

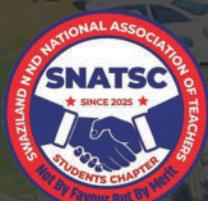
THE EAGLE



WIDENING THE DISCOURSE

DECEMBER 2025 ISSUE NO. 13

THE DAWN OF THE SNAT STUDENTS CHAPTER



SNAT HEADS TO THE POLLS IN 2026



BONKHE SHABANGU: "A TEACHER, HOD, VM™ & DISTINGUISHED INFLUENCER"




SNAT HOSTS HISTORIC TEACHERS DAY AND BASH - 2025

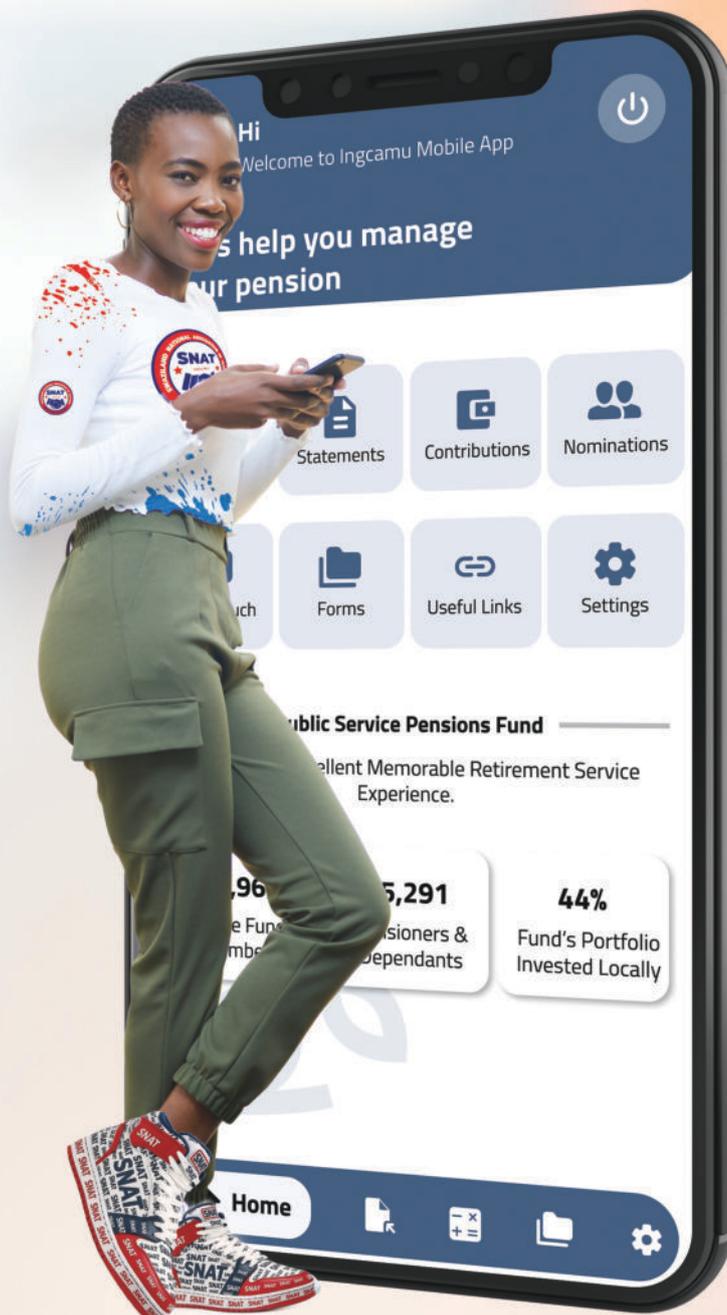


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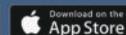
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CONTENTS

THE EDITOR'S PERSPECTIVE

- 5 THE SNAT VM™ TAG-ITS ESSENCE AND RELEVANCE - SNAT EDITOR MCOLISI MOTSA
6 SNAT ON THE LENSES

NEC ARTICLES

- 10 ISSUES AT THE JOINT NEGOTIATIONS FORUM [JNF] - THE SNAT SECRETARY GENERAL [SG] LOT VILAKATI
11 SNAT COMMEMORATES 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GBV - SNAT GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER SIFISO VILAKATI
12 THE DAWN OF THE SNAT STUDENTS CHAPTER - THE SNAT SECRETARY GENERAL [SG] LOT VILAKATI
13 UNPACKING THE ESSENCE OF THE SNAT UM-HABULO THURSDAY PROGRAMME - THE SNAT HEAD OF EDUCATION [DSG] MXOLISI NGCAMPHALALA
14 2026: THE SNAT GOES TO THE POLLS - THE SNAT SECRETARY GENERAL [SG] LOT VILAKATI
15 COMPETENCY BASED EDUCATION [CBE] OR OBJECTIVE BASED EDUCATION [OBE] IN SWAZILAND: WHICH ONE IS BETTER UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES? - THE SNAT SUB-EDITOR LINDIWE DLAMINI
16 STARK REALITY: WHO DECIDES OFFICE BEARERS WITHIN THE UNION [SNAT]? - SNAT EDITOR MCOLISI MOTSA
18 THE SNAT ON THE #GOPUBLIC #FUND EDUCATION CAMPAIGN - THE SNAT SECRETARY GENERAL [SG] LOT VILAKATI

- 19 UNDERSTANDING THE NUANCES OF BUDGETING - SNAT NATIONAL TREASURER BUSIZWE HLATJWAYO

MAIN STORY

- 20 SNAT HOSTS HISTORIC TEACHERS DAY AND BASH [2025]

PERSONALITY PROFILE

- 22 "THE SITUATION HAS GROSSLY AFFECTED ME AS A FATHER AS I HAVE TO REMAIN A PROVIDER-DESPITE BEING UNEMPLOYED,"-SNAT PRESIDENT SNAT EDITOR MCOLISI MOTSA
24 "SOCIAL MEDIA HAS TAUGHT ME A LOT ABOUT PEOPLE - HOW THEY THINK AND HOW THEY FEEL - AND HOW I SHOULD ALIGN MYSELF," BONKHE SHABANGU
27 "I TRY NOT TO BE A BOSS AND I BELIEVE IN HAVING GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE TEACHERS,"-MR. S. SHABANGU

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

- 29 WE DESERVE BETTER AS EDUCATORS - MUZI DLAMINI MLIBA BRANCH
29 ARMY RECRUITMENTS: WHAT DOES RECRUITING LEARNERS MEAN? - SENZO MHLANGA MBABANE BRANCH
29 SNAT REPS DESERVE A STIPEND - SIHLE MAVUSO [GEGE BRANCH]

- 30 TEACHERS DAY REVIEWS

FEATURE ARTICLE



- 31 SASA-PRIORITIZING ADMINISTRATORS ISSUES - SASA SECRETARY THUSI GCINA NGCEBO BRONZE
32 RISING ON A POINT OF ORDER MOET MINISTER - ESCAPA PRESIDENT CEDRIC CHIRWA
33 TEACHING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM-TEACHERS AS CHAMPIONS FOR SPORTS
34 A CONVERSATION WITH THE VISIONARIES: HOW VMST™ LEGAL IS RESHAPING THE PERSONAL LIVES OF TEACHERS IN ESWATINI - SNAT VMST™ LEGAL MARKETING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVE MASIZA DLAMINI

BRANCH NEWS

- 36 CELEBRATING THE IMPACT OF PIGG'S PEAK BRANCH: A BEACON OF EXCELLENCE IN THE SNAT - PIGGS PEAK SECRETARY THEM BISA BHEMBE
37 BIG BEND-THE VIBRANT BRANCH - BIG BEND BRANCH SECRETARY THOKOZANI NGCAMPHALALA

SNAT UNION WORKER PROFILE

- 38 THE NEW SNAT UNION ACCOUNTANT

ARTS IN THE EAGLE

- 39 POEM
40 MOPS ARTS

HUMOUR IN THE SNAT EAGLE



WIDENING THE DISCOURSE

EDITOR



MCOLISI MOTSA

E-mail: mcolisimzmotsa@gmail.com
editor@snat.org.sz
 Cell: +268 7606 5972/7906 5972
 Facebook: Mcolisi Motsa
 Twitter: @MotsaZakhele
 Instagram: @motsamcolisi

SUB-EDITOR



LINDIWE DLAMINI

E-mail: sub-editor@snat.org.sz
lindiwehappydlamini@gmail.com
 Cell: +268 7624 9542/+2687922 3405
 Facebook: Lindz Umtukulu wa Jenny
 Twitter: @Lindz78437550

VISION

To become the SNAT's premium provider of quality content across all media platforms with a high level of loyalty and activism.

MISSION STATEMENT

The SNAT Editorial will lead the new media revolution by helping to build and strengthen a revitalized teacher's union and grow our presence both domestically, regionally and internationally. This we will accomplish with excellence in the way we conduct our union business, in our product offering and in our service to our diverse rank and file.

VALUES

- EXCELLENCE
- SERVITUDE
- INTEGRITY
- SOLIDARITY
- UNIONISM

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THE SNAT VM™ TAG-ITS ESSENCE AND RELEVANCE



SNAT EDITOR - MCOLISI MOTSA

The label SNAT VM™ has created colossal interest from a myriad of quarters such as social media and comments from some self-elevated pundits.

Other highly-opinionated social media activists have amenably punched holes in the tag, insinuating that it creates some form of 'elitism' within the working class. That SNAT Members, as educators, see themselves as 'better' workers than other workers out there in the World of Work. Quite interesting! Notwithstanding the salvos fired on the tag, a grander section of the members of the Union have unreservedly endorsed this novel phenomenon-focusing on the candid context in which it was coined. For indeed, the purpose and intent for such remains unpolluted-even to this very day.

My memory is still unadulterated that after the 2024 World Teachers Day [WTD] Commemoration, held at Mavuso Sports Centre, there was so much pomp and grandiosity around the eminent t-shirt.

The celebration had a package of what was then called an inaugural 'After-Party' whereupon our members' had a blast at Mavuso Exhibition Centre. There was massive reaction and positive energy around the rank and file of the Union; inevitably so.

From that fanfare, the Members of the Union felt appreciated and cherished by the Union in an unprecedented manner. The Leadership of the Union felt the need to then 'brand' the Members of the Union [Code 0058] as Valued Members [VMs™].

This identifier had little or nothing to do with any tenets whatsoever of a mindset where SNAT Members see themselves as transcendent to oth-

er workers out there in terms of education, social status, wealth, intellectual abilities etc. No!

Bluntly, there is nowhere the Union has come out to 'command' Members of the SNAT to patronize other workers, belittle or have a condescending attitude, develop exclusive thinking and have an inflated ego on their identity. We never even said our members should stop calling each other 'Comrades;' a vocabulary relative in political literature.

The SNAT NEC never pronounced that. Instead, the tag emanates from the fact that the Union attaches a certain degree of value to its members. The NEC sees the members as vital, respected and indispensable to the organization's success and identity. It is a fundamental shift from the traditional tag such as /-t-/ or any other that perforated the circle of educators.

The Union acknowledges and recognizes the work of SNAT Members; their skills, roles and efforts. The Union recognizes the worth of its members: their in-

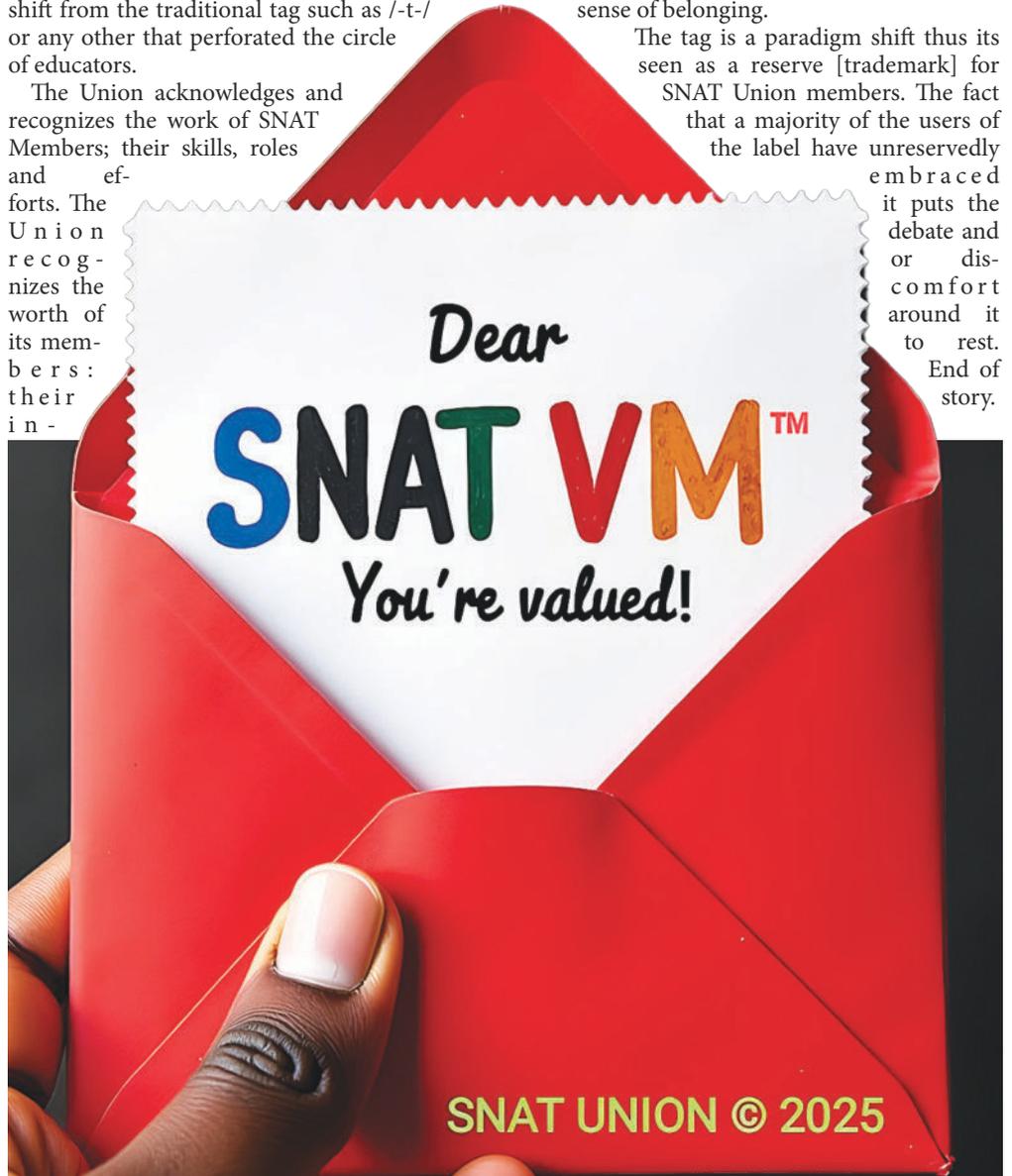
herent [intrinsic] worth and dignity. VM™ symbolizes respect and appreciation. It's a commitment that we shall treat each member with courtesy and fairness, regardless of their background, location, race, position etc.

That we shall publicly and privately celebrate and acknowledge our members achievements and milestones to help boost their morale and reinforce their vital role.

VM™ also means that the Union is committed to seeking out and genuinely listen to its members, considering their input in decision making. We see our members as our partners-not just executors. VM™ is further meant to foster a culture of inclusion; where every member feels a part of the Union, feels accepted and have a sense of belonging.

The tag is a paradigm shift thus its seen as a reserve [trademark] for SNAT Union members. The fact that a majority of the users of the label have unreservedly

embraced it puts the debate and or discomfort around it to rest. End of story.











ISSUES AT THE JOINT NEGOTIATIONS FORUM [JNF]



The Joint Negotiations Forums [JNF] is composed of the Government Negotiations Team [GNT]-led by the Chief Negotiator, who happens to be the sitting Principal Secretary [PS] at the Ministry of Public Service [MoPS]-Mr. Mthunzi Shabangu and five [5] government Ministries/Departments.

