Where Business meets ideas

NAMIBIA BUSINESS REVIEW

EDITION 3 | VOLUME 3 | 30 SEPTEMBER - 06 OCTOBER 2025

Govt warns visitors to be cuatious, wildfire raze down Etosha

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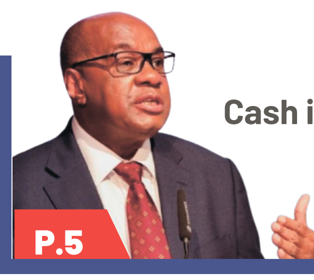

Cash is king in Namibia

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Govt to prioritise marginalised groups in fish quota allocation

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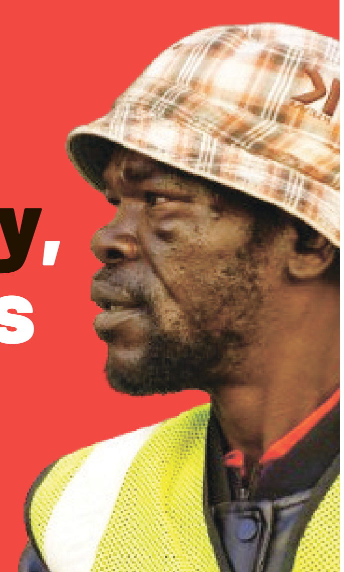
Road Safety Council fails to account for N$11million subsidy

• IMELDA AMBONDO

The Auditor General Junias Kandjeke has flagged bad financial management at the National Road Safety Council (NRSC) including failure to record a government subsidy of about N$11 million.

READ STORY ON PAGE 2

'Robbing Peter to Pay Paul'



...Car guards make N$40 a day, while City makes N$5.8 million in parking fees

READ STORY ON PAGE 2

Competition Commission reviews Gondwana-Abenteuer Afrika Safaris merger

• TIRI MASAWI

The Namibia Competitions Commission (NaCC) will decide on the proposed merger between Gandwana Collection, one the largest hotel and hospitality industry players and Abenteuer Afrika Safari (AAS) Close Corporation.

Gondwana Collection Namibia Managing Director, Gysbert Joubert confirmed the deal pending the Namibia Competition Commission's approval .

»Gysbert Joubert

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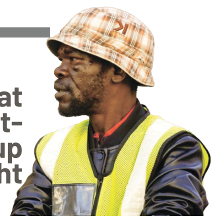
NEWS

"Every morning at 06:00, parking attendants take up their posts in bright yellow vests"



FROM PAGE 1

'Robbing Peter to Pay Paul'

• IMELDA AMBONDO and TIRI MASAWI

The City of Windhoek's decision to privatise its parking system has enriched its coffers but left the parking attendants — the same people keeping the system running — earning far less than promised.

In 2023, the municipality awarded the parking management contract to ChargeTech Namibia, and KeyPlot Investments owned by property mogul Martha Namundjebo-Tilahun.

Since then, the venture has generated about N$5.8 million in parking fees, with contractors taking 35% of that revenue while the City pockets the rest, an increase from the N$600 000 collected annually before the deal.

Several parking attendants claim they signed contracts guaranteeing a monthly salary of about N$3700 but instead receive as little as N$1 500 to N$2 000.

City of Windhoek spokesperson Harold Akwenye did not revealk the earnings of ChargeTech Namibia and KeyPlot Investments but confirmed the deal has boosted the City's revenue. "The City used to make about N$600,000 a year. So far the City has collected revenue to the value of N$2.9 million on average per year," he told Namibia Business Review.

ROBBING PETER TO PAY PAUL

Every morning at 06:00, parking attendants take up their posts in bright yellow vests, working 12-hour shifts to keep Windhoek's parking system operational. Behind those vests, however, are workers facing insults, refusals, and even threats from motorists.

For a 21-year-old parking attendant employed by one of the contractors, the challenges are constant. "Sometimes you issue the ticket and want the clients to pay, then they refuse. They insult you. Some even pull out a gun, saying we are robbing them," he said preferring to remain anonymous.

