is indeed extraordinary.

Mr Dlamini telephoned a local newspaper from Botswana to say he had fled because he feared being jailed without trial — a fate that has overtaken several Swazis in recent years.

His fear had been sparked by his dismissal from his job as personnel manager of a sugar corporation. The corporation has disclosed that the order came from "higher authority" — a euphemism generally understood to mean King Mswati, Swaziland's absolute monarch, or someone acting in his name.

The order came after Mr Dlamini had asserted in Parliament that a secret group with more power than the Prime Minister was making major decisions, including the decision last year to fire a key Cabinet Minister.

On the face of it, Mr Dlamini appears to have been the victim of efforts to prevent him asking awkward questions in Parliament about how Swaziland is governed.

While he was hiding out, efforts were being made to further the case of another Swazi who claims to have been the subject of attempts to keep him silent.

Peter Forbes, a white Swazi with three generations of roots in the country, had approached Lord Forbes, head of Scotland's Forbes clan, for assistance and protection after he had allegedly received death threats if he went ahead with court action to sue the Swazi government for R20 million.

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Swazi citizenship, which has been denied him by the Swazi authorities since he was taken to a hospital in Johannesburg during a hunger strike he embarked on in an effort to force them to give reasons for his detention.

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The most likely explanation appears to be that there is a desire in some quarters to discourage Swazis from agitating for a multi-party government rather than the all-powerful monarchy that now prevails.

Where does the king stand in all of this? Squarely in the middle, it seems, for since he has absolute power he must be assumed to have absolute responsibility.

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The allegations of Mr Dlamini the MP suggest a new set of advisers might have replaced or joined the old group. His firing and subsequent flight suggest in addition that they are not anxious for their identities or activities to be disclosed. — Star Africa Service. □

Pressure grows on Swazis

Star Africa Service

(312)

SW 18/3/91

MBABANE — Outside pressure is increasing on Swaziland for its use of detention without trial legislation, with reports at the weekend that Amnesty International representatives are to visit the country this week.

Local newspaper reports at the weekend also said that the Brussels-based International Confederation of Free Trade Unions may advise members to boycott Swazi exports.

Foreign interest in the issue has increased since a United States condemnation of the legislation last week. A strong statement from the US Embassy was the first diplomatic condemnation of the detention law.

Six people are in detention in Swaziland; five of them since

November. Four of these are currently in hospital being treated for the effects of a prolonged hunger strike, the latest of several they have staged.

The five including a lawyer and lecturer, were detained shortly after being acquitted of high treason and of belonging to an illegal political party.

The sixth detainee is a member of the royal Dlamini family, Prince Mfanasibili, who was detained immediately after his acquittal on an unconnected charge of high treason in August. The prince has not taken part in hunger strikes.

However, as he was being detained at the High Court after his acquittal, he shouted to relatives that he feared poisoning, and asked them to regularly bring him food in prison.

● Something rotten — Page 12

Outspoken, missing MP back home

MBABANE - A Swazi MP who fled his country claiming he feared detention without trial two weeks ago and sought refuge in Botswana is back home again.

Mr Philip Dzingalive Dlamini had meetings yesterday with Prime Minister Mr Obed Dlamini and officials of parliament, but would not say what was discussed.

However, he did confirm that he would be returning to parliament as an MP.

Outspoken Dlamini fled the country after a week in which he claimed in parliament that there was a shadowy group which holds more power than cabinet. *Sowetan*

Fear 20/3/91

He also queried government spending on the army, a subject not normally discussed in the house.

After his flight he telephoned local journalists "from a nearby country" and said major local shareholders in the large sugar company where he is employed as personnel manager had told management to fire him.

In his phone calls

Dlamini said he feared the next step would be detention without trial, so he fled.

Speaking yesterday after his meeting with the Prime Minister, he said Botswana authorities had been highly sympathetic and hospitable.

"The international community is aware of what is going on here, and of the violation of human rights that is taking place.

"My return was also because of pressure exerted on government."

Job 312

Dlamini said he had been assured that he would not be fired from his job, although after he fled his employers confirmed that they had been told to dismiss him.

The Prime Minister has said he knows nothing of allegations that the MP was to be detained without trial.

One of the first things Dlamini did when he returned to Swaziland was to report to United Nations officials here.

He did this, he explained, on the advice of UN High Commission for Refugees officials in Botswana.

Rejoining Africa is fraught with difficulties

THE recent Scenarios for a Subcontinent conference in Swaziland — the first time representatives from 14 African states publicly met SA businessmen in 14 years — began on a pessimistic note. From there things got steadily worse.

The conference, the first of a series, was aimed at providing mostly SA businessmen with an understanding of regional issues in view of SA's imminent return to the international arena.

The meeting comes at a time when there has been a surge in trade between SA and countries in the region. As a result, it elicited a high level of interest from SA businessmen who will soon need to grapple with some of the intricacies of regional co-operation.

The conference demonstrated, more graphically than the organisers had hoped, that the process of reintegrating SA into the region will not be quite as easy as some had thought.

This is because Africa is undergoing a crisis of monumental proportions.

Also, SA businessmen are not yet accustomed to dealing with African governments. It is clearly something which will require more care and understanding than was shown at this conference.

Whether the conference organisers were victims of an internal Swaziland power struggle or whether some aspect of diplomatic protocol was breached is a moot point. But the fact is Swazi King Mswati III and Swazi Prime Minister Obed Dlamini pulled out of their conference commitments at the last minute.

To make matters worse, the five-person delegation from the National African Federated Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Nafcoc) — co-sponsors of the conference with the SA Chamber of Business (Sacob) and the SA Foreign Trade Organisation (Safito) — pulled out the next day.

Either the walkouts were the result of an unseemly degree of petulance on the part of the parties not fulfilling

their commitments, or they were the result of a not entirely uncharacteristic degree of insensitivity on the part of the white SA businessmen.

An opening pessimistic note was provided by the London School of Economics and Political Science's Christopher Coker who did not use the phrase "Afro-pessimism" but clearly subscribed to the idea.

The 1980s were a "catastrophe" for Africa, and Europe no longer felt implicated in its predicament, he said. Regional development was not possible; only some kind of regional rehabilitation.

Unfortunately, much of the available evidence is on his side.

EC funding for southern Africa declined in real terms by 30% last year. The UK, for example, was divesting from the region on an unprecedented scale, Coker said.

One third of British companies had divested from sub-Saharan Africa since 1985.

Other states in the region were structurally different from SA, which had a vast array of trade tariffs, exchange controls, licencing systems, and zoning arrangements.

Coker's negativity was balanced by African Development Bank vice-president Adewale Sangowawa, who said that contrary to the gloomy predictions forwarded, he was optimistic African economies would emerge stronger and buoyant after the reforms underway in the region.

Increasing regional dialogue was taking place, political differences were being resolved and confidence was growing, Sangowawa said.

Sacob deputy president Hennie Viljoen called for "open frontiers" and said the time had come to start breaking down those divergent political barriers that could influence co-operative

business efforts.

The conference was billed as "historic", mainly because of the delegates' high standing. Representatives from the SADCC, the Preferential Trade Area and influential businessmen and bankers from Zimbabwe and west Africa for the first time attended a conference organised by SA.

To the extent that it exposed SA businessmen to their counterparts, the conference was a success.

But the desire expressed by Safito CEO Wim Holles before the conference that "some kind of communication structure" would emerge appeared further away after the conference than before.

In fact, communication emerged as a major difficulty, both in the broader sense because of the pullouts and in a more immediate sense.

For example, the hotel's phones did not work.

The conference was billed as a "Scenario for a Subcontinent". One can only hope it was not.

Swaziland unbans

312

City Press

Open 24/3/91

SWAZILAND has lifted the six year ban on *City Press* and sister publication *Drum*, Interior Minister Senzenjani Shabalala told the Swazi Senate this week.

Drum and *City Press* were banned after they published "certain sensitive and critical articles" about members of the once all-powerful Supreme Council of State, the Liqoqo, which ruled Swaziland for two years after the death of King Sobhuza II in 1983.

City Press has not yet been officially informed that the ban has been lifted.

"Once that happens *City Press* will immediately begin circulating again in Swaziland," editor Khulu Sibiya said yesterday.

Political comment and newsbills by
K Sibiya, headlines and sub-editing
by B Keswa, both of 2 Herb Street,
Johannesburg.

local stadium to Thabang, welcome step.

Swazis pardon six detainees (312)

MBABANE - Six political detainees held under Swaziland's Detention without Trial Act, were suddenly pardoned by the king and released, conditionally at the weekend.

The six included former political strong-man in the once powerful Supreme Council of State (Liqoqo) Prince Mfana Sibili, who was jailed for seven in 1985 for defeating the ends of justice.

Immediately after his release last year the prince was re-arrested and charged with treason, but was acquitted by the High Court. He was then immediately detained under detention without trial laws until his release on Friday.

The other five detainees were arrested after serious student disturbances at the Swaziland University. They are academics and student leaders and alleged members of an illegal underground political organisation (Pudemo) Peoples United Democratic Movement. *Sowetan 2513191*

The pardon and release of the detainees came a week after the United States and British governments joined the growing demand by international human rights organisations for the detainees to be released or charged and the scrapping of detention without trial laws. - Sapa

Detainee is held again after pardon

312
So we have
26/3/91.

MBABANE - One of six political detainees in Swaziland, released under a royal pardon on Friday, was rearrested on Saturday after he was allegedly found wearing an army uniform.

Former student teacher Mr Maphandlana Shongwe was arrested in Manzini by soldiers and handed over to the Manzini police.

Shongwe was kept in the cells overnight for questioning concerning the army uniform and was released later on Sunday pending further police investigations.

Announcing the Swazi King's pardon on Friday,



KING MSWATI

royal councillors warned the detainees to repent, go home and carry on with their own business and leave the running of the country to people who are there for that purpose.

Meanwhile the United States government in a statement issued from its embassy in Mbabane at the weekend, praised King Mswati III for granting the pardon to the detainees.

The release of the detainees was a significant step towards observance of internationally accepted human rights by the Swaziland government, the statement said.

The US government now urged the Swaziland government to abolish detention without trial and thus enhance respect for human rights and the rule of law in the country.

- Sapa

Swaziland re-arrests one of 6 released detainees

Star 26/3/91 (312)

MBABANE — A Swazi political detainee released last week after being held without charge since November was back behind bars at the weekend.

This was after he was found wearing a Swazi army uniform.

Former student Maphandlana Shongwe was released on Friday, with five others also in detention without trial, after King Mswati announced he had pardoned them.

On Saturday police confirmed they were holding Mr Shongwe again because members of Swaziland's army had found him wearing an army uniform.

Police said they would hold Mr Shongwe until he explained why he was wearing the uniform.

Yesterday the United States ambassador to Swaziland, Stephen Rogers, issued a statement welcoming Swaziland's release of the six detainees.

The statement said: "This marks a significant step toward a greater

Swaziland has released six people from detention without trial — but one of them is back in jail, reports the STAR AFRICA SERVICE.

observance of internationally accepted human rights procedures by the government of Swaziland.

"We remain strongly opposed to the detention-without-trial legislation, and understand it is under review by the Swazi government."

Mr Rogers two weeks ago issued a statement deploring the detentions.

Five of those released on Friday were Mr Shongwe, lawyer Dominic Mngomezulu, university lecturer Ray Russon and students Boy Magagula and Sabelo Dlamini.

They were all detained soon after being acquitted in November by the High Court of charges of high treason and of belonging to an illegal political party.

Mr Shongwe went home after his pardon was announced.

However, the other four, suffering from the effects of a prolonged hunger strike protest, went back to hospital for further treatment.

The sixth detainee was Prince Mfanasibili, detained in August immediately after his acquittal in an unconnected trial for high treason.

The prince took part in no hunger strikes, and went home after his release.

He immediately began preparations for the burial on Saturday of his wife, who died earlier in the week.

A local newspaper reported on Sunday that the five detainees, excepting the prince, had expressed their thanks to Prime Minister Obed Dlamini for his efforts in obtaining their release.

Observers said their statement pointedly did not mention the king, who actually ordered their release.

The day the ancestors were part of parliament

MBABANE - Senators in the Swaziland House of Senate on Monday apparently had their parliamentary privilege extended to sleeping in the house. *Sowetan 27/3/91*

When Senator Arthur Khoza stood up and interrupted Prime Minister Mr Obed Dlamini during a budget debate to point out that some senators were sleeping, the president of the House, Mr Jacob Mavimbela, studied the sleeping senators in silence for several

moments.

He then rose and cautioned Khoza, saying it could be dangerous to suddenly disturb the senators concerned - including a Cabinet Minister - who could in fact be concentrating deeply on communicating with their ancestors.

He said if this was the case, and if they were suddenly disturbed during such concentration, they could die from shock. - *Sapa*.

312

NO BIG STICKS

Fm 29/3/91

312

Prof Peter Vale is attached to the Centre for Southern African Studies at the University of the Western Cape. He takes a critical look at the recent conference on trade in Swaziland.

There was a certain wry symbolism to the stormy conference on trade and southern Africa's future held in Mbabane last week with South Africans — long the subcontinent's loners — deliberating on the territory of a reluctant host. Then, by all accounts, fluffing protocol and finally quarrelling among each other on unity of purpose.

Because change in our country is transforming the face of regional relations, the Swaziland conference will not be the last on the region's future: accordingly, it would be a serious miscalculation not to take stock of why there was controversy.

Central to the role which we will come to play in the subcontinent are two contradictory inclinations — fear and opportunity. As with most things in international relations, these are delicately poised.

For SA business the opportunities offered by links with neighbouring states have almost become an article of faith in the De Klerk era. Moreover, the view that we can save the region has been a persuasive argument in the run-up to the formal ending of sanctions.

As business also faces the unhappy reality of the EC after 1992, the idea that a subcontinental economic bloc can offset the costs of increased access to traditional markets has an undoubted appeal.

But there is also fear: can the states of the region handle an economic culture which is aggressive and will they be able to pay for any goods and services in hard currency?

For their part, neighbouring states see real opportunities in deepening their links with us but they fear that our comparative strength will simply wipe out their own economic potential.

Our neighbours are also rightfully proud of the advances they have made in building entities for regional integration. In many ways, however, they will remain incomplete without our participation. But — equally so — the rationale underpinning both will be seriously threatened if we become a fully fledged member of either the Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) or Southern African Development Co-ordinating Conference.

Add to this the image which our policy of regional destabilisation once engendered throughout the continent, and it's not surprising that our neighbours are jittery about the enthusiasm with which business has approached regional economic questions.

This is why it is important to understand what went wrong in Swaziland.

It was, firstly, ill-advised (to say the least) to root the planning of the conference entirely in SA. Without looking in to regional partners, any impulse of this kind was certain to be looked upon as an effort to promote the interests of the initiating country.

This was worsened by the aversion to invite Swazi expertise — especially local business — to participate more in the deliberations. Not only was this simple discourtesy but, more deeply, it signalled near handedness on the part of the organisers.

Put in diplomatic language, Swaziland is a sovereign country and, with this, goes considerable official propriety. To ignore the locals, or to pretend even for organisational purposes that Swaziland was an extension of

SA, were oversights which bordered on gaffes.

Secondly, it was a foot fault to invite Swazi King Mswati — chairman of the PTA — to deliver a key address. Not only is the PTA sensitive about SA but that organisation, like all international bodies, hangs together by consensus. In these circumstances there was simply no chance that Tanzania — a leading member of the PTA — could have sanctioned the king's formal (or, for that matter, informal) participation.

Judging from the press, however, there were some high moments in Mbabane.

The participation in the proceedings by a vice-president of the African Development Bank was as significant as his message: the bank is laying plans for our participation. This confirms the view that when the country's political dust finally settles it will play an important role in African affairs. Its part in the functioning of an influential African institution, like the bank, will be decisive not only for this country but for wider development on the continent.

But the most important theme was the sheer nervousness with which our neighbours view this country.

Its corollary — a point underscored at the closing sessions — was that trade needs to benefit all the states of the region, not only SA.

No state can ignore the sensitivities of its neighbours. We dare not pretend to be talking to the subcontinent before bullying it into a series of arrangements in which the advantage flows only to the rich and powerful.

Not to recognise this will be to invoke the same faux pas which nearly derailed the Swaziland conference.

I won't unban political parties, says King Mswati

312

MBABANE — Swaziland's King Mswati told local priests and others from neighbouring states, who paid a courtesy call on him at the Easter weekend, that he had no intention of unbanning political parties in his country.

The king said Swaziland's unique Tinkhundla system of decentralised government had managed quite well.

Political parties in Swaziland were banned when the late King Sobhuza II scrapped the inherited British Westminster-style

constitution in 1973. He said at the time it was unsuited to the African kingdom.

After ruling by decree for five years, during which he sent constitutional experts to various countries to examine their

systems, King Sobhuza introduced the present system.

Under the system, the country is divided into 40 community areas, all administered by Mndeni Shabalala, who is in effect the Minister of Constitutional Development. — Sapa.

Star 15/4/91

Swaziland's Aids toll increases to 22

MBABANE — Five people have died in Swaziland this year from Aids, the ministry of health has confirmed.

Director of medical services Dr John Mbambo also said four babies had been

found with HIV infection, and were not expected to survive.

(312) The report said 22 people had died of Aids since it was first reported in Swaziland.

— Star Africa Service.

Inside the AK-47 smuggling route

Sowetan 19/4/91.

312

MBABANE - Behind the post office at Lomahasha on the Swaziland-Mozambique border, a man opened a plastic bag and showed me three AK-47 assault rifles. He said I could have all three for only R70.

I knew then that I had succeeded in tapping into the smuggling route along which the deadly Soviet-made military rifles are entering South Africa in growing numbers.

And in South Africa, they have gained notoriety for their use in faction fighting, political killings, bank robberies and other crimes.

Lomahasha, the main border post on Swaziland's boundary with Mozambique, is the main conduit through which the guns are coming into South Africa.

Food

I proved that almost anyone can buy one there for a few rands.

The little dorp, whose name means "to itch", is described by local residents as "a bed of criminals and arms smugglers".

Arms smuggling from Mozambique to South Africa by way of Swaziland is big business for people who have been making money out of the killings in South African townships.

There are two types of smugglers: the small, occasional dealers who may be regarded as amateurs in the business and the big buyers, the professionals.

The former are usually people who cross the border illegally from Mozambique into Swaziland with AK-47s looking for someone who will buy them for as little as R20 a gun.

They then use the money to buy food before crossing back into Mozambique.

The big dealers normally travel into Mozambique to fetch arms which, if they can be smuggled

FOCUS

**By IKE MOTSAPI on
Special Assignment
for Sowetan Africa
News Service**



past the Swazi police and army roadblocks, are sold in Natal and on the Witwatersrand for large sums - as much as R6 000, according to the South African Police.

The source of the AK-47s, as well as Makarov pistols and ammunition for both, is reportedly the Renamo guerilla group fighting the Frelimo government in Mozambique.

The London newsletter, *Africa Confidential*, recently reported that Renamo had taken to selling its surplus weapons in South Africa to get funds.

However, my information is that Renamo as an organisation is not directly responsible for the smuggling.

Renamo

It is individual Renamo members who sell the weapons or exchange them for food, clothing, cigarettes and other goods.

I went to Swaziland to investigate reports that AK-47s can be bought for as little as R20 at Lomahasha.

The area near the border post was so congested with people and vehicles it resembled a beehive.

Many people were carrying big bags filled with goods bought on either side of the border.

Most of the people crossing the border are Mozambicans.

I was met with great suspicion when I began questioning people about AK-47s. People did not

want to talk to me.

I approached a woman who had just bought bread from a store near the border post. I gave her two pieces of chicken remaining from some I had bought on my way to Lomahasha and I bought her a cold drink.

This started a conversation that led to my meeting the man who called himself Alfonso.

Alfonso

"Talk to those people there," the woman said, pointing to Alfonso. "You should be very careful, though, because the police are always here."

I approached Alfonso, a Mozambican who said he had three children and no job and had to find food for his family every day. I told him I was interested in buying an AK-47.

"Are you serious?" he asked.

I said I was.

He took me and my Swazi guide to an area behind the post office. We stood there for some time. It was obvious that Alfonso was trying to make sure that nobody was watching us.

Then he opened the plastic bag he was carrying and asked me to look inside. I was shocked to see three AK-47s.

My mind was filled with thoughts of being arrested for arms smuggling.

"Give me R70 and take the lot," Alfonso said. "The police can come here any time."

I asked Alfonso where he got the guns and he said he usually gets them from Renamo soldiers in exchange for food.

"They come around to my place looking very tired and hungry," he said.

I told him about the roadblocks and asked how I could pass through them with the weapons.

"That is your problem," he said. "I need the money and the rest is for you to take care of."

I told him I was scared to buy the guns. I apologised and gave him R10 for his trouble. He took the money and left, obviously angry with me.

In Mbabane I was told by Swaziland's CID chief, Inspector Azaria Ndzimandze, that the police are aware that South Africans and Swazis can buy an AK-47 for as little as R20 and a Makarov pistol for only R5.

"We are aware that it is easy to get these guns, particularly with American dollars," he said. "We are also aware that Lomahasha seems to be the nerve centre of the arms smuggling."

Arrests

"We are obviously concerned about this and we are doing our best to crack the smuggling, but it is not easy. We make regular arrests but what worries us most is that people are able to pass through the roadblocks with these weapons."

Inspector Ndzimandze said about 10 people were arrested each month with AK-47s and other smuggled arms as well as ammunition. He estimated that more than 500 weapons had been confiscated from smugglers so far this year.

"Obviously others got through," he said.

The smugglers used a variety of devices to get the weapons

*To page 7

Political comment in this issue by Aggrey Klaaste and Deon du Plessis. Newsbills by Sydney Matlhaku. Sub-editing and headlines by Ivan Fynn. All of 61 Commando Road, Industria West, Johannesburg.

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* Write to the Editor at PO Box 6663, Johannesburg 2000. Nom-de-Plumes can be used, but full names and addresses should be supplied or the letter will not be published.

Inside the AK route

(24/12) 312 * From Page 6

through the checkpoints, he said, and mentioned as an example a number of AK-47s found by police inside a false extension of the petrol tank of a van.

The inspector's admission confirms the assertions by the South African Police that many of the AK-47s being used in robberies and political killings in South Africa come from Mozambique by way of Swaziland.

A few weeks ago Lieutenant Colonel R Reynolds, the head of SAP public relations in Natal, showed journalists some of the more than 1 800 AK-47s and pistols confiscated by police in Natal since the beginning of the year, together with more than 50 000 rounds of ammunition.

He said the weapons had come from Mozambique through Swaziland to Weenen. From there they would be distributed in Natal and on the Reef, selling for as much as R6 000 each.

Swaziland is paying a heavy price for the smuggling. There has been a big increase in armed robbery, often involving the use of AK-47s. Guns are easily available in Manzini, Swaziland's second largest town, where it is now considered unsafe to walk the streets at night.



Lieutenant R Reynolds (right), head of the Natal police liaison division, shows members of the Press some of the 1 800 arms confiscated by police in Natal since the beginning of the year.

For sale: one AK-47 Price: R20

Star 19/4/91

312

BEHIND the post office at Lomahasha on the Swaziland-Mozambique border, a man opened a plastic bag and showed me three AK-47 assault rifles. He said I could have all three for R70.

I knew then that I had succeeded in tapping into the smuggling route along which the deadly Soviet-made military rifles are entering South Africa in growing numbers, to be used in faction fighting, political killings, bank robberies and other crimes.

Lomahasha, the main border post on Swaziland's boundary with Mozambique, is the main conduit through which the guns are coming into South Africa. I proved that almost anyone can buy one there for a few rands.

Smuggling

The little town, whose name means "to itch", is described by local residents as "a bed of criminals and arms smugglers".

Arms smuggling from Mozambique to South Africa by way of Swaziland is big business for people who have been making money out of the killings in South Africa's townships.

There are two types of smuggler: the small, occasional dealers who may be regarded as amateurs in the business, and the big buyers, the professionals.

The former are usually people who cross the border illegally from Mozambique into Swaziland with AK-47s looking for someone who will buy them for as little as R20 a gun. They use the money to buy food before crossing back into Mozambique.

Renamo

The big dealers normally travel into Mozambique to fetch arms which, if they can be smuggled through the Swazi police and army roadblocks, are sold in Natal and on the Witwatersrand for large sums — as much as R6 000, according to the South African Police.

The source of the supply of the AK-47s, as well as of Makarov pistols and ammunition for both, is the Renamo guerilla group that is fighting the Frelimo government in Mozambique.

I went to Swaziland to investigate reports that AK-47s can be bought for as little as R20 at Lomahasha. The area near the border post was so congested

AK-47 rifles are being sold in Swaziland for as little as R20. In SA, they can fetch up to R6 000. IKE MOTSAPI reports.



Contraband . . . reporter Ike Motsapi with a smuggled AK-47 shown to him by police.



with people and vehicles that it looked like a beehive.

Most of the people crossing the border are Mozambicans.

I met with great suspicion when I began asking about AK-47s. People did not want to talk to me.

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Then he opened the plastic bag he was carrying and asked me to look inside. I was shocked to see three AK-47s. My head was filled with thoughts of being arrested for smuggling.

"Give me R70 and take the lot," Alfonso said. "The police could come here any time."

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Arrests

"We are obviously concerned about this and we are doing our best to crack the smuggling, but it is not easy. We make regular arrests, but what worries us most is that people are able to pass through the roadblocks with these weapons."

Swaziland is paying its own heavy price for the smuggling in the form of a big increase in armed robbery, often involving the use of AK-47s. Guns are easily available in Manzini, Swaziland's second largest town, where it is now considered unsafe to walk the streets at night.

The anger of Swazis is being turned against the many Mozambicans in the country.

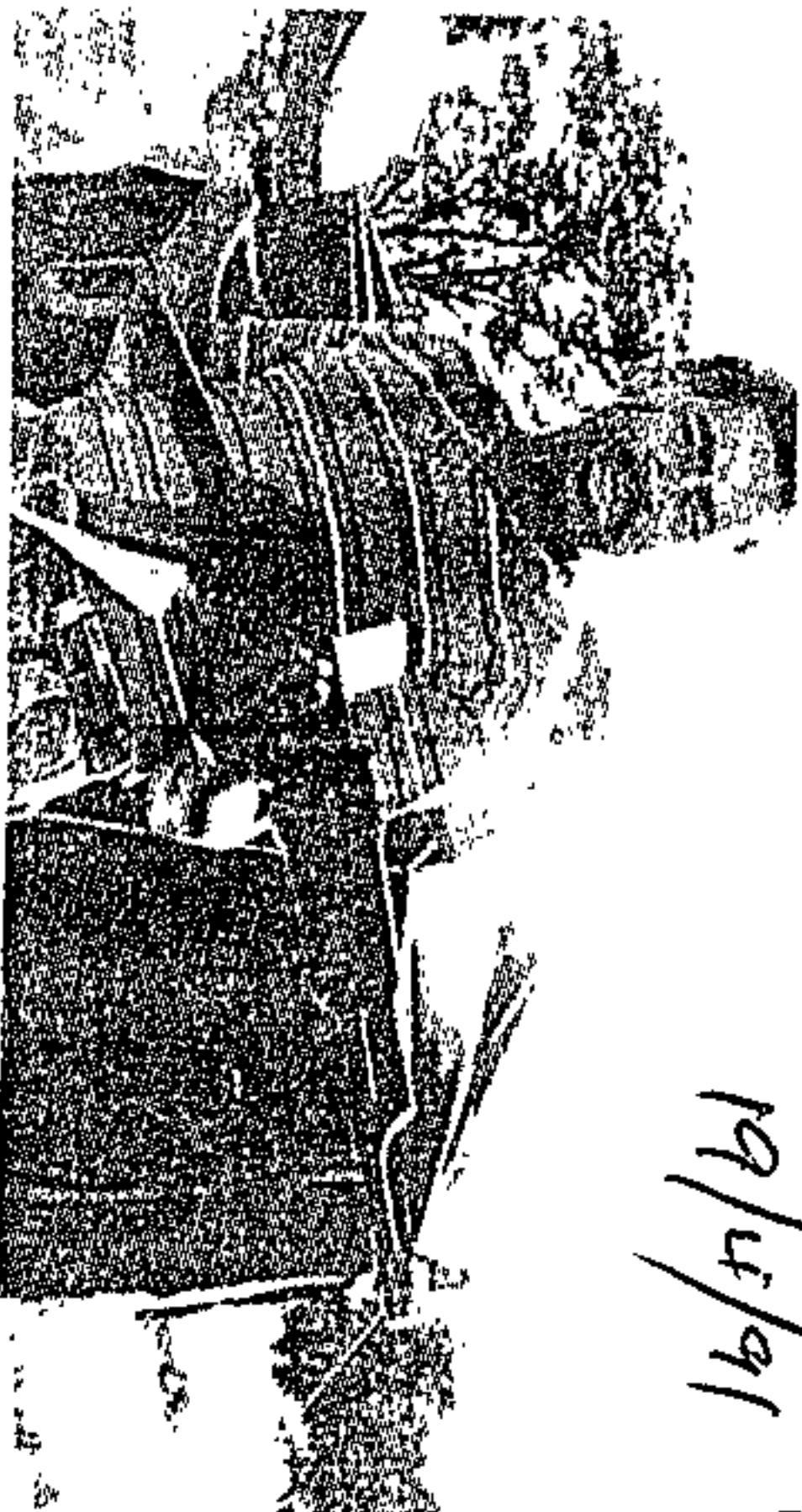
But the guns keep coming in. — Star Africa Service. □

The price of violence: Three AK-47s for R70

From IKE MOTSAPI
Argus Africa News Service

MBABANE. — Behind the post office at Lomahasha on the Swaziland-Mozambique border a man opened a plastic bag and showed me three AK-47 assault rifles. He said I could have all three for just R70.

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REPORTER Ike Motsapi with an AK47 assault rifle smuggled into South Africa, probably from Mozambique by way of Swaziland. This picture was taken when smuggled guns were shown to the Press by the police at Weenen.

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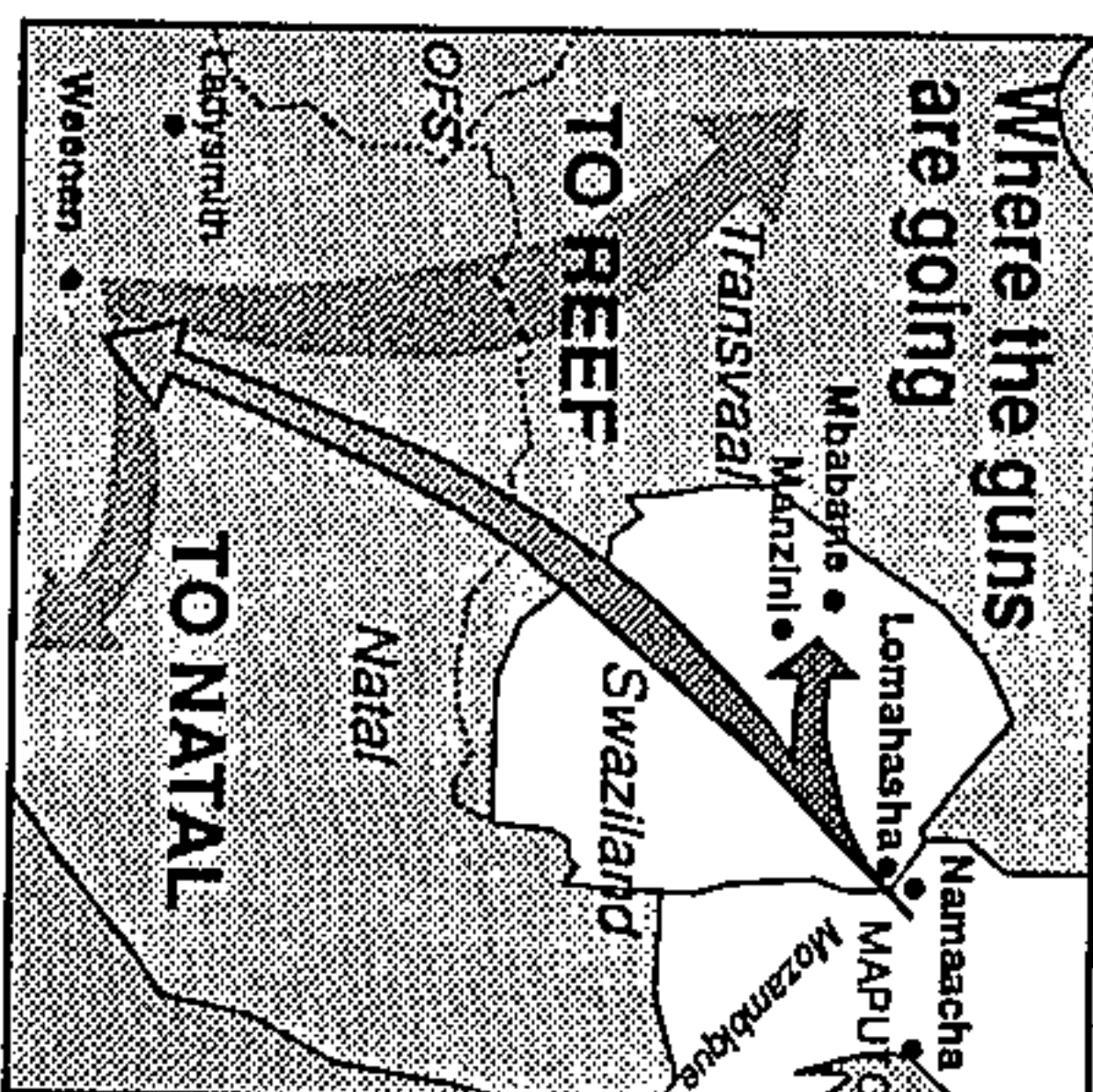
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The former are usually those who cross the border illegally from Mozambique into Swaziland with AK-47s, looking for someone who will buy them for as little as R20 a gun. They then use the money to buy food before crossing back into Mozambique.

The big dealers normally travel into Mozambique to fetch arms which, if they can

Lomahasha is the main channel for the smuggling of guns from Mozambique into Swaziland and on to lucrative markets in South Africa.

From Lomahasha the guns go to Manzini and then to Weenen for distribution.



be smuggled through the Swazi police and army roadblocks, are sold in Natal and on the Witwatersrand for large sums — as much as R6 000.

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"They come around to my place looking very tired and hungry," he said.

(Turn to page 4, col 1)

political activity, but who had not been convicted in court of any offence.

At the same time, there are reports of friction between the monarchy and the Cabinet, and of public concern over what is said to be the growing power of a group in the palace.

The opposition to detention without trial, which has been openly joined by the United States government, led to the freeing of the five detainees last month.

The London newsletter, *Africa Confidential*, says in its latest edition that their releases came "amid mounting evidence of growing disarray within the government".

"Its two arms, Cabinet and monarchy, are increasingly at loggerheads and public alarm has been rising as evidence emerges that enormous power within the palace is now being exercised by a clique known as the Central Committee."

The newsletter says "the divide between the Cabinet and the monarchy is in large part, it seems, a response to the move towards political reform in South Africa and within the region".

The sensitivity of the palace to murmurs of public dissent was shown by the harshness with which it reacted to those murmurs.

These were first heard just more than two years ago when pamphlets calling for democracy were circulated by an organisation calling itself the People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo).

Pudemo had been formed in 1983 to oppose not the monarchy but the powers assumed by a traditional body known as the Liqoqo, after King Sobhuza died in 1982.

Its pamphlets criticised the system of election to parliament, the building of a new palace for Sobhuza's successor, King Mswati (which has never been reported in the local press) and alleged nepotism in the royal Dlamini family.

The government took Pudemo's activities seriously enough to charge 10 Swazis last year with being Pudemo members and with treason.

They were acquitted by the High Court but five were then jailed without trial.

They were released only 10 days after the third renewal of their 60-day detention-without-trial orders — after a public condemnation of the detentions by the US, which is Swaziland's major aid donor, and a more discreet protest from the British government.

Their release came on the eve of the arrival of a delegation sent by Amnesty International to investigate the detentions.

They were taken to the pal-



Swaziland's King Mswati . . . under pressure to scrap detention without trial.

Star 30/4/91.

ace — four of them from the hospital to which they had been admitted after going on a hunger strike — and told by a senior palace official that they had been "pardoned", but were not told for what offence.

They were told to "go home and forget about the issues of running the country. There are people who are there to do that, and not you, our children."

This paternalistic injunction seems not to have been accepted, for the detainees next day released a statement pointedly thanking Prime Minister Obed Dlamini for their release.

This made the nation catch its breath, as it were, for it is widely known that although the prime minister signs detention orders, only the king has the power to impose or lift them.

The prime minister hurriedly issued a statement advising that any thanks should be directed to the king. But the former detainees had made their point.

And they emphasised it in a response expressing polite surprise and saying that since detention orders were signed by the prime minister, they had

assumed he was responsible for issuing them.

Once again attention had been drawn to the personal power King Mswati has to detain his subjects indefinitely without charge and without giving reasons.

A Swazi who is close to the proposed formation of a human rights organisation in the country said that since a king had introduced the detention-without-trial law, only a king could remove it from the books, and pressure would now increase for King Mswati to do that.

If he did, the way would be opened for other changes that might loosen the firm, if normally benevolent, grip the royal Dlamini family has had on Swaziland.

King Mswati may thus be caught between a desire — if not on his part, then on the part of other members of the royal clan — to retain absolute power and the need to placate foreign donors and investors.

Some Swazis saw a veiled threat that US aid might be curtailed in the statement by Ambassador Stephen Rogers that there was "no immediate

plan" to halt American aid.

According to another London newsletter, *Africa Analysis*, even members of the royal court are urging that the detention-without-trial legislation be scrapped to ease internal tension and placate critics.

A crucial influence will probably be exercised in any decision on this issue by the members of the Central Committee. Two of the council's members are said by *Africa Confidential* to be Abednego Hlophe, who was a member of the Liqoqo after Sobhuza's death, and former Cabinet minister Sishayi Nxumalo, "arguably now the most influential figure in Swaziland politics".

Recalling that the Swaziland Law Society has also come out publicly against the detention-without-trial law, the newsletter says the legal establishment's unease with the situation in Swaziland has been heightened by the premature departure of Chief Justice Nicholas Hannah, who acquitted the five who were subsequently jailed without trial, and whose contract was not due to expire until the end of the year. □

Swazi throne feeling the heat

Star 30/4/91 (312)

The absolute powers of the monarchy in Swaziland have not been enough to save it from coming under both internal and external stresses, reports GERALD L'ANGE of The Star Africa Service.

SWAZILAND'S all-powerful monarchy is feeling the first tremors of challenge since King Sobhuza assumed absolute power in 1973.

The autocracy of the throne is being questioned most directly through growing pressure for the scrapping of the law that allows Swazis to be imprisoned without trial at the discretion of the king.

Demands for the abolition of the law grew from the arbitrary jailing of five Swazis who were suspected of challenging the monarchy's ban on party



Tucker leaves permanent mark

Star 30/4/91

(S8)

THE NEWS of Bob Tucker's resignation might have come as a shock to outsiders who know him only through his press statements and public appearances. But sources close to him are not surprised.

Recognised as a man of great vision, associates point out that in the past five years he has entirely succeeded in achieving one of his aims — positioning the Perm as the "People's Bank" — the area where he believes its future lies.

And for him to stay on now when the Perm is about to become a "brand of Nedcor" and relinquish the great independence he has experienced in running his own show is not something they expected him to accept.

Bob Tucker has been something of maverick in the world of banking, say colleagues. Unlike most other building society chiefs who eagerly sought a share-market listing, Mr Tucker had no wish to take the Perm to the stock exchange or transform it into a bank.

It was only after being heavily pressured by the authorities that he agreed to a merger with Nedcor.

His philosophy, which emerged at a press conference yesterday, is that building societies should not have to be banks as this could influence their relations with their clients. In fact, he suggested that the time might come when more mutual building societies should be established.

Mr Tucker has also been active in other fields.

He has been one of the sponsors of the Old Mutual and Nedcor scenario on South Africa's future, which has drawn highly favourable comments, both locally and overseas.

Explaining the reasons for his resignation yesterday, he said technological and other factors required a closer association between the Perm and Nedbank. It had become obvious that there had to be some reconciliation between the two groups. "In many parts of the country we found our most intense competition came from Nedbank, and that had to be resolved.

"It was the Perm's executives who motivated this whole re-

Bob Tucker, managing director of the Perm for the past eight years, has announced his resignation. The move follows an announcement that the Perm and Nedbank groups are to work more closely together and that the rationalisation process between them will be accelerated.

DEREK TOMMEY looks at the man behind the name and the reasons for his resignation.



Bob Tucker . . . colleagues say he has been something of a maverick in the banking world.

construction of that group," he said. "I'm absolutely satisfied that the right thing is being done in the right way at the right time for both the Perm and Nedbank — to bring them

together with a common management."

He said the move would not effect the Perm's clients.

"A banking relationship is very personal . . . People come

to the Perm because they like the Perm's management and we are not going to upset that relationship."

Mr Tucker said the work that the Perm had been doing to improve the socio-political situation in the country would continue.

The Perm has been recognised as having a very heavy commitment to social upliftment.

"That commitment was not Bob Tucker on his cranky own, but of the whole management team which stays in place," he said. He added that there was also a high degree of recognition at Nedcor of the importance of what he had been doing in serving the broad spectrum of South Africans.

Mr Tucker said he did not yet know what he would do.

"All my energy has gone into doing what I understood to be the right thing for the Perm and Nedcor. I have had no time to think about the future.

"But my total commitment is to remain in South Africa and play the maximum possible role . . . in bringing about the changes in the socio-economic circumstances which are so gently necessary.

"I will need some time to figure out precisely what platform will do that from and from what base and what role I can play," he said.

Nedcor had asked him to remain as a director, which he had happily agreed to do, he said. It had also asked him to continue working with its scenario plan and this he would do. He emphasised that there was absolutely no pressure on him to resign. Nedcor was anxious for him to join it.

He said Nedcor did not want him to stay at the Perm because it saw a bigger role for him at Nedcor.

He also did not want to leave the Perm because he thought he had "run his period".

Mr Tucker (44) is a law graduate. He is married and has three sons.

He is a keen sportsman and is regarded as a determined person and an achiever.

This and his work in the South African scenario suggest that he will do much in the coming years to bring about a better South Africa. □

Havelock Mine sold to SA's CMC

MBABANE — Swaziland's Havelock Asbestos Mine, which went into voluntary liquidation two months ago, has been sold to a SA company Consolidated Mining Corporation (CMC).

Under the purchase agreement, signed in Mbabane on Tuesday by Swazi Finance Minister Sibusiso Dlamini and CMC chairman Gerald Rubenstein, the Swazi government has a 15% shareholding in the new company, HVL Asbestos Swaziland Ltd, which will operate under the name Bulembu Mine.

Rubenstein announced that Monty Schechter had been appointed managing director of Bulembu Mine, which resumed operations on a limited scale yesterday.

About 800 workers will be employed during this year. More than 1,700 miners lost their jobs when the mine suffered a financial collapse.

Under the same agreement the government will also purchase certain assets of the mine, including its housing estate and certain of the buildings. — Sapa.

and the outlook remained positive.

Commenting on the trading performance, Lewis said that the lower landed catches, reflected in the results, was symptomatic of the whole industry. He added that the industry was facing a "challenging 1991 season", with this year's quota on rock lobster not likely to be fulfilled.

As a result, the higher earnings forecast made in the last annual review would probably not be realised. However, Oceana was expected to turn in a better performance in the current six months to end September, Lewis said.

missed.

SA donation for Swazi pupils

MBABANE — South Africa has donated R121 000 towards educational scholarships for pupils in Swaziland.

The donation was confirmed by SA Trade representative Etienne du Toit, who is based in the kingdom. Mr du Toit said R91 000 of the money would be for Swazi students at SA institutions and R30 000 would be used to help establish community schools in the kingdom.

He urged Swazi students in South Africa to return to Swaziland when they complete their training. There has been concern recently that many Swazis complete their training and then get jobs in SA. — Star Africa Service.

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Toyota Conque
Class winners:
ta Conquest; B
Skyline; C — S
ta Conquest; D

SA gives Swazi scholarships

■ South Africa had donated R121 000 towards educational scholarships for Swaziland pupils, SA Trade representative Etienne du Toit said this week. Du Toit said R91 000 would be for Swazi students at South African institutions and R30 000 for Swazi community schools.

De Klerk in Swaziland

MBABANE - President FW de Klerk and South African Cabinet Ministers met Swazi leaders for one-and-a-half hours yesterday. (3/2) (3/2)

De Klerk was accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Pik Botha, and his deputy, Mr Leon Wessels.

The Swazi delegation was headed by King Mswati and the Swazi Prime Minister, Mr Obed Dlamini. - Sapa.

De Klerk 312

and Mswati discuss

the new SA

By Kaizer Nyatumba
Political Staff

LOZITHA PALACE (Swaziland)
— Southern African countries had to group together and co-operate more closely in order to survive, President de Klerk said yesterday.

He said this was necessary particularly because of the emergence of a unified Europe next year, and recent changes in Eastern and central Europe and the Soviet Union.

Speaking at a luncheon in his honour at the palace, Mr de Klerk said the majority of African leaders looked forward to South Africa playing a meaningful role in African affairs.

In Swaziland on a one-day working visit, Mr de Klerk was met at Matsapha International Airport yesterday morning by King Mswati III and Prime Minister Obéd Dlamini.

Mr de Klerk said South Africa's return to "regional multi-lateral organisations" was imminent and he looked forward to the day South Africa would be welcomed back into the ranks of African organisations.

King Mswati said there was now "a real softening of attitude" towards SA in Europe.

He had recently paid a 10-day visit to Europe in his capacity as both king of his country and as chairman of the 18-nation Preferential Trade Area (PTA) of southern and eastern Africa, and he had detected a great interest in South Africa.

He said he had assured the European Community of the PTA's eventual aim of forming a sub-regional common market.

He had also expressed the PTA's hope that South Africa would be able to join the PTA "as a powerful market force".

A senior South African source said Mr de Klerk was scheduled to pay an official visit to Lesotho today, but the trip had to be called off indefinitely because of the present political instability in that country.

ANTHONY JOHNSON

MBABANE — The plan to establish a southern African economic union modelled on the EC received a boost yesterday at talks between President F W de Klerk and Swaziland's King Mswati III.

Foreign Minister Pik Botha, who has visited Botswana, Kenya and Swaziland in a bid to sell the idea of a unified development region for the African subcontinent, said: "The momentum is complete. The dream is now being realised."

"Nothing can stop it — the momentum is too strong."

After yesterday's talks the king told a banquet at Lozitha Palace that he strongly supported De Klerk's proposal for an economic common market.

Swazi king backs FW's regional plan

The 23-year-old king said that leaders of the nine-nation Southern African Development Co-ordinating Conference (SADCC) and 18-nation Preferential Trade Area (PTA) of southern and east Africa supported his stance that SA should adopt a role as a "major sub-regional power" in trade, economic co-operation and development.

Speaking later, De Klerk echoed the call for the urgent establishment of an economic unit in the region which would help to boost foreign investment and economic co-operation across a wide front.

Mswati keeps 'em waiting...

From ANTHONY JOHNSON

MBABANE. — An embarrassing delay virtually became a diplomatic incident yesterday when King Mswati III kept President F W de Klerk and his party waiting at Matsapa International Airport ... for a full 12 minutes.

The Swazi nation pulled out all the stops to give President De Klerk a rousing welcome yesterday on his first official visit to the mountain kingdom.

President De Klerk's Falcon Jet arrived on schedule at 10am, taxied down the runway to an awaiting red carpet and the door was lowered, but no one emerged from the aircraft.

The minutes continued to tick by as the Swazi prime minister, senior political officials, princes

and princesses, the diplomatic corps, the guard of honour and a military band, several choirs, a dancing troupe, praise singers and hundreds of interested onlookers waited ... and waited.

When the delay looked like becoming a diplomatic incident, the young Swazi king suddenly arrived in his black Cadillac stretch limousine, much to the relief of the South African protocol officials.

However, seasoned locals were apparently unfazed by the delay, saying that when Prince Charles last visited Swaziland, the unpunctual king had kept him waiting for a similar length of time.

However, once the two leaders met, Mr and Mrs De Klerk were warmly received by their Swazi host and thousands of their excited subjects for the rest of the day.

Swaziland 312
Star 13/6/91
**switches sugar
exports to SA**

MBABANE — Swaziland is switching all its sugar exports to the South African port of Durban because of problems in shipping through the Mozambican port capital of Maputo.

Swaziland Sugar Association chief executive Derek Johnson said Swaziland had been sending 140 000 metric tons annually through Maputo, but now total exports of more than 450 000 metric tons would go through Durban.

Johnson told Reuters the decision had been made due to pilferage, derailments and deficient rolling stock and facilities at Maputo.

"Sometimes we didn't know if there were going to be enough tarpaulins to protect consignments at the port. Pilferage in the 1989-90 season amounted to 10 000 metric tons," he said.

Swaziland Railways said services would continue to Maputo taking coal, citrus and wood-pulp for export.

The railway has also come under intermittent attack from rebels of the Mozambican National Resistance (Renamo) fighting the government for the past 16 years. — Sapa-Reuter.

Swazi sugar exports rerouted to Durban

MBABANE — Swaziland is switching all its sugar exports to Durban because of problems in shipping through the Mozambican port of Maputo, Swaziland Sugar Association chief executive Derek Johnson confirmed yesterday. *6/12/91*

Swaziland had been sending 140 000 tons annually through Maputo, but now total exports of more than 450 000 tons would go via Durban.

Johnson said the decision had been made due to pilferage, derailments

and deficient rolling stock and facilities at Maputo.

312

"Sometimes we didn't know if there were going to be enough tarpaulins to protect consignments at the port. Pilferage in the 1989/90 season amounted to 10 000 tons."

Swaziland Railways said services to Maputo would continue, taking coal, citrus and woodpulp for export.

The railway has also come under Renamo attack. — Sapa-Reuter.

FW to visit Kenya and Swaziland



Mr Arap Moi

Political Correspondent

PRESIDENT F W de Klerk is off to Kenya and Swaziland — notwithstanding calls by the OAU foreign ministers this week for an intensification of all forms of pressure on Pretoria.

Mr De Klerk will head an entourage which includes four other cabinet ministers when he visits Nairobi at the weekend in a bid to boost trade and other economic ties with one of Africa's leading nations.

The President's support team is expected to include the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Pik Botha, the Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr Org Marais, the Minister of Mineral and Energy Affairs, Mr George Bartlett, and the Minister of Agriculture, Mr Kraai van Niekerk.

et/4/6/91
The warming in relations between the two countries followed a visit by Mr Botha to Kenya and a reciprocal hush-hush visit by a senior Kenyan politician to South Africa.

SAA now has regular flights to Nairobi and South African tourists are for the first time welcome in Kenya.

Mr De Klerk's visit takes place at the invitation of President Daniel Arap Moi.

The composition of the SA delegation gives a clear indication of the next targets for bilateral co-operation.

Mr De Klerk is expected to follow up his Kenyan trip with a visit to South Africa's neighbour Swaziland early next week.

1951

TUESDAY, 18 JUNE 1991

1952

Donations to educational institutions: tax benefits

*12. Mr R M BURROWS asked the Minister of Finance:

- (1) Whether it is the intention to provide additional tax benefits to persons or institutions making donations to educational institutions; if not, why not; if so, (a) what additional benefits and (b) with effect from what date;
- (2) what are the tax benefits available to individuals or organizations making donations to educational institutions in the current tax year?

B1196E

The MINISTER OF FINANCE:

(1) and (2)

Section 18A at present provides for a deduction against the taxable income of a taxpayer in respect of donations made by him to a university, college, the Bible Society of SA and certain educational funds, to an amount of R500 or 2 per cent of the taxable income (whichever is the greater) in the case of individuals and 5 per cent in the case of companies. Educational funds include *inter alia* the National Study Loan and Bursary Fund as well as certain funds whose sole purpose is the promotion of secondary education.

The Margo Commission recommended that the ambit of section 18A be broadened to also allow for the deduction of donations to primary schools. This recommendation was accepted by Government, subject to the administration of the system being tightened up and existing abuse being removed. Discussions in this regard are, however, taking place on an ongoing basis with the Department of National Education and other interested parties such as the Urban Foundation, but it is clear that there is no quick solution to these problems and I can assure you that various alternatives in this regard have been and are being investigated.

The Government realises the need for and the importance of education in South Africa and is not unsympathetic in this regard. The Government's action should, however, always be balanced, and notice must be taken of the fact that the way in which section 18A is structured at present may be criticised. As people are

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

1953

TUESDAY, 18 JUNE 1991

1954

The MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC CO-ORDINATION AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES:**Own affairs:****Agricultural credit committees: members**

*1. Adv C H PIENAR asked the Minister of Agricultural Development:

- (1) What criteria apply at the appointment of members of an agricultural credit committee;
- (2) whether he adheres to these criteria; if not, why not; if so, to what extent?

B1211E.INT

*The DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT: Mr Chairman, the appointment of agricultural credit committees is regulated by the Agricultural Credit Act, Act 28 of 1966.

Section 6 of the Act provides that the Minister may appoint an agricultural credit committee for one or more agricultural districts under the chairmanship of the local magistrate. In the case of Pretoria the head of department may appoint an official of the department as chairman. The committee comprises at least three members of whom the aforesaid chairman is one. Furthermore, the Act provides that the Minister may appoint the other members of whom at least two are resident in a particular magisterial district or part thereof. They should also have a thorough knowledge of farming and be acceptable to the community. They are appointed in consultation with the Agricultural Credit Board.

The Act also provides that a member of an agricultural credit committee be appointed for a period determined by the Minister, but not exceeding three years. To simplify administration, the terms extend from 1 October to 30 September. If valid reasons exist, the Minister may terminate the term of office at any time.

In order to receive inputs from grass-roots level regarding an appointment or filling of a vacancy in the agricultural credit committee, at least three nominations per vacancy are received from the district agricultural union or the farmers' association, if the former does not exist. The magistrate's motivated recommendations concerning the nominees are furnished to the Agricultural Credit Board in order of preference. Nominees should preferably not be in debt to the department. However, exceptions are made in the cases of home loans to farm workers, soil conservation loans and harvest production and

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

more inclined to donate to institutions from which they or their relatives will benefit directly, rather than to those institutions where the greatest need exists, it can be said that the system favours the wealthy.

In addition it should be borne in mind that the tax system should not be the primary channel to finance and stimulate education. It should only be supplementary in this regard. Hon members will recall that I was criticised on several occasions this year for not giving enough tax relief, and my reply thereto was that there were other more important priorities. One of these is of course education in respect of which approximately 20 per cent of the National Budget is applied.

It has come to light, however, that the corporate sector at present has a pressing need to make donations to educational institutions for the advancement of primary and secondary education needs on a broad basis. Section 18A has accordingly been amended this year to provide for a deduction in respect of donations by any company to a few large educational funds for the advancement of both primary and secondary education. Thus, while the current system can lead to a concentration of donations to more affluent schools, the new provision should result in a more even distribution among schools, particularly to less affluent schools.

The amendment will apply in respect of donations made on or after the date of promulgation of the Income Tax Act, 1991, to an approved new educational fund.

HR: party-political documents

*13. Mr R M BURROWS asked the Minister for Economic Co-ordination and Public Enterprises:

- (1) Whether he has used any of his staff to devise, create or distribute any documents of a purely party-political nature having a bearing on members of Parliament in the House of Representatives joining the National Party; if so, (a) for what reasons and (b) (i) which members of staff are involved and (ii) by whom are they remunerated;
- (2) whether he will make a statement on the matter?

B1197E

Swaziland: RSA donation for education
Foreign Affairs:†

*14. Mr A GERBER asked the Minister of Foreign Affairs:†
Whether the South African Government recently donated an amount to Swaziland for educational purposes; if so, (a) what amount, (b) when, (c) why and (d) for what facet or facets of education? B1198E

The MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS:

Yes.

- (a) R30 000.
- (b) 22 February 1991.
- (c) To upgrade community schools in neglected areas of Swaziland.
- (d) For the provision of additional classrooms and/or educational equipment.

INTERPELLATION

The sign * indicates a translation. The sign †, used subsequently in the same interpellation, indicates the original language.

3/2
Swazi hotels
Star 20/6/91
going ahead

MBABANE — A South African group is back in the running to build two luxury hotels, costing a total of R400 million, in Swaziland.

The hotels project was announced last year, with the Sheraton group to provide management, and SA-based Genesis Holdings the finance.

Little was heard of the plan after that, although arrangements were made to move communities living on land where the hotels were to be built.

Yesterday Genesis Holdings announced that funds had been raised, Sheraton had signed a 20-year management agreement and details would soon be finalised with the developers. — Star Africa Service.

Swazis set for trade boom

(312)
C/pen
23/6/91

By DONNY NXUMALO

SWAZILAND is set for an investment boom, whose effects are to have an impact on the Preferential Trade Area (PTA), following King Mswati III's tour of Europe.

Business sources said the King's tour would not only generate investment opportunities in Swaziland but would also benefit the PTA regional grouping, of which the King is chairman.

PTA activities were almost unknown to the ordinary Swazi entrepreneur until the King was appointed to lead the 19-member State organisation.

One of the immediate benefits of the tour would be the construction of two Sheraton hotels - at Si-phofaneni and Elangeni - at a cost of about R400-million.

In another development, a four-man team from the government development organisation Tibiyo Takanagwane, who recently returned from Europe, have announced that their search for investors had been successful.

Tibiyo's legal advisor, Ndumiso Mamba, said the trip would reap dividends soon. He said the delegation met Lonhro officials to discuss projects like air cargo services, newspapers, security, printing and agricultural projects.

Royal marriages link Swazis to network of allies

Star 25/6/91

LOVE and marriage, says the song, go together like a horse and carriage. The Swazis seem to add a twist to it and say that the right kind of marriage can help to avoid a foreign relations miscarriage.

Marriage across the border in the upper echelons of society appears to be seen by the Swazis as a useful form of political glue to help cement relations with neighbouring states and political movers and shakers in those countries.

For example, King Mswati's elder sister Manfombi is married to King Zwelithini of the Zulus, thereby creating what some have called an "Inkatha bridge" and what certainly is a Zulu bridge.

King Mswati's elder brother, Prince Thumbumuzi, is married to Nelson Mandela's daughter Zenani, giving the Swazi royal house a strong link to the African National Congress — and perhaps, who knows, to a future South African Government.

Both marriages took place during the reign of King Mswati's father, King Sobhuza, who when he died in 1982 at the age of 83 had had more than 100 wives and more than 60 sons, whose own marriages have given the monarchy familial links running deep and wide in Swazi society and perhaps even beyond.

Any Swazi who ever moves against the monarchy is going to have an awful lot of family to contend with.

Although he is only 23, King Mswati is following vigorously in his father's footsteps, with seven known wives. The exact number is not known for certain outside the royal household, for the affairs of the royal family, unlike those of the British equivalent, are not regarded as public property.

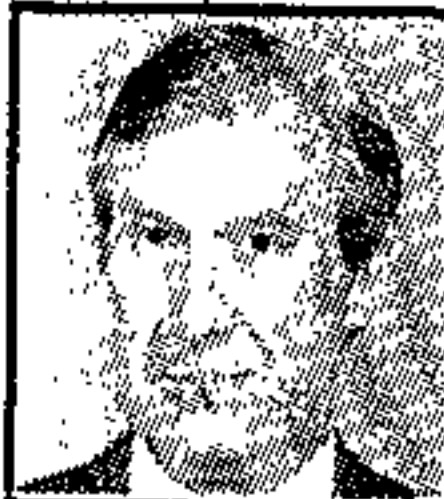
All seven of King Mswati's wives are from prominent Swazi families, which further consolidates the roots and branches of the royal family tree.

King Mswati has not yet taken a wife outside Swaziland but tradition seems to suggest that it is not impossible that this might be undertaken if it is considered to be in the interests of the nation.

Swazi authorities note that other members of the Swazi royal family have married into the Ndebeles of the Eastern Transvaal,

Out of
Africa

GERALD
L'ANGE



the Pondos of the Transkei and the Hlubis of Natal.

In this way the royal family, and no doubt the Swazi nation which it represents, has made ties beyond the country's borders whose political value should not be under-estimated.

This is not to suggest that all these marriages were arranged simply for political purposes. But the broad mass of Swazi society may have reason to be thankful for them from time to time.

□ □ □

Swazi custom had nothing to do with the sight that greeted President de Klerk and his entourage during his recent visit to the kingdom: a traditionally-dressed dancer who went vigorously through his paces with a 40-gallon oil drum gripped in his teeth.

He didn't have the whole thing in his mouth, you must understand; he gripped it by the rim around the top. And the drum was empty, of course. But anyone who has ever handled 40-gallon oil drums knows that it is difficult enough to lift one with both hands, let alone with the teeth and they will have great respect for Sahhehla Shabangu, the dental dancer. At the very least they have great respect for his teeth.

Mr Shabangu is a member of the Sagila Semnikati dancing troupe, which accompanied King Mswati on his recent visit to Europe.

The oil-drum routine was not part of Swazi tradition, palace officials explained.

"It's a variation he introduced himself," they said.

Possibly for this reason, but more likely because it would have been difficult to stow in the luggage rack, Mr Shabangu was not allowed to take the oil drum with him on the trip to Europe.

It can surely be only a matter of time before we see him with his drum in a toothpaste commercial on the telly. □

312
Star
4/7/91
24/7/91

Stealing of sugar leads to transport dilemma

ROBIN DREW of The Star Africa Service reports.

THE FATE of the Limpopo railway line linking Zimbabwe with Maputo is in the balance because of inefficiency at the port's sugar terminal and huge losses from theft.

According to the Beira Corridor Group's latest bulletin, Zimbabwe will have to decide whether to follow Swaziland's example and stop using Maputo for its sugar exports.

Last year the two countries lost 6.4 percent of their sugar exports amounting to more than 17 500 tons worth R10.2 million.

The bulletin says Swaziland decided recently to stop using Maputo for its sugar exports, which has worrying and far-reaching implications for both Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

The sugar terminal can handle 700 000 tons. In previous years, Swaziland has sent out 400 000 tons and Zimbabwe 200 000 tons.

But because of the stealing, Swaziland reduced its figure to 143 000 tons last season and Zimbabwe sent out only 131 000 tons because of reduced harvests.

As a short-term measure Swaziland has decided to export its sugar through Durban. South Africa is studying the feasibility of building a new sugar-handling facility at Richards Bay.

The bulletin says indications are that the new terminal, offering users efficiency and security, would be commercially feasible with Swazi demand alone. But construction would probably be assured if Zimbabwe elected to ship through Richards Bay as well.

The dilemma facing Zimbabwe is that until now, Maputo has provided the best option and is likely to become attractive with the expected operation of the Limpopo railway, which directly links the canefields in the south-east with the port.

But with the rerouting of Swazi sugar, the Zimbabwean sugar industry can expect significantly higher losses through theft. It could also find that without the existing volumes of sugar, the Maputo terminal would become uneconomical.

If costs and risks rise too high, Zimbabwe would have to look elsewhere, and Richards Bay would offer the next best alternative. But unless Zimbabwe makes a commitment now, no provision will be made in the design of the new facility.

The bulletin concludes: "The line's fate, in essence, depends on how Zimbabwe assesses Maputo's ability to implement a strategy which ensures that its sugar crop is handled efficiently and without loss.

"If this cannot be achieved, South Africa's ports and railways can reasonably expect a bonus." □

Swazi 'party' tries to recruit pupils⁽³¹²⁾

Argus Africa News Service

4/7/91

MBABANE. — An illegal political party is recruiting Swazi high school pupils with promises of paying them R100 a month and opportunities to study abroad, a newspaper reported yesterday.

The paper said letters were being sent to pupils by the People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo), which was at the centre of a treason trial last year. All seven accused were cleared of belonging to the party, but the judge said there were indications that Pudemo exists. Political activity is banned in Swaziland.

The pupils said they were asked to paint slogans on school walls in support of Pudemo.

FW at prayer festival

19/7/91
Source: fan
MBABANE - State President Mr FW de Klerk, Mozambican President Joachim Chissano and Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda are among the leaders invited to join Swaziland's King Mswati III at a weekend international prayer festival in the mountain kingdom.

The honorary chairman of the African National Congress, Mr Oliver Tambo, Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Inkatha Freedom Party president Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi have also been invited.

- Sapa.

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y, August 5 1991 5

Swaziland ⁽³¹²⁾ deports 16

CT 6/8/91
MBABANE. — Another batch of illegal immigrants, including Mozambicans and South Africans, have been declared prohibited immigrants in Swaziland and deported.

The 16 deportees were deported this week following the forced repatriation last month of more than 300 illegal Mozambican immigrants rounded up during police raids.

Detention, Swazi style

Argus Africa
News Service

312

MBABANE. — Foreigners do not understand the Swazi system of human rights, says Justice Minister Zonke Khumalo.

The minister was answering Australia's high commissioner to Swaziland, Mr Colin McDonald, who said he was worried by claims that Swazis were detained without trial.

Minister Khumalo replied: "Only Swazis understand why some people are jailed without trial."

Swaziland gets a bridge over troubled water

Star 20/8/91

312

WOULD you believe that there are children in Swaziland who have to swim a crocodile-infested river to get to school?

The Mkhondvo River might not actually be crocodile-infested in the strictest sense of the word — although I personally would regard just one croc in a river as an infestation if I had to swim across it.

And swim across it is what the children who live on the wrong side of the river at Mkhitsini have to do to get to the school on the other side, says the headmaster, Ephraim Nsibandze.

He and other local residents say there are crocodiles in the Mkhondvo. And as it is the widest river in a country in whose rivers crocodiles are not uncommon, who is going to doubt them?

Whether any children have ever been taken by crocs in the river I do not know. But this does not necessarily mean that there are none there, or even that no children have been taken.

Even without crocs, the children of Mkhitsini, which is in the Nhlangano district, have a hard time getting across the river. In winter the water is so cold that even if it is low enough to be waded some of the children become ill from repeated immersions, according to the headmaster.

In the summer the children cannot get to school at all when the river is running too strong to be swum.

I offer this story to all the white South African mothers who have to put up with bleats and moans from their children as they are hauled and cajoled out of their warm winter beds, filled with hot breakfast, wrapped in woollies and dropped off at the school gates in the family car.

You mothers could threaten to go and live in Mkhitsini, where the kids would have to swim the river to get to school.

But you had better do it soon, because it will not be long before the children of Mkhitsini will be crossing the river on a bridge. Last week a South African helicopter began carrying R110 000 worth of building materials to the site where the bridge is to be constructed.

The materials are being provided by the European Economic

**Out of
Africa**

GERALD
L'ANGE



Community and the labour by the Swaziland government. The South Africans, the Europeans and the Swazis have come together in this project mainly through the efforts of headmaster Nsibandze and the South African trade representative in Mbabane, Etienne du Toit.

□ □ □

Swazi groups 'have gone underground' 312

Star Africa Service

MBABANE — Four political organisations are working underground in Swaziland, where all political activity was banned in 1972, it is claimed here.

The claim was made by Swaziland university lecturer Ray Russon, who was himself charged last year with treason and belonging to an illegal political party.

After being acquitted of the charges, he and four other accused were detained without trial for several months.

Mr Russon made his allegations at a weekend meeting in Manzini where the formation of

Star 27/8/91
the Swaziland Youth Congress was announced.

The aim of this organisation is to promote the interests of Swazi youth.

Mr Russon did not name the four political organisations, but said that the no-politics ban should be lifted, and they should be allowed to express their views.

According to eye-witnesses, police in uniform and in plain clothes took notes as he spoke.

Others at the meeting said they had been given pamphlets about an organisation called the Ngwane Revolutionary Socialist Party, which said it was in favour of democracy, was non-violent, but would counter violence with violence.

Moshoeshoe may set up home in Swaziland

Star Africa Service 312

MBABANE — The former King Moshoeshoe II of Lesotho has arrived in Swaziland amid speculation that he will seek residence in the country.

Moshoeshoe, who has been living in London since being dethroned by Lesotho's military government last November, arrived yesterday on a flight from Lusaka.

There was no immediate explanation from the Swaziland government of his presence. Ostensibly he may have come to attend the annual reed dance festival, a traditional highlight of the Swazi calendar.

However, a source close to the Swaziland

government told The Star's Africa Service that the possibility of Moshoeshoe establishing a home in Swaziland might be discussed with the government during his visit.

Yesterday the former king addressed a group of loyal Basotho who had come from Lesotho to meet him. The meeting took place in a night club in the hotel where he is staying.

Reports that he was to be joined by his son, King Letsie III, who succeeded him on the throne, were denied by members of the Basotho party.

The reed dance ceremonies were being attended yesterday by King Goodwill Zwelithini of the Zulus.

REAR VIEW . . . Swazi maidens parade at the Reed Dance ceremony, above, while below a Swazi warrior — a member of the King's Regiment — makes sure his shield is properly adjusted before joining the dance.

■ Pic: ELIAS MALULEKE

Swaziland in a dance trance

By ELIAS MALULEKE

KWAZULU maidens were a great attraction among more than 5 000 locals at the Swaziland Reed Dance (Umbhanga) celebration this week.

The semi-naked maidens received a tumultuous applause and chants of "usuthu" when they trotted on to the Ludzidzini Parade Ground near the royal residence and danced for the Ingwenyama, King Mswati III.

The "Tingabisa" from KwaZulu performed for the King and more than 50 000 people who attended the two-day ceremony, which started on Monday.

The ceremony was attended by the entire royal family, including the

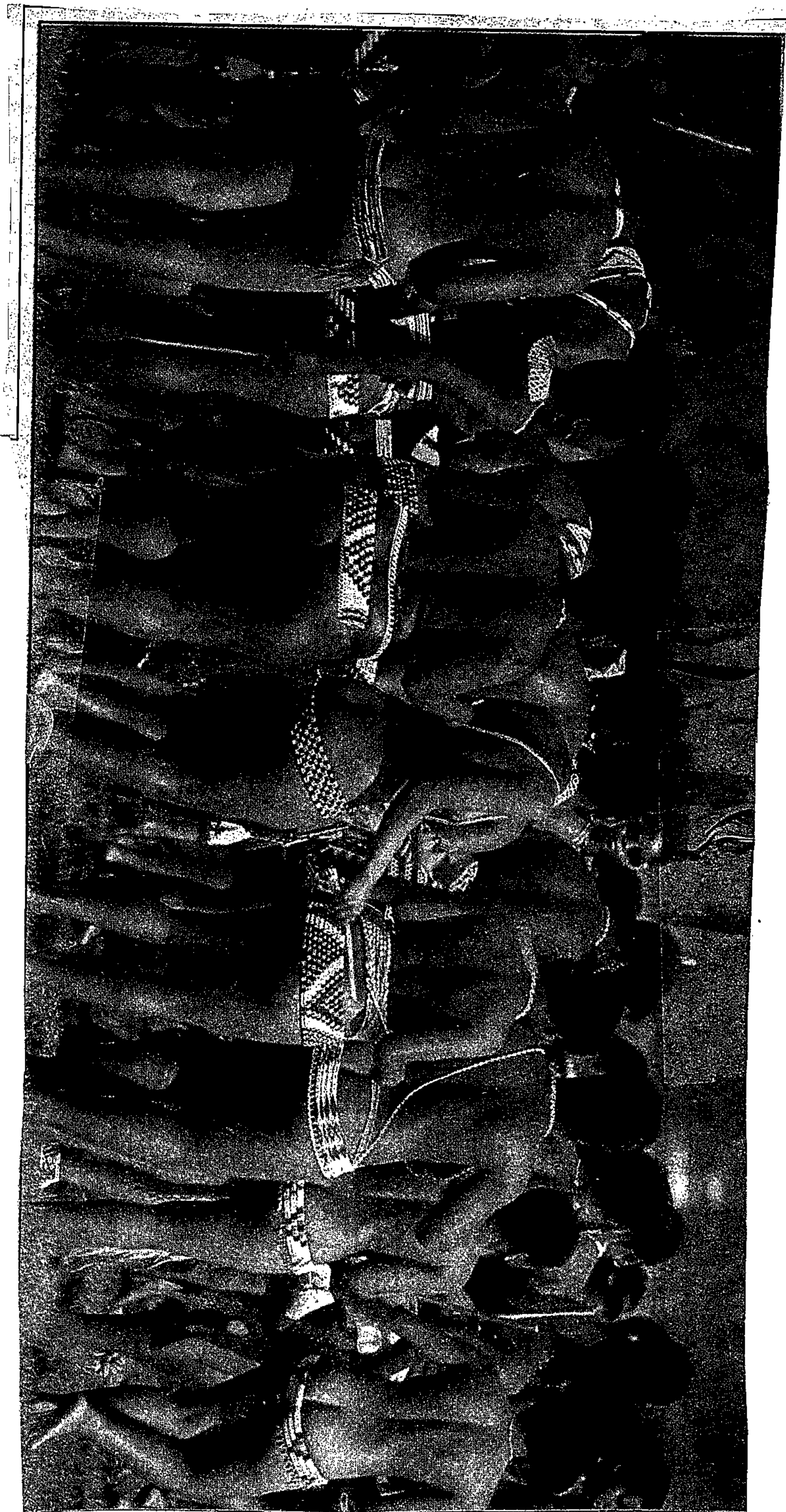
Queen Mother, Basotho King Moshoeshoe II, Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini and other dignitaries from around the world, including senior officials from South Africa.

King Mswati III opened the festivities when he led members of the King's Regiment and an invited high-level delegation of dignitaries on a hunting trip at Hlane Game Reserve. Among the invited guests was King Goodwill Zwelithini of KwaZulu.

The Reed Dance celebration started a day later when girls aged between five and 18 assembled at the Swazi traditional capital to prepare for the ceremony. The "initiation" ceremonies.

Few of them could match the dancing, beauty or grace of the King's bride, Inkosikati la Matsebula, who received a thunderous ovation from the crowd when she danced with other princesses.





8/9/91

312

Swazi Press in arms over election ban

MBABANE - A ban on Press coverage of proceedings of a Swaziland special political review committee has angered the mountain kingdom's media. (312)

Interior Minister Enos Mavuso announced the ban at a news conference on Monday. It came after sharp criticism of the present system of government at the committee's meetings. Sowetan 25/9/91

The committee was appointed about three months ago and is touring Swaziland to obtain opinions at grassroots level about the country's non-party system of government.

Meanwhile, King Mswati III is in the United States explaining the review committee's objectives and activities. He had instructed the committee's proceedings should be made public.

The Times of Swaziland called the development a "boggling issue". It challenged the prime minister to clarify the measure. - Sapa

MANZINI - Multiparty rumblings are worrying traditional leaders in conservative Swaziland, which has banned party politics of any kind.

The kingdom was declared a no-party state in 1973 by the then monarch, King Sobhuza, who said that multiparty politics were divisive and the Westminster constitution left by the British at independence in 1968 unsuitable.

The decision did not meet much opposition at the time. Sobhuza was a much revered monarch, who had ruled since 1922. The Swazis have always been a united people, with one language and one culture and their king is the symbol of that unity.

But Sobhuza died in 1982, to be succeeded by his 18-year-old Mswati in 1986.

A diplomat pointed out recently that out of the kingdom's population of just over 800 000 today, 25 percent are between the ages of 15 and 30.

"This is a very vocal group in any country, and here they have been exposed to more education and knowledge of the world around them," the diplomat said.

"King Mswati has inherited an entirely different nation."

The king, now 23, has made it clear he intends to follow his father's ways.

When Sobhuza died in 1982, a supreme council of state, the Liqoqo, took absolute power as an interim ruling body. The 13-member Liqoqo made some highly questionable and unpopular decisions and soon after it took control an underground political party, called the People's United Democratic Movement, was formed to oppose its traditionalist and autocratic stance.

Detentions

It was a time of detentions without trial, removals from power and general tension.

King Mswati came to power in 1986 and immediately eliminated the Liqoqo, and it was assumed that Pudemo no longer had any reason to exist. But that was not to be.

Pudemo, whose leaders or even membership have never been identified, began demanding more freedom of speech, multiparty democracy, and even suggested the unheard of - that Swaziland should have a constitutional monarch, rather than an absolute ruler.

Three years after Mswati succeeded to the throne, slogans were appearing on school walls and pamphlets were being scattered in major towns at night.

The authorities decided to act. More than a dozen young people were rounded up and charged with high treason and with belonging to an illegal political party.

All were acquitted on the major charges last year, but almost immediately five were put in detention without trial under legislation that was introduced by Sobhuza in 1973 and which requires no reason to be given for arrest.

In March this year, after several hunger strikes, and public concern expressed by United States ambassador Stephen Rogers and Amnesty International, the five were released by order of the king. There was no mention of pardon.

One of the king's counsellors, Prince Mphica Mtsetfwa, told the detainees: "Now, you all go home and forget about issues such as running the country. There are people there to do that, and not you, our children."

This patronising advice was not heeded, it seems, because four months later one of the former detainees, political science lecturer Ray Russon, told an inaugural meeting of a youth organisation that there are now four political parties operating underground in Swaziland.

Swaziland's young people, it seems, are no longer prepared to go home and shut up. - *Sowetan Correspondent*.

Swaziland's
monarchy
faces a new
challenge

Kinross ^{Sowetan} dead not forgotten

THOUSANDS of miners are expected to commemorate Health and Safety Day on October 1, emanating from the 1986 Kinross mine disaster which claimed 177 lives.

The National Union of Mineworkers said in a statement yesterday rallies had been planned for the weekend and the first week of October. 27/9/91.

There will be rallies at the President Steyn mine in the Orange Free State and Westonaria on the Witwatersrand on Sunday, and another at Embalenhle Stadium in the Secunda area on October 6.

NUM repeated its demand for October 1 to be declared a public holiday to honour workers who died on the shopfloor.

NUM also echoed earlier calls that the Kinross victims' families be compensated with "a just and fair settlement," as opposed to the R4 000 a family offered by the Gencor mining house. - Sapa

Massive Swazi arms bust ³¹²

MBABANE - A South African man who arrived in Swaziland from Mozambique has been found with the largest haul of arms discovered by Swazi police this year, a police spokesman has said.

He said the arms were found in a South-African registered truck which the man was driving when he checked in at the Lomahasha border post in north-eastern Swaziland.

Police would not name the man, but said he was 40 years old and was from Tsakane township near Brakpan. He will be charged with unlawful possession of arms and smuggling, they said.

The truck was carrying 16 AK-47 rifles, five commando rifles, a Star pistol, 14 AK-47 magazines, 658 rounds of AK-47 ammunition, 313 rounds of 9mm ammunition and six commando rifle magazines.

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- Feast on your favourite golden grilled fish, with prawns, calamari, mussels and all the trimmings.
- Then ... Strawberries and cream or ice cream.

Swazis air their views

Sowetan 2/10/91 (312)

SWAZI citizens have been allowed to spend the past month criticising their government at no-holds-barred public meetings.

A commission appointed by 23-year-old King Mswati has been holding the open-air meetings to hear feedback on the unique tinkundla electoral system introduced by the king's late father King Sobhuza II 18 years ago.

There have been persistent reports of underground political operations this year, including recruitment at schools, colleges and the university.

Swaziland has been a no-party state since 1973.

Political observers say there is a significant upsurge in interest in multiparty politics is that a large proportion of the 800 000 population is between the ages of 15 and 30, educated, inquiring and well aware of developments in neighbouring countries and the world at large.

"A lot has been said that some people are speaking from underground, so it is for us to listen to you," said commission chairman Prince Masitsela Dlamini at its first sitting.

"This is your opportunity to criticise as much as you like, instead of speaking from the bush. Nobody will be arrested for speaking here."

However, Prince Dlamini's audience was well aware that six people, students and a university lecturer, are currently awaiting trial in November on charges of attending an illegal meeting.

There have been suggestions that some people fear the consequences of giving the commission, composed of powerful traditional leaders, outspoken views on the no-party system.

Towards the end of the commission's hearings,

Prime Minister Obed Dlamini, speaking in his private capacity in his home area, appealed for reassurances on this issue. He said although he was not voicing support for a multiparty system, he hoped that those who did would not suffer arrest or victimisation.

Prince Masitsela gave him that assurance.

The tinkundla election system was introduced in 1978, five years after former monarch King Sobhuza abolished the multiparty system inherited from the British at independence in 1968.

Sobhuza argued that multipartyism was unsuitable for Swaziland, as it promoted violence and corruption.

But after two elections held under the tinkundla system, this too is coming under fire. Under this system, voters in 40 tinkundla, or constituencies, elect at open ballot 80 representatives who make up an electoral college. Voters at each tinkundla simply walk through a roughly constructed gate.

This college of 80 people then sits in private to elect 40 members of parliament from outside their number. The king can nominate MP's from outside this group of 40 members of parliament in this way, and he appoints his prime minister and cabinet.

Critics of the college say because its members discuss appointments of MP's in private, most MP's find themselves in parliament without even knowing that they are being considered, or asked if they want to be MP's.

A number of MP's said at the last session that they had no idea how or why they had been chosen.

Former Prime Minister Prince Bhekimpi Dlamini has suggested that the person with the most votes at each tinkundla ballot

should go directly to parliament, removing the electoral college stage.

The person with the second largest number of votes would be a stand-by, in case of illness or death of the sitting MP.

Prince Masitsela has compared the electoral college to the system used to elect the pope.

"Not all Roman Catholics participate in the election of the pope. He is elected by a group of people," Prince Masitsela said.