These include the Ministry of Education and Training [MoET], Ministry of Public Service MoPS], Ministry of Health [MoH], Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. The other Departments include the Management Services Division [MSD] and Treasury.

According to the JNF Constitution, for them [GNT] to quorate, all the Ministries Principal Secretaries [PSs] should be present. On the side of the Unions, we have the four [4] PSUs-led by the Chairing Union as Chief Negotiator. The Chairperson of the Negotiations is the Secretary to Cabinet.

Ordinarily, the Chairperson is supposed to be neutral. Unfortunately, in our case, the Chairperson forms part of the Cabinet where the GNT recharges their mandate. Such as posture compromises his neutrality as the Chairperson. For the JNF to sit, All parties must be present.

This year's [2025] Agenda is far from being exhausted due to postponements and the salary review rigmarole. At some point, parties at the JNF resolved to venture into "blocked negotiations." Such a practice saw parties engaging meaningfully on the issues at the JNF, particularly the Negotiations Framework. The only item that was partially concluded this year [2025] was the Salary Review [SR] Exercise as conducted by Emergence Growth [Umelusi]. The outcomes were partially implemented with 85% yet to be implemented in July 2026.

The thorny issue of the Performance

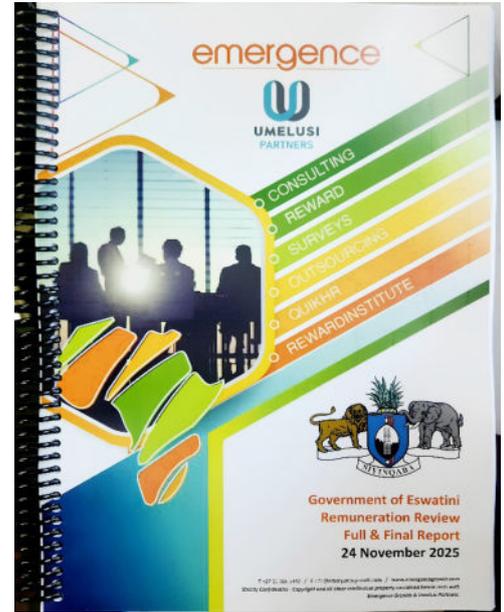
Management System [PMS] is on the agenda-paired with Quality Public Service Delivery. PSUs also raised the issue of the 13th cheque/bonus for all civil servants as backed by best practice in other countries. Next year [2026] April, we are going to notch from the first notch to notch 2 except for those who went notch to notch during the Salary Review Exercise.

The Salary Review Exercise of 2025 was implemented at 100% basic salary with a staggered housing and back pay. The Consultant has since submitted the Final Copy of the Salary Review Exercise.

According to the Terms of Reference, both parties appended their signatures that appeals will follow suit. The main problem was the misinformation contained in the Establishment Circular. Filing Appeals against incomplete data with errors was going to be dissersive on our part as Unions.

The last JNF of the 29th of December 2025 agreed on January 31, 2026 as the last day for lodging appeals against the Salary Review Exercise. Members of the SNAT are urged to lodge as much appeals as possible including all the downgraded posts, equal pay for equal value of work, senior teachers with degrees, nominal HoDs who qualify [with degrees]. Worth noting is that most of our sectoral allowances require some serious overhauling and adjustments.

The JNF agreed to open a window for



The Final Salary Review Report [SNAT Media].

further appeals on the Allowances post July 2026.

All the downgraded posts, current holders of those posts were not supposed to be downgraded. Unfortunately, the government downgraded them. As of now, PSUs are in a brawl with the GNT, fighting for their reinstatement into their original posts as per our Collective Agreement.



The SNAT SG Lot Vilakati discussing with NAPSAWU DGS Msimeto Malindzisa at the JNF [SNAT Media].

SNAT COMMEMORATES 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GBV



**SNAT GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER
SIFISO VILAKATI**

The 16 Days of activism against Gender Based Violence [GBV] is an annual international campaign that starts on the 25th of November to the 10th of December (Human Rights Day)-each year.

The campaign was started by Activists at the inaugural Women's Global Leadership Institute in 1991. These Activists, key amongst them was Charlotte Bunch [founder of the Centre for Women's Global Leadership], wanted to raise awareness and advocacy for the elimination of Violence against women and girls globally. Since inception, over 6, 000 organizations in approximately 187 countries have participated in the campaign. Customarily, the SNAT commemorates this event-each year, to demonstrate our commitment to end this social scourge-GBV.

The 2025 Theme: "UNITE to End Digital Violence against all Women and Girls" focused on digital safety and collective community action.

The campaign had a myriad of objectives such as to:

1. Raise awareness about digital Violence
2. Mobilize local leaders against digital violence
3. Mobilize teachers and parents to recognize digital Violence as a form of GBV
4. Advocate for school policies on digital safety and GBV prevention

The importance of the Campaign

- A. It shows Gender Based Violence [GBV] as a global crisis affecting 1 in 3 women
- B. It challenges harmful norms, laws and improve support services for the victims
- C. It ignites the civil society, private sector and governments to collaborate in ending GBV

As the SNAT, we are saying "NO TO GBV" and zero tolerance to any form of Violence against Men, boys, Women, Girls, Marginalized groups-the LGBTIQ+ Community. We are proud as the SNAT in joining the world in commemorating this Campaign.

Examples of digital Violence

- i. Online harassment
- ii. Cyberstalking
- iii. Revenge porn
- iv. Image Based abuse
- v. Deep fakes

Proposed Solutions

- a. Governments must criminalize digital Violence
- b. Tech companies must ensure platform safety and transparency
- c. Individuals to challenge harmful online norms and the support for survivors
- d. Platforms to have rules and guidelines

As the SNAT, we thank the Swaziland Cyber Security Act of 2022 which addresses online offenses like Hacking, data theft and Online fraud and there are heavy penalties for these crimes aiming to limit Cyber Criminals and have them prosecuted.



The SNAT Gender and Human Rights Officer-Sifiso Vilakati addressing members of the public in Manzini on the 5th of December 2025 during the SNAT #ENDGBV March [SNAT Media].



Mbabane Swallows FC PRO Knowledge Ngwenya addressing members of the public during the SNAT Commemoration of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence in Manzini on the 5th of December 2025 [SNAT Media].

The SNAT #ENDGBV banner [SNAT Media].

We also have the Sexual Offences Domestic Violence [SODV] Act of 2018 and the Child Protection Act 2012. These pieces of Regulations are trying to prevent and stop all kinds of abuse and violence to women, girls and the children in the country. The theme colour of the 16 Days Campaign was Orange. The colour symbolized bringing a brighter future-one free from violence and a country free from violence, bringing hope to all the citizens of the country.

The SNAT [Union] organized its Campaign on the 5th December 2025, starting with a Public Sensitization March from the Somhlolo Park in Manzini, via the bus Rank up to the SNAT Centre. About 500 marchers joined the activity with other SNAT partners such as One Billion Rising Campaign, Swaziland National Union of Students [SNUS], the Ministry of Health, TransSwati [LGBTIQ+ Community], Swaziland Rural Women's Assembly [SRWA], Public Sec-

tor Unions [PSUs], ESCAPA, Liphimbo LaboMake, Mbabane Swallows Players, as well as Members of the SNAT General Council.

At the SNAT Centre, all stakeholders presented and committed to building a society free from ALL forms of Gender Based Violence.

The SNAT also commits to demanding the ratification of ILO C190 - Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190)-the first international treaty to affirm every worker's right to a world of work free from violence and harassment, including gender-based violence. This Convention recognizes that such abuse is a threat to human rights, dignity and equality.

The SNAT calls for the domestication and ratification of this fundamental convention. We also call for the Deputy Prime Minister's Office to declare Gender Based Violence [GBV] as a National Disaster.

THE DAWN OF THE SNAT STUDENTS CHAPTER



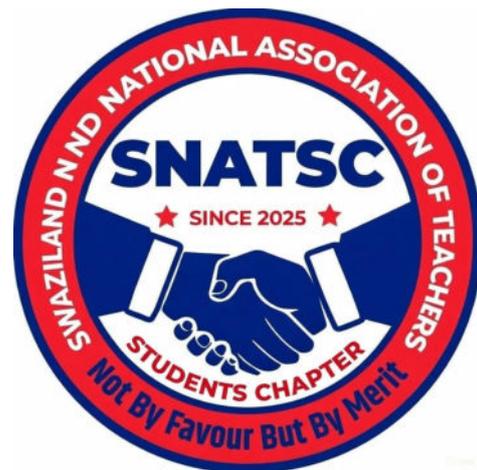
**THE SNAT SECRETARY GENERAL ISGI
LOT VILAKATI**

The young workers forum is a live wire of the Union that determines the future of the organisation. A Union without young workers is neither here nor there. Our Constitution allows student teachers to be members of the Union as Associate Members. We are still encouraging all student teachers to join the SNAT as the parent and future Union of teachers in Swaziland.

The National Executive Committee [NEC] will soon appoint an interim executive of young men and women that will draw their own organogram and Bylaws and take the structure into its Inaugural Conference of the youth where a proper structure will be constituted through the ballot.

The SNAT will have more time now in educating its members about the Union, its existence and the role of a trade union before the young workers join the working force. This will highly focus of education of trade unionism basically.

The SNAT will also take advantage of grooming future leaders of the organisation; however, it should be clear this does not mean that when one leads in the chapter, he automatically becomes a Leader of the main trade union [SNAT].



The SNAT Students Chapter.

The SNAT wants a clear programme of the youth and proper structures of the chapter that will link and connect with colleges and universities.

The Students Chapter in the training institutions will work under the Swaziland National Union of Students [SNUS] and also strengthen the SNUS. It will never contest space for power against the SNUS but will empower SNUS in the main.

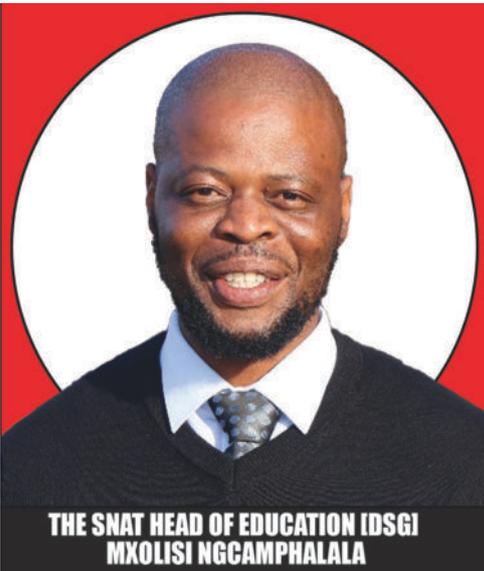
The SNAT Annual Conference this year [2025] in September adopted the SNAT Students Chapter as the new structure of the Union.

The Students Chapter is going to comprise of all student teachers, all graduates and all those under the age of thirty-five [35] years in the education sector.



UNESWA Students Chapter at the 2025 Teachers Day [Courtesy Pic.]

UNPACKING THE ESSENCE OF THE SNAT UMHABULO THURSDAY PROGRAMME



THE SNAT HEAD OF EDUCATION IDSGI
MXOLISI NGCAMPHALALA

May I take the opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude to the SNAT Head of Publications [HoP]-Editor for allowing me to dissect the SNAT Umhabulo Thursday Programme.

This is our online education platform that seeks to empower our members by building skills and developing workers political consciousness and to assist them to advocate for better working conditions, resolve conflicts, build leadership, foster solidarity amongst workers and the working class, understand the socio-economic situation of the country and most importantly, understand complex global economic and political issues.

Umhabulo refers to a form of political education and discussion programme. It is the act of engaging in deep, objective and principled political reflection using correct tools of analysis, in our context: it is using the working-class ideology. The Union adopted the working-class ideology in the 2022 National Conference. Many revolutionary organizations and progressive Unions have adopted the working-class ideology as an outlook that seeks to build strength of their organizations, understand the world better from the perspective of the working class—a class that is currently a victim of the brutality of capitalism. Capitalism is a social system that has subjugated the working class into extreme levels of poverty and degradation.

In the year 2023, the SNAT held Annual Conferences under the theme; “Strengthening Workplace Organization Through Massive Recruitment and Deepening Class Consciousness.”

The theme, which is not just a mere tagline; rather, a position of commitment by the Union. Conference declared that it will strengthen political education and establish

capacity building campaigns using all available mediums, from physical workshops, social media platforms and newsletters.

Delegates to Conference observed that there was a huge decline on membership of the Union and most of the members who remained were disengaged from the activities of the Union which is trade Union apathy. Such a condition of trade Union apathy then diminishes influence of the Union and had a potential of further loss of membership as the remaining members lose confidence in the Union’s ability to address the needs of members. Another problem of trade Union apathy is that it creates a risk where decision making becomes a responsibility of a small number of entrenched leaders creating a gap between the ideals of democracy and actual practice. These were the concerns by delegates and they resolved that affirmative actions in relation to political education and capacity building must be prioritized to revive the strength of the trade Union.

Following the declaration by Conference, the education committee led by the DSG, Mxolisi Ngcamphalala had to act to implement the decision of Conference, hence it established the online platform that sought to foster internal political discussion, and debates within the Union.

The platform hosts facilitators, referred to as Subject Matter Experts, to make presentations on different topics, ranging from trade unionism, politics, strategy and tactics, ethical leadership, organizational renewal and many other important issues. The platform also hosts debates on topical issues and allows members to be engaged in them. In our view, there have been positive changes because of the Umhabulo Sessions.

Although we still

believe that more trade Union education is still needed, there will never be a situation where learning and growth stops.

We note that there has been an increase in Union participation, growth in inclusion, an understanding of global solidarity and general empowerment.

We may also highlight a few challenges which we will work hard to rectify, one of which is the struggle to find a relevant personnel member for some of the topics we wish to discuss.

One of the challenges is the busy schedule of the SNAT NEC which sometimes make us fail to host the programme. Another challenge is that of network glitches-compelling some of our facilitators to travel to the Office at night.

We do believe that the platform can empower our members with the knowledge of workers’ rights, collective bargaining and creating confident activists by transforming ordinary members of the Union into skilled representatives making them more effective agents of the Union.

SNAT PRESENT UMHABULO THURSDAY

With

MODERATOR
Mcolisi Ngcamphala (SNAT DGS)

FACILITATOR
Quinton Dlamini

Topic **THE ROLE OF THE FEDERATION AS THE LEADER OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT**

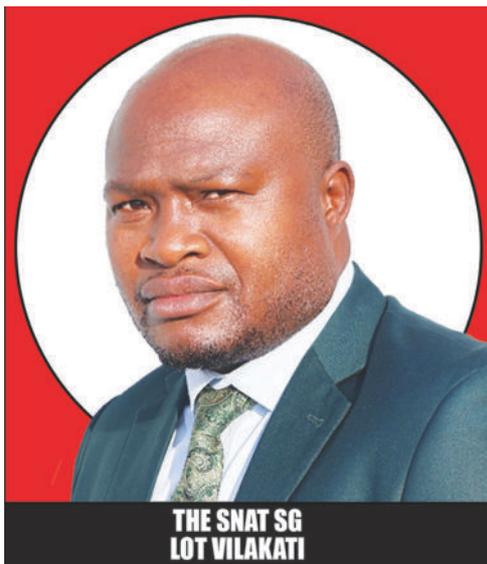
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LIVE STREAM
The SNAT Platform

The SNAT Platform @SnatSwaziland @Snatswaziland The SNAT Union

Recasting Teaching as a Collaborative Profession.

2026: THE SNAT GOES TO THE POLLS



Union are customarily declared vacant by the Office of the Secretary General [SG]. Such is a constitutional provision. It is worth noting that some Office Bearers in the Union shall be eligible for re-election whilst others shall be subjected to the 'cooling period.'

All ten [10] NEC posts, National Committees posts, Branch Executive Committees, Regional Representatives, Branch Committees, all SNAT Representatives posts are hereby declared vacant. According to the Constitution, no Officer amongst the above-mentioned ones is supposed to hold Office for more than eight [8] years in the same committee or position. Immediately after the September 2026 National Conference, BECs are expected, in liaison with the Branch Elections, to hold Elections in schools for new SNAT Shopstewards.