Angelo Immanuel (Not real name) attends to more than 40 cars daily, making about N$600 a day for the joint venture. His colleague, a 30-year-old attendant, recounts similar experiences: "Some people never pay. Some insult you. Some run away with tickets." According to her, she makes about N$300 to N$400 at quieter sites, rising to as much as N$800 in high-demand areas per day for the business owners. On busy days, she serves between 30 and 50 vehicles.

"Despite making money for the owners, our salaries are sometimes cut. Instead of getting paid N$3700, we end up being paid N$1500 to N$2000," a parking attendant said. Last year, a group of 23 parking attendants complained that their salaries were being deducted without their permission.

Questions sent to Tilahun-Namundjebo were not answered.

Despite poor pay, some attendants say the City of Windhoek's partnership with ChargeTech Namibia, and KeyPlot Investments is working but communication with the public is poor. "Some clients are not aware of the parking system. They must put measures in place to force all customers to pay."

The City of Windhoek's decision to privatise its parking system has enriched its coffers but stripped away the livelihoods of men and women who once depended on informal car guarding for survival.

A HARD KNOCK LIFE

Everyday, 56-year-old Greggy Stephens walks through the streets of Windhoek's city centre to the corner where he has stood for years. There is no uniform, no salary, and no guarantees, just a bag hanging over his shoulder and the hope of earning a few dollars to feed his family.

"I come here, sit, relax, take off my bag, and hang it up where I do every day," Stephens said. "Then I watch. I observe how the parking lot is moving," he adds.

Before the City brought in contractors, Stephens could make between N$40 and N$50 a day by watching over vehicles and receiving small tips from motorists. Now, he says, he earns way less than that.

"They told us to bring our CVs, to register," he said. "Some of us are illiterate, yes, but we know how to use a cell phone. We can work. They didn't even give us a chance."

Stephens' story reflects a broader reality. He said while Windhoek is modernising, informal workers are being pushed aside without training or support.

"There's no reason they couldn't have trained us," he said. "Look at other people, a cleaner became a manager. He started at the bottom."

For Stephens, survival has always been fragile. Once homeless, he was moved to Khomasdal Soccer Field during the Covid-19 pandemic. "We still come into town every day. We look after the cars. That's how we survive," he said.

But even that survival is under threat.

"Some days, there's no money. You go hungry. Nothing for transport, nothing for food. Just from the hand to the mouth."

Despite the hardship, Stephens finds hope in small gestures. A pastor offers soup and bread, a stranger once gifted his baby clothes and a jacket, and another gave him spectacles.

He dreams of starting a small business selling fat cakes, but without money for flour, oil, and yeast, the dream remains out of reach.

"We don't want handouts. We want chances. Learn while you work. That's all we ask," he said. -NBR

FROM PAGE 1

Road Safety Council fails to account for N$11million subsidy

According to the latest report from the Auditor General's office, NRSC incorrectly recorded a government subsidy of N$ 11 223 285 in the revenue disclosed in the statement of surplus or deficit and other comprehensive income.

Kandjoeke said this was inappropriate as the government made these contributions in their capacity as the shareholder.

The financials cover the financial year ending 31 March 2024.

"In my opinion the financial position of the National Road Safety Council as at 31 March 2024 and its performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)," he said.

The auditors also flagged a significant delay in the development of the new Road Safety Management Bill.

Kandjeke said the governance structure of the Council is unenforceable.