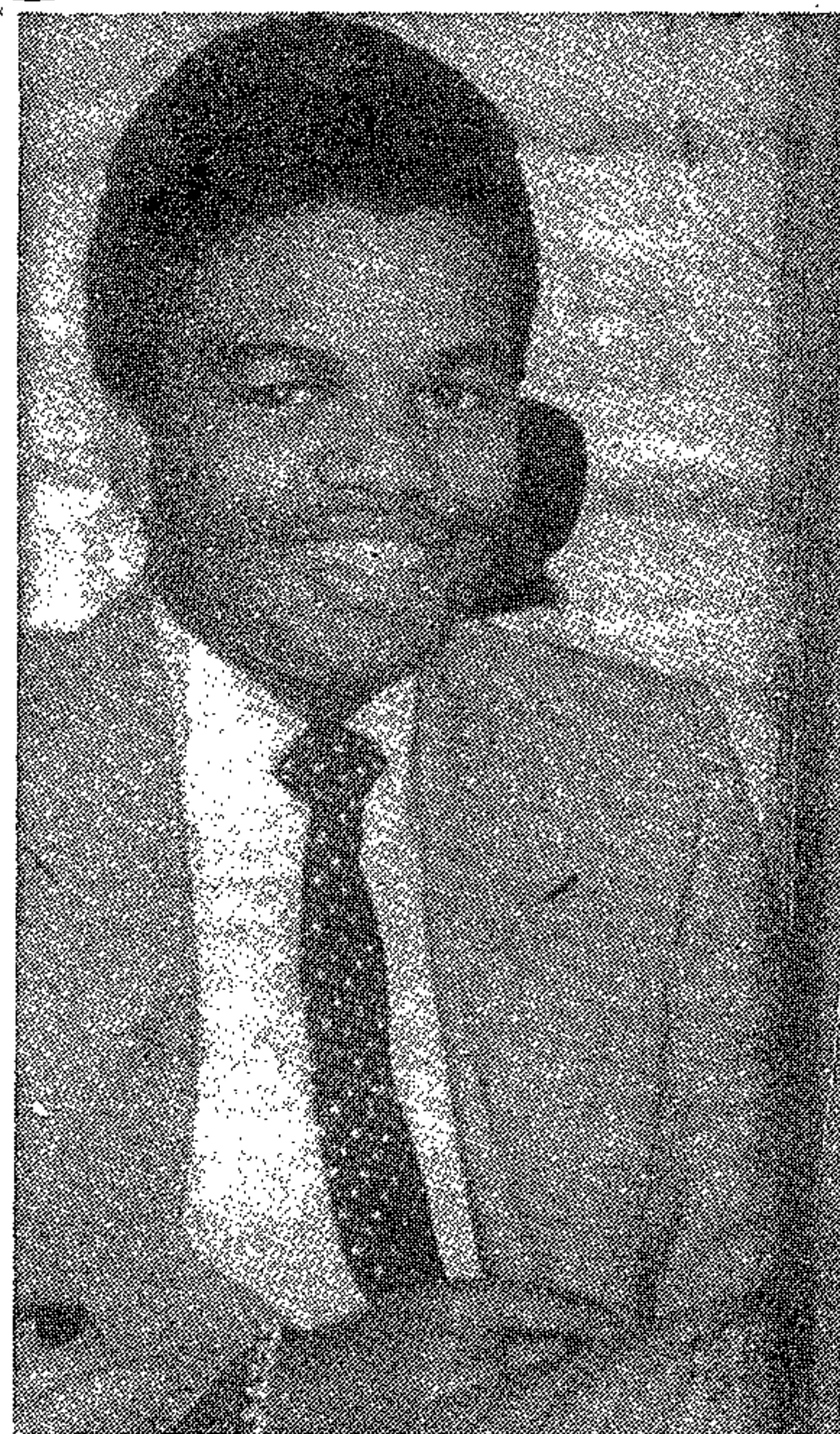
Mr Majaha Dlamini, the deputy attorney general, speaking in his personal capacity, said parliament should have the power to make laws and not subject to the king, who has the power to veto any law under the present system.

Mr Dlamini also touched on the sensitive subject of political parties, saying: "For how long are we going to suppress them? If we suppress them by the gun, we will not succeed."

"The communists tried to suppress people without success, and they collapsed. Let's find a way to handle political parties," he said.

Justice minister Zonke Khumalo said these underground political parties were backed by former colonial masters who were using money to mislead Swazi children.

The tinkundla review commission is currently preparing its report to be presented to King Mswati for his consideration. It is thought unlikely that his study will be completed before next year.



Open ears - King Mswati

Makeba *Sowetan* on mercy mission

4/10/91
(312)
MBABANE - Miriam Makeba is in Swaziland to publicise a charity concert to raise money for African children which will be held in Lagos, Nigeria next month.

The South African-born singer will hold a reception for Swazi cabinet ministers this evening to ask for support for the concert, which will raise funds for her organisation "Children of Africa".

She told local reporters the aim of the organisation was to use the talents of African artists to raise funds for Africa's needy children.

The concert is scheduled for November 30. -
Sowetan Africa News Service.

'End maize monopoly'

MBABANE — Maize farmers, who this year responded to the Swazi Agriculture Ministry's call to grow more maize, now find they have huge stocks left which the National Maize Corporation cannot buy as all its silos are full. *B. D. C. 9/10/91*

The maize farmers' representative in the Central Co-operative Union, Leo Dlamini, has confirmed that the corporation, which has the monopoly for the purchase, export and import of maize, has had to refuse further supplies.

The maize farmers last week bitterly complained they had to queue for several days and nights in their trucks at the corporation's depot at Matsapa waiting to offload and sell their maize because the corporation and its facilities could no longer cope with the tremendous increase in local maize being supplied by farmers.

The farmers have now urged the Agriculture Ministry to end the monopoly enjoyed by the corporation and to allow Swazi farmers to sell directly to local or foreign markets. — Sapa

Swazis³¹² jealous

31/10/91
Sowetan

MBABANE - Swazi-land's foreign minister, in hot water for appointing his 28-year-old son to a top ambassadorial post, said yesterday Swazis are destructively jealous.

Foreign minister Mr George Mamba's son Clifford, who had not previously worked in government, was last month named as ambassador to the European Economic Community. Mamba junior is a businessman.

Foreign minister Mamba said that the Swazi people are so jealous that they will always downgrade anyone who is successful. - *Sowetan Africa News Service.*

Swazi citizens have been invited to criticise the 'no-party' system

Cautious steps towards democracy

Star 9/10/91

312

THE people of Swaziland have just spent a month in no-holds-barred public meetings in which they were asked to criticise the country's system of government.

Swaziland has been a "no-party state" since 1973.

A commission composed mainly of traditional leaders appointed by 23-year-old King Mswati has been holding open-air meetings throughout the country to hear comments and suggestions on the unique tinkundla electoral system, devised by the king's father, King Sobhuza II.

This year there have been persistent reports of underground political movements operating, with claims that the parties are recruiting at schools, colleges and the university.

One of the reasons suggested by observers here for the upsurge in interest in multiparty politics is that a large proportion of the 800 000 population is between the ages of 15 and 30, educated, inquiring and well aware of de-

velopments in neighbouring countries and the world at large.

"This is your opportunity to criticise as much as you like, instead of speaking from the bush. Nobody will be arrested for speaking here," said commission chairman Prince Masitsela Dlamini at its first sitting.

However, Prince Dlamini's audience was well aware that six people, students and a university lecturer, are currently awaiting trial on charges of attending an illegal meeting.

There have been suggestions that some people fear the consequences of giving the commission, composed of powerful traditional leaders, outspoken views on the no-party system.

Towards the end of the commission's hearings, Prime Minister Obed Dlamini, speaking in his private capacity in his home area, appealed for reassurances on this issue. He said although he was not voicing support for a multiparty system, he hoped that those who did would not suffer arrest or

victimisation.

Prince Masitsela gave him the assurance there would be no victimisation.

The tinkundla election system was introduced in 1978, but after two elections, the system is coming under fire.

Under this system, voters in 40 tinkundla, or constituencies, elect at open ballot 80 representatives who make up an electoral college. Voters at each tinkundla simply walk through a roughly constructed gate.

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Critics of the college say because its members discuss appointments of MPs in private, most MPs find themselves in parliament without even knowing that they were being considered.

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that the person with the most votes at each tinkundla ballot should go directly to parliament, removing the electoral college stage.

Majaha Dlamini, the deputy attorney-general, speaking in his personal capacity, said parliament should have the power to make laws. Under the present system the king has the power to veto any law.

Mr Dlamini also touched on the sensitive subject of political parties in Swaziland.

"If we suppress them by the gun, we will not succeed. The communists tried to suppress people without success, and they collapsed.

"Let's find a way to handle political parties," he said.

The tinkundla review commission is currently preparing its report to be presented to King Mswati for his consideration. It is thought unlikely that his study of the findings will be completed before next year. — Star Africa Service □

T-shirts are taboo in here

312

MBABANE - A Swazi politician was ejected from the Senate yesterday because he wore a T-shirt.

Despite his protest that the temperature was above 30 degrees, Mabalizandla Nhlabatsi was sent home to change.

Some male senators responded by asking why female senators were not wearing hats, as laid down in standing orders, but no action was taken. - *Sowetan Africa News Service.*

16/11/91
Sowetan

Education is equal to prostitution say men in Swaziland

Sowetan Africa News Service

Sowetan 1/11/91
MBABANE - Swazi men are preventing their wives from attending adult literacy classes because they believe "education" will make them prostitutes, it was reported here yesterday.

A senior official in the adult literacy programme, Mrs Emmah Dlamini, confirmed that the negative attitudes of men in rural areas had caused the closure of some classes, and accused husbands of sabotage in forbidding their wives to attend.

One woman in the eastern Lubombo region told a local newspaper that husbands fear the liberty and independence women will gain with literacy. "My husband said I should go forever if I learn to read and write," she said.

312
Sowetan 7/11/91
**Exiles in
Swaziland**

Sapa

MBABANE - Large numbers of refugees from Central and Northern Africa are arriving in Swaziland, which is already host to almost 100 000 refugees, mainly from Mozambique.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Swaziland, Mr Christopher Thorne, said refugees, from countries like Uganda, Zaire, Somalia and Ethiopia were mainly skilled or professional people seeking asylum as a result of political unrest in their home countries.

Swazi MP moved while abroad

MBABANE An unexpected Cabinet shuffle in Swaziland last month caught one minister on the hop, travelling abroad.

Sowetan 8/11/91
Former Education Minister Chief Sipho Shongwe was made a regional administrator in the reshuffle on October 11 but he had left Swaziland the day before on a visit to Europe in his capacity as Education Minister, and has continued with his schedule of meetings. An education ministry spokesman said the ex-minister has attended a Unesco meeting in Paris, and has had talks in London with education authorities.

Chief Shongwe is expected home at the weekend, when he will report to his successor, Prince Khuzulwandle, and proceed to his new job as administrator for Shiselweni, south of Swaziland.

Elliott's on the move in Africa

312
S/Times (bus) 17/11/91
REMOVAL group Elliott International has acquired a majority stake in Swaziland Bearings.

By DON ROBERTSON

This is its first expansion venture in Southern Africa, Swaziland Bearings distributes SK bearings and seals. It has an interest in an industrial chemical and packing operation in Matsapha.

Elliott chairman Tom Ansley sees the acquisition as a promising diversification, but regards it as a "guinea pig" in the company's expansion into Africa.

Mr Ansley says that although it seems a strange diversification, bearings are transport oriented and the company services its own vehicles.

"The bearings business is a baseline from which to develop and expand into Swaziland. I am confident this company will soon be a force to be reckoned with."

Early next year, Elliott plans to introduce a removal and storage operation in Swaziland as well as enter the packaging market to produce paper, plastic and cardboard cartons.

"Swaziland has some interesting tax concessions, including a 37.5% corporate tax rate," says Mr Ansley.

The company is also investigating investment opportunities in Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

Post is still vacant

MBABANE - Swaziland's newly-appointed ambassador to the European Community, Mr Clifford Mamba (28), son of Swaziland's Foreign Minister, has still not taken up his appointment in Brussels. *Sowetan* 20/11/91

News of his appointment as ambassador brought a storm of public criticism, accusing Foreign Minister George Mamba of outright nepotism. (312)

Critics pointed out that his son had spent little time in Swaziland and did not know much about government or the country's political requirements.

He had little, if any, work experience and could not possibly represent his country at such an important and high level. - Sapa.

WITH only a year before planned general elections in Swaziland, the electoral and political system is confused and under attack.

The current Tinkhundla electoral system was established by a decree from the late King Sobhuza II in 1978. The "Westminster-style" system was abolished and all opposition parties banned.

The "Tinkhundla" are areas presided over by a chief. There is voting for a committee member who will in turn elect parliamentarians.

In the first stage people in each Tinkhundla gather in the open (there are no secret ballots) and nominate three names to stand for election to an electoral college. Later one of the three joins the college and casts a vote along with other nominees for those who will be members of parliament.

The effect has been unresponsive and even authoritarian rule.

The first Tinkhundla elections in 1978 were held with no written constitution to guide the government of the country.

**Swaziland's
'Tinkhundla'
under attack**

Since then, government business has been by decrees issued by the head of state -- in theory, the King or in his absence, the Queen Mother. In practice, however, there have been times when the authorising signature has been in question.

The complicated electoral process has meant some MPs representing areas from which they do not come and to which they pay little attention.

There has been no forum for the debate of differing public opinions. Political parties have had to maintain an underground existence and some politicians have been hounded in and out of prison.

Recently, differences in opinion have had to be expressed through leaflets sometimes littered

overnight in all the populated urban and industrial areas. Names like People's Democratic Movement (Pudemo) and the Swaziland Liberation Movement

(Swaimo) have emerged. Another political party which was forced to go underground in 1973 was the Ngwane National Liberation Congress led by political veteran and medical practitioner

Ambrose Zwane. His party nearly won power during the last elections under the Westminster-type of constitution.

**Two years ago,
Swaziland had to bear**

pressure from the international community and Amnesty

International to release all political prisoners who included ex-Pudemo trialist and vice-president of the Swaziland Youth Congress (Swayoco) Mphandlana Shongwe.

Though released,

Shongwe is still seen as a political threat and was shadowed by police as he continued his university studies. He has been barred from attending this year's graduation ceremony.

Students on the campus have been the most public in their protest against the lack of democracy.

An October 22 protest against the University

Senate's dismissal of constitutionally elected Students' Representative Council leaders brought the institution's work to a halt for days.

The government has set up a review committee to refine and reform (but not abolish) the Tinkhundla.

Now the committee members are trying to get the underground political groupings to air their views.

In a humorous set of contradictions, committee president Prince Masitsela and prime minister Obed Dlamini have publicly appealed to the parties (which should not officially exist) to "come forward secretly" for a discussion of the electoral system and a constitution.

The committee says the process is underway but won't mention names.

In the meantime it is not clear whether King Mswati's promises to the international community to improve human rights in the kingdom are to be fulfilled, or whether next November's elections will come off under a system and constitution respected by all Swazis. — AIA

Bunfight over leaked papers

MBABANE - Swazi teachers said yesterday a departmental directive ordering a rewrite of the mathematics paper by O-level students was impractical and unfair. (312)

The initial examination papers were discovered to have been leaked.

The Swaziland National Association of Teachers has sent a letter to the Ministry of Education stating its opposition to the move.

Teachers' spokesman Maduduza Zwane said it was impractical to recall students who had returned to their homes - in Swaziland and abroad - to sit again for the paper at the expense of taxpayers.

He said negligence on the part of the Swaziland Examination Council was responsible for the leak.

The leak was discovered during examinations last month when students in various parts of the country were found buying photocopies of the paper at between R10 and R50 each. Sapa.

Cadbury plant is moved to Swaziland

CAPE TOWN — Cadbury-Schweppes is to relocate part of its Chapelet-Humphries sweet factory from Ndabeni to Swaziland.

The Ndabeni plant will be closed and various components relocated also to plants in Port Elizabeth and Johannesburg. The closure will mean the retrenchment of about 350 workers.

Cadbury already has a sweet manufacturing plant in Swaziland and is able to import sweets into SA at much lower prices because of lower Swazi sugar prices. This has been a source of dissatisfaction within certain sectors of the indus-

try, which have had to labour under fixed SA sugar prices.

Cadbury group financial director John Buchanan said the Humphries plant would be closed by March as part of a programme to rationalise Cadbury's sugar confectionery business. There had been duplication and insufficient capacity following Cadbury's takeover of Chapelet-Humphries in 1989.

Management had negotiated a retrenchment package.

LINDA ENSOR

16/2/1991
BPP/10/12/91

(312)

Mystery over missing minister

312

13/12/91
Sowetan
MBABANE - Swazi-
land's recently-appointed
Minister of Transport and
communications, Mr
Alfred Shabangu, this
week left for Botswana,
but officially, nobody
seems to know why.

Shabangu was the
leader of the country's
powerful teacher's union
before he was appointed
to his cabinet post by
King Mswati last month.

In Swaziland, royal ap-
pointments may not be
refused.

However, according to
the National Association
of Teachers, Shabangu is
in Botswana in his capac-
ity as an executive mem-
ber of the World Confed-
eration of the Organisa-
tions of the Teaching
Profession, and will attend
the annual conference of
the Botswana Teachers'
Union.

Secretary to the cabinet
Mr. Alphus Shabangu (no
relation) however said this
week that he knew noth-
ing about the transport
minister's departure.

"Before a minister can
leave the country his trip
has to be approved by
cabinet," he said.

"A minister cannot just
leave the country on pri-
vate business without any
reference to cabinet."

Sowetan Correspondent

Swazi Aids workers trained

VOLUNTEER Aids counsellors are being trained in Mbabane, Swaziland, in a bid to stem the spread of the incurable disease which is spreading at an alarming rate worldwide.

The World Health Organisation estimates that 16 000 people in Swaziland, out of a population of 800 000, may be HIV positive.

So far this year 71 people have been diagnosed with full-blown Aids, of whom 20 have already died.

Available statistics show the income-earning 18 to 40 age group are the most vulnerable.

Local industries are worried about the potential loss of labour and have encouraged the counselling campaign.

Industries like Ubombo Ranches Limited, Mananga and Mhlume Sugar Estates, as well as Swaziland Railways, have requested that

Aids awareness counsellors conduct talks and demonstrations at the workplace.

In June 1990, the Swaziland government initiated a public health campaign known as the National Aids Prevention and Control Programme which together with the Family Life Association of Swaziland (Flas) coordinates and implements

Aids awareness programmes in the country. A similar programme is being mounted by the foreign development agency, Project Hope.

The aim of this national venture is to train Aids counsellors who are then made available to counsel, educate and support nationals at home and at clinics, schools and places of employment.

Within the last 16 months, Flas and Project Hope have trained 95 volunteer counsellors, more than the government's

earmarked figure of 60.

Says Project Hope's national co-ordinator Thandi Nhlengetwa: "The first phase of our training programme involved nurses and other paramedical people.

"We soon realised that the objective was to go beyond paid staff to prepare for the possible and unforeseen time when the demand for counsellors will be greater than the available staff with a medical background."

She says the next phase will be the distribution of trainers to the rural areas and industries to educate, demonstrate and counsel people.

Swaziland Railways has asked to be the first on the list in two weeks' time, to be followed shortly by Ubombo Ranches.

Flas's director Nomcebo Manzini says her organisation's health education programme deals with counselling the

members of the public either as family units or individually. (312)

"She says training of school counsellors has already been undertaken.

"We believe in peer group counselling, because young people understand and accept each other's opinions much better than when an adult is involved.

"We had to remove the morality barrier which always affects adult-youth relations. Hence, our helpline and youth counselling are staffed by trained young people."

Flas introduced a telephone helpline during the September independence celebrations this year. The service has received much acclaim and has been a permanent source of help for all kinds of problems.

Nhlengetwa says the Project Hope programme targets the 20 to 35 age

group, since statistically 2.8 percent of this age group has been found to be HIV positive or Aids affected nationally.

"She says the main problem with this group is that it tends to cover a wide interest area.

"That is why it was important to ask for volunteers from all groups to come forward for training to avoid clashes.

"For example in rural areas we have trained Aids counsellors who will be acceptable to the community chiefs and *tinkhundla*, making it easy for their communities to accept.

"Church groups also need to deal with their flocks in their appropriate language.

"That is how we hope to draw in the non-school-going, non-working and young brides who have no access to posters, films and condoms. They will be educated within their communities." — AIA

Swazi visit to SA (312)

A Swazi ministerial delegation is in South Africa to hold talks with President de Klerk, but officials will not say what the talks are about. But it is believed that Swaziland's claims to land in the KaNgwane area and northern Natal will be discussed.

STAR 23/12/91

Slight drop for Lonrho Sugar

(312) 2
MARCIA KLEIN

SWAZILAND-registered Lonrho Sugar Corporation, which grows and mills sugar in Swaziland, Malawi, Mauritius and SA, has reported a small drop in earnings in the six months to end-September after showing continued growth since 1988.

The group's earnings fell by 7,3% to 217c (234c) a share in the period, mainly due to "unseasonal climatic conditions in Swaziland", directors said.

The interim dividend of 100c a share has been maintained.

Interim results reflect half the estimated profits for the current financial year, and the 1990 comparative figures are half the actual profits for the year.

Directors said actual figures had not been given as they would be misleading "in view of the seasonal na-

ture of the group's sugar operations".

The estimated figures show turnover grew by 8,8% to 208,1-million emalangeni (191,2-million emalangeni) and pre-tax profit declined by 5,4% to 51,4-million emalangeni (54,4-million).

Directors said this 5,4% drop, in line with predictions in the group's 1991 annual review, was mainly due to climatic conditions in Swaziland.

After taxation and minority interests, attributable profit was 7,3% down at 24,5-million emalangeni (26,4-million).

In the group's 1991 annual report directors expected a slight dip in profits in financial 1992 as the world market was in recession and there would be an expected surplus.

ciety would open their hearts to the have-nots during the festive season, and we are enormously grateful to readers who swelled the fund to R330 000.

"But there, to our disbelief

to help make good the shortfall in this season of peace and goodwill.

Please send cheques to The Star Christmas Hamper Fund, Box 1014, Johannesburg 2000.

Toy-toying among litter

Star Africa Service

STAR 31/12/91

MBABANE — Township rubbish clean-ups by a youth group in Swaziland, where all political activity is banned, has aroused the suspicion of the authorities.

The Swaziland Youth Congress organised clean-ups in the capital Mbabane, the industrial centre of Manzini and the town of Pigg's Peak at the weekend.

During the "anti-litter" drive toy-toying members of the group shouted slogans in support of multiparty democracy.

Congress leader Benedict Tsabedze was last year acquitted of belonging to the banned People's United Democratic Movement (Pudem). (312)

Mr Tsabedze at the weekend agreed that congress members opposed Swaziland's one-party system, adding that the toy-toying during the clean-ups was "a way of showing excitement".

Police said they kept a close watch on congress members and would continue to monitor future clean-up exercises.

SWAZILAND - GENERAL

1992

Swazis dance to dissenting tune (312)

Star 16/11/92

SWAZIS OPPOSED to the absolute rule of King Mswati are finding unusual ways to express their demand for a multiparty system.

Elections for the Swazi parliament are due to be held in November under the unique *tinkhundla* system, under which voters are counted as they walk through gates designated for candidates.

But many Swazis, mainly the younger ones, are growing increasingly dissatisfied with this system and with the ban on political parties, in force since 1973.

Members of the Swazi Land Youth Congress, for instance, have used community service projects to convey a political message.

Gathering in the crowded townships, they begin tidying up the rubbish, usually neglected by municipal workers. As they work, they sing political songs and dance the toyi-toyi.

Originally seen as a symbolic tribute to the ANC military wing Umkhonto we Sizwe, the toyi-

Swazis have found a unique way to show their opposition to the old no-party system. They're cleaning up the country in their quest for a multiparty democracy.

toyi now signifies general dissent and defiance.

In Swaziland, these performances, watched by amused and applauding crowds, are also seen as recruiting campaigns for young people demanding a return to multiparty politics.

Nobody is in any doubt about the youth congress's motives, and the political songs and slogans are technically illegal, but police who have monitored the clean-ups say they cannot take any action.

Youth congress leader Benedict Tsabedse, a university student, blandly denies any ulterior motive.

He commented: "We are addressing the environmental question. We live in an environment that is so filthy that our health is threatened." But Mr Tsabedse could not resist adding: "Not only is the environment filthy, this is extended to the minds of those in authority."

And the clean-ups would continue, he said.

Increased interest in political activity has been evident in Swaziland for the past 12 months. There have been persistent reports in the local media that four political parties are operating underground, with claims that the political parties are recruiting secretly at

schools, colleges and universities.

Political criticism in Swaziland is directed primarily at the *tinkhundla* election system which was introduced in 1978, five years after former King Sobhuza abolished the multiparty system left by the British at independence in 1968. Under the current no-party system, voters in

40 *tinkhundla*, or constituencies, elect 80 representatives who make up an electoral college in an open ballot. Voters at each *tinkhundla* simply walk through a roughly constructed gate, beside which candidates for the electoral college sit.

This 80-member college then meets in private and selects 40 members of parliament. However, a number of MPs said at the last session of parliament that they had no idea how or why they had been chosen.

A former deputy attorney-general, Majah'enkhaba Dlamini, who is now an academic, recently touched on the sensitive subject of political parties.

"For how long are we going to suppress them? If we suppress them by the gun, we will not succeed. The communists tried to suppress people without success, and they have collapsed. "Let's find a way to

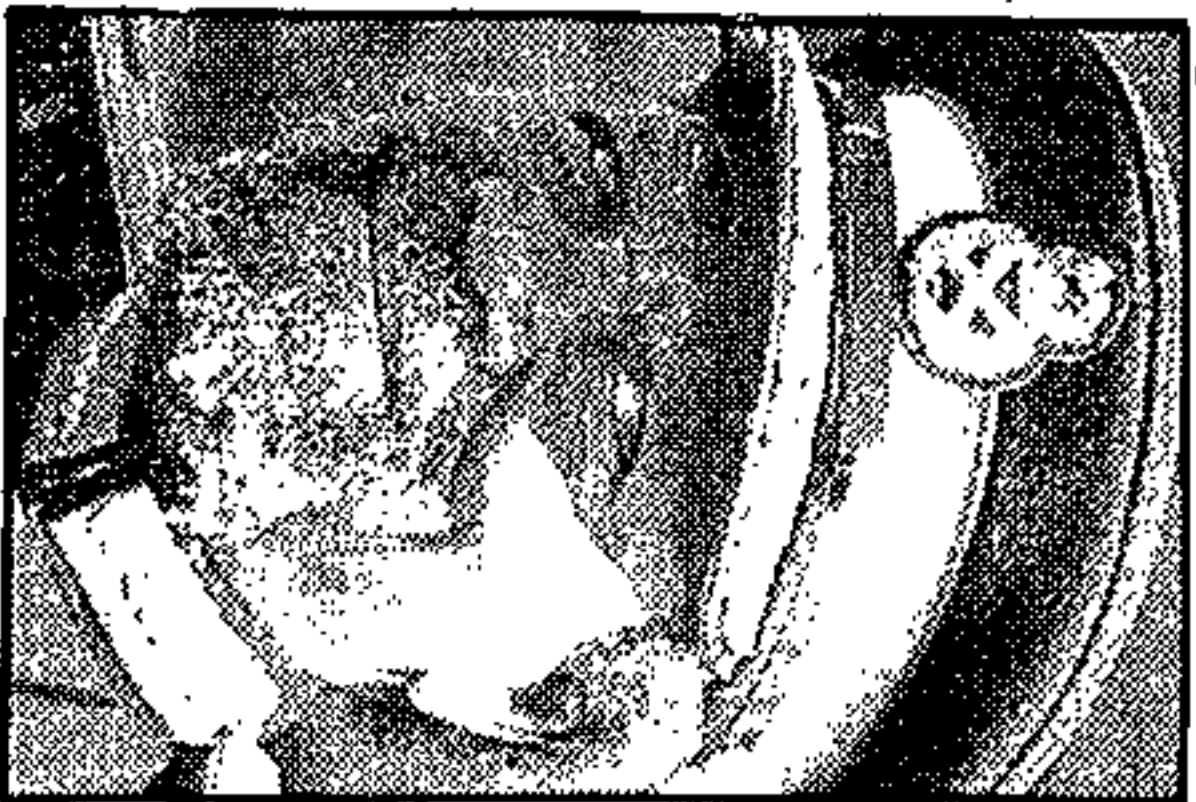
handle political parties," he said.

King Mswati this month showed that he was aware of the controversy when he announced he would "soon call a meeting of the nation to discuss the issue of constitutional developments".

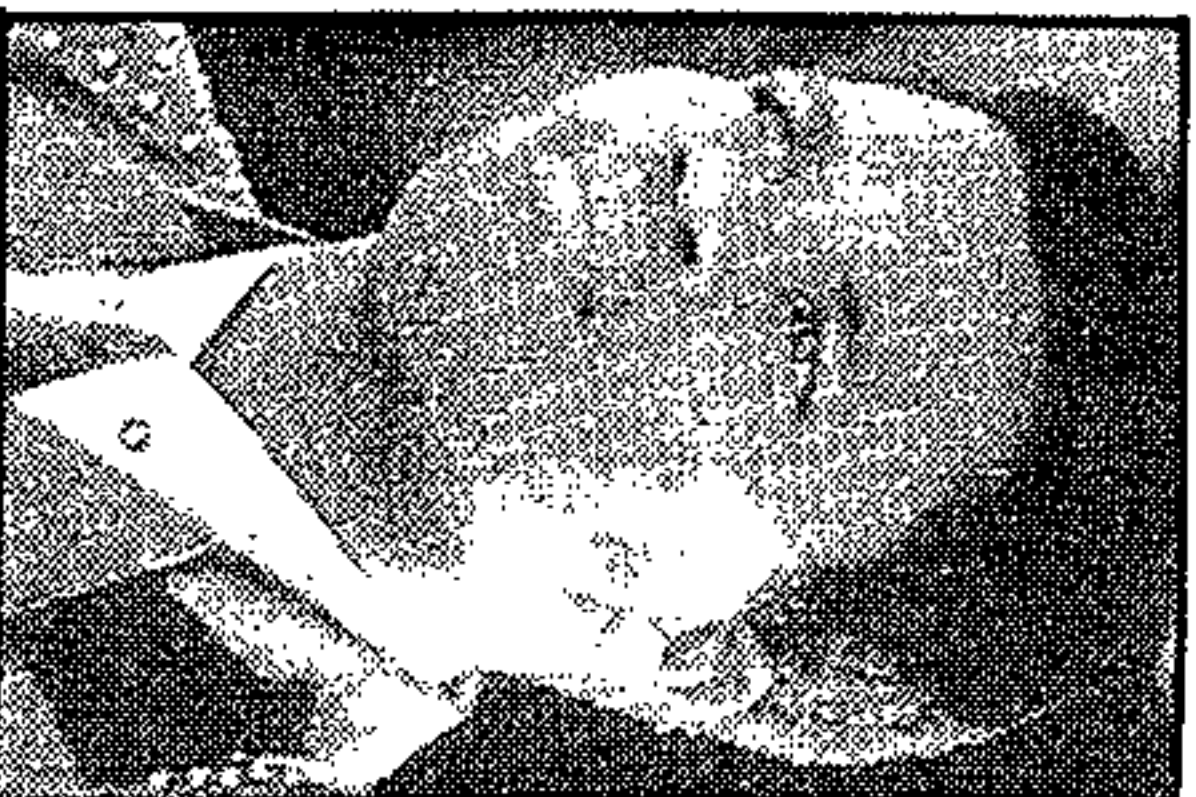
This means that he will hold an open-air meeting at the royal kraal, a traditional meeting place which can be attended by anyone regardless of background or nationality. Such day-long meetings are as old as the kingdom itself, and usually attract thousands of Swazis.

In his January announcement, however, King Mswati, still counselled by advisers who were close to his father, made it quite clear he was in favour of the present political system.

He warned against "the infatuation for change" and said: "Swazis should not hurry to abandon long-held customs just because they do not want to be left out of fashion." □



Kings Sobhuza and Mswati... both not keen on multiparty system for Swaziland.



SA, Swaziland talks to decide fate of sugar mill

THE fate of the proposed R1bn Nkomati sugar mill near Komatipoort depended on successful negotiations between SA and Swaziland concerning international water rights, sugar industry sources said on Wednesday.

And related to these rights would be the exact location of the mill and its two dams, the Driekoppies and Magugu, a Department of Water Affairs spokesman said.

The project would not only affect 240 sugar cane farmers, but also the economic climate of the Onderberg area and Ka-Ngwane, the Transvaal Sugar Corporation (TSC) said.

Once the agreement had been signed, possibly in the first quarter of this year, construction of the mill and the dams would go ahead, it said.

The Driekoppies Dam,

KARIN FRANKEN

bordering Swaziland, should take about six years to complete, while milling would start in about three years.

The Magugu Dam would essentially be used for other crops, according to the TSC.

Rembrandt-owned TSC won the rights to build the sugar mill in July last year. TSC spokesman Riaan Pienaar said the total project would involve about R1bn, of which between R240m and R300m would be spent on the mill.

The mill's estimated annual production would be 130 000 tons, requiring 30 000 hectares of cane, Pienaar said.

"Local farmers are expected to change crops once the sugar mill is viable."

The Water Affairs Department's Paul Roberts said the environmental and social aspects surrounding the mill had been given prominence by TSC and his department.

Roberts said there had been no real problems with environmental groups.

Plea to exiles

Scutlan 21/1/92
MBABANE - King Mswati III of Swaziland has appealed to exiled Swazis to return home and take part in national dialogue aimed at "mapping out the future political direction of the country".

The king's invitation to exiles was made known on his behalf on Tuesday by Prime Minister Obed Dlamini when he delivered his New Year's message in Mbabane. - Sapa.

APR 23/1992 (312)

Swaziland facing worst drought crisis

MBABANE. — The Swaziland Ministry of Agriculture has warned that the drought which is killing large numbers of cattle and ruining maize crops in north-eastern Swaziland could become the worst drought-induced crisis in the country's history.

The ministry's acting principal secretary, Mr David Hlatwako, re-emphasised a warning to farmers by the Minister of Agriculture, Mr Themba Mavuso, to sell off some of their cattle immediately rather than have them starve to death through lack of pasture and water.

Tens of thousands of rural Swazis and thousands of refugees engaged in subsistence farming in the Lubombo district have also been warned not to waste water which is being supplied to them by water tankers from distant sources because most dams in the area have dried up.

The ministry has announced certain contingency plans under consideration. These include co-ordination of all remaining water resources in drought-stricken areas and the provision of watering points for communities and watering troughs for livestock. — Sapa.

Swaziland wants free education

SWAZILAND'S National Association of Teachers has called on the kingdom's government to introduce free education immediately. (312)

In a broadcast, the association's secretary-general, Madaduza Zwane, said escalating fees had forced many children to drop out of school.

Zwane was reacting to a public outcry against the regular arbitrary raising and fixing of school fees by various institutions.

Uneasy lies the head that wears the Swazi crown

STAR 11/2/92

KING Mswati of Swaziland is finding that there is a lot of truth in the old saying about uneasy being the head that wears the crown.

Caught in the middle of a political crisis that is splitting his people in two, Mswati, as absolute monarch, must take the decisions that will resolve the issue. But whatever he decides is going to be unpopular with one side or the other and perhaps even dangerous to himself.

On one side are the kingdom's conservative traditionalists who want the absolute monarchy to continue, and on the other side the young reformists who want a multiparty democracy.

The simple solution would seem to be for him to exercise his absolute powers and suppress the democrats with his loyal police and army, which have recently exercised such duties with uncommon zeal.

But Mswati knows that such a course would be strongly disapproved of by the United States, Britain and others among Swaziland's major aid donors.

It is in any case very unlikely that the security forces could stamp out the growing demand for a multiparty democracy. They would more likely provoke rioting that would destabilise the country even more than the kingdom's endemic corruption has already done.

Failure to suppress the democrats, however, could put his own monarchy at risk. At best, they would reduce his absolute power; at worst, they would install a democracy and abolish the throne.

Like President de Klerk, King Mswati is having to consider whether it is possible to share power or whether it can only be held absolutely, either by a king or a dictator or a ruling party.

The word from Swaziland is that he may be forced to make a move one way or the other very soon, for the traditionalists are said to be demanding that he get rid of Prime Minister Obed Dlamini.

The Prime Minister is widely respected in Swaziland as an honest and able man. But the conser-

Out of Africa

(312)
GERALD L'ANGE



King Mswati . . . has some tough decisions to make.

vatives are said to consider him to be too sympathetic to the democrats. They remember uneasily that he was once a trade unionist.

Their fears were strengthened by a recent march from Manzini to the capital, organised by the youth group that appears to be associated with the multiparty movement. Ostensibly, the marchers were raising money for charity, but they were also doing the toyi-toyi and chanting political slogans, including some praising the Prime Minister and calling him "Comrade PM".

Conservatives may argue that the absolute monarchy has always been traditional in Swaziland, a custom interrupted only when the British imposed their constitutional ideas on the country. It may be said that King Sobhuza was only getting things back to normal when he abolished the British-imposed constitution after independence and assumed all powers.

The democrats argue, however, that such a feudal system is about three centuries out of date in the modern world and simply does not work any more. □

Swazi demo disrupts traffic

Sowetan 10/2/92

MBABANE - A demonstration in the centre of Swaziland's capital of Mbabane seriously disrupted traffic yesterday afternoon.

A large group of people, believed to be members of the Swazi Youth Congress, danced the toyi-toyi, sang anti-government songs and shouted "viva".

Bystanders claimed that some of the youths were drunk.

Swayco is the youth wing of the Peoples United Democratic Movement, an illegal political movement which has gone underground to campaign for the overthrow of the government, the removal of executive powers from the king and a return to a multiparty system.

A small contingent of policemen avoided confrontation but instead spoke quietly to what appeared to be the leaders of the group.

About an hour later the demonstrators moved to the nearby Freedom Square and occupied it. - Sapa.

(312) (47)
**Swazi meat
plant collapses**

MBABANE — Hundreds of Swazis will lose their jobs this week following the collapse of the country's only meat processing plant. *Star 20/4/92*

A spokesman for Swaziland Meat Industries (SMI) confirmed the collapse, attributed to a shortage of capital.

The spokesman said efforts were being made to attract investors. SMI has major contracts to supply the European Economic Community. — Star Africa Service.

tar Friday February 21 1992 37

(312)
**Swazis amazed
by man's return**
STAR, 21/2/92

MBABANE — Swazi police were astounded this week when a white man who was declared a prohibited immigrant 13 years ago walked through the Oshoek border post and demanded to be put in detention.

Later they said they would follow laid-down procedure and charge Peter Forbes (63) with illegal entry. If found guilty, Mr Forbes would be sent back to Johannesburg, where he has lived since 1979.

Mr Forbes, descendant of pioneers who settled in Swaziland in the mid-19th century, has argued since 1979 that the confiscation of his Swazi passport was a contravention of the UN charter on human rights.

He explained yesterday: "In 1979 I was instrumental in the establishment of a commission of inquiry into corruption in Swazi government circles. That offended people in power, and I was detained without trial."

"I then went on hunger strike and was eventually moved to a hospital in Johannesburg."

The former land-owner says he was born in South Africa, but was brought back to Swaziland when he was seven days old.

Apart from periods of education in South Africa, he lived in Swaziland until 1979. — Star Africa Service.

Swaziland budget in deficit for first time

Star Africa Service 312

MBABANE — Swazi finance minister Sibusiso Dlamini yesterday delivered a budget in deficit for the first time, and warned of hard times.

Mr Dlamini anticipated expenditure for 1992/93 of R1,038 billion, exceeding R1 billion for the first time in the country's history. Of this the government would raise R966,5 million, leaving a deficit of R72,4 million.

The minister blamed the shortfall on an expected decrease in receipts from the southern African customs union, normally a major contributor to Swaziland's in-

come, providing about 35 percent of revenue.

Mr Dlamini also warned that two major industries — Swaziland Meat Industries and textile plant Natex — are in financial difficulties and needed assistance.

Swaziland Meat Industries was this week put on a care and maintenance basis with 250 employees made redundant.

The country's only textile industry is also experiencing difficulty.

Mr Dlamini said R14 million had been provided to Natex by government in bank guarantees but this would be lost if the company collapsed.

Swazi reformists push for change

MBABANE — The winds of change sweeping Africa are howling at the door of tiny Swaziland, one of the world's last absolute monarchies.

Restless students and human rights activists are mounting an unprecedented challenge to King Mswati's traditional power in this landlocked state.

In scenes unthinkable a year ago, youths converge every weekend on crowded urban townships, singing banned political songs and calling for multiparty rule. Political parties are forming underground.

The focus of criticism is the 23-year-old king and his plans for indirect parliamentary elections. Critics want direct voting and not the electoral college which the king envisages.

His father King Sobhuza reinstated the centuries-old monarchy upon independence from Britain in 1968 and then abolished the constitution, banned all political parties and assumed total power.

Now the young Mswati, who assumed the throne in 1986, is caught between conservatives who want the absolute monarchy to continue and young reformists inspired by democratic changes in other southern African states.

"I think the king is listening to what

critics have to say about power sharing. But he is under a lot of pressure by the conservatives to protect customs in what is an extremely traditional society," said a Western diplomat.

Traditions run deep in Swaziland, where many people proudly choose tribal dress over Western garb and 20% of the 800,000 population is related to the royal family.

But alleged government corruption and a crippling drought are sowing discontent in the land of mainly subsistence farmers.

Public debate is limited in the state-controlled media. But critical letters are flooding into the country's only private newspaper, the Times of Swaziland.

Traditionalists say multiparty politics are unsuitable for Swaziland and would encourage violence. But some political analysts fear violence if demands by the opposition are not met.

A petrol bomb destroyed the car of interior ministry under-secretary Tars Makana last week. Police declined to speculate whether the attack was political.

However, political analysts doubt the government will rely on security forces to stamp out the growing democracy movement. Such a move would be highly unpopular with Western donors who provide much needed aid. — Sapa-Reuter.



Pope John Paul II blesses the sick and infirm in Banjul, Gambia on Sunday. He continued his west African tour to Guinea yesterday.

Picture: AP

Challenge to all the king's men

312

SWAZILAND'S major opposition movement, the underground People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo) held a secret general congress in Soweto recently and then returned to Swaziland and unbanned itself. This was announced in a defiant message to the nation by the newly elected Pudemo president, Kislou Shongwe.

The move has been enthusiastically welcomed by opposition forces throughout the kingdom, particularly the Pudemo aligned Swaziland Youth Congress (Swayoco). Over the past six months, Swayoco has emerged as a champion of democracy, placing the state in an embarrassing situation by conducting widely supported nationwide clean-up campaigns in carnival-like atmosphere, singing revolutionary songs, while significantly swelling its ranks.

Swayoco has also held several marches in the major urban centres in defiance of an effective state of emergency which has existed in the country since 1978 when King Sobhuza II suspended the Independence Constitution, closed down parliament, banned political parties and introduced 60-day detention without trial legislation.

While as yet there has been no official reaction to Pudemo's defiant stand, it appears to have instilled a great deal of excitement in other quarters including parliament. Police failure to respond to calls from university students about attempts by thieves to steal minibuses during inter-university games a fortnight ago which led to the fatal shooting of a student who attempted to intervene, saw a march last week on the Manzini police station by students demanding the resignation of the commissioner of police.

Within parliament last week, a new spirit of courage pervaded the galleries, as angry MPs called for the resignation of the prime minister over the issue. Swayoco members said in early February, after a sponsored walk that culminated in a Manzini rally, that police had told them during various altercations recently that the majority of policemen support their cause.

While discontent has long been simmering beneath the surface of Swazi society, open opposition is a major new development. There are currently four opposition groupings, all of which remain illegal — Pudemo, the Ngwane National Liberatory Congress (NNLC), which was the leading pre- and post-independence opposition grouping, the Ngwane Socialist Revolutionary Party (Ngwasorep) and the London-based Swaziland Liberation Movement (Swalimo). Nevertheless, it is Pudemo which has emerged as the major opposition force, at least in the urban area.

Pudemo was formed in the winter of 1983 by disgruntled intellectuals, the majority of whom were students at the University of Swaziland (Uniswa). It has been greatly influenced by the African National Congress, and this is reflected in the aspirations of its founding charter, which resemble those expressed in the Freedom Charter. It was founded during a period of intrigue and internecine struggles within the royal palace, although it has fallen short of calling for a republican constitution, and seems to favour a constitutional monarchy.

For the first five years of its existence, it sporadically distributed pamphlets which hit

W/Mail 13/3-19/3/92

Discontent has long been simmering beneath the surface of Swazi society. Now, for the first time, the Swazi monarchy has been openly challenged.

RICHARD LEVIN reports

out at the excesses of members of the royal council and the undemocratic system of "no party elections" under the tinkhundla electoral system. This system came into being in 1978, dividing the country into 40 districts. Elections are held in these districts every five years, but are non-party in character. The candidates, who are announced on election day, do not go to parliament, but form an electoral college which elects 40 out of 50 MPs, and 10 out of 20 senators under the close supervision of a committee established by the king. The remaining MPs and senators are appointed by the king, who also appoints his cabinet.

Pudemo's existence as an underground cabal was transformed in late 1989 when police announced that a major crackdown on political dissidents was on the cards. In the months that followed, about 30 people were detained, 12 of whom were charged with high treason. The trial eventually began in October 1990, but within weeks came to a dramatic end with all Pudemo leaders being acquitted of charges of high treason.

Six of them were found guilty on the lesser charges of attending illegal political meetings, including general secretary Dominic Mngomezulu and Uniswa sociologist Ray Russon. Their sentences were later overturned on appeal.

The effect of the treason trial was to give Pudemo a public face. Since then the movement has gained ground rapidly, particularly in the urban areas among professionals, workers and the youth.

The post-treason trial period has seen the rapid metamorphosis of political life in Swaziland. Influenced by South Africa's United Democratic Front, Pudemo has moved quickly to build and strengthen organisations of civil society, most notably the Human Rights Association of Swaziland (Humaras) and Swayoco.

The attempts by the Swazi government to crack down on Pudemo were undermined in March 1991, when the United States intervened, linking the continued detention of five Pudemo leaders, redetained in November 1990, to the cancellation of aid agreements. The five, along with a notorious prince at the centre of royal intrigue, Prince Mfanasibili, were released and there have been no 60-day detentions since then.

With pressure mounting for democratic reform, King Mswati III announced in September last year that the tinkhundla system was to be reviewed by the vusela (greeting) committee. Intended as an exercise to strengthen the system, the committee travelled countrywide, canvassing the views of ordinary



Challenged ... King Mswati III

Swazis: the response was an unequivocal rejection of the system.

In the meantime, Swayoco took to the streets, championing the cause of the masses and defying police bans. In Manzini, they prevented the vusela meeting from taking place. Their cause has been assisted by the prime minister, Obed Dlamini, who has resisted the attempts by reactionary elements within the royal council to crush all opposition.

These elements have now become bent on removing the prime minister who has thus far thwarted these efforts, while continually insisting that Swaziland will have to democratise its politics in line with developments elsewhere in Africa and eastern Europe. Pudemo and Swayoco members now fear that reactionary councillors in collusion with the minister of justice are setting up hit squads to terrorise the opposition.

This follows rumours of the arrest by Frelimo intelligence of Justice Minister Zonke Khumalo in Mozambique in January and a hastily organised "hush-hush" trip by the prime minister to secure his release. Indeed, at the end of January three men tried unsuccessfully to abduct Pudemo leader Ray Russon's

son.

The king's equivocal position on democratic reform has been demonstrated in two recent speeches. In his first speech of 1992, he warned Swazis against "the infatuation for change", arguing that they "should not hurry to abandon long-held customs just because they do not want to be left out of fashion". In February, however, he seemingly did an about turn during a visit by Zambian President Frederick Chiluba. The king told him during a state banquet that his government would not resist change, and that the nature of that change would be determined by the people.

In the meantime, Pudemo has presented the king with a five point programme which it believes will create the necessary conditions for the normalisation of political life. The first calls for the immediate lifting of the state of emergency; the second for a national convention of all political groupings; the third for the establishment of an interim government; the fourth for the holding of a national referendum on the suitability of the independence constitution abrogated by King Sobhuza in 1973; and the fifth for the establishment of a constituent assembly should the referendum reject the independence constitution.

Pudemo's February Congress rejected the process of constitutional review initiated by the king through the vusela committee, but the king announced a second vusela exercise on February 27. This time, however, he has included a number of opposition figures in the committee, including former Pudemo treason trialist and current national organiser of the movement Mandla Hlatshwayo, along with Humaras president Michael Mukombe, and an established political figure, Arthur Khoza, who has publicly opposed the tinkhundla system and called for its review. The committee, however, remains heavily loaded with conservatives.

All indications are that the tinkhundla elections due in November will not go ahead, although the terms of reference of "vusela 2" — essentially to investigate how the tinkhundla can directly elect MPs to parliament — indicate that multi-party elections will only be won through further struggle.

While Pudemo is well placed to make substantial gains in the urban areas, it has still to demonstrate a rural constituency, although Swayoco has established branches in some rural areas. In focusing its attention on central parliamentary institutions, Pudemo has made the mistake of many African pro-democracy forces.

It has failed to give the peasantry an effective political voice, and to develop democratic organs capable of advancing peasant interests. These are problems which Pudemo is aware of, however, and its recent congress noted "the arbitrary and insensitive evictions of subjects from the land that they consider to be their only source of livelihood and land which they fought for to gain independence in 1968".

Pudemo would do well to add a land and agrarian programme to its existing economic policy paper, if it seriously wishes to undermine royal hegemony and the king's substantial rural support base.

●Richard Levin is a senior lecturer in the sociology department at Wits University

Swazis desperate for maize

Star Africa Service

17/3/92 according to the agriculture ministry.

MBABANE — Almost 30 percent of the population of Swaziland is suffering the effects of drought, and needs 40 000 tons of maize to survive, The ministry said 250 000 of Swaziland's 800 000 people will need food aid in the coming year.

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Zambia finds itself falling to new heights

STAR 24/3/92

THE buzzword in Zambia today is one you will not find in the dictionary. But every Zambian knows that *kacha* refers to the new style that has taken hold since Kenneth Kaunda fell from his dusty pedestal and was replaced as president by breezy little Frederick Chiluba.

The word started out as "culture" but quickly became corrupted to something that slips easier off the local tongue. In part the new culture — sorry, *kacha* — stems from the diminutive stature of the president, who barely tops four feet.

Thus, nobody calls dumpies dumpies any more in Zambia. If you should find yourself in a bar in Lusaka and you want a small bottle of beer you will get much quicker service, I am told, if you do not ask for a dumpy. Ask instead for a presidential size beer and a dumpy will come whipping over the counter almost before you can say please.

Likewise, it has become fashionable to refer to all short people as "presidential heights". Alternatively, they may be called *ka chiluba*. In the same way, dumpy beer bottles are sometimes referred to as *ta chiluba*.

The president's image has not suffered even from the fact that his wife, Vera, towers above him. It is not uncommon for husbands, especially when their wives are very large, to refer to them not as "my wife" but as "my Vera", or "my first lady".

Just as the president makes the best of his smallness, his wife flaunts her huge size, favouring colourful dresses, big hats and sunglasses.

There is an exuberance to the new culture that probably reflects a sense of freedom, of release from bonds.

I am told that suddenly people are doing things that they were afraid to do before, like criticising the government and standing up to police bullies — and suing each other in the courts. Just why they

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have taken to litigation is a bit of a mystery.

□ □ □

ALTHOUGH they are supposed still to be illegal, political parties have started sprouting like spring buds in the warmer political climate now prevailing in Swaziland. Three have popped up in succession. And, believe it or not, all are led by men named Shongwe.

First there was Kison Shongwe, president of the Peoples United Democratic Movement (Pudemo), who is a lawyer who has the added distinction of being a graduate of Swaziland's detention-without-trial system.

After him came Matsapa Shongwe, leader of the Swaziland United Front. He is a Christian preacher whose party is believed to have links with the Kangwane homeland in South Africa.

Recently Elmond Mpho Shongwe, a businessman from Manzini, made his debut as president of the Swaziland National Front.

But that is not all. Mphandlana Shongwe is a prominent official in the politically vocal Swaziland Youth Congress.

None of the four Shongwes is related by blood. Knowledgeable Swazis say it is not uncommon for people named Shongwe to rise to prominence in political activity of one kind or another. Perhaps it has something to do with genes.

A more prosaic explanation that is offered is that the Swazis are a small nation with relatively few family and clan names. For instance, an extraordinarily large number of them are called Dlamini, which is the royal clan. They fill nine of the 54 pages in the Swaziland telephone directory.

But that still doesn't account for all those political Shongwes... □

Coke to remain in Swaziland

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Sowetan 25/3/92
MBABANE - Coca-Cola has decided against returning to South Africa, the major concentrate-making plant it moved to Swaziland in 1987 because of anti-apartheid sanctions. Instead, the company is to spend R20-million on ex-

panding the Swaziland plant, almost doubling its investment in the kingdom. The move was announced yesterday by Coca-Cola's world vice-president, Mr George Gourlay, after a meeting with King Mswati.

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Democracy is catching

Emboldened by moves towards democracy across Africa, especially the example of the Convention for a Democratic SA, Swaziland opposition groups have suddenly begun to surface. This is in open defiance of emergency rule imposed 19 years ago.

But King Mswati III (23), shows signs of handling demands for a multiparty system based on a modern constitution in a positive and dignified manner. This suggests a Swazi-style transitional process is in the offing — one which is unlikely to cause any major upheavals in the small kingdom.

The past two months have seen the re-emergence of the main opposition group, the People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo), and the launch of two new, much smaller political entities: the Swaziland United Front and the Swaziland National Front (SNF).

Only Pudemo, a reincarnation of the old Ngwane National Liberation Congress (NNLC, banned in 1968) of veteran opponent Ambrose Zwane, has a history and a significant membership base. Pudemo is led by its president, Kison Shongwe, a former NNLC man and ex-civil servant who claims to have founded the movement in 1983. That was the year he was detained by the infa-

mous Ligoqo clique, which had highjacked the royal council in the interregnum following King Sobhuza's death.

But the two new parties appear to be climbing on the bandwagon. They have few members and no track record.

The SNF is led by Mbo Shongwe (no relation to Kison) and Glenrose Dlamini. It is a faction that broke away from Pudemo on a stronger free enterprise platform, though observers believe this has more to do with ambitions and personality differences than ideology.

Pudemo started making its voice heard about two years ago when it clandestinely distributed pamphlets calling for democratic reforms. Their language tended to be shrill and socialistic but their demands are essentially reasonable.

Thus Pudemo favours a constitutional monarchy in which the monarch is above politics — as in Britain — and executive power is vested in the prime minister. It recently indicated favouring a free enterprise economy. While the movement is thought to be strong in urban areas, it remains to be seen whether rural people would vote for Pudemo or for a party that might well be formed around the royal family.

Allied to Pudemo is the Swaziland Youth Congress (Swayoco), which provides the brawn of the movement. It has been able to operate all along since it is technically not a

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party and it is frequently in the news because of its defiant methods.

Pudemo also has links with the ANC, which is rumoured to have funded Pudemo's national conference held in Johannesburg last month. Days later, on February 25, Pudemo "unbanned" itself by holding its first public meeting in Swaziland. It demanded a referendum on multiparty democracy, the lifting of emergency rule and the unbanning of political parties.

"What we want to have established is whether the people want a complete change to multiparty democracy," a Pudemo statement said. "We believe that public discussion over the past few months has proved beyond doubt that the nation rejects the present system."

A day after Pudemo came out into the open, an 11-member committee was appointed by the king to go into the question of restructuring the electoral system and make recommendations for constitutional change. At least one Pudemo member, Mandla Hlatwayo, is on this potentially path-breaking committee.



Swaziland's King Mswati ...
managing the transition

The traditionalist authorities have so far taken no action against the parties. They are being cautious, in part no doubt because repressive rule has gone out of fashion.

More important, though, is that the young

king is instinctively progressive and is thought to want to evolve a new democratic arrangement in which his position is precisely defined.

However, the king has to contend with a group of self-serving traditionalists who surround him. Fortunately, it seems that Prime Minister Obed Dlamini, who is also in charge of the police, is more in step with the king; he is honest, respected and a progressive leader in his own right.

One pointer to change was signalled by the king early this year when he handed over the chairmanship of the Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) to Zambia's newly elected President Frederick Chiluba.

The occasion gave Mswati the opportunity to talk about change. He congratulated Chiluba on winning the Zambian elections and said Swaziland would also change — in a way that would "reflect the will of the people." Chiluba responded by saying that Swaziland is managing to change without losing its traditions.

That probably sums up the course of events to come.

Swaziland PM aware of plot to oust him

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MBABANE - Swaziland's prime minister says he is aware of powerful elements close to the king who are working to oust him from office, a newspaper reported yesterday.

A Swazi daily newspaper quoted Mr Obed

Dlamini as saying the elements, members of an advisory body to King Mswati, wanted him removed because he had not acted against those responsible for the surfacing of political parties and movements in defiance of a ban im-

posed by the 29-year-old state of emergency.

Dlamini said he was not worried about the plot, adding as he had not applied for the job, the authorities could always dismiss him if they were not satisfied with his performance. - Sapa.

They want to oust me, says Swazi premier

MBABANE. — Swazi Prime Minister Obed Dlamini has agreed that powerful traditionalist elements would like to have him dismissed.

Mr Dlamini told a local newspaper that there were "elements" who were working for

his removal. The newspaper suggested that traditionalists suspect him of sympathising with the aims of two illegal Swazi political parties.

Another claim is that traditional elements are annoyed with Mr Dlamini because of his re-

fusal to sign detention orders against opponents of the political system.

The Prime Minister said yesterday: "I wish my critics would inform the King ... so the nation can be told about my dismissal. — Star Africa Service.

19 Aids deaths in Swaziland a 'bigger tip of the iceberg'

MBABANE — Nineteen people, seven of them children aged under four, died from Aids between January 1 and March 31 in Swaziland.

The figure, released by the director of medical services, Dr John Mbambo, is the largest recorded over any three-month period.

The latest statistics were described by Dr Mbambo as "a bigger tip of the iceberg".

In December Swaziland Aids worker Wezi Dlamini told doctors that a total of 26 people had died as a result of the disease since records began in 1986.

Dr Mbambo said in the first quarter of this year 55 cases of full blown Aids, 12 children and the majority of the remainder women, were reported.

The total population of the tiny mountain kingdom is only 800 000.

Royal wife raises Swazi eyebrows

STAR
14/7/92

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EDDIES from the winds of change that are blowing through Swaziland have wafted even into a part of the royal palace that was once considered absolutely wind-proof: the secluded little world of the royal wives.

The news that one of King Mswati's wives had made a public speech at the opening of a creche startled many Swazis. It was the first time that any of the royal wives had emerged from their marital cloisters to officiate at a public function and it was widely seen as something in the nature of a straw in the wind of change.

For years the Swazi monarchy has been even more secretive than its British counterpart about its private affairs (which may be wise, considering the savaging that the British royalty gets from its press). The public was not considered to have any interest, or any right to take an interest, in even so notable an event as a royal wedding. Whenever King Mswati got married — and he has done so seven times so far — it was not considered necessary to inform his subjects beyond a terse communique that was about as informative as a wedding notice in *The Star* classifieds.

This was in keeping with a tradition that has long held, in effect, that affairs of the palace, and even affairs of state, are no concern of the public. The king and his advisers were considered to know best what was good for the people and they must be left to run the peoples' affairs accordingly.

It was in the spirit of this paternalistic tradition that King Sobhuza banned party political activity soon after independence. And it was in the same spirit that a senior member of government last year told parliament that it was un-Swazi to question the right of the royal Dlamini family to rule the country.

The demand for democracy has nevertheless grown louder, especially among younger Swazis, and the monarchy has felt obliged to react by setting up a kind of advisory body to look into the issue.

The winds of change have not, however, blown open any windows in the palace, figuratively speaking. Beyond that rare and so far un-repeated public appearance by one of the seven wives, the public

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remains largely ignorant of what goes on in the palace. Many do not even know what it looks like, or even exactly where it is.

Following tradition, Mswati ordered a new palace built when he was crowned in 1983. The edifice, designed by South African architects and built by South African contractors, has been growing slowly but, according to some reports, spectacularly, about 10 km north of Mbabane in the Ngwenya region.

My own efforts to find out what the palace looks like have been rebuffed by the monarchy's minions, but it is said to incorporate some quite remarkable features. One of these is said to be a glass-bottomed indoor swimming pool that is suspended above a lounge so that the king may, if he wishes, recline at his ease and listen to rock music while watching his guests cavorting in the water above his head.

My request for information was rejected by the palace even though the architect had said he was willing to give it if the king gave him permission. My guess is that the request never got anywhere near the king. But it was perhaps too much to expect that it would. After all, how much do we know about the inside of Buckingham Palace?

If the winds of change have not opened up the palace they appear to have begun blowing up some strange things elsewhere. It is now reported that one of the leading figures in the demand for multiparty democracy has been arrested and charged with running a Fagin-like operation in which the thieves, instead of picking pockets, burgled homes and shops. The news astounded close associates of the man and immediately aroused suspicions that it was a "planted" charge aimed at discrediting him and ending his challenge to the reign of the Dlaminis.

The courts will now have to decide and it will be a trial that will be followed with intense interest in Swaziland. □

By JURIE VAN DER WALT

THE small Kingdom of Swaziland — one of three kingdoms left on the African continent — is at the start of a road which should take the country to political democracy after 19 years of having been a non-party country.

The small southern African country is experiencing relentless pressure from the majority of people — particularly the younger generation — to bring about a democratic change.

There is an African saying to the effect that anything that does not change or get finished is a bad omen. Many Swazis say that if Swaziland does not change politically like other countries in Africa and the world over, it could spell doom for the country.

Political parties were banned in Swaziland in 1973 after allegations that they brought diverse ideas. Today Swaziland and Libya are regarded as the only non-party states in Africa.

However, things are changing and Swaziland has received the green light from its 24-year-old King, Mswati III, to allow an investigation into the

Swaziland looks at new dispensation

democracy for

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democratisation of the current political dispensation.

Swaziland is a monarchy in which the king is vested with supreme power.

One of the greatest paradoxes in Swaziland today is the amount of political activity taking place despite the 1973 State of Emergency which is still firmly in place.

There are numerous political parties active in the country, using the uncertainty while the Tinkhundla Analysis Commission is investigating the future of political parties in the kingdom. The resurgence of political parties in Swazi-

land has been described as the most interesting political phenomenon in the ongoing debate for democratisation. However, the activities and campaigns of these political parties are closely followed by the authorities.

Five political parties have emerged with support.

One of the biggest is the Swaziland Youth Congress (Swayoco), which has been the most visible in the country and claims a membership of close to 7 000. Although Swayoco protests that it is not a political party, it has a physical presence and representation throughout the country. Said to be in alliance with Swayoco and show-

ing a strong presence in the kingdom is the formerly underground Peoples United Democratic Movement (Pudemo), which recently unbanned itself. Pudemo's leaders claim a membership of almost 2 000 and assert there is a military wing.

The most visible campaigner of the party, Mphandiana Shongwe, recently threatened on television that Swaziland would swim in blood should political change and democracy not materialise.

However, Pudemo suffered a serious blow earlier this month when one of its senior members, Ray Russon, was arrested on charges of house breaking and theft.

The most junior among the active political parties is the Swaziland National Front (Swanafro), headed by computer-whiz, Mhoshongo Shongwe.

Two other contenders are the Swaziland United Party (Sup) and the Ngwane Socialist Revolutionary Party (Ngwasorep).

Then there is the Ngwane National Liberty Congress (NNLC) of Dr Ambrose Zwane, which was active even before independence and has almost 9 000 members.

According to Dr Zwane: "We are the opposition in the country. We have a written manifesto which can be found at the University of Swa-

ziland library."

But why is the membership of these political parties so small?

Dr Zwane gives the answer: "People are frightened by the present political climate. The climate is not yet conducive to freedom of political activity. Some do join political parties but do not participate actively."

Asked what the future holds for multi-party politics in Swaziland, Dr Zwane said it "can no longer be avoided".

Although it seems that the monarchy is trying to resort to delaying tactics in recognising the existence of political parties, Swaziland has taken the first steps on the road to multi-party democracy.

Call for national referendum in Swaziland

STAN 281472
MBABANE — A leading Swazi opposition group called yesterday for a referendum on the country's no-party system and said it would boycott a forum organised by King Mswati to discuss possible reforms.

Dominic Mngomezulu, secretary-general of the People's United Democratic Movement (Pude-

mo), said the so-called Vusela Committee appointed by the king last year to informally canvass the public's views did not go far enough.

"Vusela does not address the national question. It takes place in an atmosphere of fear," he said. "The situation requires a referendum to decide which way the

country has to go." 312

Pudemo is one of three underground parties which recently surfaced, despite a ban on political activity, calling for a multiparty system.

The king at the weekend condemned divisive political elements which he said were destroying the unity of the Swazi people. — Sapa-Reuter.

Deportation over Swazi theft probe

MBABANE — A South African private investigator was deported from Swaziland because his investigations into car thefts allegedly showed Swazi police involvement.

The Swaziland Observer newspaper yesterday reported that Leonard van der Merwe was sent to Swaziland by a South African insurance company to investigate a racket involving stolen South African cars being sold in Swaziland.

The newspaper said it had a copy of Mr van der Merwe's affidavit which lists 200 stolen cars, some of which were allegedly in the possession of Swazi police officers, including the commissioner of police, who was an assistant commissioner at the time.

The newspaper, which said it planned to publish the complete list today, said Mr van der Merwe's investigations showed so much fraud and theft that the police began proceedings which led to his deportation. — Sapa.

Swazis hold ANC men (312) en route for training STAR 215192

PRETORIA — The Department of Law and Order will approach the Swaziland police for assistance after the arrest of 32 African National Congress members in the mountain kingdom, SABC radio news reports.

Yesterday Swaziland police confirmed they had arrested 32 men claiming to be ANC members travelling to Tanzania for military training. The police said the men would be deported to South Africa from Big Bend, where they were being held.

A spokesman for the South African Department of Law and Order said he had not received confirmation of the arrests, but the Swaziland authorities would be approached as soon as possible to help the SA Police in their investigation.

If the arrests could be verified, the matter would be raised at Codesa on Monday.

Minister of Law and Order Hernus Kriel had repeatedly warned against actions that were contrary to the spirit of Codesa and the National Peace Accord, said the spokesman. — Sapa.

STAR 215792

Swazis hold 'ANC soldiers' (312)

MBABANE — Swaziland police have confirmed they have detained 32 South African men claiming to be members of the ANC on their way to undergo military training in Tanzania. The men were being held at Big Bend in eastern Swaziland pending their deportation back to South Africa. The arrested men had entered the country in groups and had been taken to a refugee centre at Mpaka where they became violent when Swazi and UN High Commissioner for Refugees authorities refused to fund their onward journey, police said. — Sapa.

Swaziland to expel MK recruits

By DE WET POTGIETER

THE 33 ANC recruits arrested in Swaziland on their way to Tanzania for military training will be extradited to South Africa.

A senior SA Police officer said yesterday the men had been recruited by a

S/ Times
woman in Durban and came from Kwa Mashu.

All the men are in detention at Big Bend. 3/5/92

They were arrested on Friday after they crossed the border into Swaziland and applied for political asylum. They asked the UN

Human Rights Commission for financial support to get to Tanzania. Their requests were turned down.

A spokesman for Minister of Law and Order Her-nus Kriel said he was "deeply concerned" about

the arrests.

He is expected to raise the question of continued MK recruitment at Codesa tomorrow.

ANC spokesman Gill Marcus said: "It is no secret that the ANC is training people abroad."

SA to seek help after 32 ANC arrested

Sowetan 4/5/92

SA Press Association (312)

THE Law and Order Ministry will approach the Swaziland police for assistance following the arrest of 32 African National Congress members in the kingdom.

Swaziland confirmed the arrests on Friday and said the men would be deported to South Africa from Big Bend where they were being held.

The men claimed to be ANC members en route to Tanzania to receive military training.

In reaction, a spokesman for South Africa's Ministry of Law and Order said he had not received confirmation but that the Swaziland authorities would be contacted to help the SA Police investigate the report.

He said the matter would be raised at Codesa as soon as the detentions were verified.

Law and Order Minister Mr Hernus Kriel had repeatedly warned against actions that were contrary to the spirit of Codesa and the National Peace Accord, said the spokesman.

'ANC' group still held in Swaziland

(3/2) CT 5/5/92
JOHANNESBURG. — Swaziland police were yesterday still holding 32 alleged ANC members reported heading for Tanzania for military training.

Police spokesman Inspector Azaria Ndzimandze said the men were being held at Big Bend in eastern Swaziland, pending their deportation to South Africa.

The head of the UN High Commission for Refugees, Mr Gary Perkins, said the 32 were schoolboys from Durban — aged 16 to 18 — and had sought assistance from the agency to travel to a third country, but the agency had turned them down. He said they had apparently paid R150 each to be transported to the border. "Possibly there is an element of fraud," he said.

The youths were picked up when they entered Swaziland without proper documents.

In another development yesterday, a spokesman for the Prime Minister's office in Mbabane said his government did not recognise ANC members as political refugees.

The ANC has said the 32 are not members of the organisation.

The South African Law and Order Ministry said at the weekend it would raise the issue at Codesa. — Sapa

Second 'ANC group' in Swaziland

MBABANE — A group of 13 youths claiming to be ANC members en route to Zambia or Tanzania for military training arrived in Swaziland on Monday night.

The youths are being kept under police super-

vision in the southern town of Big Bend.

A police spokesman described the youths, who range in age from 16 to 20, as "very arrogant and threatening violence if they don't get what they want".

The statement followed the arrest of 32 youths, also claiming to be ANC members, who crossed into Swaziland illegally at the weekend.

The ANC denied the 32 were members. — Sapa.

Kentucky strike declared illegal by Cape judge

Sowetan 6/5/92

THE Cape Town Supreme Court yesterday ordered that a strike by South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union members at Kentucky Fried Chicken countrywide is illegal.

The owner of 22 Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets had applied to the court for an interdict restraining staff members from striking.

SJ and MM Hilcove CC, owners of 22 Kentucky fast food outlets in the Western Cape, the Transvaal and Natal, asked the court to declare industrial action at some branches illegal and to order workers back.

In an affidavit Mr Stuart Hilcove, managing member of SJ and MM Hilcove CC, said the strikers had illegally taken action.

Sowetan Correspondent

Yesterday Mr Acting Justice HP Viljoen said "serious irregularities" took place during the strike ballot held by Saccawu's members on December 9.

"Here the nature of the irregularities points to fraud rather than mistake," he said.

Non-members had voted illegally in the ballot and it seemed clear that they and at least some of their colleagues must have known about this irregularity.

Justice Viljoen said there were also allegations of intimidation of employees who did not favour the strike. The ballot could therefore not be allowed to stand.

Baffled Swazis hold 13 more youths

Sowetan 6/5/92

MBABANE - More young South Africans claiming to be members of the African National Congress have arrived in Swaziland demanding to be sent to other countries for military training.

Swazi authorities were baffled in April when a group of 32 youths arrived in the eastern border town of Siteki saying they were ANC members who wanted to be sent to Zambia.

Swazi authorities explained that they could not be granted refugee status because the ANC had been unbanned and talks were going on.

The group refused to return to South Africa and are being held after trying to hijack a government truck to drive to Mozambique.

A police spokesman said yesterday: "Last weekend

Sowetan Africa News Service

another group, about 13 of them, turned up also asking to be sent for military training. They are now waiting at the town of Big Bend for Interior Ministry officials to explain the situation to them.

"All those who have arrived are between 16 and 20 years old. We think they came from Natal."

A United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) spokesman said last week: "The UNHCR is not involved in sending South Africans to third countries from Swaziland."

"In fact, we are engaged in a programme to repatriate South Africans who fled the country as political refugees back to the Republic."

From having no political parties Swaziland suddenly finds that it may have too many as demands for democracy grow bolder, reports the Sowetan Africa News Service.

MBABANE - The people of Swaziland last month celebrated the sixth anniversary of the coronation of their absolute monarch, King Mswati.

Political feelings have risen to a pitch unprecedented in the 300-year-old monarchy, which has been ruled under a state of emergency since 1973.

And the coming year is not likely to see any easing of the political pressure, according to local observers.

Three underground political parties announced early this year that they intended to operate openly, defying the 19-year ban on all political activity.

The three are: the People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo), whose president is Mr Kison Shongwe, a lawyer and its secretary general is Mr Dominic Mngomezulu, a lawyer.

Pudemo was formed in 1983, during troubled times following the death of the former monarch, King Sobhuza. Its policies have not yet been fully explained, but the party is demanding the lifting of the state of emergency and is calling for multiparty elections.

The Swaziland United Front (SUF). This little-known party is led by a Christian preacher, Mr Matsapa Shongwe, and is believed to have a traditional approach.

Informed sources said it has links with political groups of the KaNgwane Swazi homeland in South Africa. Shongwe also called for the lifting of the state of emergency and direct elections.

The Swaziland National Front (Swanfro), its president is Mr Elmond

Democracy call grows louder in Swaziland

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Shongwe, a businessman based in the industrial town of Manzini. The secretary-general is Mrs Glenrose Dlamini, who works in the accounts office at a major hotel.

Officials of the party said its stand, not yet fully described, would probably be more middle of the road than Pudemo's, which is thought by many to lean toward socialism.

Initially, Swanfro officials said they are pressing for an opening up of politi-

cal activity as suggested by the other parties.

Leaders of all three parties said they had come out of the closet as a result of a call by King Mswati for open discussion on "constitutional development".

A high-ranking official of one of the parties, who asked not to be identified,

'We need time to organise, and to explain our aims to the people in rural areas. At the moment many people think we are just against authority, which means being against the king. That is not the case.'

agreed that from having no political parties, Swaziland could now be in danger of having too many.

The official said: "There is common ground, though, points we agree on. There could be amalgamation to form a unified, more powerful movement, like Kenya's Ford or MMD in Zambia. We need a strong voice in opposition to the Imbokodvo."

Imbokodvo (which means the grinding stone) is what was known as the king's party, which came to power immediately after independence in 1968, and was formally banned with all other political parties in 1973.

It has remained silent in all the recent political declarations, but opposition voices say it is organising secretly, mainly through the chiefs.

Members of opposition parties, whose support is largely among white-collar, urban area residents, admit that Imbokodvo, through the power chiefs have over their subjects, is still a major power.

"We need time to organise, and to explain our aims to the people in rural areas. At the moment many people think we are just against authority, which means being against the king. That is not the case," they say.



KING MSWATI

Besides these three political parties, the past year has seen the emergence of two powerful groups which describe themselves as politically involved, but deny being political parties.

The first is the Human Rights Association of Swaziland (Humaras), which

is closely allied to Amnesty International.

The group has made clear its opposition to Swaziland's ban on political activity, and its support of a move toward multiparty democracy.

The second group is the Swaziland Youth Congress (Swayoco), an organisation set up to organise unemployed young people. This group has the same views as Humaras, and makes them clear more vehemently in high-profile demonstrations in crowded townships throughout the country.

Although the three political parties, and possibly the Youth Congress, are contravening Swazi law, no steps have been taken against them as organisations.

However, Pudemo secretary-general Mr Dominic Mngomezulu, and Mr Mphardlana Shongwe of the Youth Congress were arrested for allegedly disturbing the peace during a rowdy demonstration in the capital, Mbabane.

In another arrest, the founder of the Youth Congress was this month detained on suspicion of being the leader of a gang responsible for break-ins and thefts of property valued at more than R100 000 from major shops in the town of Manzini.

Mr Ray Russon has been released on bail of R44 000, and he is not expected to be tried until June or July, according to defence lawyers.

The arrest of Russon, a university lecturer in sociology, and the accusation made against him, are regarded with suspicion by multiparty supporters.

King Mswati and his government are expecting political pressures to increase in the coming year, particularly with the prospect of a general election scheduled for November.

But another concern which could arouse public agitation even more is the drought.

Director of Agriculture Mr Dickson Khumalo last month said more than 30 percent of Swaziland's total population needed emergency food aid.

Agriculture Minister Mr Themba Masuku said nearly half of the country's cattle were expected to die as a result of the drought.

UN doubts 'ANC' boys

Sowetan 8/5/92
THE head of the United Nations agency for refugees in Swaziland yesterday expressed doubts that 45 South African youths being held in the country were bona fide members of the ANC. *(312)*

Mr Gary Perkins said: "They are being told to contact Swazi police and the UNHCR for assistance to go to a third country," he said.

Swazi police had been unable to trace people involved in the youths' illegal entry in Swaziland, he said.

The ANC has distanced itself from the youths. - *Sapa*

Death threat for Swazi Minister

Sowetan 13/5/92 (312)

MBABANE - A Swazi Cabinet Minister, who was this week reported to have been pestered by men who wanted to steal his bath towel, yesterday said he had received death threats.

Transport and Communications Minister Mr Albert Shabangu caused controversy soon after his appointment early this year when he raised the fine for

Sowetan Africa News Service

abuse of government vehicles from R60 to R4 000.

Sources at his Mbabane home said at the weekend that two men had made repeated attempts to obtain his bath towel, first by saying they had been sent by him to collect it and then by trying to buy it.

Shabangu's maid said the two offered her R2 000

if she would give them the towel, but she refused.

There was wide speculation in Swaziland that the men wanted to harm Shabangu and had been advised by a sangoma to get his towel so that "muti" could be used on it.

Police

The incident was reported to the police and yesterday Shabangu said he had received calls about the

towel incident, together with death threats. He said the caller told him his maid had saved his life by refusing to hand over the towel.

Teacher

Shabangu is a former teacher and was a forceful leader of the teachers' trade union before he became a Cabinet Minister.

Police said yesterday they are investigating the matter.

ANC to help return youths home to SA

Sowetan 21/5/92

312

2418

MBABANE - An ANC delegation has told the Swaziland government it will co-operate in repatriating youths who arrived in that country demanding to be sent to Zambia for military training.

The arrival of the 47 youths, all claiming to be ANC members, baffled the Swaziland govern-

Sowetan Africa
News Service

ment and refugee officials in Mbabane because the practice of sending political refugees abroad for military training ended when the ANC was unbanned in South Africa.

Officials at ANC headquarters also denied knowledge of the youths, who entered the country illegally, apparently from Natal. They have been held in prison at the southern town of Big Bend since their arrival.

On Tuesday an ANC delegation, led by Mr Jackie Selebi, head of the ANC repatriation programmes, had talks with the youths, together with Swaziland Interior Ministry and United Nations High Commission for Refugees officials.

Confirmed

Later Selebi confirmed that the ANC was no longer sending people for military training abroad.

He said: "On the other hand, some or all of these young persons could be members of our organisation. They mentioned some names of high-ranking ANC officials, people who had directed them to come to Swaziland and then proceed abroad.

"I will not reveal those names. We have to carry out thorough investigations when we get back to South Africa."

The youths are expected to be returned to South Africa soon, according to the ANC delegation.

Suddenly politics arrives in Swaziland

21 March 22/5-28/592 (312)

AFTER 19 years in which political parties were banned, the kingdom of Swaziland suddenly finds it has two.

The day before 24-year-old King Mswati addressed the nation on political developments, the People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo), which had been operating underground, decided to defy the law and go public. Nervous officials refused to let party members use administration offices in the capital, Mbabane, so they moved to an open area near the market place and announced that the party was "unbanning itself".

The meeting named insurance assessor Kision Shongwe as party president and lawyer Dominic Mngomezulu as secretary general. Both in their early 30s, they are typical of Pudemo's targeted membership — articulate and educated.

Party officials support multi-party democracy and suggestions are being made that the absolute monarchy should become a constitutional monarchy, giving more power to parliament.

Soon after the Pudemo announcement, the Swaziland United Front also went public. It has a rural base and links with Swazi tribal groupings in neighbouring South Africa.

Despite the illegality of these moves, the authorities took no action and made no comment.

"It's difficult," said a policeman, who did not want to be named. "A few months ago a spokesman for the king said that dissidents should come out of the bushes, and exiles should return, so that differences can be openly discussed. Until we get further instructions we cannot act."

When the king spoke the day after Pudemo's

Swaziland has been a monarchy

for the past 19 years. Now two

political parties have come into the open

and the king has set up a committee to

canvass views on constitutional change,

reports **NORMAN SOWERBY**

action to thousands at the open-air traditional meeting place, the Royal Cattle Kraal, he did not refer to Pudemo, but announced the names of an 11-member committee to canvass views from the nation "on constitutional developments".

The members include at least three supporters of multi-party politics who belong to organisations opposed to the present no-party system.

Swaziland has been ruled by the Dlamini dynasty of absolute monarchs for 300 years. King Mswati came to the throne in 1986 and there is a feeling among the 800 000 population that he might be the last king of his kind.

Improved health services during the past 25 years have meant that more than 40 percent of the population is aged 15-40. They are relatively well-informed and sophisticated, and have had improved opportunities for education and travel abroad.

As a result they question what was previously unquestioned and compare their country's ways with developments in other countries.

Foreign diplomats are playing a discreet role in these awakening interests. They have addressed meetings of the Human Rights Association of Swaziland (Humaras), formed last year and calling itself "not a political party



King Mswati

but a political organisation".

United States Ambassador Stephen Rogers said: "We, like other aid donors, will increasingly consider democratisation and human rights as we plan our aid expenditure. This is a necessary underpinning to economic development."

"Swaziland's record on human rights is remarkably good," added British High Commissioner Brian Watkins. "But it is encouraging to see how Humaras has grown. Its existence shows an advance in government thinking on human rights."

The king is urging that change should not be encouraged "for the sake of fashion". He told chiefs: "I have heard that some people are calling for the abandonment of our system. This system is Swazi. It should not be abandoned."

Members of the committee set up by the king are appointed as individuals, not as representatives of any organisation. All are to be seen as supporting the decisions of the majority. — Gemini News

Winnie 'fired' Nelson's aide

CP News 24/5/72

By CP REPORTERS

WINNIE Mandela, estranged wife of the ANC president, is alleged to have fired her husband's personal secretary without his knowledge.

The secretary, Buntle Setshogwe, said yesterday she still regarded herself as Nelson Mandela's employee and would fight her "dismissal" through the right channels.

"I was not employed by Winnie and she has no right to fire me," Setshogwe said.

Earlier this month Winnie is also alleged to have chaired a regional executive committee meeting of the ANC Women's League (PWW) in which the region's general secretary, Lindi Maseko, was relieved of her post because the organisation did not have money.