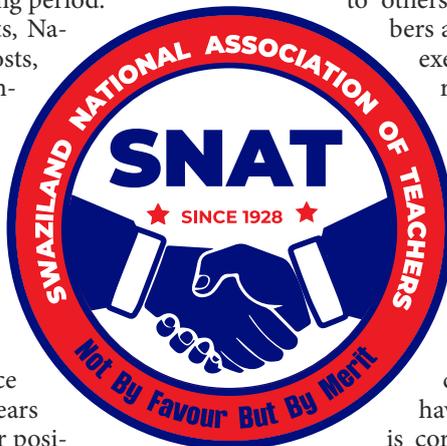
Customarily, the Union's Conferences begin at Branch Level-to Regions and lastly National Conference, usually held in September. For a member to attend National Conference, that Member must have attended both Branch and Regional Conference and accredited by the Branch Elections Committee at Branch and Regional level and National Credentials Committee at the national level.

Like in all organisations, elections are po-

litical. It's a democratic political exercise that every organisation that believes in democratic centralism undergoes in selecting and mandating new leaders. The process of politics is known to others and a foreign phenomenon to others. Notwithstanding, members are free to contest and thus exercise their democratic right of casting a vote. We are urging all members to exercise their rights of voting, and or standing for Office and be voted for.

Members must also take note that contestation does not mean enmity. It's the process of choosing leaders that we have selected as SNAT-which is correct and progressive. The other reality contestants should face is that once you enter into the race, there are two [2] possible results. It's either you win or lose. If you win, it will be because Members of the Union have trusted you with the duties of the Office. If you lose, take notes and prepare for next elections. As members of the Union, we must learn to accept results of an election. We cannot compel or lure members to vote for us by force.

We are wishing all the VMs™ and the organisation at large a happy elections year. This time around, we want free and fair elections in 2026.



The SNAT, as a living organism, possesses the characteristics of trade unions: that of elections.

The SNAT started to exist in June 1928. Up to this day, ninety-seven [97] years later, it's still standing and walking tall. The Union abolished staggering and all the SNAT entities are supposed to do away with staggering in their Term of Office as such was a Conference Resolution.

In the year 2026, the SNAT Union [Code 058] is going to the polls to renew and review Officers duties in the past four [4] years. The last elections for the organisation were held in September 2022. All the positions in the



The SNAT SG Lot Vilakati addressing delegates at the National Conference [SNAT Media].

COMPETENCY BASED EDUCATION [CBE] OR OBJECTIVE BASED EDUCATION [OBE] IN SWAZILAND: WHICH ONE IS BETTER UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES?



THE SNAT SUB-EDITOR
LINDIWE DLAMINI

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) defines competency-based education (CBE) as: “a system of instruction, assessment, feedback, self-reflection, and academic reporting that is based on students demonstrating that they have learned the knowledge, attitudes, motivations, self-perceptions, and skills expected of them as they progress through their education.”

Objective Based Education (OBE) on the other hand, helps assess and compare every student’s achievement record to decide their course of action in a new environment.

Additionally, institutions can compare themselves, by checking to see what outcomes they have in common and work the areas to improve.

The AACN has developed this model to provide a framework for nursing education that emphasizes the demonstration of learning and the development of essential competencies.

In a country, like Eswatini, where education is underfunded, it can be difficult to implement competency-based education, because it requires resources and training for teachers. In addition, without enough human resources, such as qualified teachers and support staff, it can be hard to ensure that students are getting the individualized support they need to succeed.

In a situation where there are so many obstacles, like in our case (Swaziland) including underfunding, lack of human resources, and poor infrastructure, it may be difficult to implement competency-based education in its ideal form. However, it may be possible to take some elements of competency-based education and integrate them into the existing system.

For example, providing more individualized support and feedback to students, and assessing their learning based on specific skills and competencies, rather than just grades or test scores.

Given the circumstances above, objective-based education may be more feasible and effective than competency-based education in our country.

While competency-based education has many

benefits, it can be more resource-intensive and difficult to implement in a setting where there are limited resources. Objective-based education can still provide opportunities for individualized learning and assessment, and it may be easier to measure progress and track student achievement. The government should focus on first implementing some key components of competency-based education, without trying to overhaul the entire system.

For example, they could focus on providing more support for teachers in terms of training and professional development, and establishing clear learning objectives for students.

They could also explore ways to assess students based on their skills and competencies, even if it’s not done in a fully competency-based system.

One of the potential dangers of implementing competency-based education without assistant teachers is that it could put too much pressure on classroom teachers.

In a competency-based system, teachers are expected to provide more individualized instruction and support to students, which can be time-consuming and difficult to do without extra help.

Without Assistant Teachers, it’s possible that teachers could become overwhelmed and burn out, which could have a negative impact on student learning.

It’s hard to say definitively who is most disadvantaged between the teacher and the learner in this situation, but both the teacher and the learner may face challenges.

The teacher may be overworked and under-supported, which can make it difficult to provide the level of individualized instruction and support that’s needed in a competency-based system.

Meanwhile, the learner may not receive the level of support they need to succeed, and may not be able to progress at the rate they would like. Parents are complaining that teachers no longer want to work yet they are met with the above challenges and the frustration of parents in this situation is well understood. It’s import-

ant to recognize that teachers may be facing a lot of pressure and stress when it comes to implementing competency-based education.

However, one would advise the parent to talk to the teacher directly about the concerns regarding the amount of homework.

The parent could suggest that the teacher find ways to make the homework more manageable, such as breaking it down into smaller tasks or providing more guidance and support.

In addition, the parent could help the child develop good study habits and time management skills to make the homework less overwhelming though it will be of disadvantage to the learner because a lot of content will be left out at the end.

Some parents are not educated, unemployed and computer illiterate. In such cases where parents may not have the resources or skills to help their child with homework that involves using the internet or other technology, it’s important for the school to be aware of this and provide support. The school could offer resources like computer labs or access to computers and internet at the school, as well as training or support for parents on how to use these tools which makes Swaziland not to be ready for CBE because the government has not provided such facilities in schools.

Competency-based education can have many benefits, such as allowing students to work at their own pace and giving them more control over their learning.

On the other hand, as mentioned above, it may not be possible to fully implement CBE in a setting where there are limited resources and infrastructure. In this case, it may be more practical to use a hybrid of competency-based and objective-based approaches, depending on the situation and the needs of the students.

Competency based education can have many benefits, such as allowing students to work at their own pace and giving them more control over their learning.

One would challenge the government to consider the objective based education for now; until the required human resource and infrastructure is provided in schools.



Learners in a classroom in Eswatini [Courtesy Pic.]

STARK REALITY: WHO DECIDES OFFICE BEARERS WITHIN THE UNION [SNAT]?



SNAT HEAD OF PUBLICATIONS IHOPI MCOLISI MOTSA

At this juncture, I am reminded of one Court Case where the Union [SNAT] hauled the employer's agent [TSC] to Court in 2016. This was during the To Each According To Qualification [TEAQ] Case. The Teaching Service Commission [TSC] Executive Secretary-Mduduzi Nkambule had to file an answering affidavit in response to the mind-bending question in our sector: what variables/factors determine teacher remuneration in Swaziland?

The then TSC Executive Secretary-Mduduzi Nkambule responded in an affidavit that: 'it is the qualified teacher that fits into an established government post instead of the teacher's qualification being considered for remuneration.' The conundrum had been brought forth around the enduring discourse of educators being compensated based on qualification than based on an obtainable post in the Government Data System.

With my mind on that TSC Court rigmarole, I'm inclined to think around the SNAT Elections hubbub. Holding Office within the Union is a debate we are yet to ferociously confront; both as Leaders and the rank and file. The biggest elephant in the room is the million-dollar question: who determines Office Bearers within the Union? In our case [058], does it suffice for leaders to simply provide a vision, foster trust, make decisions, and promote collaboration to navigate challenges and accomplish shared objectives with zero proven record of leadership

within the Union?

Literature establishes it [clearly] that trade unions play a vital role in advocating for the rights and welfare of workers. However, the effectiveness of a union largely depends on its leadership and management. Strong leadership within trade unions ensures that member interests are represented effectively, negotiations are conducted professionally, and the union remains a unified force for positive change. The SNAT turned 97-years old this year [2025]. In this day and age, the Union has no crystal clear SNAT Leadership Development Programme and Succession Plan except for a disjointed capacity building sessions such as workshops and other forms of random trainings. By now, the Union should be having a SNAT School of Leadership [SNASLE]-accredited at Eswatini Higher Education Council [ESHEC]. With these nine [9] decades, we should be modelling to other similar bodies what is termed as Best Practice in terms of Leadership and Trade Union Management. We should: from shop-steward to National Office Bearers, be mak-

berlee Henry [2024] is robust enough to say: "Leadership succession planning is the strategic process of identifying, developing, and preparing qualified individuals to assume critical leadership roles within an organization. It ensures smooth leadership transitions, maintains continuity, and prepares leaders for future roles." She goes on to say effective leadership succession planning is essential for organizational stability, continuity, and future success. Without a robust succession plan in place, organizations face major risks. This is where we are as the SNAT Union. For 97 years, the Union does not have a clear-cut leadership transition framework from shop-stewards, Branches, Regions and National Office Bearers. Leadership is 'accidental' and the Union lingers on individual brilliance and competence. There is no school of leadership where the culture, skills and competencies of leaders are sharpened for the betterment of the organization. At this juncture, it should be clear that a Deputy Secretary of a Branch shall, once a certain level of competence is reached, assume to be a Branch Secretary.

The same for other positions within the Union, such as Deputy Chairperson. The SNAT Union should, by now, be having standards and levels to gauge leadership capacity and be deployed into positions by Conference instead of Leaders 'pronouncing their self-interests' to assume certain positions.

With strategic planning, organizations can minimize disruptions during leadership transitions and maintain a strong leadership pipeline.

Henry goes on to list reasons why organizations need leadership succession. She mentions issues of smooth leadership transition in that a well-defined succession plan guarantees continuity and stability of the organization. She argues that with the plan in place, the organization experiences minimal disruption when leaders leave Office because a qualified successor is already prepared to step in. This minimizes confusion and maintains momentum-improving operational efficiency in the process.

Henry also posits that a clear Succession Plan ensures in that it prepares a robust pool of future leaders. She challenges organizations to identify potential in leaders and invest in their development, nurturing a constant flow of talent ready to take on leadership roles. This eliminates the scramble to fill positions and cultivates a culture of leadership from



The author is of the fervent view that the SNAT should, at this juncture, be having a School of Leadership [SNAT Media].

ing it succinctly clear that effective leadership is the backbone of any successful trade union. Leaders are responsible for navigating complex negotiations, building solidarity among members, and ensuring that the union's goals are met.

Credible scholars have defined Leadership Succession from different perspectives. Kim-

within.

At some point a SNAT Skills Audit was suggested to buttress the need to build organizational capacity. Leading the Union, at this juncture, should not just be about who will take over next; rather, it should be about ensuring that the Union's values, vision, and legacy continue to thrive across generations. There is pending danger in leaders identifying positions to fill themselves. In fact, we are walking on eggshells. Leaders in a well-oiled organization should be deployed to fill positions based on proven credentials, capabilities and strengths whilst growing through the ranks of the organization. Leaders should not just grow in positions; relatively, leaders should first exhibit growth in other forums then fit into the positions.

This is what credible organizations such as the African National Congress [ANC] through its Cadre Deployment Policy as developed in 1997 at the 50th National Conference in Mafikeng. Such a Policy within the ANC can be traced back to the ANC's Kabwe Conference in 1985 when the ANC President Oliver Tambo called for the establishment of a Political School within the organization. In 1994, the ANC recommended the deployment of suitably qualified personnel into structures of government at all levels.

It is gemstone clear to all and sundry that the Union of close to 13,000 Members require a certain caliber of leaders to realize its full potential. Not to blow one's own trumpet, however, the foundation has

been laid in terms of marketing the brand SNAT. The next level is to ensure that the Leadership invests in what is called Union Instrumentality. Union instrumentality is an employee's belief that their union effectively achieves tangible benefits, like better wages, improved working conditions, and job security, making membership worthwhile. Our members should, when they conduct a cognitive assessment of the value of the Union, see no alternative but the organization in terms of representation. The next layer of leadership should el- evate

work into pragmatic reality. This will require a paradigm shift and a resolute leadership. This will require a certain crop of leaders that shall put the interest of the Union first.

There is a conventional norm out there whereupon Leaders decide on the portfolios of their own preferences.

This is perilous for the Union. It should be bluntly established that a Deployment Framework within the Union needs to be enacted lest the gains be thrown into the lurch. Seldom, the Union depends only on individual brilliance and capabilities of the individual Office Bearer. It is time we all confront the essence and relevance of what the SNAT Credentials Committee consider in requesting credentials/CV of the Candidates. The gist of that exercise is not just a piece of data; rather, to trace the prospective candidate within the Union and ascertain if they fit into the vacant positions as announced.

Perhaps, it is time we robustly confront the kernel of that process which may culminate into establishment of the Deployment Framework within the Union. Failure to review the credentials of the probable candidates may lead to mayhem within the organization. That is why thus far, the SNAT has failed to provide leadership outside of our boarders such as Education International [EI] and other similar bodies.

The time is now for the electorate to adhere [to the latter], the tagline in our logo: "Not By Favour But By Merit." Basically, this profound motto emphasizes the principle that individuals should be elected or appointed to positions of authority based on their qualifications, abilities, and achievements rather than personal relationships, favoritism, or connections. For those seeking election into office this year [2026], adhering to the principle of "Not by favor but by merit" is crucial. It not only enhances their chances of being elected but also sets a standard for future leadership, fostering an environment where excellence is recognized and rewarded.



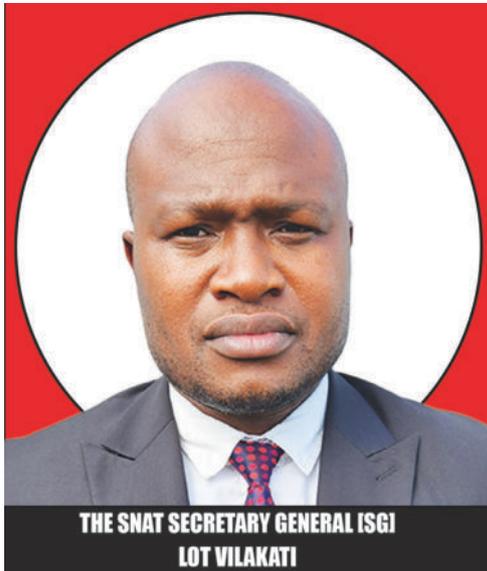
The African National Congress [ANC] logo [Courtesy Pic.]

the organization as an Investment Hub. The discourse around the SNAT Holdings Pty [Ltd] should bridge the theoretical frame-



Delegates at the SNAT Conference [SNAT Media].

THE SNAT ON THE #GOPUBLIC #FUND EDUCATION CAMPAIGN



In July 2024, the SNAT Secretary General [SG]-Lot Vilakati travelled to Buenos Aires, Argentina for the 10th Education International [EI] World Congress [29th July to August 2, 2024].

The Congress was held under the theme: “Growing our Unions, Elevating our Professions, Defending Democracy.”

At the Congress, the Secretary General, met with the EI Head of the #GoPublic #FundEducation Campaign in Brussels, Frolian. He also met Dr. Pedi from Accra, Ghana, the EI Africa Region Project Manager for the #GoPublic #FundEducation Campaign. It is these meetings that culminated into the SNAT Union #GoPublic #FundEducation Local Campaign.

The #GoPublic #FundEducation Campaign by Education international [EI] is informed by the limited financing of education in the public sector. Governments of the day are no longer prioritising public education at all; instead, more austerity measures are introduced in the public education sector.

The majority of school going children of the working class attend public schools yet the quality of education in the public schools is going down the drain-day in and day out.

The privatisation of education does not only affect the quality of public schooling-it directly affects the right of children to education as education is a right of each and every child in the global village.

When education is for sale, as it is now, only children of the elite have opportunities and access to that kind of education.