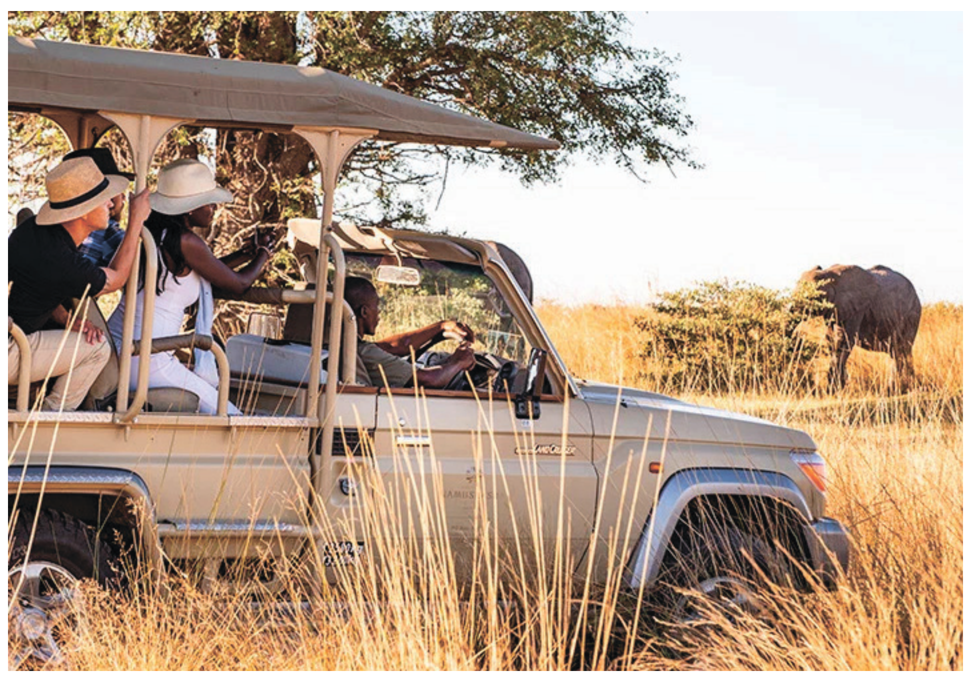
He said the auditors could not determine the accounting policies used to recognize revenue, because the relevant accounting standards could not be applied to the transactions.

Other transgressions also show that NRSC expenditure vouchers amounting to N$ 4 500 000 were not provided for audit purposes.

"Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements." Kandjeke said. -NBR

FROM PAGE 1

Competition Commission reviews Gondwana-Abenteuer Afrika Safaris merger



We applied to the Competition Commission around three and a half months ago. We are waiting for their process to be finalised before we can comment," he said.

The Namibia Competition Commission told the ***Namibia Business Review*** this week that they are still dealing with the matter.

If given approval Gondwana Collection Namibia will take a controlling stake in Abenteuer Afrika Safari .The proposed merger will see Gondwana Collection Namibia acquiring a controlling stake in Abenteuer Afrika Safari .

Gondwana Collection Namibia is involved in providing accommodation and activities, travel advice, rental cars, and tourism shuttles throughout Namibia.

Abenteuer Afrika Safari is a destination management company focusing on the design and implementation of events, activities, tours, transportation, logistics, and program management within a specific destination. ***Namibia Business Review*** understands that the Competition Commission is keenly looking at the deal During its assessment, the Commission consults stakeholders (i.e., customers, competitors, sector regulators etc.) involved in the relevant market.

Meanwhile, an expert in the tourism industry who spoke anonymously raised concern that if the deal is given a green light by the Competition Commission it might propel larger players like Gongwanan collection at the expense of new players.

"The deal is big and if it goes ahead there are elements that could make it very difficult for other smaller players and new players to access the market," he said. -NBR

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Govt warns visitors to be cuatious, wildfire raze down Etosha

»Hon. Indileni Daniel

"Someone has to be held publicly accountable

• TIRI MASAWI

The Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) Indileni Daniel has warned visitors to Etosha National Park to remain vigilant after a raging wildfire destroyed nearly a third of the park's grazing land, threatening wildlife and tourism in Namibia's flagship conservation area.

The government on Sunday said it's still pondering a state of emergency.

The government has roped in the military,police, well wishers and the ministry's officials to deal with the blaze which continues to destroy everything on its way since Tuesday last week.

Daniel said they are yet to determine the number of wild animals that have been killed by the blaze.

"To date, the ministry has deployed 150 personnel alongside 311 members of the Namibian Defense Force. The response is supported by two helicopters for aerial surveillance and water bombing, six fire trucks, six fire engine machines, five fire blowers, two Land Cruisers equipped with water tanks, and one water truck provided by the Oshana Regional Council," she said. Despite these efforts,Daniel said the situation remains challenging due to strong winds, dry vegetation, and limited firefighting equipment.