Maseko said the meeting was attended by Winnie, deputy general secretary Maria Mopelo and Joan Fubbs a member of the regional executive committee.

She said during the meeting they told her that she had been stripped of her status as the full-time general secretary and that she should only volunteer her services. She was told to come into the women's league offices only once or twice a month, she said.

Maseko said: "I was shattered by the news and am pursuing the matter. Although we only have a draft constitution, I feel my dismissal was unconstitutional. I won't rest until the matter has been decided by the full meeting of the REC."

Winnie's deputy, Gwen Mahlangu, said she was not aware of Maseko's dismissal and added that the REC would meet today to discuss the latest developments in the women's league and they would issue a statement after the meeting.

A source said that heads are set to roll at today's meeting as disenchanted executive members are expected to tell Winnie candidly to stop behaving "as if she owned the ANC".

Swazis expel 47 ANC youths

By FRED KHUMALO

312

EIGHT Natal youths, part of a group of 55 who illegally crossed the border into Swaziland with the hope of being sent to Zambia where they would undergo military training, remain holed up in Swaziland's Big Bend prison, the ANC has revealed.

They were arrested two weeks ago. Forty-seven of the youths were repatriated on Thursday, but the remaining eight await final deportation procedures, according to southern Natal ANC deputy-secretary Sihle Ndlaazi.

Ndlaazi said the youths were expected back "sometime next week", as the deportation process was lengthy.

Ndlaazi told City Press that aspiring Umkhonto weSizwe soldiers could approach the ANC as the organisation was continuing with its military programme. CP News 24/5/72

"Nothing is done in secrecy now as we are training a regular army for the future SA. The comrades should have gone through the right channels," said Ndlaazi.

Although officials at ANC headquarters had denied knowledge of the youths, the Durban structure of the organisation did not disclaim them outright.

010 am 23/5/79

M-Net eyes Swaziland

M-NET representatives from SA are to visit Swaziland next week to discuss a proposed television service for that country.

Talks would be held with the Swaziland Television and Broadcasting Corporation. The Times of Swaziland reported yesterday.

Bus drivers, taximen clash (312)

A SWAZILAND police spokesman on Wednesday confirmed that interstate buses travelling between Swaziland and South Africa were conveying passengers under armed escort because of a dispute between their drivers and

those of minibus taxis.

The spokesman said Swazi police accompanied the buses from the Manzini central bus rank to the Swazi/SA border at Oshoek where South African security forces took over.

Minibus drivers are alleged to have threatened to attack and burn down interstate buses.

Efforts by Swaziland's transport ministry to bring the two sides together by forming a joint interstate public transport corporation failed last week. - Sapa

Sawetan 29/5/92

Fiefdom facing a modern crisis

THE muzzled voices of Swazi opposition parties are gradually becoming stronger and more collective in calling upon King Mswati III to free the democratic process in the kingdom.

Dr Ambrose Zwane, leader of the oldest unofficial opposition party, the Ngwane National Liberation Congress (NNLC), told AIA his party is demanding the removal of the powerful King's Order-in-Council decree of April 12 1973 to free political activity in the country.

The 19-year-old legal decree, declared by the then-King Sobhuza II, repealed the independence constitution, suspended parliament and banned all party politics while giving sweeping powers to the monarch and a few individual advisors serving as the King's Council (Liqoqo).

Says Zwane: "Underground political parties in Swaziland are like parties in exile. The King needs to come out into the open and invite them to participate fully in the country's democratic process."

He also emphasises that last year the King made a speech promising some political freedom for these parties but has so far failed to deliver.

Similar calls have been made at meetings and in the media by leaders of the People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo) and the Swaziland Youth Congress (Swayoco).

Pudemo secretary-general Dominic Mngomezulu says there are reasons why democratic forces inside Swaziland have been dormant.

Mngomezulu says those who opposed the repeal of the parliament could not publicly condemn the King because they supported his stand against the Pretoria government. He says supporters of democracy at the time felt the King needed support in his anti-apartheid fight.

Sobhuza's charismatic leadership and the stability offered by the Swazi economic situation at the time were enough to contain all dissenting voices, said Mngomezulu. Problems seem to have come to a head following the King's death and the autocratic governments that took over before Mswati's installation in 1987, culminating in the present economic crisis.

Pointing towards a new direction for Swazi politics, both Zwane and Mngomezulu are calling for a national referendum instead of the current revisionist meetings held under the Tinkhundla system.

In a bid to curb the economic crisis, encourage investments by Western governments and individuals as well as keep the fragile peace initiatives from breaking, the King has set up a commission to review the flagging Tinkhundla system – a process known as Vusela II.

When this commission was set up, many people voiced doubts that the system had been left unchecked for too long and that undemocratic forces within the government and Liqoqo have used it for their own ends.

However, Mngomezulu argues that while Vusela II meetings are meant to look critically into the economic and socio-political problems of the kingdom, they fall far short of what a national referendum could achieve.

He says the meetings are limited because the system is trying to review itself from the inside and its terms of reference carry a penalty clause for those in opposition to the views of the commissioners.

He also questions why the King and government are failing to lift the state of emergency to assure Swazi citizens that the political climate has improved.

Pudemo and other progressive forces are calling for pressure groups, organised labour and the church to form a national forum or convention to decide the future of Swaziland.

The NNLC leader revealed he is currently holding meetings with the Vusela II committee. He is also calling for a return to parliamentary democracy and a radical approach to Vusela II.

Without mincing words, Zwane says there is a need for the King to remove himself from direct politics. "The King should be above politics, and at the moment he is not. The problem is that under the Tinkhundla system, all political parties were banned – yet the Imbokodvo Movement is still in place."

The Imbokodvo Movement is the party that led Swaziland to independence in 1968 and fell foul of voters during the 1972 general elections in which the results became contested between this party and the NNLC.

Zwane says the way forward would be to do away with Tinkhundla and its feudal nature and restructure Vusela II into something like Codesa.

"Imbokodvo should resign from power and stop masquerading as a democratic force," adds Zwane.

The NNLC leader says the Swaziland economy is in dire need of change in order to safeguard its future. He says the economy is feeling the pinch as most aid investment is bypassing Swaziland and finding its way to Eastern European countries.

Zwane says he has heard the rumour about the national Tinkhundla elections being held in November. "If the government is still going to conduct them under the Tinkhundla system, there will be trouble because people do not want this thing."

Three quarters of the population (600 000) stayed away from the last elections. – AIA

Swaziland jails ANC trio

Sowetan 5/6/92

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Sowetan Africa News Service

MBABANE - Three young South Africans claiming to be members of the ANC were jailed for 30 days in Mbabane on Wednesday for illegal entry into Swaziland.

Moses Madalane Sotho, Lapson Makhubela and Thembisile Ngomane from the Nelspruit area arrived in the kingdom late last month and asked for political asylum and to be sent to a third country to continue their studies.

United Nations High Commission for Refugees offi-

cials in Mbabane said they could not make those arrangements.

The three pleaded guilty to illegal entry and could not pay a R50 fine. Police sources said they would be sent back to South Africa after their sentences.

Swazi court jails ANC trio

MBABANE — Three young ANC members who crossed into Swaziland illegally last month were sentenced to 30 days' jail by a Mbabane Magistrate's Court on Wednesday when they failed to pay R50 admission of guilt fines. The two youths and a 24-year-old woman had requested political asylum saying they had left SA because of the ongoing violence. No decision has been taken on their request.

STAR 5/6/92.

Swaziland buys power

THE Swaziland Electricity Board said in Mbabane yesterday that because of the drought, more than 90% of the country's electric power was being imported from Eskom in SA. The board would pay Eskom R50m this year.

31 pay
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STAR 16/7/92

Krishnas told not to feed children ³¹²

MBABANE — Members of a South African Hare Krishna group have been told to stop distributing food to hungry children in Swaziland by the country's Interior Ministry.

* A ministry spokesman said no one could distribute food — even in a drought — without registering as an organisation.

* The Hare Krishna mission has alarmed some Swazis who are unfamiliar with their shaven heads.

* After they distributed food at one primary school in Mbabane, the headmistress forbade them to return.

ANC occupies NP offices in Cape

Own Correspondent

CAPE TOWN — At least 15 ANC Youth League members and two senior ANC figures occupied the offices of the National Party in Burg Street yesterday in an action which brought hundreds of people to central Cape Town.

The occupation of the NP offices was preceded by a mock trial, attended by thousands of ANC Youth League supporters, during which President de Klerk and Foreign Minister Pik Botha were given "life sentences". Among those who entered the D.F. Malan Building as part of the ANC's mass action

campaign were the organisation's western Cape secretary Tony Yengeni and regional executive member Christmas Tinto.

It is understood that the NP's offices were unoccupied when the group entered with a document demanding an end to NP rule, and end to the "low-intensity war" against the ANC and its allies, and an interim government and a constituent assembly.

After they occupied the offices, policemen entered the building and closed the iron gate at the entrance. Standing on the steps in front of the gate, they refused to allow reporters, except a journalist from Die Burger, into the building. Hundreds of people stood

chanting behind a row of khaki-clad marshals outside the building, who allowed the drivers of vehicles parked in Burg Street to remove them.

A Youth League spokesman said plans for a sit-in at the Department of Manpower's offices were called off because of a large police presence.

The occupation of the NP's offices followed a mock trial by the Youth League on the Grand Parade yesterday of President de Klerk and some of his ministers.

There was a strong police presence on the Parade, about a third of which was closed off for parking. Before the "trial", ANC MP Jan van Eck said the Government was illegitimate because it had no mandate from the

people of South Africa.

"When President de Klerk made his speech in February 1990, we were all very hopeful when he said he would take South Africa to democracy. He lied."

Mr van Eck said the country was in turmoil since the breakdown of Codesa.

The present violence proved that the Government was illegitimate.

"President de Klerk's disbanding of 32 Battalion was good timing because he was trying to fool the international community that he was in control of the country."

"The people of South Africa and the ANC campaigned for the disbanding of 32 Battalion

and this is a victory for them."

He criticised Law and Order Minister Hennis Kriel who, he said, had "completely repoliticised the police force" within a few months, allowing them to launch vicious attacks on the ANC. He called for Mr Kriel to be replaced by his predecessor, Adriaan Vlok.

Mr van Eck said that if those killed in Boipatong had been white, the Government would have demolished the hostels and would not have waited for Mr Justice Goldstone to tell them to do something about it.

"The inaction of the Government means it is indirectly guilty of the murder of the people in Boipatong."

STAR 16/1/92 Krishnas told not to feed children

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A ministry spokesman said no one could distribute food — even in a drought — without registering as an organisation.

The Hare Krishna mission has alarmed some Swazis who are unfamiliar with their shaven heads. After they distributed food at one primary school in Mbabane, the headmistress forbade them to return.

STAR 16/1/92 Federalism the answer, envoy

By Mckeed Kotlole
Pretoria Bureau

Federalism is the solution to South Africa's political problems, according to retiring South African ambassador to Bophuthatswana Dr Willem Kotze (61).

Dr Kotze is also author of the recently published "Voetspore in die Kalahari".

The ambassador, who is retiring at the end of this month, was speaking at his farewell party in the Bophuthatswana capital, Mmabatho, yesterday. Acting State President T M Molatlhwa and Mafikeng

mayor Sidney Gordon were among the dignitaries who attended the function.

Dr Kotze, former MP for Parys in the Free State, was appointed ambassador to Bophuthatswana in 1982.

He said the "peace, harmony and co-operation in the nonracial society of Bophuthatswana" could form the basis for federalism as a way of life in South Africa in the future.

Dr Kotze said he could find no reason why Bophuthatswana and its neighbours could not unite to make a better future for themselves.

The foundations of racial harmony had already being

New body to focus on aspirin

An organisation that seeks to highlight the benefits and risks of using aspirin, as well as recent discoveries of new uses for it, was launched in Johannesburg yesterday.

Harry Seftel, Wits University professor of African diseases and honorary president of the SA Aspirin Foundation, said preparations of salicylates, of which aspirin was an example, had been used for centuries for relief of pain.

"But it was only in the latter half of the 20th century that the new science of molecular biology discovered how aspirin works."

Swaziland gold (312)

MBABANE - Deposits of gold have been rediscovered in an area of Swaziland where miners flocked before the Witwatersrand boom a century ago.

Sowetan 17/7/92

Sowetan 17/7/92 (312)

The discovery was announced this week by Commissioner of Mines Mr Aaron Vlakati who said the Rio Tinto company discovered the deposits in the northern Piggs Peak area. Rio Tinto has a five-year contract to explore that area.

- *Sowetan African News Service.*

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Land claim

SWAZILAND Prime Minister, Obed Dlamini said yesterday that once an all-race government was in place in SA his country would open talks for the return of the black homeland of Kangwane.

"We do not wish to pressurise South Africa with hot matters during the transitional period, but once they are through with their problems we would like them to attend to the issue of returning Kangwane, which is part of our land, to Swaziland," Mr Dlamini said at the end of a week-long visit to Botswana.

7
police ● Swazis clam Kwa-Ngwane

Return our land, says Swazi leader

Sowetan 20/7/92 (312)

■ Swaziland wants KaNgwane returned to Swaziland:

SWAZILAND would open talks for the return of the black homeland of KaNgwane once an all-race government was in place in South Africa, Prime Minister Mr Obed Dlamini said at the weekend.

"We do not wish to burden South Africa with such matters during the transitional period but once they are

through with their problems we would like them to attend to the issue of returning KaNgwane which is part of our land," Dlamini said.

KaNgwane is one of 10 self-governing states created by Pretoria in the 1960s which gave blacks a political say in their territories while denying them a national voice.

Call for crisis meeting after Mugabe's anti-Semitic jibe

BIDAY 21/7/92
MICHAEL HARTNACK

HARARE — Zimbabwe's Jewish Board of Deputies is seeking an urgent meeting with President Robert Mugabe over an anti-Semitic gibe he reportedly made to a crowd in Matabeleland.

The government-controlled Bulawayo Chronicle reported that while he explained his plans to nationalise white land, during a rally in the Bubi district, Mugabe said: "Commercial farmers are hard-hearted people, you would think they were Jews."

Shortly afterwards he told a German television crew: "White people had better face the land problem now, rather than be deprived by force in the future. If white people had hearts, they would understand. But if they do not, hard luck."

Veteran white liberal politician and Central African Jewish Board of Deputies president Muriel Rosin said: "In other countries, remarks like this have started a wave of anti-Semitism." She said her eight-member board had held a crisis meeting in Harare on Sunday to discuss a letter to Mugabe, which was dispatched yesterday.

"We have requested with the utmost urgency an audience with the president as, throughout history, our experience has shown that such statements by those in power have often been the forerunner of

extreme anti-Semitic actions," she said. "We would not want it to happen here."

She said Zimbabwe's Askenazi and Sephardi Jewish communities were small: "That is 1 007 souls, counting every Jew — man, woman and child. But they have done a hell of a lot for this country."

She said that when Jewish community leaders met Mugabe after Zimbabwe's 1980 independence, they broached the subject of his formal recognition of the PLO, which has an embassy in Harare. "He made it absolutely clear to us that politically they (ruling Zanu-PF party members) were anti-Israel, but were not anti-Semitic."

Rosing said that in the 60 years since she emigrated to the then Rhodesia from Britain to marry a leading local surgeon, she had never encountered anti-Semitism.

At the weekend, Mugabe consulted Sir Timothy Bell, image adviser to Britain's Tory party, on how to generate investor confidence in the face of "negative publicity" generated by the drought and the Zanu-PF plan to take over 6-million hectares of maize and tobacco belt currently owned by 4 500 whites.

Dry Swaziland, Lesotho reeling

GENEVA — A major international relief organisation said yesterday Swaziland and Lesotho had been especially badly hit by the drought sweeping southern Africa.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) said at least 40% of the 800 000 people of Swaziland would soon need emergency food aid as the country underwent its worst natural disaster in living memory.

"The figures of those affected ... are rising daily as whole communities, proudly self-sufficient just a year ago, succumb to the ravages of a searing drought which has reduced the harvest to 30% of normal."

At the same time, basic rations provided in a government relief operation were already being reduced by 30% as supplies threatened to run out.

In Lesotho the drought was hitting hard in mountain districts. In one hospital, one tap was being used for one hour a day for all hospital needs.

The IFRC weekly bulletin quoted Lesotho Red Cross official Roland Mokomo as saying the age-old community help system could be breaking down "with neighbours and relatives apparently unable to help those even more unfortunate than themselves". — Sapa-Reuter.

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Africa in

Border dispute 312

MBABANE - Swaziland is continuing its claims to areas of land in South Africa's Lowveld, Prime Minister Obed Dlamini said at the weekend. *Sowetan 21/7/92*

The claims are based on the belief that borders were wrongly drawn up during the colonial era. Many Swazis argue that the South African homeland of KaNgwane, to the north of the kingdom, and Ingwavuma in Natal on its southern border, are rightly part of Swaziland. - *Sowetan Africa News Service.*

Swazi mine to close

MBABANE - Swaziland's only coal mine, which earns the country around R7 million annually, is to close down at the end of the month.

Emaswati Coalmine has told about 250 workers that they will lose their jobs, but mine officials were unable to comment further yesterday.

The mine is situated in Mpaka in the centre of the country. - Sowetan

Africa News Service and Sapa-

Reuter-AP-AFP.

Sowetan

24/7/92

312

Swaziland loses aid

MBABANE - SWAZILAND is losing out on international drought aid because donor nations believe the country is relatively well equipped to deal with the emergency.

Explaining the dwindling drought aid, Swaziland's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Prince Mboni Dlamini, said yesterday that some donors and aid agencies were saying Swaziland should use funds earmarked for other development projects to cope with the drought crisis.

Sowetan 3/2 24/7/92

Swaziland outlaws polygamy

MBABANE — Polygamous marriages in Swaziland, allowed under Swazi traditional law, are now forbidden under a new marriage law. This was revealed on Thursday during legal argument in the

Swaziland High Court. The issue arose when the second wife of a fraud accused wanted to have her South African insurance policy transferred to Swaziland as surety for her husband's bail. — Sapa.



Royal wives start charity

26/7/92

FOR THE first time in Swazi history, young royal wives can now talk to the press, radio and television as ordinary women or mothers.

The break in tradition came after the wives formed Lusito, a private welfare organisation, to assist the poor with hospital fees for their children.

Lusito means "help" in the Siswati language.

The move by Inkhosikati Sibonelo LaMngometulu and other Emakhosikati (royal wives) to form this charity is turning the tables on old traditions in the Swazi royal household.

King Mswati III has to face the challenge of seeing his wives and three other members of the royal family being quoted in the press or giving radio and television interviews in their individual capacity.

LaMngometulu says Lusito plans to send poor children abroad for specialist medical treatment, if necessary. She is the president of the new organisation. Other members are Inkhosikati CaMabuza, Inkhosikati LaNgozwane, Thabsile Dlamini and Veleleni Dlamini, a member of the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

Inkhosikati LaMabuza explains that as members of

the younger generation of Swazis, they have realized that the country does not have good hospitals for children with serious illnesses and adults with terminal diseases.

"We have become aware of the serious condition of the needs of children and the terminally ill and the fact that our hospitals have not developed enough to cope with today's needs in hospital care," she says.

"While government is trying to remedy that situation we have also found it would be best not to wait, but act to save lives," adds LaMabuza.

The King's wives have had a limited involvement with children in the past, visiting and comforting them in hospitals.

Says LaMabuza: "At times children and adults alike are referred to hospitals across our borders and the family needs to travel with them but cannot afford that extra cash for food and accommodation.

"We hope to be able to help with such arrangements. In times of disaster like floods and fires we also find that extra help is needed."

Money for Lusito will be raised from the public, donors, businesspeople and governments. — AIA

IT BRAND

Arms cache found ^{3/2}

MBABANE - Swaziland police have discovered an arms cache including 10 AK-47 rifles hidden in dense bush at the north-eastern Lomahasha border post with Mozambique.

Sowetan 29/7/92
The area has become notorious for the smuggling of arms of war from Mozambique and Lomahasha police have reported an increase in crime. Drivers of trucks carrying goods to Maputo, just an hour away from the Swazi border are victims.

Sowetan 29/7/92

Buses withdrawn

MBABANE - The owner of a Swaziland transport company which has been operating bus services to South Africa has pulled out because of violent opposition by local kombi drivers. (312)

Mr Robbie Zeeman said yesterday that there had been weeks of harassment of his buses by kombi drivers and shots had been fired. "After the first shooting we were called to a meeting with the kombi drivers at the Road Transportation Board but the feud has not been solved," he said. One of his drivers was injured in the shootings.

Swazi maize shortfall

3/2

MBABANE - Swaziland has 350 000 people in need of emergency food supplies, but so far food aid is reaching only 7 000, according to drought disaster task force chairman Mr Ben Nsibandze.

He said latest estimates indicated that 7 000 tons of emergency food supplies were needed in drought-hit areas.

Swaziland's Agriculture Ministry said recently that the country's annual maize requirement was just over 160 000 tons and the predicted local crop for this year was 69 000 tons, leaving a shortfall of 91 000 tons.

Sowetan 30/7/92

Drought could close big pulp, sugar plants

STAR 11/8/92

312

MBABANE — The South African-owned Usuthu pulp mill in Swaziland and a major sugar company are contemplating closing down because of a water shortage caused by the current drought. Sugar and pulp are Swaziland's major export earners and the country's major employers.

Natural Resources Minister Senzenjini Tshabalala told the Senate that the Usuthu Pulp Company, which is owned by Sappi, and Mhlume Sugar Company had both warned his ministry that they may have to stop operating until water supplies improved.

This week another major pulp company in Swaziland announced that it was retrench-

AFRICA NEWS SERVICE

ing 200 workers because of the prevailing depressed market conditions.

Tshabalala added that a delegation from the sugar company had told him that authorities in South Africa were now reluctant to release water supplies from the eastern Transvaal through the Komati River dam project, a joint exercise between the South African and Swazi governments.

The R500 million Komati project involves the construction of dams in Swaziland as well as at Driekoppies, in Transvaal.

312
Pulp firm in trouble

8/DA 43/8/92
A SWAZILAND pulp company, Usutu, which is operated by Sappi SA, may close due to lack of water supplies, a senior minister warned. He said SA had to release more water into the country.

In another development, one of the country's largest timber companies, Peak Timbers, was to re-trench 200 workers by the end of the month, management said.

Swazi royal women lend hand

SOUTH 8/81-12/8/92

312

FOR the first time in Swazi history, young royal wives can talk to the press, radio and television as ordinary women and mothers.

The break in tradition came after the wives formed Lusito, a private welfare organisation, to assist the poor with hospital fees for children.

Lusito means "help" in the Siswati language.

The move by Inkhosikati Sibonele LaMngometulu and other Emakhosikati (royal wives) to form this charity is overturning old traditions in the Swazi royal household.

King Mswati III has to face the challenge of seeing his wives and three other members of the royal family quoted in the press or giving radio and television interviews in their individual capacities.

Unlike royal families in Europe, Swazi royal wives have never appeared in public, except for ceremonial purposes.

Lusito is the first organisation of its kind to be formed by royal family members. Lusito plans to send children abroad for medical treatment, if necessary.

LaMngometulu is president of the new organisation. Other members are Inkhosikati CaMabuza, Inkhosikati LaNgozwane, Thabsile Dlamini and Veleleni Dlamini, a member of the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

Inkhosikati LaMabuza explains that, as members of the younger generation of Swazis, they have realized the country does not have good hospitals for children with serious illnesses and adults with terminal diseases.

— AIA

Wednesday August 12 1992 SOWETAN

AFRICA NEWS Water may be released from Transvaal

Swaziland begs for water

Sowetan 12/8/92 3/2

■ Major industries may close:

MBABANE - Swaziland is to send a high-powered delegation to South Africa to appeal for the release of water from the Western Dam in the Transvaal to save two major industries.

Major wood pulp and sugar mills in

Swaziland early this month threatened to suspend operations because of water shortages caused by the current drought. Sugar and pulp operations are Swaziland's major export earners, and the country's major employers. according to recent government statistics sugar exports accounted for R305

million of the country's total export revenue of almost R800 million, and wood pulp contributed R21 million. the two agro-industries together employ more than 20 000 people.

The closure warning was given by Natural Resources Minister Senzenjani Tshabalala in the country's senate.

brief

Sowetan 19/8/92
Following a rowdy meeting on Monday, members resolved to file an application at the High Court for the revocation of the ban. It was imposed by royal decree in 1973 by former monarch King Sobhuza on the grounds that multiparty politics were causing division in the country. (3/2)

Unbanning sought (3/2)

MBABANE - Swaziland's human rights organisation is to put pressure on the government to revoke the 19-year-old ban on political parties.

Sowetan 19/8/92

Sowetan 20/8/92

Food aid less than hoped

MBABANE - Swaziland will not get as much food aid as hoped during the current drought, a major donor agency spokesman said yesterday.

Mr Mark Bowden, African director of the Save the Children Fund, said conditions in Swaziland were bad but not as serious as in other African countries. Swazi officials monitoring the drought claim that 350 000 of the country's population of 800 000 are in need of emergency food relief.

Sapa-Reuter-AFP.

(312)

News briefs

30 days for illegal entry

A YOUNG South African was jailed for 30 days in the Manzini Magistrate's court on Friday for illegally entering Swaziland.

Alfred Khoza told the court he had entered Swaziland in transit and had intended to ask for political asylum while he made arrangements to travel to Tanzania where he claimed he was to undergo military training for the African National Congress.

Earlier this year, a group of ANC officials from Johannesburg visited Swaziland and interviewed several young South Africans who were arrested on charges of illegally entering the country.

The groups numbering several hundred also claimed they had been recruited by the ANC and were on their way to Tanzania or Zambia for military training. - Sapa

Sowetana 25/8/92

Protests after 2 acquitted

Sotho 27/8/92

312

■ Student from Botswana shot dead during street clash:

MBABANE - A storm of protest is sweeping Swaziland following the acquittal on Tuesday of two men accused of shooting dead a visiting Botswana student.

Protests were received by local newspapers from Botswana as news of the acquittal circulated, and there have been demands for a retrial.

The prosecution in the murder trial said two students from Lesotho who were vital eyewitnesses to the shooting had refused to travel to Swaziland to give evidence.

Timothy Tema, a South African, and Ralph Thring, a Swazi, both of Manzini, were charged with the murder of Mr Setamiso Kgobo, a Botswana student visiting the University of Swaziland for an athletics meeting in February.

The prosecution alleged the shooting followed clashes with Botswana and Sotho students.

Monday August 31 1992 SOWETAN

AFRICA NEWS Tough start to Angola

Sultan to visit Swazis

■ Brunei's Mr Money to pay State visit: (3/2)

Sowetan 31/8/92
MBABANE - The Sultan of Brunei is to pay a State visit to Swaziland soon at the invitation of King Mswati III.

The sultan is regularly voted the richest man in the world.

The invitation followed a visit earlier this year to Brunei by a large Swazi government and business delegation led by Mswati.

The delegation also visited a number of countries in Europe, America and the Far East to promote Swaziland among

foreign investors as a potential trading partner and ideal choice for investments.

Swaziland Commerce and Industry Minister Senator Barnabus Mhlongo this week defended the delegation's tour, saying it was essential in attracting badly needed foreign investment and overseas markets.

Swaziland had benefited economically during the past 10 years from the conflicts in neighbouring Mozambique and South Africa. - Sapa.

Corruption finding (312)

MBABANE - The Swaziland Government admitted in parliament that current investigations show there is corruption in some government departments.

A government spokesman would not specify the departments or the extent of the corruption but said investigations were under way. *Sowetan*
11/9/92

Sofo 17/9/92

Diet causes measles (312)

MBABANE - A serious outbreak of measles sweeping parts of Swaziland is believed to be due to nutritional problems. A spokesman for the Swaziland Health Unit said yesterday the inadequate and unbalanced diet of rural people, as a result of the drought, had weakened their bodies' resistance to disease.

2 BUSINESS DAY, Tuesday, September 22 1992

SA taxi drivers battle Swazis

312 THEO RAWANA

SA taxi drivers were engaged in their second cross-border feud in three months when fighting broke out between SA and Swazi operators in Manzini at the weekend.

Minibus operations into Zimbabwe are still on hold after SA operators clashed with the Zimbabweans and SA vehicles were stoned in Bulawayo two months ago. B10AM

Sapa reports several people were injured at a Manzini terminus when taxi drivers fought over the transportation of mineworkers. Swazi police had to fire warning shots.

The Swazis are reported to oppose SA minibuses taking their business. Government efforts to resolve the dispute have failed. 22/9/92

SA taxi boss Peter Rabali, who is chairman of the National African Federated Transport Organisation, yesterday confirmed reports of the fighting, but said he did not have details. Reports said combatants hurled stones at each other and then fought with fists. At least 100 people were involved.

After the fighting, police and the knobkierie-wielding mineworkers escorted the SA minibuses out of Manzini.

Leon attacks govt over gambling Bill

B10AM 22/9/92

THE controversial Gambling Amendment Bill designed to shut a loophole in the Act which allows hundreds of "illegal" gambling dens to mushroom throughout SA is expected to be approved next week by the standing committee.

In the interim, President F W de Klerk and his government have come in for severe criticism by the most vocal opposition on the parliamentary standing committee on justice — MP Tony Leon (DP Houghton).

Leon has opposed the Bill most fervently because it "flies in the face of free market principles", and he complained yesterday that government had excluded him from attending the vital session through its lack of sensitivity and bigotry.

He said the committee was meeting on Monday and Tuesday, two of the three most important Jewish religious holidays, Rosh Hashanah, which meant no self-respecting Jew could attend to testify.

He accused De Klerk of flaunting both democracy and "the free market principles he has so recently come to espouse".

"De Klerk operates with clear contra-

BILLY PADDOCK

diction and deliberate sleight of hand, committing his government to free market principles and then ordering that legislation be passed effectively in favour of the Sun International cartel," he said.

He pointed out that De Klerk, in his speech to the NP Transvaal congress last week, was in favour of gambling continuing in the TBVC states, while he was busy negotiating the reincorporation of these into SA.

Former chairman of the committee and now Law and Order Deputy Minister Gert Myburgh said the Bill was not amending the principle of the Act which was to prohibit hard gambling, and he expected Parliament to pass it in October.

He said all the parties in the other two houses had indicated their support for the change in definition of hard gambling to bring it in line with the Interpol definition.

"The principle of the Act remains and the NP is opposed to hard gambling. But because there were no prosecutions being brought because of the loophole in the Act we have had to shut it down," he said.

Trader facing illicit gem deal charges

STEPHANE BOTHMA

DIAMOND dealer Maurice Katz was arrested by gold and diamond branch detectives moments after allegedly concluding an illegal diamond deal worth R530 000.

Katz, 44, and co-accused Louis Auttard, 38, both of Bedfordview, appeared briefly in the Johannesburg Regional Court yesterday on a charge of illicit diamond dealing.

The two men were released by Magistrate H Wolman with a warning to appear on October 28.

Katz, a businessman and registered diamond dealer, and Auttard were arrested on Friday when they allegedly bought diamonds — 189 carats worth R530 000 — for R275 000 from undercover detectives, Witwatersrand police liaison officer Capt Eugene Opperman said.

The arrests took place minutes after the conclusion of the alleged illegal deal, and followed months of investigation.

Officials check on Chinese hawkers

ADRIAN HADLAND

HOME Affairs Department inspectors were sent to Johannesburg's CBD yesterday to check on Chinese informal traders' work and residence papers, department spokesman Chris Pretorius said. B10AM

The move followed complaints from the African Council of Hawkers and Independent Business last week that Chinese hawkers had access to duty-free goods and were undercutting local traders without the required permits. 22/9/92

Reports at the weekend also suggested some Chinese immigrants were being misled by promises of work and residence in SA by agents in their home countries.

Civic and church leaders said tension between local and Chinese hawkers had increased dramatically in recent weeks.

A Johannesburg City Council licensing official said the number of informal traders in the city was swelling by almost 1 000 a month with about half of the new licences issued to Chinese traders. Hawkers did not have to present work and residence permits to obtain licences.

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DIGITAL PICTURES

Sowetan 16/10/92
Arms confiscated 312

MBABANE - Swazi police are holding four South Africans, two of them women, for entering the country in possession of arms of war.

A police spokesman said yesterday four AK-47 rifles were found in their car as they crossed into Swaziland from Mozambique. They are Lucas Mahlangu, Jeremiah Khoza, Betty Makhubela and Angelinah Muene, all from Germiston. They were travelling in a car with registration KNE 374T, according to police. -

Sowetan Africa News Service

NEWS IN BRIEF

Plans for Swazi dam

A FEASIBILITY study of the R280m-R300m Maguga Dam on the Komati River in Swaziland was well advanced, SA Water Affairs spokesman Paul Roberts said yesterday. (3/2) (5/8)

In terms of a treaty ratified by SA on November 6, Swaziland had two years to decide. Roberts said the dam would benefit agriculture in both countries.

Swazi women urged to take leading role

MBABANE — The traditionally male-dominated society of Swaziland should have a woman prime minister in the not too distant future, according to Swazi Prime Minister Obed Dlamini's wife, Mirriam.

In an interview published in yesterday's Swazi Observer, she said that with the many social, political and economic changes taking place, African women could no longer afford to remain in the background.

Swazi women must let their majority voice be heard, cast aside their inhibitions and take part in social, economic and political debate and in the political development of their country, she said. — Sapa.

STAR 29/12/72

Top journalist dies in Mbabane

MBABANE — Veteran Swaziland journalist Norman Sowerby, the BBC correspondent in the mountain kingdom, died on Wednesday after a long illness.

British-born Sowerby arrived in Swaziland in 1975 as managing editor of The Times of Swaziland, a tabloid newspaper.

He transformed the newspaper into the country's most popular daily and worked on a freelance basis for The Star Africa Service. (312)

He retired five years ago from The Times to concentrate on working for the BBC, Reuters and several magazines.

Sowerby, who leaves his wife and two children, will be buried in Mbabane today. — Sapa.

SWAZILAND - GENERAL

1993

Swazi tycoon's R20m SA spree

STW 10/1/93

By CHARIS PERKINS (312)
A SECRETIVE Swazi sugar and cattle baron has gone on a spending spree in the eastern Transvaal, buying up a string of hotels and farms worth R20-million.

Mr Dumisa Dlamini, described as a charming and friendly man by people in the area, has bought at least eight well-known hotels and six farms to date. He is negotiating for at least three other hotels in the eastern Transvaal and is looking for resorts in Pretoria and Natal. He could not be contacted this week, but his elder brother and personal secretary, Mr Elias Dlamini, said his brother was buying properties over the border because he believed Swazis should invest in South Africa in the same way as South Africans had business interests in Swaziland. "He does not want the Swazis to be seen as beggars always on the lookout for foreign money," Mr Elias Dlamini said.

Mr. Dumisa Dlamini, who is in his middle 30s, owns a string of Swazi sugar farms and cattle ranches.

In 1991 he branched out into the hotel industry in Swaziland, paying R4.4-million for the Swazi Inn, the Mgeni Hotel and Snokey Mountain Village. Last year he spent nearly R6-million on two Manzini hotels, the New George, and Uncle Charles.

Phone

Mr Dlamini began his eastern Transvaal spending spree by buying five sugar and citrus farms in Ectoraport for an estimated R8-million.

In June he bought two commercial hotels opposite each other in central Nelspruit, the Paragon and the Figtree. He also bought the Hotel Malelane, 60km from Nelspruit on the road to Komatipoort.

The former owner of the Grecian-style Paragon, Mr Billy Ross, said he received a phone call "out of the blue" from one of Mr Dlamini's employees offering to buy the hotel.

In August Mr Dlamini bought the Wayside Inn, a rustic two-star hotel dating back to 1897.

Three months later Mr Dlamini bought the Citrus Valley Lodge, paying with cash and with the aid of a bank loan.

"There are plenty of rumours going round about where he gets his money,

Secrecy as he buys up hotels



DUMISA DLAMINI
Plenty of rumours

declaration of the Deed Registry Amendment Decree of October 1988, which empowered the Swazi justice minister to intervene in the sale of any land.

Mr Dlamini — a nephew of Swazi Prime Minister Obed Dlamini, — is said to have few friends and visitors. He lives on one of his Big Bend farms with his wife and six children.

De Klerk brother to be dad again at 64

By CHARIS PERKINS

PRESIDENT FW de Klerk's brother, Professor Willem de Klerk — a 64-year-old grandfather of six — is about to become a father for the sixth time.

Professor de Klerk, a former newspaper editor and now a lecturer at the Rand Afrikaans University, married fellow academic Professor Nina Overton, 38, on December 23 1991.

He and his first wife, Elzabe, were divorced in June 1991 after separating about a year earlier.

The first Mrs de Klerk had cancer at the time and died in October last year.

This week, the expectant couple were reluctant to discuss their impending parenthood, saying it was "a personal matter".

Neither of them would confirm that the baby is due next month, but close friends said the pregnancy was already "common knowledge" at the time of Professor de Klerk's ex-wife's funeral.

Professor de Klerk has three daughters and two sons from his first marriage, and six grandchildren.



WILLEM DE KLERK
'A personal matter'

One daughter, Corlier a divorcee.

Professor de Klerk's eldest son, Willem, is a lawyer, while the other son, Jan, is a television cameraman.

Professor de Klerk declined to be photographed with his wife, while Prof. Overton would not draw on details of pregnancy or whether was expecting a boy or girl.

Blame stone-age lus

Sunday Times Reporter: New York

CAVEMAN last is destroying many modern marriages according to a new study.

It says the four-year itch which leads many of tod husbands astray is really a million years old. Caven were promiscuous to ensure that human life continues — and they passed down their philandering ways.

Dr Helen Fisher of New York says in her book *Anatomical Love* that primitive couples stayed together for 1 years to raise a child. Then they sought other partners. Couple's behaviour today is "rooted in the past".



ALLURING... Bernice is in great demand

Picture: TERRY SHEAN

Sweet 16 and already heading for stardom

Meet the Tight American... with taste!

the Figtree. He also bought the Hotel Malelane, 60km from Nelspruit on the road to Komatipoort.

The former owner of the Grecian-style Paragon, Mr Billy Ross, said he received a phone call "out of the blue" from one of Mr Dlamini's employees offering to buy the hotel.

In August Mr Dlamini bought the Wayside Inn, a rustic two-star hotel dating back to 1897.

Three months later Mr Dlamini bought the Citrus Valley Lodge, paying with cash and with the aid of a bank loan.

"There are plenty of rumours going round about where he gets his money, but we are all in the dark," said Mr Wolmarans.

Trouble

"He keeps telling us he started sugar farming when he was very young and that he works very hard, but it is impossible to expand at such a rate. The sugar industry is just not that lucrative.

"And why this sudden splurge when the tourist industry here is in such trouble? I find it hard to believe this is a straight-forward spending spree."

Seven days after securing the Citrus Valley Lodge, Mr Dlamini bought the Bambi in Machadodorp from the Protea group.

Last month he expanded his burgeoning empire to include Barberton, buying the one-star Impala Hotel on December 10 and the Phoenix Hotel on December 18.

In Swaziland he is best known for his attempt to murder two farm labourers known as the Matsengwa brothers, whom he accused of bewitching his two-year-old daughter.

Convicted

He dragged them to her graveside, tied them to stakes and roasted them. They were close to death when they were rescued.

He was convicted in the Swazi High Court in 1988 of attempted murder and was fined. Last year the brothers sued for R180 000 damages. They were awarded R90 000 by the court, but Mr Dlamini has lodged an appeal against the judgment.

He first hit Swazi headlines, however, by becoming involved in a row over the purchase of a sugar farm in Big Bend.

He kicked up a fuss after he had been beaten to the sale by a South African farmer, Mr Hans Helmut Steffen, demanding that Swazis have priority over foreign investors.

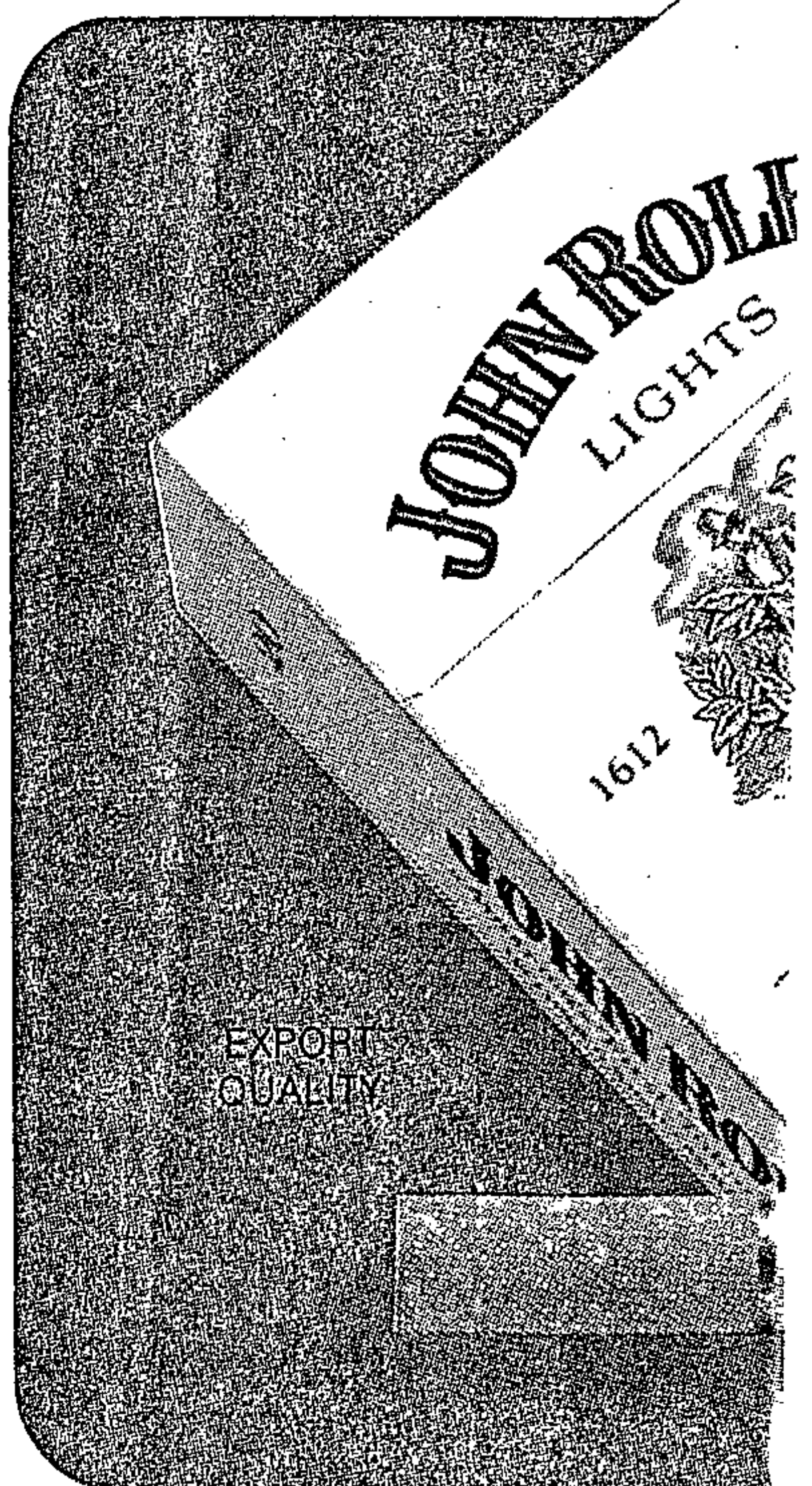
His protests led to the

OF SWAZI PRIME MINISTER Obed Dlamini, — is said to have few friends and visitors. He lives on one of his Big Bend farms with his wife and six children.

MUM'S THE WORD ... pregnant Nina O

Meet the Li with

JOHN LI



Swaziland to develop new investment code

MBABANE — Swaziland is developing a new investment code to help attract investors, Commerce and Industry Minister Barnabas Mhlongo said last week.

The idea was to bring into one format regulations ranging from labour laws to tax incentives, he said in an interview. "It is the creation of a one-stop investment office to simplify the process," Mhlongo said.

Experts from the UN Industrial Development Organisation have submitted an initial report on industrial and investment policy, which the Swazi ministry is studying before drafting the code.

Mhlongo said the ministry had created new schemes to encourage growth in the small business sector in a country heavily dependent on agriculture. He said the citrus, forestry and sugar industries had been hit hard by the 1992 drought, which was extending into this year.

"These industries are labour intensive and have had to retrench," he said.

Finance ministry officials said GDP was projected to fall 2% in 1992 from 2.5% growth in 1991 and 9.8% growth in 1990. They said the key agricultural sector's

contribution to GDP had tumbled to 16% from 20% last year as a result of the drought.

Some Swazis feared SA's re-emergence on the world scene after the apartheid years could have an adverse economic effect on Swaziland, which had benefited from companies seeking to invest in the region without political problems.

However, Mhlongo said he believed that in the medium to long term "the demise of apartheid is going to have a very positive effect in Swaziland".

"We believe that if there is political stability in SA, trade in the region will not be disrupted, bearing in mind that SA is our biggest trading partner," he said.

Swaziland gets about 80% of its imports from SA, including goods moving through the republic, and exports 70% of its products to SA with 40%-50% of the exports remaining there.

Mhlongo was enthusiastic about regional co-operation, saying it was "urgent" that SA joined regional groupings like the 10-nation Southern African Development Community as soon as a democratic government was in place. — Reuter.

Cash available to fund expansion

MBABANE — Swaziland's Central Bank governor James Nxumalo says the country has adequate cash to fund economic expansion he hopes will take off late this year or early in 1994.

"There is much more liquidity than the banking sector can absorb through lending to the private sector. We have more than 100-million emalangeni ready for lending to the private sector, which is more than adequate for quite a while," he said in an interview this week.

"I think we'll go through a rough time in 1993, but in the longer term I'm optimistic. I hope there will be an (economic) upturn, possibly towards the end of this year or early next year."

He said there was some concern over the projected 1992/93 budget deficit of about 100-million emalangeni after four years of

surplus. However, gross reserves were "quite healthy" at around 1-billion emalangeni at the end of December — equivalent to about six months' imports.

Acting Finance Minister Solomon Dlamini said the government was budgeting for a deficit for the 1993/94 fiscal year starting April 1 due in part to recession and drought.

But he expected to keep the deficit within bounds through strict controls on government spending. The deficit was being financed out of government reserves.

Nxumala said the broad-based money supply M3 had grown 19.7% in the year ended last December compared with 13.4% in 1991.

Nxumala said the Swazi currency was closely tied to the SA rand within the common monetary area. — Reuter.

'Tiresome' youth held ^{3/2}

MBABANE — A youth who accused the government of corruption during election education sessions being held in preparation for next month's elections was yesterday arrested by the Royal Swazi Police.

Martin Ntshangase is being held at the Bhunya police station and no charges have been laid against him. He was arrested as Prime Minister Obed Dlamini was calling for political tolerance at a meeting in Simunye. Prince Mahlalengani, chairman of the Electoral Education Commission, said after the arrest that he was "tired of being harassed by the youth". — *Sowetan Africa News Service*.

Sowetan 23/2/93

Swazi govt 'swindled'

MBABANE — Swaziland's government has been swindled out of millions of rands by foreign construction companies engaged in contract work, through misrepresentation at the customs and excise office, it says.

Customs inspector Lucas Magagula said yesterday foreign companies brought equipment into the country, thus cheating the government of millions of rands.

Magagula said local companies could not cheat because an invoice was needed in the event they purchased equipment from SA, while foreign companies were not required to do so.

Equipment for construction bought in SA to be used in the country must be registered at the customs department. — Sapa.

Swazis can't take plunge

MBABANE — The Swaziland Government is still seeking legal advice on whether to release a controversial "Black Wednesday" report on an inquiry commissioned after university students clashed with security forces on November 14 1990.

Prime Minister Obed Dlamini said this week his government was having difficulty in deciding whether to release the report as no legal advice had been obtained. — Sapa-

Reuter-AFP. (312)

Sowetan 25/12/93

Swazi squatters left homeless (312)

■ Government ignores pleas from shack dwellers to let them stay on and orders bulldozing of their homes:

Sowetan Africa News Service

Sowetan 26/2/93.

MBABANE — More than 300 squatters in Nkhanini, Nhlanguano, were left homeless after their shacks were bulldozed in a pre-dawn raid.

Mr Siphso Dlamini, chairman of the Nkhanini-Nhlanguano Squatters Association, said the residents were summoned by Regional Secretary of Shiselweni District Mr Duma Hlatshwayo last week and told to vacate the government farm on which they were illegally settled.

They were given until last Wednesday

and even an appeal to the Prime Minister, Mr Obed Dlamini, failed to persuade the Minister of Housing and Urban Development, Mr Thomas Stevens, to stall the evictions.

On Tuesday the office of the Prime Minister referred the squatters to the governor of Ludzidzini, where they were told the evictions would not take place until the King had been briefed.

The residents were shocked when their homes were surrounded by armed police at 4.00am on Wednesday morning.

They were ordered out of their homes which were bulldozed.

Bulldozers leave 300 homeless

By Bheki Matsebula
Star Africa Service

(312)

MBABANE — More than 300 squatters in Nkhanini location, Nhlangano, were left homeless after their shacks were razed by Swaziland government bulldozers in a pre-dawn raid on Wednesday.

Sipho Dlamini, chairman of the Nkhanini-Nhlangano Squatters' Association, said the residents were summoned by the regional secretary of Shiselweni District, Duma Hlatshwayo, last

week and told to vacate the government farm on which they were illegally settled.

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take place until the king had been briefed.

The residents were shocked when their homes were surrounded by armed police at 4 am on Wednesday.

Most of those squatters have been left out in the open, while a few have been accommodated by sympathetic people in the township.

Residents of the township have threatened to protest against the evictions by boycotting elections expected to take place soon.

B/DN 8/3/93

Swazis want land back

SWAZILAND expected SA to return all former Swazi territory before a transition to black majority rule in SA. Prince Mahla-lengani said when he addressed a meeting last week on the possible reincorporation into Swaziland of KaNgwane and Ing-wavuma, regions annexed almost a century ago. (312)

Swazi cops confirm death (3/2)

SWAZILAND police on Monday unofficially confirmed a *Times of Swaziland* report that a Swazi national, Sipho Sibandze, died at an African National Congress camp in Cuba while undergoing military training. *Sowetan* 10/3/93

The newspaper report quoted a Swaziland police source as saying Sibandze joined Cosatu while working as a migrant miner at a South African mine before joining the ANC. *Sowetan*

AFRICA BRIEFS

14/3-25/3/93 90
Aids on the rise 42

■MBABANE— Nearly 0.5 percent of Swaziland's population has been infected by the Aids virus, the Health Ministry said this week.

A ministry report, describing the situation as "extremely serious", said 25 000 of the kingdom's 700 000 people were HIV-positive. At the end of 1992, 248 Swazis had full-blown AIDS. The number of people with the HIV virus may double by 1997, it added. — Sapa-
Reuter

ANALYSIS *Plan to change tinkhundla system without upsetting stability* • Randy set to go

Swazi tradition challenged

By Nkosingphile Ziyane
reports for the Sowetan
Africa News Service.

SWAZI DRAMA Multiparty democ-

racy runs into a wall of opposition:

MBABANE — The current of multiparty democracy that has swept through most of Africa has run into a wall of tradition in Swaziland.

In recent weeks, the Electoral Education Committee, appointed by King Mswati III, has been publicising the findings of its investigation into how the traditional tinkhundla political system can be made more democratic without upsetting the stability of the country.

The exercise, called Vusela, was said to be, in effect, an opportunity for members of the public to express their feelings about the tinkhundla system, which provides for administration by appointed rather than democratically elected representatives.

Two commissions with a similar mandate, the first led by Prince Masitseta and the second by Prince Mahlallengeni, had submitted their findings to the king.

However, the king decided to appoint a third, dubbed Vusela III, also under the leadership of Prince Mahlallengeni, to reinforce the findings of the first two commissions. When Vusela III had completed its

hearings the king summoned the nation to the royal kraal to hear Prince Mahlallengeni's report-back.

The prince told the nation that the committee had found that the majority of Swazis still preferred the tinkhundla system but with certain amendments. The committee recommended that multiparty politics should not be allowed at this time but that the idea might be tested again in the future.

While they were hailed as a victory in traditional and conservative circles, the findings drew the wrath of various political formations that have been advocating multiparty democracy.

When the EEC visited Mbabane to explain the requirements for voting in the next election, youths led by the Vusela Resistance Movement's Mphandlana Shongwe tore up and burned the Tinkhundla Review Commission report in a defiant rejection of the findings.

Most of the political parties have taken advantage of the government's relaxed stance on political activity even though it is still nominally banned under a decree issued by King Sobhuza II in 1973.

The Ngwane National Liberatory

Congress, under the leadership of Dr Ambrose Zwane, welcomed the fact that the election would be by secret ballot even though political parties could not field candidates. But he accepted no other provision in the report.

The People's United Democratic Movement demanded a referendum on any future dispensation. Its members had walked out of the royal kraal when Prince Mahlallengeni announced that there would be no multipartyism. Such a walkout could be deemed treasonable according to tradition as this was a gathering called by the king.

Glenrose Dlamini, secretary-general of the Swaziland National Front, said "the ban on multi-party politics is a dream. Parties exist and cannot be wished away".

While many Swazis will support the tinkhundla initiative because it came from the king, the radical youth, now mainly concentrated in the Swaziland Youth Congress, together with the Human Rights Association of Swaziland and some influential members of the trade union movement, have condemned the whole tinkhundla exercise as an effort to entrench traditional systems and the Imbokodvo National



King Mswati III of Swaziland

Movement.

This was the party that was in power when the king scrapped the constitution in 1973. Opponents point out that no matter who is elected to the lower house, the senate — whose members are appointed by the king from among traditional chiefs

and princes — will have the power to veto any legislation that may be seen to threaten traditional institutions.

Repressive legislative instruments such as the state of emergency and the detention without trial regulation have still not been repealed.

The police seem nevertheless to have displayed a much more liberal attitude towards political dissent, particularly following a statement by Prime Minister Obed Dlamini, who is also Minister of Police. He called for tolerance while the country undergoes the transition towards a more acceptable political dispensation. A former trade unionist, the Prime Minister has not won friends among the traditionalists who are known to have sought his removal.

His position was especially in doubt after he allowed a march between Mbabane and Manzini while the king was absent on a visit to Zambia.

Police escorted the marchers and even offered lifts to those who became tired — thereby making a public relations coup and being referred to as "comrade police" by the marchers.

Opposition politics in Swaziland remains badly organised, however, and cannot offer any meaningful alternative to the traditionalists.

Some observers cannot understand the authorities' reluctance to accept a multiparty dispensation, since any party supported by the king will emerge victorious.

Swaziland's politics is a contest between the irresistible force of democracy and the immovable object of tradition, reports **NKOSINGPHILE ZIVANE** of The Star's Africa Service.

Tradition is still king in Swaziland

Star 15/4/93
(3:12)

THE CURRENT of multiparty democracy sweeping through Africa has run into a wall of tradition in Swaziland.

In recent weeks, the Electoral Education Committee (EEC), appointed by King Mswati III, has been publicising the findings of its investigation into how the traditional *tinkhundla* political system can be made more democratic without upsetting the country's stability.

The exercise, called *Vusela*, was said to be an opportunity for the public to express their feelings about the *tinkhundla* system, which provides for administration by appointed representatives.

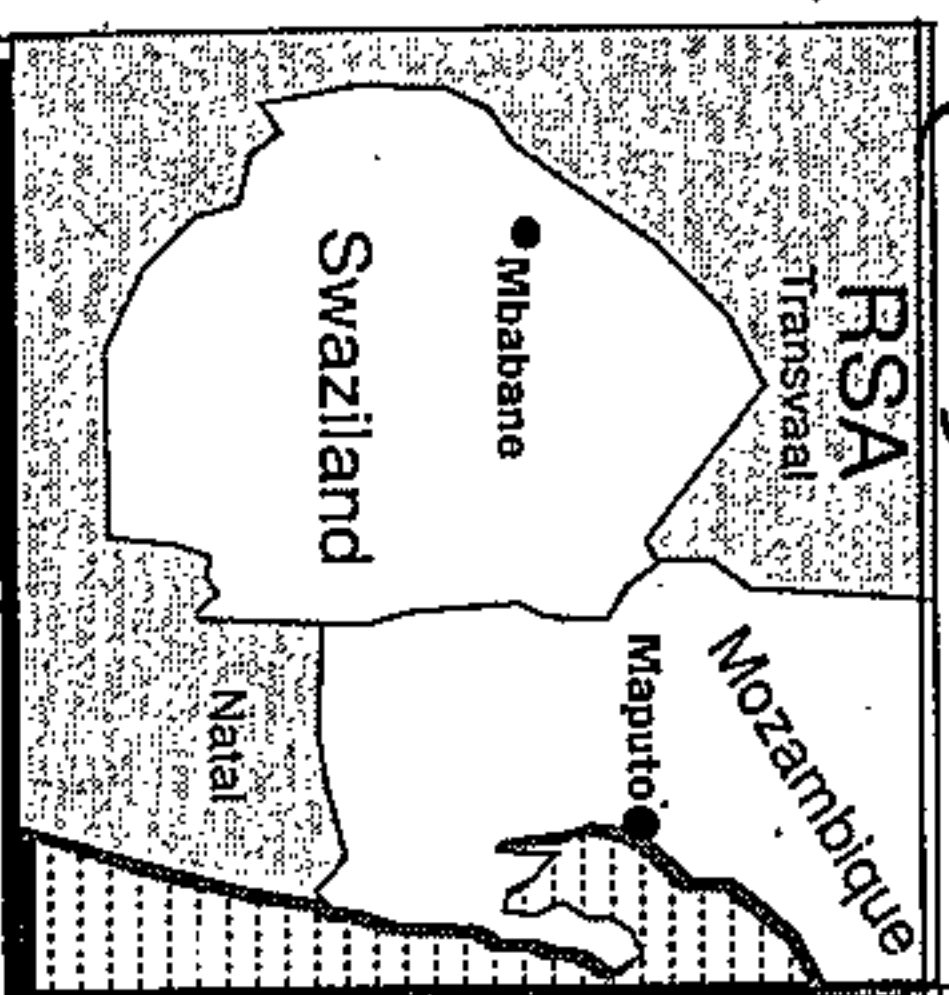
Two commissions with a similar mandate, the first led by Prince Masisela and the second by Prince Mahlengani, submitted their findings to the king. The king, however, decided to appoint a third commission, dubbed *Vusela III*, also under the leadership of

Prince Mahlengani, to reinforce the findings of the first two.

When *Vusela III* had completed its hearings the king summoned the nation to the royal kraal to hear Prince Mahlengani report. The prince said the committee found the majority of Swazis still preferred the *tinkhundla* system — with certain amendments — and recommended that multiparty politics should not be allowed at this time.

While they were hailed as a victory in traditional circles, the findings drew the wrath of various political formations which have been advocating multiparty democracy.

When the EEC visited Mbabane to explain the requirements for voting in the election, youths led by the *Vusela* Resistance Movement's Mphandlana Shongwe tore up and burned the *Tinkhundla* Review Commission report. The People's United Democratic Movement demanded a referendum on any future dispensation.



While many Swazis are likely to support the *tinkhundla* initiative because it came from the king, the radical youth, now mainly concentrated in the Swaziland Youth Congress, together with the Human Rights Association of Swaziland and some influential members of the trade union movement, have condemned the exercise.

Critics of the initiative say that no matter who is elected to the lower house, the senate — appointed by the king from among traditional chiefs and princes — will be able to veto

any legislation that may threaten traditional institutions.

The police seem nevertheless to have displayed a much more liberal attitude towards political dissent, particularly following a liberal stance by Prime Minister Obed Dlamini, who is also Minister of Police.

A former trade unionist, the Prime Minister has not won friends among the traditionalists. His position was in doubt after he allowed a march between Mbabane and Manzini while the king was in Zambia. Police escorted the marchers and even offered lifts to those who became weary — thereby making a public relations coup as marchers called them "Commerce police".

"Ordinary Swazis have little interest in active politics, but they would welcome a dissenting voice to keep the elders in check," said one observer. "As it is, they have allowed the likes of Mphandlana to gain ground. We may be heading for a time when much more than the *Vusela* report will be burnt." □

Secretary, 10/5/93
Swazi govt 'corrupt'

A TOP official in the Swaziland Ministry of Finance told a commission of inquiry on Friday that the kingdom's government was riddled with corruption which could not be ended, as some of the most senior and powerful officials were implicated.

The ministry's principal secretary, Mr Isaac Shabangu, said some companies had been paid by officials for goods that were not delivered, while some goods not requisitioned were often delivered to government departments. -- Sapa. (312)

Star 24/5/78
**Swazi police
hold activists**

MBABANE — Police arrested eight political activists at the weekend for allegedly holding an illegal meeting, called by an underground organisation called the Convention for a Full Democratic Swaziland (Cofudeswa).

(312)
Among those arrested were Swaziland Youth Congress leaders Mphandlane Shongwe, Jabulani Dlamini, and Michael Shekwa, Swaziland National Front secretary-general Glenrose Dlamini, and Cofudeswa's Sabelo Dlamini and Gorman Tsele.

— Star Africa Service.

Star 27/5/93
Getting the
taste of 'coke'

MBABANE — Swaziland police have reported an alarming increase in cocaine trafficking from Mozambique through the kingdom for distribution in South Africa.

A police spokesman said that while in the past the route had been for transit, the drug was finding its way to local markets.

He said that the drug was usually smuggled through the Lomahasha border post and Matsapa International Airport.
— Star Africa Service.

Star 5/6/93

Tie-up with SA judiciary

MBABANE — Justice Minister Dr. Zonke Khumalo signed an agreement yesterday which provides for the secondment of judges, magistrates and prosecutors from SA to Swaziland's judiciary. — Sapa (312)

news in brief

Sowetan 8/6/93
They don't wear the pants

THE Swaziland Government has banned the wearing of trousers by Swazi women. Royal counsellor Mr Lusendo Fakudze, senior Swaziland chief and governor of King Mswati's royal residence, announced the ban at the weekend and said the growing number of women wearing trousers in public was "shameful" and showed disrespect for the king. He said Swazis living in areas near royal residences should exercise self-discipline and avoid "bad practices" which people in other communities could emulate. (312)

B/DA/ 22/6/93

Appeal for drought aid

THE Swaziland government appealed yesterday for international aid for more than 150 000 drought victims.

(3/2)
National Disaster Task Force chairman Ben Nsibandé said his organisation would need at least 24 600 tons of maize and 2 200 tons of beans to bring the situation under control.

B/Dew 28/6/93
Sugar exports

THE Swaziland Sugar Association is considering returning to Maputo for exports, but has not taken a final decision, as indicated in a Business Day report on June 17. The association said that even if it did resume exports through Maputo, this did not mean it would no longer use Durban harbour.

REPORTS: Sapa, Business Day Reporters, Own Correspondent.

Swaziland to set up R7m training centre

MBABANE. — A R7-million communications centre to train journalists and communications personnel of Southern African countries would be set up in Swaziland, the country's Broadcasting and Information Minister Mr Nkomeni Ntiwane said on Friday.

He told a news conference here that the centre, at the University of Swaziland, would provide training for journalists and managers in communication strategies. — Sapa

CT 28/6/93

(312)

Sowetan 12/7/93
Warning to Swazis

Swaziland's trade representative in SA yesterday warned Swazi citizens not to visit declared unrest areas in SA unless such visits were essential.

In the warning published in Mbabane, Mr Sam Malinga said many Swazis had died in the violence. If Swazis had to visit unrest areas in the PWV area or townships in the Cape and Natal, they should avoid social gatherings like parties and bars and keep a low profile. -- *Sowetan Correspondents, Sapa.*

(312)

Star 14/7/93
**Swazi legal process
plunged into chaos**

By Nkosingphile Ziyane
Star Africa Service

MBABANE — Swazi-land's judicial process has come to a full stop following a High Court ruling barring the acting director of public prosecutions, Andrika Koso-pire Donkoh, from enter-ing any court in the country.

The ruling which threw the courts into cri-sis was made by Chief Justice David Hull on Friday.

On Monday, prosecu-

tors said they could not discharge their duties as the director of public prosecutions was the only person empowered to sanction prosecutions.

The action by the Chief Justice follows al-legations that Donkoh had destroyed a court record of an application for a summary trial of a murder suspect, Jo-hannes Dhamini.

The judge refused to allow Donkoh to be heard at the hearing through legal represen-tative Denis Kuny, SC.

Sowetan
**Swazi visit
by Nigerians**

MBABANE — A six-person Nigerian delegation arrived in Swaziland on Monday to deliver a special message to King Mswati.

Nigerian Industry and Technology Minister Mr Alhaji Aminu said he could not disclose the contents of the message from President Ibrahim Babangida. — *Sowetan Correspondents and Sapa* (312) (88)

en schools in Swaziland

Sowetan 28/1/93

Swaziland plagued too

MBABANE — Upheavals similar to those in South African schools are being experienced in Swaziland — but for different reasons. (3127)

As in parts of South Africa, some schools have virtually been taken over by pupils. In some instances the pupils, supported by their parents, have ejected teachers and headmasters.

Whereas the unrest in South African schools arises from dissatisfaction with educational standards and continued control by the white government, in Swaziland it has been blamed on efforts

by political parties to replace the all-powerful monarchy with a democratic system.

At a meeting of headmasters and school committee members in Manzini some headmasters said they were afraid to go to their schools in case they were attacked by pupils.

The situation was blamed on underground political parties who, defying the official ban on party political activity, have been campaigning for a multiparty democracy in Swaziland.

-- Sowetan Africa News Service.

Lawyers' plea to PM

MBABANE

Swaziland Prime Minister Obed Dlamini has been asked by the Law Society of Swaziland to intervene and help find solutions for the problems facing the administration of justice in the country. (312)

The society's appeal follows the continuing derailment of the justice machinery caused by confrontations between legal professionals in the country. The worst of these was that between the Director of Public Prosecutions, Adinkrah Donkoh, and Chief Justice David Hull early this month when Donkoh was banned from entering any court in the country following the disappearance of a document in a murder docket. — Sapa-
Reuter-AFP.

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Star 218193

Swaziland urged to end repression

Star Africa Service

MBABANE — Amnesty International has called on the Swaziland government to repeal all repressive laws before parliamentary elections are held.

In a letter to Prime Minister Obed Dlamini, the human rights organisation said it was concerned about the imprisonment

of political activists.

Amnesty called on the government to repeal a 1973 proclamation forbidding political activity, and expressed concern at "stringent" bail conditions imposed on activists of the People's United Democratic Movement and the Swaziland Youth Congress arrested in connection with a rally early this year.

(312)

Star 18/8/93
Curbs for Swazi election

Mbabane — No one can be buried, tombstones must stay veiled and sport will be forbidden on election days in Swaziland. The country's 860 000 people will vote in three stages in parliamentary elections on August 21, September 18 and October 11. The police and army will vote early so they can provide security on the final election day.

(312)

NEWS New civilian government is all

Minister gets R2-m demand

**Sowetan Africa News
Service**

MBABANE — Swaziland's Minister of Justice, Mr Zonke Khumalo, is being sued for more than R2 million by Mr Peter Forbes, the white Swazi national who was jailed without trial and then deported.

(312)
A letter of demand sent to Khumalo on Tuesday by Forbes' lawyers requests payment within seven days of R2 020 000 for damages allegedly suffered by Forbes as a result of the minister "unlawfully and maliciously" order-

ing his detention, the withdrawal of his citizenship and his deportation in 1978.

Forbes previously said he was detained without trial after he began exposing high-level corruption in Swaziland at the request of the late King Sobhuza. He went on a hunger strike in an attempt to force the authorities to give reasons for his detention and ended up in a Johannesburg hospital.

When he recovered he was barred from returning to Swaziland, where his ancestors had lived for three generations.

26/8/93
He has since won the right to return to Swaziland.

CT 7/9/73 312

Swaziland's king lays claim to KaNgwane

MBABANE. — Swazi King Mswati III urged the incorporation of South Africa's KaNgwane region into Swaziland in a speech at the country's Silver Jubilee celebrations outside Mbabane yesterday.

South African President De Klerk was among the 200 foreign guests, including African heads of state, attending the festivities for Swaziland's 25th independence anniversary and the king's 25th birthday.

Swazis regard KaNgwane as part of their land which was excised with the creation of the Union of South Africa in 1909. — Sapa.

'One voter, one bullet'

A PAMPHLET calling for "one voter, one bullet" a few months before Swaziland's elections has been circulated in the capital of Mbabane.

The People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo), which is campaigning for a boycott of the elections later this year, immediately denied responsibility for the pamphlet.

Pudemo secretary-general Mr Domenic Mngomezulu said the pamphlet appeared to be an altered version of one issued by the organisation urging voters to boycott the election. *South 10/9 - 14/9/93*

Pudemo had never advocated violence against anyone participating in the coming elections, but urged people to use their discretion, he stressed.

Pudemo is an illegal political party in Swaziland. *(312)*

Swazis to vote after 20 years

MBABANE. — The first stage of Swaziland's first general elections for 20 years by secret ballot takes place on Saturday, September 18, when the primary elections are held.

But, the candidates still must be screened by police before being allowed to stand and the final list has not been completed. (3/2) ARG 11/9/93

Candidates were nominated by each community in the chiefdoms and urban centres throughout Swaziland.

The secondary elections take place in October on a date still to be determined.

Illegal political movements like the People's United Democratic Movement and the Swaziland United Front are boycotting elections until a multiparty system is reintroduced. — Sapa.

Swazi maiden for top slot?

By ELIAS MALULEKE

A 19-YEAR-OLD Swazi girl, Bindzile Nhlengetswa, has been nominated for elections to the Swazi parliament.

The shy, devoted Christian has no idea why she was nominated and is believed to be the youngest nominee in any Swazi election.

The girl, who intends becoming a judge, said she had attended a nomination court in her village and had been completely

surprised when her name was called out and the elders asked her to stand up.

"I thought they were talking about another Nhlengetswa," she said.

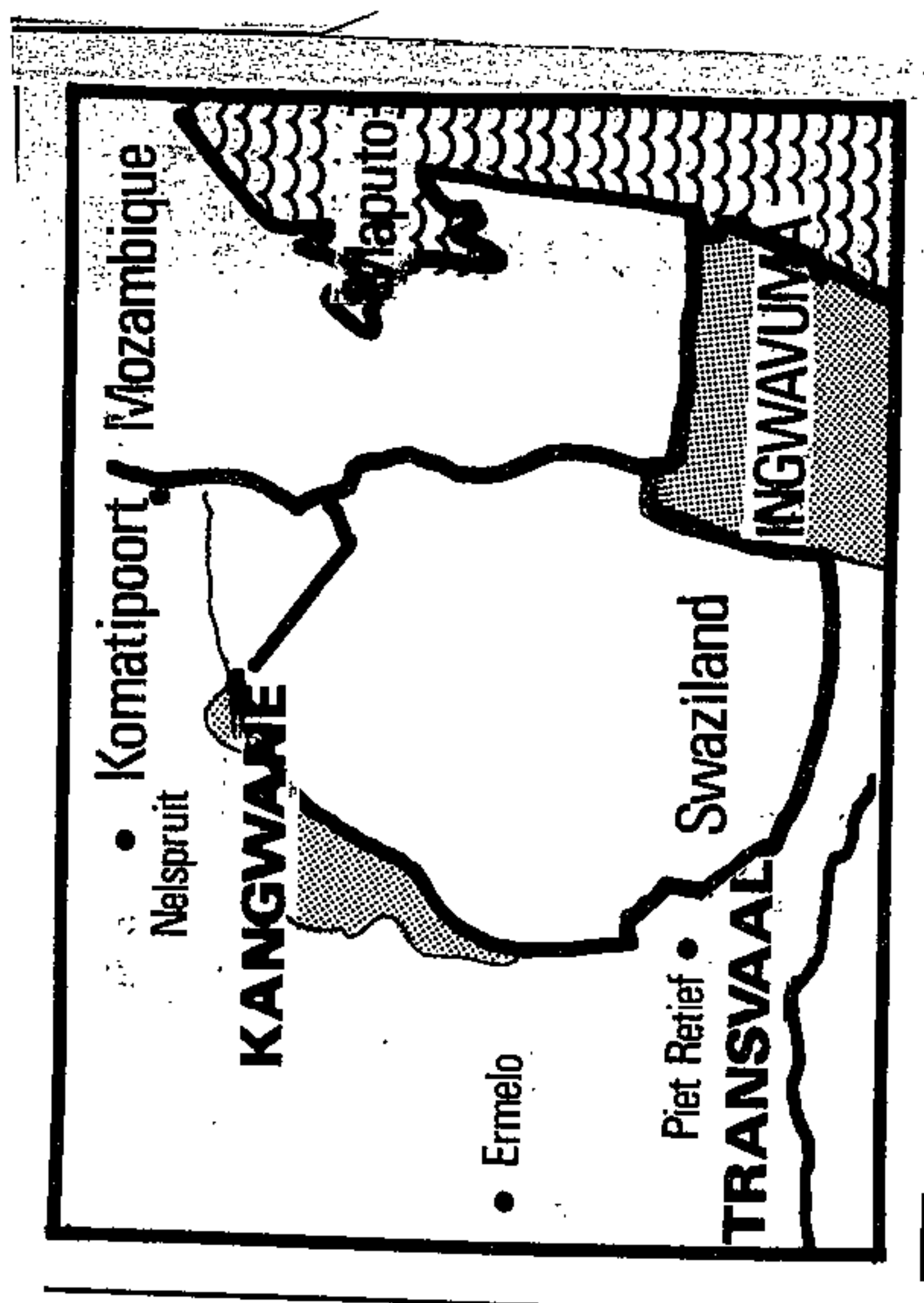
Although she may not campaign before Saturday's preliminaries, Bindzile - who initially had no idea what she would do if elected - said she thought she had the support of her constituency.

Bindzile has no idea what she will do in parlia-

ment if elected in Swaziland's Democratic elections.

She said all youth in Swaziland had to must participate in the country's its development and should vote for someone they trusted and someone who would not sleep in parliament like some other former members of parliament were known to have done.

Bindzile may not start campaigning for the elections until after September 18.



Swazis eyeing the *Star* 14/9/93 big prize 312

A desperately poor but very beautiful corner of South Africa is being sought with the same dogged affection as shown to a Swazi virgin at the annual reed dance.

KaNgwane, tucked away in the eastern Transvaal, is the prize which Swaziland so desperately wants. King Mswati III has said: "We won't rest until we get KaNgwane..."

Mswati, successor to Sobhuza II, who was the world's oldest reigning monarch when he died in 1985, has put the KaNgwane Question at the top of his foreign affairs priorities.

He has powerful backing from his government, and, in the past, from the Organisation for African Unity as well as Mozambique.

History will show that Swaziland could well have already had KaNgwane and Ingwavuma under its jurisdiction — literally doubling its size and population — had not the South African Government backed down on a decision taken in the early '80s to hand the two areas to the Swazis.

It was only after massive opposition by Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Chief Minister of KwaZulu, and KaNgwane leaders that the Government did its about-turn. However, the Swazi Council of Chiefs of South Africa has continued to petition Pretoria to give away KaNgwane.

South Africa first played its hand in 1981 by dissolving the KaNgwane Legislative Assembly. A year later, former Cabinet Minister and ambassador Dr Piet Koornhof ran the gauntlet of the KwaZulu assembly when he told understandably angry Zulus that Ingwavuma was also being excised in Swaziland's favour.

Enos Mabuza, then chief minister of KaNgwane, fought his country's issue in the Supreme

SWAZILAND has again demanded the incorporation of KaNgwane, homeland for millions of Swazis. Norman Chandler of The Star's Pretoria Bureau looks at the background

Court and won an out-of-court settlement — in essence, a climbdown by the South African Government.

The Government was however still not satisfied and immediately established the Rumpff Commission to investigate Swazi claims.

The Ingwavuma question will no doubt rear its head during the years ahead and provide the more-than-likely ANC government of the new South Africa with a major headache, taking note of the Zulu reaction to possibly losing land, which they regard as theirs and most certainly not Swaziland's.

The claim over KaNgwane, where about 700 000 Swazis live compared to 500 000 in Swaziland, is based on a 1920's belief long held by Mbabane that the colonial powers (that is, the British) who ruled southern Africa wrongly drew the borders separating South Africa and Swaziland.

It has been said at various times that Carolina, Barberton, Malalane, Oshoek, Badplaas and other districts in the eastern Transvaal are rightly part of Swaziland.

Swaziland is waiting in the wings for an ANC-dominated government in South Africa and it is no secret that as soon as that happens, it will play its ace by demanding incorporation.

Swazis go to the polls tomorrow

Sowetan 24/9/93
■ SECRET VOTE Elections will break the traditional

chiefs' stranglehold on political power:

M **BABANE** — Swazis vote tomorrow in the first round of general elections hailed by the government and Western diplomats in the region as a breakthrough for democracy.

For the first time, ordinary Swazis have been allowed to select their own candidates for the 55-seat lower house of parliament, breaking the stranglehold of traditional chiefs on political power.

The 283 693 registered voters in the tiny mountain kingdom of about 900 000 people sandwiched between South Africa and Mozambique will choose from a record 2 094 candidates.

"The nominees going to the primary election come

from all walks of life. None can be deemed planted by the government of Swaziland," one diplomat said.

"Voters have a free and secret chance to cast their ballot for whoever they want to," he said.

The country's small opposition movement has branded the coming elections as a farce, citing a 20-year-old ban on political parties and a continuing state of emergency. (312)

"The elections are not democratic and there is no doubt about that. How can the government say the elections will be free and fair when the country's repressive laws have not been repealed," Mr Dominic Mngomezulu, spokesman for the People's United Democratic Front (Pudemo), said yesterday. — Sapa

Swazis rush to vote *C/Press*

VOTERS chanting "Democracy has finally reached Swaziland" crammed polling stations after a hesitant start to the kingdom's first free elections for 20 years yesterday. *26/9/93*

In Mbabane the main polling stations were deluged by midday after a slim turnout of only a few hundred people in the morning.

Electoral officials said rural stations, where voting was even slower in the morning, were also busy by afternoon. *(312)*

A state of emergency has been in force in the tiny kingdom for 20 years and political parties remain banned. Still, ordinary Swazis were jubilant over the chance to select their own candidates for the 55-seat lower house for the first time.

■ Reports by Sapa, Ecna, Reuter

Swazis vote

Times
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A state of emergency has been in force in Swaziland for 20 years and political parties are still banned. (312)

r 14 killed on East Rand

Sowetan 27/9/93

Tokoza toll soars

FOURTEEN people died and two were wounded in violent incidents mainly in Tokoza on the East Rand during the weekend, police reported.

Spokesman Lieutenant Deon Peens said in a statement yesterday most of the victims had been shot, stabbed, hacked or burnt to death on Saturday night or early yesterday morning.

Most of the bodies were found at hostels in the township.

A man with three bullet wounds to the head was found at Tokoza Hostel No 3 and admitted to Natalspruit Hospital in a critical condition.

In Katlehong, the bodies of four men were found. Two had been shot in the head and two burnt to death.

The body of a man with stab wounds was found in Duduza and that of another with assegai wounds at the Selby hostel near Johannesburg. — Sapa.

Swazi polls a great feat

Sowetan 27/9/93

THE first election by secret ballot in more than 20 years in Swaziland has been hailed an outstanding success by chief electoral officer Mr Robert Thwala.

Candidates elected in the primary election will be allowed to start campaigning immediately for the

secondary elections to be held on October 11.

Campaigning was previously not allowed under Swaziland's non-party election regulations.

Political parties and a Westminster-style constitution were scrapped in 1973 by the late King Sobhuza. — Sapa.

Swazi PM survives first (312) CT 28/9/93 round of historic votes

Mbabane. — Swazi Prime Minister Mr Obed Dlamini and four of his cabinet have made it through first-round voting in the country's parliamentary elections.

The first round, which was extended to Sunday because of a slow turnout on Saturday, narrows the field to three candidates for each of the 55 contested seats.

It is the first time the citizens of this Southern African kingdom of about 900 000 people have been allowed to choose their own candidates for parliament, instead of simply endorsing those put forward by traditional chiefs. — Sapa-Reuter

King scraps 60-day arrest law

KING Mswati III of Swaziland has scrapped the 60-day detention without trial law, introduced in 1973 by his father and predecessor, King Sobhuza II. 29/9/93

The law was introduced when the late King Sobhuza abolished the multiparty constitution, outlawed all political parties and ruled the country as a non-party state.

Mswati repealed the law with immediate effect. (3/2)

He also dissolved the Council of Ministers, with effect from tomorrow, to allow Cabinet members to campaign for run-offs for parliamentary elections. — Sapa.

CT6/10/93
(3/2)

'SA hit squad in Swaziland'

MBABANE. — A hit squad from South Africa aiming to assassinate Swaziland's former prime minister Mr Obed Dlamini is currently in the country, the Swaziland Observer claimed yesterday.

According to the newspaper, the plot aims to prevent Mr Dlamini's possible re-election to parliament and possible re-appointment by King Mswati III as prime minister.

The hit squad, said to be from South Africa, was believed to have been hired by people wanting the prime ministership, it said.

Mr Dlamini's position as prime minister was dissolved last Thursday along with those of other cabinet ministers on the orders of King Mswati.

This was done to enable Mr Dlamini to campaign in Swaziland's elections on an equal footing with other candidates.

The newspaper said it was "reliably understood from impeccable security sources" that as a result of the threat, Mr Dlamini was living in a secure place with his family.

Police had declined to comment on the alleged plot, saying only that Mr Dlamini was safe. — Sapa

Mixed feelings over Swazi elections

(312)

THE FINAL round of Swazi-land's first free parliamentary elections in 20 years ended peacefully last week.

"Voting was peaceful in all the kingdom's polling stations," said police spokesperson Mr Paul Zish-wili after polls closed last Monday.

Security was tight during the voting in which citizens of Swaziland, which has about 900 000 people, were allowed to choose their own candidates instead of endorsing those put forward by traditional chiefs.

"This is the opportunity we have waited for for so long, and we are pleased that at long last we have been allowed to contribute in the formation of a new government," said a voter at a Mbabane polling station.