The SNAT Union is calling for the closing of all private schools in the country-transform these institutions into public schools. Alternatively, let all public schools emulate the standards of the private schools.

It is an open secret that these private schools are owned by influential individuals in the sector thus the likelihood of having a difficulty closing them.

The High-Level United Nations [UN] Panel of

educated educationalists published fifty-nine [59] Recommendations to all governments of the world that they need to implement for quality education in the world. The International Monetary Fund [IMF] is also one of the hindrances of quality public education that only focuses on the Wage Bill when teachers are supposed to be engaged on a permanent basis by the government.

Currently, about forty-four [44] million teachers are needed globally to achieve universal primary and secondary education by 2030.

EI calls this shortage a “global epidemic” affecting the wealthy and poor nations alike. In Swaziland, we only need a meagre 4,000 teachers to fill the vacancies that are caused by hiring freeze pioneered by the government.

The continuous employment of teachers on fixed term contracts for more than fifteen [15] years is a day light robbery and a proof to everyone who cares to listen that education is no longer a priority in the country.

The failure of the Teaching Service Commission [TSC] to relocate Bachelor of Arts [BA] in Humanities + Post Graduate Certificate in Education [PGCE] teachers who are wrongly-placed in primary schools, to their correct posts in secondary schools is one sign that the government cares less about the welfare of teachers and the education of the learners.

Not only are these educators demoralised by the wrong remuneration scale, their exit package is heavily compromised as they are compensated at C3 instead of C5. The other salt in the wound is that of teaching at the wrong level.

The lack of transparency in the recruitment exercise by the TSC is also affecting the morale amongst the cadres as to who is supposed to be relocated and promoted at all.

For us in Swaziland, the #GoPublic #FundEducation Campaign started in Regions where SNAT Members delivered Petitions to Regional Educa-



tion Offices [REOs], raising a litany of sectoral issues that needed the attention of the government. All four [4] REOs received the Memorandum of Demands [MoDs] from the Union. On the 14th of November 2025, the Union held a National Event on the #GoPublic #FundEducation Campaign.

A Petition was delivered at the Ministry of Education and Training [MoET] Headquarters in Mbabane. Numerous education stakeholders participated in the session. Ordinarily, the campaign is supposed to run throughout the year as it resonates well with all the challenges faced by educators in the country and the education system as a whole.

The SNAT is calling for the increase of the education budget. We call upon the MoET to separate the capital expenditure and the salaries that take up 75% of the budget.

The budget for salaries should be allocated to the relevant Ministry-that of the Public Service, not the Ministry of Education and Training [MoET].



The Minister of Education and Training [MoET]-Hon. Owen Nxumalo with the EI Delegation holding the Document on the 59 recommendations from the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel on the Teaching Profession [SNAT Media].

UNDERSTANDING THE NUANCES OF BUDGETING



**SNAT NATIONAL TREASURER
BUSIZWE HLATJWAYO**

Management of financial resources requires much of budgeting. The subject of budgeting had been widely ignored by numerous people, especially civil servants who are paid peanuts. They no longer see the need and importance of doing a budget because the salary is not

enough even to sustain their basic needs.

They even refer to budgeting as a “wish list”. With that said and done, we still need to budget for the little that we earn.

Budgeting defined:

A budget is a financial plan aimed at balancing income and expenditure. It is an estimate of incomes and expenditures for a certain period.

Importance of a budget:

Despite the fact that a majority of people are living from hand to mouth, it still remains important to have a budget of all expected revenues.

The following are some of the many reasons for budgeting:

1. A budget assists in determining if the amount received had been spent wisely
2. It helps to keep track of money received, spent and how it is spent. Budget monitors income and expenses.
3. Budgeting keeps us on track for our financial goals. The little that we earn we still have big goals to achieve. To do this, we

need to prepare a sound budget.

4. It helps to be able to honour debts in time. Debts that are not paid accrue interests and become very costly.
5. Budget helps to identify problem areas and facilitate effective solutions.
6. Budget assists in emergency preparedness.

Methods of Budgeting:

1. **Incremental Budgeting:** Incremental budgeting takes last year’s actual figures and adds or subtracts a percentage to obtain the current year’s budget. This type of budgeting is most commonly used because it is simple and easy to understand.
2. **Activity Based Budgeting:** In this method of budgeting, every activity that incurs cost is scrutinized for potential ways to create efficiencies. All activities need to be analysed prior to be budgeted for.
3. **Zero Based Budgeting:** This is a method of budgeting in which all expenses must be justified for each new period. Unlike in the incremental method, zero based budgeting the expense is budgeted for from zero every financial year. It doesn’t take into account previous records.



The writer advises everyone to budget for all expected revenues [Courtesy Pic.]

SNAT HOSTS HISTORIC TEACHERS DAY AND BASH [2025]

On the 5th of October, annually, teachers around the world gather to commemorate what is pigeon-holed World Teachers Day [WTD].

The commemoration of this Day is paramount as it serves as a global call to action, support, protect and appreciate the heartbeat of the teaching profession: educators. Since it was established by the UNESCO in 1994, the day is no longer a routine celebration; rather, a critical advocacy platform.

A moment to pause and reflect on the obtaining conditions of service of teachers, evaluating the rights of teachers, their compensation, addressing global teacher shortage, advocating for the boost of teacher morale and motivation, highlighting the transformative power of education and an endeavour to hold governments accountable [report card] on education policy issues.

This year, 2025, under the resounding theme of “RECASTING TEACHING AS A COLLABORATIVE PROFESSION,” the SNAT joined the contemporary World in commemorating the distinct day. The Union chose, intentionally so, to have the merriments on the 24th of October 2025.

It is common cause that for the longest time, until 2024, the Ministry of Education and Training [MoET] could not see the need to value and appreciate teachers in the country for a myriad of reasons. Unlike other countries that awarded teachers for their sterling professional work and commitment as pedagogists, the Ministry would elect to frustrate the commemoration of this Day by the

SNAT through threats of no work no Pay and forms for those who would defy Circulars from the Ministry declaring the designated day as ‘normal working day.’ The Department of Education in South Africa, for instance, has what is termed the “National Teaching Awards,” as established in 2000 by the late Professor Kader Asmal. This year [2025], the awards reached a major milestone, celebrating their 25th [Silver Jubilee] Anniversary.

Botswana does have a synonymous event dubbed the “National Teachers Day Awards.” This year’s event took place on the 5th of June 2025 in Palapye under the theme: “Investing in Teachers as Architects of the New Bo-

swana.”

In Eswatini, such a mini-recognition of the Day commenced last year [2024] at Esibayeni Lodge. This year [2025], the event was at The George in Manzini on the 10th of October 2025.

Since the arrival of the new Minister Honourable Owen Nxumalo and the new Principal Secretary [PS] at the Ministry of Education and Training [MoET]-Ms. Nanikie Mnisi, teachers have enjoyed a relatively cordial and threat-free celebration of their day.

The PS would simply issue a Formal Correspondence permitting teachers to attend the event in droves.

The 2025 commemoration was like no other. Similar to the 2024 commemoration, the 2025 celebration was held at Mavuso Exhibition Centre. Ordinarily, the event was supposed to be held at Mbulungwane with the Branch acting as hosts. Customarily, the commemoration of Teachers Day rotates through Regions and Branches, re-



The SNAT SG Lot Vilakati.



Over 10,000 Teachers cascaded to Mavuso Exhibition Centre on the 24th of October 2025 to commemorate World Teachers Day under the SNAT.

spectively.

This was a Conference Resolution-a while ago. Manzini Branch were, in fact, hosts last year. The reason the Branch had to waive the hosting rights came after further engagements and discussion around logistics. It is common cause now that a Teachers Day and an After-Party are inseparable. This year, the After-Party metamorphosed to become a Teachers' Bash with various local and international artists featuring during the day and at night. In 2022, the Budget for the Teachers Day Commemoration stood at E100 000.00.

The New NEC managed to supply 3,500 t-shirts. The subsequent year, 2023, Big Bend Branch hosted the event and the NEC supplied 7,000 t-shirts of medium quality. In 2024, 11, 500 quality t-shirts were procured. The quantity supplied this year surpassed all-as 13, 000 high quality t-shirts were delivered to our Valued Members.™

The expenses for the Teachers Day have since ballooned to E2 Million. It is quite satisfying that Members no longer complain about stomach issues as financial resources [though never enough] are released to Branches for them to transport and feed our members who have registered their intent to attend the celebration.

This year's 2nd Edition of the Bash was surely a blast. The main act of the fete was none either than South Africa's sensation: Sjava. Both local dailies had eye-catching headlines on the next Monday of the week-reflecting on the thrilling activities of the bash. "Sjava, Umafikizolo pack Teachers Day Bash" headlined the Times of Eswatini.

"Sjava ignites Teachers Day Bash" reported the Eswatini Observer. The two [2] headlines resonated with the thrilling events of the awe-inspiring night of the 24th of October 2025. Other local eccentric Artists such as Linda Dlamini, DJ Lolo, Phathwakahle, Tibza, M-Nation, Young Zesh, Jerry-P etc left the revellers yearning for more on the stage.



Invited guests after cutting the 97-year-old celebration cake at the Mavuso Sports Centre during the teachers day commemoration on the 24th of October 2025.

Khadeair was equally a marvel to watch.

Worth noting this year is the issue of the massive corporate support that came through from different companies. The brand SNAT is now a force to reckon with. Pick n Pay [Lojaf] was the main sponsor of the massive event with a whooping E300, 000.00 donation to the Union.

This amount supported Branches as they prepared for the Day and catered for other expenses at National Office in line with the event.

It would be disservice not to appreciate New Life-the expertise and guidance they projected to us regarding the logistics of the event was outstandingly great.

2026 shall surely be mind-blowing as the Union will celebrate 98 years of existence, since 1928.



The SNAT President Mbongwa Dlamini addressing the over 10, 000 teachers at Mavuso Sports Centre on the 24th of October 2025.



Pick N Pay Stores Donated E300, 000.00 for the 2025 Teachers Day.

“THE SITUATION HAS GROSSLY AFFECTED ME AS A FATHER AS I HAVE TO REMAIN A PROVIDER - DESPITE BEING UNEMPLOYED,”- SNAT PRESIDENT



SNAT EDITOR
MCOLISI MOTSA

The SNAT Editor, Mcolisi Motisa, took time to engage in a robust conversation with the SNAT President-Mbongwa Dlamini on a plethora of contemporary issues in the country.

The President shared his insight on numerous organizational issues, his current condition, following his arbitrary and unfair dismissal by the Teaching Service Commission [TSC] in 2023, his Presidency at the SATO, issues around the Joint Negotiations Forum [JNF] and host of other issues. The SNAT Editor reports...

SNAT Editor [SE]: Good day Comrade President! We hope you're doing well Leader.

SNAT President [SP]: Good day Comrade Editor and thanks for having me.

SE: Salute! Thank you for taking your time, in your busy schedule, to talk to us President. We are humbled. Now, tell us President. How has life been since you were unfairly and arbitrarily dismissed by the TSC in August 2023?

SP: Comrade Editor, life has been tough but because of the cause: we remain strong.

SE: Hmm...we can only imagine President. We can only imagine. How has this situation affected you as a father and a human being?

SP: The situation has grossly affected me as a father as I have to remain a provider despite

unemployed. What's worse is that none of my children receives scholarship from the central government but I have been able to make ends meet. As a human being, I have gained a lot of experience from my situation.

SE: Oh yes! We can tell President. We know that losing a job is not an easy thing. What keeps you going?

SP: Believing in the cause will always keep one going. The support from members of the SNAT NEC, SNAT members, fellow citizens and international friends has always been a pillar of strength.

SE: President, there was a point where the Government Minis-

tries, including the mighty TSC, refused to meet the SNAT NEC in your presence: what was in your mind during those difficult days?

SP: Comrade Editor, that was one of the worst moments but it was interesting at the same time. My experience as a football coach made me understand that the mistakes being committed by the government are due to the pressure they are experiencing.

SE: Oh yes! At some point the JNF was in limbo due to your presence thereat. At some point the then PS at the Public Service led the GNT on a walk-out, protesting about your inclusion amongst the PSUs at the JNF. When you look back, what issues can you pick that are worth mentioning at this juncture? How did the whole thing affect you as a Trade Union Official?

SP: The unity by the SNAT NEC and the PSUs leadership denied government her victory on this matter. I learnt that resilience and unity yield good results.

SE: Some Members were even suggesting that you should resign as the SNAT President. Did all that affect you? Is there any moment where you felt you should indeed jump the ship and step down as the SNAT President?

SP: That didn't bother me much simply because I understood that such calls were from the enemy. None of the SNAT formal structures ever supported the call.

SE: Hmm...thank you President. We have also seen you leading the Southern Africa Teachers Organization [SATO] as the President. Since you took Office as the SATO President, what challenges do teachers in SADC face?

SP: Comrade Editor, that's one of my difficult tasks. I have realized that teachers' problems are common across the SADC Region.

SE: Well, that is profound President! With your Executive at the SATO, how do you intend fixing those chal-



SNAT President Mbongwa Dlamini.

lenges faced by Teachers across the SADC Region?

SP: We have decided to officially register SATO in Botswana. This will enable us to participate in All SADC Meetings especially when Education Protocols are being enacted. It will be the perfect platform to address our concerns.

SE: Hmmm...thank you about that President! Now, we usually see SADC having Conferences/Meetings and adopting various protocols. The voice of teachers is not there in all this. One such instrument on Education is the 1997 SADC Protocol on Education and Training where Member States made a plethora of commitments regarding education. How do you plan to penetrate the SADC Level where the SATO would probably participate fully and influence the discourse on teachers and education issues?

SP: As I mentioned earlier, we are in the process of registering SATO in Botswana. Since we understand that there is nothing for us without us, we are going to make sure we have a space during the enactment of such protocols. It has been unfortunate that such protocols were established without teachers' input yet we remain the main stakeholders in Education.

SE: Now coming back to Swaziland, we have seen you prominently leading at the Public Service Negotiations Chamber-with massive dedication and precision, yet you knew you won't benefit from the outcome of the Salary Review Negotiations. Tell us: where do you derive such level of selflessness as a Leader?

SP: Oh, thanks Comrade Editor for recognizing my efforts during this exercise! I believe any leader should pride themselves on the success of the delivery of their mandate. To me, a leader should always put their electorate first. We worked as a team with the whole PSUs leadership and that on its own was a motivation.

SE: Well, thank you President. From your experience as a Negotiator, what is your take on the need for a Joint Negotiations Forum Framework than the current Constitution?

SP: I may begin by concurring with that we need a Joint Negotiations Forum Framework than the present Constitution. The current Constitution does not promote free and fair negotiations as it promotes dominance by the Employer. As PSUs, we are always treated as underdogs than equals in the negotiations forum. The framework must allow for a neutral Chairperson and Negotiations to precede the national budget. With the current situation, we negotiate from a pre-determined budget thus making government to impose the offer instead of negotiating it. With a proper framework, negotiations should not last the whole year but be completed within a specific period.

SE: Now looking at the recent outcomes of the JNF, are you satisfied as a Leader or you feel you should have pushed for a 'better deal' for your members out there as PSUs?

SP: Comrade Editor, as much as this is not enough for our members but it remains the best we could have negotiated under the ob-



The SNAT President Mbongwa Dlamini engaging with his Lawyer Lucky Howe at the High Court in one of his Court battles with the TSC over his unfair dismissal [SNAT Media Pic.]

taining circumstances. Ours now is to make sure the remaining 85% backpay and the allowances are paid in July next year [2026]. Also, what is also good about the issue of all workers grades starting from notch 1 is that every worker's salary will increase every April for the next five [5] years and that is whether we get CoLA on not from government. As much as notch to notch seemed favorable to our members but the increase would have been once and if government offers no CoLA in a particular year, the effect would be worse.

SE: I am sorry about this one President. I have to ask it. I think you now have four [4] Court Judgements exonerating you from the determination by the 'kangaroo court' known as the TSC. The Commission has refused to take you back. How do you feel about the whole thing? Is it affecting you in anyway?