"I am currently on the ground in Etosha National Park to assess the extent of the fire damage, evaluate the operational needs of deployed teams, and provide strategic guidance to ensure an effective and coordinated response and provide support to the brave men and women working tirelessly to contain the fires," she said.

She added"At this stage, the full extent of wildlife casualties cannot be confirmed. A proper postmortem assessment will be conducted once the fires are fully contained to determine the impact on species and habitats," she said.

STATE OF EMERGENCY

On Sunday night, Vice President Lucia Witbooi said the Government was still weighing options on whether to call a state of emergency.

The Presidency said aerial imagery will be undertaken to determine the extent of the spread of the fire and the area destroyed.

"No State of Emergency has been declared yet and a decision will be taken once all information is obtained. During the past three days, the fire has spread to the north-eastern parts of the Etosha National Park. On Friday, 26 September 2025, the fire had spread into the communal areas of Omusati and Oshana regions particularly in the constituencies of Uuvudhiya, Otamanzi and Ruacana. Strong winds and dry vegetation contribute to the fire spreading rapidly," Witbooi said .

The Presidency added that a raft of measures has been put in place including the urgent sitting by a committee chaired by Secretary to the Cabinet, Emilia Mkusa, as Chairperson of the National Disaster Risk Management Committee to find solutions.

According to the Presidency, the Committee considered all factors and critical needs as identified by the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism.

These needs included human resources, equipment for firefighting and protective masks, food ration packs, graders for clearing priority fire cutlines and mobile clinic for emergencies

John Grobler, a journalist who has many years of experience in covering the environment, said the situation is bad.

"It's going to hit the tourism sector hard because big spending foreign tourists come here above all to see wild animals in their natural habitat," he said.

He said both fires, the first one starting at the Okaukejo dump site, the second in the west from negligent and possibly illegal burning of charcoal are due to the managerial oversight failure at the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism.

"Why was charcoal making allowed in the first place on any farms adjoining the Etosha National Park," he said.

Grobler said there has been a culture of commercial promiscuity that prevailed that undermined ecological sustainability, something that has done serious damage to our country's biodiversity.

"Someone has to be held publicly accountable," he said.

The Charcoal Association of Namibia (CAoN) has denied that its members' operations were the source of a recent wildfire in Etosha National Park, despite official suspicions that the fire likely began at a nearby charcoal production site. CAoN insists its members have maintained a clean fire control record with no fires originating from their activities over the last three years. However, the Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Tourism (MEFT) has confirmed the fire was likely started by charcoal activities before spreading into the park. -NBR

"More and more people are using digital payments

Cash is king in Namibia

• TIRI MASAWI

Despite most countries moving into cashless societies dominated by mobile wallets and digital transaction applications, Namibia has witnessed a sharp increase in the amount of cash circulating in the economy from N$4.7 billion to N$5.6 billion between 2020 to-date.

Bank of Namibia Governor Johannes !Gawaxab, speaking at the official issuance of the upgraded bank notes and coinage in Mariental on Monday said the increase in the levels of cash in circulation means people are still using money in their hands, not just on their phones or cards.

"That N$10 note in a student's pocket, the N$20 handed to a taxi driver, or the coins a grandparent uses at the corner shop, they still matter. Indeed, cash is alive, active, and essential, especially for informal businesses that deal in small daily transactions, rural communities where internet access is limited or unavailable, and households where every cent must stretch and count," !Gawaxab said..

He said while cash remains vital to the transacting public Namibia must face a reality that the world of money is changing.

"More and more people are using digital payments. Phones are becoming wallets. Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) are giving way to apps. But with this shift come new challenges: cybercrime, data theft and fraud are rising. The sophistication of fraud in Namibia has become deeply alarming. Scammers are now creating fake pictures and even fake videos, with computer technology, to look and sound like real people," the Governor said. He added that, "These are called deepfakes. They can make it seem as if a trusted leader or public figure - even myself - is speaking, when in fact it is all a lie. With the rapid spread and easy access to advanced technology, such as deepfakes and other scams, are likely to continue increasing unless we act decisively."

According to the apex bank chief the bank is intensifying efforts to educate Namibians on how to safely use digital payment tools and online platforms.