But former Swazi prime minister

Mr Obed Dlamini, accused conservative opponents of trying to sabotage his re-election to parliament.

"I have sufficient evidence that a plan was worked out to let me down," Dlamini said.

Election officer Mr Crenna Magagula said he was approached by conservatives and asked to miscount votes at the Siphofane district where Dlamini stood.

"However, immediately after I was approached I reported everything to security officers," Magagula said.

Traditionalists have accused Dlamini, who stepped down as prime minister during the election campaign, of being too soft on opposition parties. They fear King Mswati III will choose him to head the new government.

Swaziland's tiny opposition has

branded the election a farce. The People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo) had called for a boycott of the elections.

Pudemo leader Mr Kiso Shongwe said the election demonstrated that mass defiance had occurred. Despite 75 percent of the people being registered, only 25 percent had voted.

Shongwe said in rural areas, voters had heeded Pudemo's call for a boycott.

"The people of Swaziland want genuine multi-party democracy, the unbanning of political parties and a proper constitution with its basic civil liberties," he said.

"The people want the executive position of King Mswati III to pass through a prime minister as in any other country."

In the preliminary round three

weeks ago, the 283 693 registered voters whittled down a record of 2 094 candidates to three for each of the 55 districts.

Dlamini and four of his ministers made it through the first round.

Former transport and communication minister Mr Albert Shabangu and ex-agriculture minister Mr Themba Masuku were re-elected. Former industry minister Mr Barnabas Mhlongo lost his seat to newcomer Mr Ephraim Mavuso.

The elections have been hailed by the government and by western diplomats as a breakthrough for democracy.

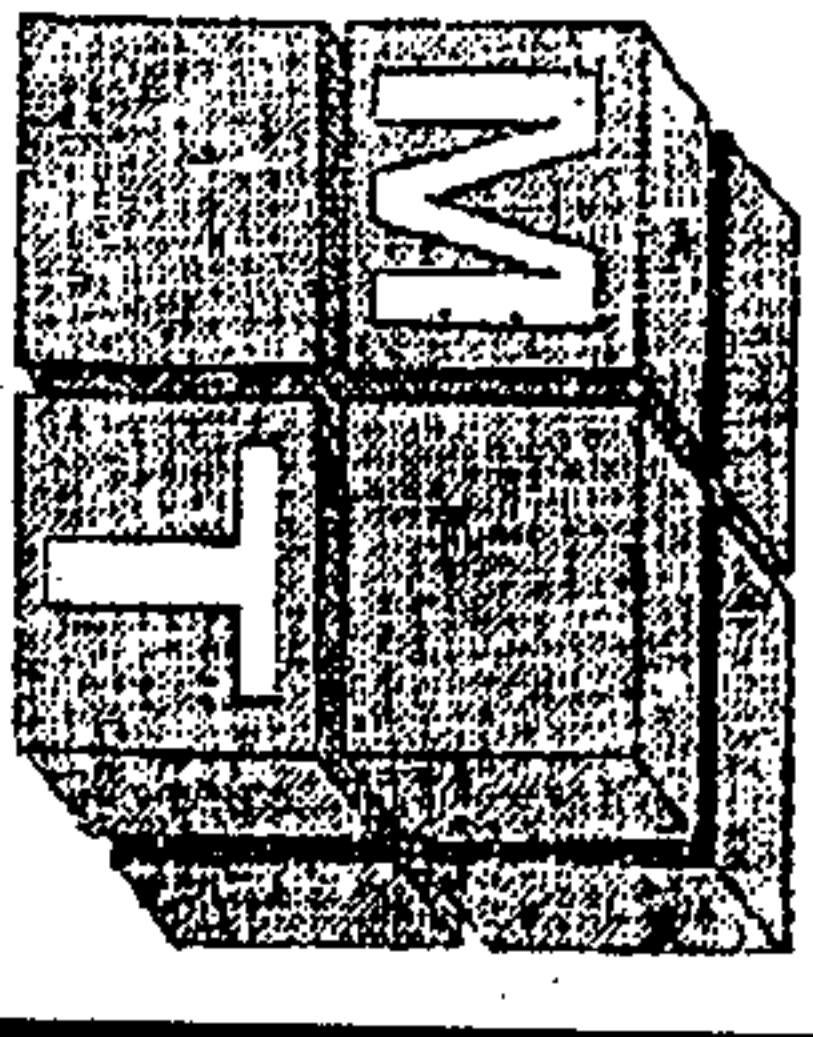
Under the revised political system, King Mswati III will appoint 10 people to the lower house of parliament while the other 55 will be elected.

The king will also pick 20 people

for the senate, while the lower house will elect 10 senators from among its members, effectively leaving it with 55 seats.

King Mswati will also appoint the prime minister. — Sapa

This page is a joint project of MATLA TRUST and SOUTH



Star 13/10/93

10 Ministers ousted in Swaziland poll

Mbabane — Only three members of the 13-member Cabinet won election to a new parliament in results announced yesterday after Swaziland's first secret balloting in more than 20 years.

Prime Minister Obed Dlamini was one of the Ministers ousted.

Other former Cabinet members lost in primary rounds or were prohibited from running because they belonged to the royal family.

About 200 candidates competed for the 55 seats, running in districts

based on the traditional chieftaincies. (312)

Turnout was low because of confusion over the three-stage election that began with nominations earlier this year, then a primary and then the final vote held on Monday.

The powers of the new 55-member parliament are unclear as King Mswati III has yet to unveil a new constitution expected to entrench the monarchy while establishing a Bill of Rights and the elected legislature. — Sapa-AP.

Challenge for public servants

MBABANE — Those who advocated a return to party politics were a threat to the political and economic stability of Swaziland, Deputy Prime Minister Dr Sishayi Nxumalo said at the weekend.

(312)
Addressing constituency officials from Manzini, Nxumalo said the peaceful development of the country was at stake. He called on those who

Sowetan
criticised the system while holding political office or jobs in public service to resign "and find work elsewhere" to make way for those who believed in the system. Members of Parliament in the Hhohho region had earlier described the present "tinkundla" system of government as "useless", charging that it had not done anything for the development of the country's economy or improving

14/12/93
the political situation in the country.

The MPs said a new system in which the interests of Swazis were better represented needed to be introduced.

Party politics were banned by King Sobhuza II, and recently elections were held on a non-party basis. Opposition groups have described the process as a sham and a travesty of democracy. — *Sowetan Africa News Service.*

SWAZILAND - GENERAL

1994 - 1995

Plea to Swazi king

MBABANE — Swazi chiefs and KaNgwane headmen have appealed to Swaziland's King Mswati to incorporate the homeland into Swaziland before SA's April election. **B1 Day**

At a weekend meeting, the king urged them to be patient as negotiations on adjustments to the border were "already under way." **(312)**

The chiefs said they had been asked by President F W de Klerk and ANC leader Nelson Mandela to vote for them, but they and their subjects owed allegiance to the Swazi king.

They said KaNgwane did not belong to Mandela or De Klerk but to the king. It had been taken from the Swazis by the English and the Boers.

— Sapa.

812194

Star 6/5/94
**Swazi Aids
figures shock**

Mbabane — A new study on Aids in Swaziland expects more than 100 000 Aids orphans in the kingdom by the year 2006.

Within 12 years 41 000 fewer children will start primary school than if there had been no Aids in Swaziland, which has a population of about 850 000, the report says.

Education Minister Prince Khuzulwandle Dlamini said "much of the investment in education will be lost" unless Aids was checked.

Official figures show one in five sexually active Swazis to be HIV positive. In some areas the figure is one in three.

Health Minister Dr Derek von Wissel said a hospital would have to be built every six months to cope with Aids. — Sapa.

(3:12) (P)

Winds of change begin to blow in Swaziland

(3/2)

Source: 13/2/95

MBABANE — Swaziland, the only Southern African country which bans political parties, is not threatened by recent arson attacks but must respond to demands for change, political analysts say.

Arsonists set fire to parliament buildings and a firebomb was thrown at the home of Information Minister Prince Phinda earlier last week.

There have also been attacks on the homes of other officials and government property in recent weeks.

A previously unknown group, calling itself the Mashekeshe People's Army, has claimed responsibility for some of the attacks.

At the same time opposition political groupings are being formed despite a government ban.

No longer pleased

"The fact that opposition parties are being formed is an indication that a certain section of the Swazi society is no longer pleased with the present system of government," political science lecturer Mr Petros Gambukusa Magagula said.

He dismissed as an exaggeration claims by one opposition group that the kingdom was on the verge of civil war, but said people clearly wanted change.

"The people want a change, and if the government continues to ignore the calls for multiparty (democracy), the opposition might resort to violence which will bring instability and scare potential investors," Magagula, who lectures at the University of Swaziland, said.

Political parties were outlawed in 1973 when the late King Sobhuza II declared a state of emergency and suspended the

constitution to suppress opposition to his rule.

The government has tolerated opposition groups since 1993, when the country held its first free parliamentary elections in over two decades, although along non-party lines.

Prime Minister Prince Mbilini has warned the country's 900 000 people that political parties remained banned, and it was a crime to form one.

Police have also strengthened security around government buildings and ministerial homes after the recent attacks.

The Swaziland Youth Congress Party also threatened violence if free political activity was not allowed, but the threat was condemned by other opposition groups.

No arrests in the arson attacks have been made so far, but Mr John Masson, president of the Swaziland Chamber of Commerce, said the business community was confident the police had the situation under control.

He said the climate had not changed for business in the last few years when most of the opposition groups were formed.

"The formation of the political parties in Swaziland has not changed anything in as far as the business community is concerned. The political situation is still good for investment," he said.

A Western diplomat said he believed a majority in the generally conservative kingdom were happy with the monarchy.

"Perhaps that's why many people voted in the 1993 parliamentary elections to show their support for the king," the diplomat said.

"I would assume many people would have boycotted the elections if they were fed-up with the one-party rule or the king."

— Sapa-Reuter.

Ignorance dogs Swazi health care

CP 2/4/95 (312)

WATER is life. Where it is scarce, rivers stop flowing. Vegetation wilts and people suffer. Eventually death reigns.

The 10 000 people of Hlane know these things first hand.

Swaziland's rural areas have experienced severe drought for the last few years and Lubombo, along the Mozambique border, has been hit the hardest. Hlane is part of the Lubombo region.

With the water shortages, people in Hlane are drinking contaminated water. Every month there are a thousand cases of cholera, diarrhoea, typhoid or dysentery. As often as twice a month the diseases break out.

According to a United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) report on children and women, Swaziland has one of the biggest health care budgets on the continent, second only to Gabon, but the nation's health ranks among the poorest in the region.

The country's health expenditure is largely financed by external aid and private business. The private sector bias is toward higher-cost curative interventions which turn a profit. Preventative

medicine, such as hygiene education, good water and sanitation, have not received their share of the health budget.

In 1990, the country spent an estimated R250 per person on health care. With expenditures that high, the global goal of "Health for all by the Year 2000" ought be within reach.

But the road to health looks rocky for the rural population, which still does not have access to clean drinking water.

Health education officer Abigale Dlamini says the community has very little understanding of health and hygienic issues. People defecate in the bush. The faeces end up in the river — the source of water for drinking, bathing and washing.

The community still has to change some old habits. The ventilated improved pit latrine is an acceptable system for rural areas and the government is providing people with bags of cement to construct toilets. But some use their cement rations to plaster their homes, because they do not understand the importance of good sanitation.

The Rural Water Supply Board and various government ministries

have been working to overcome these problems. Since it began in 1977, the board has served 42 per cent of the rural population by implementing 270 micro and macro water supply schemes throughout the country.

The board has been supported by the Canadian International Development Agency, the British Overseas Development Ministry, the European Development Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the Netherlands, the Swazi government and non-government organisations.

While the Rural Water Supply Board is willing to help, board officer Simon Simelane says Hlane must first establish a committee and a savings fund. The community fund must have at least £3 000 (R17 000) before they qualify for assistance.

The Rural Water Supply Board is strict about water quality and prefers spring water and boreholes, as that water does not require treatment.

Now that government is linking clean water and hygiene to the global goal of "Health for all by the Year 2000", the rural population may see improved health.

12/Africa

Wind of change blowing through Africa's Ruritania

312

SPW 10/6/95

The only country in southern Africa not to have democratic government, Swaziland, is moving towards reform. **CHRISTINA LAMB** reports

Mbabane — Were it not for the lines of trucks clogging the narrow mountain roads, entering Swaziland would be like going back in time. Placards proclaim "Long live the king", every other person appears to have the same surname, the phone book has a large section under "His Majesty" and the big issue is whether the government will charge for cattle-dipping.

Beneath this pastoral idyll, however, all is not well in the mountain kingdom, the only southern African country not to have introduced democracy.

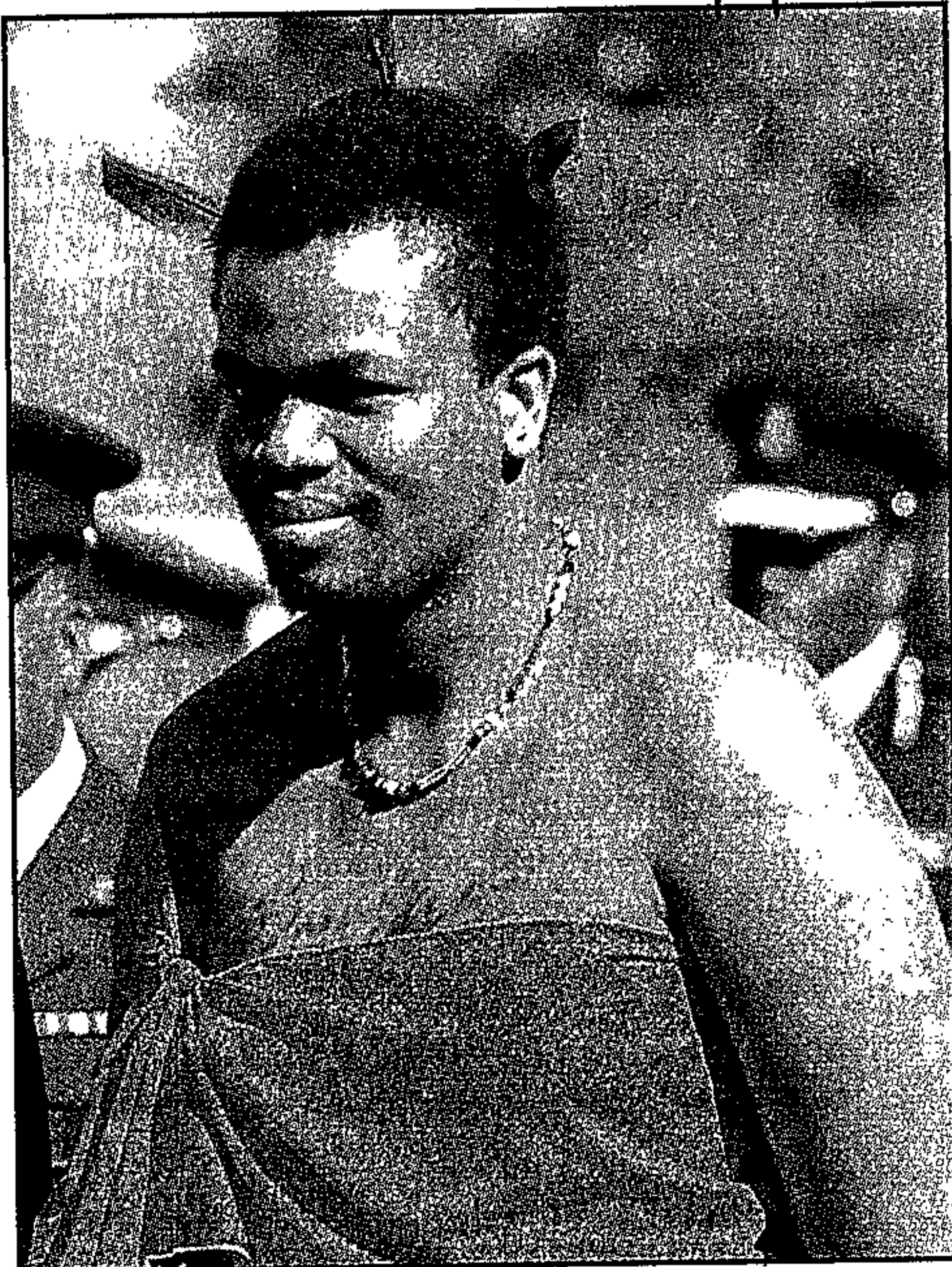
Facing an unprecedented wave of popular protest, including the fire-bombing of parliament, the 27-year-old king is pondering reform. His relatives, who do well out of the present arrangements, are shocked.

Charismatic

"Swaziland sticks out like a sore thumb," said a diplomat, "and the king is well aware of that." On the map, the landlocked country of 900 000 people resembles a small ink-blot, surrounded by South Africa and Mozambique, which both held democratic elections last year.

Mswati is regarded as charismatic and forward-looking. He is an athletic man who makes a public appearance most Fridays wearing a leopard skin and printed cloth, and red feathers in his hair. He has taken a modest five wives.

"We are not standing still," the king said last week when asked about reform. The country continues to be run by a



KING MSWATI OF SWAZILAND: Posters proclaim "Long live the king" but his days in power could be numbered

dual system. The king has official and secret royal councils and there is a non-party government and parliament. In 1993 there were elections for 55 of the 95 seats, but the cabinet continues to be chosen by the king, who also selects a prime minister from the royal clan.

Until recently there was little pressure for change. Swazi society is predominantly rural and to most Swazis the king is not to be questioned.

The relatively high per capita annual income of about R3 800

has also kept the pressure off. In the 1980s the economy grew at 5%-8% a year as Swaziland became a base for multinational companies that found it politically unacceptable to invest in South Africa.

All that has changed. Two years ago the budget surplus became a deficit. Seshaya Nxumalo, the deputy prime minister, said economic conditions alone dictated the decision to reform the public sector. "People are becoming disgruntled because the government does

not deliver," he said. "To do that we must make the public sector less cumbersome and faster to respond."

"The idea is not to change the system: at the moment people do not want political parties because they are frightened this will end our traditional peace and bring in conflict, as we have seen in our neighbours."

The opposition is unimpressed. Glenrose Dlamini, secretary-general of the Swazi National Front, one of several illegal parties, said: "What they are doing is a waste of money. It's not the people who are ineffective, it's the whole system."

The opposition strategy is to make the country ungovernable through civil unrest.

Dominic Mngomezulu, secretary-general of the People's United Democratic Movement, admits, however, that the opposition has failed to tap into the rural semi-literate majority.

Rumblings

With Swaziland increasingly out of step, few believe the royal house will be able to resist the rumblings of its subjects for long. The question is whether change is managed towards a constitutional monarchy or forced, in which case the royal family could be ousted.

Militant activists warn that if change takes too long they will resort to tactics such as persuading South African dockworkers to refuse to handle Swazi goods, which would soon bring the country to its knees.

Percy Simelane, a government spokesman, insists: "We can't change just because our neighbours have done so. When the rest of southern Africa was fighting civil wars no one asked why we did not follow, so why should we now?" — The London Sunday Times



its grim toll on animals daily.

Drought brings misery in Swaziland

(312) Sowetan 29/6/95

By Bhekile Matsebula

THE EFFECTS OF the drought in southeast Swaziland have reached serious proportions. At least three people reportedly died in Lavumisa this year as a result of malnutrition.

Mr Ben Nsibandze, chairman of the National Disaster Task Force which is responsible for relief aid to drought-stricken families, says the drought, particularly in the Lowveld, is very serious and many people are expected to suffer.

90 000 worst hit

More than 90 000 people have been identified as worst-hit by the drought, and he said the situation was worsened by the lack of food supplies to the affected families.

The Swazi government early this year made an appeal to international donors to come to its rescue to save the starving families.

It especially targeted the Lavumisa area, south-east of Swaziland, where the drought has left people without food for five consecutive years.

So serious is the situation that the drought has left farmers bankrupt because of accumulating debts acquired through bank loans.

Demanding repayment

Swazi prime minister Prince Mbilini Dlamini and parliament have been approached by the farmers who requested them to order the Swaziland Development and Savings Bank, the sole financial institution giving loans to cotton farmers, to temporarily stop demanding repayment of

loans until the drought crisis was over.

The farmers told *Sowetan* it had appeared that the government was reluctant to address their plight. Bank officials continued to intimidate them, demanding their money back.

Lavumisa inhabitants now lived off watermelons which, because of the lack of rain, are not very big.

For water, local inhabitants used okra, a wild vegetable which sheds a lot of water when cooked. But okra, too, is very hard to find.

Aiding residents

Several non-governmental organisations such as the Baphalali Swaziland Red Cross Society, the Swaziland Farmers Foundation and the Lutheran World Services have tried to come to the aid of the residents.

But the NGOs are faced with dwindling food supplies and their relief work cannot last longer as a result.

Nsibandze says even if food supplies were available, it was difficult to locate some of the needy families, especially those living in remote rural areas in the Lowveld. Some of the places were inaccessible and had no roads at all.

Drought victim

One of the drought victims, 70-year-old Mr Giba Nhleko, nearly died from hunger at his home at Qomintaba in Lavumisa last month.

Nhleko, whose legs were amputated, was in a very critical condition when *Sowetan* visited his home early last month. He could hardly speak and his voice was very hoarse.

"I don't know what am I living for on this earth. My son died the same way ... he died of starvation. Who will look after my grandchildren?" said Nhleko.

This month the United States government donated more than R11 million for the stricken families in Swaziland.

Well-known farmer and member of parliament in the area, Mr Robert Mbhamali, says the community should not be suffering from water shortages as South African authorities have given Swazis the go-ahead to use

I do not know what I am living for on this earth

water from the Jozini Dam in Northern KwaZulu-Natal for drinking and irrigation purposes.

Risking assault

He says the Swazi government failed to utilise the water. As a result, Lavumisa communities had to risk being assaulted by South African troops when fetching water from the Pongola River.

Mbhamali said he had raised the plight of the community in parliament.

(312)
Swazis
ARL 17/9/95
**brace for
threat of
big strike**

MBABANE. — Swazi employers said they would treat today as a normal working day in spite of warnings of chaos from trade unions which have called a general strike.

A spokesman for the Swaziland Federation of Employers, Musa Hlophe, said the government had pledged there would be maximum security and employers should not fear businesses would be vandalised.

"We advise members to treat today as a normal working day," said Mr Hlophe, adding that workers who went on strike risked losing their jobs.

The Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU), the biggest union umbrella body, postponed a general strike from last Tuesday to today to give the government time to meet 27 demands.

It warned government and employers of chaos if offices and businesses remained open and told pupils to remain away from school for their own safety.

The federation, among other demands, wants legislation to allow courts to reinstate workers unfairly dismissed and Swazi citizenship for SFTU secretary-general Jani Sithole.

Mr Sithole was born in Swaziland to a Swazi mother, but the government says he is a Mozambican and last month threatened to deport him for causing trouble in the kingdom.

Prime Minister Prince Mbalini said this week the planned strike was illegal and offices and businesses should operate as normal.

The Education Ministry has told pupils to attend school, and the teachers' federation said on Friday schools would remain open. — Reuter.

Car industry deal worries Swazis

John Dlodlu

SWAZILAND Commerce Minister Majahinkaba Dlamini said the agreement on the southern African region's auto industry could deprive his country of an opportunity to develop its fledgling car industry.

He said in terms of the deal reached with counterparts at the five-nation Southern African Customs Union — which includes SA, Lesotho, Namibia and Botswana — all members had to submit motor industry development plans by the end of this year.

The long-term plan stipulated foreign firms, wishing to set up manufacturing plants within any country in the customs union area, would have to apply to the ministers' council, one of the new structures to be set up.

Dlamini's concern was that major car-makers would continue to pour their mon-

ey into well-developed SA and Botswana before the long-term plan came into effect, due to better locations and incentive packages offered by those countries.

This might thus create uncertainty about applications of several foreign auto companies considering setting up shop in Swaziland. These firms might change their minds, and start operations in SA.

"Once located in one country, it's difficult to relocate," Dlamini said.

He called on other partners to "be more considerate" to less developed fellow regional members.

Trade and Industry Minister Trevor Manuel's spokesman Ismail Lagardien said, in an apparent bid to allay fears, that SA remained committed to negotiating the agreement with minimum disruptions and SA was determined to assist other partners to develop an industrial base.

Swazi king shrugs off Mandela

(312) WM 18-24/8/95

On a state visit to South Africa, Swaziland's King Mswati III paid little heed to those pushing for democratic reforms

SWAZILAND'S King Mswati, the only ruler in Southern Africa resisting multi-party politics, has told President Nelson Mandela his people have developed their own type of democratic consultation and had elected a representative Parliament.

The young king, whose country's last elections in 1993 allowed neither political parties nor campaigning by candidates, politely told Mandela that those elections "reflected the wishes of the whole nation".

Mswati, on a state visit to South Africa last week, gave not the slightest hint to Mandela that he intended to lift the ban on political parties imposed in 1973 by a royal decree of his father, King Sobhuza. After talks with Mandela, Mswati told the president at a state banquet that much about his country was inevitably "unfamiliar and misunderstood".

He proceeded to give Mandela a rundown of the political changes initiated in 1992 by "a uniquely democratic system of consultation" based on leadership through the consensus of the people. He was referring to the committees which he appointed, mainly headed by princes of his Dlamini clan and filled with traditionalists, which toured the kingdom soliciting the views of Swazis on political change.

The exercise — "a type of rolling referendum", as Mswati put it — had led to national elections at the end of 1993 that the international community had declared free and fair. Opposition groups, however, condemned both the "Vusela" consultations, as they were known, and the elections as a farce.

Journalists covering Mswati's visit believe Mandela privately gave the king a dressing down about his refusal to allow free political activity. But Mandela made no direct mention of this in his own speech. He did, however, say that South Africans and Swazis shared the same aspirations and beliefs in freedom, justice and respect for human dignity. Mandela added a warning that development in southern Africa would succeed "only if we ensure popular par-



King of the castle and not letting go: King Mswati III inspects the guard of honour which greeted him on his arrival in South Africa PHOTO: ADIL BRADLOW / AP

ticipation in the political and economic life of our countries".

Mswati said Swaziland was changing politically and economically and "evolving according to the wishes of its people".

The king and his entourage ducked the South African media, giving no chance for the provocative questioning they knew could be expected.

Back home in Swaziland the media gave extensive coverage to Mswati's visit but offered no critical comment. National television filled tracts of its news programme with footage of the trip, presenting it as a memorable national achievement.

A television crew, accustomed to recording Mswati's every public move, filmed away furiously. The station, where newscasts often end with a praise song in siSwati from a newsreader friend of Mswati's, followed the monarch wherever he went.

The Swazi Observer newspaper, owned by a trust fund dominated by the Dlamini royal family, crowed about Mswati's "charisma" that had taken South Africa by surprise. "He came, he saw, he conquered," an article by a senior staffer said of Mswati's visit.

Swazi parliamentarians, many of them poorly educated traditionalists with no political experience, called on Wednesday on the Senate and House of Assembly to thank Mswati for his visit and for clearing the air about the country's political system.

A former prime minister serving in the Senate, Prince Bhhekimphe Dlamini, even challenged the press to push harder for a referendum to test if Swazis really want multi-party politics.

Mswati's visit came at a time of unprecedented criticism of Swaziland's lack of free political activity, its worsening labour relations, a human rights record tarnished by the increas-

ing official harassment of journalists and legislation denying bail to suspects in a wide range of offences, including many political charges.

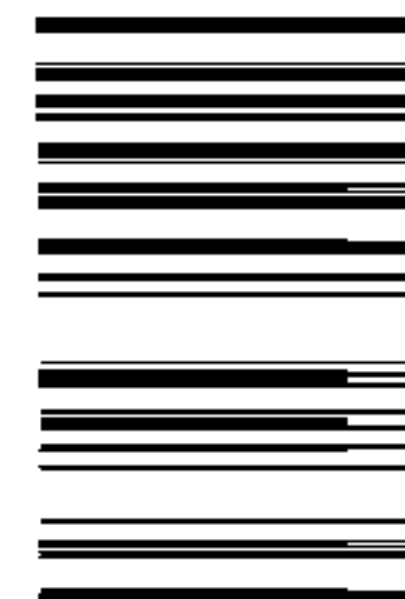
The Swazi authorities, and Mswati himself, remain resentful of criticism, especially when it comes from non-Swazis. A recent report in a Johannesburg newspaper likening Mswati to a tinpot dictator created a furore in Swaziland. The Cabinet promptly appointed a committee to examine the report and to pursue the matter further with South Africa.

Trade union leader Jan Sithole found his citizenship being called into question when the government felt unions were becoming too strident in calling for another national strike in July. That strike was hastily called off when Mswati warned of the possibility of violence. Sithole remains a Swazi for now, and has received the support of the Interna-

tional Confederation of Free Trade Unions to prevent the government from deporting him.

Swaziland's opposition remains small and fragmented, but has been encouraged by political changes in South Africa and the rest of the sub-region. Though still officially banned, political parties have emerged from underground and openly agitate for multi-party democracy. Many are affiliated to the Convention for Full Democracy in Swaziland, an assembly of opposition parties in which the People's United Democratic Movement is by far the most powerful.

Critics say Mswati and his advisers are afraid to open the system to political parties, as it will mark the beginning of the end for the monarch's absolute rule. Many, however, concede that a party enjoying Mswati's tacit support would sweep the polls, at least in the first multi-party elections.



600 Swazi Aids cases 'tip of iceberg'

CT 20/10/95

(312)

MBABANE: About 600 cases of Aids had been officially reported in Swaziland since the disease was first diagnosed in the kingdom in 1987, but the actual figure was much higher, health officials warned yesterday.

They warned that the figures published in the Aids programme's latest quarterly report, released yes-

terday, should not be regarded as the actual figures, but rather the tip of the iceberg.

Health workers fear that large numbers of people carrying HIV, which causes Aids, do not report to clinics and are therefore not recorded. It is widely believed they are spreading the disease rapidly.

The report said the large num-

ber of condoms issued by the Aids programme, 78 000 in just two weeks recently, was no guarantee the condoms were being used for their intended purpose.

Many condoms found their way into the hands of children and were being used as balloons. Many adults had found unconventional uses for them. — Sapa

IMF advice to Swaziland a 'red alert' — minister

□ *Programme aims to rescue ailing economy*

MBABANE. — The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank will impose modified forms of their structural adjustment programmes on Swaziland in 1996 in a bid to save the kingdom from an impending economic crisis, Finance Minister Derek von Wissell says.

Mr von Wissell told reporters on his return from annual IMF and World Bank meetings in Jamaica that the financial institutions had undertaken to provide urgent technical assistance to design appropriate programmes for Swaziland.

“The IMF and World Bank will impose a pre-emptive and modified form of the structural adjustment

programme... This will call for a stringent and tight budget control on the part of the government,” he said.

“This means that the institutions will provide only the structural adjustment guidelines and we will execute and manage the programme on our own to avoid being totally overwhelmed and smothered to operate under their conditions.” Mr von Wissel said that World Bank and IMF advice that Swaziland immediately impose structural adjustment to avoid an economic crisis should be seen as a “red alert”.

He said there was a need for action, not panic.— Sapa.

Nigerian rulers resist pressure

Journal 6/11/95

(Signature)

Derek Ingram

THE Nigerian military regime is digging in its heels against pressure from the Commonwealth for a speedy return to civilian rule.

The announcement by the military ruler General Sani Abacha that he will hand over power in October 1998 heralds an angry showdown at the Commonwealth summit, being held in Auckland, New Zealand, on November 10 to 13.

The timescale for civilian rule is considered far too long and, in any case, there is no confidence that Abacha means to keep his word.

Harsh sentences

For is anyone satisfied with the mounting of death and other harsh sentences on 40 people accused of plotting a coup. The 40, who include former head of state General Olusegun Obasanjo, remain in prison, as does chief Moshood Abiola, who is widely regarded to have won the aborted presidential election in 1993.

Abacha says he is going to Auckland, but it is not believed that he will turn up. The Nigerians plan to send a big delegation. It will get a frosty reception.

Commonwealth leaders are expected to call for measures to be taken against the regime, accusing Nigeria of abusing human rights and consistently ignoring the Harare Declaration of 1991, which commits

Commonwealth unhappy with timetable for handover to civilians

been termed welfare centres.

Meagre incomes and lack of work is forcing families to sell children as young as four or five into service or simply to turn them on to the streets to fend for themselves. Police sweep them up and take them to a welfare centre - in reality to prison.

Once inside, the boys are herded into one cell, the girls into another, and there they remain for 24 hours a day. They are let out only to be lined up in front of the cells for a meal, usually provided by an expatriate non-governmental organisation.

The children sleep on thin mattresses on a cement floor. The lavatory is a bucket in the corner. The children eventually end up in

election, a presidential candidate wishing to win will have to be seen as a figure for national unity.

The report calls on the leaders in Auckland to press for an immediate return to democratic order and the freeing of political prisoners. If the regime does not respond, trade and financial sanctions should be applied.

Military prison

Among those held in a military prison serving a life sentence is one of the members of the Commonwealth Human Rights Advisory Commission, Dr Beko Ransome-Kuti. He is also chairman of the Campaign for Democracy.

The CHRI report says no military government should be entitled to send a delegation to future Commonwealth summits. This suggestion is directed at Sierra Leone and Gambia as well as Nigeria.

No such regimes should be allowed to take part in Commonwealth ministerial meetings, it says.

But the report stops short of suggesting that Nigeria should be expelled from the Commonwealth. Instead, its suggestions add up to a form of suspension from the main Commonwealth activities. The aim

Many schools are closed. Hospital patients must often pay for bed space and buy their own drugs as well as needles, syringes and suture threads





Swaziland's Press in a 'battle of the giants'

(312)

By Coudjoe Amankwaa

THE feud between Swaziland director of public prosecutions Mr Adinkrah Donkoh and some sections of the kingdom's Press has once again exposed loopholes in the country's laws because of the absence of a constitution.

Both parties have been using their positions to get even with one another in the fierce cold war that ensued after the arrest of three senior *Swazi Observer* executives and a journalist early this year.

The tension between Donkoh and the local Press has been dubbed the "battle of the giants".

The row between the two parties was apparently fuelled by the *Swazi Observer's* former news editor Mr Donny Nxumalo, who in his column called Donkoh a *kwere-kwere*, (a derogatory name for illegal immigrants).

This irked Donkoh, a Ghananian with close links to the Swazi royal family. The column also accused him of getting fat cheques from the Swazi govern-

Loopholes in Swazi laws leave journalists open to prosecution

Chief Justice Ben Dunn the following morning after the newspaper's lawyers intervened.

Donkoh's action attracted a lot of public attention, both in Swaziland and internationally. This put Swaziland in the spotlight again for intimidating journalists, a reputation well-documented by international organisations such as Amnesty International and the Media Institute of Southern Africa.

What emerged from the whole saga was the lack of professionalism on the side of both local journalists and Donkoh.

On the one hand, Swazi journal-

towards Donkoh.

"Not all Swazi journalists have bone of contention to chew with Donkoh; only a fraction of them," he said.

He conceded that both parties had abused their positions to wage an unethical and unprofessional war against one another.

Other local journalists, who wanted to remain anonymous, described the whole saga as "silly and nonsense". They said the four Swazi journalists had taken advantage of the fact that they were Swaz and Donkoh a foreigner.

The rift between him and sections of the local Press is likely to take a long time to heal.

Certain influential figures in the Swazi hierarchy have reported taken sides with the Swazi journalists and are now lobbying for the sacking of the DF

It has also been reported that Donkoh, who on

He (Ginindza) said that both the Press and the director of public prosecutions had abused their positions to wage an unethical and unprofessional war against each other

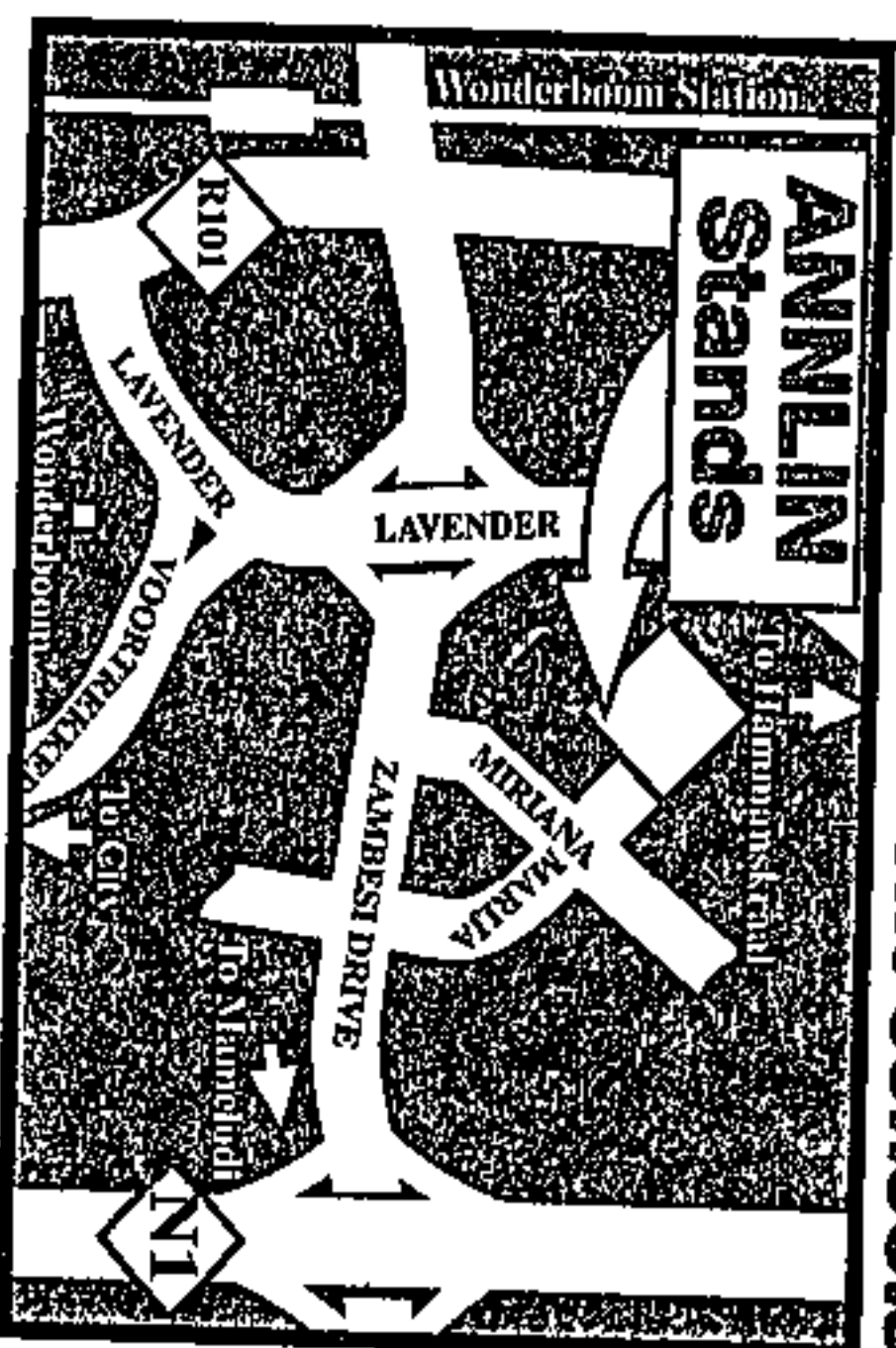
ing Mswati III ... Swazi traditionalists close to him see Adhkrh Donkoh, ho is embroiled in a running battle with the Press, as a trustworthy ally.

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his duties competently. However, despite these remarks, Donkoh remained cool and bided his time.

Then Nxumalo's newspaper published an article regarding a rape case. In the report, journalist Mr Martin Maise erroneously disclosed the names of the rape victims, a serious legal offence.

Donkoh acts

It was then that Donkoh made his move and immediately took legal action against the newspaper. He promptly applied for a warrant of arrest for the *Swazi Observer's* editorial management and the reporter for publishing the report.

After this, *Swazi Observer* editor-in-chief Mr Vusi Sibisi, managing editor Mr Cyril Dlamini, former news editor Mr Donny Nxumalo and Maise were arrested and detained for one night at the Mbabane police station in February.

Donkoh later visited the newsmen in their cell, where he reportedly insulted them. However, they were given free bail by Mr Acting

Press laws. On the other hand, it was clear that Donkoh had used his powerful position in the kingdom to settle an old score with the newspaper. The cold war between Donkoh and the local Press intensified.

Swaziland National Association of Journalists, secretary-general Mr Michael Motsa condemned the DPP's actions, describing them as "barbaric".

However, observers point out that while Donkoh's actions were too harsh and were uncalled for, it was equally important to bear in mind that the "yellow journalism" of some journalists was at the heart of the controversy.

SNAJ president Mr Vusie Gindza argued that the country needed to update current legislation to uphold the rights of Swazi journalists. "Whatever laws exist have too many loopholes and are therefore open to abuse," he said.

Gindza noted that Donkoh had capitalised on journalists' ignorance of the law to deal his cruel blow. But Gindza pointed out that his organisation does not have any ill-feelings

ti prince" from the Othumfu Upoki Ware royalty, is believed to be working towards securing citizenship of the kingdom through the traditional Swazi *Khonia* system.

Through this system, a foreigner applies for permission from a tribal chief to build a home in the area under that chief's control. If the chief approves the application, the foreigner automatically becomes a Swazi citizen.

Close to royal family

A well-placed source said Donkoh started his close relationship with the royal family when he defended the monarchy during the era of the now-defunct Supreme Council of State.

Swazi traditionalists close to King Mswati III see Donkoh as a trustworthy person. Modern Swazis, however, see him as an opportunist who has become too big for his boots.

(The writer is a Ghanaian journalist who worked in Swaziland for several years. He is now a freelance journalist based in Johannesburg.)

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6/11/25 (312)

Swazi tradition clashes with democracy

(312)
ARG 20/12/95

SUZANNE DALEY of the
New York Times News
Service reports from
Mbabane, Swaziland.

Tucked between green, rolling mountains, this tiny, landlocked kingdom still has the sleepy look of a gentler time.

It is a place where African traditions hold sway: Chiefs distribute the land, wealth is measured in cattle, and hundreds of bare-breasted maidens pay homage to the queen mother each year by gathering reeds to repair her home.

The nation's 27-year-old king, Mswati III, is the last absolute monarch in southern Africa, a handsome man who often appears in public dressed in leopard skins with red feathers in his hair.

But the country's economic fortunes are in decline, and with its financial troubles have come calls for a more modern government. The last year has brought a

wave of protests, including strikes, the firebombing of parliament and the demand by the powerful national federation of unions for a constitution.

"We have evolved under the monarchy, so we do revere it," said Mashumi Twala, the news editor of Times of Swaziland and an outspoken critic of the current government. "It has preserved our traditions and our culture. But times are changing, and we must adapt."

In the 1980s Swaziland's fortunes grew steadily. Sandwiched between South Africa, with its violence and unrest, and Mozambique, with its civil war, it was an obvious haven for multinational corporations. Swaziland barely had to lift a finger and they came. Coca-Cola, for instance, set up a huge syrup plant.

But now Swaziland's neighbours have embraced democracy. And the steady job growth this country enjoyed in 1980s has disappeared. In 1993 just 198 new jobs were

created; last year, none at all. Figures are not complete, but this year appears no better.

At the same time, Swaziland's population, now about 900 000, is growing by 3.5 percent each year, one of the fastest rates in the world.

Questions have been raised lately about government spending, which is largely under the control of the royal family.

Last year, for instance, Swaziland bought a jet plane for the national airline in spite of several consultants' reports saying the country could not afford it...

Other questionable purchases include a television broadcasting studio used by the royal family for announcements. And audits have discovered that funds were missing, royal ghosts were collecting salaries, and there was lavish spending on cars and renovated offices by government officials.

"We just keep seeing a gross misuse of funds in a country that

has some very pressing problems," Mr Twala said. "New carpets might seem a bit minor to some. But to us, it's not."

Much of Swaziland is still devoted to subsistence farming, and poverty is widespread. Its main industries are tourism, wood pulp and sugar production.

It is not unusual to see people in traditional dress, even in the nation's capital. And women must wear skirts rather than pants in order to enter public offices.

Polygamy is still widely practised. (A wife costs about 12 head of cattle.) Some criticise the king because he has taken only six wives. His father was reputed to have more than 100.

Almost everywhere, it seems, there are photographs of the royal family. And it is clear that many people still believe the family has special powers.

But many also believe that the country's peculiar combination of traditional (unwritten) and modern law left over from the British is

holding the country back.

For instance, 70 percent of the country's land is owned by the royal family in trust for the nation, with chiefs deciding who will be allowed to farm where. One consequence is that farmers cannot use the land to secure a loan for seed or improvements.

Others argue that the dual system - which includes the parliament, as well as a traditional council of elders - leaves foreigners confused and uncertain about their investments.

"Right now we are just a dot between two big countries, so we have to do more to offer a climate that is conducive to people who want to come here," said Mary-Joyce Doo Aphane, a young lawyer who heads a non-profit organisation devoted to improving the lot of women.

But like many others, Mrs Aphane does not want to see the king removed, only raised above blame.

"Right now, he is the head of

government and therefore he can be criticised for this or for that," Mrs Aphane said. "The royal family should just be a family that we all look up to."

Government officials say changes are under way. The most recent parliament included far more candidates elected by secret ballot than ever before, although the king is still able to appoint a sizeable number of members. And he retains total veto power.

Swaziland, which gained independence from Britain in 1968, has had a few political earthquakes in the past.

In 1973 the present king's father, Sobhuza II, scrapped the constitution that the British had left behind and crushed workers' protests with rubber bullets and teargas.

Political parties were also made illegal, although several small organisations exist now without much trouble from the authorities.

Government officials like to

point out that political killings are not part of the Swazi history. In fact, many of the current ministers were jailed at one time or another.

This is so with the current deputy prime minister, Sishayi Nxumalo, who was jailed in 1985 for accusing other government officials of corruption.

Mr Nxumalo now laughs about the experience. He says many changes are under way, including the writing of a constitution.

But he says it is unclear how long it will take. He says that the conversion from traditional to Western ways cannot be hurried and that investors should have faith in his country.

"The whole world right now is saying there is South Africa, let's go there," he said.

"But I hope that soon people will start seeing again that we are part of the market in southern Africa.

"Of all sub-Sahara, our system has worked, whether you understand it or not. It has worked."

R24-m aid for Swazis

The Argus Correspondent

(312)

PRETORIA. — Japan is to provide R24 million in grant aid to Swaziland for the building of a rural water supply project.

ARG 21/12/95
It is the second major grant made to a southern African country in the past week. Japan and Lesotho earlier signed an agreement for R29,1 million to alleviate the mountain kingdom's grain crisis caused by years of drought.

• SWAZILAND — GENERAL

1996 — 1997

'Be here for carnage'

By JUSTIN ARENSTEIN and FRANK MALUKA

THE HUMAN Rights Association of Swaziland (HRAS) has appealed for a massive foreign media presence in the strife-torn kingdom this week in a last ditch attempt to avert a threatened clash between the country's security forces and pro-democracy protestors.

The association's secretary Simon Noge said on Friday that the stay-aways and mass actions planned for Monday would be the biggest protests seen in Swaziland since the banning of political parties in 1973.

He said that all of Swaziland's most powerful trade and labour unions, youth and students groups, as well as the biggest banned political parties in the kingdom had joined forces for the planned mass mobilisation against Swaziland's absolute monarchy.

Foreign media asked to be in Swaziland next week to be protestors' watchdog

"This will be much bigger than the strikes and protests which brought Swaziland to a halt for two days in March 1995 and which forced the government to speak to some of the banned parties," Noge explained.

He added, however, that the association expected a period of violence "the like of which has never been seen in this small country".

"The atmosphere here at the moment is not good and the government has been using the local media to tell the nation that they will not hesitate to use the full might of their security forces against protestors."

"During the past three weeks the police and army have reacted very harshly to any form of civil disobedience, with shootings and severe beatings. I personally witnessed some of the incidents and have photographs of these disgraces," Noge said.

Subject to pressure

Calling for foreign media attention, Noge said that although local journalists had been reporting on the mounting tensions, they were all subject to pressure from the state.

"The foreign media must be here on Monday so

that the government realises that the world is watching."

"We also expect large-scale army manoeuvres right around the kingdom, in an attempt by the security forces to intimidate the whole country," he said.

Democratic Movement (Pudemno), Domentic Mngomezulu, confirmed that the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU) and Swaziland Youth Congress had formed a joint co-ordination committee to organise the protests.

"Swaziland residents should automatically doubt any statements made by the government during the next few days, especially if the government announces that any joint agreements have been reached to cancel the protests," Mngomezulu added.

"The government has been known to try and divert crises in this way." - African Eye News Service.

Swaziland's king in a right royal coup

Justin Arenstein

As anti-monarchist and labour protests in Swaziland continued this week, a prominent human rights campaigner claimed the country's ruler, King Mswati III, appears to have been sidelined in a palace coup.

Ironically, although the protests are directed against Swaziland's Thukhuda traditionalist system of government, the 27-year-old absolute monarch remains popular with the Swaziland population.

"It looks like traditionalists in the royal court, headed by the Queen Mother Ntombi Twala, have effected a type of palace coup so as to ensure that the more liberal factions in the court don't give in to the protesters," said Human Rights Association of Swaziland (HIRAS) secretary general Simon Noge this week.

"You see, even under a democracy, the king would retain his status and at least some power. But the lesser royals stand to lose all their influence, and so they are dead against any reforms," he said.

Noge also dismissed rumours that Mswati had briefly fled Swaziland on Tuesday, at the height of the violence,

saying the rumours seemed to have originated from the royal court itself.

"The rumours could have been started to discredit the king. We certainly don't believe them. But, the people of Swaziland are beginning to wonder why the king doesn't make a stand and flex his powers," he said.

At least four people died and four popular union and youth leaders were arrested during clashes between Swaziland's security forces and pro-democracy protesters this week.

Spearheaded by the kingdom's biggest union, the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU) and various banned political parties as well as civic organisations, the strikes effectively crippled Swaziland.

By Wednesday, the streets of Mbabane were filled with the stench of uncollected refuse and rotting supermarket per-

ishables as the government refused to accede to the striker's demands and the strikers, in turn, refused to restore the capital's electricity supply.

The electricity cuts forced the few

businesses, including state-run newspaper *The Swazi Observer*, to close their doors. The black-out forced Matsapha International Air-

port to reroute incoming flights and to close completely on Wednesday. It also led to sporadic petrol shortages, as Mbabane's petrol pumps ceased working and millions of rands worth of perishable foods were spoiled when commercial refrigerators switched off.

The four fatalities occurred on Tuesday when police clashed with demonstrators in the commercial

'The lesser royals stand to lose all their influence, and so they are dead against any reforms'

capital Manzini and Mbabane. Two plain-clothes CID detectives, who infiltrated a crowd of demonstrators in Mbabane in an attempt to identify the protest's ring leaders, were injured when riot police opened fire on the crowd.

Noge attributed Tuesday's violence to the unexpected arrest of SFTU president Richard Nxumalo, SFTU secretary general Jan Sithole and his assistant, Jabulani Nxumalo, on Monday evening. Noge confirmed that Pudemmo and

March 1995. The government was forced to agree to a list of 27 demands centred around a redrafting of outdated 1963 labour legislation, a repeal of the 1973 banning of all political parties and an undertaking from the government to institute democratic government structures.

"But instead of honouring its promises, the government used the next few months to push the hated Labour Relations Act, which effectively bans union leaders from instigating strike action, through Parliament," said Noge.

"With all our political parties and leaders banned, the unions became the only effective voice for the population — and now the government tried to silence them as well."

After eight months, the SFTU announced another national strike in November, in an attempt to force the government to abide by its undertakings.

Government negotiators immediately met union members and pledged substantial reforms by the new year if the strike were cancelled.

SFTU says there were no reforms and thence the strikes. — *African Eye*

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SFTU says there were no reforms and thence the strikes. — *African Eye*

Swazis struggle to marry tradition with demands of modern life

By RICHARD CORNWELL
INDEPENDENT FOREIGN SERVICE

For the past 50 years, Swaziland has been struggling to find a way of marrying the demands of the "modern" bureaucratic state with the power and privileges accruing to those owing their position to a "traditional" system centred on the ruling Dlamini royal lineage.

On September 6 1968 Swaziland became independent, with a parliamentary multiparty system dominated by the Dlamini's own political creation, the Imbokodvo National Movement (INM), which had taken all the seats in the pre-independence elections of 1962 and 1967.

During the next few years King Sobhuza II outmanoeuvred the relatively small group of modernists who sought to reduce his role to that of a constitutional monarch or figure-head, and although the terms of the largely British-designed constitution forced him to rule through parliament, no laws were passed without his approval.

In the elections of 1972, however, it appeared that the INM's parlia-

mentary monopoly had been breached when three opposition members were returned by the electorate. The INM and the king himself sought to overturn this election result through the courts.

They proved unsuccessful, but in April 1973 Sobhuza suspended the constitution and appointed a royal commission to make recommendations on a constitutional system more amenable to Swaziland's traditional elite.

The commission's findings were never published, and in 1977 the king announced that Swaziland would be ruled through "traditional institutions". Future MPs would be elected by an indirect system centred on regional committees (*hwindla*).

In essence this was designed to prevent the modernists and reformers gaining even the smallest foothold in the political arena. Despite the apparent reintroduction of constitutional institutions, Swaziland was now an absolute monarchy, in which unauthorised public meetings were prohibited and preventive detention was used to deter opponents.

Despite the myths perpetuated, often in good faith, by the "traditionalist" camp, the Swazi kingdom is neither very old in historical terms, nor has its institutions been cast in stone.

Indeed, one of the underlying reasons for Sobhuza's success as a leader was his ability to modify and transform Swazi tradition when occasion demanded, and even to reinvent it. It was due in no small part to Sobhuza's own personal charisma and stature that certain institutions and practices advocated by him came to be accepted by the majority of his subjects as essentially Swazi and therefore immutable.

Before the question of succession could be finalised, Sobhuza died suddenly in August 1982 after 60 years on the throne. As so often in Swazi history, the death of the king ushered in a time of troubles, and a power struggle tore the ruling Dlamini household apart.

On April 25 1986 Prince Makhosetive finally ascended the throne as Mswati III, an absolute monarch aged just 18 and faced with the formidable challenge of trying to

restore the unity of the Dlamini while at the same time seeking policies to combat the substantial economic and social problems confronting the kingdom.

By 1988 it was clear to most that the political and governmental system was in need of radical change. Sobhuza's experiment had failed to meet the demands made on it. Efforts to reform this system and the resistance to change by so-called traditionalists have continued to provide the dominant theme in Swaziland's history ever since.

By the end of the 1980s coherent opposition to the status quo was emerging from the ranks of organised labour and the students at the national university. They were willing to defy legislation that branded virtually all criticism as subversive. By the beginning of 1991, events in South Africa, and the keener interest being shown in Swazi affairs among foreign aid donors, nudged the king and his followers towards the path of reform.

In September 1991 a consultative commission, known as Vusela (Greeting) I, was established to canvass

Swazi opinion on constitutional matters. The commission was dominated by conservatives, and proved a disaster.

Its successor, Vusela II, was a little more progressive, and recommended a fairly substantial reform of the system, although it stopped short of calling for the reintroduction of party politics.

The political struggle now moved to focus on this issue, with the reformists drawing encouragement from the democratic revolution in SA. Strikes, political violence and arson have raised the stakes in the political arena, and the conservatives and traditionalists find themselves under increasing pressure to dismantle the system that assures them of a place in society.

Understanding the complexity of Swaziland's political turmoil is made more difficult by pervasive rumour and intrigue. Moreover, there is a substantial part of Swazi society, including most of the leadership, who rely upon their belief in the supernatural.

The rituals and symbols of kingship, for example, are more than

mere tokens; to the key participants they are real, and of frightening power and efficacy which would make little sense in the modern, industrialised world.

This situation will obviously compound the problems of finding a way for Swaziland's political and social order to undergo an orderly transformation into a modern democratic system, as it would be an assault on the mystery of Swazi kingship.

By the same token, it is evident that the demands for democratic modernisation being heard from young town-dwellers, students and organised labour in Swaziland have received a sympathetic hearing among South Africa's ruling circles.

King Mswati's late father Sobhuza dealt with political crises using a combination of charisma, political nous or guile. It is doubtful whether the young king has inherited or yet developed these talents, and it seems probable that the next few years will see the royal house put to its severest test in a century. - Independent Foreign Service

■ Richard Cornwell is head of current affairs at the Africa Institute of SA.

Young king faces the sands of time

Star

1/2/96

312

By ADRIAN HADLAND
Mbabane

The latest salvo of crippling strike action and the recent political turmoil in Swaziland marks the beginning of the end for the subcontinent's last remaining absolute monarchy.

While many countries around the world have shown that societies, and even fully fledged democracies, can make provision for a symbolic and constitutional monarchy, few have presented a sustainable vision of executive, absolute kingship in the context of the 20th century and beyond.

Provision for a monarchy in South Africa's own constitution, even though no absolute powers will be ceded, remains one of the most contentious issues faced by the constitution's makers.

The major reasons for the fading of absolutism are the same compelling reasons behind the emergence of democracy as the increasingly dominant mode of governance of our contemporary era.

Without the transparency and accountability inherent in a democratic system of government, corruption, nepotism and secrecy are

likely to flourish, to the detriment of all but a limited elite.

"Power corrupts, but absolute power corrupts absolutely".

Apart from his title and all the obvious trappings of royal entitlement, the 28-year-old King Mswati III has inherited a difficult, arguably unsustainable, situation.

In 1973, his predecessor, King Sobhuza II, in the face of new clamourings for democracy, issued a royal proclamation which has come back to haunt Mswati.

"I have assumed supreme power in the kingdom," the proclamation states, and "all legislative, executive and judicial power is vested in me". This directive has remained in force for more than 20 years, with the mantle of supreme power now being worn by Mswati.

Added to this, and also still in force, are a number of clauses



King Mswati ...
rules absolutely.

within the proclamation aimed at preventing political activities.

The absence of political parties and the over-concentration of authority has meant the struggle for power in Swaziland has been confined to the royal family.

Historian Richard Levin says that following the death of Sobhuza, a four-year battle for familial supremacy was waged, culminating shortly after the accession of Mswati in 1986 with the arrest on sedition and treason charges of 12 prominent public

figures, including a former prime minister, a former labour minister and members of the royal family.

The factionalism and intrigue of that period continue today, contend many Swazis, further complicated by networks of formal and informal royal advisers.

These advisers, say critics, form a "human curtain" around Mswati, keeping him isolated and uninformed. But it is the course of history that threatens the absolute monarchy in Swaziland.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the domino theory became a popular means of describing the likely impact of communism on a region, meaning one country after another tumbling in the ideology's thrall.

This theory was also used to justify military intervention in some countries.

Ironically, it is democracy that is following the domino principle in the 1990s, and Swaziland is the last domino resisting the multiparty system in southern Africa.

The monarch and his self-appointed cabinet face an increasingly confident and militant pro-democracy movement, as well as pressure to reform not only from neighbouring countries, but from donor nations and in forums like the Southern African Development Community.

The sands of time are surely running low for absolutism in this part of the world. - Independent Foreign Service.

SWAZILAND's democracy movement was driven back yet again last week. But it had found the government's soft underbelly — Eskom high-tension lines supplying 90% of the kingdom's power.

The sabotage of two Eskom lines gave a new and devastating twist to a five-day stayaway called by the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions. Factories and mills stood idle; water supplies failed; petrol pumps were inoperative; street lamps and traffic lights died.

The use of industrial sabotage underscored the escalating social antagonisms in the kingdom. So, too, did the response of the state: the stayaway was outlawed by decree and three federation leaders arrested under the colonial Public Order Act. In actions which shocked many Swazis, police fired live ammunition at demonstrators who tore down the Swazi flag in Manzini, and cleared the streets of Mbabane with batons, teargas and stun grenades.

Government intransigence, coupled with a call by King Mswati III for a return to work, ultimately broke the back of the stayaway. Talks between the unions and a cabinet team are reported to be in the offing, but the government has already signalled that these will not address political questions.

At one level, the conflict is about the kingdom's labour regime, and centrally the Industrial Relations Act signed into law last week by Mswati. The unions reject its draconian penalties for illegal strike action and incitement to strike; employers its sanctions for illegal lock-outs. Both are angered that the government signed a tripartite deal on the legislation last year and promptly wrenched on it. Also at issue are 27 union demands put to government three years ago, and on which there has been no real movement. These include calls for a national minimum wage, paid maternity leave and the right to strike.

But the federation, under the leadership of charismatic secretary-general Jan Sithole, is more than a campaigner for industrial justice — like Cosatu in the 1980s, it is the legal spearhead of a democracy movement which includes banned political parties, a youth grouping and white-collar unions for teachers and public servants. The most explosive of the 27 demands is article

Swazis are still intent on their fight for a democracy

DREW FORREST

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21, which calls for a Codesa-like forum of all interest groups to decide Swaziland's constitutional future. The underlying agenda, says Kialon Shongwe, president of the largest opposition party, the People's United Democratic Movement, is constitutional monarchy, constitutionally guaranteed freedoms and parliament as the supreme law-giver.

Karl Marx had the idea that ideological clashes reflect a deeper conflict over resources — and with some caricature, Swaziland can be seen as a case of Marrian class conflict. On the one hand is a rural-based aristocracy with an absolute monarch at its apex, dedicated to heroic idleness and conspicuous consumption. On the other are the industrious urban classes implanted by colonial rule — professionals and entrepreneurs in alliance with organised workers — who are spectators at the royal banquet.

The post-independence coup by Mswati's predecessor, Sobhuza, created a two-stream system of rule under which traditional rulers could tap into the tax revenues and mining royalties generated by the modern sector. Parliamentary subdivisions and royal funds like Tlhiyo Takanigwane — founded with mining royalties and now a powerful investment corporation — guarantee the livelihoods and powers of patronage of Mswati and a host of parasitic hangers-on.

Mswati has a weakness for modern toys: he is said to have installed a disco and a swimming bath with a glass bottom at his new palace outside Mbabane. Two years ago, he

bought a 500 series Mercedes, to replace it months later with a 600 series model which he allegedly modified by adding a gold mascot. Last year he and 30 retainers spent R1.2m on a two-week jaunt to the UN celebrations in the US.

His livelihood is assured — no one in Swaziland is calling for a republic. But the princes and princesses who cluster around him are not so secure. They are said to have told him, when a constitutional monarchy was debated: "The old king left us the tinkhundla system so that we could live."

The system in question entrenches traditional dominance of the modern stream of government: par-

liament rubber-stamps the decisions of the executive, and cabinet cannot move without royal fiat. Secret ballots and some popular role in the selection of candidates were introduced in the 1993 election, but parties remain banned under the 1973 royal decree which created a standing state of emergency.

Mswati's power to "hulalwa" (arbitrarily elevate to high office) is used to reward the royals and other families of high rank, and is a major source of government incompetence. He appoints the entire cabinet, two-thirds of the senate and some assembly members.

Ruling circles are singularly opaque to public scrutiny and prone to Byzantine intrigue. Swazis talk of dihard counsellors who hold the king in their thrall and of whom he is physically afraid, but are vague on its members. Mswati is said to be at odds with the Queen Mother, the power behind the conservative and unpopular prime minister, Prince Mbuli.

The cabinet is said to be split between hardliners and moderates. Secrecy and capriciousness go hand in hand with thinly veiled intolerance of media freedom. All the mass media — with the honourable exception of the Times of Swaziland — are state-owned and expected to toe the official line. The Times has been subjected to bureaucratic harassment, including the unexplained refusal of a work permit to its owner, Doug Loffler, after 20 years of residence in the country. Last year the senate approved legislation banning the Press for publishing critical

reports on the Swazi monarchy. In its armoury, the government has control of the media, the police and the military. Through patronage it has the power to weaken opposition — Labour Minister Shabangu, for example, was once a brave and articulate leader of a national teachers' strike. But the forces of change are developing an unstoppable momentum.

Swaziland is umbilically linked to SA and Swazis — particularly younger Swazis — are keenly aware of the democratic transformation which has swept the region. "If it happened in Malawi, why not here?" one asked last week.

SA's democratic revolution is intensifying pressures for change in other ways. Swaziland can no longer serve as a Trojan horse for sanctions busters, and this has undoubtedly contributed to economic stagnation.

There is a real threat of solidarity action by missionary SA trade unions, and the SA government's current policy of quiet diplomacy could change if the kingdom started to fly apart.

Employers, who tend to view the current government as an obstacle to growth and stability, are increasingly sympathetic to the labour and broader democracy movement. With two stayaways in a year, and sporadic political violence — including the firebombing of parliament — they are bracing for more trouble.

In a practice reminiscent of England before its civil war, Swazis still tend to blame royal advisers for the failures of government rather than Mswati himself. But there is growing scepticism about the young monarch and his perceived inability to stand his ground.

Swazi democrats may have lost this round, but they are digging in. Their movement remains relatively weak and fragmented; their immediate goal is the repeal of the emergency and ban on parties, so that other, larger, objectives can be pursued. But the escalating severity of their confrontations with the state suggests they are growing in strength and tactical sophistication, and that the ruling ideology — that democracy is "unSwazi" — is being rolled back.

"Whatever happens now will not be the end," warned federation leader Jabulani Nxumalo after his release from custody last week. "For workers, it is just the beginning."



KING MSWATI

Domino king?

SWAZILAND is the last domino resisting the multiparty system in Southern Africa writes **ADRIAN HADLAND** for The Argus Foreign Service in Mbabane.

(312)
FAS 2/2/96

The latest salvo of strike action and the recent political turmoil in Swaziland marks the beginning of the end for the sub-continent's last remaining absolute monarchy.

While many countries round the world have shown that societies, and even fully-fledged democracies, can make provision for a symbolic, constitutional monarchy, few have presented a sustainable vision of executive, absolute kingship in the context of the 20th century and beyond.

Provision for a monarchy in South Africa's own constitution, even though no absolute powers will be ceded, remains one of the most contentious issues faced by constitution-makers. The major reasons for the fading of absolutism are the same compelling reasons behind the emergence of democracy as the increasingly dominant mode of governance of our contemporary era.

Without the transparency and accountability inherent in a democratic system of government, corruption, nepotism and secrecy is likely to flourish to the detriment of all but a limited elite.

As the old saying goes, power corrupts while absolute power corrupts absolutely. It is for this reason that power is ideally spread among different institutions within society.

Apart from his title and all the obvious trappings of royal entitlement, the young 28-year-old King Mswati III has inherited a difficult,

arguably unsustainable, situation. In 1973, his eminent forbear, King Sobhuza II, in the face of new clamourings for a more democratic dispensation, issued a royal proclamation which has come back to haunt Mswati. "I have assumed supreme power in the Kingdom," the proclamation stated, and "all legislative, executive and judicial power is vested in me". This directive has remained in force for more than 20 years with the mantle of supreme power now being worn by Mswati.

Added to this, and also still in force, are a number of clauses within the proclamation aimed at preventing political activities: "All political parties and similar bodies that cultivate and bring about disturbances and ill-feelings within the nation are hereby dissolved and prohibited."

The absence of political parties and the over concentration of authority has focused the struggle for power in Swaziland within the royal family. Following the death of Sobhuza, a four year battle for familial supremacy was waged culminating, shortly after the accession of Mswati in 1986, with the arrest on sedition and treason charges of 12 prominent public figures including a former prime minister, a former labour minister and other members of the royal family, according to historian Richard Levin. The factionalism and intrigues of that period continue today, contend

many Swazis, further complicated by networks of formal and informal royal advisors.

These advisors, say critics, form a "human curtain" around Mswati keeping him isolated and uninformed. But it is the course of history that threatens the absolute monarchy in Swaziland. During the 1960s and 1970s, the domino theory became a popular means both of describing the likely impact of communism on a region - one country after another tumbling in its thrall.

Ironically, it is democracy that is following the domino principle in the 1990s and Swaziland is the last domino resisting the multiparty system in Southern Africa. With Swaziland's two neighbours, South Africa and Mozambique, both recent converts, a continued ban on political parties and the maintenance of hereditary supreme power is quickly becoming untenable.

While the general strike in Swaziland has been suspended and life in Mbabane and Manzini has returned more or less to normal, the success of the action - which brought the economy to a complete standstill for a week - is an indication of the support the pro-democracy movement is managing to drum up. The monarch and his self-appointed cabinet face an increasingly confident and militant pro-democracy movement as well as pressure to reform not only from neighbouring countries but from donor nations.



King Mswati of Swaziland, one of the world's last absolute monarchs.

KING UNDER SIEGE

*CP 11/2/96
(312)
Call for another stay-away*

By BHEKIE MATSEBULA

SWAZILAND faces yet another mass stay-away on February 19.

It has been called by the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU) in the face of the Swaziland government's continued refusal to address workers' demands for political change.

The demands include a revision of the Industrial Relations Act and the unbanning of political parties in Swaziland.

Sources within Swaziland told City Press this week that the situation showed no improvement as the government continued to harass the SFTU leaders.

This week the SFTU's assistant secretary general, Jabulani Nxumalo, was arrested for allegedly forging his matriculation certificate.

On Wednesday he was freed on R500 bail.

During the bail application Nxumalo told the court that the charge was a fabrication and that he

believed it emanated from his involvement in the SFTU.

■ The situation in Swaziland has also drawn the attention of the Confederation of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu).

Cosatu met with the SFTU executive in Johannesburg on Thursday to discuss the political situation in Swaziland. Details of the meeting were not immediately available.

King castigated

■ Meanwhile, Swaziland's major underground political party, the People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo) on Monday castigated King Mswati III for refusing to bring about political change.

Pudemo said Swaziland was the only southern African country where political parties were banned – and it was high time the situation was changed.

Political parties in

Swaziland were banned by the late King Sobhuza II (King Mswati's father) on April 12 1973 – when he abolished the British formulated constitution, replacing it with the controversial Tinkundla system of government in 1978.

Pudemo and other underground political parties said they supported the SFTU's call for a mass stay-away on February 19.

The SFTU's secretary general, Jan Sithole, said that on the day before the proposed stay-away workers would hold a meeting to decide whether the action should ahead – should government fail to meet their demands by then.

■ The Federation of Swaziland Employers and the Swaziland Chamber of Commerce and Industry this week held urgent talks with SFTU and government representatives to try to avert the stay-away.

Swaziland going through turbulent times

By Thulani Mthethwa

MANZINI — The tiny kingdom of Swaziland, once known for its peace and tranquillity, is reeling from political turbulence, which led to a week-long mass stayaway by workers recently.

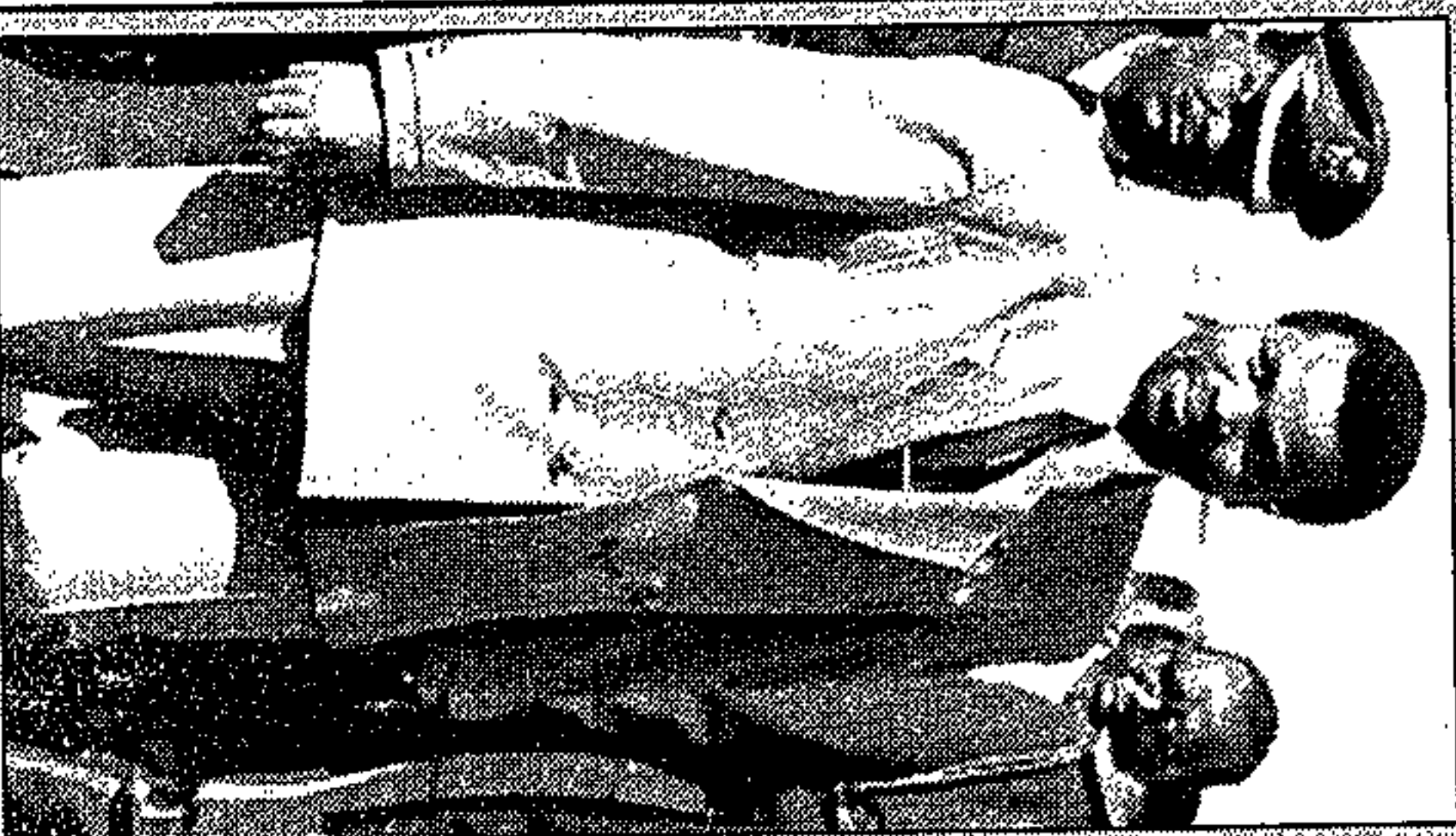
Indeed, King Mswati is in a rough furrow as the winds of change culminate in political uprisings in various corners of the country. The universal phenomenon of democratisation is beginning to take a grip.

While its neighbours have democratised, Swaziland — under the king — has resisted change and remains subject to authoritarian rule.

The stayaway cost Swaziland about 50 million elangeni (about R40 million), says Mike Masebula, an economics lecturer at the University of Swaziland.

The action started on January 22 and dragged on until the following Saturday when the king ordered the participants to return to work by Monday (January 29).

King Mswati... beginning to feel the winds of change in various corners of his country.



ferred short and potential long-term losses, the short-term costs being the loss in production of locally made goods (such as refrigerators, glasses and other products for export).

The long-term fears are the possible loss of investors who, says Masebula, might consider relocating causing damage to the ailing economy.

Moves towards democracy have seen the formation of opposition political organisations, and the future of the monarchy, which is directly involved in the political arena, looks stark.

The king is responsible for appointing the Cabinet, prime minister, senators and members of parliament.

Respect for king eroded

The strong respect for the monarchy, especially in the rural areas, is being eroded as some Cabinet ministers and privileged individuals surrounding the king improperly acquire farms and other property under the pretext that the king "forgets" about his rural subjects.

Political parties, including the People's United Democratic Move-

ment, have said in numerous letters addressed to the king that he should adopt the role of a constitutional monarch and leave the business of politics to the politicians.

The parties have also said the Prime Minister and his government should be answerable to the nation, which is not currently the case as they see themselves directly responsible to the monarch.

The week-long mass stayaway under the leadership of the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU) was marked by an atmosphere of anger and resentment of workers at the authoritarian political system. It paralysed the country, both economically and socially.

Workers originally submitted demands to the government in 1994 and it is a lack of action on these that has led to the dissent.

The demands include empowering the industrial court to reinstate unlawfully sacked workers, recognition of May Day as a paid public holiday, paid maternity leave, no taxation of retrenched workers' benefit, adequate

accommodation for the police, Press freedom and the establishment of a constitutional forum.

Labour and Public Service Minister Albert Shabangu has claimed the workers' demands are being met through the introduction of an amended Industrial Relations Bill of 1995.

But the bill has been scorned by the SFTU and the Federation of Swaziland Employers (FSE), who see it as an undemocratic legal instrument because they were not formally invited to contribute to its contents.

Instead, they demand that a document known as the Tripartite Protocol — of the government, SFTU and FSE, which embraced the 27 demands made on the government — be recognised by the government, replacing the Industrial Relations Bill.

However, there has been a deadlock because the government has not shown a willingness to adopt the protocol, apparently preferring to stick with the bill.

The SFTU has now been mandated by its members to consult different civic groups and political parties. — *ATA*

Swaziland reform hopes revived after meeting

Star 15/2/96 (312) (312)

Pietermaritzburg – Hopes for negotiations on Swaziland's constitution have been given a boost after a meeting between Swaziland's royal-led government and its pro-democracy federation of trade unions.

Political protests late last month brought commercial activities in the country to a standstill.

The Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions and other groups are pressing for democratic reform in the tiny kingdom.

"The talks show there is some form of willingness on the part of the government to talk about these issues," trade union leader Thomas Dlamini said yesterday, referring to negotiations on a re-

turn to multiparty democracy. He described the meeting on Tuesday as "talks about talks".

Dlamini, the national co-ordinator of the SFTU, said a mass meeting would be held today to "reconsider the contemplated strike on February 19".

"I am sure the executive will try to sell the idea to give the government more time on the issue."

Labour Minister Albert Shabangu would not comment on the meeting.

After the four-day stayaway last month, strikers returned to work only after King Mswati III ordered his subjects back to work amid a heavy security force presence. – Own Correspondent.

Swazi king 'has not moved'

By BHEKIE MATSEBULA

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BANNED POLITICAL parties in Swaziland yesterday rejected King Mswati III's promise that his government will reinstate constitutional rule 23 years after it had been suspended by the late King Sobhuza II.

Secretary-General of the popular People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo), Dominic Mngomezulu, said King Mswati's promise was "just like his usual promises that he will bring political change" in Swaziland.

On Friday King Mswati III - during the official opening of this year's parliamentary sitting - said "the time has come that we carry on with the constitution", adding that a committee will be set up to prepare the way for the reintroduction of a constitution.

"He (Mswati) hasn't started saying anything. To us (Pudemo) he is just silent," Mngomezulu said by phone from Manzini yesterday.

"He would have said something we feel could be substantial to us if he had said the 1968 constitution (Westminster drafted constitution) was being reinstated so that we can start working on it if we need any changes," Mngomezulu said.

Mngomezulu said the King should remove the King's Proclamation No 12 of 1973 which forbids political activity and the freedom of gathering.

"With that decree still in force, we feel he hasn't moved even an inch," Mngomezulu said.

Political comment and newsbills by K Sibya, headlines and sub-editing by M Adzga, both of 2 Herb St, New Doornfontein, Johannesburg.

NOTICE: THE POST OFFICE HAS ADVISED THAT THE ABOVE IS A PRIVATE LETTER AND NOT A NEWS ITEM.

Swaziland plans to diversify revenue

ET(BR) 8/3/96 (312)

By TOM HOLLOWAY

Mbabane — Derek von Wissel, the finance minister, announced plans for revenue diversification and drastic reforms in Swaziland's tax system in his budget speech this week, in line with his earlier warning of a voluntary structural adjustment programme.

The adjustment, Von Wissel said, was a pre-emptive measure to avoid such a programme being imposed later on Swaziland by the

International Monetary Fund.

One of the urgent requirements the budget speech focused on, was the need for the government to diversify and broaden its revenue sources, of which more than 50 percent come from the South African Customs Union (SACU).

The SACU formula was being renegotiated which could result in a reduction in Swaziland's revenue share, said Von Wissel.

To safeguard against this the reforms include a move away from

reliance on direct taxation to indirect taxation which would include increases in sales tax and fuel tax.

The minister said that of the overall reforms, the changes to the personal income tax system will benefit taxpayers most. Taxpayers will be treated equally with all income, including benefits in kind, being taxed.

However, the highest rate of tax is to be reduced from 40 percent to 30 percent and a higher income threshold will protect the poorest

who will be exempt from income tax.

To encourage job creation and investment, corporate tax is to be reduced from 37 percent to 30 percent and an improved company act will be introduced. Parastatals will also be brought into the tax net.

A key point in the budget speech was the unacceptably high government expenditure. Allocations to ministries have been cut and strict monitoring systems introduced. — Independent Foreign Service

Mandela's Secret Swazi plan

(312)

Secret discussions between King Mswati III and Nelson Mandela have left diplomats pondering the details of a policy they are to implement, reports **Stefaans Brümmer**

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela is playing his cards in the Swaziland democratisation game close to his chest — so close, in fact, that Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo and South Africa's Foreign Affairs Department are in the dark about the details of his strategy.

Mandela has taken immense personal interest in helping Swaziland resolve its domestic crisis, which came to a head in January when virtually the entire workforce, led by the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU), embarked on a one-week stayaway to demand a return to constitutional rule.

Last Saturday Mandela, joined by his counterparts from Botswana and Zimbabwe, Quett Masire and Robert Mugabe, met with Swaziland's young King Mswati III in Pretoria. It followed a meeting on March 1 between Mandela and Mswati in Swaziland.

At both meetings, only the heads of state spoke and not even Nzo, who

was at the Pretoria venue last weekend, joined in.

This week neither Nzo nor Foreign Affairs Director General Rusty Evans had been briefed on what had been said, a senior Foreign Affairs official confirmed. South African diplomats admitted to a degree of frustration at not knowing the details of a policy they are supposed to implement, but acknowledged Mandela's indulgence of the king's need for absolute confidentiality may be the only way.