SP: Winning a case against any allegation is gratifying regardless of any material benefit. The act of the TSC to disregard courts is evidence enough to Swazis and the World that we have no government as the people. This can't make us to think it's just the TSC that undermines the courts but even the Attorney General [AG's] Office which advises and represents the TSC in Court.

SE: Well, we won't go into deeper details on the above as it is still pending before Court. Coming to the outcomes of the 2025 SNAT Conference of Delegates where your issue took Centre stage, what are your thoughts on the pronouncements by Conference?

SP: I would like to appreciate the delegates for understanding the bigger picture in the

issue and do the opposite of what the government expected. It was an accurate reading of the political barometer by the delegates in understanding that this is not an attack to my person but the organization. As a Union, we shall never allow the enemy to isolate and attack our leaders.

SE: Now, Mr. President, we know that you are leaving Office in 2026. What is your greatest fear as the President, looking at the status of the organization, you have led for the past seven [7] years?

SP: My greatest fears Comrade Editor is that the enemy has infiltrated the Union such that, at some point, if we are not going to analyze properly, elements from the enemy will take over the leadership thus reversing all the gains we have achieved for the past nine [9] decades of our existence as a Union.

SE: Comrade President, we cannot avoid the question that says: where to from here as the SNAT President? Where do you see yourself in the next three [3] to four [4] years?

SP: This is a difficult question but I can sum it up by saying that, when I took leadership in the Union, I believed that my destiny is best known by the members of the Union. My duty would be to support any leadership elected by the Members.

SE: Hmmm...that's profound. Thank you for everything Mr. President. We appreciate your time to talk to us President. May God be with you!!

SP: You are welcome, Comrade Editor and for the opportunity you have given me. Wishing you happy festive season and a prosperous new year.

“SOCIAL MEDIA HAS TAUGHT ME A LOT ABOUT PEOPLE - HOW THEY THINK AND HOW THEY FEEL - AND HOW I SHOULD ALIGN MYSELF,” BONKHE SHABANGU

The name Bonkhe Shabangu is no just an ordinary name. Bonkhe is a prestigious powerhouse.

A reputable brand influencer, a marketing guru, a renowned author, father, HoD, an entrepreneur and Leader par excellence. We took our time to engage him as our VM and gain insight on a plethora of issues around his life. The SNAT Editor, Mcolisi Motsa reports.

SNAT Editor [SE]: Good day VM™ Mbhele. How are you doing? Thank you for taking your time to engage us here at the SNAT Media.

Bonkhe Shabangu [BS]: Hello Editor, it's indeed a good day. I am feeling great – thanks. I hope the same applies to you. Let me also take this opportunity to appreciate this interview. Yes, thank you for having me Editor.

SE: Hmm...great to know that you are doing well. Now, just a brief background: who is Bonkhe Shabangu?

BS: I come from rural Sigwe Inkhundla, in the Shiselweni region – where I grew up and where my parental home is. I went to Ntshani Primary School (class of 2005) and completed my secondary education at Ntshanini High School (class of 2010).

SE: Well, we are equally interested in knowing what keeps Bonkhe going each morning? What are the key values that define Bonkhe Shabangu?

BS: I am very self-driven Editor. Each morning when I wake up, I wake up with positivity. I wake up to living up to my ambitions and to seizing opportunities as they come. I wake to appreciating life as an adventure that has a lot to offer.

SE: Wow!! That's quite profound! We know you as a Brand Ambassador and a business-minded individual. Give us a low-down. How did you come up with the concept of 'Cotton Sway'?

BS: Cotton Sway is a fashion brand in the street-wear category. It is a portfolio of my entrepreneurial work that started in June 2020, in the middle of a lockdown. You'd remember how Covid-19 was messing up with us in terms of schools' operations. One-minute schools are opened; next they are closed. So, finding myself idle when schools were closed got me bored. As a creative and lifestyle-oriented person, having sold 'Phuma Kimi' branded t-shirts at university, I leveraged that experience and exposure to come up with Cotton Sway as a street-culture clothing

brand. What inspired the clothing brand idea in the midst of Covid-19 was after noticing how Mickey Mouse branded t-shirts were selling on Facebook. That gave me an insight and confidence in that clothes were selling despite lockdowns and curfews.

SE: Beautiful! We are interested in knowing whom did you collaborate with in developing the massive

brand: Cotton Sway? Looking back, what lessons can you pick and how would you advise other entrepreneurs out there in terms of business incubation, execution, marketing etc?

BS: In the fall of 2020, I partnered with two [2] boys in their teens, who lived in Manzini town: full-time. They were popular amongst their groupies in school and they were very passionate about street-culture fashion. They helped pollinate the brand through both sales and photo-shoots. That gave the brand a quick breakthrough. When it comes to ownership, I own 100% of the Cotton Sway concept and catalogue to-date.

I am self-taught graphic designer.

Through constant practice, this skill has enabled me to create with freedom and also translate my ideas into tangible designs with speed, and clarity. Over the years, I have developed a good working relationship with the guys who do the sewing – we identify quality fabric, sew everything from scratch and take the merchandise for branding.

SE: Well, we have also seen you being Brand Ambassador for different corporates, parastatals and entities. Give us an insight into that. How did you eventually venture into the space of social media marketing? What lessons can you pin-point emanating from that space?

BS: Yes, I have served as a brand ambassador for United Holdings Eswatini; a brand influencer for MTN Eswatini; Unilever - Knorr Soup Campaign; as well as a content creator partnership with Eswati-



BRAND INFLUENCER- Bonkhe Shabangu.

ni Tourism Authority. My journey in social media marketing started at university in 2012 when I got a campus award for being a Facebook-addict. I was always online, making updates, journaling my personal life and promoting the Phuma Kimi t-shirts I mentioned earlier. As Facebook developed over the years, I would notice the new features added and run to YouTube to learn more about the changes. Then I got to learn about Facebook Page manager (now called Meta Business Suite) – that is what introduced me to understand social media analytics. Offline, I was reading a series of Entrepreneur Magazine copies. In those magazines, the editorials; interviews of business executives; and budding entrepreneurs across the African continent, mostly South Africa, shaped by entrepreneurial mindset. Since then, it's been constant learning, research, and application. What I learned through these experiences and exposure is that the digital space has numerous career opportunities that our country (and industry players) hasn't fully exploited. So, ours is to keep adapting and aligning ourselves.

SE: Hmm...from your years in the business circles, what do you think are the principal challenges facing young entrepreneurs in Eswatini?

BS: Well! As you know Editor, many would say it is the lack of funding. But what come top of my list are: the lack of intentionality; lack of exposure; lack of mentorship in both personal growth and business development; and most importantly the lack of marketing. Young people don't market themselves and they haven't fully grasped the concept of building a brand. A brand allows you to tell your story, in a manner that sets you apart. Also, once you are running a brand, you get organized; structured and serving the brand everyday builds consistency.

SE: That's absolutely correct! We have also witnessed you exhibiting an outstanding writing craft: "Hustlerpreneurs Perspectives: A Definitive Guide to Personal Growth and Development." What was in your mind when you wrote that Book? How do you feel about it as it's still selling even today?

BS: Before that, I self-published a book titled "A Journey To A Definite Place of Purpose" in March 2018. This one tells my story in a motivational and inspirational way to the reader, the youth in particular. The "Hustlerpreneurs Perspectives: A Definitive Guide to Personal Growth and Development" project was launched in August 2024. It also captures my experiences, insights, thought-process, and motivation. The target audience includes entrepreneurs, personal brands, learners, and everyone who appreciates literary works with local context. My personal mission is to engage, inspire and transform my communities through speaking, writing and action. Having this kind of work done gives me a sense of fulfillment that I have contributed to society in the most positive and energetic way possible. I look up to my own work and get inspired to do more.

SE: Hmm...great work! In your view, is publishing a worthwhile venture in Eswati-



Bonkhe Shabangu receiving a token of appreciation from the Minister of Tourism and Environmental Affairs Honourable Jane Mkhonta-Simelane in this file photo.



Copies of Bonkhe's Book: "Hustlerpreneurs Perspectives: A Definitive Guide to Personal Growth and Development".

ni?

BS: Absolutely! We need more writers to produce and document more of our stories. We have a very young and youthful Nation that will utilize the written material, find motivation, get inspired, see gaps for themselves, apply themselves and ultimately impact their own lives and the country at large.

SE: Now, at some point we usually see you profiling yourself in your page and ensuring that we see the real-time algorithms and

statistics of your followers. Tell us: what's the point behind that?

BS: The teacher in me always feels like shedding light. It comes natural and hence I keep on sharing. On the other hand, I am demonstrating what I can do. I am marketing myself in terms of how I think and how I view the social and commercial space. My personal goal is to transition fully into the corporate space, and social media is the tool that enables me to advance this goal. I recently enrolled for a Master of Business Administration, specializing in marketing management. It is the same social media understanding and presence that has inspired this direction.

SE: It would be injustice to end this interview without telling us about your best collaboration. When you look back at the companies you have partnered with, which one do you think comes top in terms of adding value to you and helping you grow as a person and business person?

BS: If MTN Eswatini didn't see me, United Holdings Eswatini (and all the other collaborations) probably wouldn't have confidence in me. I value each one of them, but to answer you sharply so, MTN Eswatini takes the credit for giving me my first-ever brand-influencer contract. I have always been obsessed with their organization and how they have kept their brand alive. Over the years, I tried interacting with their brand, and participated in their MTN 21 days of Yello campaign. The moment they wanted to partner with me, I received the opportunity with both hands – they gave me a breakthrough.

SE: Now, without sounding personal, we know that you are a father. Tell us about the relationship you have with your son.

BS: We have a growing relationship, given



The SNAT SG Lot Vilakati handing over a valued t-shirt to our VM™ Bonkhe Shabangu as a brand influencer.

that I don't stay with him – he spends all of his time with his mother or granny's place. He is teaching me things that I don't know and I wouldn't have known until I had him. I appreciate him for teaching me responsibility, love for kids and long-term planning. As he grows older, I cannot wait to see him take on the universe with my support and guidance.

SE: We are all aware that social media is not for the weak. Give us an insight. How do you handle the aggression, clout and toxicity of social media?

BS: Toxic is an understatement Editor! This is a place of chaos. One quote says: "Social media is the cancer of our time" – because everything spreads fast and there is no control. There's just too much freedom. I have my moments where I lose it, but over the years, I have developed a great amount of resilience to overcome whatever battle that comes my way online. Social media has taught me a lot about people – how they think and how they feel – and how I should align myself. It's a wholesome experience that makes a man made of steel.

SE: Hmmm...now besides being a father, you are also a teacher and recently a Head of Department at your school. Tell us about your journey as a teacher and how much you think you have influenced the young souls under your care at school? How does it feel being referred to as an HoD?

BS: I have been in the teaching profession for a decade now, having started in February 2016. I appreciate the experience I have gained over the years, and the opportunity to empower a younger generation. My phi-



Bonkhe Shabangu at work!!

losophy is that teaching and learning should be fun. I strongly believe in education given the socio-economic landscape in our coun-

try – still developing with so much room for improvement, and that calls for empowered citizens. I go off-topic from time-to-time and seeing the learners get engaged with keen interest in what I share from my world of exposure warms my heart. As an HoD, I am humbled and happy with the opportunity to lead, and grow at the same time. Everything is still new; hence I will be applying myself gradually.

SE: I am interested in asking the question: do you see yourself as a social media influencer? If so, what does it take for one to be a social media influencer?

BS: Yes, I see myself as a social media influencer and I am intentional about it. To be one, it takes understanding your strengths, your passions and using those qualities to: (i) Find your voice; (ii) Position Yourself; (iii) Build authority; and (iv) Be engaging. The growth process follows the structure of being a personal brand. You cannot be everywhere, hence find your niche or communicate your areas of interests. Brands see you when you have a personality and character that matches their brand in terms of values and culture. For me, my background in entrepreneurship, education, social media marketing and lifestyle events has given me a good leverage.

SE: If you were to advise other social media influencers out there in Eswatini, what would be your word?

BS: Adding to my response above, I would challenge them to be as professional, and handle every campaign as if their next collaboration depends on it. Also, they should keep profiling themselves, take pro-bono gigs if they are still starting out for build exposure. And mostly importantly, have differentiators – what sets you apart from the rest.

SE: Hmmm...That's amazing! Tell us: whom do you look up to as your source of inspiration and motivation whether locally or internationally?

BS: Personal branding wise, I looked up to Dj Sbu in South Africa. My mentor in entrepreneurship is Strive Masiyiwa, the Econet founder and billionaire from Zimbabwe. Locally, I look up to Gciniwe Fakudze for all the balance she possesses as a role model, a business executive and personal brand. Otherwise, I learn from quite a number of individuals since I read magazines a lot, and that exposes me to a wide range of success stories.

SE: Wow!! Where do you see yourself in ten [10] years from now as a person and entrepreneur?

BS: I am picking things as they come, adapting and aligning myself to the corporate space through learning and practice. As an entrepreneur, I hope to create jobs and impact my immediate communities more through social responsibility.

SE: Well, thank you so much Mbhele for the time to chat with us. We appreciate you so much. Wishing you well in your future endeavors.

BS: Thank you Editor for the opportunity to share my story. It has been a refreshing experience to respond to all of your questions – leading me onto new tracks. Be blessed!

SE: Thank you Mbhele!!!

“I TRY NOT TO BE A BOSS AND I BELIEVE IN HAVING GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE TEACHERS,” - MR. S. SHABANGU

The long-held adage that ‘leaders are born’ holds true for none either than Mr. Sicelo Shabangu—a teacher, Administrator and SNAT Leader of note.

Mr. Shabangu is currently the SNAT Resolutions Gender Officer—representing the Manzini Region. The mention of his name at Dwalile Community brings smiles and overwhelming moments considering his credentials and outstanding Leadership at the school—Dwalile High. The SNAT Editor, Mcolisi Motsa took time to engage with the incredible Leader.

SNAT Editor [SE]: Good day Mr. Shabangu. Welcome to our interview. Thank you for the opportunity to meet you and have this vital conversation.

Shabangu Sicelo [SS]: It is my pleasure Editor to be in this interview.

SE: Now, tell us: who is Mr. Shabangu? Just a brief background of who Mr. Shabangu is and where do you come from?

SS: I’m a 48-year-old male from Lushikishini—just 30km outside Mankayane.

SE: Wow! We are cognizance of the fact that you are a Headteacher at Dwalile High School—a rural school. Tell us about your brief background and your academic journey as an educator up to where you are now as an illustrious Administrator.

SS: After finishing my high school education at Nhlanguano Central, I enrolled at UNISWA for a Bachelor of Arts [BA] in Humanities. After graduating, I was posted at Dwalile Central High—that was in 2001. I have never taught in any other school save for Ngudzeni High where I was a temporary teacher from February to July 1996—just after finishing my O’Level.

SE: Hmm...we have seen you take Dwalile High School to greater heights. When did you arrive at the school Mr. Shabangu? Give us an insight.

SS: I arrived in 2001 just after graduating and been everything from being Assistant Teacher, Head of Department [HoD], appointed Deputy Headteacher in 2010. In 2016, I got appointed as the Headteacher of the school.

SE: Oh great! Looking back when you arrived and now, how would you describe your leadership style and what would you point out as key changes under your leadership?

SS: I would not know my leadership style but one thing I know is that I try not to be a Boss and I believe in having good relations with the teachers. On key changes we have



Mr. Sicelo Shabangu—Headteacher at Dwalile High School.

managed to work on was that of prioritizing the teachers’ welfare, especially in ensuring that no teacher shares accommodation. Yes, there have been changes in the results of the school. That is when we have seen some moments of even individual brilliance—seeing top pupils coming from our school in 2018 JC, 2020 SGCSE, 2022 top pupil and second best both from our school.

SE: So many school Leaders want to see their schools perform-academically. What is your secret as an outshining Administrator?

SS: We thrive to reach out to teachers to have good relations which has to filter to the working environment. We encourage teachers to make the kids their core priority.

SE: Wow! Quite profound! We also saw you winning a number of Awards at the inaugural 2024 Ministry of Education and Training [MoET] Teachers Awards at Esibayeni Lodge, including that of Excellence in School Leadership and Management. How did you feel about the achievement?

