

# **The Complete History of Eswatini**

## **1. Prehistoric and Early Inhabitants**

- Human habitation in Eswatini dates back over 200,000 years.
- The Ngwenya Caves are the site of the worlds oldest mine (iron ore, 43,000 years old).
- Early inhabitants included Khoisan peoples, followed by Bantu-speaking settlers.

## **2. Formation of the Swazi Nation (1700s1800s)**

- Ngwane III (c. 1745) is regarded as the founder of the Swazi nation.
- Sobhuza I (Somhlolo) led during the Mfecane and built unity.
- Mswati II expanded and centralized the Swazi state, giving it its name.

## **3. Colonial Period (Late 1800s1968)**

- Boer and British competition led to protectorate status under the Boers in 1894.
- Britain took over in 1903; indirect rule continued through the monarchy.

## **4. Independence (1968)**

- Nationalist movements and King Sobhuza II led Swaziland to independence on September 6, 1968.
- A constitutional monarchy was established.

## **5. Absolute Monarchy (1973Present)**

- In 1973, King Sobhuza II suspended the constitution and banned political parties.
- After his death in 1982, Mswati III became king in 1986 and remains

in power.

## **6. Modern Developments**

- In 2018, King Mswati III renamed the country Eswatini.
- 2021 saw major pro-democracy protests; Thulani Maseko was assassinated in 2023.

## **7. Culture and Society**

- The king remains a cultural and spiritual leader.
- Major ceremonies include Umhlanga (Reed Dance) and Incwala.

## **8. Economy and Development**

- Economy depends on agriculture, services, and remittances.
- Challenges include high unemployment and HIV/AIDS prevalence.

### **Timeline Summary:**

**~1745 Ngwane III founds Swazi nation**

**1815-1836 Reign of Sobhuza I**

**1840-1868 Reign of Mswati II**

**1894 Boer protectorate**

**1903 British protectorate**

**1968 Independence**

**1973 Constitution suspended**

**1986 Mswati III becomes king**

**2018 Renamed Eswatini**

**2021 Democracy protests**

**2023 Thulani Maseko assassinated**