"We have no knowledge of the contents [of the talks]. It is quite a problem for us, because we have to work with it. Our Swazi counterparts also do not know what has been said," a member of South Africa's High Commission in Mbabane, capital of Swaziland, said.

But he believed Mandela's strategy had a purpose: "Mswati cannot be humiliated before his own people, and he cannot appear to be succumbing to pressure. But there will definitely be pressure on him, from

inside Swaziland and from outside ... and from President Mandela."

Mswati's father, the late King Sobhuza II, suspended Swaziland's Westminster-style Constitution in 1973, banning political parties and free political activity. Mswati (27) — who rules as absolute monarch, the last in sub-Saharan Africa — has publicly blamed "foreigners" for the troubles in his country and, as a sovereign monarch in a deeply traditional society, has repeatedly demonstrated he will not appear to succumb to pressure.

It is widely held — and South African foreign policy is premised on this assessment — that Mswati is personally

in favour of at least limited change, but is held back by his traditional advisers and the extended royal family, which stands to lose more from reform.

Around August last year, Mswati invited Mandela on a state visit to Swaziland, where it is understood he intended to use the cover of general relations to discuss the clamour for

MTG 22-28/3/96

democracy in his country.

While that visit did not materialise, Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini had talks with Mswati in which the benefits of democracy and a return to a constitutional monarchy were apparently raised.

Then Mandela's deputy Thabo Mbeki was to have visited Swaziland during the labour unrest earlier this year, primarily to discuss a long-standing land claim the

It is widely held that Mswati is in favour of limited change, but is held back by his traditional advisers and the extended royal family

kingdom has against South Africa. But Mswati stopped the visit; a move interpreted by South Africa at the time as an attempt by the king not to have it appear that Mbeki was there to advise on Swaziland's internal situation.

Meanwhile, Mandela was coming under increasing pressure to ensure Swaziland moves towards democracy. A source close to the presidency said Mandela, who had taken an active personal stance against Nigerian military dictator Sani Abacha, was being criticised for not taking an equally tough line against undemo-

cratic rule in a neighbouring country. The Congress of South African Trade Unions, which is close to the SFTU, also agitated for South Africa to get involved. "We couldn't delay any longer," the source said.

Mandela invited Mswati to visit Pretoria on March 1. Mswati agreed, but asked for secrecy. When the President's office announced that it would take place — apparently under the mistaken impression that it would be enough to keep the contents secret as opposed to the fact of the meeting — Mswati called it off. Mandela offered to visit Mswati in Swaziland instead, where they had one-on-one talks.

It is believed Mandela would have stressed to Mswati the importance of reform, but did not want to be seen again to be the "bullyboy of the region", an epithet reinforced when Mandela outpaced his regional partners in criticism of Abacha.

Mandela asked Masire and Mugabe — significantly, the two who had helped him avert a coup in Lesotho in 1994 — to join him for last Saturday's discussions in Pretoria.

The source close to the presidency said Mswati had wanted this meeting to be a secret too, but it was confirmed when a Swazi journalist got wind of it. "It is very difficult to keep a meeting secret if you bring together four heads of government," he said.

Swazis get a big boost

(3/2)
A R44 million loan scheme introduced by Swaziland's King Mswati III to assist the establishment and development of small and medium business projects went into full operation on Tuesday.

Interviewed about the scheme yesterday, Finance Ministry director, Bill Farmer, said the loan scheme would be operated through established intermediaries such as banks.

The scheme was intended to bene-

fit Swazis unable to provide the security usually required by commercial banks, and enable them to obtain loans to start up their own business projects.

Farmer said the applicants' proposed projects had to be viable.

Referring to the failure of similar loan schemes in the past, he said the ministry and the fund's management committee had made sure that abuse of funds would not take place. — Sapa.

Sowetan 10/4/96

Swaziland reform 'too slow'

CT 11/4/96

#(312)

MBABANE: Swazis would lose confidence in their government if democratic reforms in the kingdom were not speeded up, a member of parliament said yesterday.

"If the process continues to move at the slow rate, the people's hopes and confidence in this government will be eroded," Mr Dumsani Masango told parliament.

"I therefore ask the prime minister to give this house a detailed explanation on the progress Swaziland has made on the reforms and include the time-frame in which coming changes will be implemented."

Masango said that since reforms were introduced little progress had been made.

"The democratic reforms introduced more than three years ago

have raised the people's hopes for a more democratic Swaziland. But it seems everything has stopped and the changes, if any, are hardly noticeable."

Masango's comments follow the announcement of plans by the opposition Democratic Alliance's for a new round of demonstrations to demand political freedom.

The alliance said its supporters would march to the prime minister's office tomorrow and parliament on Saturday to demand the repeal of a royal decree that outlawed political parties in 1973.

The kingdom of 900 000 people is the only Southern African country where political parties are forbidden.

The alliance has demanded that King Mswati place himself

above politics and allow normal political activity.

His father and predecessor, King Sobhuza II, issued the 1973 decree suspending the constitution, which dated from independence from Britain in 1968.

Unions brought the country to a standstill with a week-long general strike in January over the issue.

They said last month they had suspended talks with the government and would not return to negotiations until all oppressive laws were removed.

Mswati has allowed parliamentary elections and limited political activity but the ban on parties remains.

A police spokesman said action would be taken if the demonstrations went ahead. — Reuter

Swazis protest for democracy

312
Mbabane - About 100 pro-democracy protesters marched on government offices yesterday, defying a 23-year-old ban on political activity in Swaziland.

Star 13/4/96
Prime Minister Mthini Dlamini on Thursday banned two rallies organised by the umbrella opposition Swaziland Democratic Alliance to mark the anniversary of an April 12 1973 state of emergency banning political parties. Dlamini had threatened to use troops to "enforce the law".

Simon Noge, executive officer of the Human Rights Association of Swaziland, said about 3 000 people would converge on parliament today in the hope of hearing that their demand for the repeal of democracy restrictions had been accepted. - AFP

Diamond that enriched Free State miner set to fetch millions at auction

London - A diamond discovered more than 100 years ago by a young Free State mineworker is expected to fetch more than R12-million on auction next month.

The diamond, its history dating back to the pioneering days of the South African diamond industry, has lain in an American vault for nearly a century. It was placed there by its owner, whose identity remains a secret.

For the sweaty, tired miner, about to finish a shift at Jagersfontein mine in the Free State on a June evening in 1893, it was the find of the century. In his shovel, among the dirt and the grit, lay what at that time was the world's largest uncut diamond - all 995 carats of it.

Mine records recall that the worker did not do what he was supposed to do - hand it over to his supervisor. He had heard

many tales of miners cheated out of their rewards for finding and handing over diamonds. Without a word to anyone, he hid it among his belongings and waited for the right moment to claim his reward.

He managed to smuggle the diamond out of the work area and demanded to see the mine manager. When he produced the rock, he was handsomely rewarded, paid the equivalent of R3 000 - which for a black worker at that time was an enormous amount - and given a horse, complete with saddle and bridle.

History does not record what happened to him, but the diamond enjoyed celebrity status. In 1903 it was cut into 21 gems, the largest of which was the 69.68 carat brilliant white, pear-shaped Excelsior I. It is this, the big brother of the family, that will be auctioned in Geneva next month.

Nigerian pledge on civilian rule

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Abuja - Nigerian military ruler Sani Abacha yesterday assured the international community that his regime is irrevocably committed to returning to democratic rule within the three-year timetable set out in the transition programme.

Abacha told a United Nations fact-finding team that his regime had no intention whatsoever to perpetuate itself in power as alleged by the opposition and pro-democracy groups, adding that the three-year timetable was to enable the regime to avoid past pitfalls and lay a good foundation for an enduring democracy.

"We have decided not to look back and we shall not waver in the faithful implementation of our transition programme," he added. - Sapa-DPA

Star 13/4/96

Muslims warn 'insulting' Swazi priests

ARLT 20/4/96

(312)

(212)16

TOM HOLLOWAY

Foreign Service

MBABANE. - Priests from the Zionist sect here have brought down the wrath of Islam on their heads and have been warned they could face the same fate as *Satanic Verses* author Salman Rushdie. This follows the recent call by a number of Swazi priests for all non-Christian religious groups in Swaziland to be banned.

The priests were attending a mass

gathering at King Mswati's royal residence at Lozita when some of them said the prophet Mohammed was a criminal and a murderer.

King Mswati rejected the priests' remarks which have brought sharp rebukes from other church leaders.

Muslims here have reacted angrily through the local press. One infuriated writer warned that, no-one, not even the Swazi priests who called the prophet Mohammed a murderer, could be forgiven for insulting Islam.

The writer warned the priests that, just as the author Salman Rushdie had been sentenced to death for insulting Islam in his book, their names could also be on the death list very soon.

The Zionist priests also accused the non-Christian church groups of misleading the Swazi nation in their religious speeches.

Swazis chart

historic course

By Thulani Mthethwa

The Swaziland Ex-Miners' Union was formed in 1993.

MANZINI - The formation of an alliance of pro-democracy groups promises to usher in a new political chapter in Swaziland.

Having struggled individually to prepare for a transition to democracy, the groups finally formed the Swaziland Democratic Alliance. The birth of the alliance could pose a tough challenge to King Mswati's non-party traditional system of government.

The alliance, formed after a meeting at the University of Swaziland, includes the influential Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU), the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), the Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), Forward to the Future Forum (FFF), the Swaziland Ex-Miners' Union, the National Farm Dwellers' Association and the Human Rights Association of Swaziland.

Royal ban

Several of the groups have prospered despite a 1973 royal ban on all political activity in Swaziland.

The SFTU represents 18 unions with a following of more than 80 000 in the commercial and agricultural sectors. SWAYOCO is the youth wing of PUDEMO, which was formed in 1983.

Early in 1995, former commerce minister Barnabas Mhlongo, University of Swaziland political science lecturer Nomtheho Simelane, and former radio announcer Dumisa Dlamini launched the FFF, which aims to provide a platform for political debate and education on the principles of democracy.

March to Parliament

For the first time in the history of Swaziland, the alliance openly demanded that the government repeal the 1973 ban on political activity.

Alliance members recently marched to the office of the Prime Minister, Prince Mbilini, to deliver a petition calling for the repeal - even though Mbilini had banned the march at the request of parliament.

The demonstrators went to parliament to deliver the petition on the same day.

In March the deputy prime minister, Sishayi Nxumalo, extended an invitation to various groups, including pro-democracy bodies, to identify candidates for a constitutional review commission.

But, surprisingly, King Mswati denied he had authorised Nxumalo to make the invitation. - *Africa Information Afrique*.



KING MSWATI... the Swazi king is expected to make an announcement on the direction of Swaziland's constitutional future.

Studies show oil near Kenyan border

Two foreign firms to sink wells in new Tanzanian oil venture

By Joe Khamisi

CT (BR) 8/5/96

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Canadian firm.

Nairobi — A new search for oil will begin later this year along Tanzania's Indian Ocean coastline after preliminary seismic studies showed there is oil in the area.

Two foreign companies, Dublin International Petroleum and Canada's Antrim Resources, have been granted licences to prospect for oil.

Officials from the two companies will travel to Dar es Salaam at the end of next month to sign agreements covering the project.

Memoranda of understanding have already been signed with Tanzania Petroleum Development.

The agreements will run for 11 years. The two firms will commit \$30 million to sink wells between the mainland and Zanzibar within the Tanga-Pemba-Zanzibar triangle bordering Kenya.

The coastal project is the second contract awarded to the

Antrim Resources has been doing exploratory drilling in the Rufiji river basin and in Mandawa in the Lindi region.

The latest agreements call for profit-sharing, with part of any discovered oil going to the investors and the rest being retained by Tanzania Petroleum Development.

The development corporation has also called for the training of Tanzanians and the transfer of technology.

The only significant oil find in Tanzania has involved commercially viable gas reserves on the island of Songosongo and Kilwa in southern Tanzania.

Experts from HBT Agra, another Canadian firm, have been waiting to lay a 220km natural gas pipeline from Songosongo to Dar es Salaam.

Development corporation officials said the work was being delayed to allow five natural gas wells in the area to be rehabilitated.

The Dubai-based Schlumberger Oilfield Assistance has reportedly won a \$15 million deal to repair the wells. The tender will be formally awarded in a few weeks.

The Songosongo gas-to-electricity project was scheduled to start generating power for sale to the Tanzania Electricity Supply Company in 1998, but delays are expected.

Environmentalists have been worried that construction of the pipeline would pose environmental problems to humans and animals. But HBT Agra officials said safety precautions had been taken to safeguard lives.

The pipeline would avoid sensitive areas such as human settlements, mangrove forests and designated wetlands.

The \$300 million project is funded by the World Bank and the European Investment Bank.

Experts said the project would ease widespread power shortages in Tanzania and help industries

boost production once completed.

It would also replace costly oil imports with the cost-effective natural gas.

Tanzanian officials expect the project will provide a dependable supply of natural gas for at least 20 years. Experts said the Songosongo gas field had enough reserves for 35 years.

The project will be able to process 70 million cubic metres of gas a day without compression.

The gas will be transported through the pipeline to five gas turbine generators at the Ubungu power station in Dar es Salaam.

Two of the generators were installed last year to alleviate the country's electricity shortage.

They were built by the Johannesburg-based Rosherville Construction in conjunction with North American companies.

Tanzania hopes to export generated power from the project by linking its grid to neighbouring countries. — Independent Foreign Service

Swazi king sacks prime minister

312

CT 9/5/96

MBABANE: Swazi King Mswati III said yesterday he was retiring Prime Minister Mblini Dlamini — but was not explicit about the reasons.

The king told a public rally: "The people of Swaziland are warned to show respect for their culture and traditional authorities."

The names of a national council of royal advisers would be announced, he said.

Mswati told the meeting South African President Nelson Mandela, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe and Botswana President Ketumile Masire would visit Swaziland today "to personally witness Swaziland's unique democracy in action".

However, Mandela's spokesman Mr Parks Mankafilana said Mandela would not be visiting the kingdom today. The president had no plans to visit Swaziland this week, he added.

Most of Swaziland's banned political leadership attended the meeting, expecting the king to announce significant political reforms. — Sapa

Sugar a sweetener for smaller farmers

(312) 30 10/5/96

MBABANE — The future of small-scale sugar cane growers in Swaziland looks bright. They farm 10% of the 500 000 tons of sugar produced each year.

The sugar industry earns 23% of the gross domestic product (GDP), 33% of foreign currency income and makes up 67% of total agricultural production.

It was like a voice crying in the wilderness when the Commonwealth Development Corporation called on Swazi farmers to take up sugar cane farming in 1962. Traditional chiefs were suspicious of an emerging industry ruled by foreign interests in which Swazis would be merely providers of labour. Only a trickle took up sugar cane farming, at the foot of the Lubombo Mountains.

When the Swaziland sugar industry strategic plan was reviewed in 1990, the industry began to involve Swazi farmers in sugar cane growing.

Initially, local chiefs were suspicious, believing they might lose land. Some branded those who allowed sugar cane growing as sellouts bent on trading off their forefathers' land to industrialists.

One such dispute was that of Chief Madlenya Gamedze of the Siphofaneni area, who came under fire from Chief Bhodzela Ngcamphalala of KaNgcamphalala for approving sugar cane cultivation. King Mswati intervened to save stalled sugar cane projects. In October 1992 the king formally approved sugar cane farming on national lands, which came as a relief to many small-scale farmers.

The royal assent, coupled with a radio and television campaign by the Swaziland Sugar Association saying "Sugar Is the Real Swazi Gold", has brought a surge of interest in sugar cane farming among subsistence farmers.

To facilitate the smooth transition from subsistence farming to commercial farming, the industry gave the Swaziland Sugar Association's extension services responsibility for assisting emerging small-scale cane growers.

Large sugar estates like Mhlume Sugar Company and Ubombo Ranches are also helping growers.

The assistance given includes land preparation, irrigation, fertiliser application, weed control, pest and disease control, harvesting, transport and financial advice.

These new farmers hope that sugar cane farming will help to improve the quality of life of their communities.

The chairman of the Magwanyana Farmers Cooperative, Albert Fakudze, believes sugar cane is the keystone to economic development in Swaziland.

"It is an answer to economic ills like poverty, unemployment and the poor national infrastructure," he says. — AIA.

Swazi sacking

is a sop

ST 12/5/96

By NIMROD MABUZA
Mbabane

KING MSWATI III of Swaziland miscalculated when he dismissed his unpopular Prime Minister, Prince Mbilini, this week in an apparent effort to appease his politically stifled subjects.

The king will name a new premier once he has received recommendations from the Swazi National Council — but political analysts and opposition groups in the kingdom say that nothing short of a repeal of the 1973 decree by his father, King Sobhuza, which banned political parties, will satisfy the aspirations of the Swazi people.

Jan Sithole, secretary general of the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions, described the sacking of Prince Mbilini as "changing the lid of a Coca-Cola bottle to a Fanta".

Jerry Nxumalo, secretary general of the Swaziland Democratic Alliance — a coalition of political pressure groups — said he was disappointed that the king did not use the opportunity to announce significant and urgently needed political reforms.

BUSINESS NEWS

Big future for cane growers

Source: 13/5/96
(312)

By Vuyisile Hlatshwayo

THE future of small-scale sugar cane growers in Swaziland looks bright.

Last year they produced 10 percent of the 500 000 tons of sugar produced in Swaziland.

The sugar industry contributes 23 percent to the country's gross domestic product, earns 33 percent of foreign currency and comprises 67 percent of total agricultural production.

The cane growers have come a long way since the Commonwealth Development Corporation called on Swazi farmers to take up sugar cane farming in 1962.

The traditional chiefs were suspicious of an emerging industry ruled by foreign interests in which Swazis would be merely providers of labour. Only a handful took up sugar cane farming, at the foot of the Lubombo Mountains.

When the Swaziland sugar industry strategic plan was implemented in 1990, the industry began to involve indigenous Swazi farmers in sugar cane growing.

Initially, local chiefs were sceptical, fearing that they might lose land. Some branded those who allowed sugar cane growing as sell-outs bent on trading their forefathers' land off to industrialists.

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Madlenya Gamedze of the Siphofaneni area, who came under fire from Chief Bhodzela Ngcamphalala of KaNgcamphalala for approving sugar cane growing.

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Since the royal assent, coupled with a radio and television campaign by the Swaziland Sugar Association rallying under the banner: "Sugar is the real Swazi gold", there has been a surge of interest among subsistence farmers.

Smooth transition

To facilitate the smooth transition from subsistence to commercial farming, the industry has charged the Swaziland Sugar Association Extension Services with assisting the emerging small-scale cane growers.

Large sugar estates such as Mhlume Sugar Company and Umbono Ranches are also helping.

Among other things, the assistance covers land preparation, irrigation, fertiliser application, transport, weed, pest and disease control as well as financial advice.

Farmers are excited with the new developments in the cane growing industry. — *Africa Information Afrique.*

16 AFRICA

Swazis without a prime minister

M&G Correspondent

SWAZILAND is without a prime minister two weeks after King Mswati III sacked Prince Mbilini at a meeting of the Swazi nation at the Royal Cattle Byre in Lobamba.

Swazis have been anxiously awaiting a new prime minister, whom the king promised would be appointed after recommendations from a 21-man Swazi National Council appointed two days after the sacking.

At present acting deputy prime minister Sishayi Nxumalo is in charge. King Mswati is on a state visit to Kuwait and was a guest at the inauguration of Taiwanese President, Lee Teng-hui.

Prince Mbilini's sacking was the climax of six years of pressure for democratic change.

The prime minister's dismissal was

not a show of political change, but it calmed the tension. Prince Mbilini was the seventh and most unpopular prime minister in Swaziland since independence in 1968.

During his tenure there were two mass stay-aways orchestrated by the powerful Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions. The latest, in January, brought the country to a standstill for eight days.

Political and pressure groups which have sprung up over the six-year period and the trade unions, have dismissed the sacking of Prince Mbilini as insignificant, saying the real answer to the country's problems was to change the whole political system to bring about democracy.

Swaziland only allows one political party to operate, the Imbokodvo Party. All the country's political ills

have been blamed on this system which is the royal family's power base. It has promoted nepotism and favouritism among those in high places and with royal blood.

When the king summoned the nation to the cattle byre, many political commentators expected he would remove the notorious King's Decree of 1973, proclaimed by his father King Sobhuza II, which banned political parties, vesting all authority in the king's hands. But he did not remove the ban.

On the same day, the king opened a people's parliament at the cattle byre, where all Swazis, for the next few days, were to speak their minds on any subject they chose. He appealed for tolerance among those with differing views.

These talks revealed there was clear division among the "progressive",

mostly urban forces who strongly advocated the unbanning of political parties, and the "conservatives", led by princes who questioned the wisdom of such a move, claiming it would destabilise Swaziland's peace.

After 23 years of one-party-state politics, many people have become indifferent and are not aware of their rights. Many Swazis do not realise they do not enjoy basic human rights, such as the right to own land.

While there is no law against this, married women cannot acquire a passport or travel document without their husbands' approval.

In the rural areas, women are not allowed to acquire land on their own. The bulk of land (Swazi National Land) is in the hands of the King and is distributed through chiefs. — *The Swazi Times*



King Mswati III: He has failed to remove the ban on political parties

Phosa calls for closer Swazi corridor links

BD 29/5/96

212 (312)

Mduduzi ka Harvey

THE time had come for SA and Swaziland to translate the Maputo-Mpumalanga corridor initiative into projects that would create sustainable jobs for both countries.

Mpumalanga premier Matthews Phosa was addressing, in the capital Mbabane yesterday, a joint meeting of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Economics Association of Swaziland. The projects would focus on water shortage, electricity supply, tourism and trade.

He said he had "always emphasised" the need for regional economic and development co-operation between neighbouring countries, which aimed at "softening political borders". This vision of regional co-operation "had now begun to materialise".

He said the concept of having a regional circle of friends who were bonded together by co-operation and economic growth would make "international investors feel safe to invest".

He said that in the tourism sector negotiations were currently taking place for the development of a national park that

would border Mpumalanga, Mozambique, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.

He said inward investment would bring capital into the region and for this reason he supported President Mandela's vision of a privatisation drive that would introduce into the economy new skills, technology, innovative management ideas and a better spread of wealth.

Swaziland Railway CEO Gideon Mahlalela said the development of various corridors should be "dictated by rational economic reasoning" — rather than by political decisions — because this would lead to undue competition between the different corridors and the marginalisation of certain groups.

He said in the past Swaziland "had been left out" of the Mpumalanga-Maputo corridor development project and yet it was geographically and economically an integral part of the eastern sub-region. He said Swaziland's rail network was ready to integrate into the corridor project and he called on the SA and Swaziland governments to consider a railway that would link Swaziland with all the east coast ports.

Appeal to Swazi teachers to talk

MBABANE – Swaziland acting Prime Minister Dr Sishaye Nxumalo yesterday appealed to the nation to play a constructive, positive and meaningful role in the kingdom's "march" towards reform and democracy.

In a statement prepared for delivery in Mbabane, Nxumalo appealed to the country's teachers to call off their strike and settle their problems through dialogue.

He emphasised the need for peaceful transition in Swaziland.

"Bear in mind that our unique Tinkhundla system of government was chosen by the Swazi people, and will be changed only by the will of the people," he said.

"Any reform will be determined in the forthcoming

Sowetan 17/6/96 (312)
Acting premier calls for dialogue for democracy

constitutional forum announced by King Mswati III, and I therefore call on the people of Swaziland to move forward in unity and play their part in this process which is so vital to the future of the kingdom," he said.

"It is through this process," Nxumalo said, "that the Swazi people will chart our new course and provide the new mandate for the democratic future of Swaziland. In this way the country will develop to the stage where it can take its rightful place in the Southern African Development Community and beyond."

Nxumalo warned that turmoil resulting from such action could erode the investment climate in the highly competitive international arena.

"If that happens, we could be left behind, and we would struggle for alternatives," he said.

"Action such as strikes and stayaways can harm the economy, diminish foreign and local investor confidence, and stifle economic growth. This would mean fewer jobs and less pay, which would be detrimental to the Swazi man in the street," he concluded – Sapa.

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after his predecessor, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, retired.

Water scheme workers on strike

ABOUT 3 000 employees of the Lesotho Highlands Water Scheme were still on strike at their camp outside Butha-Buthe yesterday. A project contractor said work at construction sites had ground to a halt. About 10 South Africans, apparently fearing for their lives, had resigned, he said, after objections to the participation of South Africans in the scheme.

(312) ST 23/6/96

CA journalists honour Zambian

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NEWS ROUND-UP

Swazi king prepares new constitution

(312) Star 25/7/96
Emergency consultative

meeting of SADC countries

takes place without Mswati III

SAPA

President Nelson Mandela yesterday said he was convinced Swazi monarch King Mswati III had embarked on a path which would result in Swaziland becoming a fully democratic state.

Speaking in Pretoria after his return from Maputo, where he attended talks on problems in Swaziland, Mandela said moves towards democracy in the kingdom had to be expedited.

"I believe that His Majesty on his own is already taking this role. For that reason we are convinced the way forward that he mapped out is one that, in due course, will mirror the aspirations of the people of Swaziland."

The talks in Maputo were also attended by Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, Botswana President Ketumile Masire and host president Joaquim Chissano.

Mandela said Mswati had sent acting prime minister Sishayi Nxuma-

lo to brief the four presidents on the king's strategy to bring democracy to Swaziland.

"The king wanted to come, but apparently, as they were waiting for him at the airport, they received a message that he had contracted flu," Mandela said.

Swaziland, the only southern African country in which political parties are banned, has been rocked by a series of pro-democracy strikes and protest actions.

Mandela left for Maputo yesterday morning to attend an "emergency consultative meeting".

He said Nxumalo had told them the king would make an important announcement tomorrow on a constitutional commission, which would consult with the Swazi nation on the way forward towards a fully democratic state.

The body would also deal with the powers of the Swazi monarch.

Mswati would also announce the appointment of a new prime minister.

'Swaziland geared for democracy'

(312) Sowetan 25/7/96

The kingdom has been rocked by strike actions by pro-democracy organisations

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela said yesterday he was convinced Swazi monarch King Mswati III had embarked on a path which would result in Swaziland becoming a fully democratic state.

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"The king wanted to come, but apparently, as they were waiting for him at the airport, they received a message that he had contracted flu," Mandela said.

Swaziland is the only southern African country in which political parties are banned, and has for more than a year been rocked by a series of pro-democracy strikes and protest actions.

Referring to weekend reports on a romantic link between him and Graca Machel, widow of former Mozambique president Samora Machel, Mandela quipped: "I must assure you, I didn't go there for romance."

He said Nxumalo had told them Mswati would make an important announcement on Friday on a constitutional commission, which would consult with the Swazi nation on the way forward towards a fully democratic state.

Mandela said Swaziland was not an isolated country. It was part of the SADC region, where all the member countries had democratically-elected governments. — Sapa.

Fears of fresh bout of unrest

Presidents hold urgent talks on Swaziland

DD 25/9/96
(312)

Tim Cohen

CAPE TOWN — President Nelson Mandela and three other southern African presidents held urgent, unscheduled talks in Maputo yesterday, following fears that imminent moves towards democracy in Swaziland would be rejected as inadequate and plunge the kingdom into fresh unrest.

The attempt at pre-empting a new bout of labour unrest got off to a poor start, with Swazi King Mswati III's last-minute decision not to attend the meeting. Mswati sent his acting prime minister Sishayi Nxumalo instead.

Sources said Mandela, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, Botswana President Ketumile Masire and host President Joaquim Chissano were concerned about announcements due to be made by Mswati on Friday.

Sapa reports Mswati intends to initiate constitutional reform in Africa's last kingdom and announce members of a new assembly at a national meeting at Ludzidzini Royal Kraal on Friday. The group would be responsible for implementing a long-awaited constitutional review promised by the king earlier this year, aimed at drawing up a democratic constitution.

It was also hoped the king would announce the name of a new prime minister to replace Prince Mbilini, whose "retirement" was announced by the

king two weeks ago.

The constitutional reforms follow strikes and civil unrest in Swaziland earlier this year to back demands for a return to democratic rule.

Mswati's father, King Sobhuza II, outlawed political parties when he introduced emergency rule in 1973 and suspended the Westminster-style constitution inherited at independence.

Yesterday's meeting of presidents was intended to impress on Mswati the need to take into account the views of all interest groups in Swaziland, particularly those of the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions, which has featured strongly in the push for democracy. The meeting was also intended to be a follow-up to a meeting in March, attended by Mandela, Mugabe, Masire and Mswati, at which tricky issues involved in the kingdom's democratisation were reportedly discussed. A state visit by Mandela to the kingdom was to have taken place after this meeting, but it never came about, although discussions have continued.

Meanwhile, Sapa-DPA reports that Swazi teachers and public servants are furious over a cabinet decision to deduct 33 days' pay from their July and August salaries, following their month-long strike which was called off last week. Teachers and public servants demanded an 18% salary increase but were offered just over 10%.

Mswati splits pro-democracy movement

Drew Forrest

SWAZI monarch King Mswati III had split the country's pro-democracy movement by announcing a 29-member constitutional review commission, a senior Swazi campaigner for democracy said yesterday.

Kislon Shongwe, former president of the outlawed People's United Democratic Movement, said that the commission would not solve the simmering constitutional crisis in the country or create the political certainty the Swazi economy required.

Shongwe said he was "puzzled"

that the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions had agreed to take part in the commission, named by Mswati on Friday.

The union movement was the spearhead of the Swaziland Democratic Alliance, which had agreed it would not take part in any constitutional review until the 1973 royal ban on political parties was lifted.

To be democratic, the process should involve elected delegates from organised formations, Shongwe said. However, the king had made it clear that the commission's members would serve in their individual capacities.

Shongwe said the movement's leadership was "vacillating" over whether to take part. Sapa reports that its president, Mario Masuku, said the movement would attend the commission's opening meeting "to see what is happening".

Mswati did not specify the commission's terms of reference, saying it should chart its own path.

Shongwe said that as most of the commission's members "supported the status quo", it was unlikely to arrive at a broadly acceptable dispensation.

There could no political settlement without a democratically formed constitutional assembly.

BD 30/7/96

(312)

Swazi king turns hotelier

MtG 2-8/8/96

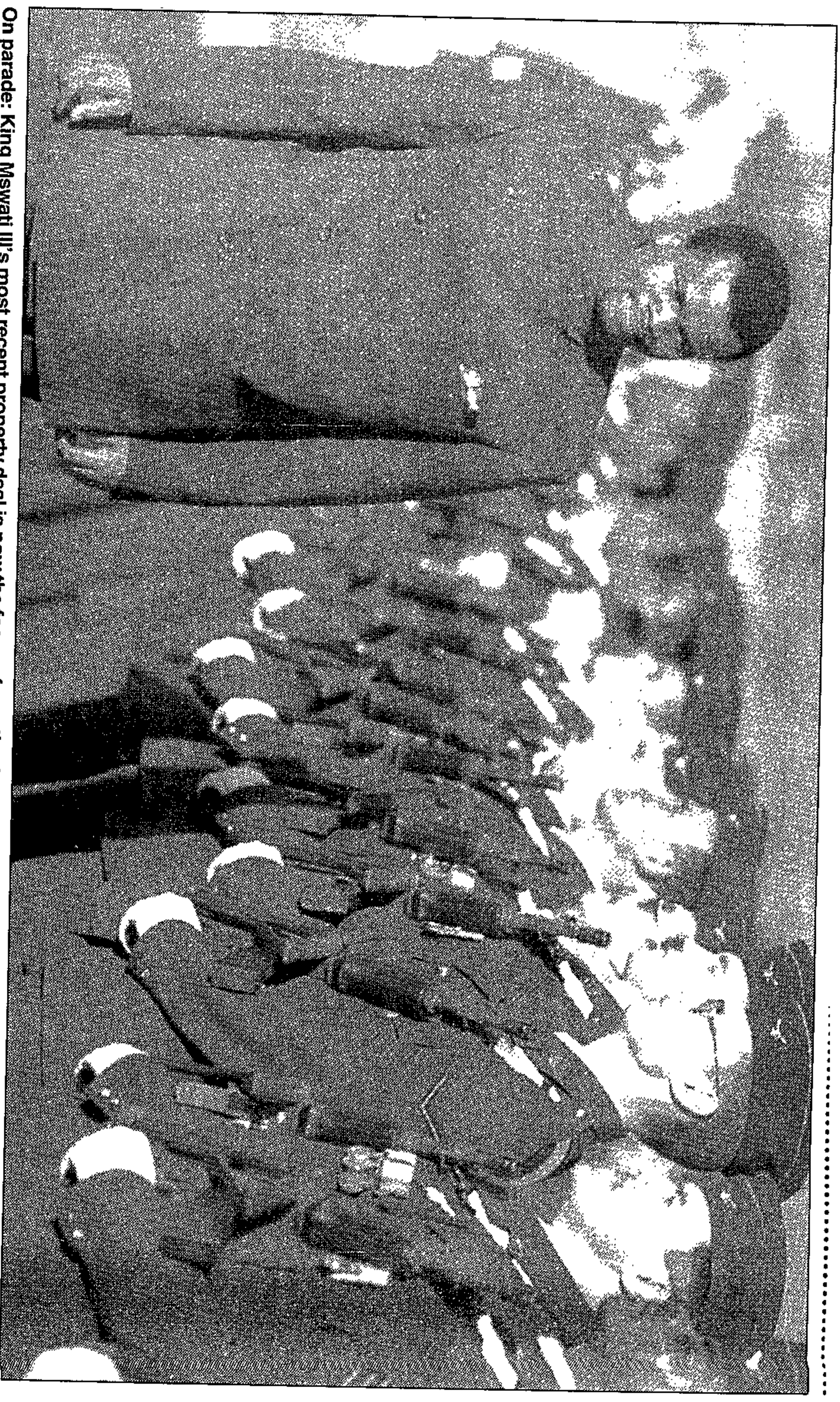
Apart from six palaces — one for each wife — Swazi King Mswati III earlier this year bought a hotel, it has been discovered

SWAZI King Mswati III has bought an R8-million hotel in Mbabane at a time when the homes of many of his subjects are being repossessed by Swaziland's banks.

Both the price and the provenance of the hotel have attracted controversy. Businessmen believe the king has seriously overpaid; the Mbabane city council has assessed the property at R3-million.

And the fact that the king bought the Castle Hotel in his personal capacity was kept secret for weeks, until it surfaced coincidentally in a court case earlier this month.

The manager of the hotel had accused millionaire property developer Kal Grant — at that time believed to own the hotel — of harassing her, and charged him with



On parade: King Mswati III's most recent property deal is now the focus of scrutiny by the Swazi public

trespassing. It was revealed during the case that followed that Grant had sold the hotel to the king.

The king owns a great deal of property in his kingdom, including a palace for each of his six wives, and there have been rumours for years of villas in Brunei, yachts in Australia and property in the United States.

The latest deal comes in the wake of countrywide turmoil: months of pro-democracy demonstrations and strikes, including a lengthy teachers'

strike settled only fortnight ago. Last week a contingent of Southern African leaders — President Nelson Mandela, Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe, Botswana's President Ketumile Msire and Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano — met the Swazi Acting Prime Minister Sishayi Nxumalo at an "emergency consultative meeting" in Maputo. Afterwards, Mandela said he believed the king would be moving towards democracy.

And indeed, at the gathering of the

nation on Friday last week, although the 23-year ban on political parties was not lifted, a constitutional committee, charged with constitutional review, was appointed.

And a new prime minister was named: former minister of finance Sibusiso Barnabas Dlamini and the executive director of the International Monetary Fund for Southern Africa. The last prime minister, Prince Mbilini, was retired summarily in May.

Meanwhile, the land deals continue — and so do suspicions that the king is too close to wealthy and influential businessmen. The troublesome Malagwane Hill Road, intended to be cut through Grant's property, has been diverted around the hill to avoid it, at a cost of several million rands. Nor is Grant the only beneficiary: the road has also been diverted around the property of the powerful Prince Masisela, the king's brother.

mtg 2-8-896

Sweet deal for Maputo

(312)

Vuyisile Hlatshwayo

AFTER four years of lying idle, the Maputo Sugar Terminal is now in full swing following overhaul and modernisation by the Swaziland Sugar Association and the Zimbabwe Sugar Association.

Since June 10 1995, the two associations have exported 283 000 tonnes to the European Union (EU). Mozambique and Zambia also send small consignments through the terminal.

In 1992, Swaziland and Zimbabwe clinched an eight-year lease to operate the terminal as a joint venture. Storage capacity is 140 000 tonnes, divided among three sheds. This year the two countries are expected to export 400 000 tonnes, rising to 500 000 tonnes next year.

Exports through Maputo were stopped in 1991 because of the extremely high prevalence of theft at the port, with Swaziland alone losing about 16 000 tonnes in that year. The two countries were forced to switch to Durban, 600km further away and about 20% more expensive.

Security measures have been stepped up, with liner trains travelling non-stop to Siweni in Mozambique where they are put under 24-hour guard. At Maputo, Manica Freight provides round-the-clock security guards and the fence around the terminal is electrified.

Swaziland will export 195 000 tonnes this year, mostly to the EU and the United States. Zimbabwe will export roughly the same. — AIA

Swazis pass land grab motion

(312) 01 21/8/96
MBABANE — A motion passed yesterday by Swaziland's senate to nationalise all land in the country has sent shock waves through private and business sectors.

The motion, made by conservative traditional Swazi chief and former prime minister Prince Bhekimpi, seeks to repeal the Concessions Act of 1907.

In an emotional speech, Bhekimpi referred to former Swazi kings Mbandzeni and Mswati I who had given vast concessions of land to European settlers. Bhekimpi said such land was loaned to them free of charge, but they had since claimed ownership and used or sold it as they pleased.

This, he said, was tantamount to stealing the land that had been lent to them by the kings. Everyone claiming to own land in Swaziland should be

made to give such land back to its rightful and original owner, the king.

Bhekimpi made no mention of compensation in his submission, saying it was shocking that King Mswati III had to spend millions in buying back concession land needed for development.

Natural Resources Minister the Rev Muntu Dlamini, who unsuccessfully opposed the motion, warned senators it would have serious political and economic implications.

Landowners, subsistence farmers, business leaders and cabinet ministers have condemned the move.

The executive secretary of the Federation of Swaziland Employers, Mosa Hlope, said the motion was bad news for Swaziland, which was about to embark on a historic constitutional reform exercise. — Sapa.

AFRICAN BUSINESS

Swaziland prime minister pulls the plug on senate's motion

Land-grab fears allayed

By Tom Holloway

Mbabane — Sibusiso Dlamini, Swaziland's prime minister, is adamant that the government will not implement a senate motion aimed at nationalising privately owned land.

He was responding to last Monday's bid by Prince Bhekimpi, a former prime minister, to repeal the Concessions and Partitions Act of 1907 that allows private ownership of freehold land.

Dlamini said on Thursday that changing the law would have many implications, one of which would be the disturbance of peace and stability.

He said the government would help Swazis buy farms and other freehold properties through loans from the government-owned Swazi Bank,

the Swaziland Building Society and commercial banks.

"Land is an important commodity and the repercussions of banning the buying and selling land would be too severe even to be considered."

He said Swazis and foreigners could continue to buy and sell land in Swaziland.

Dlamini's comments came after a special joint caucus meeting in parliament held in camera on Thursday afternoon.

The prime minister said that Muntu Dlamini, the natural resources and energy minister, instructed by the senate to prepare a Bill to implement the motion to retrieve the land, would not be charged with contempt if he refused because the rejection of the senate's motion was a collective deci-

sion by the Cabinet.

The prime minister said the entire government would have to be charged if the Senate pursued this course of action.

The relief expressed by the public and the business community was summed up by Musa Hlope, the executive secretary of the Federation of Swaziland Employers, who commended the government's swift action "in arresting an event that was fast eroding business confidence" in Swaziland.

"The Cabinet's decision was further evidence that the new prime minister, Dr Dlamini, is determined to stamp out inconsistencies and contradictions within the government," Hlope said. — Independent Foreign Service

CT(BR) 27/8/96 (213) (312)

Legal rows dog Swazis

THE President of Swaziland's People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo) has withdrawn from a committee set up to write the country's Constitution. Mario Masuku listed seven demands to be met — among them the lifting of a 1973 decree which bans political parties from operating in Swaziland — before he would rejoin the talks. The existence of Pudemo is currently illegal. The committee met for the first time last week to map a programme of action according to terms of reference set out by Attorney General Siphoswe.

The committee has been given enormous powers to prosecute anyone who dares to "belittle" or "insult" it — including the authority to impose fines of E5 000 (R5 000) or five years' imprisonment or both. The Swaziland Democratic Alliance (SDA), a group of political organisations, trade unions and other civic groups advocating for change, has said the law is meant to intimidate people.

SDA Secretary General Jerry Nxumalo said: "People will now be afraid to submit to the committee because of this threat. You will never know what will insult the commissioners, so it will be better not to say anything."

Dr Jerry Gule, secretary general of the Institute for Democracy and Leadership (Ideal), and also a member of the commission, also expressed his dissatisfaction in the way that the terms of reference were drawn up.

"Ideal feels that the approach being adopted by those so far who have been handling the process is creating unnecessary stumbling blocks. For the process to be transparent and legitimate the views of all the stakeholders in and outside the commission should be accommodated," he said.

The 30-person team, announced by King Mswati III in July, was given two years to draw up a Constitution for Swaziland.

BUSINESS

EC aid to pay for Swazi developments

(312) CT(BR) 9/10/96
TOM HOLLOWAY

Mbabane — The European Commission (EC) will provide R17,5 million for an access road system and R2,5 million to expand maize storage facilities in Swaziland.

The two agreements between the EC and the Swaziland government signed at the weekend bring its development aid to Swaziland to more than R1 billion over the past 20 years.

The construction of a dual carriageway bridge with access roads in Swaziland's Eastern Lowveld will improve communications in this deeply rural area and make access to milling and marketing facilities for hundreds of small sugar cane growers easier.

The other project is to expand the maize storage capacity at Swaziland's central grain silo

complex at Matsapa in central Swaziland which will improve food security for the country during droughts.

The EC's recent decision to downgrade its status in Swaziland from its delegation to an office had raised fears in the Swaziland government that EC development aid to the kingdom might also be reduced.

Gabriel Lee, the head of the EC delegation in Mbabane, assured the government the downgrading would not adversely affect the EC aid commitments to Swaziland for the present five-year Lomé IV period totalling more than R170 million.

This amount will be devoted largely to the agriculture and rural development sectors and business, and will not be affected by the EC's transformation of the EC delegation to an office. — Independent Foreign Service

Swazi women still lack status

(312) Southern 21/10/96

By Vuyisile Hlatshwayo

MBABANE – Common law and Unmodified Customary Law derived from Swazi traditions

relegate the status of women to that of minors. They are completely controlled by the male head of the family.

This customary law, which still overrides the common law based on the Roman-Dutch legal system when it comes to marital power held by men over women, makes it extremely difficult for the women's struggle for equal rights.

All sorts of laws keep women under male control. For instance, women cannot be chiefs in Swaziland, and the immigration office requires a married woman to have her husband's or guardian's permission to obtain a passport.

Also, while women represent about 30 percent of the labour force, the Employment Act discriminates against female employees.

Women married in community of property do not enjoy equality. Men, always regarded as the head of the family, are free to take unilateral decisions regarding family property like cattle, land, estates and mov-

Customary laws and tradition allow for women to be treated as minors

ables.

According to Maureen Magwaza, local programme officer of Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF), the biggest handicap of customary law is its constraints on women, especially married women.

Under customary law or marriage in community of property, married women may not own property. The Deed Registration Act prohibits married women from registering property in their own names. Married women can only sue or be sued with their husbands' involvement.

Men can transfer or sell family property without the consent or knowledge of their wives.

Recently attorney-general Siphso Zwane transferred his family estate without the knowledge of his wife. She has had to take legal action against him to get her share.

Swazi Nation land is controlled by the chiefs and held in the national trust by the monarchy. The chiefs do not entertain requests for land from married women. In the case of single

women, they can access land through their male relatives.

Title deed land is urban land controlled by the city council. Those married in community of property cannot register title deed land in their own names – it must be registered in their husband's name. This is spelt out in the Land Act No 37 of 1968.

Inheritance laws are very hard on widows. According to Swazi law and custom, a widow cannot inherit her deceased husband's property in her own right, but through their *inkhosana*, the son chosen by the family council. The *inkhosana* inherits the estate and livestock.

This custom excludes women from being heirs because they will probably leave the family when they re-marry. The widow is left powerless as her in-laws grab the property she shared with her husband.

A widow must observe one month of confinement, but a widow does not. Her movements and public conduct are restricted. Widows working in public places



Common law and customary law which are derived from traditions relegate the status of Swazi women to that of minors.

must cover their mourning weeds because members of the royal family might see them.

Policewomen and nurses are not allowed to wear mourning clothes. These mourning rituals place working women at a disadvantage in terms of productivity and eligibility for promotion.

Several organisations are working to improve women's rights. WILDAF, for example, informs women about their rights.

"We want the women to know that their status is equal to that of men. They should fight for the representation of their rights even in the new constitution," says Magwaza.

Swaziland Women Against Abuse works on all forms of abuse – from violence to restrictions on property ownership and access to land.

The Council of Swaziland Churches also helps to provide legal assistance on matters relating to maintenance. – *Africa Information Afrique*.

IMF commends Swaziland's 'pre-emptive' actions

TOM HOLLOWAY

Mbabane — The IMF has commended Swaziland for its pre-emptive voluntary structural adjustment measures.

During his visit here last week, Michel Camdessus, the IMF's director, said Swaziland's initiative would avoid an economic crisis which could

require his organisation's intervention.

He said the purpose of his visit was to endorse Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini and his government's efforts, to correct what he described as "the dangerous trends of the country's economy" including declining growth, and increased public expenditure.

Camdessus commended Dlamini, for four years a director at the IMF, for the professional and efficient way he and the Swazi government were adopting voluntary structural adjustment measures to safeguard the country's economy.

He said the IMF was offering the country its technical assistance, perma-

nent dialogue with the government which would help it perceive the magnitude of the economic problems and the best way of handling them; and if the government judged it appropriate, the IMF would extend financial support.

Commenting on a Swazi Observer newspaper editorial which said in Africa the mention of the

IMF and World Bank was always associated with restructuring, cutbacks, forced privatisation which led to hunger and strife, Camdessus said: "It is true the IMF spends not one cent on marketing itself to the people. There is some fear by governments about the assessments by the IMF on the economic situations of their countries but it is

the IMF's job to speak the truth even if it makes the IMF unpopular. But if a country knows the reality of its economic situation early enough it is able to adjust without reaching that stage where dramatic changes have to be made."

During a recent IMF visit to South Africa, Cosatu refused to meet Camdessus.

ET (Be) 23/10/98

(312)

EU deal threatens Swazi sugar industry

Louise Cook

(312) (2) ~~SECRET~~

A FREE trade agreement between the European Union (EU) and SA that included cheap sugar imports could "profoundly jeopardise" Swaziland's sugar industry, according to a European Research Office study.

The study, stemming from investigations of the effect of a free trade agreement between SA and the EU on African countries, said nearly half of Swaziland's sugar was exported to SA.

Sugar accounts for 67% of its agricultural production, 23% of GDP and 57% of foreign exchange earnings.

"For the EU to secure an early elimination of import duties and non-tariff barriers on sugar and chocolate confec-

tionary (from SA) without addressing EU export and producer subsidies on those products was an obvious offensive interest. This would seriously affect the price of sugar and confectionery products on the SA market and the price and market share of Swazi sugar and confectionery producers."

Swaziland faced serious budgetary difficulties without taking into account the effect of an EU/SA free trade agreement, the study said.

In Namibia, sectors vulnerable to a free trade agreement included beef, beverages, motor vehicle components and fisheries, while in Lesotho generic pharmaceutical products, household electrical goods and canned vegetable production were at risk.

ED 28/10/96

Swazi sugar war leayes bitter taste

ST(BT) 3/11/96

(312)

COMMODITIES

By DON ROBERTSON

THE Swaziland sugar industry has slammed what it describes as "sanctions" imposed on it by its SA counterparts, asking whether this is in keeping with the policy of opening up trade with Africa.

Only last week, Trade and Industry Minister Alec Erwin committed South Africa to increased trade with sub-Saharan Africa.

At the International Sugar Organisation conference in London last week, Swaziland Sugar Association general manager Andy Colhoun challenged the actions taken by the SA Sugar Association in denying it access to export, research and training facilities. Swaziland is a member of the Southern African Customs Union and is entitled to export products to member states, he says, but South Africa's actions represent effective sanctions.

Swaziland and SA sugar producers have been at loggerheads since

the beginning of the year, with South Africa claiming that Swazi exports of sugar into South Africa could reach about 230 000 tons this year, costing the SA industry more than R200-million.

Efforts by the two bodies to reach agreement failed and in September, South Africa advised the Swazi association that from April next year, export facilities at Maydon Wharf in Durban and research and extension facilities offered by the experimental station at Mount Edgecombe would be withdrawn. It also immediately withdrew training facilities and access to the Sugar Milling Research Institute.

In the past, Swaziland producers paid about R3,5-million a year for these services.

Colhoun told the multinational

ISO conference that because the domestic price of SA sugar was substantially higher than the international price, customs union members competed to sell in this market. He insists, however, that sugar from Swaziland is generally not sold on the retail market, but through value-added products.

This stems from the early 1990s when SA sugar production slumped because of the drought and it was unable to meet demand. Companies such as Cadburys, Coca-Cola and Nestlé established operations in Swaziland and products such as chewing gum, chocolates and fruit concentrates containing Swazi sugar were exported to South Africa.

"Now that SA sugar production has recovered, the SA Sugar Association is unhappy about products containing Swazi sugar entering the market although Swaziland has every right to do it," says Colhoun.

FOCUS ON AFRICA

Mob justice rules in Swaziland

(312) Sowetan 28/11/96

By Vuyisile Hlatshwayo

MBARANE - TWO DAYS AFTER King Mswati III warned the public against taking the law into their own hands and resorting to mob justice, a 30-year-old man suspected of practising witchcraft was battered and burnt to death by an angry mob in Mbelebeleli, 25 kilometres north of Manzini.

The man, a herbalist, was suspected of causing the death of three people under his care.

The mob apparently became incensed when the man refused their demands to swallow some of the herbs he is alleged to have prescribed for the deceased. Six people have been arrested in connection with the death.

Mob violence, or *mbuyinyaniso*, is a by-product of the escalating crime rate in Swaziland.

The practice originated in Ndzingeni in the Hhohho region in the early 1990s when an angry crowd reacted, after the acquittal by the court of two men accused of brutally murdering a toddler.

Incensed by the verdict, the crowd assaulted the two men and set their homes on fire. Since then there has been an increase in the number of reported mob-related cases of violence.

At the official opening of the Swaziland High Court on October 26, the King said those involved in mob violence would be severely punished.

Three days after the warning was issued, former Prime Minister and Chief of the Nkhaba area, Senator Prince Bhekimpi, caused concern by calling for the

Prominent Swazis support kangaroo courts

legalisation of mob justice.

Speaking in Parliament, Bhekimpi said mob justice was the only "effective" deterrent for criminals. He said this had been proven in his area, which had seen a noticeable drop in crimes since a special committee had been formed to "monitor the activities of the criminals at night" and decide on the punishment.

While some members of the long-suffering

public appear to support Bhekimpi's call, it has also unleashed scathing criticism from many sectors of the community which accuse the former Prime Minister of "being hell-bent on plunging the kingdom into lawlessness".

The Law Society of Swaziland has also condemned the call. In a statement, secretary-general Thembele Simelane said: "The law states that every person is presumed innocent until

proven guilty and it is only the court of law that can pass such a judgment and not a mob."

However, mob justice has been condoned by a number of government officials and chiefs, who see it as the only solution to the country's escalating crime rate.

The trial of Chief Magagula of Ndvinabangeni who, on June 25 1995, allegedly ordered the public burning of a couple suspected of being witches continues. Ten people accused of carrying out the punishment have been arrested. - *Africa Information Afrique*

Swaziland simmers

SWAZILAND IS EXPERIENCING the pain of transition to a modern democracy. In July King Mswati announced moves towards democratic reform, including the appointment of Sibusiso Dlamini as the new prime minister.

Labour mass action, which had paralysed Swaziland earlier last year, as well as pressure from the country's southern African neighbours, were key factors in precipitating this process.

Emerging after a secret meeting with southern African heads of state in Pretoria, Mswati pledged to embark on reforms to satisfy the political aspirations of the people of Swaziland.

Despite this commitment, what the king has shown thus far is a determination to consolidate his regime's repressive apparatus and to crush the trade unions and the democratic movement.

"Reform" has been restricted to the appointment of the new premier, the establishment of the Swazi National Council and the setting up of a Constitutional Review Committee, which includes the president of the banned opposition movement Pudemo and an official of the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions.

The members of the latter are, however, serving in their capacity as ordinary citizens and not as representatives of organised political interests, which are not recognised in Swaziland.

Over the last five years the Swazi government has embarked on a non-stop process of setting up hand-picked commissions to give the impression that reforms are under way.

What the people of Swaziland want is an irreversible and all-inclusive process of democratic transformation with an agreed time frame and negotiated terms of reference.

What Mswati has done thus far amounts to a ploy to delay the democratic revolution and perpetuate the *status quo*.

Tom Dlamini, a member of the Swaziland Democratic Alliance and a veteran unionist, says Mswati's so-called reforms are nothing but "a ploy to delay the democratic revolution".

The unions and Pudemo have set preconditions designed to "level the political playing field" before they will participate in any reform process.

One of these is the unbanning of political parties and the lifting of the draconian Proclamation of 1973.

The SDA, to which the SFTU, Pudemo and other progressive organisations belong, has vowed to boycott Mswati's constitutional reform exercise. A programme of mass defiance and action which involves rallies has been adopted.

Historically, Swaziland has been an ideal place to do business. Most workplaces were not

The people are steadfast in demanding an irreversible and all-inclusive process of democratic transformation. **Kuseni Dlamini** explains why...

Sowetan 9/1/97 (312)



Swaziland's King Mswati ... has pledged to embark on reforms but seems determined to crush the trade unions and democratic movement.

unionised and, where unions existed, they were weak. Unions were branded as "unSwazi".

With the changes taking place in the country, the business community has started to take stock of its position. Government can no longer be trusted to deliver and ensure a stable climate to do business.

The business community has repeatedly expressed concern about the deteriorating political situation. Business has paid the price through lost production and damage to property.

Promise to compensate

Furthermore, government's promise to compensate businesses for losses incurred as a result of the strikes never materialised.

Numerous behind-the-scenes meetings between members of the Federation of Swaziland Employers, Pudemo and the SFTU have taken place.

FSE and SFTU insiders see the close relationship between employers and workers as a departure from the adversarial and conflictual industrial relations which have characterised Swazi workplaces.

Instead, a more cooperative and productive labour relationship, based on mutual respect between the social partners, is being built.

The international community has also expressed concern at the situation in Swaziland.

A diplomatic source in Mbabane argued that the king should allow the will of the people "before the country is plunged into a turbulent and destructive civil war".

The spectre of civil war is not exaggerated. At a Red Cross seminar in Mbabane recently, a Pudemo spokesman said: "The Red Cross must prepare for a looming violent conflict between the regime and democratic forces."

At its annual general congress in September, the SFTU resolved to continue mobilising and rallying workers around the struggle for democracy.

SFTU general secretary Jan Sithole said that no genuine reform process can take place in a climate of repression and intimidation. He urged affiliate unions to prepare for a tough struggle.

On October 5 the SFTU and SDA organised a massive rally in Manzini, the industrial capital. This was in defiance of a government announcement on national radio banning the rally in terms of the 1973 Proclamation.

Police Commissioner Edgar Hillary warned the nation that "those who defy the order will face the wrath of the law". Notwithstanding these threats, workers attended the rally in huge numbers.

The Swaziland regime's "reform" process seems to be nothing other than an attempt to reformulate policies and laws which are not only unworkable but also anachronistic.

It is designed to undermine the labour-led demands for far-reaching political change.

The democratic way forward is for the old draconian measures and practices to give way to a new system that allows basic human rights and fundamental freedoms such as freedom of association, assembly and speech as well as full union rights for workers.

The current reform process in Swaziland has failed to create the necessary conditions for change. State repression continues. There is no scope for organised formations to participate in reform.

The terms, substance and pace of the process are dictated by the regime. Achieving a democratic dispensation in Swaziland will require much more than cosmetic tinkering with a totalitarian system.

(The writer is a sociology graduate of the Universities of Natal and Oxford. The article first appeared in the December issue of South African Labour Bulletin.)

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leaders held in Swaziland

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Cosatu support for workers' stayaway
to be focus of meeting with SA's Nzo

**SAPA, AFP
AND STAR FOREIGN SERVICE**
Mbabane

As Swaziland braced itself for more strike action, about 20 members of the Swaziland Democratic Alliance were held in a police swoop last night in Manzini.

The arrests took place as SDA members gathered in the town to assess the effects of yesterday's worker stayaway called by the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions, four of whose principal leaders were arrested on Friday.

The strike which commenced yesterday was in support of 27 labour and political demands.

Andrew Mamba, chairman of the Swaziland Agricultural and Plantation Workers' Union, said that according to his information those held in last night's raid included Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions vice-president, Joachim Dhlamini, SFTU assistant secretary-general, Barbara Dhlamini, and Jerry Nxumalo, chairman of the SDA.

The arrests followed a day of tension in Swaziland where a stayaway called by the SFTU was almost 100% effective in the sugar growing and plantation industries and at the Bulembo asbestos mine on the Swaziland-South African border.

Heavy police contingents were present throughout yester-

day in all the country's major centres to ensure that those who wished to work could do so without intimidation.

Swaziland's Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini last week announced that he had ordered police "to shoot to kill" in order to maintain law and order during the strike.

The secretary-general of South Africa's largest trade union federation, Cosatu, yesterday said its members will start a consumer boycott of Swaziland products if the SFTU leaders were not released.

The strike, which follows a similar campaign in late January last year, is aimed at pressuring King Mswati III to restore constitutional rule and scrap a 1973 decree that forbids political parties.

■ Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo is to meet his Swazi counterpart Arthur Khoza today amid rising tensions between the two countries over the stayaway.

Swaziland requested the meeting to protest about Cosatu's outspoken support for the stayaway, which it regards as interference by the SA Government because Cosatu is a political ally of the ANC.

The SA Government has rejected this argument as a smoke-screen to hide Swaziland's lack of democratic reforms, and will tell the Swazi foreign minister that this is the real cause of tension in the country.

Clamour for democracy in Swazi kingdom

CT 14/2/97

(312)

AS PRESSURE for democracy grows in Swaziland, the government may be coming to the realisation that time is no longer on its side, says contributing editor **VERNON SEYMOUR**.

RECENT events in the Kingdom of Swaziland underline the fact that the clamour for democratisation and political pluralism is on the ascendency in Africa.

Whereas many countries on the continent have lifted themselves out of the human-rights black hole in the last year, more have sunk into tyranny and repression. Entrenched rulers generally resist change, but they have often been obliged to make concessions to appease foreign donors and to relieve domestic pressure.

The relatively peaceful Kingdom of Swaziland has been rudely awakened and is discovering the hard way why the 1990s is often called the "age of political liberalisation".

King Mswati III faces problems on a scale far greater than his father could have imagined when he, by royal decree, abrogated the Swaziland constitution and banned political parties in 1973.

For a period of five years after independence, Swaziland's monarchy co-existed with a parliament of legislators elected on party tickets. However, in 1973, things changed dramatically in the Swazi kingdom. King Sobhuza placed democracy on hold indefinitely. Since that time, there has been subtle and (more recently) not so subtle pressure for change and political reform.

Now, like so many African despots and ruthless dictators, the 28-year-old King Mswati III has publicly blamed "foreigners" (allegedly Cosatu) for the troubles in his country.

Since the early 1990s, political violence, arson, strikes and mass stayaways have become a feature in the Swazi kingdom. The pressure for change has been unrelenting. It has grown because all the

regional states have moved towards multi-party democracy and many have experienced relatively free and open democratic elections in recent years.

Swaziland is the last Southern African country not to have democratised and does not allow multi-party politics. King Mswati III is the only surviving absolute monarch in Africa. As the pressure has mounted, the Swazi authorities have responded with half-baked, proposed reform measures reminiscent of the National Party appeasements during the dark years of apartheid rule.

Last year, King Mswati III announced the establishment of a constitutional committee, hand-picked by himself, to write a new constitution. (This was exactly the same response of General Sani Abacha when the Nigerian people embarked on mass action and began to challenge the repression of his military government).

Recently, under the Public Order Act, the government passed an extraordinary gazette that provides for punishment of a life sentence for anyone convicted of sabotaging essential services.

Developments in Swaziland may remind South Africans of their not too distant past when bannings, detentions, police brutality, arbitrary arrests and emergency rule were the order of the day. It is depressingly familiar. The labour movement has now become the focus of political protest.

Although the demands include some labour issues, multiparty democracy has become the rallying cry for much sought-after political reforms. The protest actions, which resemble the framework of a mass democratic movement, have highlighted five main demands:

- The repeal of the 1973 royal decree;
- Constitutional reform;
- A guarantee from the government to refrain from interfering in trade union activities;
- A guarantee that chiefs will not harass their followers for holding dissenting political views and;
- Access to all media.

Civil society in Swaziland, which includes the labour movement led by the Swaziland Federation

It is widely believed that King Mswati III is personally in favour of at least some reform, but is held back by royal advisers and the extended royal clan, who stand to lose from reform measures.



SWAZI REFORM: Under multiparty democracy and constitutional monarchy, King Mswati III would be elevated above politics in his country.

of Trade Unions, NGOs such as the Institute for Democracy and Leadership (IDEL), illegal political groupings such as the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) and other civic groups, have formed an umbrella organisation, called the Swaziland Democratic Alliance, to demand constitutional reform including the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, where the king would be elevated above the politics.

Ironically, although the protests have been directed against Swaziland's Tinkhundla traditionalist system of government, the youthful king remains popular with the Swazi people.

It is widely believed that King Mswati III — and South African foreign policy seems to be premised on this assessment — is personally in favour of at least some reform, but is held back by traditional royal advisers and the extended royal clan, who stand to lose from reform.

The Dhlamini (a royal clan) and other so-called "lesser royals", who have greater access to government employment and decision-making positions, are often perceived to be freeloaders at the expense of ordinary, hard-working Swazi taxpayers.

Swazi society is deeply traditional, stratified into clans of royals, quasi-royals and commoners. The prime minister has always been a Dhlamini and the majority of cabinet members, all appointed by the king or the queen mother, are members of the royal clan. The Human Rights Association of Swaziland recently suggested that the traditionalists, led by the queen mother Nthombi Twala, have almost effected a palace coup, discouraging any initiative that may lead to genuine reform.

Under a democratic dispensation, the king would retain his status and some power, but the "lesser royals" stand to lose all their influence and are therefore strongly opposed to reform.

Regional diplomatic endeavours involving the heads of state of Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe are clear indicators to the Swazi government that it will not be able to escape the wave of democratisation that has swept the Southern African region in recent years. The desire for freedom and justice of the peoples of this region is evident in Swaziland and has been recognised by the ruling elites of Southern Africa.

The role of Cosatu in this crisis has demonstrated that a nascent regional civil society is developing a transnational momentum, which is rediscovering ancient bonds of kinship and mutual dependence. After decades of oppression and intolerance, Southern Africa has experienced a spectacular shift in the discourse and practice of human rights and democracy, brought about by a movement of civil society clamouring for institutionalised democratisation.

The ordinary people of Swaziland have now become part of that movement. Time is no longer on the side of the Swazi government. The sooner they realise that, the better.

□ *Vernon Seymour is the senior research fellow at the Centre for Southern African Studies, University of the Western Cape.*

A king resisting change

SWAZILAND, once an oasis of peace in Southern African, has been turned into a police state – soldiers and police, armed to the teeth, have been deployed to all corners of the country.

A workers' strike to back demands for a democracy, led by the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU), entered its fourth week on Monday. There is still no sign of a solution as unrest continues.

The Swazi government has ordered that cars from all ministries should be handed over to the Swaziland Defence Force, and that police firmly deal with *toy-toying* workers who are considered a threat to the country's stability.

The sight of police and soldiers patrolling every corner of the country is disconcerting, both to Swazis and tourists alike.

In Manzini a heavily armoured war tank emerges each time four trade union leaders appear in court. Security forces look at people suspiciously. Although a state of emergency has not been declared, there is tension in the air.

The SFTU leaders being charged are union president Richard Nxumalo, first vice president Themba Msibi, general secretary Jan Sithole and deputy general secretary Jabulani Nxumalo.

They have been charged under the Public Order Act with molesting and intimidating bus operators.

Swaziland is being subjected to an acid test, with the workers' strike and unrest reflecting the general discontent at the lack of free political expression.

Last week alone six workers were shot and seriously wounded when police opened fire on a crowd of *toy-toying* workers at Big Bend in eastern Swaziland.

Calls for transformation

Police claim they used rubber bullets but the unions contend that live ammunition was used on unarmed people.

The calls for transformation are met with mixed feelings from Swazi nationals.

Businessman Hamilton Dlamini told *Sowetan* that democratic change was inevitable, but felt it should be gradual and driven by Swazis themselves and not by "radical foreign elements within the SFTU".

He argued that democracy had to be managed by "the (native) people for the overall good of the Swazi people".

"If Swaziland is to change, the international community should not wield a big stick at her," Dlamini said.

Political activist James Mabila felt that the "snail's pace" with which the *labadzala* (elders) wanted change to take place in Swaziland was unacceptable.

International pressure is mounting for the Swaziland government to change its traditionalist monarchy into a democracy. **Coudjoe Amankwaa** explains why...



King Mswati 3 ... it remains to be seen how far the Swazi monarch will push the transformation process in his country.

He felt that the SFTU was doing the right thing because the majority of the country's people were "oppressed by a ruthless system".

What is obvious is that both conservatives (traditionalists) and liberals (modernists) agree that the time has come for change. But how far King Mswati 3 will push the transformation process remains to be seen.

The arrest four weeks ago of prominent union leaders has sparked off international criticism of the country's government.

The irony is that no government ministry is claiming responsibility for the arrests, shifting the blame instead to the office of the director of public prosecution (DPP).

Political analysts say that the DPP's office does not have a mandate to arrest union leaders

on its own but must have acted on instructions from powers from above.

Meanwhile local and international pressure has been mounting on the Swazi government to release all the union leaders unconditionally or face sanctions.

Swaziland National Business Council spokesman Stanley Fakudze has called for the speedy release of the SFTU leaders. The Swaziland Council of Churches has also called for their unconditional release.

Congress of South African Trade Unions assistant general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi has said the federation has given an ultimatum to the Swazi government to release the unionists by March 3 or face blockades, pickets, marches, protests and a refusal by South African workers to handle Swazi goods.

Stop the repression

The Southern African Trade Union Coordinating Council has also declared March 3 a day of solidarity with the SFTU.

In addition, a delegation of the Brussels-based International Confederation of Free Trade Unions led by Bill Bret told the Swazi government that unionists have a right to be involved in politics. He urged the government to release the union leaders.

The International Labour Organisation has also made a plea to

the Swazi government to stop the repression of SFTU leaders, and the European Union has threatened to stop the import of Swazi sugar to European markets if the unionists are not released. Sugar is the backbone of the Swazi economy.

The Botswana Federation of Trade Unions said in a statement it was worried about the mental and physical safety of the unionists.

Sithole became ill last week during the trial of the unionists in the Manzini Magistrate's Court.

United States president Bill Clinton's special envoy, John Blaney, told the Swazi government to release the union leaders and enter into more fruitful negotiations aimed at bringing much-desired reforms to the kingdom.

Swazi *Swaziland* govt 4/3/97 slams (3/2) Cosatu

By Abdul Milazi

THE Congress of South African Trade Unions blockade of Swaziland border posts yesterday went against the goals and interests of the Southern African Development Community and violated cooperation treaties signed recently by sub-Saharan countries.

This was said by the Swaziland government after members of Cosatu set up blockades on Swaziland borders yesterday in a bid to force the kingdom to allow union activities.

Cosatu decided at its executive meeting last month to take action against Swaziland after four trade unionists were arrested for planning a mass stayaway.

Swazi monarch King Mswati 3 has managed to suppress political activity through the King's Decree of 1973.

Cosatu is demanding the amendment of Swaziland's Labour Relations Act and the lifting of the state of emergency which has been in place since 1973.

International treaties

Swaziland minister of public service and information Mr Muntu Mswane said Cosatu's interference in the affairs of his country contravened SADC regional cooperation agreements such as the Southern African Customs Union and the United Nations Convention.

"If such regional and international treaties and protocols can be violated at the whim and will of certain organisations, then they surely have no significance and meaning to the states who are signatories," said Mswane.

Mswane argued that Cosatu's action would only help to disprove and put at risk the ideals of regional cooperation.

"Swaziland expects that all the people who live in the country shall abide by the laws of the country. It would be unfortunate if certain individuals or groups of people would use international pressure to support them commit offences against the country's laws," he argued.

Mswane said Swaziland was a sovereign state and did not see it proper for any formation from another country to take it upon itself to interfere in "purely domestic matters" of another country.

☐ SUGAR~~SECRET~~

2F (312)

Swazis cry foul over Illovo-Lonrho deal

The Swaziland National Business Council has condemned the deal between Illovo, the South African sugar company, and Lonrho, in terms of which Illovo acquired Lonrho's sugar interests.

These include a 60 percent stake in Ubombo Ranches, one of Swaziland's oldest sugar operations. Jabavu Mpofu, a consultant to the council, said yesterday that the deal denied Swazis full participation in the sugar industry.

"This development shunts Swazis to a position of mere spectators as the giants make off with millions from an industry regarded as gold in Swaziland," Mpofu said people in the Swazi sugar industry were disappointed that they were given no opportunity to bid for a stake in Ubombo. Illovo could not be reached for a comment at the time of going to press. — *Ncaba Hlophe, Johannesburg*

Louise Cook

THE trade war between SA and Swaziland over excessive amounts of Swazi sugar coming into SA was likely to jeopardise the Swazi sugar industry in the long run, sources said yesterday.

The local sugar industry barred Swaziland last month from using its sugar export facility at the Durban harbour — thereby forcing the Swazis to turn to the Maputo harbour — and also withdrew access to local sugar research facilities, said SA Sugar Association spokesman

Trade war 'may hurt Swazi sugar industry'

By 15/5/97

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He said that these imports clearly constituted a violation of old established agreements.

SA Sugar Association CEO Jack Wixley said Swaziland would not be able to find alternative research facilities and technology easily.

"Mauritius is the most likely alternative, but then the Swazis would lose out on new technology on cultivars developed specifically for this region."

Kraamwinkel declined to say when the next meeting between Pretoria and Mbabane would take place.

Mike Mathews. "The matter was now in the hands of the two governments — there is not much more industry can do," he said.

Trade and industry department director Alwyn Kraamwinkel declined to give details of talks between SA and Swaziland which were under way at present.

Asked whether a solution was in sight, he said that SA was primarily

seeking a "long-term solution."

"SA is not in a position to set up antidumping measures as this is not an option within the Southern African Customs Union."

"We have to find an alternative way."

SA Cane Growers' Association director Brian Sugden said yesterday that SA was likely to use the talks to negotiate for a stake in Swaziland's lucrative export market through the

Lomé convention, which allows Swazi sugar into the European Union at preferential rates, as well as Swaziland's generous access to the US sugar market through special quotas.

Sugden said that lately between 150 000 and 180 000 tons of sugar had been coming into SA from Swaziland.

"A few years back, this was only a couple of hundred tons."

No returns for Swazi venture

Aleta Armstrong

MBABANE — Swaziland's royal development agency, Tibiyo Taka Ngwane, invested R70m in a company called Nutrition Dynamics over the past four years without receiving returns, sources involved in the project say.

Tibiyo, which holds a portfolio of shares in some of the kingdom's top companies, operates outside the auspices of central government and is exempt from paying tax.

King Mswati holds the agency in trust for the people as head of the Swazi nation.

Nutrition Dynamics Swaziland (NDS) was formed in 1993 as a joint venture between Nutrition Dynamics International of the US and Tibiyo. Sources said the initial plan was to make baby formula, with the US partner supplying and paying for part of the plant and equipment.

About \$4m was paid to US company Polk Manley Machinery, ostensibly for machinery to make baby formula, with Tibiyo raising \$2m through a share issue.

Sources said NDS hired two Americans as MD and marketing manager the following year and started operating out of rented offices in Mbabane.

However, the company experienced a severe setback when the baby formula concept was rejected by the health ministry. The machinery was relocated to the former KwaNdebele homeland and has never been used.

Sources said NDS spent six months doing feasibility studies on the manufacture of breakfast cereals, then changed its mind and decided to make sweets instead.

A subsidiary company was formed in 1995 called Nutrition Dynamics SA, which bought Johannesburg-based Dick's Sweets for R1.5m. Dick's Sweets was liquidated a few months later and all its assets were sold by auction.

Sources said Tibiyo then bought a plot of land at Matsapa industrial site and financed the construction of another sweet factory. The initial costs were R3.5m, but this escalated to R14m. The factory was completed in June last year and NDS moved in, but has yet to produce a single sweet.

NDS management has refused to comment on the developments.

Sources said the MD and marketing manager were dismissed in February. Sources said staff had confronted management over rumoured retrenchments following the appointment of a new MD, W Lomahoza.

BD 28/5/97

(312)

Swaziland vehicle assembler set to roll

6030/5/97

(312)

Bahele Ginindza

MBABANE — Afinta Motor Corporation is about to launch the assembly in Swaziland of up to 150 completely knocked down buses and trucks a month.

A spokesman for the Johannesburg-based company said the Swaziland concern would come on stream in a five-year, three-phase operation, and had already received an order from an East African country for 600 36-seater mid-sized buses a year.

Another order for 20 buses and trucks had also been received from Mozambique.

Initial production targets would be about 20 vehicles a month.

Regional markets would include Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Uganda and Angola.

MD Graham Nicholls was involved in talks with the Swaziland government to sort out delays in the launch caused by bureaucratic problems.

Delays had also been caused by the need for plant refurbishment, with the company originally scheduled to start operations last month.

Afinta has been selling vehicles for the past 15 months through 22

dealerships across SA, with up to 70 trucks and buses a month being assembled at its plant in Isando. So far about 1 000 vehicles had been sold in SA, a spokesman said.

The company also planned to assemble cars and talks were being held with Italy's Alfa Romeo and Japan's DAU for the assembly of small vehicles. He said Afinta hoped to begin assembling sedans by next year.

US-based General Motors was looking to assemble a specific model of school bus in Swaziland, and this could tie up with Afinta's plans to assemble such a vehicle, the spokesman said.

EXECUTIVE SUITE

By William Wells and Jack Lindstrom

Minister's family wins licence to run Swazi Lottery

Alleta Armstrong

MBABANE — The wife and daughter of Swaziland's Housing and Urban Development Minister John Carmichael have been granted a 15-year licence to run a national lottery.

The licence was issued by Industry and Commerce Minister Majah 'enkhaba Dlamini to Thuthuka Investments late last year, the directors of which are Magede Carmichael and Linda Anselmo. The lottery licence, which was not put out for tender, was granted under the Lotteries

Act which states that the minister can allocate a licence on grounds "that such a person is a person of integrity, and has adequate financial resources and experience to conduct a public lottery properly".

Referring to the granting of a licence to close family members of a minister, Swaziland Democratic Alliance chairman Simon Noge said: "In other countries where there are codes of conduct this kind of practice is frowned upon because it borders on nepotism. Swaziland, however, is abnormal and undemocratic so people tend to view this as normal behaviour."

Other sources said the move highlighted the shortcomings of the Lotteries Act, which did not insist on tenders and gave the minister total discretion, leaving the granting of licences open to abuse.

Thuthuka launched its scratchcard lottery on April 24 when Anselmo said its main aim would be to raise funds for underprivileged Swazis and "50% of all players will win something, for example, 10 out of 20 players will win from R2 to R20 000". A businessman contacted by Thuthuka to sell cards said Anselmo had explained that the tickets

cost R1 each and were sold in batches of 200. "We would sell them for R2 and out of the R400 received when they are all sold we would get a R40 profit. She said there was a guaranteed payout of R160 to the public and we could then use the R200 left to purchase another batch of tickets."

However, an independent survey of a batch of 200 tickets found only 10% of players would win something. Another 10% would get their money back with a R2 win. The breakdown of wins were 16 cards: 1 x R100, 2 x R20, 4 x R10 and 9 x R4, then 20 cards of R2.

The remaining 164 cards were no wins. "These odds are terrible" said a gaming source. Most payouts would not be wins, and the odds were unfair.

In Mbabane tickets are being sold by street vendors, and children are also buying them. This contravenes the Lottery Act which says no tickets can be sold by or to a person apparently under 18 years of age and no person under that age may recover a prize.

Thuthuka's letter said it was a "welfare project" with government receiving 80% of net profit.

However, a Swaziland-based

lawyer said: "This is a private enterprise not a charity. A national lottery is a huge moneyspinner for a country if the correct provisions are in place." The minister granting the licence was responsible for stipulating conditions that would safeguard the public and other Swazi gaming industries. "The act has huge loopholes... and does not make enough provision to safeguard public interests. Thuthuka has to pay government a percentage of net profit yet other gaming establishments like Tattersalls pay government 10% of all takings. There is a difference."

Lottery

Commissioners threaten to quit constitutional process

Aleta Armstrong 80 11/6/97 (3/2)

MBABANE — Swaziland's Constitutional Review Commission has been surrounded by controversy since its inception 10 months ago, and four commissioners have threatened to resign because they believe the new constitution will uphold the status quo.

King Mswati III appointed 30 members to the commission last August with the aim of providing a constitution within two years. The opposition groups objected, saying the commissioners had not been elected by anyone other than the king and only individuals would be allowed to make submissions, not groups.

They also argued the 1973 decree which banned political gatherings and banned political parties limited scope for debate. They said the public was wary of a clause in the Constitutional Review Commission decree that provided for fines and jail sentences if people insulted, disparaged or belittled the commission.

The four commissioners who have threatened to resign are Jerry Gule, Mahawu Maziya, Nkonzo Hlatshwayo and Zombodzi Magagula. The four are viewed as being more independent of the king.

One of the four commissioners, who did not want to be named, said they believed the make-up of the commission and the limits on debate and political activity meant the "Constitutional Review Commission is not capable of delivery in accordance with the

will of the people". He said most commissioners represented the status quo and did not want the system to change. They met the king every week — not to report on progress made but to consult him on every point.

"There is great competition and squabbling among the members who all wish to be seen to be pleasing His Majesty. I have no option but to resign. The process will not deliver what the people want, and I do not want to lend my name to that."

Mario Masuku, president of the banned People's United Democratic Movement, resigned from the commission in January saying: "The commission is an instrument of deception, delaying tactics and tokenism."

Condemnation

The Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions vice-president Themba Msibi is also a commissioner despite the federation's condemnation of the commission. Msibi was one of the union leaders arrested by the government during the month-long strike in January.

The government has estimated the constitution review process will cost R20m and has appealed to the international community for financial assistance. Taiwan has pledged R2.3m and the UK R1m, all other countries have only offered advice.

Last week King Mswati was asked about problems with the commission, but said it would not be dissolved. He was satisfied progress had been made.

Swaziland prepares for cuts in customs income

JABU MATSEBULA
AND BANELE GININDZA

Mbabane — Swaziland revealed a new tax bill this week aimed at broadening the kingdom's tax base and boosting annual government revenue by at least 38 per cent in preparation for the possible phasing out of Southern African Customs Union receipts.

Customs receipts account for 53 percent of revenue in Swaziland's budget, and is the mainstay of the kingdom's economy.

The new tax regime, which comes into effect on July 1, introduces a self-assessment scheme under which Swazi taxpayers will be responsible for their own tax liability — shifting the burden of tax assessment from the tax collector to the taxpayer.

The bill, which goes to parliament tomorrow, is part of a clutch of public-sector reforms to overhaul the administration and arrest economic deterioration.

The government budget has spiralled from a generous surplus position of R21 million in 1992/3 to a deficit of R136 million in 1996/7 and is expected to worsen to R151 million in 1997/8.

In addition, the onset of globalisation and Gatt may remove or

significantly reduce revenues from customs, prompting the Swaziland government to initiate its Economic and Social Reform Agenda (Esra).

Key tenets of the programme incorporate initiatives to encourage economic growth, revenue diversification and expenditure controls.

The strategy for meeting these challenges is touted as a promotion of sound macro-economic management and the improvement of the efficiency of the public sector through reforming the public service, reforming government-owned companies, improving delivery of infrastructure services and improving administrative procedures.

Seventy-five percent of Swaziland's expenditure is for recurrent spending, 40 percent of that is for personnel costs, a level dangerously close to the 45 percent IMF red line for mandatory structural adjustment.

Sibusiso Dlamini, the prime minister who inherited a decaying administration when he assumed his post last August, stressed this week that he was committed to containing public spending and to reforms. — African Eye News Service

Swazi king lets Taiwanese miner dig in nature reserve

BANELE GININDZA
AND JABU MATSEBULA

Mbabane — The Swaziland Minerals Committee has granted a five-year mining lease to Taiwanese company Michael Lee Enterprise to prospect and mine ornamental chert, a green stone used for making floor tiles and jewellery.

The licence, signed on Tuesday, is the first in two years and will allow the Taiwanese to prospect and mine the mineral in a proclaimed nature reserve at Malolotsha.

Mining licences are normally only granted grudgingly by the Swaziland Minerals Committee, which is appointed by King Mswati III and reports directly to him.

Gwece Dlamini, the mining committee chairman, paid tribute to the 28-year-old monarch, saying the licence was a direct result of an investment tour of the Far East during which Mswati invited Taiwanese investors to the Kingdom and signed a protocol for investment with the increasingly isolated Republic.

Chert, which is believed to be plentiful in the protected nature reserve Malolotsha on

the Western Mountains in a belt bordering South Africa up to the Bulembu area near the Havelock asbestos mine area, has up to now been mined by bootleg operators from Swaziland and South Africa.