SS: I was so excited to receive two [2] Awards and I was also happy for the teachers who are behind the school success.

SE: Impressive! We send our message of felicitations on your achievement. We learnt as well that even this year [2025], you bagged in a number of Awards at The

George during a similar event as last year’s. When you sit down at home, reflecting on all this, how do you feel Mbhele?

SS: This year was so special as we received three [3] Awards and the prestigious Principal Secretary’s [PS] award which was introduced for the 1st time. It was so humbling when I got that standing ovation. To me it came with pressure and the expectations that come with the Award. It was pleasing that both in 2024 and 2025, it was not only the Headteacher who was awarded but even teachers. In 2024, the Best Food and Nutrition [F&N] Teacher Award was ours. In 2025, best Siswati JC and SGCSE both came to us.

SE: Hmm...humbling indeed! Tell us about your relationship with your Academic Staff. How do you relate with them as an Administrator?

SS: We have very good relations. I visit Departments and talk about the challenges they face in an informal setting. I also subject myself to the authority of the HoDs who Head the Subjects I teach. I also attend Departmental meetings Chaired by the HoDs and get to be a subordinate. By the way, I teach Mathematics and Geography where my tests also go via the HoDs. Socially, I avail myself in all activities that have been organized by the Committee that organise school social events.

SE: Well, that’s quite heart-warming! In

every school, there are challenges and setbacks that you come across on a daily basis. What is your approach in addressing those internal challenges as a Leader?

SS: If they don't affect the school performance, I don't give it much attention. If they do, I give it attention by addressing it with the people concerned. Some issues may crop up as a result of poor communication. Forums such as a caucus, meetings are used frequently in our school. At least, they make every stakeholder to have a sense of belonging in the school.

SE: Hmmm...that is absolutely mouthful! Tell us about your relationship with the community and the School Committee. How can you describe your working relationship with them?

SS: I have spent my entire life in that community and as such my relationship with them is eccentric. Remember the parents are now the pupils I taught in my earlier years. So, they give that respect of relating with them as their former teacher. I have worked with different School Committees and I have never had a problem with any. The current one is five [5] months into the Office and promising to emulate past committees that prioritized teachers' requisitions.

SE: If you were to project, what's your ten [10]-year Vision of the School? Where do you see the school heading to in terms of your Development Plan as the Visionary?

SS: To have State of the Art facilities that would guarantee quality education that is at par with urban schools, thus moving the pupils away from the traditional professions like ours.

SE: If you were to be given a platform to advise other Administrators on strategies to produce results in a school, what would be your core message to them?

SS: I don't want to rub people the wrong way. Being hands on assists in appreciating the challenges that teachers face and you then get to be part of the problem so that it gets to be easy to be part of the solution. I'm not in



The School's Netball Team [Courtesy Pic.]



SNAT VMs at the School posing with their Administrator-Mr. S. Shabangu [Courtesy Pic.]

any way saying they should teach.

SE: Let us ask you this one last question. You are a Leader at the SNAT as well. There is a misconception out there that SNAT Activities disturb teaching and learning. How do you balance the two [2] as a Leader yourself and a Headteacher?

SS: I started serving in the SNAT when I was not in any Administration Post. I would make it a point that when I leave, the kids have something that they would be doing and it won the hearts of the Administrators. For Committee meetings, we would have late

meetings and start at school. As a subject teacher, I do that even now—they would be left with something or we exchange periods with other teachers, like bringing mine earlier so that I leave the school having attended the learners.

SE: That's brave!! Well, we appreciate your time and everything Mr. Shabangu. We wish you all the best as you lead the school and all your future endeavors.

SS: Thank you very much Editor.

SE: Thank you so much Mbhele!!



A section of the learners at the school [Courtesy Pic.]



THE SNAT EAGLE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

P.O. BOX 1575, Manzini | Phone: 2505 2603/2505 6267 |
Email: mcolisimzmtsa@gmail.com/editor@snat.org.sz

Location: Manzini, opposite William Pitcher | Website: www.snat.org.sz

WE DESERVE BETTER AS EDUCATORS

Dear Mr. Editor

I want to appreciate you for giving me this intermittent opportunity to vent out to the government of Eswatini on how it treats teachers-particularly those employed in fixed term contracts.

Nothing is so painful like working for over thirteen [13] years without any pension, notching and allowances, yet fully qualified.

The million-dollar question is: what is so temporary with teaching?

The World deserves to know that the government of Eswatini treats teachers with massive contempt [as second class employees]. The government does not value educators and education as a whole. As educators employed on fixed term contracts, we are told that we are not allowed to even

ARMY RECRUITMENTS: WHAT DOES RECRUITING LEARNERS MEAN?

Dear Mr. Editor

In the past two [2] months, the country has been witnessing the recruitment of personnel to the army.

The events that have been unfolding shocked many emaSwati, including myself. Not that army recruitment is wrong, but the appalling part was that of seeing learners leaving exams to join the race for army jobs. That alone spoke volumes for me. From a layman point of view, such talks to issues of 'opportunity cost.' It talks about grabbing an available opportunity whilst forgoing another. It talks to issues of job security and guaranteeing the future. In many aspects, social media commentators have expressed their opinions on this subject matter, arguing that the learners are matured enough to decide for themselves. That they are capable of charting their own paths and are quite competent to decide what is best for themselves. There is no debate around that.

The crux of the discourse is around the effects and or message regarding the essence of education to us as emaSwati. It should worry every adult liSwati to read an Army Commander asserting that those who won in the races will decide whether they go for the Army or finish school. It is an open secret that some of the learners who emerged victorious in the army recruitment exercise were young children as far as Form 4. What does that tell someone out there watching the recruitment? What does leaving an Exam and going for a recruitment in the Army mean? This is a wake-up call to the Ministry of Education and Training that learners no longer value what is done in the four [4] walls of the classroom. That whatever is being done in schools no longer add value to the learners. They are simply doing it for the sake of being in the class.

*We should all be worried as a Nation.
Worried Parent and VM™
Senzo Mhlanga
Mbabane Branch*

have a maternity leave. Imagine working for over thirteen [13] years and not be able to have a family due to inhumane legislation. This is evil to the core. I am yet to see a contract Police Officer, a contract Warder and or a contract soldier.

Seldom, contract teachers are made to beg for the renewal of their contracts in schools. They are made to work as slaves-harder than a normal teacher out there in the schools to prove a point. From where I stand, this is deliberately done to give Principals an edge over the teachers. Personally, I have been subjected to the worst forms of torture where a Principal refused to recommend my contract for renewal due to blurred reasons.

I tried to confront him to enquire the cause of the non-renewal. He entered the fast lane and avoided me. I was lucky that the TSC posted me to another school albeit the 'sorting' by that malevo-

lent Principal. That alone took a toll on me as I had to relocate and get a new place of residence.

From where I stand, the least the government could do for us is to ensure that we get allowances, get the notching and be pensionable.

The E200.00 contribution to the ENPF is nothing but an insult to us as contract teachers. It's a drop in an ocean-if I can put it that way.

It boggles my mind why the Government is refusing to amend Legal Notice No.147 of 2009. I read at The SNAT Platform that the previous Gazette of 2005 was better. Looking at sixteen [16] years ago, I can only wonder what is so difficult with amending a Legal Notice and ameliorate the terms and conditions of service. The only issue is that of lack of political will on the side of the employer.

We deserve better as educators.

*Yours in pain
Muzi Dlamini
Mliba Branch*



SNAT REPS DESERVE A STIPEND

Dear Editor

I want to appreciate your time and gold heart in giving me this space in your Magazine to express myself on this serious organizational matter that I think needs urgent attention-the stipend for SNAT Reps.

Now and again we here of the Union [SNAT] growing in leaps and bounds. The last time I heard we had 12, 000 members. This means we are the largest Union in the country. I know as well that each member of the Union subscribes 0.7% of her basic to the Union per month. The SNAT is 97-years old this year [2025].

I believe the people doing most of the work are SNAT Shopstewards in schools. These are the foot soldiers of the organization. Branches use them to relay information to the members on the ground regarding the Union. They recruit new members.

They are Organizers. They are the voice of the Union at the shopfloor. But they are the least taken care of. The question is: why are SNAT Reps not given a stipend per month? I am posing this question to the SNAT NEC as they are responsible for the Management of the organization as per the Constitution.

The Union is entirely dependent on SNAT Reps for survival. It is time those in power realize this fact and appreciate SNAT Reps in anyway. There is a lot that these Comrades are doing and deserve a token of appreciation from the Leadership of the Organization.

*Aluta continua!!
Concerned
Sihle Mavuso
[Gege Branch]*

TEACHERS DAY (2025) REVIEWS

SANELE, MHLUME
BRANCH

“This was the best Teachers Day for me. I think the Union should organize for us a whole weekend of Fun-like some SNAT Bushfire.”

“Mind-blowing! I had a blast! The line up of artists for the Night Bash was out of this World. I love Sjava to the core! Thank you my Valued Union.”

MINENHLE,
MBABANE BRANCH

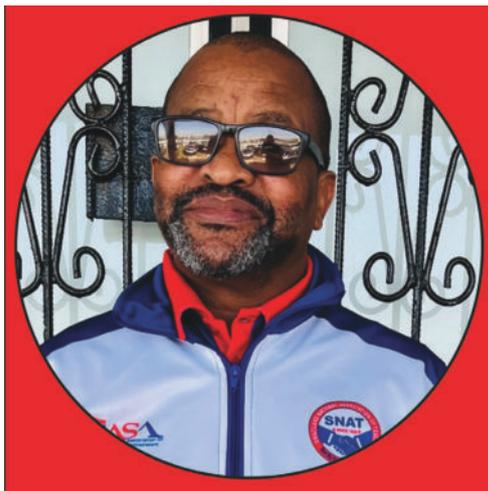
“2024 Teachers Day set the tone for this year’s celebration. The t-shirt, food, entertainment kept me on toes. The entire event left an indelible mark on my mind. I can only imagine how 2026 will look like.”

HLENGIWE, GEGE
BRANCH

“May I thank my BEC for the delicious meal the Leaders organized for us. Well done, Manzini BEC. The venue was top notch. Though we were moneyless but that didn’t deter us from having our best moment.”

PHILISWA, MANZINI
BRANCH

SASA-PRIORITIZING ADMINISTRATORS ISSUES



**SASA SECRETARY
THUSI GCINA NGCEBO BRONZE**

The SNAT SASA is an Association of School Administrators under the SNAT. The entity [SASA] was formed to advance school administrators interests, views, and aspirations within the Union-SNAT.

In the year 2025, SASA had a number of activities and programs. These include an election of the Hhohho Regional Committee, a general meeting, undertaking a trip to Cape Town, having the SASA gear, and hosting the Annual General Meeting [AGM].

HHOHHO SASA REGIONAL COMMITTEE

The committee was elected and consists of the following:

- Muzi Mkhontfo (Chairperson)
- Ncamiso Shongwe (Deputy Chairperson)



Some SNAT SASA Members during their excursion to Cape Town in September 2025 [Courtesy Pic.]

- Banjwayini Shongwe (Secretary)
- Norman Gumedze (Deputy Secretary)
- Lindiwe Mbazima (Recording Secretary)
- Muzi Dlamini (Treasurer)
- Nonhlanhla Dlamini (Gender Officer)
- Winile Simelane (Condolences Co-ordinator)

The organization successfully held a general meeting where members converged at the SNAT Centre to deliberate on pertinent issues (OVC Grant and FPE Grant, shortage of teachers and delivery of food).

A group of about sixty [60] SASA members flew from the OR Tambo International Airport to Cape Town International Airport on the 1st of September 2025 and back to OR Tambo International Airport on the 5th of September 2025. During their stay in Cape Town, they resided at the prestigious Hotel Sky.

The Valued Administrators enjoyed the ride aboard the popular Red Bus in and around the mother city. Places of interest toured included Table Mountain and sand dunes, among others.

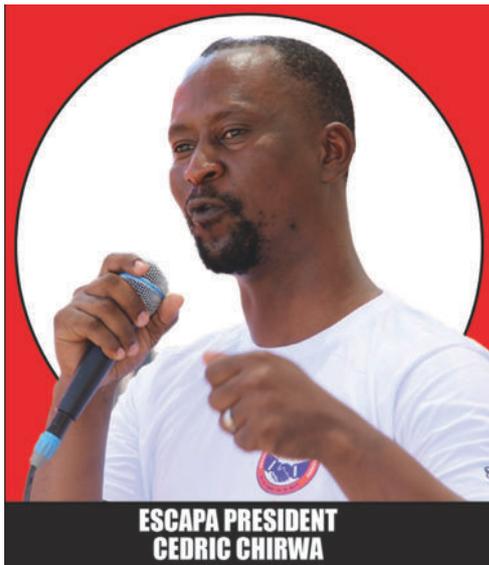
The AGM was held on the 12th of December 2025 at the SNAT Centre. Over 200 school administrators converged to deliberate on reports, made resolutions and declarations. The SNAT NEC graced the SASA AGM and the SNAT President opened it.

The AGM concluded with a braai with the VAs™ having a ball of a time. In 2026, the SASA will continue to advance the interests of Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers within the Union, demand for the improvement of working conditions in schools such as the FPE/OVCs Grant, food for learners and teaching and learning materials. We look forward to a better and productive year as the SASA.



The SNAT SASA National Executive with some of the SASA Hhohho Regional Executive Committee Members at the SNAT Centre on the 26th of November 2025 [SNAT Media].

RISING ON A POINT OF ORDER MOET MINISTER



On the 10th of December 1948, the United Nations [UN] General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, where the people of the United Nations [UN] reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

Member States pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedom.

In Section 236 (1) (d) of the 2005 Constitution of Eswatini, we see Eswatini reaffirming herself into (d) endeavor to uphold the principles, aims and ideals of the United Nations [UN]. It is in that spirit we are raising on a point of order, trying to magnify the inconsistencies of the only section in the constitution of Eswatini that speaks to the right to Education with the constitution itself and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Rights of the child (Eswatini Constitution) Section 29 (6) provides that every Swazi child within three [3] years of the commencement of this Constitution have the right to free education in public schools at least up to the end of primary school, beginning with the first Grade. The fact that the constitution is only able to secure and safeguard this right to a child/child of a Swazi makes it inconsistent with Section 20 (2) of the Eswatini Constitution. For the avoidance of any doubt, a person shall not be discriminated against on the grounds of gender, race, color, ethnic origin, tribe, birth, creed or religion, or social or economic standing, political opinion, age or disability. As it is now, we have a Section in the Constitution that discriminates on the basis of age, tribe and ethnic origin. One needs to be a Child (age 7 years to 18 years) to enjoy the right to free primary education and be a Child of a Swazi (Tribe and Ethnic Origin).

We fail to see the commitment in this Section that is badly provided in Section 236 (1) (d) which endeavor to uphold the principles, aims and ideals of the United Nations [UN].

Aims and Ideals of the United Nations [UN] on Education:

Article 26 (1) (3) (Universal Declaration of Human Rights) (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

Whilst in the Eswatini Constitution, the right to education is reduced to a right to a Child and/ or Swazi Child, the United Nations [UN] makes it a right to all.

Whereas in the Eswatini Constitution, the right to free education shall be free at least up to the end of primary school, the United Nations [UN] makes it free at least in the elementary and fundamental stages (Basic Education).

Whereas in the Eswatini Constitution, the right to free basic education is not given the importance it deserves, the United Nations [UN] makes elementary education compulsory. It becomes more concerning when one realizes that in the entire constitution of Eswatini, education is only mentioned in Section 29 (6).

That is: under Rights of the child, especially when one considers the views of the United

Nations [UN] on Education in Article 26 (2). The Article provides that Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, races or religion groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

Full compliance with Article 26 of the United Nations [UN] General Assembly as adopted in the Declaration of Human Rights is prescribed by Section 236 (1) (d) of the Eswatini Constitution.

This is the only available and solid route to take in the transformation of the country's education system.