The Taiwanese company will undertake a two-phase development to prospect the area and identify "ideal" mining sites.

In a subsequent phase, they will establish a factory for processing the product before export.

"This will in turn provide training opportunities and employment as well as earn vital foreign exchange for the country," Dlamini said at the signing ceremony.

Michael Lee, who signed on behalf of his company, said the operation would immediately employ between 50 and 100 people, with more jobs coming available as the mine started operating.

He said he had been working on feasibility studies for the project since Mswati visited Taiwan in 1995.

There are only two active mines in Swaziland at the moment. — African Eye News Service

Whitehall firm on new Swazi dispensation

ARG 21/6/97

(312)

FOREIGN SERVICE

Mbabane - The new British government has reaffirmed its support for Swaziland's controversial Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) which is charged with finding a way to introduce democratic reforms in the autocratic kingdom.

High commissioner John Doble said at a reception to celebrate the queen's birthday this week that he was saddened to learn that some people in Swazi-

land were already criticising the CRC.

He hoped all Swazis, regardless of their shades of political opinion, would contribute their ideas to the constitution-making process so the new constitution would be to the satisfaction of the majority of the Swazi people.

Doble said the recent change of government in Britain would in no way affect the continuity of British development aid to commonwealth member developing countries in Africa.

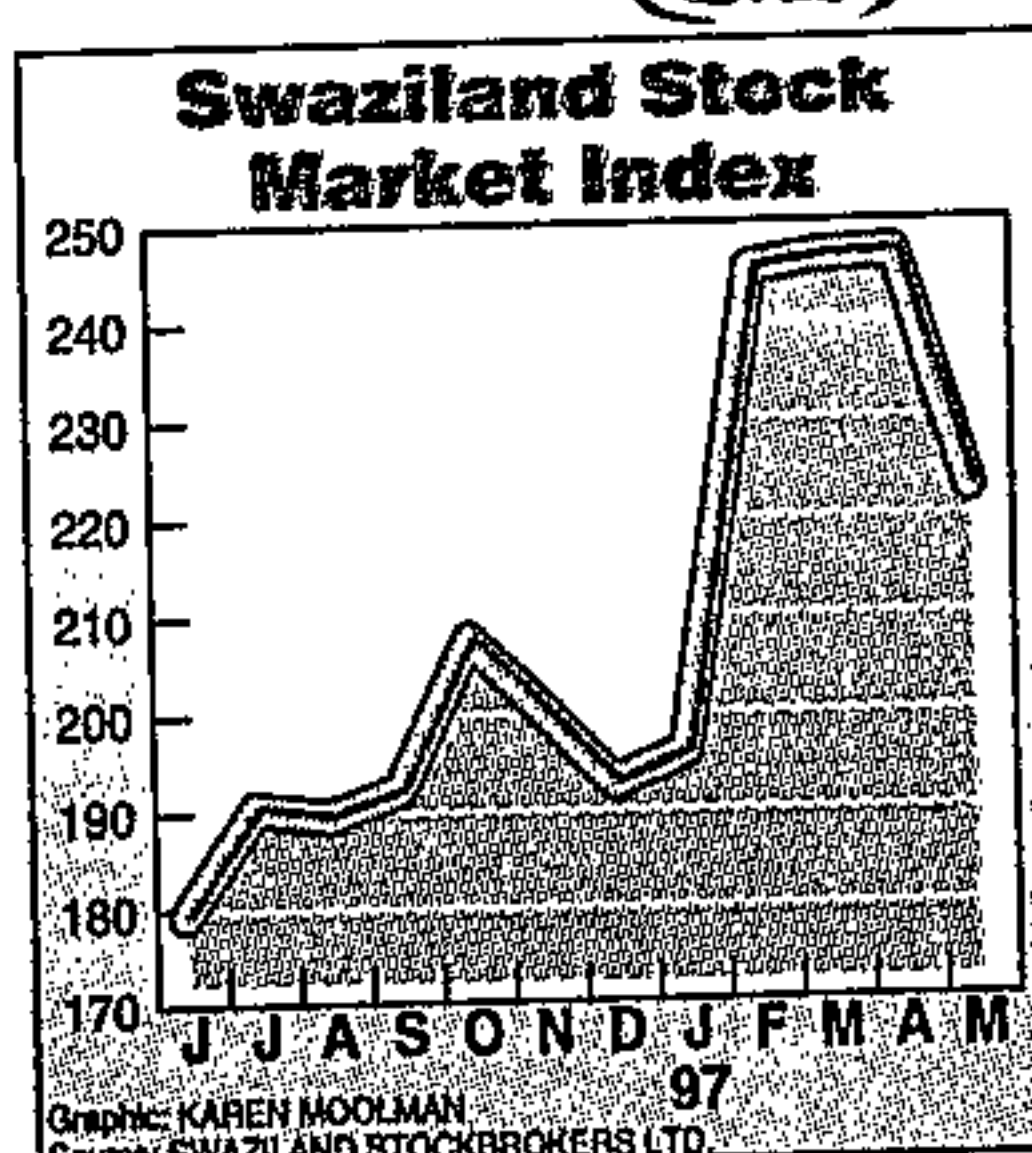
THE Swaziland Stock Market, like many of its African peers, has undergone rapid growth since its birth in 1990, and is expected to gain sharply from the government's plans for privatisation and other proposed legislation. However, in contrast to bigger and more diversified exchanges, Swaziland is unlikely to benefit from SA funds heading overseas on July 1.

Firstly, SA institutions' increased allowance from July of 2% of net cash flows into Southern African Development Community countries is irrelevant when it comes to the Swazi exchange, as Swaziland is part of the common monetary area and unhindered by SA exchange controls.

Secondly and more to the point, local investors say the stock market is "too small". Furthermore, its six listed shares overlap with companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE).

Lonrho Sugar Corporation, which makes up about 65% of the Swazi exchange's R2,615m market capitalisation, is dually listed on the JSE, as is Masterfridge. Standard Chartered Bank Swaziland is a subsidiary of JSE-listed Standard Bank. The only "pure" Swazi listed companies are the Royal Swaziland Sugar Corpora-

Swaziland 'is too small' to draw SA funds



tion, Swazispa Holdings and Swaziland Growth Properties, now under suspension. SA's Illovo Sugar plans to list its subsidiary.

"It is very much a good, agricultural-based economy, but there's nothing that really attracts one in terms of industries that we don't have here," said the chief investment officer at a major SA financial institution.

Another SA institution was not aware the exchange existed, and broker SBC Warburg said it was "far too small" to draw interest.

At the end of May, the Swazi Stock Market index had risen 15,5% to 222,85 from the end of last year, and market cap was up 18,6%. Turnover peaked last year at R10,083m — meagre compared with the JSE's average daily R800m traded.

But more patient investors might take heart in future developments: an insurance and pensions bill before parliament proposes Swazi pension funds be required to invest at least 15% of their capital domestically, which would improve liquidity.

Swaziland Stockbrokers CEO Andrew McGuire says the cabinet is due to debate "a specific policy for future privatisation," which would result in additional listings.

□ On Friday, the JSE's all gold index ended a further 3,2% or 34 points weaker at 1 027, bringing its erosion for the week to 10,5% or 121 points. The industrial index, added 78 points to 8 511,5, while financials put on 1% or 99 points to a new record high of 9 891. The all share index picked up 25 points to 7 234 at the weekend, although it faltered a net 59 points over the course of last week.

SA 'should stop aid to Swazi sugar producers'

Nicola Jenvey

DURBAN — SA should stop providing cane varieties, training, milling research and export terminal facilities to Swaziland if the neighbouring sugar producer continued dumping its product into the local market, SA Sugar Millers' Association chairman Don MacLeod said yesterday.

He told the association's annual general

meeting that the Southern African Development Community (SADC) should enter into a protocol governing the future development and trade in sugar within the region and eliminate the long-standing problem between SA and Swaziland.

He said the distorted nature of the world sugar market and the resultant volatile price meant the industry's long-term survival depended on a secure domestic market. However, this required tariff

protection, an equitable sharing of the tariff among producers and controlled access to the SA market by other SADC members.

Swaziland already benefited from preferential quotas to the European Union and the US. MacLeod said the local industry would continue requesting government support initiatives for these benefits.

He proposed a protocol be developed to enable regional sugar producers jointly to grow and create a stable block of low-cost manufacturers who could take advantage of the international marketing opportunities.

Final production for the 1996/97 season was 2.3-million tons of which 44% was exported. Early predictions were the 1997/98 season would produce nearly 2.5-million, of which 48% would be exported.

MacLeod said the political changes had opened new export markets in Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Prices had been relatively stable in the past few months, albeit about 10% lower than the comparable period last year and export earnings were expected to rise to R1,5bn — R271m higher than last season — for the current year.

MacLeod handed the chairmanship to Tongaat-Hulett Sugar MD Bruce Dunlop at yesterday's meeting.

Stop punishing Swazis, urges SA sugar chief

SHIRLEY JONES

(312) ~~(S) SECRET~~
CT(B2) 26/6/97
Durban — The South African Sugar Millers' Association called yesterday for the re-establishment of an equitable trading partnership between the Swazi and South African sugar industries.

Speaking at the organisation's annual general meeting, Don MacLeod, its outgoing chairman, said it was time for South Africa to reinstate the use of facilities such as the export terminal and training and research, which had been withdrawn to punish Swazi producers who sold into the closed South African market.

"Neither country benefits from this standoff, and it is

important that facilities are reinstated in return for an acceptance that unfettered access for existing and future expansions in (Swazi) production cannot be allowed while a distorted world market exists.

"The achievement of an equitable trading agreement — through the assistance of the government, if necessary — is important to enable the two customs union producers to promote a sugar protocol within the Southern African Development Community," he said.

MacLeod said in light of the volatility of the world sugar market, the long-term survival of the South African industry depended on a secure domestic market.

Swaziland's community police plan turns sour

Star 26/6/97 (312)

Mbabane - The formation of Swaziland community police in the Dvokudvweni area in northern Swaziland to assist police curb crime and violence has backfired on those it was intended to serve.

Residents in the five chiefdoms of Dvokudvweni have appealed, through their chiefs, to the regional authorities for protection from the community police whom they elected only last month.

Allegations by the chiefs and their subjects splashed across the front page of The Times of Swazi-

land tell of beatings, torture, confiscation and slaughter of cattle, illegal road blocks and immoral behaviour among male and female community police.

Dvokudvweni headman Shiya-makhuanzo Fakhooze, has confirmed that the chiefs have called on the Swaziland police to take action against community police who abuse their authority.

Swaziland police public relations officer, Superintendent Khismusi Ndlovu, has confirmed that seven of the community policemen have been arrested and

charged with assault.

He said he was shocked but remained confident that the scheme, aimed at encouraging communities to co-operate with the police in combating crime, could work.

It was, however, clear that community police had to be more carefully selected and thoroughly briefed by their chiefs and the Swaziland police regarding the limits of their authority. Their role, said Ndlovu, was to identify and hand criminals over to the police. - Star Foreign Service.

Hong Kong invests in Swaziland

Banele Ginindza

BD 3/7/97
MBABANE — International Investments, a Hong Kong-based manufacturing and assembling company, has pledged to invest R60m before the end of the year on four assembling operations in Swaziland.

The new operations will assemble watches, television sets, air conditioners and enamel cutlery sets. It has also

(312) (312)
pledged investments in the textile industry, but did not disclose details.

The leader of a company delegation in Swaziland last week, Frank Yiu, said about 2 000 jobs — ranging from managerial posts to menial tasks — would be created.

He said the assembled products would be exported to the Far East.

The investment plans are at an advanced stage after the completion of a feasibility study which the company commissioned through a Swazi consultancy.

Technicians who accompanied the delegation will return in two weeks for further discussions on the planned investment.

Last week the delegation inspected possible sites and identified two plots at the newly rehabilitated Matsapha Industrial Park.

Yiu said the company was waiting for the go-ahead from Swaziland and had packed its machinery for shipping.

The delegation met officials from the enterprise and employment ministry, and the Swaziland Industrial Development Company, which is assisting it.

Swaziland approves Eskom power lines

~~CT(BE) 9/7/97 (312)~~
BETTER NDABA

Mbabane — The Swaziland government has approved, in principle, the construction of one of two proposed 400 kilovolt Eskom power lines through the country to supply Gencor's Mozal aluminium smelter in Maputo.

The \$150 million Mozal

smelter plant will require roughly 900 megawatts of power to operate at full capacity and would be forced to rely on South African-supplied power, Swaziland's Electricity Board (SEB) officials said.

"To benefit from the Mozal project, SEB will need to build a 132 to 400 kilovolt stepdown substation, so as to

redistribute the energy within the country," the government stated last week.

SEB officials also stressed that the Swaziland government was studying the possibility of sourcing more power from its binational Maguga Dam project with South Africa. — African Eye News Service

(3.2) ~~Swazi~~
**Swazi crop
could hurt
SA farmers**

ET(BR) 9/7/97

Mbabane — Swaziland's expected bumper vegetable harvest this season could hurt Mpumalanga farmers who have traditionally supplied a significant portion of the kingdom's vegetable markets, analysts said this week.

The bumper season in Swaziland has been attributed to the unusually cold, wet winter which cut pesticide and irrigation costs, and a drive to encourage small farmers to begin farming vegetables commercially.

Swaziland's National Agriculture Marketing Board (Nam-board) said yesterday it had registered an increase in the quantity of fresh vegetables brought in by local farmers.

Crammer Dlamini, a Nam-board official, attributed the increase to a new cash up-front payment system the board adopted earlier this year.

He said if Swaziland harvested enough vegetables for the local market, imports from South Africa would be minimised. "We only import ... if local demand cannot be met; otherwise local produce is given priority," he said. — African Eye News Service

□ SWAZILAND

GDP forecast hit by internal turbulence

Labour and political unrest had shaved 1 percentage point off Swaziland's GDP growth forecast of between 3.5 percent and 4 percent for this year, a Standard Bank economic analysis paper entitled "Facing tough challenges" said this week.

The unrest and resulting strikes, which slowed down new irrigation projects, have hit Swaziland's sugar industry hardest. The industry is the kingdom's biggest foreign exchange earner and one of its largest employers. "The major impact, though, has been the international blow to business confidence in the kingdom — something that is not that easily regained," the document said.

Painting a bleak prospect for Swaziland's general economic performance during the rest of the year, the study also said large industries such as sugar, wood and pulp were not "sending out particularly bright signals". Although abundant rains had boosted water supplies in the sugar sector, the recurrent labour problems and cooler-than-normal weather were likely to lead to a fall in production this season, the report warned. — *African Eye News Service, Mbabane*

Commission secretary quits

(312)
Aleta Armstrong

80 10 17 197
MBABANE — Swazi-
land's constitutional re-
view commission secre-
tary has become the
third member to resign
from the body this week.

Nkonzo Hlatshwayo
resigned on Tuesday, a
day after the commis-
sion's deputy chairman,
Jerry Gule, and member
Muhawu Maziya an-
nounced they were leav-
ing the body designed to
lead Swaziland back to
constitutional rule.

The commission was
appointed by King
Mswati last August, af-
ter protests against
emergency rule. Some
commission members
knew they had been ap-
pointed only when they
saw their names in the
local media, and opposi-
tion groups have called
for an elected body.

SA casino resorts threaten Swaziland industry

Ed 10/7/97

(312)

MBABANE — Swaziland's ailing hotel and tourism industry would be seriously threatened by the rash of multimillion-rand casino resorts being built in Mpumalanga, Sun International's Swaziland financial director said yesterday.

Three large casino resorts, with hotel, retail and entertainment features, are being built in Mpumalanga. Six schemes are expected to be licensed in Gaut-

eng in the next year or two.

Swaziland's tourism industry has relied almost exclusively on casinos in Piggs Peak and the Royal Swazi Sun to lure visitors, but hotel occupancy rates have dropped steadily during the past six months.

"The drop has been due to an underperformance by local operators. We definitely expect increased competition from the new casinos in the short term

and we're worried that the Mpumalanga casinos will already be operational within six months," said Sun International finance director John Frazer.

"Our casinos in Piggs Peak and Nhlanguano are in danger and only a concerted and very aggressive international marketing campaign punting Swaziland as a broad interest tourist attraction will prevent further losses for the industry."

In response to fears, the Regional Tourism Organisation for Southern Africa announced it would introduce a single visa for the subregion and that Swaziland was about to fast-track traffic at its border posts.

Swaziland players believe business travel and tourism spin-offs from initiatives such as the Maputo and Tlokombe corridors may help compensate for gaming losses. — AEN.

Swaziland switches on Eskom project

(312) BD 14/7/97

MBABANE — Swaziland's cabinet has approved construction of Eskom's 400kv power line through Swaziland to feed Gencor's Mozal aluminium smelter plant in Mozambique.

The decision, confirmed in a statement from Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini's office on Friday, cancels proposals for two separate 275kv dedicated lines from Eskom to feed the Swaziland power grid. Also cancelled, the statement said, was another proposed 275kv "interconnector" line linking

Swaziland with Mozambique's Cahora Bassa power station.

The 400kv line, intended to be one of two Eskom supply lines for the Mozal project, is intended to serve Swaziland's power needs for at least 30 years. Projected costs were comparable to building the two smaller lines.

Swaziland would, however, proceed with plans to build its own 400kv feeder line directly into the Cahora Bassa power pool, to ensure it retained access to alternative power sources. — AENS.

BUSINESS

Swazi investment in sweet factory goes sour

Aleta Armstrong

MBABANE — Swaziland royal development agency Tlbiyo Taka Ngwane has admitted to losing R48m in a company called Nutrition Dynamics Swaziland after the company's board members decided earlier this month to liquidate it.

Tlbiyo MD AT Dlamini said this week that the company had been placed under provisional liquidation but that Tlbiyo was still "looking at avenues to explore to make this project viable". He insisted that the sweet factory would be running again in less than six months.

Tlbiyo was previously reported to have invested R770m in the project, although Dlamini only admitted this week to the loss of R48m.

Tlbiyo holds shares in some of Swaziland's top companies and is exempt from tax. King Mswati III holds the agency in trust for the peo-

ple as head of the Swazi nation.

Dlamini has placed most of the blame for the company's failure on David Rabhan, the chairman of Nutrition Dynamics International, who formed the Swaziland subsidiary in 1993 as a joint venture with Tlbiyo. The Sunday Times of Swaziland reported that Dlamini had alleged that Nutrition Dynamics Swaziland had been let down by Rabhan who had "not paid a cent" of the money he had pledged. Although Rabhan could not be contacted, he claimed previously that he was not responsible and blamed Tlbiyo for delays in commissioning the plant and for pumping in money in the absence of production.

The initial plan was to manufacture baby formula and \$4m was raised to pay a US company called Polk Manley Machinery, \$2m of which was raised by Tlbiyo through a share issue. The health ministry

rejected the baby formula concept and the machinery was relocated to KwaNdebele and has never been used since.

Then six months were spent on feasibility studies on manufacturing cereals, but Nutrition Dynamics Swaziland rejected the plan and decided to manufacture sweets instead. Last year, Tlbiyo bought a plot at Matsapa industrial site and spent R14m constructing a sweet factory. Nutrition Dynamics Swaziland moved into the factory in June last year and although Tlbiyo did not charge it rent, the company never manufactured any sweets. Nutrition Dynamics Swaziland MD Winston Lomahozo said the delay was due to the nonarrival of sweet machinery from the US.

The sweet project was financed by Standard Bank in Mbabane, which loaned Nutrition Dynamics Swaziland R18m. Standard Bank

Swaziland MD Mervyn Lubbe declined to comment.

A subsidiary, Nutrition Dynamics SA, was formed in 1995 and bought a Johannesburg-based company called Dicks Sweets for R1.5m. Dicks Sweets ended up being liquidated and all its assets were sold.

Dlamini said that when Rabhan came to Swaziland he had excellent credentials from his bankers, congressmen and former US president Jimmy Carter. "We thought he was a trusted US citizen. I am not shifting the blame to anyone else but really, the ambassador here should have alerted us about Rabhan."

The Swaziland US embassy responded by saying it did not involve itself in the details of private business transactions. "While we did not introduce Nutrition Dynamics to Tlbiyo, US embassies around the world routinely facilitate contact between US businessmen and local

counterparts in support of efforts to stimulate trade, create employment and generate economic growth."

Dlamini has also confirmed that he received \$50 000 from Rabhan for a personal joint venture in farming but claimed it was "all legitimate". However, the money is still frozen in Dlamini's bank account because it was brought into the country without proper clearance through the central bank.

On June 16, Dicks Sweets Swaziland was registered with its shareholders being Nutrition Dynamics Swaziland and Tlbiyo GM Ndumiso Mamba. The subsidiary's future now lies in the balance as a result of the provisional liquidation of Nutrition Dynamics Swaziland.

Tlbiyo has said it will now hire corporate investigators to handle all affairs related to prospective business partners to prevent a recurrence of this kind of situation.

90 16/7/99

Bank's 'grab-a-cow' campaign ruined farmers, probe told

Banele Ginindza

MBABANE — Peasant farmers were shot at, livestock, poultry and cooking pots impounded, and farm equipment and assets worth several million emalangeni confiscated in a Swaziland Development and Savings Bank debt recovery programme, witnesses have told a commission of inquiry.

The programme, dubbed the "grab-a-cow campaign" by the public, has driven hundreds of small-scale Swazi farmers to ruin and facilitated "robbery" and power abuse by leading bank members, according to witnesses.

Finance Minister Themba Masuku set up the commission of inquiry, headed by advocate Hilton Fine, in May after long-standing complaints about

methods used to recover debt. Witnesses have claimed that some cabinet members, the bank's former MD and other senior officials benefited personally from goods recovered.

The commission is examining whether the campaign was conducted in accordance with bank policy, who was responsible for certain actions, and to establish how funds and assets were dispersed and sold.

Most farmers failed to service their debts after the drought of 1991/92 when all their crops shrivelled in the fields. The "grab-a-cow" campaign targeted the Shiselweni region, a traditional farming stronghold.

Witnesses have said a portrait of King Mswati was used to intimidate them, and his speech appealing for

debts to be repaid cited to them.

Absalom Mabuza told the inquiry he was shot and seriously injured when he tried to stop 15 cattle being impounded. Mabuza, who owed R6 000, said he had documents to prove he was repaying his loan.

It was alleged that former bank MD Sam Kuhlase paid about R15 000 to conceal fraudulent activities by a bank official who confiscated a tractor. Kuhlase is also cited as having paid about R40 000 for a farm, worth R170 000, belonging to a former bank debtor. A car valued at R19 000 and 11 cows were taken to settle a R5 420 loan.

Sixteen herds of cattle were confiscated from a widow whose late son was indebted to the bank. Another farmer said he lost 30 cattle as he owed R200

Agriculture Minister Chief Dambuza said despite the fact that he was on the bank's board of directors, alleged wrongdoings had not been brought to his attention.

Victims say they have no recourse because the bank has no records of confiscated property, and claim some cattle were taken to bank officials' homes.

Farmers complained that while small-scale farmers were persecuted for not paying debts, senior bank officials and other prominent citizens were let off the hook.

Local newspapers reported a leaked bank report which indicated that senior princes, cabinet ministers, senators and parliamentarians owed the bank more than R220m in nonperforming loans.

(312)

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END 18/7/97

SA, Swaziland among Sloan group targets for investment

MBABANE — SA and Swaziland are two of 13 southern African countries targeted for investment by Sloan Financial Group, the US-based company which launched a R540m New Africa Opportunity Fund recently.

The group claims to be the world's largest black-owned diversified financial services firm with managed assets of more than R16bn.

The new fund would make privately negotiated equity investments in companies with business activities located in southern Africa, with an emphasis on SA.

The fund managers, New Africa Advisors, said last week that they were looking for investment opportunities ranging between R22,5m and R96m.

The fund managers hoped to provide capital for expansion, management buyouts, noncore asset disposals, privatisation and investment by multinationals. Industry sectors which will be specially targeted include the consumer products and services industries, telecommunications, tourism, health care, financial companies, light manufacture and construction.

"Most of these sectors are expected to benefit from the emerging black middle-class consumer," the fund managers said.

The fund's initial R540m had been raised from US investors, including US bank Citicorp and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, a US government agency.

Sloan executive vice-president Justin Beckett said the fund was an important milestone for the group, by further enhancing its African focus.

"The group has been investing in Africa's securities markets since 1993 and currently manages a listed portfolio of more than \$100m," he said.

He said the launch of the fund supported the group's view that southern Africa offered "very attractive" investment opportunities.

Factors which contributed to the fund's successful launch included the growth potential of the SA economy, the lifting of international economic sanctions against SA and the effect of increasing world trade in SA and the surrounding region.

The entry and in some cases re-entry of US and other foreign corporations into the SA market and the positive steps taken by the SA authorities in the phasing out of exchange controls were other factors supporting the fund.

The fund was structured as a 10-year partnership, targeting long-term capital for direct investment in the southern African region. To achieve its primary aim of maximising investment returns, it would pursue a proactive investment approach, mainly by buying substantial equity positions in established, unlisted firms.

The fund manager's investments team had highly qualified individuals with a wide range of managerial, consulting and financial skills. — AENS.

Swaziland probes SA joint venture

Aleta Armstrong

(312)

BD 28/7/97

MBABANE — A commission of inquiry is under way in Swaziland to probe a \$60m satellite deal involving Swaziland's Posts and Telecommunications Corporation, the Swaziland Television Authority and the African Satellite Entertainment Corporation.

The inquiry will focus on why Swazi telecommunications signed a 10-year lease with Intelsat, making itself liable for \$60m, when it had no payment guarantees from its customer, African Satellite. This company is a joint venture formed by SA company United Satellite Network and Swaziland Television in November 1994.

Three people have been suspended on full pay: Swaziland Posts and Telecommunications MD Alfred Dlamini; Swaziland Television MD Dan Dlamini; and Richard Shabalala of the tourism and communications ministry. There have been delays and the main witnesses have not yet testified. The inquiry will resume in mid-August.

African Satellite claims that in January 1995 it asked Swazi telecommunications to make inquiries with only Intelsat about leasing a satellite. But Swazi telecommunications then signed the 10-year lease without entering any contract with African Satellite. A contract between the two parties was signed only in May 1995. African Satellite was un-

able to raise funds and claims to have asked Intelsat to cancel the deal. Swazi telecommunications board members said they were told about these contracts at the end of 1995.

Last year Intelsat cancelled the lease with Swazi telecommunications, passing it on to Telkom. The inquiry has said it will probe Telkom's role in the matter. But Telkom International MD Steven Lamb said: "We have not been contacted by anyone in Swaziland. Telkom applied through the normal channels to Intelsat for a capacity and I was finally informed we could take over the lease at a cost of \$60m."

Plant creates 1 000 jobs

Banele Ginindza

MBABANE — Afinta Motor Corporation (AMC), which launched its operations in Swaziland yesterday, plans to export 85%-90% of the vehicles it will produce to countries that are members of the common market for east and central Africa.

Export director Rajiv Wahi told an AMC convention this week that the R150m investment in a plant to assemble vehicles at the Matsapha industrial site involved the creation of 1 000 jobs.

Wahi said an agreement had already been clinched with a distributor for the sale of the first 1 000 Swazi-assembled buses to Kenya and Tanzania. They would be distributed under the AMC brand name.

He said the Swazi economy would be bolstered by the creation of jobs and the fact that Swaziland stood to make at least R90 000 in export revenue for every 1 000 vehicles sold.

AMC vehicles incorporated parts for European, Japanese, Korean and Chinese vehicles and made up a "unique bus for African conditions", said a company spokesman. Both left- and right-hand drive vehicles were produced.

AMC has been selling vehicles for the past 17 months in SA through about 22 dealerships, with up to 70 trucks and buses a month being assembled at its plant in Isando, Gauteng.

So far more than 1 000 vehicles have been sold in SA.

BD 6/8/97

BUSINESS

Clothing firms flock to Lesotho

Candi Ratabane Ramainoane

MASERU — Lesotho has become a popular site for Taiwanese garment manufacturers, 14 of which have set up shop there, in their quest for a competitive location from which to serve world markets.

The 14 firms, which employ about 8 000 workers, constitute more than half of the 23 textile manufacturers in Lesotho.

Lesotho National Development Corporation spokesman Lesa Makhoalibe says Taiwanese firms began investing in Lesotho from 1986, and she claims the quality of Lesotho's labour is attractive to investors.

Labour is relatively cheap by SA textile industry standards — at a minimum of \$100 a month — but this is still a higher minimum than that set in several other African and Southeast Asian countries.

Makhoalibe says the productivity of Lesotho's English-speaking workforce has resulted in low-unit labour costs and "most companies pay above the

minimum wage to reward this productivity". The unions, however, argue the Taiwanese firms seldom pay above Lesotho's minimum wage.

Investment incentives are also a factor. The development corporation offers a 15% corporate tax rate with no further withholding taxes or restrictions on the repatriation of profits, as well as training grants of up to 50% of the wage bill during the training period.

It also provides cheaper loan finance for projects which can demonstrate long-term viability. The duration of the loan is usually up to 10 years. In addition, the corporation can guarantee loan finance provided to its clients by other financial institutions.

Despite the fact that Lesotho is landlocked within SA's borders, it has managed to secure quota-free shipments of garments to the North American and European Union markets — the destination of most shipments. The capital Maseru has also been designated as an in-

land port, and containers are cleared and shipped through Durban without further customs formalities.

Makhoalibe declined, "for strategic purposes", to comment on the number of Taiwanese companies which had relocated to Lesotho from SA, particularly after SA's decision to switch diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to China.

Swaziland, which still recognises the nationalist island, is also understood to be wooing Taiwanese investors following SA's diplomatic switch.

Makhoalibe would say only that Taiwanese investors were arriving in Lesotho from "elsewhere", and some established operations were growing rapidly. She said Taiwanese company United Clothing had expanded its factory space of 4 000m² by 2 000m², thereby creating additional jobs and bringing its total employment to 2 200.

A second Taiwanese firm, J&S Fashions, has also expanded its operations recently.

Furthermore, it was an-

nounced recently that Singaporean firm Lekin Textiles had invested R21m in Lesotho.

Makhoalibe said of the 23 clothing manufacturers in Lesotho, five came from SA.

Ts'eliso Ramochela, secretary-general of the Lesotho Federation of Democratic Unions, is not impressed by the Taiwanese investors and alleges they have the worst industrial relations records in Lesotho.

He said many of them imported Taiwanese and Filipinos to do supervisory jobs instead of training locals. They also kept workers inside the premises for 12-hour stretches, from 7am to 7am, because they "feared that the workers may confer with the trade unionists who operate in the area".

He alleged they paid the lowest salaries and stuck to the minimum wage stipulated in the law. He also claimed they did not observe international environment guidelines, and employees were in danger of contracting fibrosis, a lung disease caused by fibre dust.

(12/17) (312) BD 19/8/97

Shocking study on street children

Star 21/8/97 (312)

Mbabane - Street children are no longer rare in Swazi society, which once prided itself on its traditional extended family systems.

The children are abused, molested, perceived as deviants and regarded with contempt and hostility.

In a study on street children conducted by the Swaziland Association of Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation of Offenders (Sacro), it was found that there were more and more street children in Manzini and Mbabane.

The study finds that street children are often abused. Police spokesman Sabelo Dlamini said that old men sodomised young boys, many of whom became infected with sexually transmitted diseases. He said the children were enticed with money and offered glue to keep them in "high spirits" during the act.

Physical abuse by parents or step-parents are just two reasons the chil-

dren opt for the streets. "My mother started seeing other men. He moved in with us with his own children, who used to beat me. I left home," says one street child.

Nonhlanhla Hadzebe, a timid 7-year-old, says: "The last time I saw my mother and father was when I was very little. I do not know where they are, but I know that they are still alive. At times I sleep without having eaten anything but I cannot complain - to whom, anyway? I only pray to God that one day my parents will come back so we can all be a family again."

Sandile Mamba (14) says he left home because his alcoholic father used to beat him and his mother.

The children see the street as a place to search for a livelihood. Patrick Johnson (17) recalls how he used to beg along the streets and later turned to washing cars. - Star Foreign Service/Africa Information Afrique

Challenge to Swazi throne

Sowetan 22/8/97

(312)

By Sello Seripe

Emangcamanes claim kingdom belongs to them

THE SWAZILAND kingdom could be thrown into disarray if the leadership of the Emangcamane Swazis carries out their threat to reclaim the Swazi throne.

This grouping is made up of Swazis who are citizens of South Africa.

They are organised under the Emangcamane Swazi National King's Council (ESNKC), which is mobilising displaced Swazis throughout Southern Africa.

They claim that Swaziland is their land and that they do not recognise the political borders separating the kingdom from South Africa.

ESNKC members say the land was cut off – without Swazi approval – from South Africa around 1840 by British colonialists.

Swaziland gained independence in 1968.

According to ESNKC spokesman and national organiser Prince Alfred Maseko, the present-day Swazi monarchy are impostors: "They are amaNgwane clan refugees – mostly Dlamini – who immigrated to Swaziland between 1800 and 1820 from Mozambique via Natal.

"They were allowed to settle in the kingdom by King Khabangobe on humanitarian grounds."

The ESNKC, which operates from South African soil, claims it also has members and supporters in Swaziland, though they are keeping a low profile because they fear the actions of King Mswati III.

The Emangcamanes carry surnames such as Bhembe, Buhali, Dube, Fakudze, Gomane, Hlophe, Jele, Kunene, Lukhele, Maseko, Mahlobo, Maphanga, Ngwenya, Siluma, Thwala, Vilane, Xaba and Zulu (Mbuyisa not Mageba).

According to Maseko, the country was named Swaziland by the late King Maphanga Maseko I around 1750.

"Mswati was named after that territory and not the other way round, as distorters are saying," he said.

He pointed out that the Emangcamanes regard the current monarchy as "illegitimate".

"Our kings, chiefs, indunas and the nation at large were persecuted and driven out of their land by the amaNgwane.

"Our last leader in Swaziland, King Sidinga I, was forced into exile in the Free State in 1840, where he died in 1902."

He said over the years efforts by the Emangcamanes to reclaim their land and throne failed to yield any results as the struggle was waged "quietly and diplomatically".

"We now invite clan members to join the movement (ESNKC) to pursue this struggle. Our leaders may have been killed over the years but our nation has continued to grow," he said.

Emangcamanes also want Swaziland to be reincorporated into South Africa as they do not recognise borders which, they allege, were agreed to by British settlers and the Dlamini.

They also claim that their territory originally covered parts of present-day Gauteng and Mpumalanga.

Other aims of the ESNKC are:

- To seek reparation for the alleged theft of their cattle, throne, land and minerals in 1840; and

- To stimulate debate about the Dlamini, whose authority the ESNKC charges was imposed on the nation.

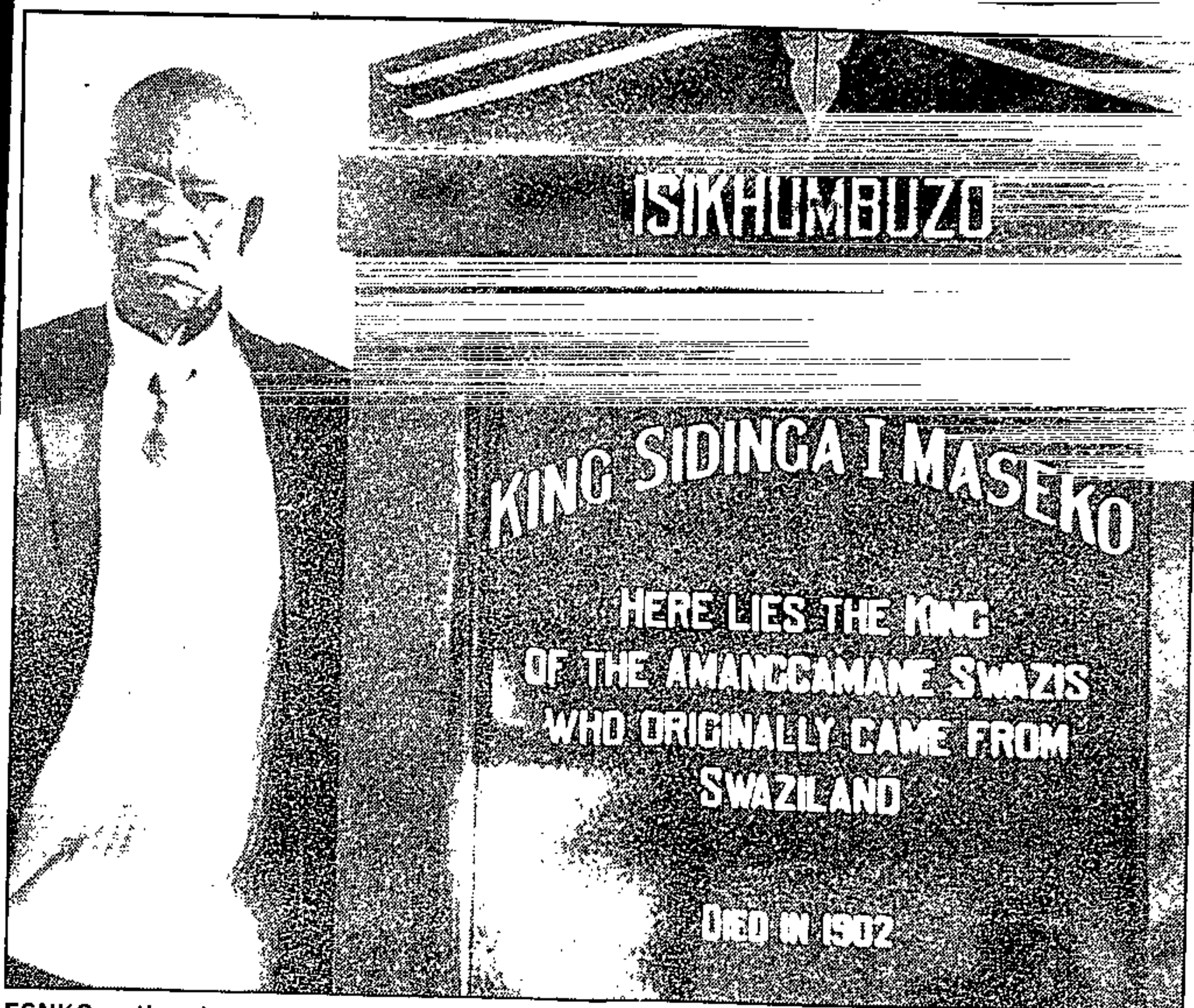
Other members of the ESNKC are Jacob Maseko, Dan Maseko, Lucas Sibanyoni, Joe Maseko, Luke Maseko and Cecil Malaza.

The first secretary at the Swaziland High Commission offices in Pretoria, Andrew Sibandze, told *Sowetan* that his government does not know of the existence of the ESNKC.

However, he acknowledged the existence of the Emangcamane clan, who mostly live in the Bhunya area in the kingdom. He added that his government would investigate the ESNKC.

Although he agreed that the Dlamini initially came from Tembe in Mozambique, he dismissed the perception that they were refugees who were "illegitimately" clinging to the Swazi throne.

"The Dlamini overpower-



ESNKC national organiser Prince Alfred Maseko at the grave of King Sidinga I in the Free State town of Fouriesburg.

PIC: PAT SEBOKO

ered the tribes they found in the territory now known as Swaziland and as such are not refugees. These tribes included Masekos and many others."

Regarding the borders between Swaziland and South

Africa, which the ESNKC says are illegal, Sibandze said his government would not seek "any advice or permission" on the matter from any group outside government.

Meanwhile, the

Amangcamanes are planning a celebration at which Luhleko II, a son of the late King Griffiths Maseko, will be crowned.

A date and venue for the coronation will be announced soon.

Stone proves money-earner for Swazi mining industry

Banele Ginindza

(312) BD 28/8/97
MBABANE — Asbestos products and stone quarried for highway and dam construction generated most of the revenue for the Swaziland mining industry in the first half of this year.

Geological survey and mines department statistics indicate that overall mining sector earnings for this period were R43m.

Major revenue earners were the Havelock asbestos mine at Bulembu, on the northern border, which earned R30,6m after producing 10 940 tons; and the Kwalini Quarry near Mbabane — managed by Rockmovers of SA — which brought in R8m. The government owns most of Havelock.

Kwalini quarry saw increased earnings as a result of constant demand at construction sites, particularly at projects like the multimillion-rand rehabilitation of the Mbabane-Manzini highway, and the Maguga Dam. Stone previously was a low contributor to the kingdom's overall mine earnings.

Swaziland's mining sector had earnings of about R86,8m last year, roughly the same as in 1995.

Overall mining results in the first half of this year have been depressed by the closure in December last year of the Dvokolwako diamond mine in central Swaziland. This was owned jointly by Swaziland's investment house, Tibiyo TakaNgwane, and the Trans-Hex Group of SA. Havelock has been involved in a recent bid to reopen the Dvokolwako mine, and has suggested that it earn extra income by serving as

a tourist attraction, or make low-cost bricks.

However, at the time of the diamond mine's closure, Tibiyo TakaNgwane GM Ndumiso Mamba said its high capital requirements and uncertain deposits made it risky to pump in more funds. "We are to explore what could be done with the infrastructure," he said.

Moloma colliery, owned by US company Koch, was also threatened with closure last year. However, it made R2,5m after-tax profit this year, thanks to an injection of funds by Koch which alleviated cash flow problems.

"Production and revenue earnings at Maloma colliery were sustained but did not live up to expectations because of poor ground conditions and dyke intrusions," says a report compiled by then seconded government mining engineer Clarence Russell.

Total coal production of 88 932 tons accounted for earnings of R2,59m in the first two quarters of this year, with Emaswati Colliery in Mpaka providing a small balance.

This year the authorities awarded Taiwanese firm Michael Lee Enterprises a licence to mine chert, a green stone used in ornaments and jewellery, at the Malolotja Game Reserve, about 20km north of Mbabane. Michael Lee Enterprises is awaiting also ratification of its application for a licence to mine ventralite, while G&W Base Metals has applied to mine pyrophyllite.

Lomati Exploration, a JCI subsidiary, has a prospecting licence for the old Forbes Reef gold mine at Pigg's Peak, 60km north of Mbabane.

Swaziland MPs angry at Mandela

(312) #APG 12/9/97

Mbabane - The one-party Swazi parliament has bitterly attacked President Mandela, chairman of the SA Development Community, for allegedly meddling in Swaziland's internal affairs.

However, Mr Mandela's attack on traditionalist leaders who deny real democracy to their countries - widely interpreted as a reference to Swaziland's monarchy - has also been praised by commentators. The attack yesterday was in support of King Mswati who earlier criticised Mr Mandela. - Foreign Service

Swazis accuse Mandela of meddling in their affairs

AAG 13/9/99 (312)

Mbabane - Swaziland parliamentarians have accused President Mandela of interfering in the kingdom's internal affairs.

They have also asked why Swaziland remains a member of the Southern African Development Community when Mr Mandela, the SADC chairman, had insulted member nations' traditions and cultures.

The Swazi MPs were referring to Mr Mandela's criticism of the traditional political systems of some SADC member states in his speech to the organisation's summit, held in

Malawi earlier this week.

Political parties are banned in Swaziland. The kingdom's government runs on the "Tinkundla" (constituencies) system.

Economic Planning Minister Albert Shabangu told MPs that Swaziland had benefited from more than R55-million in aid from the SADC. "The funds have been provided to Swaziland under the SADC/EU (European Union) regional development programme as agreed in Lome Conventions 2, 3 and 4," the minister said in reply to a question. - Sapa

Swaziland in the grip of tension

Sowetan

17/9/97

312

MBABANE — The southern African kingdom of Swaziland has been slow to adapt to the democratic changes in neighbouring countries, with King Mswati III hiding behind a blanket of culture and tradition.

The king has blocked reform proposals, confident that his citizens would be unwilling to change the non-party traditional system of government (Tinkhundla).

But there has been growing political and industrial tension, with the opposition stepping up the pressure and criticising the new constitution as inadequate.

The constitutional review process, said to be the barometer to determine the kingdom's political way forward, is fizzling in an atmosphere of political confusion and disagreement.

Swazis remain polarised in two seemingly irreconcilable factions regarding the constitution.

Pro-democracy groups want the dissolution of the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) — consisting of chiefs, members of the royal family and those loyal to the monarch.

They were handpicked by Mswati in July 1986 — and the unbanning of political parties by repealing the King's Proclamation Act of April 12, 1973.

Political reform

But traditionalists, who form the traditional government, want a continuation of the *status quo*.

The Review Commission is expected to complete the task of drafting Swaziland's "unique" constitution next July to pave the way for general elections set for October 1998.

The contrast in views between the *status quo* and pro-democracy groups, including the People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo) and the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU) which have been vocal for political reform, culminated in the withdrawal of their executive members from the CRC.

Pudemo president Mario Masuku resigned from the commission, while the SFTU suspended its executive member, Themba Moibi, from the organisation for refusing to withdraw from the

CRC as resolved.

Another big blow was the recent resignation of three potential members, Jeremiah Gule, leader of the Institute for Democracy and Leadership; Mhawu Maziya, lawyer and deputy executive director of the Federation of Swaziland Employers; and Nkonzo Hlatshwyo, a constitutional law lecturer at the University of Swaziland and CRC secretary.

But Mswati, who was unmoved by the CRC jigsaw puzzle, told a press conference that personal differences between CRC members, which led to the resignations, was not a legitimate reason for him to dissolve the commission.

Nonparty system

He instead called on the nation, which had already passed a vote of no confidence in the CRC, not to give up early, saying that he was satisfied with the process.

His comments have raised the suspicion that he is using the commission to prolong the nonparty system which he inherited from his late father, King Sobhuza II.

The CRC was allocated a staggering 4.25 million dollars (R19,85m), which includes donor funds from various international states, to facilitate the constitutional process.

Already the commission has spent almost 213 000 dollars (R995 000) to buy a fleet of luxury motor vehicles.

Pudemo has planned country-wide political rallies from the end of August to denounce the CRC and conscientise people in readiness for political reform.

Already the party has written to Mswati demanding political reform and saying why they had decided to pull out their leader, Mario Masuku.

According to Masuku, Pudemo is at present soliciting both regional and international support to isolate Swaziland in a bid to step up political pressure on the rulers.

The wrath of Pudemo was felt by the CRC when the political upheavals at the constituencies was marked by toyi-toying and the chanting of political slogans, calling for the immediate dissolution of the CRC. — Sapa-DPA.

Swaziland's King Mswati III ... hiding behind a blanket of tradition.



Mandela's 'democracy' remarks anger Swazis

(312) Star 23/9/97

Mbabane – President Nelson Mandela's remarks on democracy at the recent South African Development Community (SADC) summit have sparked protests among conservative politicians in Swaziland, while King Mswati III slammed pro-democracy groups.

Addressing the SADC heads of state summit in Blantyre, Malawi, President Mandela called on traditional leaders to bring about meaningful democratic reforms in their countries.

In Swaziland angry parliamentarians responded by slamming the SADC heads of state, and especially President Mandela, for meddling in the political affairs of the tiny kingdom.

Mgabhi Dlamini, a diehard conservative MP, said the SADC

chairman seemed to have an undeclared political interest in the kingdom.

"The SADC chairmanship is interfering with the political affairs of our country. This is really disturbing me. Perhaps he thinks that Swaziland is part of

Some were pleased by the 'advice'

South Africa," he said.

The parliamentarians asked whether Mandela had a mandate to interfere in the internal affairs of a country and if the organisation respected the unique culture of member states and their leaders.

"Does it mean that democracy in all SADC member states should be universal?" asked MP Patson Khumalo.

Meanwhile, secretary-general of the Human Rights Association of Swaziland (Humaras), Dr Joshua Mzizi thanked Mandela for his "good advice".

He urged Mswati to listen with an open mind to the SADC heads of state, saying it was not for the king to prescribe to the people the way forward to democracy.

"Swazi democracy is meaningless if it does not mark time with regional, and indeed international democracy as espoused by all freedom-loving nations and enshrined in international charters and conventions," said Mzizi. – Star Foreign Service

freedom

Journalists denounce law to restrict press

MEABANE — Swaziland's media faces new challenges following the cabinet's approval of a proposed Media Council Bill 1997 which restricts press freedom.

This new legislation gives the government powers to ban and jail journalists who break what is termed an "official code of ethics". It carries harsh prison penalties ranging from five to seven years and an indefinite ban for any publication breaking the official code of ethics.

Angry journalists from five media houses, The Times of Swaziland, Swazi Observer, Nation Magazine, Broadcasting and Information Services and Television Broadcasting Corporation, marched

(312) BD 6/11/97

to the prime minister's office to protest. Mbuso Mtsenjwa, president of the National Association of Journalists, handed over a petition demanding an immediate withdrawal of the bill. The association has said it is prepared to fight the matter in the court.

But Information Minister Muntu Mswane argues that the journalists' fears are groundless because the core objective of the bill is to promote professionalism. Mswane says journalists, as professionals, need to behave rationally and must not make unfounded statements.

"Government will not draft a bill that will infringe on the rights of journalists.

Swaziland boasts of a free media and we intend to maintain that," he said.

Should the bill be passed by parliament, the government will establish a seven-member media council, a supervisory body, which will give accreditation to journalists. It will comprise two High Court judges as chairman and vice-chairman. Two members will be nominated by the journalists' association and the rest by the information minister. The council will have a right to deregister journalists failing to comply with the code of ethics.

A journalist qualifying for accreditation has to be 18 years old, resident in Swaziland and hold at least a diploma in

journalism. Accreditation is renewable every year. It also requires owners of the press to have journalism qualifications.

"A person who is not accredited under this act shall not run or operate a newspaper firm or company," says the Bill.

Penalties range from deregistering a journalist and compulsory retraction of an offending article to compulsory publication of the council's findings and indefinite banning of publications. Journalists who fail to toe the line will face a fine or a jail term of five years while the publication's owners also risk substantial fines and a possible prison term.

The bill stipulates that a Media Coun-

cil ruling that an article is defamatory shall constitute definite proof of defamation in any civil claim for damages against the journalist or publication.

Swaziland journalists have unanimously condemned the bill as censorship threatening press freedom. The Federation of Trade Unions and other groups have joined forces to press government to withdraw the bill. The information ministry drafted the bill after complaints by parliamentarians about a lack of professionalism among journalists characterised by irresponsible reporting. — AIA.

Swazi beef processor in battle for supplies

BD 12/11/97

Banele Ginindza

MBABANE—Swaziland Meat Industries, the sole processor of Swaziland's 3 363-ton beef quota for the European Union (EU), is battling to procure supplies while the Swazi government monitors reports of foot-and-mouth disease.

A shortage of supplies has been exacerbated by the closure of 31 dipping tanks after some buffalo in the kingdom's Mkhaya Game Reserve tested positive for the FMD SAT 1 virus.

Swaziland Meat Industries — which has never been able to fulfil its EU quota because traditional farmers are reluctant to part with stock — has been unable to buy cattle from blacklisted areas since the red alert was declared.

GM Jon Williams said that if the clinical examinations conducted by the agriculture and co-operatives ministry were not completed soon the company would face big problems. However, he would not disclose to what extent business had been affected or outline alternative measures that the company was considering.

The disease, which last broke out in Swaziland 28 years ago, had been under control until two buffalo migrated into the Mkhaya Game Reserve about two weeks ago. The buffalo have since been destroyed.

Meanwhile, beef exports and efforts to export cattle to Mozambique will not be affected by reports of the disease. Swazi Veterinary Services director Robert Twala said the incidence of the disease was limited and could not be termed an outbreak. The ministry, which put a freeze on beef activities around Mkhaya Nature Reserve, is continuing to monitor animals in the area.

The problem is not yet expected to jeopardise arrangements to replenish Mozambican cattle stocks which were depleted by the 16-year civil war.

Twala said market confidence had not been lost because prompt action had been taken to control the disease. Swaziland had raised the alarm and informed bodies such as the World Organisation for Animal Health as soon as reports had been received.

Kuwait interested in Swazi bank

Banele Ginindza

MBABANE — Kuwait has indicated a strong interest in buying a 25% shareholding in the Swaziland Savings and Development Bank which is being restructured by the Belgium-based Amsco, a wing of the United Nations Development Programme.

The Swazi government is preparing a business plan for the sale of a 25% shareholding in the bank.

Finance Minister Themba Masuku told parliament the Swazi government would retain a 49% shareholding while the public would be able to buy 26%.

Masuku said Kuwait was the first international partner that had shown an interest in pumping capital into the Swaziland Savings and Development Bank, which has reported huge losses in recent years.

The losses have been largely at-

tributable to uncommercial practices, such as granting loans to politicians, members of the Royal family and high ranking officials.

"We do not intend selling the entire bank, it belongs to the Swazis and serves their interests," Masuku said. "We will be selling shares to Swazis in our bid to make the bank profitable."

The proposed restructuring will also require the expansion of the bank's board of directors.

The savings and development bank was in the news recently when a commission began investigating its hardline debt-recovery tactics, which had been dubbed the "grab-a-cow campaign" by the local media.

Farmers told the commission that while high-profile debtors, like politicians, owed large sums to the bank, smaller players like themselves had been the target of the bank's campaign. They alleged

they had been shot at, their cooking utensils confiscated, and that property valued at millions of emalangeni had been confiscated.

Masuku said Kuwait had pledged to support the bank, but that high-level talks were yet to begin. "I will not delve into the specifics of that matter now... but you must be informed that we are working on a policy and business plan which will guide us in this venture," he said.

Swazi organisations invited to buy shareholdings in the new-look bank include empowerment groups like the Vuvulane Irrigation Scheme which is made up of small-scale sugar growers.

The bank was heavily subsidised by government in the past, largely because many loans to politicians went unpaid. At the start of the current financial year, the bank asked for 33-million emalangeni to bail it out of trouble.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS *Plan to save Swazi Bank doesn't please everyone*

'Born again' bank splits opinion

CT(MR) 27/11/97

TOM HOLLOWAY

Mbabane — The Swazi government plans to create a "born again" people's bank out of the Swaziland Development and Savings bank (Swazi Bank) in a bid to prevent the bank's collapse.

Swazi Bank is struggling under unpaid, non-performing loans of about R200 million.

The government-owned bank was established in 1968 specifically to assist small farmers who were unable to obtain loans, as they did not have the collateral demanded by commercial banks.

But the bank's low interest rate loan scheme was allegedly abused by influential Swazi businessmen and some members of royalty, who received millions of rands in irregular loans at the expense of small farmers. The small farmers, who required loans of just a few thousand rands, were allegedly refused loans on the grounds that the bank had insufficient funds.

The bank was declared technically insolvent by an independent firm of auditors two years ago, prompting the state to remove the managing director and hand the operations of the ailing bank over to the Swaziland Central Bank, pending a decision on the future of Swazi Bank.

After pumping some R30 million into a study by the auditors for options for the bank, the government has decided on the bank's future.

However, more than a few eyebrows were raised when Themba Masuku, the finance minister, recently announced the government's plans for salvaging Swazi Bank.

The government's restructuring plan for Swazi Bank is to split it into a "good bank" and a "bad bank".

The non-performing debts



will be left with the bad bank, which will remain wholly government-owned. It will operate on a collection-only basis to recover the amounts owed. No new business or deposits will be accepted by the bad bank.

The good bank will be a new legal entity into which managing partners from the private sector, such as other financial institutions, as well as passive investors with small shareholdings, will be introduced. This bank will be run as a commercially viable operation aimed at paying a dividend within five years.

The good bank will incorporate all Swazi Bank's existing performing loan accounts and savings accounts. As with other financial institutions in the country, it will employ a mix of national and expatriate qualified staff to ensure it has adequate financial expertise and local knowledge to run a viable operation.

The good bank will include a recovery unit which will undertake debt recovery work on behalf of the bad

bank on a contractual basis.

Despite an assurance given in parliament by Masuku that no debt forgiveness would be entertained, cynics, including many parliamentarians and the press, have expressed concern about the real motives behind splitting the bank into two units.

These suspicions were summed up this week in a front page editorial in the Times of Swaziland, entitled "Overdrawn, over protected, overdue for justice". The newspaper said the important question was who would be appointed to run the bad bank effectively to recover the debts, as the government had failed to do so through the Swazi Bank.

It said those owing the bank were still seen driving luxury cars and owning huge farms, houses and hotels, and asked whether the government would seize the properties of those "fat cats" who owed millions, as it had seized the livestock and equipment of small farmers who had failed to repay loans of a few

thousand rands because of prolonged droughts.

The paper said there was no guarantee the powerful debtors would not continue to use their status and influence to intimidate a government-appointed bureaucrat who was responsible for recovering the debts.

In addition, it said there was reason enough to suspect that, by splitting the Swazi Bank and taking the bad bank under its wing, the state hoped the public would eventually forget about the R200 million in bad debts, which then could be written off.

The paper called for Swazi Bank's "high and mighty debtors" to be stripped of their assets in lieu of the amounts owed, in the same way as commercial banks would treat them. To this end it said the government should let an independent financial body run the debt recovery process.

It said Masuku should meanwhile quickly draft and pilot through parliament a bill aimed at the establishment of a special court to deal with the debt recovery process in the shortest time possible.

Certainly the government coffers could do with the R200 million which, among other things, could substantially reduce its steadily increasing deficit, which is well over R100 million and is predicted to double or even triple over the next year or so.

But as Isaac Shabangu, the former finance minister, once said in an attempt to assure members of parliament who expressed concern about the deficit: "Deficits are really only a matter of simple arithmetic. Many people would agree that to be a good finance minister, one needs to be a good juggler." — Independent Foreign Service

Swaziland in new taxation move to lure investment

Banele Ginindza

(312)
BB 9/6/97

MBABANE — The Swaziland government has tabled a bill introducing new investment incentives in a bid to attract more investment and boost the manufacturing sector in particular.

The Investment Promotion Bill, which has been approved by the cabinet, will lead to a reduction in the corporate tax rate from 37,5% to 30% during the current year. Another 5% decrease will be phased in over the next five years, bringing the rate to 25%.

The current tax holiday for certain new companies is to be scrapped following complaints that it was not applied fairly and that some companies moved their operations out of Swaziland once their five-year tax holiday period had expired.

Tax holidays, will, however, be replaced by a targeted company rate — a reduced tax rate aimed at encouraging the manufacture of specific goods — and a reduced rate for small companies struggling to become established. This means their tax rate will, in cases, fall below 25%.

The bill aims broadly to promote new investment, protect existing investments and facilitate the settlement of investment disputes. It also provides for the establishment of an investment promotion centre, which should provide all necessary information in a "one-stop service" to investors.

Government said earlier that the centre's role would include attracting investment, removing barriers to investment, and advise the enterprise and employment minister on investment policies and suitable incentives.

Labour and business are generally supportive of the bill, but are unsure whether it will improve Swaziland's ability to compete in the region.

Swaziland chamber of commerce and industry executive director Harvey Bird said the chamber supported the concept. However, it was not enough to drop corporate tax rates when many southern African countries already had lower tax rates. "We must demonstrate that we are facilitating new investment in the kingdom," he said.

Federation of Swaziland employers deputy executive director Muhawu Maziya said the new incentives should help Swaziland survive as it opened up to regional competition.

Swaziland federation of trade unions assistant secretary-general Jabu Nxumalo said the manufacturing sector's investment incentives should include easy access for investors to operational land, an export processing zone and effective trade liberalisation. "It is government's responsibility to legislate investor-friendly laws, settle disputes at the point of origin and promote dialogue," he said.

The federation was opposed to corporate tax cuts being carried over to the tax on workers. "The taxes should be such that the small man does not end up paying for the big firms," he said. Any policy had to take account of the social life, welfare and investments of the people, he said.

SWAZILAND - GENERAL -
1998-1999

Swazi doubt on reform

ARG 7/1/98 (312)

Mbabane – Swaziland's banned opposition parties said here they were sceptical of a loosening of curbs on political activity announced at the weekend by King Mswati III.

Both the underground People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo) and Siye Siyingaba, a political movement masquerading as a cultural organisation, said they would be satisfied only with a return to normal politics.

King Mswati rules by decree and all

political activity is banned under a state of emergency declared in 1973 by his father, King Sobhuza.

At the weekend, the monarch encouraged people to share ideas on the constitutional transformation of Swaziland and to feel free to discuss political ideas.

He also called on Swazis to consult among themselves and to make submissions to the Constitutional Review Commission he appointed in July to examine possible reforms in the country's constitution. – Sapa-AFP

They are former members of the ... cants had done so by admitting respon ... all, he said.

Swaziland slashes SA flour imports (312)

PD 15/11/98

DURBAN — Swaziland has slashed the amount of wheat flour it imports from SA, saying the product is being dumped and is threatening its milling firms.

Swaziland's National Agricultural Marketing Board said last week it was cutting imports to 15% of the amount it had been importing from SA in recent months.

Due to excessive imports and dumping the board has decided to restrict imports of wheat products to levels imported before September 1 1997, it said.

Swaziland is the second southern African country to complain about SA wheat exports. Zambia stopped importing wheat products last September.

Analysts said SA's wheat exports to neighbouring countries had risen sharply since the deregulation of the country's wheat market from November 1 last year. Jeanne de Villiers of SA's National Chamber of Milling said wheat flour exports to Swaziland, averaging about 50 tons a month in previous years, had jumped to between 500 and 1 000 tons a month.

Swaziland was a small market worth just more than R1m a month, he said. It's not a major loss to the SA industry, but it is

a major loss in trying to establish a free trade zone in the Southern African Development Community.

A Swaziland-based importer said the block on SA flour was hurting consumers because locally milled flour was regarded as inferior in quality.

"We (the importers) are seriously thinking about challenging this position in court because we feel it cannot be legally justified," he said.

Swaziland's Chamber of Commerce said it would probe allegations of dumping and intervene to raise the current limit.

"We hope this situation is temporary. There might be ways we can intervene to raise the limit once we have explanations and figures from the board," the chamber's executive director Sibusiso Shandze said.

Meanwhile, SA's wheat milling body hit out yesterday at a new import tariff on wheat, saying the system on which the duty was based was outdated and unnecessarily burdening millers and consumers.

Hilton Zunkel, financial manager of the National Chamber of Milling, said the timing of the tariff was unfortunate as it coincided with a season in which the country

had a shortfall of wheat and had to import.

"When there is a lot of wheat, we understand there is a problem for farmers (as they get lower prices). But in this current season there is going to be a shortfall in SA," Zunkel said.

The trade and industry department earlier announced it had increased the customs duty on wheat to 5c/kg from nil before with effect from last Friday following a drop in international prices. It also raised the wheat flour tariff from 50% ad valorem to 50% plus 5c/kg.

Zunkel said the tariff could increase the price of bread by 3c a loaf.

He said the international price government used to decide the tariff, the Argentinian Trigo Pan price, was not relevant to SA as most millers got wheat from Canada, the US and Australia — whose prices were higher than the Argentinian price.

The wheat model protects a domestic price level of R889 a ton and a tariff is triggered if the Argentinian price — over a four week average — falls \$10 below this level.

The department said this model was only a temporary measure and was under review. — Reuter.

Pule Molebeleli

NEW Northern Province provincial director-general Manching Monama has pledged to work hard to realise the "dream of the people" of the north for a transformed and efficient public service. Speaking at the Legal Resources Centre in Pretoria yesterday, where she will continue as a director until she moves into her new job next month, Monama said she was looking forward to her new

New top of

responsibilities. Northern Province provincial director-general Manching Monama's appointment was said the province was said to attract an admittance to attract. "She is a woman of wealth and a wealth of experience in the legal and administrative fields that will benefit the province's development," he said. Monama replaces

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12/2/1004

Mill to close for 2 months

8D 19/1/98 (312) 3#
MBABANE — Usuthu Pulp at Bhunya in western Swaziland will close for two months from February 1 following a sharp decline in overseas orders.

The Sappi-operated company will also lay off more than 2 000 workers until its market in southeast Asia has improved.

MD Andy Goodwin said unsold stocks of pulp at the mill now amounted to R70m, the Swazi Observer newspaper reported.

Goodwin said it was hoped that when the company reopened on March 20, the excess stocks would have been sold and the international market conditions improved.

Usuthu expressed uncertainty about its future following periodic industrial action organised by the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions. Loss of production because of the action had cost the company hundreds of millions of rands. — Sapa.

Swaziland millers move to increase production

Banele Ginindza

(312)
00 2/2/98

MBABANE — Swaziland's three sugar millers have committed at least R37m towards increasing overall production by 150 000 tons over five years.

The Royal Swaziland Sugar Corporation (RSSC), Mhlume Sugar Company and Ubombo Ranches plan to increase total production capacity from 500 000 tons to 650 000 tons by 2003. The expansion will range from increasing field hectares to milling.

This is in line with government and private sector initiatives to increase small sugarcane growers' participation in the industry which was deregulated last year.

All the millers are committed, in varying levels, to assisting small scale growers, some of whom are on state land.

Mhlume has set up a dedicated department to assist with feasibility studies, planning, administrative and technical know how to consolidate small growers' development.

RSSC, popularly known as Simunye, which has extended also assistance to small growers, plans to make land available to them.

Ubombo works closely with farmers in Siphofaneni and Maphobeni who are growing cane on 800ha.

Old and new meld under a king's rule

(312) ET 2/12/98

LOMBAMBA, Swaziland: King Mswati III of Swaziland, ruler of Africa's tiniest monarchy, is a young king caught between more than 200 years of tradition and the modern world.

In 1986 he became the world's youngest monarch at the age of 18, chosen from 68 princes, and groomed to rule the Swazi people, a nation of fewer than a million people living in a verdant hilly kingdom.

Mswati was schooled in Britain until the death in 1982 of his father, Sobhuza II, who ruled Swaziland for 61 years, overseeing independence from Britain in 1967, and had 60 wives.

"My father was a very wise man and I'd always wondered how I would do as king, because I did not want to be a disappointment to the Swazi nation. I wanted to be more or less like King Sobhuza," King Mswati III confided during a rare interview at the royal kraal outside Mbabane.

Mswati is known by his people as Ngwenyama—the crocodile—representing strength and bravery. He rules jointly with the queen mother, the Ndlo-vukazi or "great she-ele-

phant", in Southern Africa's only land where political parties are banned.

"Being a king is not an easy job. People expect you to do so many things and sometimes you cannot fulfil their expectations," he said.

Meeting the king is not easy and his diary includes long meetings at his palaces with traditional elders and the government ministers, whom he appoints.

He dresses in sandals and a colourful skirt of cloth and animal skin and, modest compared with his father, has only six wives, a fact he declines to discuss.

To show respect ministers and visitors have to take their shoes off to see him and keep a low bow when addressing him.

He believes in exercising, running and lifting weights to keep fit, and is a fan of Michael Jackson and Eddie Murphy.

At 30, after 12 years as king, Mswati faces some of the most testing times in his peaceful realm.

His country has weathered the strife of the large neighbours that surround it. South Africa was torn by decades of

fighting over white rule and Mozambique endured 16 years of civil war, which ended in 1992.

But the young king is finding it more difficult to preserve traditions as the country moves into the future.

Once a year he calls his people to Ludzidzini kraal, where they sit around him as he talks about the state of the nation.

But unrest since 1995, led by a growing group of modernists who want to emulate the multi-party democracy of Swaziland's neighbours, and who oppose a king running the government with the advice of royal astro-nomers, threatens to split the people.

There have been some small, violent clashes but Swaziland has retained its reputation as a peaceful place.

Mswati has taken bold steps during his rule, freeing all political prisoners, introducing a secret ballot for elections to parliament, and setting up a consti-

tutional review commission to look into politics and the role of the monarchy.

"As long as people feel there is room for a monarchy, there is always room for one, but that depends on the people themselves. I haven't felt any discomfort or any feeling that now there is not room for a monarchy," he said.

His critics say progress in the kingdom is too slow, while massive political and economic changes elsewhere in southern Africa threaten to isolate Swaziland.

Timber, sugar and South Africa dominate the economy. Membership of the South African rand monetary area has brought growing reliance on this large neighbour where tens of thousands of Swazis live and work.

"We are a region and we share a lot of things and I don't think Swaziland can work in isolation. We have to work with your neighbours and they have to work with us," Mswati said.

Regional leaders, including South Africa's President Nelson Mandela, whose ANC party has little patience for traditionalists, have put pressure on Swaziland to move forward.

Mswati says he recognises the need for change, but not change for its own sake.

"We see there is a lot of change in the world and all of us in Swaziland acknowledge that we have to change. But we as Swazis have to sit down together and work out how we have to change and do something suitable for us," he said.

"The best formula is what comes from the people in your country and not from copying what others are doing. If you try to bring over formulas that don't work, it can cause difficulties, because a lot of people won't be able to understand them.

"We have set up committees to gather information on how we can change and after we have received the information, we will make the change from there," Mswati said.

He pledged to go ahead with multi-party elections if the commission—which opponents say is full of royalists—recommend the move. —Reuters

'I'd wondered how I would do as king. I did not want to be a disappointment to the nation.'

Tourists pass by Swaziland

(312)
Sowetan 3/2/98

SWAZILAND is losing out on southern Africa's regional tourism boom, with increasing numbers of tourists skipping the country in favour of South Africa's casinos, beaches and game reserves.

The decrease in tourists started in 1994 and is expected to escalate as increasing numbers of casino resorts open in neighbouring South African provinces, according to the Integrated Tourism Report for eastern Swaziland released yesterday.

Drafted on behalf of the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative (LSDI), the report also notes that the industry has failed to develop any domestic tourism.

The LSDI is Swaziland's answer to South Africa's R25 billion Maputo corridor initiative, aimed at linking Gauteng with Mozambique's Maputo harbour.

Launched to ensure Swaziland is not isolated from planned industrial and infrastructure development along the corridor, the LSDI is designed to link the kingdom with Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal and Mozambique via a network of new highways and rail links.

The tourism report stresses that the end

of anti-apartheid boycotts and development of regional casinos in South Africa has effectively robbed Swaziland's tourism product of its key ingredients.

The country has instead become, the report says, a transit tourism market for package tours travelling between Mpumalanga's game reserves and beaches in Mozambique and KwaZulu-Natal.

Swaziland should therefore design new products to serve these tourists, who spend one day in the country on average.

Despite the overall decline in tourist arrivals, the report also notes that there has been a significant increase in the number of tour buses passing through the Lowveld region of Swaziland. One bus passed through the region per week in 1994 compared to six per day in 1996.

The report suggests a larger proportion of regional tourists currently travel as part of organised tour groups than in the past.

It adds: "Swaziland's location between major tourist attractions within an expanding regional tourism market suggests that it remains well-positioned to function as a transit destination." — Sapa.

Swaziland makes plans to expand sugar output

CT(BR) 3/2/98 (312)

FROM REUTER

Mbabane — Swaziland, one of Africa's largest sugar producers, hoped to increase annual production by 150 000 tons to 650 000 tons in five years, said Thamba Masuku, the finance minister.

This did not include 4 000 hectares of sugar already being grown by smaller producers under an empowerment programme, he said at the weekend.

Another 14 000 hectares was planned for small producers in the lower Lesotho basin, which was still under feasibility study. On average 110 tons of sugar cane were harvested a hectare.

Swaziland's three millers said

they planned to invest 37 million emalangeni (R37 million) in increasing sugar production.

Jerry Gosnall, of Ubombo Ranches, which produces 175 000 tons annually, said the company hoped to increase capacity to 200 000 tons by the turn of the century. The Royal Swaziland Sugar Corporation planned to increase its 165 000 tons to 200 000 by the year 2002, said managing director Paul Linder. Mhlume Sugar Company's Brian Glassock said output of 170 000 tons would increase to 250 000 tons once a factory expansion was completed.

Masuku said a fourth miller was planned as sugar-growing expanded to other areas.

AFRICAN

Kingdom makes plans to meet challenges of regional free trade zone

Swazis pull out economic stops

(312)

CT(BR) 3/2/98

FROM REUTER

Mbabane — The kingdom of Swaziland was restructuring its economy to meet the challenges posed by the economic liberalisation of southern African, said Themba Masuku, the finance minister, at the weekend.

Changes included a 25 percent cut in corporate taxes, raising fuel prices and modernising the infrastructure, said Masuku.

South Africa, the economic giant which hugs the kingdom's borders and dictates its monetary and fiscal policy, is on the verge of sealing crucial trade deals from which Swaziland's economy cannot escape. About 50 percent of Swaziland's income is drawn from customs revenue.

By the end of the year, Pre-

toria hopes to have a trade deal with the European Union and is also preparing to renegotiate the Southern African Customs Union agreement. New regional challenges will also be faced with the World Trade Organisation's new tariff structures.

Masuku said that the Southern African Development Community (SADC), of which Swaziland was a member, was also on its way to becoming a free-trade area, forcing the kingdom to become more competitive.

"The short-term impact of all these influences will be negative. But in the long term, it is good because we will then have the competition and are likely to be getting cheaper goods we can afford.

"We will also be selling to those markets which we were

unable to penetrate before because of all these controls."

Masuku said that the Swazi government was about to review its 25-year-old tax system, widen the tax net and reduce corporate taxes by at least 25 percent to lure new investors.

There is already a five-year tax holiday for new investments.

He said that Swaziland's fuel prices, currently well below those of neighbouring states, should be increased to fund economic changes.

Spending on infrastructure, 25 percent of Swaziland's R2 billion budget, would be intensified to give better access to new areas for development.

A 40 km highway was being built between the industrial hub Manzini and the capital

Mbabane. Improvements were also due in telecommunications while last week bids closed for a cellular phone network.

The government planned to increase electricity supply from South Africa's utility company Eskom to make local supply more reliable.

Before sanctions were lifted in South Africa, the kingdom was a hub for foreign companies in Africa's southernmost tip. But since South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, and new economic trust in neighbouring Mozambique, Swaziland has received little new investment.

The Asian currency crisis has also hit its timber industry, one of the country's main foreign exchange earners. Ninety percent of its pulp is exported to Asia.

Swaziland losing out on the boom in tourism

00 3/2/98 (312)
MBABANE — Swaziland is losing out on southern Africa's tourism boom, with increasing numbers of tourists skipping the country in favour of SA casinos, beaches and game reserves.

The decrease in tourist arrivals started in 1994 and is expected to escalate as increasing numbers of casino resorts open in neighbouring SA provinces, according to the Integrated Tourism Report for eastern Swaziland released on Monday.

Drafted on behalf of the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative, the report also notes that the industry has failed to develop any domestic tourism, African Eye News Service reports.

The initiative is Swaziland's answer to SA's ambitious R25bn Maputo corridor initiative, which aims to link Gauteng with Mozambique's Maputo harbour.

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nos in SA have effectively robbed Swaziland's tourism product of its key ingredients.

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Swaziland should therefore design new products aimed at serving these tourists, who spend only one day in the country on average.

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Only one bus passed through the region every week in 1994, in comparison to the six buses a day that passed through the region in 1996.

The report also suggests that a larger proportion of regional tourists currently travel as part of organised tour groups than in the past.

It says: "Swaziland's location between major tourist attractions within an expanding regional tourism market suggests that it remains well positioned to function as a transit destination." — Sapa.

SA, Swaziland sign a truce to end sugar war

~~SHIRLEY JONES~~ (712)
SHIRLEY JONES

CT (DM) 11/11/98 KWAZULU NATAL EDITOR

Durban — The South African and Swazi sugar industries yesterday signed a truce, ending a feud that has lasted more than three years.

Although no details of the agreement were disclosed, a spokesman for the South African Sugar Association (Sasa) said the accord had been scrutinised by both governments and included a provision for the export of surplus sugar. Don MacLeod, the chairman of Sasa, signed the accord with Peter Hughes, the president of the Swaziland Sugar Association.

MacLeod said in September last year after penultimate negotiations between the two industries that the new agreement would be significantly different from the one that fell away when Swazi export sugar began to leak into South Africa, undermining the local industry's jealously guarded domestic market.

The resulting battle culminated in Sasa barring the Swazi sugar industry from export facilities at the Durban port and training and research facilities.

Sasa said the two governments had encouraged the industries to settle their differences.

"This (agreement) clears the way for the restoration of good relations. This is to the benefit of both industries. It includes access to the Sugar Milling Research Institute ... utilisation of the Industrial Training Centre at Mount Edgecombe ... and the re-establishment of the Swaziland sugar industry's links with and contribution to the Research and Experiment Station at Mount Edgecombe," the Sasa spokesman said.

The agreement also paves the way for further South African investment in the Swazi sugar industry.

Voluntary sterilisation now an (312) option for Swazis

VOLUNTARY sterilisation has become an option for Swazi couples who do not want more children.

In women, the procedure is tubal ligation and for men, vasectomy.

The Family Life Association, which began offering this service at its Mbabane Clinic in 1995, says the procedure, if well utilised, would contribute significantly towards controlling the country's annual population growth rate of 3,2 percent.

However, according to Marjorie Mavuso, the Association's Research manager, cultural and religious backgrounds are discouraging people from using the method.

She said by December 1995 only 25 women and five men had undergone the operation. An education programme was launched and since then another 61 adults had undergone the operation, most of them women.

Between January and December last year, the number of men who were sterilised outnumbered that of women for the first time since 1995. Says Mavuso, "We appeal to the people to first get the right information from us before they undergo this operation. We counsel them on the implications of the operation as we believe that a client has a right to be provided with all the information required to make an educated decision".

Francis Dlamini of Sganjeni, a mother of nine, opted for tubal ligation in 1985. "I asked my husband to come with me to the hospital when I went to give birth to my last born. We briefly discussed the option and asked him to sign. I had discussed the operation with him many times and all along I wanted to have it done but met with strong objection from him. His argument was that because he was the only child he wanted me to have as many children as possible. Finally he agreed."

AIA

Swazi MPs call for hangman

By Tom Holloway

Star Foreign Service

Star 1/4/98

Mbabane - Members of parliament have called on Justice Minister Maweni Simelane to speed up the appointment of a hangman, saying only the immediate hanging of murderers would deter potential killers.

Nine convicted murderers are on death row awaiting the death sentence.

Last week, a heated debate

on the justice ministry's budget allocation led to condemnation of Swaziland's unprecedented violent crime, which includes rapes and murders, often committed during armed robberies.

Angry MPs asked Simelane: "How many more people must be murdered before the judicial mechanism already in place is used to stop the scourge?"

One MP said only immediate hanging of murderers would deter potential killers.

Tongaat-Hulett gets Swaziland foothold

~~7/4/98~~ (312)
RAVIN MAHARAJ

CT (BR) 7/4/98
Durban — Tongaat-Hulett Sugar, the sugar company, had acquired Tambankulu, the largest independent sugar estate in Swaziland, with effect from March 31, Bruce Dunlop, the managing director, said yesterday.

He did not disclose the value of the acquisition.

Dunlop said the move into the Swazi sugar industry was a significant expansion of the company's investment base in the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The acquisition would enable the company to broaden its contribution to the SADC sugar sector and provide a base for it to participate in the Swazi sugar industry, he said.

The acquisition comes after the recent signing of a truce between the South African and Swazi sugar industries, which ended a feud lasting for more than three years. The truce paved the way for further South African investment in the Swazi industry.

Dunlop said the move into higher-yielding, low-cost irrigated areas was part of a strategic diversification to decrease Tongaat's exposure to dry land farm-

ing and to enhance its geographic profile.

In addition, the Swazi sugar industry had limited exposure to the world market as almost its entire production was sold within the Southern African Customs Union and the European Union, in terms of the Lomé Convention. As a result, sucrose prices were high.

"We have great confidence in the future of the sugar industry in the SADC, and Swaziland is an important sugar player in the SADC community," Dunlop said.

Tambankulu has 3 123 hectares under sugar cane and 540 hectares under citrus. Its cane yields average 110 tons a hectare. This ranked with yields achieved at the group's Zimbabwean sugar investments, Dunlop said.

In addition, Dunlop said the company intended to increase sugar production from the estate. Tambankulu produces 362 000 tons of cane a year — equal to about 44 000 tons of raw sugar — 10 percent of the total output of the Swazi sugar industry.

Steven Saunders, the chairman of Tongaat-Hulett Sugar, said the earnings base in Tambankulu would make a meaningful financial contribution to the group.

Victory for the media in Swaziland

ET 17/4/98

(312)

MBABANE: A Swaziland parliamentary select committee set up last year to examine and make recommendations on a bill to regulate the local media has recommended that the controversial bill be shelved.

The bill was designed to give the government powers to regulate the media and contained tough proposals on qualifica-

tion conditions for journalists to practise in the country, as well as dire penalties for contravening its 31 clauses.

The parliamentary committee yesterday recommended that a communications and media policy be drafted jointly by the government and all stakeholders to replace the government-drafted bill. This was seen as a victory for media freedom. — Sapa

Swazi housing a costly bone of contention

30 6/6/98 (312)
MBABANE — Despite warnings by the International Monetary Fund to cut public spending, the Swazi government is to spend R18m this year to house public servants.

Accountant-general David Dlamini disclosed that the government received only R2,8m in rentals for existing government housing.

Dlamini said this was because of the

failure of the government to update rentals charged to public servants. He said they were paying between R60 and R100 a month for houses which would fetch up to R3 000 a month on the open market.

Many public servants are reported to be subletting rooms in their government houses and using the proceeds to buy their own houses. — Sapa.

Govts attempt to free potential of beautiful region

THE breathtaking ecological heritage mingled with the tragedy of poverty-stricken and neglected communities in northern Kwa-Zulu-Natal, eastern Swaziland and southern Mozambique has prompted the three governments to co-operate in boosting the economic potential in the region and creating an attractive and stable investor climate.

Yesterday, Mozambique President Joaquim Chissano, Swaziland's King Mswati and President Nelson Mandela jointly launched the Lubombo spatial development initiative (SDI) — an area encompassing the subtropical plains and coastline that surround the Lebombo mountains — at the annual Tourism Indaba in Durban. A major investment conference will follow later this year.

This development programme, the first ever to involve co-operation at this high level between the three countries, aims to promote economic growth through tourism and agriculture by commercialis-

The Lubombo spatial development initiative has just been launched. Nicola Jenvey looks at what the project is designed to achieve

ing many of the region's game parks and attracting significant local and foreign investment.

SDI project manager (SA) Andrew Zaloumis said that underlying the initiative was the creation of small businesses, meaning that outsiders would form joint ventures with local businesses and communities.

The region spans from the Umfolozi River near Richards Bay northwards along the coastal plain to Maputo in Mozambique. It then stretches westwards to the Lebombo mountains in eastern Swaziland and the surrounding lowlands, which run north-south through the three countries.

The region has six major interlinking ecosystems and is internationally renowned for its plant diversity, game reserves and unspoilt coastlines. Zaloumis said this asset mix was well placed to

stimulate competitive tourism and agricultural industries.

However, the inadequacy of road infrastructure had hindered development. Besides the N2, which links Richards Bay with Swaziland and Mpumalanga, there are only minor and often untarred roads.

Access to Mozambique is restricted to 4x4s because roads are limited to beach sand tracks. The 30km from the border to Ponta Malongane takes nearly an hour, while the 150km to Maputo takes about five hours.

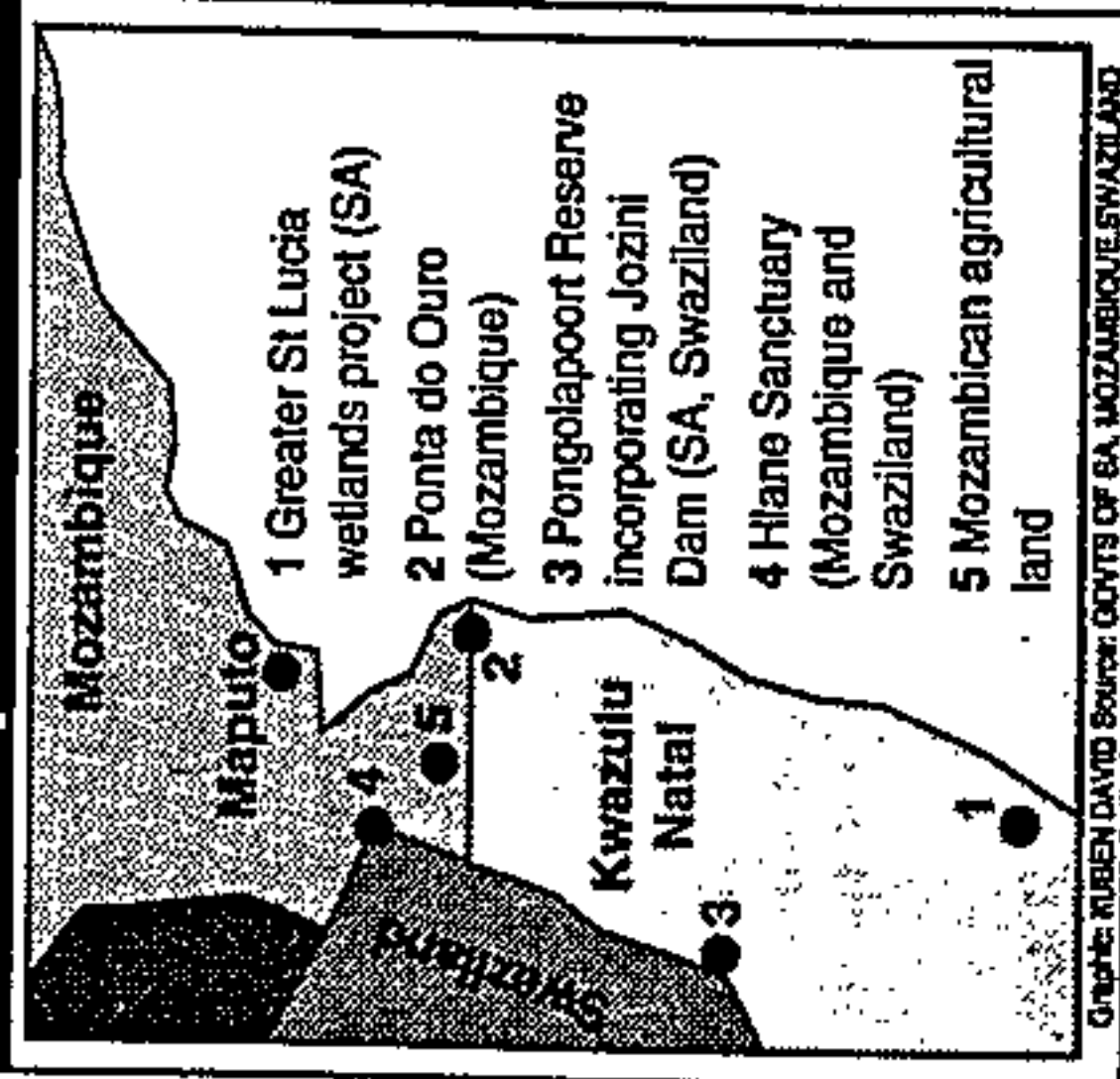
The SA government has begun construction of a R200m road, while the Mozambique government has given its assurance that the upgrade of infrastructure is a priority.

However, SDI co-ordinator (Mozambique) Albino Mahumane said that just converting to gravel,

thereby reducing the travelling time to Maputo to 90 minutes, would cost R40m. This is money the government does not have.

00 8/5/98

Lubombo spatial development initiative



(312)

Since the civil war, Mozambique has enjoyed increased investor confidence on the strength of a stable exchange rate. In 1996, gross domestic product growth was 6% and inflation only 16.6% compared to 54% in 1995.

The country's tourism policy defines strategic zones for development to enhance its feasibility and economic growth. The policy reduces possible conflicts between economic activities and avoids environmental damage.

"This, together with stability, creates a context in which tourism can thrive," Mahumane said.

In Swaziland, the Tourism Development Agency is still being set up but SDI co-ordinator (Swaziland) Sindi Mabuza said this agency would represent a cross-ministerial partnership with the private sector and be responsible for a national marketing strategy.

Zaloumis said to unblock the region's economic potential, the SDI would also:

- ☐ Ease border controls and trans-frontier movement;
- ☐ Provide bulk water, telephones and electricity;
- ☐ Establish government protocols around conservation and health issues; and
- ☐ Resolve land conflicts and tenure arrangements for investors.

A ministerial delegation from each country will embark on a joint international marketing and investment mission next month to sell the initiative to the world.

The three governments are committed to social upliftment and reform, but the success of this project depends on the recognition by the private sector of the inherent business prospects.

Government wants a tenfold contribution from business for every rand invested into infrastructure and that demands that sound policies and structures are in place to catch the prize.

Journalists in row over media awards

MBABANE — Claims of favouritism and corruption have been levelled against a panel of judges who selected prizewinners at the weekend's media awards in Swaziland, it was reported.

A row erupted among Swazi journalists over what many alleged was an unfair and corrupt selection system.

One example was a journalist who was awarded a prize for being last year's best sportswriter.

BD 26/5/98
He later admitted that he did not deserve the prize because he was out of the country for the year on a training course.

(312)
Some journalists were so offended by the awards that those working at the Swaziland Broadcasting and Information Service refused to announce the winners over the radio.

Instead, they tore up the prepared scripts. — Sapa.

Concern over tax on goods crossing Swazi-SA border

James Hall

BD10/7/98 (312)

MBABANE — There is growing unease among Swazi business and government leaders about a proposed SA tax on Swazi goods entering and leaving SA.

Robert Sandla, the director of border management for the SA revenue service, announced that a 14% value-added tax may have to be paid at Swazi-land border crossings on all imports and exports. The tax is actually a security against fraud by VAT-dodging SA "exporters" who claim their goods are destined for Swaziland when they in fact never leave SA.

An estimated R500 000 a month in VAT revenue is lost on phoney goods shipments supposedly destined for Lesotho, Mozambique and other countries.

"Similarly, some goods leaving Swaziland escape VAT when shippers claim an overseas destination, but then these goods end up in some Gauteng warehouse", a spokesman for the Swaziland Chamber of Commerce and Industry said.

Jaspher Dlamini, public relations officer for Swaziland's customs and excise department, admitted such abuses did occur, "but they are perpetrated by small-scale crooks, never by major industries".

One Swazi businessman said: "We call the new border payments "bail" instead of a "tax" because the money is to be refunded once a Swazi business proves the legitimacy of a goods shipment at point of destination. But repayment will take we don't know how many months, and that leaves us with a significant cash-flow problem."

Swazi government and business leaders hope for a promised meeting with SA customs officials prior to the introduction of the plan sometime this year.

Among the proposals Swazis will suggest to avoid a border tax collection is the presentation of contracts and official documents to confirm the legitimacy of goods shipments.

Swazi currency will stay linked to the rand

BO 13/7/98 (312)

James Hall

MBABANE — The governor of the Central Bank of Swaziland, Martin Dlamini, has assured investors that there are no plans to decouple the Swazi currency from the rand, despite the rand's dramatic depreciation in recent weeks.

SA is Swaziland's most important trading partner.

Dlamini was reacting to calls from the public and political leaders to delink the Swazi monetary unit, the emalengeni, from the rand in view of the latter's declining value.

One Swazi MP said during the budget debate that the linking of the unit to the rand left the Swazi economy vulnerable to currency speculators targeting the rand.

Other MPs have complained that the Swazi currency should not be an "innocent bystander" caught up in SA's currency crisis.

Such populist rhetoric disturbs local economists, who note the wisdom of tying Swaziland's relatively small economy to the region's economic powerhouse. Dlamini acknowledged that the most likely effect of the rand's depreciation would be a rise in the price of commodities. Swaziland imports all its petrol and most of its consumer goods.

However, with a cheaper rand, Swazi products and services will be more competitive internationally.

As to the effect of the currency crisis

on Swazi interest rates, Dlamini said the central bank was monitoring market activities in Swaziland and SA to determine its interest rates. Swaziland's central bank would strive to minimise the interest rate differentials with SA so as to reduce the risk of substantial capital outflows to SA.

Meanwhile, Christof Maletsky reports from Windhoek that the government said on Friday that the price of pump petrol and diesel would increase from Wednesday as a result of the weakening of the rand against the dollar. The Namibian dollar is pegged to the rand.

The mines and energy ministry said leaded petrol would increase 4% while unleaded petrol would go up 5%. The price for diesel would increase 2%.

The ministry said the inflationary effect of fuel prices on the economy had been considered when deciding on the increase and the government would monitor currency market trends and strive to keep domestic pump prices in equilibrium with import parity prices.

A mechanism allowing for quarterly fuel price adjustments had proven a success in this regard, as could be seen from the three consecutive price reductions in the previous three quarters.

Last week the key Namibian banks increased their prime lending rates by between 1,5 and 2,25 percentage points and several local economists forecast price increases in imported goods and general transport costs.

Swazi phone service threatened by cable theft

James Hall

MBABANE — About 20% of Swaziland's telephone subscribers are without service due to the persistent theft of telephone lines, a matter which has become a thorn in the side of the business community.

The copper wire is melted and ends up as gimmicks aimed at the tourist trade.

Police investigators suspect that factories in

(312) 80217198
Mozambique and SA buy the stolen wire. However, the actual cutting of telephone lines and their transport across the border is thought to be carried out by local Swazis.

Businesses and rural homes are worst affected by the loss of services. In urban areas, phone lines are usually buried underground.

Rural-based industries like the Simunye Sugar Estate, situated near the Mozambican border, are often cut off from corporate offices in Mbabane and the industrial area of Matsapha.

A spokesman for the Swaziland Post & Telecommunications Corporation, Lindiwe Dlamini, put the cost of stolen wire at R1,6m since last year. The effect of the theft was "a loss to Swaziland's economy".

It was reported last month that the Japanese government, discouraged by the continuous loss of telephone lines, had withdrawn financial support for a scheme to bring phone service to rural areas.

The introduction of a cellphone service by MTN by the end of the year will not alleviate the crisis.

Cellphones are beyond the financial means of rural Swazis who also live in areas out of range of planned cellphone signal beacons. "A ground-based telephone infrastructure will always be necessary, even with cellphones," Dlamini said.

No arrests have been made in connection with the thefts, but community police patrols have begun providing leads to the Royal Swazi Police Force.

James Hall

MBABANE — Already reeling from a proposed 14% VAT tax to be imposed on goods passing through Swazi-SA border posts, local business is assessing the effect of other trade restrictions desired by SA border authorities.

Swaziland worried about trade through SA

The latest row involves a reduction of border posts available for the importation of SA cattle, from an unlimited number to only two.

SA customs officials have told the Swaziland Meat In-

dustries (SMT) to select two border posts for the importation of beef because it is reducing the number of vets available to inspect the cattle.

"In and of itself, this change is not crippling," SMT MD

John Williams said. "But it reflects a pattern of changes which are overwhelming local industries." Some SA farmers now supplying SMT may be "geographically disadvantaged" if they

are cut off from nearby border posts currently in use.

SA and Swazi representatives are hoping to meet to identify border post changes which could hinder Swaziland's economy. Swazi business leaders worry they may be left out of the decision-making process, to their detriment.

PD 3/1/71 98

Locals' accusations of theft hamper geological prospecting

THE exploitation of Swaziland's gold and other mineral resources is being inhibited by chiefs and local residents who harass government geologists, claiming the taking of soil samples amounts to theft of the king's diamonds.

The lack of understanding by peasant residents on Swazi national land could frustrate the tiny kingdom's efforts to exploit its natural resources. Community co-operation is considered vital for the success of any project within the tightly knit tribal society.

George Magagula, the chief geologist at the ministry of natural resources, who leads prospecting teams in the country, said "the people get really upset when they see us digging up soil samples. The land may be only agricultural, or even barren, but because we are known as the 'diamond boys', they shout: 'You tsotsi (bandits) are stealing the king's diamonds.'"

The harassment has been particularly acute in the hamlet of Hhelehhele, about 60km south of Swaziland's principal diamond

A clash of cultures is inhibiting Swazi mineral exploration, writes **James Hall** in Mbabane.

mine at Dvokolwako. The ministry of natural resources has high hopes of locating diamond deposits at Hhelehhele.

By custom, an area chief looks after the interests of King Mswati, who "owns" all the nation's natural resources.

Reports of geologists stealing diamonds have dogged the Hhelehhele exploratory mission, and brought on the wrath of area chief Mnikwa.

Hearing from geologists themselves that soil samples are sent to SA for analysis, irate locals condemn the practice of "sending the king's wealth to foreigners".

Government geologists take seriously the accusations against them. Swazis are famously loyal to their king and the theft of His Majesty's property is thought to be an unforgivable, even treasonable, offence.

Swaziland's commissioner of

mines, Aaron Vilakati, responded angrily: "We are being insulted through and through by ignorant chiefs and residents."

"All our explorations are being conducted properly."

Vilakati conceded that an education programme might prove helpful to alert Swazis to the prospecting process, how soil samples are taken and processed.

"These samples are worthless in and of themselves," said a geologist in Magagula's prospecting team. "They are just indicators. But here in Swaziland, where everybody looks after the king's interests, people can get overexcited. Trouble starts when legitimate business enterprises are threatened."

The geologist said: "But if it takes getting hit on the head with some farmer's lingedla (krobstick), we will continue to locate and extract Swazi wealth."

(312)

BD 3/8/98

Swazis prepare to celebrate with cellphones, better roads

James Hall

(912) 7/8/98
MBABANE — The completion of a highway, the introduction of cellphones and the refurbishment of the national airport are planned to coincide with the 30th anniversary of Swaziland's independence from Britain and King Mswati's 30th birthday on September 6.

The new dual carriageway will con-

nect the kingdom's two largest population centres, Manzini and the capital Mbabane, and run through the traditional capital Lobamba and the Matsapha industrial site. It is expected to cost R400m.

An additional R100m has been budgeted to extend the highway from Mbabane to Oshoek, the border post most heavily used by SA traffic.

MTN, which secured the award of a R120m tender to establish a cellphone service in Swaziland, will start its service in September. The date has been brought forward from November.

A R2,5m refurbishment of the single-storey terminal building of the nation's only commercial airport began last week. Its completion is a priority for the works and construction ministry.

Mine's closure knocks industry (312)

James Hall

RD 13/8/98

MBABANE — A decline in mining industry revenues reported by the Central Bank of Swaziland might have been worse had a weaker rand not created favourable foreign exchange rates for exports.

Nevertheless, 1997/98 industry earnings were R90m, down from R94.6m last year's figures.

The main cause of the industry slump was the closure of the Dvokolwako Diamond Mine. The Mpaka Collieries Mine, with an excavation life estimated at 31 years at 165 000 tons of coal extracted a year, also remains closed.

A central bank survey of the mining industry states: "There is hope that the Mpaka coke mine could be reopened soon, as there are serious inquiries from interested investors."

In contrast to the weaker state of the industry, individual mines are doing well. Coal exports rose by a third because of an increase in exports credited to a cheaper emalengeni, the Swazi monetary unit tied to the rand. Asbestos export revenues also improved.

Swaziland central bank reports moderate

James Hall

MBABANE — The combined 30th independence day commemoration and King Mswati's 30th birthday celebration are set to bring visitors to the kingdom, but analysts paint a mixed picture of the country's economic performance.

While business, frustrated by unpaid bills and manufacturers' complaints about deferred orders, is pronouncing a recession, the Central Bank of Swaziland reported "moderate" economic growth this year.

Swaziland's gross domestic product expanded 3.5% in the period reviewed in the central bank's latest annual report. With a population growth rate of 2.7%, down from 3.2% in 1996, the GDP growth represented "a slight improvement in the standard of

living for the Swazi people."

But inflation is up — 7.2% from last year's 6.5% — and would have been worse if not for the tight monetary policies of the SA Reserve Bank to help the rand, to which the Swazi lilangeni is linked, as well as reduced tariffs on imported goods.

Outgoing Finance Minister Themba Manku told parliament the principal challenge faced by his successor would be to reduce Swaziland's R200m national debt.

The bank confirmed that "over the past years the government's budgetary position has been worsening mainly as a result of high levels of government consumption".

The government's debt-reduction task would be made harder by an "unsatisfactory" national trade account, it said. "The prime contributor to this performance has

been the general slowdown in regional economies, particularly SA which is the major market for Swaziland's output."

Swaziland's combined private and public sector external debt stands at R1,155bn, up from R1,07bn last year. The rise reflected "the persistent depreciation of the lilangeni/rand" the finance ministry said. About 80% of the kingdom's debt represents public sector loans from the African Development Bank, the European Development Fund, and donor governments.

Swaziland's financial markets were "underdeveloped", said the bank. Two years ago, the bank rescinded the requirement that Swazi banks maintain 95% of their assets within the kingdom. With the unfreezing of these assets, banks with surplus funds have preferred to invest their money

in the SA money market rather than engage in local interbank lending.

The small Swaziland stock market is virtually inactive, with few companies listed and new issues rare. Parliamentary approval awaits a Securities and Pension Bill which seeks to establish a fully fledged stock exchange and the licensing of stockbrokers. The bill will also require pension schemes to retain 15% of their savings within Swaziland.

Tourism has picked up from a low in 1995 when overseas visitors were drawn to the novelties of SA and Mozambique and the SA Gaming Act led to the opening of casinos in Mpumalanga which competed with established Swaziland casinos. Tourism receipts increased almost 50% last year to a record R175m, up from R118m.

6 258 tons. "The problem was the loss of the Mozambican market, which purchased 40% of our goods," he said.

Due to drought fears caused by the weather phenomenon El Niño, farmers were reluctant to plant the Swaziland staple maize crop and production fell from 135 tons to 85 tons. Milk production fell 11%, necessitating imports from SA. Citrus production plunged from 87 000 tons to 81 400 tons due to decreased demand from Asia and increased SA competition.

On a brighter note, production of drought-resistant cotton was up 15%.

The production of sugar, Swaziland's chief export, rose 1% with exports increasing 5.6% and the production of the kingdom's second largest export, forestry products, rose 31% to a record of 170 616 tons.

The state of domestic trade and consumer spending is exemplified by the car industry where profits have risen substantially with the registration of new and old units doubling that of last year.

The industrial sector remains secondary to agriculture and the bank reported slight growth in the sector over the past year.

The mining industry suffered a 4% decline in revenues, due largely to the closure of the Dvokolwako diamond mine. Revenues were down R91m from R95m the year before, although individual mines did well.

However the engine which powers the Swazi economy, agriculture, is sputtering. Magalela Ngwenya, CEO of the National Agriculture Marketing Board, said fresh fruit and vegetable production fell more than 50% last year, from 14 000 tons to

Sappi launches new scheme in Swaziland

James Hall

MBABANE — SA forestry products conglomerate Sappi has expanded its operations in Swaziland with the launch of a R238m pulp digester and a forestry empowerment scheme to bring local farmers into the commercial tree-growing industry.

The pulp digester is Sappi's largest investment yet in its Swaziland subsidiary, Sappi Usutu Pulp Company, and was recently inaugurated by King Mswati. He also launched a plan to bring local farmers into the commercial tree-growing industry for the first time since forestry was introduced in the kingdom 50 years ago. Until recently, Swaziland boasted the world's largest man-made forest to furnish the timber and pulp which is the kingdom's second largest export.

The 54m tall pulp digester will allow Sappi Usutu Pulp to increase its output from 180 000 to 220 000 tons a year. Additional export earnings are potentially R100m annually. "We are dressed up and ready to go," Sappi chairman Ian Forbes said.

"Unfortunately, the market is not as

robust as before."

About 90% of the company's pulp is sold to southeast Asia, where economic doldrums have reduced orders.

Forbes said Sappi Usutu Pulp was the world's second largest producer of unbleached kraft wood pulp, used to make cement bags, crepe paper and car filter systems. Assisted by low-cost production and a weaker rand, the company seeks industry pre-eminence.

Coinciding with Sappi's investment in its Swaziland subsidiary is a commitment to sponsor the Tiphilise Ngelihlatsi empowerment project.

The project is similar to an SA scheme which has seen 7 200 private growers in the past 10 years, largely concentrated in KwaZulu-Natal, enter the forestry industry.

Swazi farmers with land which is unproductive, from as small as one acre will receive saplings, capitalisation and a guaranteed market for their timber when the pines reach maturity in 16 to 18 years. In the interim, Sappi will provide cash flow.

King Mswati applauded the initiative, calling the nation's forest "the renewable mines of Swaziland".

AFRICA

Swaziland exploring the cultural tourism market

James Hall

MBABANE — The Swazi government is trying to encourage private investors to support culturally based tourism projects in the kingdom.

At the recent opening of the new Swazi Cultural Village, a replica of a traditional homestead near the Mantenga Falls, Swazi Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini said the European Union had helped the Swazi government finance the R1m project, perhaps the last of its kind to be realised at public expense.

"One of the weaknesses in our tourism industry has been the failure to integrate private and public sector resources," Dlamini said. He called on the Swaziland National Trust Commission, builder of the new tourist attraction, "to examine carefully the potential for partnership with the private sector".

Dedicating the collection of thatched huts and wattle enclosures, where men and women in traditional attire carry out a homestead's daily activities before visitors, King Mswati III said: "Our culture is unique, and possibly our single most attractive feature to tourists ... but we have been like a country sitting on an untapped oil supply."

Culture

Commission CEO Sinaye Mamba said the trust commission he headed was established to promote Swazi culture, not to make money. Investors were encouraged to set up and run concessions at the commission's attractions like the Swazi Culture Village and Mlawula Nature Reserve.

The commission had spent R1m at Mlawula this year making Swaziland's prettiest nature reserve more accessible to tourists,

Mamba said.

Tourism revenues in the kingdom were up 50% last year against the previous year.

About 416 000 bed nights were sold in 1997/98, up from 400 000 the previous year.

Even more than game parks, it is the traditional life of Africa's last country to be ruled by a hereditary monarch which fascinates visitors.

Tour operators organise trips to actual traditional Swazi homesteads in the low veld, where tourists can see sangomas healing patients, and call upon a chief.

Darren Raw of Safari Tours notes that Dutch, German and British tourists make up most of Swaziland's non-African visitors, followed by Americans. "They marvel at the kingdom's natural beauty, but it is the royal sites and Swazi people they want to see, and how the traditional African life is still vibrant and viable here."

(312) 11/9/98

Swaziland fears rise in interest rates may harm economy

James Hall

(312)
BD 719198

MBABANE — The Central Bank of Swaziland has decided not to lift interest rates to keep in tune with SA developments.

Several of SA's neighbours have raised their rates as a result of SA moves, and economists in Swaziland have divided views on the probable effect

of relatively low rates on the kingdom's economy. Interest rates in Swaziland stand at 19,75% compared to the 23%-24% range in SA.

"Low interest rates in Swaziland may lead to an outflow of capital as investors seek more lucrative returns in SA banks," frets one bank manager. "Banks may face difficulty meeting

their liquidity obligations. This will be complicated by South Africans who may take out loans to take advantage of our lower interest. That would mean more money going out of the country to finance the SA economy, to the detriment of our own economy."

On the other hand, if the central bank raises rates to match

those in SA, Swazi consumers will be spending more to service their loans, with less money available for other things. Swaziland's fragile economy may then tilt towards recession. The central bank acknowledges such fears, but says it is too early to detect an influx of foreign loan applicants or an exodus of bank depositors' money to SA.

Swaziland's exchange likely to be upgraded

James Hall

MBABANE — Swaziland's sleepy stock exchange is awaiting several developments which should upgrade it to full stock market status.

The catalyst will be parliament's passage of the Securities Bill, which will establish a formal market and provide for the licensing of brokers, while an accompanying Pension Bill is intended to jump-start investment capitalisation by requiring that 15% of local pension funds be invested in Swaziland.

Nearly all these funds are invested in SA at present. Once this requirement is in place, complaints about a lack of investment opportunities in the kingdom are expected to prompt the government to accelerate the privatisation of parastatals which could then be

listed on the stock exchange.

Andrew McGuire, CEO of Swaziland Stockbrokers, says that "regardless of the Securities Bill, there are quite a number of private listings in the pipeline, with four or five companies to be listed on the exchange within the next year".

This will effectively double the number of exchange listings. Currently, the Royal Swaziland Sugar Corporation, Nedbank, Swazi Spa Holdings, Fridgemaster and Swaziland Property Investments (Swaprop) are listed, along with two unit trusts. Debt instruments traded include several Swazi government stocks.

McGuire points out that his brokerage firm, the only one in Swaziland, is in the unusual position of also serving as a stock exchange.

With a built-in potential for insider trading, brokers practice self-regulation and do not recommend stocks or advise clients, he says. The stock market allowed by the Securities Bill will fall under central bank supervision, and McGuire's firm will be among the stockbrokers licensed under the pending legislation.

The exchange's administration manager, Welcome Maphalala, feels that "slow as it is now, the Swaziland stock exchange is necessary". Established eight years ago by Sibusiso Dlamini, a former World Bank executive and Swaziland's current prime minister, one of the world's smallest exchanges was founded to enable ordinary Swazis to become stakeholders in their economy.

The exchange operates out of a three-room office in Mbabane, where market activity is

recorded in marking pen on a board above the receptionist's desk.

Because of a shortage of listings, transactions are rare, and were down last year, to 32 from 52 the previous year. However, share turnover rose significantly.

Government stocks seem less vulnerable to the vicissitudes of Swaziland's small economy. "The problem with a small market is that rumour and talk can wreak havoc," notes Maphalala.

Share prices at the Swaziland Stock Exchange remain constant for long periods, and investors in other markets might envy such stability.

"We have proven ourselves immune to the Asian flu," notes McGuire, and while larger markets shake and tumble, Swaziland's is immune also to the Russian debacle.

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(312)

'Unclean' Swazi widows denied voting rights (312)

CP 27/9/98

Criminals may vote and even stand for Parliament in Swaziland. But a widow is regarded unfit for such duties, reports AIA.

WIDOWS in Swaziland are not allowed to vote or stand for election to Parliament because they are considered to be unclean.

The marginalisation of widows based on culture continues unchecked, despite nationwide calls for their status to be improved.

During parliamentary elections, widows still officially in mourning, who are allowed before the deaths of their husbands to register for the general elections, are prohibited from voting.

They are not allowed within 500 m of all the royal kraals, which are used as polling stations.

Indignant widows have pointed out that convicted criminals are allowed to vote and even stand for Parliament.

"It is not fair that because we are in mourning we should be treated as outcasts.

"We have the right to vote for people we feel can make a difference in our lives as legislators in the House of Parliament," said a widow from the Shiselweni region.

The Establishment of Parliament Order, 1992, in theory allows widows in mourning to vote, stating plainly that "all Swazis above the age of 18 are eligible voters".

Chief Electoral Officer Robert Thwala ignores this, saying that widows in mourning cannot cast a vote or be elected to Parliament.

He says that even if they were elected to Parliament they would not be admitted.

The official mourning period for widows is between two and three years. During that period the women are forbidden from performing speci-

fic duties or behaving in certain ways.

For example, they may not perform royal duties or meet royalty.

As a result widows teaching in national schools have been transferred to central schools in order to avoid their rubbing shoulders with royalty. Widows are often victimised by the relatives of their dead husbands, who seize their property.

The Human Rights Association condemns this treatment of women. Its leader, Vulindlela Msibi, says:

"Widows have a right to vote or to be elected to Parliament like any other citizen."

Maureen Magwaza of Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF) says democratic rights are being violated:

"It is unfortunate that widows should be barred from the elections because of death. That is an act of God which is beyond their control. All citizens should be allowed to exercise their right, irrespective of their problems."

Liza Dube, a widow from Msuduzwa township in Mbabane, says: "We are living in changing times and should adapt to things which will make us all comfortable.

"I feel the only way that this problem can be dealt with is for women to march to Ludzidzini Royal Residence and lodge a complaint with the Indlovukazi (Queen Mother)."

Most men continue to support traditional practices. A resident of Mlindazwe in Lavumisa, Gilbert Ndela, says: "I see no reason why people should complain that widows cannot stand for parliamentary elections. They will get their chance to be elected after five years.

"Widows cannot stand in front of men and address them on any matter - it is against our culture. We shouldn't do things which will cause our ancestors to turn against us."

The Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA) appealed to the nation to respect human rights: "We should respect all citizens and accept that they have a right to be involved in the country's welfare," said Swagaa co-ordinator Shilpa Patel. - AIA

Swazi govt given reform deadline

James Hall

BD 6/10/98

(312)

MBABANE — The Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions has delivered an ultimatum to the government to introduce political and economic reforms.

Swaziland's umbrella labour organisation has given the royally appointed cabinet of Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini until Friday to fulfil a list of demands which includes the suspension of the October 16 general elections, the dissolution of the Constitutional Review Commission, the repeal of a 1973 royal decree which prohibits political parties and the election of an interim government to rule until a "people-driven constitution" is created.

Concomitant with these demands, the federation continues to pursue its "27 Workers' Demands", first raised in 1994 and covering social, labour and political issues such as maternity leave, pension schemes and alleged exploitation of Swazi workers by multi-

national corporations.

The government says it cannot meet political demands and these will be addressed by the commission. This has led to an impasse, with the federation calling the commission illegitimate.

Enterprise and Employment Minister Majah'enkhaba Dlamini placed newspaper adverts last month saying the government had addressed all of the 27 Workers' Demands except those beyond its power to consider.

The federation distinguishes between addressing demands and meeting them. Federation secretary-general Jan Sithole is touring the nation on "vusela" (greeting) rallies in anticipation of the government's "deliberate failure" to meet Friday's deadline.

A mass workers' meeting has been called on Sunday to consider a response. The government, preoccupied with the October 16 general elections, is unlikely to meet the federation's deadline.

Judges end Swazi death penalty

MHG 6-12/11/98

Bheki Makhubu

Six South African judges, sitting in Swaziland's Appeal Court, have all but eradicated the death sentence as a punishment for murder in the kingdom.

In what is seen by some law practitioners as a spillover of South Africa's abolition of the death sentence, the judges, led by Judge President JH Kotze, have changed the rules on establishing extenuating circumstances.

In three appeal cases brought by convicts facing the hangman, the judges overturned the sentences to terms of imprisonment on the grounds that the trial judges had erred in the sentencing.

They were unanimous in the decision that the onus of establishing extenuating circumstances no longer lay with the convicted person but was the duty of the court.

In one murder appeal heard by judges RN Leon, JH Steyn and PH Tebbutt, they observed that: "In South Africa it was consistently held, before the death sentence was abolished, that there was an onus resting upon an accused to prove on a balance of probabilities the existence of such [extenuating] circumstances.

"That was based upon a decision by Greenberg JA ... with due deference to so distinguished a judge we find ourselves in respectful disagreement."

Swazi lawyers have described the ruling as a milestone. "It is probable that the new ap-

proach introduced by our court of appeal is influenced by the abolition of the death penalty in South Africa and an abhorrence of sentencing convicted murderers to death," the Swaziland Law Society reacted in a statement.

"The new approach is likely to cause a certain amount of confusion in our courts as to the role of the judge and the extent to which he is duty-bound to call for evidence on extenuating circumstances, and to actively solicit and seek such evidence."

Swaziland's deputy director of public prosecutions, Musa Nsibandze, said: "Appeal judges are known for their abhorrence of the death penalty. In fact, my information is that they were very influential in getting the abolition of the death penalty into the South African Constitution."

When the appeals were heard, there were eight convicted murderers on death row in Swaziland. Despite the judges' ruling, the death penalty still remains law in Swaziland.

But this week Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs Chief Maweni Simelane said the country had halted its search for a new hangman, or hangwoman, as it had decided not to appoint a full-time executioner.

He said there would not be enough work to justify the cost to the government, and a freelance hangman would be engaged when it was required. More than 200 people, mostly South Africans, applied for the position although it was never advertised.

AFRICA

Bleak outlook as Swazis go to polls

(312)

MBABANE — Swaziland goes to the polls on October 16, confronted with a high unemployment rate, massive retrenchment, excessive government spending, high inflation, huge domestic and foreign debt and declining social services.

Since 1990, the Swazi economy has been on a downward trend, manifesting itself in an increasing unemployment rate, which stands above 20% of the total economically active male population and a decline in real incomes.

University of Swaziland lecturer Mandla Masuku says this high unemployment rate and stagnated food production levels are indicative of an economy that is failing to support and sustain the population.

When outgoing Finance Minister Themba Masuku presented his budget speech earlier this year, he announced a national deficit which now stands at about \$32m — up from about \$7,16m in 1993.

The deficit represents 4,5% of the gross domestic product (GDP) and Swazi economists say it poses serious future economic implications.

The economic growth has stagnated at 2,7% a year, way below the population growth estimated at 3,4% a year.

Economic analysts say this means Swaziland is becoming poorer by 0,9% each year.

A possible revenue loss of millions when the sharing formula of the SA Customs Union is effected later this year, will provide more economic challenges.

Swaziland received half of its revenue of more than \$17m last year from the union's common revenue shar-

ing pool.

More than a third of the country's GDP and about 40% of government revenue comes from union proceeds.

Senior official and financial expert in the finance ministry Dumisani Masilela says Swaziland's economy was pillared by the share received from the union.

This is not the only revenue reducing issue facing Swaziland. Changes in the SA Development Community trade protocol and relations between SA and the European Union will have adverse effects on its abilities to trade with its neighbours, severely crippling its revenue generating efforts. — Sapa-DPA.



Swaziland's King Mswati III, left, is escorted by his Malaysian counterpart Tuanku Jaafar during a welcoming ceremony at Parliament Square in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Picture: AP

Troubled Swazi economy faces more revenue losses

THULANI MTHEMWA

Mbabane — Swaziland goes to the polls on Friday, confronted with a high unemployment rate, massive retrenchment, excessive government spending, high inflation, huge domestic and foreign debt and declining social services.

The Swazi economy has been on a downward trend since 1990 — seen both in the rising unemployment rate, now more than 20 percent of the economically active male population, and in a decline in real incomes.

Mandla Masuku, a lecturer at the University of Swaziland, says the high unemployment rate and stagnant food production levels are indicative of an economy that is failing to support and sustain its population.

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The possible loss of millions of dollars in revenue when the sharing formula of the South African Customs Union (SACU) comes into effect later this year will provide further challenges.

Swaziland last year received half of its revenue of more than \$17 million from the union's common revenue sharing pool. More than a third of its GDP and about 40 percent of government revenue comes from the SACU proceeds.

Dumisani Masilela, a financial expert in the finance ministry, says Swaziland's economy is supported by the share received from the SACU.

"If we withdraw from the SACU we will lose dearly and the deficit will definitely shoot up," says Masilela.

This is not the only possible revenue reduction the country faces. Changes in the Southern African Development Community trade protocol and relations between South Africa and the European Union (EU) will have adverse

effects on the country's abilities to trade with its neighbours, severely crippling its revenue generating measures.

South Africa's free trade arrangement with the EU means markets such as Swaziland, Botswana, Lesotho and Namibia will be bypassed in favour of Europe, where South Africa will earn more for its products and will generate much-needed foreign currency.

It is feared that a free trade agreement between South Africa and the EU would not only mean that Swaziland and other southern African states would lose income as a result of dwindling traditional revenue resources, but it also would raise unemployment.

"With a smaller revenue pool, fragile industries may be destroyed and infrastructure development would be curtailed," says Philippe Souvestre, the EU chief negotiator. "These countries, including Swaziland, will be unable to compete regionally, left alone on the world market."

In his annual report for the previous fiscal year, Martin Dlamini, the governor of Swaziland's central bank, attributed the slowdown in the country's economy to deteriorating terms of trade

and slow investment in flows.

Godfrey Kalinga, the leader of an International Monetary Fund (IMF) delegation to Swaziland, recently said the country's economy would improve.

"Although Swaziland is experiencing a lean spell as indicated by the negative economic growth rate and discrepancy in the balance of payments, the IMF is positive that lasting solutions can be found to make the economy better."

However, the conflict between labour and capital has not been adequately addressed. Serious tensions remain between the government and the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions, which represents more than 80 000 workers.

A new industrial relations act will soon become law. It is expected that the new law will address some of labour's outstanding demands.

King Mswati and other politicians have blamed militant labour for frustrating efforts to attract foreign investors.

Indeed, a study on industrial investment supported by the EU in 1995 found Swaziland had not had foreign investors since 1990. In the 1997-98 financial year, only two companies were said to have invested in Swaziland. — Sapa-DPA

27(MR)1910198(212)

Tax deal with Taiwan pays off for business in Swaziland

James Hall

MBABANE — Taipei-based Tatung Textiles will spend a minimum of R40m to open an electrical appliance assembly plant at the Matsapha Industrial Area, the largest new industrial investment at the Matsapha dry port this year.

When SA severed diplomatic

relations with Taiwan in favour of the People's Republic of China, an influx of SA-based Taiwanese businesses into Swaziland was expected as Swaziland continued to recognise Taipei.

However, new, rather than relocated firms, moved in.

According to the Taiwanese embassy, facilitating this was last month's agreement to end

double taxation.

Previously, profits made by Chinese firms from trade and investment in the kingdom were taxed by both authorities.

Tax revenues will now be shared by the two governments.

The agreement has also seen other Taiwanese ventures in Matsapha, Swaziland, boom.

A garment manufacturer

which began operations a year ago at Matsapha, Tuntex Textile Swaziland Company, has seen its production quotas go beyond expectations to an estimated 120 000 garments this year. A R30m expansion planned for 2000 has been pushed ahead two years, and by next March, the work force of 400 Swazis will treble to 1 200.

Swazi poll a farce, says trade union leader

A SENIOR Swaziland trade unionist dismissed yesterday his country's parliamentary election as a farce and said his organisation and other opposition groups were urging a boycott of Friday's polls.

"We do not recognise the legitimacy of these elections and have called for a boycott," Jan Sithole, secretary-general of the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions said from his office in the Swazi capital Mbabane.

Political parties are banned in the tiny, landlocked kingdom that borders SA and Mozambique and King Mswati III rules the country as an absolute monarch — the last of his kind in sub-Saharan Africa.

In Friday's elections, more than 300 candidates will contest in 55 constituencies, or Tinkuhundla centres, in a "first past the post" British-style race.

An additional 10 members of parliament are appointed by the king, who also decides on selection of the cabinet.

"These elections are occurring under a state of emergency (in terms of) which political parties are banned. The electorate has no real choice," Sithole said.

"There is no freedom of assembly, bill of rights or freedom of speech. We want a system in which voters can determine their destiny for themselves," he said.

Sithole said the anti-

election campaign had already enjoyed success, as only 200 000 of the 397 000 eligible voters had been registered.

He said that — in a twist for a trade union — the union federation was encouraging workers to go to work on Friday, which has been declared a public holiday.

"We have also asked employers not to pay workers overtime on that day as we do not recognise the holiday," Sithole said.

"Instead, we will call for our own national holiday when the king returns from his trip in east Asia and will organise a march to the palace to press our demands," he said.

Some political ana-

lysts said the king was in favour of moving to a more open system.

However, they said he had to deal with vested interests, as well as other members of the royal family who were resisting change.

Sithole said while his organisation advocated peaceful change, the patience of the populace was wearing thin.

"Justice delayed can change evolution to revolution ... things cannot go on endlessly," he said.

More than half of the mostly rural country's 850 000 people are below the age of 18.

It has been estimated that the population is growing at a rate of 3,4% a year — a figure well above the rate of eco-

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nomic growth.

Real incomes are declining and more than 20% of working age males are unemployed.

"If there is no democracy along with an unfair distribution of wealth and growing unemployment and crime ... (this) is a recipe for crisis," Sithole said. — Reuter.

Credibility may be casualty

of Swazi election

TOMORROW's parliamentary election may be the only chance for individual Swazis to influence the course of their government, but the outcome's relative unimportance in the overall power structure is exemplified by King Mswati's absence as he tours the Far East for three weeks to drum-up investor interest in his kingdom.

At stake are not only 55 parliamentary seats and an equal number of local headmen offices, but the monarch's hope of maintaining a semblance of democracy while he rules under a 1973 decree that bans opposition parties and grants him absolute governing powers.

Mswati confirmed recently that he saw no need for political parties in his kingdom and would not recognise "anyone who came to me saying he represents another Swazi".

With a successful election seen as essential to maintaining the image of a well-run nation, the Chief Electoral Officer, Robert Thwala, was roundly criticised for last month's 11th-hour postponement of the primary elections.

Thwala said an improper number of ballot papers had been printed. Employers who had already given their workers the day off were incensed, as was the public which had been forbidden to hold funerals, weddings, soccer matches or social activities during the voting.

Swazis do not hold funerals on week days and the two weekends taken over by the primary elections and the preceding weekend in which funerals were banned during the nation's combined 30th independence day/king's birthday celebrations meant a month-long period without burials.

Mortuaries reported corpses piling up three-deep.

Once the primary election was held it took the government one week to announce the winners and Thwala has never released voter turnout information, leading to speculation that participation was low.

When the general election was held in 1993, a low voter turnout of 17% did not bother Swaziland's ruling authorities. This year, the combined forces of outlawed political parties and labour organisations are calling for an election boycott.

The traditionalists at King Mswati's palace and the Mbabane

Swazis go to the polls tomorrow. James Hall in Mbabane looks at why they bother when the king's supreme power undermines their choices

government of Prime Minister Sibiso Dlamini are pulling out all the stops to induce the electorate to go to the polls.

The deadline for voter registration was extended three times from June 30 to August 31. The government claims 200 000 Swazis, about half of eligible voters, are registered. Independent sources question the figure.

Unwelcome, however, are widows, who are banned from entering royal villages. Many polling venues are set up at the homes of chiefs, which are considered royal places.

A widow in mourning cannot come into proximity with the king because this is considered "bad luck" in traditional culture. Thwala expanded the ban by forbidding widows from running for parliamentary office. "No widow is permitted to enter a place where the king is," he said, referring to the parliament building at Lubombo. The prohibition has shocked many Swazis and has led to a national debate on the treatment of widows in modern Swazi society.

Swaziland's chiefs, who are all royal appointees, are adamant that their subjects participate in the elections, equating refusal with treason and regicide. Husbands have been permitted to register their wives and adult children without their spouses' or children's consent.

In some schools older pupils have been forced to register by their headmasters. Some chiefs have gone so far as to tell their subjects which candidate to support, in violation of the electoral laws as defined in the 1992 Establishment of Parliament Act.

The government is hoping a large voter turn-out will prove progressive forces such as the Swaziland Democratic Alliance and the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions to be ineffectual if their boycott call is ignored.

At a rally at the sugar-growing region of the Lubombo, a long-time union federation stronghold, Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Khoza said: "Boycotting the elections will automatically be construed to mean that everyone is happy with the present government and it should continue in

office indefinitely."

Some progressives, such as Simon Noge and Dzingalive Dlamini of the Ngwane National Liberation Council, defied the boycott to participate as candidates, reasoning that an effective opposition could be mounted "within the system".

They now face expulsion from their disapproving organisation. Dlamini lost the primary election; Noge won in his district.

Sam Malale of the Swaziland Youth Congress condemns their strategy. "Government cannot be 'changed from within' because institutionally it is impervious to change. What is needed is a new system."

Bongani Masuku, congress president, illustrates this point numerically. Tomorrow Swazis will elect 55 MPs who will serve in the House of Assembly. King Mswati appoints 10 additional MPs at his pleasure. The upper house, the Senate, consists of 30 members, 20 of whom are appointed by the king. These 20 then appoint 10 additional senators from the ranks of either elected or appointed MPs.

"The Senate is there to look after royal interests and between the Senate and the royally appointed MPs, the people's elected representatives are outvoted," says Masuku.

Parliament has never initiated legislation, but approves bills sent to it by cabinet, leading some MPs to complain of being "rubber stamps".

Legislation passed by parliament cannot become law without the king's assent.

Parliament can be dissolved at the king's pleasure and Mswati may rule by decree. On August 13 the king granted himself the power to pass legislation through a personally appointed council of ministers.

Why, then, run for office with little chance of exercising meaningful power? Times of Swaziland News Editor Vusie Ginindza champions the cause of "change through infiltration". Opposition MPs can serve as "gadflies throwing spanners", he says. They can also gain recognition in the press and overseas as the nucleus of an unofficial opposition party, something the country does not now have.

P.T.O. For Picture

ANALYSIS

Credibility may be casualty of Swazi election

Swazis go to the polls tomorrow. James Hall in Mbabane looks at why they bother when the king's supreme power undermines their choices

PD 15/10/98

(312)

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King Mswati sees no need for political parties in his kingdom

(312) ~~PA~~ CT 26/10/98

Low turnout in Swazi poll

MBABANE: The final results of Swaziland's parliamentary elections were not expected until late this week, officials said yesterday.

A second day of voting was held on Saturday after drenching rain prevented many voters from casting their ballots on October 16.

Observers said turnout appeared to be low on both days. Only 200 000 of the country's 397 000 eligible voters had registered.

Opposition groups and trade unions had called for a boycott, but there were no reports of any disturbances.

The election is not expected to bring any major change as political parties have been banned in the kingdom since 1973. Candidates,

nominated in local chiefdoms, can stand as individuals only and not on a political platform.

Despite the ban, events on Saturday showed that some political activity was tolerated.

About 1 000 people, mostly members of opposition political parties and trade unions, gathered in Mbabane for the funeral of a leader of the anti-government Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU).

Plans to turn the funeral into a mass political rally were abandoned at the request of the family of Mxolisi Mbatha, the SFTU treasurer who died last week. Senior members of most opposition parties attended the funeral. — Reuter

EU gives Swaziland R30m for microprojects

James Hall

MBABANE — In an impoverished nation where 10% of the population benefits from small-scale community development schemes, micro-projects have found a R30m patron in the European Community following the delayed implementation of a 1996 assistance agreement between the European Union (EU) and the Kingdom of Swaziland.

The delay was due to the ratification process of the Lomé convention by the 15 EU member states and a majority of its 70 African, Caribbean and Pacific nation "partners".

About 60% of the microprojects

will be water supply schemes and new primary schools.

About 20% of the allocated money will go to infrastructure improvements such as rural electrification, bridges and roads. Income-generating projects to empower women and raise the standard of living among impoverished homesteads will make up the final 20% of projects.

Total funding will be R40m, with the inclusion of an additional R10m from the economic planning and development ministry specified for small-scale "development actions".

These schemes are in partnership with local communities, which provide 50% of project costs in cash

or by providing the labour needed.

Microprojects have generally proven successful in achieving their goals in Swaziland. As in other developing countries, their funding is an increasingly popular method of maximising foreign aid, with a target of achieving sustainable socioeconomic development.

European Commission chargé d'affaires Andrew Headey said the goal was to decentralise the focus of grants from large-scale projects "with a special emphasis on capacity building at the local level and improved regional co-ordination".

EU microproject financing will run through to 2001.

(312) 11/11/98

Swazi king appoints his government

James Hall (312)

MBABANE — King Mswati III has appointed the principal members of his government for the new five-year parliamentary session, including the reappointment of Sibusiso Dlamini as prime minister.

Dlamini's reappointment continues the custom of assigning the top government post to a member of the royal Dlamini family.

It was speculated that former foreign affairs minister Albert Shabangu would be the first non-Dlamini to be prime minister, but such a move is seems still to be unpalatable to palace elders.

Dlamini was moved from his job with the International Monetary Fund in Washington two years ago to become prime minister, at a time

when mismanagement of the government of former prime minister Prince Mbilini Dlamini had reached crisis-point.

The reaction was enthusiastic in the royal kraal when the king, resplendent in a crown of bright red lourie feathers, announced Dlamini's reappointment. Seated in traditional attire in the giant cattle byre at the Ludzidzini royal residence, the king seemed to relish his status as absolute ruler as he kept 4 000 of his subjects in suspense for 40 minutes before announcing the appointment.

The king formally dissolved the powerful band of palace councillors, the Swazi National Council.

The council's two-year term expired in September but councillors retained their posts until the new government was in place. The coun-

cil played the role of adviser to the king on traditional matters.

The king announced his 20 appointments to the 30-member Senate earlier last week. He previously appointed 10 members to the House of Assembly, who along with elected members, voted 10 senators into the upper house.

The cabinet will be named this week, from the ranks of House and Senate members.

Previous cabinet ministers appointed by the king to the House and Senate who will retain their portfolios include Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Khoza and Foreign Minister Albert Shabangu.

Transportation Minister Dumisane Masango was the only cabinet minister to stand for election on his own. He was successful.

Swazis count cost of subsidy system

Preserving traditional lifestyles in Swaziland has come at a steep price, writes James Hall in Mbabane

KING Mswati III's refusal to approve his own government's legislation to curb subsidies for cattle owners has highlighted the environmental and economic costs of preserving traditional lifestyles.

Ironically, the "beneficiaries" of these subsidies, peasant farmers on Swazi national land — so-called "king's land" — sink deeper into poverty, while the key cattle industry grows more inefficient.

The agriculture ministry spends more than R6m a year on "dipping chemicals" to rid cattle of disease-causing parasites. Grazing land is made available at no cost.

The ministry's Noah Nkambule laments: "For how long in the face of a mounting national budget deficit can Swaziland livestock owners dip their animals free of charge, with the same applying to access to grazing lands?"

Nkambule's ministry's decade-long inability to end subsidies illustrates the impotency of Swaziland's "modern government" in the mountaintop capital city of Mbabane. Actual power resides in the traditional capital of Lobamba down in the valley 15km to the east, and King Mswati's palace at nearby Lozitha.

Lobamba is also the home of the Swaziland parliament, which this year voted in favour of Agriculture Minister Dambuzo Lukhele's Dipping Chemical Bill, which would have ended the subsidy. He is the last in a long line since 1989 to have attempted to push through such legislation. But despite finally winning parliamentary approval, the measure died without royal assent. "The reason is pure politics," says Bongani Masuku, president of the pro-democracy Swaziland Youth Congress. "Peasant farmers are the king's power base. They live rent-free on his land, and they are the most vocal against democratic reforms. The ruling Dlamini family would do nothing to upset them."

Other Swazi progressives attribute a more sinister motive to the ruling authorities: a desire to keep peasants in perpetual penury so they might remain dependent upon royal favour.

Swaziland is a rural nation with a majority of the population living on "king's land". So-called national land is administered by palace-appointed chiefs, some of whom have evicted families from their ancestral homes because younger members advocate political parties.

Residents on Swazi national land are denied bank loans as they do not own their farms, and without such capital both development and economic empowerment have been stalemated, says a report issued by the University of Swaziland.

As a result of free veterinary medicines and grazing lands, 600 000 cattle (down from 690 000 after two seasons of drought wrought by El Niño weather conditions) roam the nation's pasture land which is able to accommodate only



Swaziland is feeling the cost of preserving traditional lifestyles.

500 000 cattle.

About 84% of livestock is owned by farmers on king's land. King Mswati owns a herd of 10 000 cows, says the Swazi Observer newspaper.

The result has been rampant overgrazing which has led to widespread soil erosion, with thousands of hectares vulnerable to desertification.

Top soil wash-off has resulted in the salination of local streams. Deep gullies have turned once-green hillsides into lunar landscapes. Cattle roaming the highways is a major cause of traffic deaths.

Palace authorities defend subsidies as a way to preserve "traditional Swazi lifestyles". The head of a household counts his wealth and status by the size of his cattle herd. Cows are often seen as members of the homestead and are never branded, but given pet names.

Yet as studies worldwide have shown, subsidies tend to impoverish their intended beneficiaries. Subsidised livestock owners have no incentive to learn efficient business practices or modern techniques of animal husbandry.

"The reluctance of farmers to sell their excess animals is a major concern," says Swaziland's central bank. Cattle are kept until they are too old, when their commercial value has diminished.

Because of such inefficiency, Swaziland consistently misses its European Union beef export quota. This valuable allotment guarantees a market, though not a price, for Swazi beef. This year, Swaziland failed to meet its quota by 3 000 tons.

The nation's leading abattoir, Swaziland Meat Industry must import cattle from SA to meet domestic beef needs.

And like most subsidies which have

been in place for years, recipients come to think of them as "entitlements".

"Peasant farmers are being subsidised, like the royal family itself, through taxpayer monies paid into the treasury," says an economist at the University of Swaziland.

"The palace does not care if middle-class taxpayers mostly living in towns are squeezed, because these are the people most likely to support democratic reforms. However it is ultimately bad politics to exploit the productive segment of society — to kill the goose that lays the golden egg — to hold onto the support of the unproductive group."

Environmentalists, meanwhile, point out that farmers on king's land who practice overgrazing are destroying the land which is their livelihood and which their children are meant to inherit.

Swazis turn to safer sex as Aids death toll rises

(312) CT 19/11/98
BHEKI MAKHUBU

INDEPENDENT FOREIGN SERVICE

THERE was a time when telling a typical Swazi man to use condoms to avoid Aids was received as an insult.

That was a time when most men, particularly in rural areas, likened the use of condoms to eating a sweet wrapped in plastic.

At the beginning of the 1990s there was a general denial of the existence of the disease among Swazi men. The younger generation saw the call to abstain from sex as a ploy to deprive them of the pleasures of life while the older generation saw the call to stick to one sexual partner as being contrary to the traditional belief that a man could have as many women as he wanted.

With the number of deaths from the disease having risen sharply this year, this attitude is changing. More and more people are accepting the existence of the disease and taking action.

Recent reports rank Swaziland as having the third highest Aids death toll in 1998 among Southern African Development Community countries. Malawi has the highest Aids death rate followed by Zambia.

In 1992 the Swaziland ministry of health projected that there would be a sharp increase in the number of those dying from Aids in 1998. The high number of deaths this year has seen many people, particularly among the younger generation, waking up to the disease and seeking more education about it.

Fridah Maseko, a counsellor at the Aids Information and Support Centre, says in the past few months there has been an encouraging rise in the number of people being tested for the disease and seeking more information about it. In July, 27 people tested for HIV, 30

in August and 35 in September.

"With the increasing number of people dying every day, people are beginning to accept that there is a disease that is wiping out the community," she said.

Placements of death notices in newspapers have risen accordingly.

"What is scaring most people is that in many cases you find that somebody you knew, not necessarily slept with, is dead. It is scaring people and they are coming to us for help," says Maseko.

"Most of those who are being tested want to seek direction on what to do if found positive for HIV or start new lives if found negative."

The change of attitude is best expressed in letters published in local newspapers. Readers are writing in anonymously to warn others about the deadly virus with which they have been infected.

One reader from Big Bend recently wrote a moving letter to *The Times of Swaziland* newspaper bemoaning a lover who behaved like a gentleman yet left her to die with the Aids virus alone. Part of the letter read: "I am the fourth victim you have destroyed, including an innocent baby, but you still carry on victimising females knowing that you are a time bomb waiting to explode."

"You made me promises which you failed to keep. As my days slipped away I yearned to hear those promises and loving words but you were nowhere near to see the remains of your wreckage."

Complicating the matter, however, has been the sudden rise in incest cases reported to the police this year.

Almost every week, an adult is brought before court on charges of raping children from as little as six months old.

Many cases involve fathers accused of raping their own daughters. There is a belief among some

people that having sexual intercourse with a virgin will remove the Aids virus from one's body.

The Swaziland National Aids Programme recently reported that 3 000 cases of full-blown Aids were reported between 1987 and June 1998. However, programme manager Beatrice Dlamini says this is a "gross underestimation".

Keeping track of the Aids epidemic is the most difficult task for health workers. Apart from people's denial of the disease and the general fear of being tested is the problem of Swaziland's greater population being concentrated in the rural areas where knowledge of the disease is at its lowest.

Says Maseko: "In recent times, we have seen a steady rise in the number of Aids cases in the rural areas because of the migration of those in the urban areas."

"If you consider that most men who work in the urban areas go back to their homes on weekends, there is bound to be a rise in those areas too."

"There is also the fact that some of the men in the rural areas go to the mines, even outside the country, and return infected only to pass on the disease to their wives."

"However, some of the rural women are beginning to learn about the disease and are testing and seeking counsel with us."

Between January and October this year, 88 people tested positive for HIV. "But the number, you must understand, does not include those who never returned to get their results."

As Swazis become better-informed about the virus, staunch traditionalists are beginning to lose their battle against the use of condoms.

The traditionalists have argued that for centuries Swazi families have used pre-ejaculation withdrawal for family planning and that the technique worked well.

Man killed, two hurt in powerful Mbabane bomb blast

BHEKI MAKHUBU
FOREIGN SERVICE

A powerful bomb exploded in the Swaziland capital of Mbabane yesterday, killing at least one man and injuring two in what is being seen as mounting pressure from political groups to force the monarchy to allow multiparty democracy in the tiny kingdom.

The bomb, the second in four weeks, exploded while King Mswati III's new cabinet was being sworn in about 3km away, following non-party elections

(312)
last month. Mswati's father, King Sobhuza II, banned political parties in 1973 and opposition and union agitation to legalise them again has been intensifying over the past few years.

The explosion occurred at the office building of newly elected deputy prime minister Arthur Khoza just before 5pm on Allister Miller Street, the capital's main street.

This building is the headquarters of the controversial Tinkhundla system of modernised traditional rule, which the monarchy has imposed on the country as a substitute for multiparty

democracy. There is some speculation that this may have been the reason it was targeted.

The dead man was believed to be a security guard who was posted at Mr Khoza's building. The blast shattered glass windows of a restaurant across the street and caused widespread panic.

The first explosion occurred on October 28 on the Usushwana Bridge in the busy industrial town of Matsapha, also around 5pm, two hours after King Mswati had driven past the spot.

Earlier this week, police rounded up leaders of opposition groups, including Jan Sithole, leader of the main trade union grouping, the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU), to interrogate them about the earlier explosion.

They also raided the home of Mario Masuku, leader of the banned People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo) and confiscated documents.

The SFTU and Pudemo had called for a boycott of the non-party October elections but they went ahead, although with a poor turnout.

Swazi bomb seen (2/2) as political pressure

By BHEKI MAKHUBU
INDEPENDENT FOREIGN SERVICE

Star 21/11/98

A powerful bomb exploded in Swaziland's capital Mbabane yesterday, killing at least one man and injuring two others, in what is being seen as mounting pressure from political groups to force the monarchy to allow multi-party democracy in the tiny kingdom.

The bomb, the second in four weeks, exploded while King Mswati III's new cabinet was being sworn in about 3km away, following non-party elections last month. Mswati's father, King Sobhuza II, banned all parties in 1973, and opposition and union agitation to legalise them again has been intensifying over the past few years.

The explosion occurred at a building housing newly elected Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Khoza's office on Allister Miller Street just before 5pm. This building is the headquarters of the controversial *tinkhundla* system of modernised traditional rule which the monarchy has imposed on the country as a substitute for multiparty democracy. There is speculation that this may be the reason it was targeted.

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The SFTU and Pudemo had called for a boycott of the non-party October elections, which went ahead anyway.

Swaziland businesses prepare for VAT border rules

James Hall

MBABANE — After months of confusion in anticipation of new border VAT payments, Swaziland importers and exporters to SA are adjusting to a scaled-down implementation of new rules.

Meeting government trade representatives and business officials from Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland, SA Finance Minister Trevor Manuel agreed to postpone the collection of a 14% VAT payment for goods leaving Swaziland and destined for SA. Prior to Manuel's announcement,

Swazi industries engaged in what one participant described as a "mad rush" to bring goods into and out of the country from SA, particularly materials needed in manufacturing. The sugar industry sent convoys of trucks laden with processed sugar over the border.

The postponement of export duties proved the efforts unnecessary. However, as of November 16, all goods leaving SA destined for Swaziland are required to pay VAT to SA Revenue Service agents at one of three border posts available for commercial truck traffic. The revenue service has promised

that no truck will be held up for border inspection longer than three hours.

Goods from SA to Swaziland can be zero-rated and pay no VAT if an SA supplier handles transportation from point of origin to point of delivery at its Swaziland customer.

Doug Armitage of Steel & Wire International, based in the Matsapha Industrial Site, explained: "I order steel from Iscor; Iscor arranges for the transport contractor, who picks up the steel and brings it here, avoiding VAT."

In the past, his company contracted and paid for transport itself. If this were to

be done under the new system, Iscor would bill Armitage for VAT, payable in 30 days. The VAT Refund Services, based at the Johannesburg airport, refunds VAT on goods 45 days after these pass through the border.

Armitage's company would typically face a two-week cash flow problem.

Having their SA suppliers handle transport and then billing them is one way Swaziland businesses are coping with the new rules while satisfying the revenue service that these exports are legitimate and not tax-dodging ruses which made the old system unworkable.

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James Hall

MBABANE — Human rights groups, lawyers and media commentators have reacted negatively to King Mswati's Swazi Administration Order of 1998, which gives the monarch sweeping new powers to regulate the activities of his subjects through palace-appointed chiefs.

Reacting to chiefs' com-

Negative reaction to Swazi Order

plaints that respect for their authority has eroded in recent times, and in response to a growing pro-democracy movement which seeks to replace an absolute monarchy with a constitutional monarchy, the king through his appointed council of ministers has given chiefs the

power to arrest, try and convict their subjects, to search homes without a warrant, and to evict from ancestral lands subjects deemed guilty of breaking the law.

Political parties are outlawed in Swaziland, and political activity has been made a crime under

the 1973 King's Decree.

A fine of R15 000 will now be imposed on Swazis found guilty of undermining a chief's authority, and a R20 000 penalty awaits those who undermine "the lawful power or authority of the Ngwenyama (king)".

Noting that Swazis are not permitted legal repre-

sentation either at a chief's trial or during the lengthy appeal process through traditional authorities, the Human Rights Organisation of Swaziland says: "The presumption is a defendant is guilty until he proves himself innocent of accusations brought against him before a chief who has had no training in law or criminal procedure."

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BD 11/11/99

Focus

Swazi mining industry adapts to survive

While diamonds are no longer available for the picking there are more minerals in the Swazi soil, writes James Hall in Mbabane

SWAZILAND's mining industry is shaking off the doldrums and adapting to remain viable.

The kingdom is home of the world's oldest known mine, the 40 000-year-old Ngwenya coal mine. But gone are the days when mining was the kingdom's principal industry; since Swaziland's independence from Great Britain in 1968, mining as a force in the economy has been overtaken by forestry products and agricultural concerns like sugar and citrus plantations.

Last year the most prestigious of operations, diamond mining, came to an end, albeit temporarily so in the opinion of industry experts.

The closure of the Dvokolwako Diamond Mine was not unexpected. "Mines come and go," Aaron Vilikati, the commissioner of mines in Mbabane said. "We all knew that after seven or eight years of open cast operations, they would have to go under-

ground. You cannot continue picking up diamonds off the ground forever."

However, the operating company, Trans-X, considered the expense of following the "gem pipe" underground uneconomical, and ceased operations.

Mining rights reverted to the Ingwenyama, the official title (meaning "the lion") of King Mswati III as he oversees the interests of his subjects, in this case holding "ownership" of all his kingdom's natural resources in trust for the Swazi people.

The end of diamond production caused only a slight decline in mining industry revenues, which last year were just off 3.9% from the previous year, with sales of R90.9m slipping from R94.6m.

The relative robustness of the mining sector, enabling it to shrug off the Dvokolwako closure, was due to the good performance of other minerals. In order of importance, these are asbestos, coal

and quarried stone.

Health considerations have led to diminished use of asbestos for heat-proofing and insulation, "but as long as there is no other substitute for brake linings, there will be a need for our fibre," said Natural Resources Minister Prince Sobandla Dlamini.

Despite a minuscule 0.5% production decline in 1997 — 25 888 tons from 26 014 tons the year before — asbestos was the kingdom's chief mineral money earner. Sales to the Far East, Europe, India, Japan and SA rose 10.7% in 1997 to a record R64.1m, up from R57.9m the previous year. Depreciation of the Swazi monetary unit, the lilangeni, which is linked to the rand, helped earnings.

Coal is the kingdom's second most lucrative mineral, but Vilikati says the industry needs fresh ideas. "The Ngwenya mine was closed because of supposedly low grade coal, but Canada is mining coal of even a lower grade, and

at a profit," he points out.

On the other end of the coal quality scale, the kingdom's one operating mine, Malona, which produces a high quality anthracite, saw a significant 57.5% increase in production in 1997 — 203 115 tons from 128 973 tons in 1996. Export earnings in 1997, mostly from sales to Europe and the US, rose 34.6% to R10.6m, up from R7.9m the year before. (Again, favourable exchange rates were a factor.)

Overseas demand for Swazi coal has remained strong last year, leading to an increase in production to 40 000 tons monthly.

Quarried stone, a minor player until 1996, has seen production rise from 221 237m³ that year to 45 553m³ last year, with even better sums predicted for this year. Sales tripled from R5.1m to R16.1m.

The impetus has been the need for crushed stone to construct the M3 highway connecting the cap-

ital Mbabane with the Matsapha industrial site and the central transportation hub, Manzini. Demand will grow as government undertakes three new highways, connecting Mbabane to the SA border post at Oshoek, the southern towns Nhlanguano and Lavumisa, and the agricultural towns Manlayane and Silemisa.

Like the Swazi kings of old seeking accommodation with neighbouring tribes by marrying daughters of other royal houses, the Swazi mining industry is turning to other minerals to fill the diamond gap.

The kingdom has extensive deposits of cassiterite, the mineral used to make tin, but exploitation of this now awaits a rise in tin prices. The forty millennium-old Ngwenya mine may reopen again when ways to extract low-grade coal profitably are applied. The kingdom has a number of low-grade iron deposits awaiting exploitation.

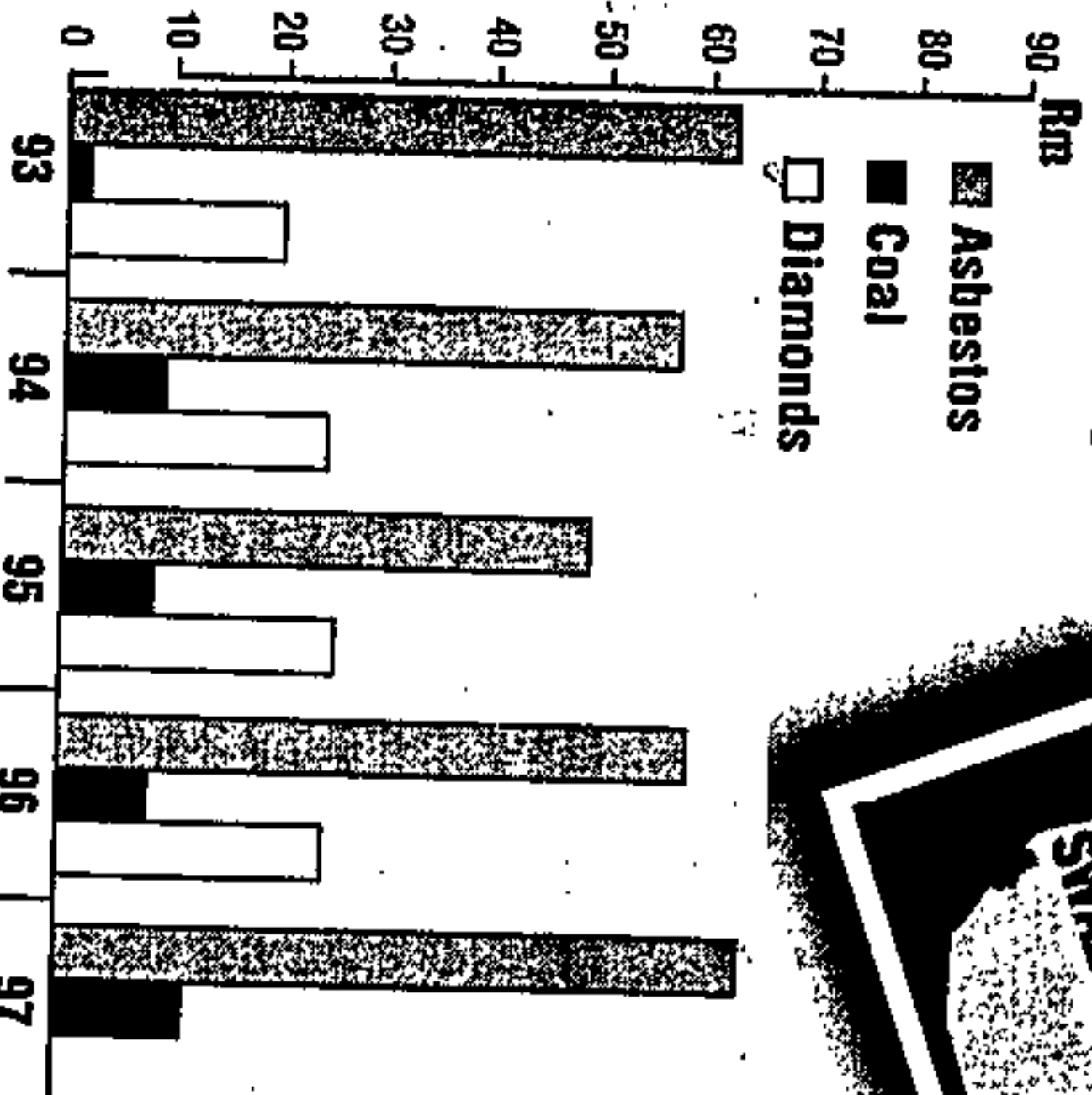
Gold prospecting is being done by a Canadian firm. There is even a future for the Dvokolwako diamond mine. "By reducing overheads, and making it a small or medium-sized mine, it could work," Vilikati said.

Working out of an old wood-frame building whose lobby is littered with boulders of coal, asbestos, beryl and iron ore, commissioner of mines Vilikati wears a second hat, that of chairman of the minerals negotiating committee, which works under the king rather than the Bureau of Mines.

It is to the king to whom investors submit plans and bids. These are assessed by Bureau of Mines geologists and scrutinised by Vilikati's committee.

Like most Swazis, Vilikati is an affable, relaxed man who sees mine closures and openings as inevitable as the cycles of nature. "Someone, somewhere, is always interested in minerals ... and we Swazis have the minerals."

Value of Swaziland's mineral exports



KUBEN DAVID Source: DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGICAL SURVEYS



Slaying of Nkabinde removes driving force of UDM growth

Despite its loss, the fledgling party could gain in other aspects, writes Kevin O'Grady

BY ITS own admission, the United Democratic Movement (UDM) was heavily reliant on its secretary-general, Sifiso Nkabinde, as it strove to boost membership figures and expand the party's branch network ahead of this year's general elections.

The assassination of Nkabinde, also the party's KwaZulu-Natal chairman, has now stranded the fledgling party without its foremost workhorse and organiser, not only in the province where he was based, but in many other parts of the country too.

Yet at the same time, the UDM had come in for heavy criticism because of its decision to embrace the expelled African National Congress (ANC) leader, alleged apartheid police informer and known warlord.

The criticism peaked while Nkabinde was on trial last year on multiple murder charges and scarcely abated following his acquittal and release from prison in May.

Although UDM president Bantu Holomisa and his deputy, Roelf Meyer, have often defended their decision to accept Nkabinde as a party member and leader, observers, including some UDM members, have now suggested the murder could be a blessing in disguise.

"The single issue over which the UDM has received the most criticism is now no longer an issue," said one party member, who asked not

to be named.

He also suggested that Nkabinde's murder might have allowed the UDM to gain some territory in the battle for the moral high ground, though this could have been tempered by the apparent revenge killing of 11 ANC supporters in Richmond soon after Nkabinde's death.

Yet Meyer, Holomisa and other party leaders would not be so callous as to admit to feeling quiet relief at Nkabinde's killing, even if this was their sentiment.

For the moment, the party's biggest challenge is to keep the momentum that has been building in the run-up to SA's second all-race general and provincial elections.

In an interview soon after Nkabinde's release from jail, Holomisa said the UDM had strong hopes for a good showing in the KwaZulu-Natal voting and made it clear Nkabinde was the man expected to lead the charge.

As long as Nkabinde could "get out of the midlands area and spread the gospel in the northern parts of the province and in the townships", he could play an important role in attracting support to the UDM, Holomisa said.

According to UDM deputy secretary-general Annelize van Wyk, Nkabinde did just that and, in the process, made a massive contribution

to party growth during the past eight months.

"At this stage we have 162 branches spread throughout KwaZulu-Natal, the most recent of which he (Nkabinde) opened in Ladysmith on Friday," Van Wyk said. "Our constitution says each branch must have a minimum of 15 members, but some of those branches have between 300 and 400 members. This has all been done since he was released from prison."

"It's quite obvious when you lose a person like Sifiso that there will not be somebody there tomorrow morning who is able to fill his shoes. It's a big loss for the UDM," she said. "Yet we must make sure that we don't get sidetracked by this. We want to continue with (his) efforts and we have the plans in place."

Van Wyk said the party's national management committee would meet today to discuss how to fill the void left by Nkabinde's death.

Sifiso Bhengu, UDM deputy chairman in KwaZulu-Natal, said Nkabinde was the party's "engine" and would be sorely missed in the build-up to the elections.



Rainfall

TODAY'S W

Illegal party releases manifesto

James Hall

MBABANE — Risking arrest, former Swaziland prime minister Obed Dlamini has announced the manifesto of a revived Ngwane National Liberatory Congress, stressing the need for democratisation for the economic and social well-being of the kingdom.

At a news conference, Dlamini, who was elected president of the illegal political party at a secret members' conference late last year, blasted palace resistance to a constitutional monarchy. "This has resulted in labour unrest and general dissatisfaction which have led to disinvestment in the Swazi economy," he said.

The Ngwane congress joins another illegal political party, Pudemo, to have emerged from the underground to campaign openly for political reform.

Political parties were banned by the king in 1973. Dlamini was appointed prime minister by King Mswati III in 1989. His administration was considered the most liberal in Swaziland's post-indepen-

dence era and a backlash by palace conservatives saw him ousted in 1993.

Dlamini condemned donor countries such as the US and Britain for funding the Constitutional Review Commission, appointed by the king in 1996. "We have seen countries which are known for being champions of democracy, and which in other regions of the world have gone out of their way to support democracy, prostituting their principles when it comes to this country."

Dlamini said the Swazi Administration Order of 1998, decreed by King Mswati with his council of ministers, which strengthens the powers of chiefs while diminishing the role of the courts, "makes the current so-called constitutional process intended to allow Swazis to determine how we shall live a fraud and an irresponsible use of taxpayers money".

Dlamini said the king's passage of laws by decree makes parliament "a redundant institution, costly to maintain". He also condemned the recent parliamentary elections as a "sham".

20/1/99 (312)

Mswati to keep his chiefs law

James Hall

(312)

BD 27/11/99

MBABANE — King Mswati III is determined to put an end to the outcry over the controversial Swazi Administration Order of 1998 which expands the powers of the traditional chiefs.

At a recent ceremony he insisted the decree would remain in force, dashing the hopes of progressives and outlawed political parties that the law's condemnation by human rights groups and the media would lead to a royal review.

Under the order chiefs may try their subjects, who are denied legal representation, and fine them up to R15 000 and jail them for up to three years for disobedience to a chief.

"I hope this will bring back the respect for chiefs which is now lost," said King Mswati, addressing 3 000 warriors at the royal village Engabezweni recently.

Dressed in traditional attire, Mswati used the dismissal ceremony of his warrior regiments to deliver his annual informal state of the kingdom message. He railed against a crime wave in the kingdom.

Mario Masuku, president of the banned political party Pudemo, condemned Mswati for "compromising our Swazi heritage by politicising the sacred Incwala and using it as a chance to take a swipe at dissenting voices".

On the administration order Masuku said: "It is extremely unfortunate that this barbaric law which has been condemned left, right and centre is being confirmed unequivocally from the throne."

In seeming contradiction of the king's assertion that the chiefs' law is beyond debate, the Constitutional Review Commission said it is empowered to review all legislation, even palace decrees, "which affect people's lives".

Swaziland's woes work in SA's favour

James Hall (312) (199)

MBABANE — Investors are turning away from Swaziland to neighbouring SA in at least two important economic areas, foreign direct investment and the placement of excess banking funds.

Foreign direct investment in the kingdom has declined for seven years. In its latest quarterly report, the Central Bank of Swaziland says "positive political developments" in SA are a main reason for this.

Investors who flocked to Swaziland in the 1980s to escape economic sanctions imposed on SA during the apartheid era, and who were lured by the kingdom's relative political stability during SA's transitional period, "now view SA as a more attractive economy to operate from". The bank says: "The spontaneous industrial unrest in Swaziland over the past years has aggravated the situation."

BD 9/12/99
The investment which persists comes from companies capitalising on the regional economic integration arrangements of the Southern African Development Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and the Southern African Customs Union as an incentive to open or retain operations in the kingdom. In some foreign markets, Swaziland enjoys preferential trade treatment because of the kingdom's status as a developing country.

In money terms, growth of foreign direct investment in Swaziland fell from 21,9% in 1992 to 3,8% in 1996. Revised figures from 1997 show a negative growth of 2,4%.

Reinvestments from existing companies nosedived by 11,4%. However, the central bank has projected a positive growth of 3,1% for this year. Total foreign direct investment in Swaziland last year was about R2 041,7m.

As predicted last winter when SA banks raised their interest rates, local banks are placing surplus funds in the SA money market.

The trend is accelerated by an absence of major project financing opportunities in the kingdom, and a lessening demand for bank credit.

The central bank blames a "general slump in domestic economic activity" for the decline in credit customers.

Swazi commissions a 'charade'

James Hall

MBABANE — Fred Camphor, head of a commission of inquiry investigating public service inefficiency and waste in the public service, has criticised the government for wasting money on his and similar commissions.

Announcing his commission's finding that the government should withdraw from housing business, Camphor said: "Government will be stupid not to implement these recommendations, because it spent a lot of money (on the commission)." He said the government frequently appointed inquiries into crises and scandals, only to ignore the reports.

Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions secretary-general Jan Sithole says the commissions are charades. "They are instituted to give the appearance of government concern, in the hope that the public will forget about a prob-

lem by the time the commission finishes investigating. Reports are never made public, and recommendations are ignored, because government is not interested in solutions."

Camphor said his commission, which probed waste and mismanagement in government housing for public servants, made proposals identical to those of the 1975 Wamalwa commission "whose findings were ignored".

Recently, two inquiries into mismanagement and nepotism at the government garage proposed restructuring. The transport administration has powerful protectors among the king's palace advisors, and resisted reform.

Commissions probed a police assault on unarmed students and the bankruptcy of the Swazi bank after government leaders defaulted on loans. Recommendations were not implemented. This week, a bribes-for-jobs scandal at the agriculture ministry is being investigated.

Swaziland gets R67m loan for rail

James Hall

MBABANE — Swaziland's rail infrastructure will be revitalised through a R67m loan from the Italian government for the rehabilitation of the kingdom's key east-west line.

Repayable in 18 years with a 12 year grace-period at 1% interest, the money is earmarked for the design and construction of rail lines linking the dry port of Matsapha with Phuzumoya near SA, and the rail hub at Mpaka with Siweni at the Mozambican border.

Swaziland Railway hopes the rehabilitation efforts will reverse its declining fortunes. Import-export traffic reached a record low this year, says CEO Gideon Mahlalela.

A passenger train service was introduced to Maputo and Durban last year in an attempt to diversify the company's revenue base, but ticket sales proved disappointing. Costly rail accidents last year involving cargo and attributable to human error have also cut into earnings.

The success of the dry port at Matsapha, which allows cargo containers to be off-loaded from ships at Durban and Maputo harbours directly onto trains which bring them to Swaziland's main industrial area, remains a bulwark against the company's chief competitor, the trucking industry. But "the slightest disruption in transport service or economic conditions" can lead to permanent loss of customers, says Mahlalela.

The railway is vulnerable to economic shifts. The past year saw a drop in rail usage by Swaziland's major exports, sugar and wood products. Sugar dropped as a result of lower export volume and timber due to a drop in demand from the SA mining industry after mine closures.

Woodpulp, once a major rail user, "has virtually disappeared from rail", says Mahlalela, who blames a change in customer transport strategy following the Asian economic crisis which cut woodpulp demand.

The railway's losses nullified increased telephone and internet usage in the kingdom to cause a 0,4% decline in the transport and communication sector's contribution to the overall economy.

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BD 17/2/99

Deadline set for Swazi constitutional review

James Hall

MBABANE — King Mswati III has ordered the controversial Constitutional Review Commission to complete its work by the end of the year.

Speaking at the opening of parliament on Friday, the king issued a surprise deadline following criticism that the commission's programme was a hoax intended to delay rather than facilitate political change.

Established by royal decree in 1996, with a mandate to deliver its report in two years, the commission requested a two-year extension last year.

Thus far, it has distributed copies of the 1973 King's Decree which

banned political parties in the kingdom, abrogated the 1968 independence constitution's Bill of Rights and declared a state of emergency which is still in effect.