The Eswatini Schools Committee and Parents Association [ESCAPA] Annual General Assembly [AGA] met last month [28 November 2025] and resolved to march to the Ministry of Education and Training [MoET] before the opening of schools next year [2026] on the basis of Article 26 (3) of the Declaration of Human Rights.

The Meeting noted and agreed that parents have a prior Right to choose the character of education that shall be delivered to their children.

The march will aim to raise concerns over the implementation of the Competency Based Education [CBE] curriculum, which is expected to be rolled-out to the secondary level beginning next year [January 2026].



The SNAT SG Lot Vilakati addressing parents and school committee executives at the ESCAPA AGM at Shosholozo on the 28th of November 2025 whilst the ESCAPA President Cedric Chirwa looks on [SNAT Media].

TEACHING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM-TEACHERS AS CHAMPIONS FOR SPORTS

From Sidvokodvo Railway Primary to endurance running, Themba Vilakati shares his vision of teachers leading in sport, wellness, and student development.

I am a teacher at Sidvokodvo Railway Primary School, an athletics coach, and a long-distance running enthusiast. I also serve in a leadership role within the Manzini Branch of the Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT). I originate from Nshamanti, Mahlangatja.

Over the years, I have come to believe that teaching does not end in the classroom; it extends to how we live, lead, and inspire beyond the school gates. My journey in athletics is one such extension of my calling as an educator.

I am a competitive marathon runner with a full marathon personal best of 2:50:22 and a proud recipient of three silver medals from the Comrades Marathon, one of the most demanding ultra-marathons in the world. Alongside competing, I actively serve as an athletics coach, nurturing talent and instilling discipline, resilience, and purpose in emerging athletes.

Through my coaching, I have taken three [3] athletes to the national team, representing the country in various athletics competitions. These achievements reflect the same values we strive to instil in learners-on a daily basis.

Teachers hold a unique position in society. Learners look up to us not only for academic guidance, but also for inspiration, discipline, and character formation.

When teachers participate in sport, as athletes, coaches, or administrators, we model healthy lifestyles, resilience, teamwork, and self-belief.

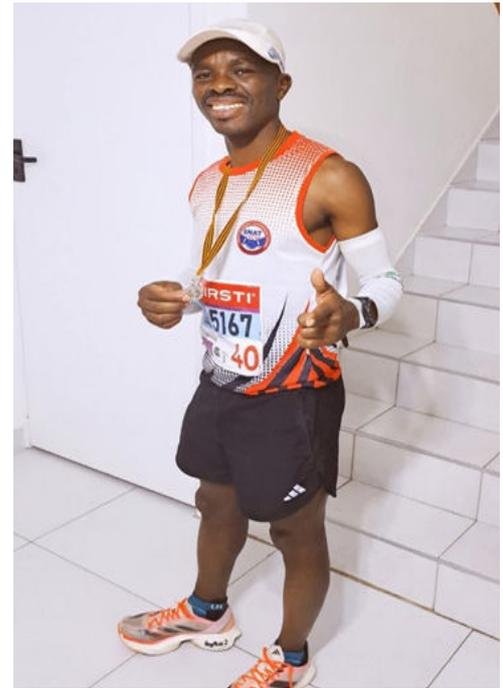
At the Nshamanti Sports Group, many soccer teams pay joining fees and compete regu-

larly. I have observed that the most feared and disciplined teams are often those played, led, and coached by teachers. This observation reinforces my belief that a healthy teacher is a more effective teacher, both on and off the field. During my time in leadership, I was exposed to the realities many teachers face regarding health and well-being.

These experiences strengthened my conviction that wellness must be actively supported within schools and professional organisations. Physical activity, alongside medical care and supportive working conditions, plays a vital role in managing stress and promoting overall well-being.

I commend SNAT for organising Branch wellness games that culminate in international games coordinated by the Southern Africa Teachers Organisation (SATO). Creating such opportunities for teachers to engage in physical activity contributes to healthier, more energised learning environments. When educators feel supported and well, they are better positioned to support learners and

their communities. While progress has been made, I believe there is still much more that teachers can do in sport. I dream of a future where teachers take active leadership roles across all sporting codes, as coaches, administrators, and technical officials, and where student athletic development is structured from school level to national level. I envision schools serving as youth development hubs feeding into SNAT national teams. Imagine SNAT Football Club, SNAT Athletics Club, SNAT Netball Club, SNAT Darts Team, SNAT Boxing Club, and many more, national teams built from school-level talent. From such an ecosystem, a cream of excellence would emerge: athletes who are technically



**Manzini Recording Secretary [RS]
Themba Vilakati**

skilled, mentally resilient, and grounded in strong values shaped by teachers themselves.

I am confident that many SNAT members are already coaching or administering teams and possess invaluable experience. If mobilised, this collective expertise can transform this vision into reality.

My achievements in marathon running and coaching are not mine alone. They represent what is possible when teachers lead by example, excel beyond the classroom, and champion sport and wellness. If we commit to collaboration, structured development, and the recognition of sport as an integral part of education, SNAT can become not only a strong voice for teachers' welfare, but also a national force in sports development.



The author leading at a training for young people in his community [Courtesy Pic.]

A CONVERSATION WITH THE VISIONARIES: HOW VMST™ LEGAL IS RESHAPING THE PERSONAL LIVES OF TEACHERS IN ESWATINI



SNAT VMS™ LEGAL MARKETING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVE MASIZA DLAMINI

In this exclusive feature, Editor Mcolisi Motsa sits down with Masiza Dlamini, Marketing and Business Development Executive of SNAT VMS™ Legal, to explore one of the most transformative member-welfare breakthroughs ever introduced within the Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT).

What follows is a compelling glimpse into an innovation redefining protection, dignity, and personal empowerment for educators across the Kingdom.

“The Teacher Must Rise. Be Protected.” — SNAT’s New Philosophy

SNAT Editor-MCOLISI MOTSA: *Before we explore the architecture of SNAT VMS Legal, allow me to congratulate the Union. There is an unmistakable shift in the landscape of teacher welfare. One senses a bold, forward-thinking commitment to member protection. How did this begin?*

Masiza: “It began with listening — deeply, honestly, and intentionally. For years teachers carried personal legal burdens quietly: family disputes, personal financial strain, criminal accusations, domestic matters, and other civil complexities. The Union initiated extensive research, surveying members, reviewing recurring personal-legal challenges, and identifying patterns that affected teachers’ emotional stability, financial progress, and overall wellbeing.

VMs Legal was not built in a boardroom; it was constructed from data, real voices, and lived experiences. It is an innovation born from necessity — but elevated by the Union’s unwavering commitment to the teacher.”

An Innovation Anchored in Personal Empowerment

Motsa: *Many describe VMs Legal as a breakthrough — even a renaissance of member protection. What makes it so different from previous welfare initiatives?*

Masiza: “VMs Legal is a Union-exclusive, member-centered, unlimited-access legal protection facility — something unprecedented in our sector. It offers teachers a dignified, structured, and affordable pathway to personal legal support.

More importantly, it is an instrument of personal growth and awakening. When a teacher no longer carries the weight of unresolved legal problems, they find clarity. They regain confidence. They become more present — in their classrooms, their families, and their communities.”

The Practical Revolution: When Legal Assistance Becomes Truly Accessible

Motsa: *The teachers speak highly of your accessibility model.*

Masiza: “Our Manzini office is intentionally designed to feel welcoming, not intimidating. But accessibility does not end there. We are entering a phase where VMs Legal will schedule legal clinics and liaison visits at SNAT Branches nationwide, ensuring teachers in rural regions benefit just as much as those near Manzini.

Soon, the VMs Legal WhatsApp-based legal chatbot will give members instant legal guidance — an innovation that places justice literally in the palm of their hand. It is modern, efficient, and designed for the teacher’s busy life.”



The Subtle Power of Intervention: Real Cases, Real Impact

Motsa: *Without going into confidential details, what can you tell us about the impact so far?*

Masiza: “Teachers are already receiving actual representation and court appearances under VMs Legal. We have handled a wide spectrum of personal legal matters — from family-related disputes to civil and criminal concerns, including adjustments to financial deductions and protective orders.

What matters most is the effect: teachers who were once distressed now stand steadier, more informed, and more empowered. The relief is palpable. The transformation is visible.”

The Union’s Quiet Genius: Preparing the Next Line of Defense

Motsa: *I hear there is an internal capacity development plan underway.*

Masiza: “Absolutely. The Union is committed to depth, not just breadth. We are preparing the training of 15 paralegals who will serve as the operational backbone of VMs Legal. This strengthens our ability to deliver swift, accurate, and reliable service to members. It is a long-term investment in continuity and excellence.”

Legal Protection as a Pathway to Wellbeing

Motsa: *There is a recurring sentiment in your vision — that VMs Legal is fundamental about wellbeing.*

Masiza: “Because it is. A teacher who is legally protected becomes emotionally resilient. A teacher who feels supported becomes productive. A teacher who knows their Union stands beside them — not abstractly, but tangibly — becomes unstoppable.

VMs Legal is a sanctuary, a shield, and an empowerment instrument. It aligns with the Union’s core belief: when the teacher is strengthened in their personal life, the educator flourishes in the classroom.”

A Message to Every SNAT Member

Motsa: *Before we close — what would you like every teacher in Eswatini to know?*

Masiza: “VMs Legal is not an optional extra. It is a necessity in today’s world — an essential safeguard every teacher deserves. It is the Union’s greatest gift to its members, crafted with care, backed by research, and delivered with a heart for service.

We are broadening the service continuously, engaging in research, discussions, and system improvements. Every teacher should be part of VMs Legal — not just for security, but for empowerment.”

Where Innovation Meets Protection

VMs Legal stands as a landmark innovation, a visionary achievement demonstrating what a forward-thinking Union can accomplish when it chooses to invest in the holistic wellbeing of its members.

It is more than a program — it is a movement. It is more than a service — it is a lifeline. It is more than protection — it is empowerment.

And it is exclusively for the teacher.

STORY VERSION

Here is the enhanced, sophisticated version including reaffirmation by the SNAT President and SNAT Secretary General:

VMs Legal: The Union-Engineered Legal Sanctuary Redefining Teacher Well-Being in Eswatini

When the Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT) undertook an extensive inquiry into the private challenges confronting its members, one undeniable insight emerged:

Teachers across the nation needed a structured, credible, and affordable system to safeguard their personal legal lives — entirely separate from their professional duties.

After months of research, confidential focus sessions, member submissions, and a thorough analysis of personal legal trends affecting the teaching fraternity, the Union responded with a

groundbreaking solution: VMs Legal — a purpose-built, teacher-exclusive legal protection facility meticulously aligned with the lived realities of SNAT members.

An Intellectual, Evidence-Based Response to the Teacher's Personal Realities

The Union's research illuminated a profound truth: teachers were silently shouldering burdens relating to family conflicts, personal financial disputes, civil claims, domestic protection matters, and criminal allegations — often without access to dignified and affordable legal support.

VMs Legal was not conceived as a convenience, but as a structural necessity, engineered to restore stability, empower members, and provide teachers with a refuge that guarantees fair representation in their personal lives.

An Exclusive, Union-Backed Legal Facility VMs Legal distinguishes itself through its exclusivity:

It is strictly available to SNAT members, designed as a specialized, all-encompassing personal legal chamber where teachers can access unlimited consultations, guidance, and representation, without the crippling financial costs associated with private legal services.

This exclusivity is not meant to separate teachers, but to fortify them.

It creates a sustainable model where the Union's collective power shields every individual educator.

Within this ecosystem, members receive comprehensive assistance across the spectrum of personal legal matters — from family interventions, protective orders, civil disputes, adjustments of personal financial obligations, to criminal defense and personal litigation support.

Transformative Impact Already Evident

Though still in its early evolution, VMs Legal has already transformed the lived experiences of countless teachers.

Its interventions — covering sensitive family matters, personal protection applications, financial adjustments, criminal representations, and complex civil disputes — have brought teachers relief, restored dignity, and stabilized lives previously overwhelmed by legal uncertainty.

For many members, VMs Legal has become a quiet pillar of strength, a source of reassurance that they no longer walk alone.

A Living, Growing Service Shaped by Member Voices

The Union's commitment extends beyond the establishment of VMs Legal.

Through ongoing strategic engagements and a dynamic feedback framework, SNAT continues to refine the service, ensuring that it evolves with the shifting legal challenges teachers face.

In the next quarter, the Union will introduce a sophisticated Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) training program — a forward-thinking initiative designed to equip teachers with knowledge and mechanisms for resolving personal disputes before they escalate.

Designed for Accessibility, Delivered with Care

VMs Legal operates from its warm, member-oriented base in Manzini, created to feel



Are you a VM™
without legal
representation?

**JOIN
TODAY!**

welcoming, confidential, and supportive.

Yet recognizing the geographical diversity of the teaching profession, SNAT and VMs Legal will soon expand through branch-based legal clinics, liaison visits, and scheduled service days across SNAT Regions — ensuring that every teacher, anywhere in the country, can access assistance without barrier.

Building Capacity for Faster, Deeper Service

To strengthen service delivery, VMs Legal will soon initiate a comprehensive internal training program for 15 dedicated Paralegals who will reinforce case management, documentation, and follow-ups — significantly accelerating turnaround time for members.

This capacity expansion reaffirms a core truth: Teachers deserve timely, competent and reliable justice.

Innovation at Hand: The Digital Legal Companion

As part of its modernization agenda, VMs Legal is developing a teacher-specific WhatsApp Legal Chatbot, enabling members to obtain immediate guidance, personalized responses, and simplified legal pathways — a pioneering first in Eswatini's legal support landscape.

Endorsement from the Union's Highest Office

The success and necessity of VMs Legal has been echoed at the highest levels of SNAT leadership:

The SNAT President reaffirmed the significance of the initiative, stating:

“VMs Legal is a testament to our promise to protect the whole teacher — not just the pro-

fessional, but the individual. Every member should see this service as an essential companion, crafted from your concerns and shaped to secure your personal dignity.” The SNAT Secretary General further emphasized the strategic importance of every teacher joining the facility:

“This service is evolving because teachers' lives are evolving. VMs Legal is engineered around the voices, needs, and aspirations of our members. It is a Union-built fortress, and it is imperative that every teacher becomes part of it.”

Leadership Perspective: The Vision Steering VMs Legal

VMs Legal Executive Masiza Dlamini concluded with a reflection on the program's expanding scope:

“What we are building is more than a legal office — it is a dynamic legal ecosystem for teachers. Every new service, every case resolved, every improvement made reflects a deeper commitment to empowering the teacher on a personal level.”

A Legal Fortress Forged by the Union, Entrusted to Every Teacher

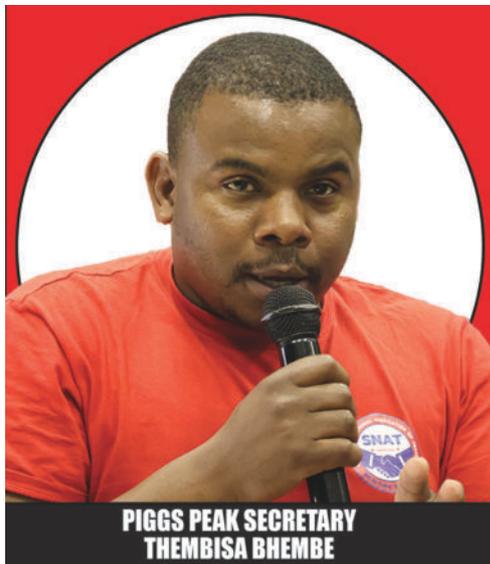
VMs Legal stands today not as a mere addition to Union services, but as a groundbreaking legal sanctuary, meticulously designed to offer teachers dignity, stability, and accessible justice.

For every SNAT member, VMs Legal is:

- A shield in personal crises
- A resource for lifelong stability
- A guarantee of unlimited legal support
- A Union promise made real

In a rapidly shifting world, one truth remains constant: Every teacher deserves protection — and VMs Legal is the modern answer.

CELEBRATING THE IMPACT OF PIGG'S PEAK BRANCH: A BEACON OF EXCELLENCE IN THE SNAT



**PIGG'S PEAK SECRETARY
THEMBISA BHEMBE**

The Pigg's Peak Branch of the Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT) has over the past four [4] years become a pivotal force in advancing organisation standards and fostering high spirit among its members.

Through a series of well-organized initiatives, the Branch has demonstrated its commitment to upholding the SNAT code of ethics, enhancing educational policies, and promoting the overall well-being of its members. This article unpacks the glamorous work accomplished by the Pigg's Peak Branch, highlighting key events and initiatives that have made a significant impact on our movement.

ADVOCATING FOR EDUCATION: SNAT CODE OF ETHICS AND EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

One of the core responsibilities of the Pigg's Peak Branch is to advocate for the SNAT Code of Ethics and educational policies. This commitment is reflected in various educational workshops in schools organized throughout the year. These sessions not only emphasize the importance of ethical standards in teaching but also provide members with the tools necessary to navigate the complexities of educational policies. The workshops gave our members a chance to objectively engage on the policies that govern our day-to-day work.

The Branch has taken a proactive approach in ensuring that teachers are well-informed about their rights and responsibilities. By conducting regular workshop sessions, the Pigg's Peak Branch empowers members to uphold the highest standards of professionalism in their duty stations. This initiative not only enhances the quality of education but also fosters a culture of integrity within the teaching profession.

TEAM BUILDING AT MPHIMBO RESORT

In an effort to strengthen camaraderie among members, the Pigg's Peak Branch hosted a vibrant team-building party at the picturesque Mphimbo Resort. This event was not only a celebration of the

hard work and dedication of teachers but also an opportunity for members to bond outside the formalities of the classroom. Activities included team challenges, hiking, horse riding, swimming and collaborative exercises designed to foster teamwork and communication. The atmosphere was filled with laughter and camaraderie as members engaged in friendly talks and shared experiences. Such events are crucial in building a supportive membership, allowing members to connect at a personal level, which ultimately translates to a more cohesive and effective Branch.

PROMOTING WELL-BEING: WELLNESS DAY FOR MEMBERS

Recognizing the importance of mental and physical health, the Pigg's Peak Branch organized a door-to-door "Wellness Indaba" dedicated to the well-being of its members. This initiative aimed to address the often-overlooked aspects of teachers' lives, focusing on stress management, healthy living, and work-life balance. The Wellness workshops focused on nutrition and mental health. The wellness convener provided valuable insights into maintaining a healthy lifestyle amid the demands of teaching. By prioritizing the well-being of its members, the Pigg's Peak Branch demonstrates a holistic approach to members, acknowledging that healthy educators are essential for nurturing healthy students.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION: VISITING SCHOOLS

Another significant aspect of the Pigg's Peak Branch's work is its commitment to resolving conflicts within schools. Such an approach is founded on recognizing that conflicts can arise in any educational setting. From such, the Branch has taken the initiative to visit schools and mediate disputes

among members. These visits provide a platform for open dialogue, allowing all parties involved to express their concerns and work towards amicable solutions. By fostering a culture of communication and understanding, the Pigg's Peak Branch not only resolves immediate issues but also promotes a more harmonious school environment. This proactive approach is essential in maintaining a positive atmosphere conducive to learning and growth.

CELEBRATING EDUCATORS: TEACHER'S DAY AT MAVUSO EXHIBITION CENTRE

One of the hallmark events organized by the SNAT is the annual Teachers' Day celebration, held at the esteemed Mavuso Exhibition Centre. This event serves as a tribute to the hard work and dedication of our members across the Branch, recognizing their invaluable contributions to our organisation. The celebration featured speeches from prominent figures in education and performances that highlighted the exquisiteness of the event. The atmosphere was filled with pride and appreciation as VMs™ were celebrated for their commitment to nurturing young minds.

CONCLUSION: A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

The Pigg's Peak Branch of the SNAT has exemplified what it means to be a leader in SNAT operations. Through its unwavering commitment to ethical standards, professional development, and the well-being of its members, the Branch has become a beacon of excellence.

As the Branch continues to push the boundaries of what is possible in SNAT, it remains dedicated to fostering a supportive and enriching environment for members in our various schools. Together, the Pigg's Peak Branch family stands strong, united in its mission to uplift and empower our members.



Pigg's Peak Branch Members during their End of Year outing at Mphimbo Resort on the 29th of November 2025 [Courtesy Pic.]

BIG BEND-THE VIBRANT BRANCH



**BIG BEND BRANCH SECRETARY
THOKOZANI NGCAMPHALALA**

On behalf of the “Most Vibrant Branch” [Big Bend], allow me to highlight our achievements and challenges as we navigate through year 2025 while executing our duties in Office.

It is of paramount importance to thank each and every leader for the tremendous sacrifice. As such, we have achieved great and below are our achievements.

1. The Branch was able to visit six [6] schools to capacitate teachers on a litany of topics such as: professionalism at work place, role of shopstewards, labour laws and introduce the SNAT together with her entities. This exercise was correctly led by the Education Convener-Cde Gugu Dlamini-Mafu and subsequently Cde Sibusiso Mkhuthuzi Dlamini who led after her departure.

2. Under Wellness, the Branch visited five [5] medically-challenged Members and two [2] were assisted with transport to the hospital. In that regard, we wish to thank the SNAT SG-Lot Vilakati and Deputy President Cde Bong’kosi ‘iNduna’ Msibi for the great assistance. This Sub-Committee is currently led by Cde Xolane Mamba. Though he recently joined the BEC, he was able to fit into the sys-

tem like gloves.

3. The Branch also attended disputes in schools and some had escalated to the REO’s Office but we were able to amicably solve them. For that, the Branch is extremely grateful about the working relationship it has with the Regional Education Officer [REO]. We appreciate the REO [Mr. Dlamini] for having a heart for teachers.

4. This year, the Branch was able to present branded blankets to eight [8] retirees in different schools.

5. On a sad note, the Branch lost a number of teachers. Some could have made it only if the health system had not collapsed. May their souls rest in eternal peace.

6. Even this year [2025], the Branch excelled in arranging transport and food for teachers during the Teachers’ Day Commemoration at Mavuso Exhibition Centre. Obvious, members played a huge role by contributing E50.00 as a commitment fee. With that contribution, we were able to transport and provide both lunch and breakfast to our members.

7. The Branch Executive was able to offer condolences, attend memorials and funerals for all our fallen members. Beyond that, we were able to give each family a sum E400.00 as ‘Condolence’ [Likhandlela]. We do know that it’s a minute contribution but it makes a difference to the bereaved family. This year [2025] the Branch lost three [3] members. One [1] retiree and two [2] Active Members. May their precious souls continue to rest in peace.

8. The Branch successfully held its Annual Conference and transported delegates to both Regional and National Conferences.

9. As a Branch, we have collaborated with the Regional Executive Committee [REC] in having what we term as Regional Wellness Day and it was great success.

Without challenges, we would have achieved great strides. Challenges have minimised our impact in addressing issues around the welfare of our members in the different schools and they include:

1. Balancing professional work and



The Branch Chairperson-Bhala Motsa addressing Big Bend Branch members in one of the Union activities in the Branch [SNAT Media].

Union work. The lack of secondment compromise service delivery for the NEC and BEC Leaders. We wish the Union could sit down and address this matter for better service delivery to our members as the Leaders are full-time teachers in their respective schools.

2. Annual Conferences have been a thorn in our flesh since a huge portion of the money gets to be channelled there instead of addressing and assisting our members on the ground.

3. Transfer of leadership has also impacted negatively to the smooth operation of the Branch since the beginning of the term. However, we are not complaining. We are happy and proud since [at most] these movements were vertical transfers [promotions].

4. The Branch has failed to honour almost thirteen [13] retirees because of lack of funds.

As the outgoing Branch leadership, we are looking forward to a more exciting year since its 2026 will be a year of organisational renewal. It’s the time where mandate givers use their constitutional right to recharge mandate. Members of the vibrant Branch, we cannot thank you enough. Thank you for entrusting us with this enormous task to lead this noble organisation. Thank you so much for the support you have shown in different ways.

Aluta continua!!!!



VMs from Emhlabeni Primary and High School with the Big Bend Branch Leadership during one of the Branch Visits to schools. [Courtesy Pic.]

THE NEW SNAT UNION ACCOUNTANT

Employee recruitment is part of growth in any organisation. Profiling new employees is fundamental when it comes to stakeholder engagement. The SNAT Editor, Mcolisi Motsa, took time to engage Tema, our new Accountant at the SNAT Headquarters-trying to gain insight of her Worldview. The Editor reports...

SNAT Editor [SE]: Good day Tema. How are you doing?

Nhlabatsi Tema [NT]: I am doing well Editor. Thank you for asking. I trust you are well too.

SE: Well, I am absolutely great myself. Tell us more: who is Nhlabatsi Temalungelo?

NT: Nhlabatsi Temalungelo is a committed and hardworking professional with strong interest in accounting and financial management. I value integrity, consistency and teamwork and I strive to perform my duties with diligence whilst continuously improving my skills.

SE: Oh, great to hear that!! Before I get into further details: I want to know if you have joined the Union-formally. Like: are you now a Code 058 Member?

NT: Yes, I have formally joined the Union and I am a code 058 member. It is an honor to be officially part of the SNAT.

SE: Well and good! We have seen you around the corridors of the SNAT-for a while now. Tell us: how does it feel being part of the SNAT Union Family? How was the reception when you arrived?

NT: Being part of the SNAT Union Family has been a very positive experience. The reception I received upon joining was warm, professional and supportive. I felt welcomed from the onset, which made the transition into my role both smooth and encouraging.

SE: Wow! That's awesome!! What really does an Accountant do? Give us a picture of how your day looks like at the Office. We know that you have been an Accounts Clerk as well.

NT: An Accountant is responsible for ensuring that financial records are accurate, compliant and well managed. On a typical day, I review financial transactions, reconcile accounts, prepare reports and support budgeting processes. I work closely with the National Treasurer to ensure financial accountability. My experience as an Account Clerk provided me with a solid foundation, which has helped me transition smoothly into this role.

SE: Awesome!! In your view, what does it take for one to be an Accountant? What values and principles should an Accountant possess, in your view?

NT: An Accountant must be detail-oriented, disciplined, and analytical. Integrity and confidentiality are essential, as the role involves handling sensitive financial information. Accountability, professionalism and commitment to continuous learning are also important val-

ues for anyone in this field,

SE: We are aware that you work closely with the National Treasurer. How would you describe his work ethic as your Immediate Supervisor?

NT: The National Treasurer demonstrates a strong and commendable work ethics. He is organized, principled and very thorough in his work. His leadership encourages accountability and professionalism, and working under his guidance has been a valuable learning experience for me.

SE: Hmmm...perfect! You joined us at a busy period here at the SNAT-Teachers Day 2025 and other Union Activities. You have also had the opportunity to interact with our VMs™, Branch Leaders, Pensioners, NEC Members etc. How has your experience been?

NT: Joining during such a busy period was challenging but very insightful. It allowed me to quickly understand the operations of the Union. Interacting with the VMs™, Branch Leaders, Pensioners and NEC members has given me a deeper appreciation of the important work SNAT does.

SE: Since you arrived at the Office, what challenges have you come across and how have you actually addressed them?

NT: One of the main challenges has been managing high workloads during peak periods. I have addressed this through effective planning, prioritization of tasks and close collaboration with colleagues. Maintaining organization and clear communication has enabled me to meet expectations and deadlines.

SE: If you were to describe your job in three [3] key words, what would you say?

NT: Accountable, Analytical and supportive.

SE: Looking at the Office, since you arrived, what is it that you think needs to be upgraded for efficiency purposes?

NT: Continued investment in digital financial systems and streamlined processes would further enhance efficiency, accuracy and timely reporting.

SE: Hmmm...that is profound! How do you see yourself in two [2] years from now as the SNAT Accountant?

NT: In two years, I see myself as a more experienced and strategically engaged Accountant, contributing not only to financial management but also to informed decision-making within the Union. I aim to continuously improve my skills and add value to SNAT's long-term objectives.

SE: Oh! Thank you so much Nhlabatsi. We wish you well in your new responsibility as the SNAT Accountant.

NT: Thank you very much editor. I appreciate the opportunity and the support I have received. I look forward to serving SNAT Union with dedication and professionalism

SE: Welcome Tema!!



The New SNAT Accountant - Nhlabatsi Tema.



The rifle does not discriminate

The black, the white
 The guilty, the innocent
 You do not feel anything at first
 But as you fall to the ground
 The pain washes over you and it is excruciating
 I talked to the widow on my way in
 I peeped through the window as she sang
 "Still all my song shall be
 Nearer, my God, to thee"
 Chair scraped, she sat there with her fiddle
 Sooner or later, men with the badge find the wrong end of the rifle
 Men with the badge can only talk through their guns or their fists

There is nothing scarier than a man with a gun
 They shot her husband in the back in the dying of the sun
 They grabbed him by the feet, cracked his head open
 They left her son with holes, in the mud to die
 Their bodies left to fester and corrupt in the hot sun
 Tears come to my eyes
 I have nothing but sorrow
 There is no hope for tomorrow
 The ranger in a uniform
 The right luminary
 The sinner, the saint
 You do not feel anything at first

But as you fall to the ground
 The pain washes over you and it is excruciating
 Everyday is a blue Monday
 I hear a gunshot
 I hear cheering and whistling
 The lawman winds up dead on the street, shot in the back
 An officer of the law

A virtual human barricade between chaos and civilization
 Two patrol lawmen down in the time it takes to spit
 A rifle can still bite you hard at hundred yards
 All dead before they even hit the ground
 You fall and never know you fell
 The night is my companion
 Launches my thoughts and opinions
 ~Thami

Awake

I dreamt about dreaming
 Dreams within a dream
 The reality of these dreams
 The actuality of what it seems

A nightmare following me out of my dreams
 A nightmare of becoming who I will be
 In my dreams, everything is cold
 A climate of insolence
 In my dreams, I am on edge
 What do you think about me when thinking about me?
 I am afraid I need to be saved from who you perceive me
 to be
 A teeny-weeny earthling

Blurry, empty like I have given blood
 Infirmity of the mind
 Identity Gordian knot
 I am afraid the coat I am wearing does not fit
 In my dreams, I am attacked for being distinct
 Under your psychiatric care
 Under your laughing academy

You visited me in the hospital
 Your revelations poisonous and lethal
 Battle-tested friendships
 You don't want me to have anything in my life that's not
 you
 In my few seconds of sleep
 So much of this feels like a dream
 In between deaths

In my dreams, darkness comes to me
 When the morning comes
 An unconscious state of affairs
 Buried in the unconscious, I feel lifeless
 Awake in my dark island, I am motionless
 I want righteousness
 I want to see what I become
 ~Thami



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ART BY ANDY MOPS



CONTACT (+268) 7643 6554

A child asked his father, "How were people born?"

So his father said, "Adam and Eve made babies, then their babies became adults and made babies, and so on."

The child then went to his mother, asked her the same question and she told him, "We were monkeys then we evolved to become like we are now."

The child ran back to his father and said, "You lied to me!" His father replied, "No, your mom was talking about her side of the family."

Teacher: "If I gave you 2 cats and another 2 cats and another 2, how many would you have?"

Johnny: "Seven."

Teacher: "No, listen carefully... If I gave you two cats, and another two cats and another two, how many would you have?"

Johnny: "Seven." Teacher: "Let me put it to you differently. If I gave you two apples, and another two apples and another two, how many would you have?"

Johnny: "Six." Teacher: "Good. Now if I gave you two cats, and another two cats and another two, how many would you have?"

Johnny: "Seven!" Teacher: "Johnny, where in the heck do you get seven from?!"

Johnny: "Because I've already got a freaking cat!"

Teacher: "Kids, what does the chicken give you?"

Student: "Meat!"

Teacher: "Very good! Now what does the pig give you?"

Student: "Bacon!" Teacher: "Great! And what does the fat cow give you?"

Student: "Homework!"

Did you know the first French fries weren't actually cooked in France?

They were cooked in Greece.



SOURCE: <https://www.laughfactory.com/jokes/clean-jokes>

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(+268) 2505 2603 / (+268) 2505 6267



Email: snatcentre@gmail.com snatg02@gmail.com



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