No submissions from the public have been heard and there is no indication when these will begin.

On Thursday Richard Zink, ambassador from the European Union which partly funds the review exercise, made future funding conditional on a report stating how the EU's recommendations have been implemented.

Other donor nations have privately expressed reservations about the efficacy of the commission.

The Swaziland Democratic Alliance

and the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions have called for the restructuring of the commission into an "all-inclusive constitutional forum".

"We must push forward with proposals such as the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative as well as projects designed to provide more (tourist) accommodation and improved entertainment attractions," Mswati said.

National budget priorities should be directed towards poverty alleviation and social service delivery, with fresh thinking to make the latter more effective. Privatisation of public enterprises was also needed to increase efficiency, Mswati said.

BD 82/7/99

Swaziland's progressives lack strategy to unseat king

Opposition forces have enough anti-government ammunition but they need to be properly galvanised, writes James Hall in Mbabane

SWAZILAND's pro-democracy groups which oppose the absolute monarchy of King Mswati are fragmented or legally banned, but remain united in their goal of transforming the landlocked nation into a multiparty state led by a constitutional monarch.

However, popular acceptance of the agenda of those labour unions and illegal political organisations spearheading the progressive movement remains hobbled by a lack of charismatic leadership and poor grass roots communication. Parties such as the People's United Democratic Organisation (Pudemo), led by businessman Mario Masuku, and the Ngwane National Liberatory Congress, led by former activist prime minister Obed Dlamini, are widely regarded as elitist city groups, and have untested support in the rural lands.

About 80% of Swazis live as peasant farmers on Swazi national land, "king's land" distributed through local chiefs.

Though officially banned by Mswati's father, King Sobhuza, with a 1973 proclamation which abrogated Swaziland's independence constitution and invested the monarch with supreme executive, legislative and judicial authority, the congress, Pudemo, and Pudemo's rowdy youth branch, Swayoco, hold news conferences and issue manifestos. Beyond rhetoric, however, these organisations have shown no strategy to unseat the popular Mswati.

Laws in Swaziland originate at the palace and are introduced to parliament by cabinet officers. The Media Council Bill, which calls

for licensing, fines, and jail terms for journalists who run foul of a proposed government appointed press watchdog committee, was introduced this way.

Alternatively, the king may promulgate laws through royal decree without parliamentary participation, prompting some MPs to complain of "rubber-stamping".

The king and his council of ministers recently issued the controversial Swazi Administration Order of 1998, which strengthens the powers of chiefs' courts where defendants are denied legal representation and may face fines of up to R15 000 and three years in jail for "disobedience" towards a chief. It has been widely decried by human rights groups and local and international media.

A new, third party has entered the political debate, a group of nationalist moderates who seek to find a common ground between the seemingly autocratic impulses of palace authority and the culturally destructive tendencies of western-style democracy.

One moderate is respected columnist Vusile Ginhindza, news editor of the Times of Swaziland. "Swazis know that the only thing which has kept us from being swallowed up into larger neighbouring countries has been the wisdom of our kings. We believe even today the Swazi national identity is preserved by our traditional authorities. Reform is absolutely necessary ... but to demonise the king, whom Swazis genuinely love, is to practice cultural imperialism in the name of human rights."

The moderates note that while progres-



King Mswati III may promulgate laws through royal decree

sives sat out last year's parliamentary elections, claiming they were meaningless as long as power resided at the palace, the conservative cultural group Sive Sinyigaba, an embryonic political party, won many seats in

the House of Assembly.

Meanwhile, Pudemo and the congress refuse to stage marches or rallies until the king's decree banning political activity is lifted. "It is an absurd situation when the opposition waits until the authorities give them permission to begin a campaign to overthrow those same authorities," says Dlamini. "People think progressives are either clueless, or they are afraid of getting arrested."

Critics of "overnight, draconian laws", to use the phrase popularised by Jan Sithole, secretary-general of the anti-government Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions, whose members have led four national worker stayaways to press for democratic reforms, miss the point that the royal house of Dlamini has retained its following through a sensitive reading of national mood.

MP Snadlane Zwane says: "Unlike other palaces, which are fortresses walled off from the common people, this king is connected. He's got his cell phone, he gets around, and it is a small country."

As a result, some onerous measures with potential to violate human rights languish unused. The Media Council Bill caused such an uproar that two years after its appearance, it remains with parliament, with MPs unsure what to do with it.

The Swazi Administration Order has become such a human rights cause célèbre locally and abroad that palace authorities say the law, though gazetted, will not be enforced until lengthy consultations are conducted with chiefs.

By that time, the Constitutional Review Commission may finally be carrying out its mandate to collect submissions from Swazis about a future constitutional dispensation. Considered by the opposition to be a way to postpone or stage-manage change and a scheme to humour donor nations wanting democratic reform in Swaziland, the commission enters its fourth year without having heard from a single Swazi.

The Media Council Bill, the Swazi Administration Order, and government's decision to enforce the death penalty this year for seven death row inmates 17 years after the last execution, touch every Swazi's life, the opposition notes, and should not have occurred at a time when the nation is to decide these matters through the commission.

Referring to Justice Minister Chief Maweni, who empowered himself and other chiefs by advancing the Swazi Administration Order and who is pressing forward with the executions, Human Rights Association of Swaziland president Joshua Misi says: "If Chief Maweni respects the commission, then he should desist from making laws that pre-empt its work."

The commission's inactivity and the Swazi Administration Order are a wake-up call to a directionless and sometimes feckless opposition, providing issues with which to bolster their antigovernment stance.

It remains to be seen whether these issues can galvanise the Swazis, conservative people who feel if intrusive foreign ideologies had not been resisted in the past, there would be no independent Swaziland today.

Swazi govt shelve bill after attacks

DD 2/3/99 (312)

MBABANE — The Swaziland government has decided to shelve a controversial bill aimed at regulating the country's media, a government spokesman said yesterday.

Information and Public Service Minister Magwagwa Mdluli made the announcement following a bitter attack from several quarters on the bill — which would have set up a media council — at a two-day journalists' conference held at the town of Nhlangano.

Mdluli said he had accepted a resolution passed by the journal-

ists saying the government and media should jointly put together a media and communications policy within the next three months.

The meeting also called for journalists, in consultation with the government, to set up a self-regulatory media council within four months of the adoption of the conference report.

The journalists also urged the government to examine and update the country's libel and defamation laws within the next six months. — Sapa-DPA.

REST OF AFRICA

Swazis go for development

(312) BB 8/7/99
Finance minister concerned by country's about heavy reliance on customs union

James Hall

MBABANE — There has been mixed reaction from local economists, political and labour leaders to this year's budget presented by Finance Minister John Carmichael.

Carmichael's R2,82bn budget focused on the goals of the national development strategy. "This is a policy-oriented budget," said an economist with accountancy firm PriceWaterhouseCoopers. "As such it sinks or swims with the success of the development strategy."

Another economist at that firm, John Bennett, said: "It is a positive budget overall, but we now need action." The minister "could have been more adventurous on the privatisation process of state-owned enterprises".

Carmichael advocated a go-slow approach to the privatisation of most state-owned enterprises, but announced progress on the sale of Royal Swaziland National Airways, the Swaziland Dairy Board and the money-losing Pigg's Peak Hotel.

Of the R1 961m budgeted for recurring expenditure in the new fiscal year, up 13,5% from last year, Carmichael announced that the largest chunk, 27,1%, would go to education and training, in keeping with NDS goals. This pleased most budget commentators.

The public service gets 24,6% of expenditures. To help create a safe environment for

foreign investment, 20,4% of the budget was allocated for public order, safety and defence. Health services get 9,3%.

A spokesman for the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions, said: "The goal of crime prevention is worthwhile, but the secret army budget, which cannot be debated by parliament, will most likely go to internal security, soldiers enforcing the king's decree banning political opposition."

Carmichael said the largest source of the budgeted R2 551,6m revenue was about R1 221,5m from the SA Customs Union. "This clearly illustrates the vulnerability of our revenue base."

Musa Hlope, Federation of Swaziland Employers president, agreed that this reliance was unhealthy. "We must expand our revenue base, which means foreign direct investment, something we have not seen in any significant way in Swaziland in five years. The minister's budget allocation for education and training is therefore most important."

Other revenue will come from personal income tax (R323m), sales tax (R293m), corporate tax (R282,3m), grants (R110,3m) and sugar export levy (R18,4m).

Carmichael responded to numerous calls for tax reform by promising a new tax bill this year, but he was short on specifics. Treasury sources suggest a corporate tax decrease to

30% from the present 37,5%. Jimson Gwebu, treasurer of the Swaziland Union of Financial Institutions and Allied Workers, said: "We need the company tax to be reduced to match that of neighbouring countries because we cannot see any investors coming here if we remain where we are."

No dissenting voices were raised against the R944,4m capital budget, of which R155,4m is for upgrading road infrastructure and R92m for the Komati River Basin programme, which includes construction of the Maguga dam.

The minister announced a slight increase in the budget deficit to "below the critical ratio of 5% of GDP". Government critic Mario Masuku, president of the banned Pudemo political party, said that the deficit of R276,2m was "unacceptable", but was pleased that spending priorities were education and training. He accepted the need for less onerous company tax.

Assuming a modest turnaround in Asian economies that import Swazi goods, Carmichael surmised 2% to 3% growth in the coming fiscal year after the previous year's estimated downturn.

"By the year 2022, the kingdom of Swaziland will be in the top 10% of the medium human development group of countries, founded on sustainable economic development, social justice and political stability," Carmichael predicted.

REST OF AFRICA

Planned Swazi chert mine causes concern

BO 16/3/99 (312)
Clash over the need for jobs and land preservation

James Hall

MBABANE — A clash between the need for jobs and environmental preservation is playing itself out in Swaziland where a Taiwanese company plans to mine green chert in the heart of the Malolotja Nature Reserve.

Pending approval by the Swaziland Environmental Authority, operations are set to begin next month in the northern Hhohho region. If it goes ahead Swaziland Greenstone Quarry will be Swaziland's first significant mining operation since the closure of Dvokolwako diamond mine in 1996. Michael Lee Enterprises obtained the greenstone quarry lease from King Mswati.

A study of SA and Swaziland geological formations found Malolotja was the only site available for mining high-quality green chert, which the company says is "much in demand in the east for jewellery and dimension stone (fashioned into slabs, tiles and ornaments)".

Green chert is fetching R6 000 a ton for dimension stone quality and R18/kg for jewellery quality.

The company expects to produce 300 tons a month and anticipates a 12-year lifespan for its quarry. The sale of 3 600 tons annually would yield revenues of R21,6m — equal to 0,7% of Swaziland's current annual export revenues. About 12% of gross sales will be paid to the Swazi government and government royalties over the quarry's lifespan are es-

timated at R67,2m, with a three-to six-fold increase depending on the quality of the mined stone.

Set against these benefits, says the Swaziland National Trust Commission which runs the reserve that is considered the crown jewel of Swaziland's park system, "Is the inescapable fact that it is illegal to mine in a nature reserve".

The commission says an environmental impact assessment by the Swaziland Environmental Authority predicts a loss of fertility over the stone stockpile area due to hydrocarbon pollution and a bad impact on animal breeding periods due to production noise. Environmentalists suggest political pressure and bribery have been applied to circumvent regulations prohibiting mining in protected areas.

The mining firm has proposed a range of mitigation measures, including suspending quarrying during the breeding periods of priority species.

Residents displaced by the reserve, who claim to have been "sacrificed for animals" and given little or no compensation, voted to support the mining at a meeting where Michael Lee Enterprises public relations officer Reuben Maphalala promised jobs for more than 100 people from the 70 families living near the reserve. A spokesman for conservation group Green Cross says employment should not come from a temporary mining operation, but by exploiting the tourist potential of the same area left in pristine condition.

AIDS poses serious crisis for Swaziland

James Hall

(312)

MBABANE — The first comprehensive review of the effect of AIDS on Swaziland's economy confirms what most employers already know: the disease is significantly compromising the Swazi work force.

One major manufacturing concern at the Matsapha Industrial Site says five workers a week die of AIDS-related illnesses.

The education ministry reports three to four AIDS deaths a week among the nation's 8 000 teachers.

A survey sponsored by Unicef and released last week says 293 000 Swazis out of a population of slightly less than 1-million are infected with HIV. AIDS will have "a severe social and economic impact between the years 2000 and 2015", with an estimated 30 000 to 40 000 deaths annually, says the report.

Swaziland has a work force of 80 000 in the public sector and 20 000 public servants.

"The Swaziland AIDS epidemic could be worse than in other countries due to the nation's small size, and the limited response to the epidemic," says the report.

The epidemic has made orphans of 112 000 children — 22% of all children below 15 years of age. About 4% to 5% of Swazi children are HIV-positive.

People with the greatest risk of contracting HIV are those between the economically productive ages of 15 to 29. The report blames government complacency, a culture of denial, the "low sociocultural status of women", and a lack of an AIDS strategy for the disease's proliferation.

Star 24/3/99
Tuberculosis killed more than 10 000 people in South Africa last year, but the disease can be controlled with good medical care, writes health reporter Anso Thom



PHOTOS:
 ZOE SELSKY

gled to sleep and had no energy. Sometimes I would sweat at night, I'd have headaches, sometimes a pain in my chest," he said.

Sibiya is one of thousands of people forced to give up their jobs because of TB. Living in Kiptown, he was diagnosed and put on a treatment programme with the help of the Emplisweni Community Project (Nguni for "Where you get life").

Project leader Jeffrey Mokoena assisted Sibiya by taking a sputum test which was sent off by the local clinic for testing.

After being diagnosed with TB, Sibiya stayed at a South African National Tuberculosis Association hospital for two months.

He was discharged and Mokoena now ensures that Sibiya takes his medication every day. "I feel better now and I have more energy," said Sibiya.

Mokoena and a group of community leaders started Emplisweni three years ago.

It started as a project to clean the garbage dumped on every corner. "It was creating a health hazard and we realised we needed to clean it if we wanted a healthier community," Mokoena said.

Emplisweni soon became involved in AIDS education in the informal settlements such as Angola, Mandela Square and Joe Slovo.

"I think everyone started taking us seriously when they saw that many people were dying from AIDS and TB," said Mokoena who also identified sexually transmitted diseases as a major health problem.

With unemployment one of the biggest problems in the densely populated settlements, Emplisweni now has 61 members who are trained in AIDS education, first aid and the Directly Observed Treatment Short-course (Dots) strategy, adopted by government to fight TB.

Emplisweni work hand in hand with the local clinic.

"My grandfather had TB and I remember how my grandmother used to shout at him because he didn't want to take his medication.

"This has helped me to understand TB patients better," said Mokoena.

"When I ask them why they haven't come for medication, they say 'Why should I? I don't have food, I'm not working.'"

Although funding is almost non-existent, local businesspeople have assisted the project with funds and food parcels.

"It's hard, but you have to go on. One of the people who was on the Dots programme died in January," Mokoena said.

THE FACTS ABOUT TB

- TB is curable.
- It kills more women than all the combined cases of maternal mortality.
- Someone in the world is infected with TB every second.
- TB kills about 10 000 South Africans each year, mainly young men and women.
- Women are more vulnerable to TB during pregnancy because pregnancy lowers their immune system.
- People who are HIV positive are more prone to developing TB.
- TB is the most common opportunistic infection and the biggest killer of people with AIDS.
- In 1997 there were 2,2 billion people infected with TB and 30,6 million with HIV in the world.
- More than 2 500 HIV-positive people died of TB in 1996 in South Africa.
- A TB patient is not infectious while under treatment.
- By weakening the immune system, HIV/AIDS was likely to cause 750 000 new TB cases globally.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- persistent cough
- thinness or weakness of whole body
- loss of appetite
- night sweats (even if it is cold)
- chest pains
- coughing up blood
- breathlessness

HOW IT IS DIAGNOSED

Microscopy is the best way to identify a TB bacilli on the patient's sputum. The SA National Tuberculosis Association uses lung x-rays to diagnose TB with sputum tests used in some cases to confirm the findings. Rapid confirmation of the results is vital.

FAMOUS EX-PATIENTS

President Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Cecil John Rhodes, Edgar Allan Poe, Eleanor Roosevelt, Louis XIV, Mozart, J.R.R. Tolkien, and HG Wells.

- A standardised, TB drug combination.
- Direct observation of treatment for at least the initial two months of treatment.
- A standardised recording and reporting system which allows assessment of treatment results and overall programme performance.
- TB patients are faced with the challenge of taking the combination medication every day for at least six months if they want to be sure of a cure.

Sadly, many patients stop taking their medication once they feel better, failing to complete their course. Once the symptoms return, the patient is usually diagnosed with multi-drug resistant (MDR) TB, which costs thousands of rands to treat with many patients dying. As a result the Dots strategy focuses on ensuring that TB patients

are observed and supported when taking their medication. Another serious complication of the TB problem in South Africa has been the emergence of MDR strains of the organism causing the disease. Treatment observers can be health workers, employers, colleagues, family members or any responsible member of the sufferer's community. The treatment of these patients costs at least 100 times as much as the cost of curing an ordinary TB patient infected with drug sensitive bacteria. Annually 2 000 new cases of the drug resistant strain are added to an already existing pool, at least half of whom die uncured within a few years.

Currently the cost for treating a new case of TB is about R250. Retreating a TB case comes to R500 and for MDR between R25 000 and R31 000. Fourie said that 90% of the problem was due to poor performance in managing the disease at district level. He accused clinics of gross wastage of drug stock, non-existent or incomplete case registers and poor service. He further called for an insistence on standardised procedures for the diagnosis and treatment of TB. "The real challenge is to convince health providers that even if they do their best, infection rates will increase in the medium term, but ultimately will start to decline. "Losing faith in the value of own effort is the biggest threat to achieving success," Fourie said. In South Africa it was thought that the spread of TB was linked to colonialism.

In particular the mining industry was directly responsible for the rapid spread of the disease. Poor ventilation, humidity, long working hours and close working proximity to the mines, as well as overcrowding and malnutrition in the compounds, created ideal conditions for TB. Additionally the migrant labour system, forced removals and the creation of peri-urban slums further disseminated the disease. World Health Organisation chief Gro Harlem Brundtland said last year that TB was a disease that many thought would disappear in our lifetime. "But TB is killing more people than at any other time with almost all the deaths preventable," she said. The number of TB patients that will die in this hour is equivalent to a Boeing 747 crashing.

According to Dr Bernard Fourie, director at the Medical Research Council's TB Research Programme, South Africa is hounded by one of the worst TB epidemics in the world. He estimated the number of new cases per year to be in the region of 180 000, more than double those observed in most other developing countries and up to 60 times higher than those currently in the United States or Europe. Fourie said the relentless expansion of the HIV/AIDS epidemic was turning the tide against the modest improvements recorded in some regions in Mpumalanga, North West and the Western Cape. "At least 40% of TB sufferers in South Africa are now also infected with HIV. TB/HIV co-infection in provinces such as KwaZulu Natal, Mpumalanga and Gauteng has reached even higher levels and has already led to sharp increases in TB rates," Fourie said. He said optimal TB control effort, with high cure rates and a significant decline in the transmission of HIV infection, would be required before stabilisation. An eventual downward turn in TB rates in the country might only become visible towards the end of this period. South Africa's attempt at addressing the epidemic has come in the form of the Directly Observed Treatment Short-course (Dots) strategy. Dots is an internationally recognised strategy and the best available to fight TB, according to Dr Ayanda Ntshaba, director-general in the national health department. Government's strategy has five core elements: ■ Commitment to sustained TB control; ■ Sputum microscopy to diagnose infectious patients;

■ A standardised, TB drug combination.

Swaziland loses urgently needed grants due to its perceived wealth

James Hall (312) BD 15/4/99

MBABANE — Swaziland is being denied access to urgently needed grant money because of its perceived affluence.

In response, the government has launched a campaign to prove to donor countries and world aid organisations that conditions are worse than they seem.

Already a badly needed highway from the capital, Mbabane, to the Ngwenya border post, which handles most motor traffic from SA, has been postponed by one fiscal year due to a change in Swaziland's loan status triggered by a solid economic performance.

The African Development Bank has disqualified Swaziland from receiving African Development Fund loans, serviced at 0,7% interest.

Swaziland's deficit of only 2,5% of gross domestic income has elevated the kingdom on a statistic basis into the development bank's category of "middle-income societies". Swaziland now qualifies only for loans repaid at 4% interest.

The finance ministry has complained that "external sponsorship" from donor nations has dried up due to the perceived improvement in Swaziland's economic status. The ministry has prepared a poverty assessment study to highlight the people's needs. About 66% of Swazis officially live below the poverty line.

A development bank human resources official, Alice Hamer, admitted that the statistics did not reflect the economic situation, but noted that this was not an isolated case, referring to SA. She promised a review.

Further complicating Swaziland's attempts to secure donor funds are objections from sponsors that the nation's approach to loan solicitation is ad hoc and uncoordinated, making the process vulnerable to political abuse.

In response, government spending is being disciplined along the guidelines of a development strategy and an upcoming revision of the economic and social reforms promised by Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini.

WORLD'S THIRD HIGHEST RATE OF HIV INFECTION

Swaziland faces crisis

CT 23/4/99

(312) (312)

MBABANE: With the constant flux of migrants between SA and other Southern African countries, the Aids problem is of growing concern.

ALTHOUGH Swaziland, with a population of less than one million, has the third-highest rate of HIV infection in the world, its government has been slow to deal with the problem.

More than 300 000 Swazis are already living with HIV and it is estimated that between 2000 and 2015, 30 000 to 40 000 people will die of Aids each year, according to a recent Unicef report.

"Aids has already caused a marked increase in mortality and morbidity, driving up healthcare costs and increasing demand for services, while large numbers of skilled personnel in public and private sectors are dying," says the report.

"There is no preparedness within government, which has a false sense of security that the ministry of health and social welfare is taking care of the issue."

Three to four of the country's teachers die each week. In manufacturing five skilled workers die weekly, the report said.

The Swaziland epidemic is worse than in many other countries because Swaziland is so small and because there has been a limited response from the government. Almost no studies have been done on the effects of HIV/Aids and very little money has been allocated for research.

The report estimates there will be 112 000 orphans, 22% of children under the age of 15, while 20 000 to 25 000 (four to five percent) of children in Swaziland are infected.

The cost of failing to develop a comprehensive strategy is enormous, including a loss of productivity, social unrest from marginalised children, high disease burden, an over-stretched health service

and job losses because of Aids-related diseases such as TB.

The report indicates that there are many barriers to effective control, one of them being denial.

Most people, including policy-makers, are unaware that almost one-third of the population is infected. There is also inconsistent support for HIV-positive people who have revealed their status to help educate the population.

A comprehensive plan to fight the disease still has to be drawn up.

Among the hurdles facing an effective policy are women's low status, widespread poverty and the dependence of rural households on remittances from migrant workers.

In response to the report Swazi Health Minister Phetsile Dlamini yesterday said a national committee had been established to review Aids strategies. — AIA, Independent Foreign Service, Sapa

Farmers turn to sugar in Swaziland

James Hall

(312) 80 3/5/99

MBABANE — The fad cultivation of sugar cane this past year is distorting Swaziland's agriculture-based economy by displacing other crops and making the sector vulnerable to world prices.

Sugar production is expected to reach a record 485 000 tons during the current cropping season, less than the anticipated 500 000 tons, but up from 475 785 tons last year.

Sugar is Swaziland's major export earner and the kingdom enjoys quotas in Europe and the US. About 174 000 tons are destined for the European Union under the Lomé Convention, while 20 000 tons will go to the US. About 35 000 tons are used domestically, while 17 000 tons are exported to other countries in the Southern African Customs Union.

But with sugar export quotas filled, excess product will have to compete on the world market at prevailing prices. Swaziland's product has a production price advantage because it is cheaper to produce sugar from cane than from the sugar beet grown in Europe. But lower prices may frustrate small farmers who are turning to cane cultivation in increasing numbers.

Last year King Mswati urged small farmers to form sugar-growing co-operatives. However, last week his Agriculture Minister, Roy Farkouris, pleaded with local farmers not to further displace their pineapple crop. This is seen as a U-turn by the kingdom from consolidation under sugar back towards diversification.

Swaziland braces for significant revenue cut

SA's new free trade agreement with the European Union will cause some uncomfortable ripples for its southern African neighbours

James Hall

MBABANE — Swaziland is bracing itself for at least a 14% cut in government revenue after its share of the Southern African Customs Union (Sacu) revenue pool is revised, says the kingdom's finance ministry.

The Sacu revenue pool is expected to drop 31% with the implementation of the European Union-SA Free Trade Agreement (EU-Safta).

A study on the effects of the agreement on the Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland states, compiled by the UK-based Institute of Developmental Studies and the Botswana Institute for Development Policy

Analysis, says that of the states, Swaziland will face the greatest percentile revenue loss when it is implemented.

Lesotho follows with a 12.9% decline in government revenues. Namibia will lose 8.6%, while Botswana, which depends the least on Sacu revenue, will lose 5.3% of its income from this source.

Swaziland's budget deficit of 0.5% of gross domestic product (GDP) will put its economy in a less critical position than Namibia, with a deficit of 6.9% and Lesotho, with a deficit of 4.5%. Loss of Sacu revenues will prompt a scramble for alternative revenue sources in these countries.

Botswana, with a budget surplus of 5% of

GDP, is in a good position to weather Sacu revenue losses.

In Swaziland, 50.4% of government revenue comes from Sacu, R1 221.5m out of R2 551.6m, according to the finance ministry's 1999/2000 budget.

If the EU-Safta includes protocol products and complete tariff elimination, Sacu will lose about 22.8% of its revenue.

To avoid a ballooning deficit, Finance Minister John Carmichael says he is looking at ways of diversifying the government's revenue base. Tax reform is key. "I will be proposing a number of tax reforms during the course of this year, reviewing both indirect and direct taxes."

However, the minister's parallel agenda is to lower taxes to attract foreign direct investment. Ministry sources suggest that when the new income tax bill is submitted to parliament, Swaziland's corporate tax rate will drop from 37% to 30%.

Among other nations, Lesotho and Namibia's corporate tax rates stand at 40% and 35% respectively. In Botswana, businesses are taxed at 25%.

Increased revenues, Carmichael says, "will be achieved only through widening the tax base."

Plans to increase efficiency of tax collections correspond to suggestions made in a study by the Institute of Developmental

Studies and the Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis.

The study urges the Swazi government to reassess public expenditure in light of declining Sacu revenues. The Central Bank of Swaziland has repeatedly complained about government expenditure.

About 14 major Swazi manufacturers were interviewed for the study, and none plan to relocate to SA as a result of EU-SA deal, though "three companies stated that they would not be able to compete with tariff free EU imports."

Finance principal secretary Musa Fakudze anticipates the effects of the EU-SA deal on Swazi exports will be minimal.

BD 7/5/99

Swazi parks project biggest in 30 years

James Hall

(312) 00 7/5/99

MBABANE — Five game parks and nature reserves are being combined to form the Lubombo Conservancy, a development regarded as Swaziland's biggest tourism initiative since independence in 1968.

At a recent signing ceremony, King Mswati inaugurated the parks and reserves in the lowveld Lubombo region as a single conservancy.

Staff from the different reserves are expected to be combined under one authority, although details have not yet been finalised. The fences separating the adjacent parks are being dismantled, while the more isolated portions are expected to be linked through land acquisition at a later stage.

At the heart of the 60 000ha attraction is Hlane Royal Game Park, previously the nation's largest game park and site of the traditional royal hunt.

Joined to Hlane will be Mlawula Nature Reserve, managed by the Swaziland National Trust Commission; Mbuluzi Game Reserve, operated on land leased from Tambukulu Sugar Estates; Sisa Ranch, managed by the department of veterinary and livestock services; and Shewula Community Game Reserve, operated by the area's residents on land given by a local chief.

Ted Reilly, founder of Swaziland Big Game Parks, which manages Hlane, said his parks drew 100 000 visitors annually. Tourism was the kingdom's "only long-term hope for self-sustainability". Tourism Minister George Vilakati said 1 000 jobs would be created.

The Lubombo Conservancy is an outgrowth of the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative, entered into by Swaziland, SA and Mozambique. It is part of the Maputo Corridor Programme. The agreement calls for a concerted three-nation effort to open the area to tourism.

Located at Swaziland's border with Mozambique, the Lubombo Conservancy may one day be incorporated into the three-nation "Peace Park" spanning Swaziland, Mozambique and SA.

The British Council is financing construction of accommodation at the Shewula portion of the conservancy, and at Mbuluzi, 20 sites are being developed for private lodges.

Coal leads the way as Swazi mines crank up mineral output

(312)
James Hall BD 13/6/99

MBABANE — Mineral production rose in Swaziland's mining sector last year, led by coal, according to figures released by the geological survey and mines department.

The kingdom's only coal mine, Maloma, produced 410 021 metric tons, more than double the output of 203 115 metric tons in 1997.

The mine's high-quality anthracite is being sought by customers in the UK, Brazil and Europe. With a change from open cast operations to underground mining, Maloma is now geared up to produce 40 000 tons a month.

The Mpaka Collieries Mine remains closed, with 5-million tons of its estimated 35-million ton reserves extracted. The natural resources ministry reports investors have shown interest in reopening the coke mine, whose 31-year lifespan is based on an annual extraction rate of 165 000 tons.

Production of chrysotile asbestos — the industry's top revenue earner — at the Bulembu mine was 27 693 metric tons last year, up from 25 888 the year before. A slight decline in exports to the UK, Brazil, SA and the Far East was offset by a rise in world asbestos prices.

Though production of quarried stone was halved in the last quarter of 1998, total output for the year was 453 334 metric tons, off slightly from the previous year's 455 753 but more than double the 1996 output.

The stone is used exclusively in local public works projects, and demand is expected to be stable. The Maguga dam, an outgrowth of the Komati Basin Treaty signed by Swaziland and SA, will continue to be a major customer until its completion in 2001. Three new highways are planned or are being built. One will link the capital Mbabane with the border post at Oshoek, which is most heavily used by SA traffic.

The past year saw no gold or diamond output, the latter because of the Dvokolwako diamond mine's continued closure. The reopening of the Ngwenya iron ore mine awaits new technology, to make the excavation of low-grade ore profitable once again.

Cheap Swaziland fuel draws in the neighbours

James Hall

(312)

MBABANE — Swaziland's petrol price, which is about 27% cheaper than SA's, is proving a boon for locals and an attraction for motorists from neighbouring SA and Mozambique.

Swaziland's unleaded petrol is R1,99/l against SA's price of R2,58 and the Swazi tourism ministry has begun to mention cheap fuel prices in its campaign to promote the kingdom. SA's petrol rose this month following an increase in world crude oil prices. Another price rise is expected later this year.

The Swaziland government, which does not tax fuel heavily, has no plans to raise prices. World oil price fluctuations are absorbed by an energy slate, a cash reserve controlled by the natural resources ministry. Ministry principal secretary Sandile Ceko said a 7c/l fuel increase announced by Finance Minister John Carmichael in his budget speech to parliament in February — a 5c fuel tax and a 2c increase in the Motor Vehicle Accident Fund — would be entirely absorbed by government's fuel slate. "Retailers and consumers will not feel the increase."

Mozambique's fuel prices vary by location, with the top price reported at Beira, where a litre of unleaded gasoline costs R7.

BD 17/5/99

REST OF AFRICA

Expert takes Swazi hot seat

John Carmichael aims to attract foreign direct investment and build entrepreneurship

James Hall

MBABANE — New Finance Minister John Carmichael stands out in Swazi politics as a man entrusted with a cabinet hot seat even though he is not one of the Dlamini royal clan.

Locals tend to think he was chosen for his expertise. Now the gentlemanly minister is seeking to create a culture of entrepreneurship among the 1-million subjects of King Mswati III.

It takes a certain evangelical fervour to promote the economy of a tiny landlocked kingdom over powerful neighbours, but the son of devout Christians lauds Swazi virtues when he says: "Our nation remains one of the most socially integrated societies in the region. We have an educated, highly motivated workforce capable of raising its standard of living once people have learnt their own capabilities."

Foreign direct investment, the second pillar of his policy to pull the Swazi economy out of its doldrums, is being sought through incentives, but he is down to earth about prospects in a regional recession. Annual growth of 2% to 3% is expected, and Carmichael has directed the largest share, 27% of the R2,82bn budget to education and training.

Carmichael — who was raised in Swaziland's rural Lubombo region near Mozambique, and educated at a mission school built by his father on their farm — believes the culture of entrepreneurship will take root because expectations have changed, most of the population is literate and education levels are rising. Job creation, however, is a paramount need with unemployment of 45%.

He believes Swaziland has attractions for foreign investors. His baritone voice grows impassioned as he emphasises Swaziland's strength in having markets where it enjoys guaranteed sales. "We are nowhere near meeting our quotas, such as beef, sugar and textiles to the European Union. Other countries have filled their quotas, they cannot expand. Their companies should relocate to Swaziland."

Carmichael points to a law recently passed by parliament to safeguard investors, which resulted from business fears about land confiscation in Africa. He will also have to shepherd amendments to income tax and corporate tax laws through parliament this year. "The goal is to achieve a lower tax rate for all taxpayers, with minimal loss on government

revenue. This will be achieved only through widening the tax base. The primary aim is to make Swaziland attractive to investors," he says.

Several thorny issues must be dealt with to achieve the twin goals of accelerated foreign direct investment and Swazi entrepreneurial growth. Privatisation of state-owned enterprises is the sort of political football many a finance minister has fumbled, but Carmichael is championing a fund into which government will offload its minority stakes in companies it co-owns.

This fund will finance small entrepreneurial projects. "Proceeds of any future divestitures will be injected into the fund, which will become a vehicle of people-based capitalism."

The opinion of the Swazi business community is that Carmichael has the stuff to do the job, but like all nonmembers of the ruling Dlamini clan he may be hobbled by a lack of political clout.

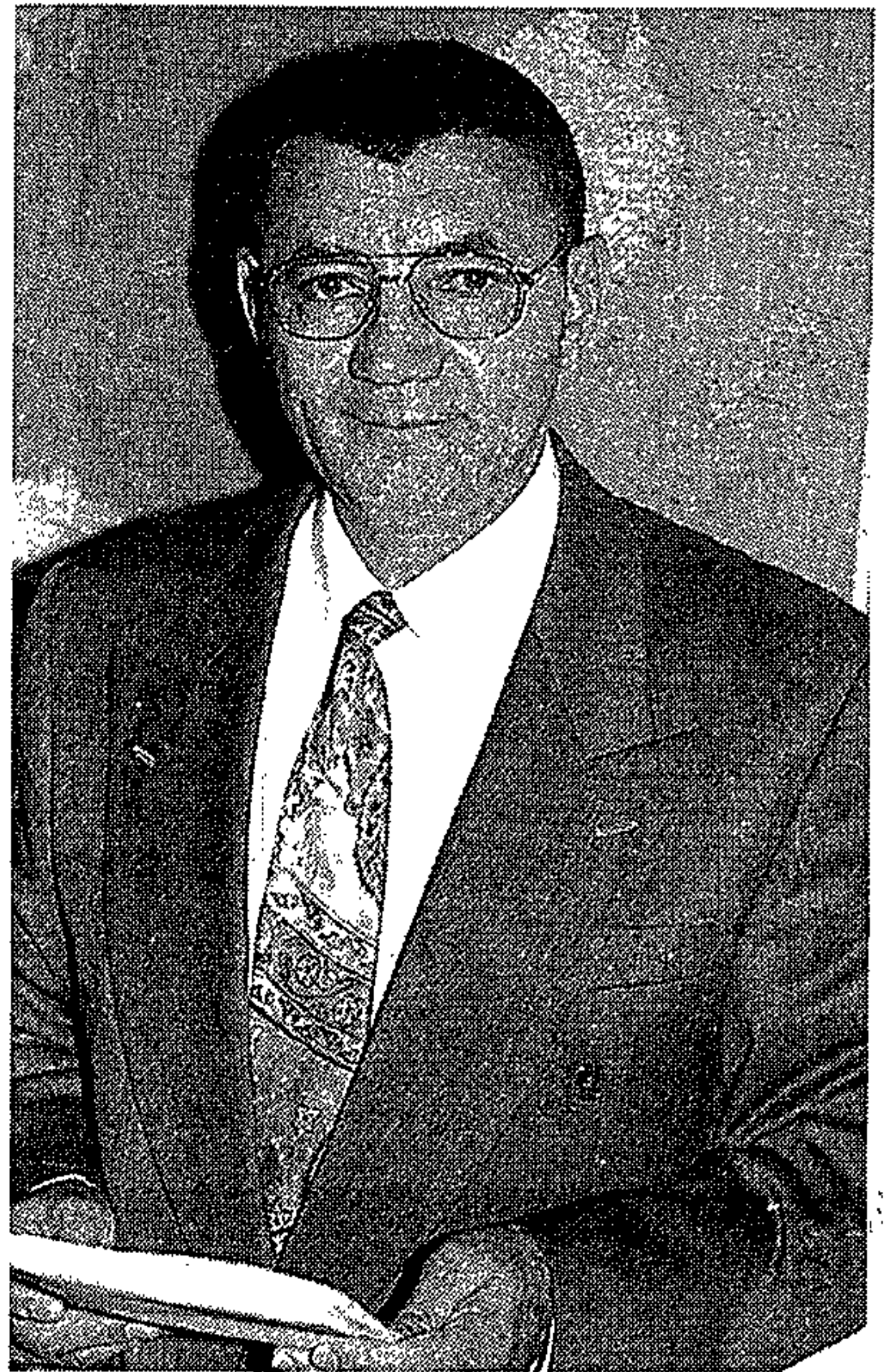
"We trust John to do the right thing," says the director of a manufacturing concern at the Matsapa industrial site. "But can he stand up to palace interference in economic matters?"

Clashing interests may prevent Carmichael from delivering on one of his most solemn promises — that the new income tax bill will be tabled before parliament by month's end.

With only a few parliamentary sessions remaining and reported backstage wrangling over the bill's provisions, the deadline is somewhat elusive.

However, Carmichael's last job as housing minister was a testing ground, a tenure filled with controversy both political — he had to quell corruption scandals involving the city councils of Manzini and Mbabane — and personal — his family was awarded a monopoly on the country's lottery, raising criticism over apparent cronyism in the cabinet. Yet he has emerged politically unscathed.

Carmichael promises the culture of entrepreneurship will be enhanced this year, with legislation to transform the somnolent



John Carmichael, Swaziland's finance minister, has big plans for the little kingdom.

Picture: JAMES HALL

Swaziland stock market into a fully fledged stock exchange. "Given the negotiations with a major sugar company, it is anticipated that the market capitalisation will increase from R50m to more than R1bn," he says.

The man whose signature will soon appear on Swazi currency is leaving his mark on the economy in other ways, through efforts to awaken Swazis to their entrepreneurial potential, so freeing them of donor dependency, and with investor-enticing policies. "Poverty alleviation is one of the key aims for the immediate future," he says.

ANC swipe at bosses, union

(312)
Renee Grawitzky
BD 20/6/99
AFRICAN National Congress secretary-general Kgalema Motlanthe yesterday criticised management and workers for the killing of a National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) leader at West Driefontein gold mine last week.

Speaking at a service for the NUM's regional chairman Selby Mayise, Motlanthe said police should investigate "misinformation" by Gold Field management on changes to the Mineworkers Provident Fund, the issue which ignited workers.

He said: "It is all the more tragic that workers who, prior to the emergence of the union, were subjected to exploitation and oppression, should be involved in the murder of one dedicated to their emancipation."

Management, he said, had a responsibility to communicate the facts about the changes to the fund, instead of allowing rumours that Mayise and the union had taken workers' money to continue.

Union sources said disgruntled members were moving from the NUM to rival organisations like the United Workers Union of SA (Uwusa) and Mouthpeace Workers Union.

Mayise's death is the second killing of a NUM leader on the West Rand. Last month a branch chairman at Deelkraal was shot.

Fewer Swazi citizens have jobs, finance ministry finds

Employers body warns of social instability, writes James Hall

MBABANE — The Swaziland finance ministry reports that fewer citizens were working last year than the year before, though its Central Statistical Office admits employment figures for the thriving informal sector are imprecise.

Excluding citizens employed in SA mines, whose numbers are diminishing due to retrenchments, 107 000 people are at work in the kingdom. This figure is off by 4 000 jobs from the previous year. Among the employed, 63 500 work in the private sector, 26 400 are public sector government employees, while 3 000 are soldiers and an estimated 17 000 people are employed in the informal sector.

Manufacturing remains the biggest employer, followed by agriculture and distribution. The latter two sectors, along with forestry and local mining, saw a decrease in total workforce of 5,5% last year. However, this was balanced by a 5,5% increase in employment in the manufacturing, construction, transport monetary and services sectors. A 30% increase in transportation sector jobs in the previous year is credited to a proliferation of minibuses serving or linking urban areas.

The ministry estimates that while formal sector employment has declined, informal sector employment is growing at 4,5% a year. Jobs in the sector range from small farmers, cattle owners on Swazi national land, small traders and street vendors, domestic workers, and a hodgepodge of menial and unskilled labours. Swaziland's unemployment rate continues to

fluctuate between 40% and 45%. Of the unemployed, 54% are between the ages of 12 and 24, and 29% are between 25 and 34 years of age, reflecting the demographics of Swaziland's predominantly young population. However, the Federation of Swaziland Employers notes that the large number of unemployed young people in the country present a worrisome potential for social instability.

A spokesman for the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions says of the latest employment figures that declining job opportunities were a result of moribund government economic policies, and the wariness of foreign business people to invest in an undemocratic state." In response, a finance ministry official cited several agreements entered into by the government — such as the Lubombo spatial developmental initiative — which are geared towards increasing employment opportunities.

Swazi prince challenges Mswati

James Hall

MBABANE — For the second time in as many months, Constitutional Review Commission chairman Prince Mangaliso Dlamini has used King Mswati's absence from the country to challenge the king's year-end deadline for completion of the commission's work and to impose press restrictions.

While King Mswati was in Pretoria at the presidential inauguration of Thabo Mbeki, Mangaliso told a gathering of chiefs he may "simply ask the king for an extension of time to deliver a draft constitution "if it's time we need".

The chairman blasted as "liars who do not know the facts" the critics of his decision to ban news cov-

erage when Swazis submit their views to the commission. But he acknowledged there is nothing in the government gazette establishing the commission that prohibits press coverage.

One of the chiefs in attendance, Simelane Galena, himself a commissioner, announced an extension of the commission's press policy banning publication of commission deliberations or preliminary reports, calling these "secrets which must not fall into the hands of Swaziland's enemies".

An editor of the Swazi Observer, which is owned by Tibiyo TakaNgwane, the royal conglomerate headed by Mangaliso, said: "The prince is a classic autocrat who has always despised the press because

he cannot abide criticism. The idea that the people's submissions are state secrets which must be kept from Swaziland's enemies is bizarre, given the purpose of the (commission) is to allow all Swazis to publicly express their views."

Mangaliso has called the press ban "a trivial matter". Reporters exposed the ban to the king when he returned from an overseas trip in May, prompting the monarch to deny knowledge of the ban.

The commission's desire to ignore the deadline appeared to be dashed when Mswati, speaking through his brother Prince Phiwokwakhe while he was in SA, said: "We look forward to the report of the commission by the end of this year."

(312) BD 22/6/99

Aid eases food crisis in Lesotho

(312)

Samuel 23/6/99

MASERU — Lesotho faces a cereal shortage of more than 162 000 tons this year to feed its population, a newsletter from the national early warning unit of the Lesotho Disaster Management Authority said yesterday.

The letter said the cereal shortage would have to be covered through imports from South Africa or international food aid.

The cereal imports to be undertaken by major millers include 134 800 tons of maize and 70 450 tons of wheat. The United Nations world food programme will provide 22 900 tons of maize.

The early warning unit said the

cause of the shortage was attributed to the fact that a sizeable portion of the crop, especially maize, was damaged beyond recovery during the long dry spell that affected the country during January to March.

Assisting farmers

As part of the Lesotho government's plan to assist farmers in boosting agricultural production, minister of agriculture cooperative and land reclamation Kelebone Maope announced the government was seriously considering ways of assisting farmers to prepare to plough their seeds in the coming summer season.

The business community was also hit by last year's political turmoil in the kingdom.

Two major agricultural projects, which were to have been implemented with the help of the World Bank and Japan, were disrupted as well.

Meanwhile, the disaster management authority provided emergency food to more than 65 000 needy families in the lowland district of Lesotho.

More than 40 000 tons of maize was distributed to needy families, targeting specifically the elderly and the disabled. Able-bodied people will be provided with 50kg maize meal rations. — Sapa

Swazis get new business

~~318~~ (312)

James Hall

MBABANE — Swaziland's economic performance may be lacklustre, but this has not deterred new business people, as evidenced by a 38% increase in registered companies.

Releasing figures for the first half of 1999, ending June 15, the justice ministry, which registers companies, reported 444 new companies, up from 320 last year.

There are 15 600 local and foreign-owned companies registered in Swaziland. The number of nonoperational companies is not known.

The registrar of companies for the justice ministry, Robert Dlamini, attributed the rise in company registrations to proliferating small and medium enterprises.

There were a few new loan programmes to assist small entrepreneurs, he said. "Their impact is reflected in the rising number of small and medium companies being registered."

Major foreign direct investment in Swaziland accounted for few new registrations.

However, he said: "We are also seeing a trend among foreigners who seek Swaziland residency permits to set up phoney paper companies under the pretext that they have legitimate business in the kingdom."

BD 28/6/99

First victory for Swazi environment watchdog

James Hall

MBABANE — The Swazi-land Environmental Authority has announced its first major environmental accomplishment.

It involves three major manufacturing firms that, by their own admission, were polluting the nation's waterways.

The relatively new environmental authority said that paper pulp manufacturer Sappi Usutu, garment manufacturer Natex and Swazi Paper Mills no longer discharge effluent into Swaziland's rivers.

The country relies on irrigation from this source for its key agricultural sector. About half of all Swazis rely on untreated water fetched from rivers for domestic use.

Sappi Usutu admitted to discharging oil and chemical pollutants into the heavily-utilised Usuthu River — mostly through spillage from storage tanks.

Monitor

At the urging of the environmental authority, established in 1996 to monitor the kingdom's ecosystems, the firms installed waste management machinery.

Jameson Vilakati, chairman of the environmental authority, said: "The Usuthu River is no longer contaminated by the three companies.

"This is a great achievement for us as it means clean water for the people."

Natex was dumping non-toxic chemical dyes used in garment manufacturing, tinting the river assorted colours.

Environmental concerns have been given new impetus in the government's soon-to-be-launched economic and social reform agenda, after having been given a lower priority in preference to luring foreign direct investment.

"We are slowly but surely getting co-operation from companies in an effort to protect the environment," said Vilakati.

Row shatters AIDS complacency

James Hall

(312)

MBABANE — The Swazi business community's tendency to deny the severity of the AIDS crisis has been shaken after the shut down of the largest manufacturing concern in the Matsapha Industrial Complex, Fridge Master, following a row between management and workers over the epidemic.

According to one AIDS activist, workers at the company accused management of "insulting" them by going public with statistics on AIDS and HIV infections within the company's sprawling refrigerator assembly complex.

One third of Swaziland's 1-million population is infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, according to a United Nations (UN) report released in March.

Health Minister Phetsile Dlamini disputes the UN's findings and says the prevalence of AIDS in Swaziland is 22.5%.

The Worldwatch Institute in the US says Swaziland has zero-pop-

ulation growth as a result of deaths caused by the AIDS epidemic. The UN blames the disease's prevalence on government complacency and Swazi society's disdain for condom use.

Alerted by radio funeral notices placed as an employee service by Fridge Master, MP Rodgers Masebula raised a motion in the House of Assembly to compel Enterprise and Employment Minister Lutfo Dlamini to investigate a "mysterious chemical" that was allegedly killing workers at the company.

However, when Dlamini sought clarification on the motion, MPs insisted that they only wanted to hear about the rumoured chemical and not any other cause of death.

Musa Hope, executive director of the Federation of Swazi Employers, said it was "unfortunate that MP Masebula used a rumour to single out Fridge Master for supposedly being responsible for the deaths of workers."

Fridge Master's CEO Geoff Mangani denied that unknown chemi-

cals were killing employees and said the company's workplace and products conformed to exacting European Union safety standards. Mangani said 17 workers died of AIDS-related diseases last year. He said seven had died this year.

Calling Mangani's statement "irresponsible and defamatory", workers downed tools for two days and demanded an apology.

In turn, Fridge Master labelled the work stoppage an illegal strike and refused to pay wages.

Workers claim they were then locked out after an order by management that they return home for a cooling-off period. They have filed a certificate of unresolved dispute with the labour ministry.

Newspaper editorials condemned Mangani's candour as "cultural insensitivity", with some suggesting Fridge Master workers would be stigmatised for "working at that AIDS place". The Swaziland Federation of Labour said that AIDS talk would deter foreign direct investment.

Swazi rights 'marginalised'

James Hall

21/7/99

(312)

MBABANE — Clauses calling for progress towards statutory human rights and unfettered rights for political parties have allegedly been marginalised from Swaziland's long-awaited national development strategy, say sources.

The strategy is designed to steer Swaziland's economic and social growth for the next quarter century.

Palace advisors to King Mswati have objected to chapters recommending political and social liberalisation.

The strategy was to have been launched by King Mswati a week ago. Officially, the launch was postponed because of palace mourning over the death of one of King Sobhuza II's last remaining wives.

Mario Masuku, president of the outlawed political party Pudemo, cited intense opposition from the Swaziland National Council Advisory Committee, the monarch's hand-picked inner council, as the reason for the delay.

The council majority objected that the strategy's clauses dealing with political issues pre-empted the work of the Constitutional Review Commission — which is hearing submissions from Swazis with the intent of formulating a new government document — and called for deletions.

The strategy was initiated by then-prime minister Obed Dlamini, whose relative political liberalism was said to have infuriated the king's council.

Earlier this year, he was made head of the illegal political party the Ngwane National Congress.

The strategy has been complemented by Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini's own document, titled the Economic and Social Reform Agenda.

At a recent press conference, King Mswati appeared to downplay the importance of the strategy, saying that it was merely an expression of people's opinions, not policy.

The Human Rights Association of Swaziland cautioned against the deletion of human rights clauses.

Swaziland cuts its company tax to 30%

DD 22/7/99 (312)

James Hall

MBABANE — Swaziland has joined other members of the Southern African Customs Union in cutting the rate of corporate tax, signalling a growing harmonisation of policies in the five-nation trading bloc.

Finance Minister John Carmichael recently announced a corporate tax rate cut from 37% to 30% to be included in a tax bill soon to be tabled in Parliament. The new company tax rate will bring Swaziland in line with SA where companies are also taxed at 30%. It will also improve its position in relation to other regional economies.

Of the customs union countries — SA, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho and Swaziland — Namibia has the highest rate of 40% and Botswana the lowest of 15%. Botswana companies customarily pay an Additional Company Tax of 10%, making for an effective rate of 25%. Botswana's industries, which produce "approved manufactured items", are taxed at a nominal 5% rate.

Lesotho's dual corporate tax stands at 35% for most businesses and a special 15% rate for manufacturers.

Carmichael said in February his tax reforms would make Swaziland more attractive to foreign direct investors.

A government economist who is pushing for a special low tax rate for manufacturers, similar to Lesotho's and Botswana's, says: "Welcome as the corporate tax reduction is, it gives us tax equality with other regional players, rather than a dramatic advantage."

While some Swazi companies have

expressed disappointment that the new corporate tax rate will not be retroactive to the last tax year, which ended on June 30, most expressed relief that the reform has been announced.

Musa Hlope, executive director of the Federation of Swazi employers, says the tax reduction will spur economic growth by freeing up money for factory expansion and other reinvestment. "Companies have been operating on barest margins (because of) high corporate taxes," he says.

"Now their situation will improve, which will be an impetus for better economic growth in Swaziland."

Employers are pressing for a still lower company tax, saying that would create a domino effect of reinvestment leading to higher government revenues, and lower unemployment and crime.

A spokesman for Standard Bank says the lower corporate tax, and an expected lower income tax will facilitate savings, now at an historic low in the kingdom, and so boost reserves.

Further alignment of the union's economic policies is expected as SA's neighbours come under pressure to diversify their revenue bases. This will, in part, stem from the decline in income from the union's common customs and excise revenue kitty when the trading arrangement is reformed.

These countries have already expressed their intention to introduce value added tax. Business organisations, such as the SA Chamber of Business, have suggested that the same rate of VAT as in SA — of 14% — should be charged in the union.

Efforts to oust Swazi prime minister fail

BD 5/8/99 (312)

James Hall

MBABANE — A first parliamentary vote of no-confidence in Swaziland history against a prime minister has been narrowly avoided by incumbent Sibusiso Dlamini and signals bolder steps by his enemies in government and royal circles to unseat him.

No Swazi prime minister has yet served his full five-year term of office.

A three-year stint is the norm, and August is usually the month when King Mswati announces government changes. Dlamini was appointed prime minister in August 1996. He was recalled from Washington, where he served as an executive with the World Bank.

Dlamini spearheaded fiscal reform and ordered cutbacks on frivolous government spending and official perks, such as expensive junkets to foreign lands undertaken by officials at public expense. The cost-cutting moves have been met with resentment by former beneficiaries in government.

At Mswati's palace, the Swaziland national council standing committee, a powerful band of royal advisors to the king, have been critical of Dlamini for not burying the National Development Strategy of his liberal predecessor, former prime minister Obed Dlamini, who now heads the illegal political party, the Ngwane National Congress.

The development strategy was near-

ly launched by Mswati last month, but was cancelled at the eleventh hour, ostensibly to observe royal mourning over the death of one of King Sobhuza's wives. The development strategy notes that "Swaziland's dual system of government is a hindrance to economic progress", and implies royal advisors and the chieftaincy system must give way to a modern elected government.

The king's advisors in the national council have condemned the report, particularly clauses calling for the re-establishment of statutory human rights removed by Sobhuza's Decree of 1973, as unnecessary in light of the work of the Constitutional Review Commission, which considers such matters.

Angered by the cancellation of a workshop by the prime minister, who blamed the parliamentary leadership of House Speaker Mgabhi Dlamini and Senate Speaker Mnti Mswani for not following procedures for such outings, MPs called for the historic vote of no-confidence. The motion was raised by MP Marwick Khumalo and seconded by MP Mfomfo Nkambule, a royal appointee to parliament. Khumalo has been an outspoken critic of the prime minister, whom he has blamed for his company's loss of a national cellular phone contract to MTN.

Dlamini avoided the vote of no-confidence by promising to arrange another workshop for parliamentarians.

Mbabane faces bus blockade

James Hall

MBABANE — The capital of Swaziland is bracing itself for a second public transport blockade in two months as tensions escalated in a dispute between busses and minibuses taxis.

In late July Mbabane was shut down for almost an entire business day as traffic arteries leading into and out of the city were blocked by abandoned buses, while drivers staged a protest in the city centre.

Police were helpless to counter the unprecedented city-wide blockage.

Appeals by mayor Solomon Nxumalo and Transportation Minister Peter Dlamini, who has promised to attend to bus owners' demands, led to a "temporary postponement" of the Mbabane bus blockage, according to the Swazi-

land Commercial Amadoda Road Transport Association.

Last week the kingdom's second largest city, Manzini, was blockaded and bus drivers have threatened another capital closure "without warning".

Bus owners are demand stiffer regulation of minibuses taxis, which have increased over the last two years.

"Kombis depart whenever they like, pose a danger at overcrowded bus ranks and steal bus passengers," said a spokesman for Mbabane bus operators, Hitler Dlamini.

Since January buses on many routes have reduced their fares by 30% in an effort to win back customers.

Crisis meetings between government officials and public transportation representatives on an almost daily basis have proved fruitless.

New Swazi bill proposes death for rapists who pass on HIV

(92) (312)
James Hall

MBABANE — Convicted rapists who infect their victims with the HIV virus will face death by hanging in Swaziland when the Public Health Bill is passed.

Also facing the hangman will be those convicted of indecent assault, sodomy and incest who infect victims with the virus that leads to AIDS.

The Human Rights Association of Swaziland is protesting against the bill and says that the kingdom is a signatory of a United Nations (UN) accord banning the death penalty.

However, the Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse, which spearheads awareness of rape and crime affecting Swazi women, supports the bill.

Death will apply whether the convicted rapist is aware of his own HIV status or not but the bill is silent about people who know they have AIDS and pass it on through consensual sex.

The UN Children's Fund estimates one third of the Swazi population is infected with HIV. The ministry of health's estimate is lower at 25%.

The last execution was in 1973, but Justice Minister Chief Maweni Simelane announced its revival when he advertised in foreign publications last year for a hangman.

BB 19/8/99

Swaziland sets out to woo foreign investment

(312) ED STODDARD

CT (BR) 24/8/99

Mbabane - Swaziland would woo badly needed foreign investment, the Investment Promotion Authority has said as it struggles to stimulate a sluggish economy in a country that is becoming poorer each year.

Last year the economy grew by 2,3 percent, lagging behind growth in population of 2,7 percent, according to the country's central bank.

"We are trying to create an investment environment in which investors can feel safe and secure," said Bheki Dlamini, the general manager of the Swaziland Investment Promotion Authority.

Foreign investment in 1997, the last year for which there are full figures, fell to \$81 million from \$118 million in 1996.

Dlamini said the government was trying to crack-down on crime in Swaziland, which, although not at the high levels that plague South Africa, is still regarded as a deterrent to potential investors.

He also said the government was investing in infrastructure, and had recently completed a new highway linking the capital Mbabane with Manzini, Swaziland's biggest city.

Other initiatives included a bill before parliament to reduce corporate tax to 30 percent from 37,5 percent. "Reducing corporate tax to 30 percent will bring us more in line with tax rates in the region," Dlamini said.

Companies that met a number of criteria, including "significant levels" of investment and that created jobs, might also enjoy a five-year tax holiday. "This tax holiday is discretionary. There are no hard rules regarding it, but we look at a number of factors and add them up," he said.

Investors could also bring in their required capital equipment and raw materials duty free.

Unemployment stood at about 40 percent, he said, and would probably rise as thousands of Swazis working in South African gold mines faced retrenchment in the wake of falling bullion prices.

"One of our key objectives is to create employment, so we want to encourage investment in labour-intensive industries."

Dlamini said the government was targeting manufacturing and textiles as key sectors it wished to promote to alleviate joblessness.

He said the focus was also on tourism. "Swaziland is ... steeped in traditional culture and we are trying to market this". - Reuters

Young Swazi activists rock the boat

Bheki Makhubu

A powerful clique of young political activists has emerged in Swaziland, challenging the country's authoritarian system and threatening to disrupt King Mswati III's rule.

A group of MPs in the Swazi House of

Assembly recently almost proposed a vote of no confidence in Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini whose government has had a bumpy ride since taking office last November.

The MP who proposed the motion, Marwick Khumalo, represents Swaziland's traditional capital Lobamba, and is the son of one of King Sobhuza's most loyal servants.

While he professes loyalty to King Mswati III, he is advocating for a change of guard in the king's advisers, saying the older generation that advises and runs the government is out of touch with the world today.

Khumalo is also a leader of a so-called cultural group, Sibahle Sinje (We are as good as we are), formed in 1996 to put pressure on the king.

The group professes to have no political agenda, and that its intention is to protect all things Swazi.

Sibahle Sinje has a strong presence in Parliament after many of its members stood in the last elections.

While they do not have a majority, the group's members are outspoken.

The organisation has been allowed to hold public rallies and meetings without interference from the police.

Dlamini has declared war on Sibahle Sinje, labelling Khumalo and the group his sworn enemies.

Illegal mining defies tradition

Desperation brings change for many Swazis

James Hall

MBABANE — A "village" of diamond scavengers which sprung up around the Dvokolwako diamond mine has grown so fast that it is now the largest informal settlement in Swaziland's northeastern Hhohho region.

Its residents are illegally reviving the moribund gemstone mining sector in defiance of government, police and traditional authorities. In addition, hundreds of SA prospectors have joined the Swazis digging to extract precious stones.

In a nation where unemployment runs at 45%, entire families now live in the inverted earthen pyramid where opencast mining was carried out until three years ago. Waiting nearby are "agents" from SA who purchase the gems.

No formal gem or precious metal mining is currently done in Swaziland. Citing declining gold prices, the Canadian firm Southern Era closed its Swazi operations last month.

The Dvokolwako mine was closed in 1996 when the opencast system brought diminishing returns.

Commissioner of mines Aaron Vilakati, who advises King Mswati on the granting of mining licences, feels

the mine is still viable if an investor reopens it as a small or medium operation with reduced overheads.

But the mine's infrastructure is being destroyed as squatters demolish structures to get building materials. Government's response has been to send two policemen to disperse the prospectors. Outnumbered one thousand to one, they were chased away by squatters.

All minerals in Swaziland are legally owned by the king, who holds them in trust for the Swazi nation. The scavengers' village at Dvokolwako has shocked traditional authorities who believe its residents are stealing from the king.

Natural Resources and Energy Minister Prince Guduza has since promised parliament the army will close the Dvokolwako settlement, and put an end to illegal scavenging, but no soldiers have appeared to interrupt the round-the-clock operations of hopeful diamond seekers.

At the mine children play and adults laugh and banter while they toil. When reminded that the diamonds she hopes to find with a pickaxe belong to her king, Winnie Ginindza replies, "We love and respect our king, but we are starving."

Swaziland launches development plan

(312)

BD 20/8/99

James Hall

MBABANE — The Swazi government's national development strategy, a blueprint of social and economic goals to guide the kingdom over the next quarter century, was launched by King Mswati on Friday.

Begun under the administration of Prime Minister Obed Dlamini seven years ago, the policy recommendations were assembled from submissions by grassroots organisations, employer and labour bodies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and church groups.

Many of the development strategy's recommendations have already been translated into legislation, or are being executed through existing programmes.

Sections of the development strategy calling for political reforms have been marginalised because government feels they precipitate the work under way by the Constitutional Review commission.

While the commission assembles its draft constitution, the development strategy's call for a "universally accepted bill of rights" has been deleted from the official document.

Stakeholders who contributed to the strategy protested the exclusion of political sections at a meeting before the launch. Musa Hlope, executive director of the Swaziland Federation of Employers, urged an audience with the king to press for incorporation of the development strategy into the constitutional commission's draft constitution.

Jan Sithole, secretary-general

of the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions, another contributor to the strategy, said the federation would disassociate itself from the document if political sections are sidelined.

The development strategy seeks to lessen Swaziland's economic dependence on SA, reduce the kingdom's 45% unemployment rate, improve education and health care, empower women, reform the public service and tackle the AIDS epidemic that threatens to frustrate all attempts at nation-building.

The plan calls for government to rely more on NGOs to increase the supply of drinking water to a targeted 60% of Swazis, and extend sanitation to 75% of the population.

The nation's school curriculum is to be reorientated toward the teaching of technical and vocational skills "required for the marketplace".

A devolution of governing powers from a centralised bureaucracy in Mbabane to local authorities is recommended, especially to facilitate urban development by giving municipalities freer rein to meet the housing shortage.

Claiming that the quality of Swaziland agricultural products is superior to that of neighbouring countries, the strategy calls for increased agricultural productivity. This is to be achieved in part by the commercialisation of peasant farms on under-utilised Swazi national land.

The strategy recognises the primacy of agriculture in Swaziland's economy, but calls for economic diversification through industrialisation.

Swaziland to end telecoms monopoly (312)

006/9/99

Post and Telecommunications pending

James Hall

MBABANE — The dismantling of Swaziland's telecommunications monopoly will go into effect with the pending passage of the Post and Telecommunications Act, signalling a major step towards the government's goal of privatising public enterprises.

Tourism, Communication and Environmental Affairs Minister George Vilakati predicts swift passage for the legislation. Recently, Vilakati split the Swaziland Post and Telecommunications Corporation into its postal and telecommunications divisions which operate separately.

A monopoly since its inception, Swaziland's phone company is a stakeholder in cellphone company MTN Swaziland, which began operations late last year.

Phone users have long complained of inefficient service, and international callers were not alerted to the new numbering prefixes in January this year, leading to the kingdom's virtual disappearance from the world's telecommunications system.

However, it was government's pursuit of national development strategy goals which precipitated the move to split the company, and not consumer complaints, Vilakati said.

The Swaziland Water Board, in turn, will soon lose its monopoly over water distribution, according to Housing and Urban Development Minister Stella Lukhele. Lukhele says the call for the end of monopolistic public enterprises the world over has proven irresistible.

The Swaziland Royal Insurance Company will also lose its monopoly once parliament passes the Insurance and Pensions Bill, expected later this year.

The Swaziland Dairy Board made its first move toward privatisation when it separated its commercial operations from its regulatory and dairy development sector. Dairy Board general manager Nicholas Gumede said the move became effective on August 1. At present the royal conglomerate Tibiyo TakaNgwane owns 35% of it, in partnership with an Italian firm, Parmalat, which owns a 65% stake.

The dairy board's commercial operations at the Matsapha Industrial Site, which manufacture and distribute a line of dairy products, also seem set for privatisation. In anticipation of this, the regulatory and development functions of the board, including the dairy product formulation and appraisal department, the dairy industry information and the artificial insemination departments have moved to new offices in Manzini.

Meanwhile, in an overture to the eventual privatised operation of border post facilities, the customs and excise department has contracted out cleaning and maintenance jobs at all border posts. The more efficient management of border posts will permit a long-desired extension of operating hours, which has thus far been considered too costly, particularly at the Oshoek post which handles most traffic from SA to Swaziland, according to a customs official.

Preferential markets 'vital for Swaziland'

MBABANE — The retention of preferential markets for Swaziland is vital for its steadily increasing sugar harvest, according to the head of the Swaziland Sugar Association.

Swaziland was nearing the end of a crushing season that was expected to produce 529 000 tons of sugar compared to last season's 475 000 tons, on the back of good weather and an increased production area, association CE Mike Matsebula said.

"The low world sugar price is not a serious problem for Swaziland at the moment because our earnings are not too diluted by the relatively small amount we sell into the world market," Matsebula said at a ministerial conference of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) grouping.

He said Swaziland would sell 190 000 tons into preferential markets and 260 000 tons into the four-nation Southern African Customs Union (SACU) market, where the price is higher than the world price, which has been pressured by a sugar glut.

The remaining 79 000 tons of expected production would be sold on to the world market.

He also said Swaziland was expecting an increase in production for the next season.

Swaziland is hosting a meeting of 17 sugar-producing ACP countries that will formulate a joint stance ahead of a final session of talks in November to renegotiate the Lomé convention under which the European Union (EU) imports 1,3045-million tons of raw sugar at about triple the world price.

Delegates have said the relationship between the EU and ACP countries could come under pressure from the World Trade Organisation (WTO) millennium-round meeting in Seattle in November.

The ACP countries have expressed concern that changes to the Lomé convention and its sugar protocol as well as a special preferential sugar agreement, due to expire in 2001, could affect their sugar industries.

Matsebula said Swaziland would push hard for an extension of the protocol to protect the sugar industry that provides one in five jobs in the kingdom of a million people and generates about 20% of the country's foreign exchange earnings.

"As long as distortions exist in world sugar, we want our access to preferential markets."

He said relations with SA, also a sugar producer, had eased since the signing of an agreement early last year that gave fairer access to each country to export their sugar into the SACU and obliged each country to export surplus into the world sugar market.

Matsebula said the two countries were working closely together in negotiating a sugar protocol for the 14-nation Southern African Development Community to limit the fallout from non-SACU members Zimbabwe and Malawi selling their sugar into that market.

Swaziland is one of the world's lowest cost producers of sugar and is planning to bring another 16 000ha of land under irrigation with water from the yet-to-be-completed Maguga Dam project. Most of that land would be given to small-scale sugar farmers.

Swaziland's sugar exports under a preferential agreement to the US should not be affected by WTO talks, Matsebula said.

"The US is committed to imports of 1,3-million tons and our share is about 20 000 tons.

"That is not expected to change," he said.

Swazi wants to keep sugar-coated access

ALLAN SECCOMBE

Mbabane — The retention of preferential markets for Swaziland was vital for its steadily increasing sugar harvest, the head of the Swaziland Sugar Association said in an interview yesterday.

Swaziland was nearing the end of a crushing season that was expected to produce 529 000 tons of sugar compared with last season's 475 000 tons because of good weather and an increased production area, said Mike Matsebula, the chief executive of the association.

"The low world sugar price is not a serious problem for Swaziland at the moment because our earnings are not too diluted by the relatively small amount we sell into the world market," said Matsebula at a ministerial conference of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) grouping.

He said Swaziland would sell 190 000 tons into preferential markets and 260 000 tons into the four-nation Southern African Customs Union, where the price is higher than the world price, which has been under pressure from a sugar glut.

The remaining 79 000 tons would be sold on to the world market.

"We are looking to an increase in production next season," he added.

Swaziland is hosting a meeting of 17 sugar producing ACP countries that will formulate a joint stance ahead of a final session of talks in November to renegotiate the Lomé convention under which the European Union imports more than 1,3 million tons of raw sugar at about triple the world price.

The ACP has expressed concern that changes to the Lomé convention and its sugar protocol, as well as a special preferential sugar agreement expiring in 2001, could hurt their sugar industries.

Matsebula said Swaziland would push hard for an extension of the protocol to protect its sugar industry, which provides one in five jobs and generates about 20 percent of foreign exchange. — Reuters

CTCBR 16/9/99

Swazi Senate approves labour bill

James Hall

MBABANE — The Swazi Senate approved the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Bill on Friday, easing labour-government tension and reducing the threat of sanctions proposed by international labour organisations.

The bill's passage was testimony to the persistence of Labour Minister Lutfu Dlamini, who argued against amendments proposed by conservative senators that would, he said, "deprive workers of their right to go on a legal strike".

Senators had demanded the inclusion to enable a labour minister to declare a proposed strike illegal if there is a threat of property damage. The clause forbids strikes that pose a threat to lives and public safety.

Dlamini argued that if during the course of a strike property were to be damaged it would be due to the lawless-

ness of individuals. To forbid a strike because of potential for vandalism would effectively outlaw all strikes.

The minister also predicted the international community would reject any labour legislation that included such a provision. "Let us ask ourselves why the world did not accept the 1996 Industrial Relations Act," he said.

The law, which the amended legislation replaces, was condemned as a violation of human rights as it criminalised certain strike activity.

Government's lack of urgency about the labour legislation's passage, as alleged by the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions, led the International Labour Organisation to urge the American labour umbrella body, the AFL-CIO, to press the US Congress to drop Swaziland from the generalised system of preferences. That scheme allows Swazi goods to enter US markets duty free.

Pension money to stay in SA

James Hall

08/10/99

(312)

MBABANE — Public Service Pension Fund CEO Ratna Ratnarajah has turned down calls for Swazi pension money to be repatriated to Swaziland, saying the nearly R1bn in pension funds will remain in SA investments.

He said about R953m in Swazi pension money was enjoying "high rates of investment returns" in SA.

Parliamentarians have recently urged the CEO to "do what is right by Swaziland and bring our money home to bolster local financial institutions".

They specifically want to see such funds injected into the undercapitalised Swaziland Stock Market, according to House of Assembly member Frank Sitatse Dlamini.

Dlamini, also an agent with the Swaziland Royal Insurance Corporation, which contributes to the pension institution, has been at the forefront of calls to localise pension funds.

"Our money is helping SA citizens to build modern houses, yet the owners of these funds are living in houses made of

sticks and mud," said Dlamini.

Ratnarajah's comments may also have been in response to a long-anticipated Securities Act expected to be tabled by the finance ministry.

The proposed law will require Swazi pension funds to invest a percentage of their capital locally. The law is devised to secure capitalisation for a proposed Swaziland Stock Exchange, to be supervised by the Central Bank of Swaziland.

Ratnarajah complained of a lack of investment opportunities in Swaziland.

"In this context, the repatriation of our funds from SA to Swaziland would cause untold problems due to a lack of suitable local investments to accommodate these funds."

Income generated from SA investments, he said, "assists the government of Swaziland in funding the cost of pensions and death benefits to public servants".

Ratnarajah said pension fund investment income is not taxed in SA, and that negotiations with the SA government were taking place in order to "formalise" this arrangement.

Small businesses last in line for loans

James Hall (312) BD 29/26/10/99

MBABANE — Swaziland's banks have money to lend, but small businesses are out of luck. Loans extended to the private sector have hovered at the R1bn level on a quarterly basis since 1997, but big corporations are the prime beneficiaries.

"Banks continue to be conservative in their lending strategy to small borrowers," says a central bank source. "Corporate demand is fully met."

Local banks deny there is a deliberate strategy of exclusion, but one financial analyst candidly expressed a popular sentiment in the banking sector: "Swazis do not repay loans."

This attitude was reinforced by the recent near insolvency of the Swazi Development Bank. Its board made political decisions to extend multimillion-rand loans to government authorities and members of the royal family. These loans went largely unserviced and government initiated a R60m bail-out, drawing on its deposits in the banking system. Currently, government's banking deposits stand at only R14m, says the central bank.

Though credit extended to the private sector last quarter totalled R1 119m, down R55,9m or 4,8% from the previous quarter, money is on hand for loans. Total domestic deposits were up by 5% last quarter and business deposits rose 31,2% last year, along with a 17,5% rise in individual deposits.

In May, following SA's lead, the central bank discount rate was lowered to 15% and since July it has stood at 14%. It would be good news for small borrowers — if only they could secure loans.

REST OF AFRICA

Report highlights Swaziland's woes

BD 27/10/99 (312)
Growth rate indicates lower living standards

James Hall

MBABANE — Lower foreign direct investment, persistent unemployment and the effect of a declining rand on Swaziland's recessionary economy characterise the kingdom's performance over the past year, says the Central Bank of Swaziland.

The economy's anaemic 2,3% growth rate last year was off from the 3,7% achieved in 1997, says the bank's annual report. Set against a population growth rate of 2,7%, the economy's performance implies further worsening of Swazi living standards.

The bank wistfully recalls the days a decade ago when double-digit annual growth resulted from foreign firms fleeing apartheid SA for sanctions-free Swaziland. In contrast, private investment growth in Swaziland last year was 0,2% and foreign direct investment totalled R202,5m.

The expansion of existing factories and the establishment of the Swaziland Investment Development Corporation, which has approved 13 projects valued at R74,7m, are two optimistic notes.

Continuing the trend of recent years, the government experienced "rapid increases in expenditure, unmatched by increases in revenue", leading to inevitable deficits.

"The emphasis must be on a fiscal policy that scales back on public sector jobs ... given the potential of the recent deficits to undermine Swaziland's macroeconomic balances."

The bank called again for the gov-

ernment to find a way to replace Southern African Customs Union revenue, which makes up 50,4% of government revenue but is to be rescheduled.

Swaziland's bilateral trade with SA saw a worsening trade deficit for the former last year, although the current account balance of R879,5m was reduced from the previous year's R981,3m.

Because SA is the chief buyer of Swaziland's manufactured goods, SA's own struggling economic performance is expected to have an adverse effect on manufacturing growth. Some growth is expected this year in other foreign markets, especially for sugar-based edible concentrates, paper products, textile products and sweets.

Manufacturing remains the main engine of Swazi economic growth, contributing 38% of gross domestic product (GDP). After expanding the previous year, the agricultural sector contracted from 10,8% in 1997 to 9,8% of GDP last year. A sharp decline in maize production was to blame.

Sugar production declined a mild 0,3%, but is expected to pick up this year. Export volumes for wood pulp, by contrast, rose 50,4% to 256 549 tons and export receipts rose 13,9%.

Mining's contribution to GDP fell to 1,4%, but industry receipts were up 20,1% last year to R120,2m. The chief mineral money earner was asbestos.

The tourism sector's contribution to GDP rose to 10,3% from 1997's 9,9%, indicating that the government and private sector's increased efforts to lure visitors are paying off.

Parmalat in Swazi joint venture

James Hall

MBABANE — Italian firm Parmalat entered a R4.2m joint venture this week with a consortium of Swazi dairy farmers and the royal conglomerate Tibiyo TakaNgwane to buy the commercial operations of the Swaziland Dairy Board.

The privatisation deal is in keeping with government's goal of shedding its business ventures. The new company will be called Parmalat Swaziland.

Parmalat will own 60% of the Matsapha-based dairy goods manufacturer, with 26% held by Tibiyo TakaNgwane and 14% by government on behalf of dairy farmers.

At the signing of the deal handing over the dairy plant to Parmalat Swaziland, Agriculture Minister Roy Fanourakis said the event represented "another effort by His Majesty's government at ensuring the private sector is in the driver's seat in economic develop-

ment while ensuring indigenous people participate on an equal footing."

Swaziland's per capita consumption of 58l of milk a year is the third highest of Southern African Development Community states. An annual 53-million-litre demand for dairy products consistently outstrips domestic supply of 36.3 million litres. The rest is imported from SA.

Imports now account for 60% of the formal milk market, and have increased 8% in the past decade. During that time self-sufficiency in milk has dropped from 78% to 68% as supplies of dairy goods, though increasing 2.5% annually, have failed to keep pace with a 4% annual increase in demand.

"Milk supply and demand projections show a gloomy picture in the next 10 years without a real effort to promote domestic production," said Fanourakis.

The minister also announced a government gazette abolishing price controls in the industry.

BD 12/11/99 (312)

EU withdraws from 'neverending' exercise

James Hall

MBABANE — The European Union (EU) has withdrawn its financial support from King Mswati's constitutional review commission, a controversial body which is supposed to be canvassing views on political change in Swaziland.

It is believed that as much as R20m in funding may have been lost to the commission because commission chairman Mangaliso Dlamini has refused to implement EU recommendations to make the constitution drafting process more transparent, democratic and financially accountable.

Dlamini said he was unconcerned about the EU pullout. "We are expecting the money to come from government because we are a national project," he said.

An EU team of advisors assessed the commission's operations earlier this year, and recommended several posts — which the union would pay for — including a media advisor to improve the commission's abysmal press relations. Dlamini has barred the press from the commission's proceedings.

The king and Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini routinely refer questions about political reform in the kingdom to the commission,

saying only through this process will change be realised.

Labour unions, outlawed political parties and human rights organisations have condemned the commission as undemocratic, and an attempt by the palace to manipulate political change.

Sources say the EU, and increasingly the two remaining major foreign funders of the commission, the UK and Taiwan, are growing wary of the neverending exercise.

The Times of Swaziland has become the first media organ to call for the abolition of the constitutional commission. "We should start afresh," the newspaper said.

BD 24/11/99

(312)

WTO may cause Swazi sugar blues

James Hall

(312) BD 2/12/99

MBABANE — Swaziland's economy faces potentially disastrous repercussions if the World Trade Organisation (WTO) brings an end to preferential trade agreements for the kingdom's chief export, sugar.

On the agenda of WTO delegates currently meeting in Seattle is the cessation of such deals as those guaranteeing a quota for Swazi sugar in the European Union (EU), US and other markets.

Swaziland's trade representatives will lobby the WTO for an extension of the sugar protocol and special preferential sugar agreement.

Last year, sugar export volumes were down 2,4% due to a decreasing share of the regional market, but export revenues rose 6,2% to R616,5m on the previous year's figure. The appeal to importers of cheaper Swazi sugar — because of the declining value of the rand, to which the Swazi currency, the lilangeni, is linked — offset damage caused by a drop in world sugar prices. Domestic sales increased 14% last year to 280 000 tons, says the Swaziland Sugar Association.

Swaziland's EU sugar quota was brokered under the Lomé Convention — the EU's treaty with 71 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) nations — while its US deal falls under that country's generalised system of preferences. Current quotas for Swazi sugar are 120 000 tons for Lomé and 20 000 tons for the US.

Swaziland sells 17 000 tons within the Southern African Customs Union which is made up of SA, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Namibia.

A 12-nation alliance of sugar producing nations will lobby the WTO to forbid renewal of these agreements, which are now expiring, and subject them to renegotiation. Preferential agreements are being increasingly challenged in the WTO.

Sugar industry officials see a detrimental ripple effect should preferential trade status be removed for the product: a loss of foreign exchange earnings, leading to exacerbated balance of payment problems and loss of profit.

Swaziland is betting heavily on the continued good performance of its sugar sector. King Mswati is encouraging small cane growing co-operatives as an answer to unemployment.

While hopeful of a favourable transitional WTO deal, Alan Mkhonta, administrative manager at the Swaziland Sugar Association, says: "The bottom line is that in a setting of globalisation Swaziland will increasingly have to sell its sugar on the world market."

New body to tackle Swazi tourism flaws

(312)
James Hall

MBABANE — A long-awaited Swaziland Tourism Authority has been established in draft legislation unveiled by Tourism Minister George Vilakati.

Parliament will consider the bill when legislators reconvene next month, following a recess.

The authority will add coherence to the kingdom's efforts to boost its tourism sector.

A National Development Plan launched in September targets tourism as a key growth area for employment and government revenues. Industry receipts are up slightly this year, nearly reaching R200m.

The Central Bank of Swaziland ascribes the improvement to the proliferation of small lodges and guest houses that provide cheaper, more varied alternatives to the main tourist complexes of the Ezulwini Valley, Pigg's Peak and Nhlangano.

Game park revenue has increased, because of the opening of a luxury lodge at Mlilwane Nature Reserve. The bank has also pointed to a spill-over benefit as more tourists visit the kingdom as a side trip to their primary regional destination, usually SA.

Yet a lack of co-ordination between government agencies has hobbled the industry's efforts to lure more tourists. Some border posts close as early as 4pm, restricting traffic flow.

To deal with such problems, a national tourism advisory council will be assembled by the tourism minister from industry players like hotels, tour operators, game parks and travel agencies, along with environmentalists and representatives of cultural and artists' groups.

The council will provide policy recommendations to the minister and the tourism authority, whose nine-member board will also include a cross-section of tourism industry professionals.

Vilakati, considered one of the most dynamic holders of the tourism portfolio to date, is confident the tourism authority will end ad hoc efforts to lure visitors to what former US president Jimmy Carter has recently described as "one of the most beautiful countries I've seen".

BD 7/12/99