"Our goal is to empower everyone with the knowledge and vigilance needed to protect themselves and prevent becoming victims of these evolving threats.

If you are ever in doubt, please call the Bank

of Namibia before you invest in an 'opportunity' that the Bank is supposedly promoting," he said.

He said there are three pillars that must continue to guide the Bank of Namibia including resilience.

"Resilience means that our money must function under all conditions - not just when times are good, or when technology is working perfectly, but especially when they are not. When the power goes out. When the network fails. When there is no smartphone or signal. Namibians must still be able to make a payment, to buy bread, to settle a fare, or to support a loved one. A resilient monetary system is one that keeps working even when everything else does not," he said. -NBR

Telecoms, energy and finance industries flagged for anti-competitive practices

• IMELDA AMBONDO

Namibia still struggles with restrictive practices including price-fixing, collusive tendering, and market division in telecommunications, finance, and energy industries, a study commissioned by the Namibia Competitions Commission last week revealed.

The Competition Impact Assessment Study flagged rampant unfair pricing and discriminatory practices in most industries in the country.

The study revealed that 43% of the interviewed Namibian consumers believe competition is limited in most industries while a 75% sample said they see entry barriers in certain industries hindering new businesses.

About 57% of the sample believe that Namibia needs to strengthen policies to promote competition.

The study used a mix of systematic law reviews, in-depth interviews across 12 sectors, consumer surveys, and documentary analysis.

Some of the distortions identified include State Enterprise privileges in 15 or more laws including giving automatic licenses, tax exemptions, and guaranteed funding to entities like Telecom Namibia, and NamibRe.

The study aims to audit over 160 laws, policies, and regulations that may distort competition across the country's economic sectors.

»CEO Vitalis Ndalikokule

Speaking at the stakeholder consultation workshop, Chief Executive Officer of the Namibian Competition Commission, Vitalis Ndalikokule said the study marks an important milestone in the ongoing journey towards a more inclusive, efficient and competitive economic landscape.

" We are gathered here to engage in discussion around the Competition Impact Assessment Study, a project that seeks to undertake a comprehensive audit of laws, policies, and regulations that may have the potential to distort competition in our markets," he said.

Ndalikokule said the study was commissioned under the National Competition Policy, with technical support from Inceptors Pty Ltd, the commercial arm of the University of Namibia.

"Their expertise brings valuable academic and analytical rigour to the exercise, ensuring that the findings are grounded in evidence-based research and aligned with international best practices," he added.

Executive Director of the Ministry of Industries, Mines and Energy, Moses Pakote said the study will improve Namibia's economic transformation.

"It gives me great pleasure to address you today at this important stakeholder consultation workshop, convened for the Competition Impact Assessment Study, a key component of the implementation roadmap for our National Competition Policy," he said. Pakote said the National Competition Policy provides a coherent framework for fostering effective competition across all sectors, in alignment with Vision 2030 and Namibia's National Development Plans.

"The purpose of this study is clear: to identify laws, policies, and regulations, whether existing or proposed, that may hinder, distort, or unnecessarily restrict competition in the Namibian market," he said.

Professor Dunia Zongwe, representing the University of Namibia consultancy said the study covered more than 160 laws, policies, and regulations.

It covered sectors including trade and industry, business regulation, media and communications, land and housing, energy and utilities, and financial services.

The consultancy team outlined a reform framework addressing regulatory coordination, entry barrier elimination, competitive neutrality, and enforcement enhancement.

The study proposes a phased implementation of regulatory coordination, entry barrier reduction and infrastructure sharing enforcement.

It said the reforms will boost investment, enhance innovation and job creation, improve consumer welfare, increase economic diversification, and ensure sustainable growth aligned with Namibia's Vision 2030. -NBR

Over 11 000 business apply for capital from youth development fund

11,475 applications were received from all 14 regions of our country"

• TIRI MASAWI

Prime Minister Elijah Ngurare yesterday said about 11,475 applications were received from youth run businesses who want to access capital from the National Youth Development Fund.

He described the unemployment situation in the country as 'sobering.'

The Fund is capitalised at N$500 million, with N$257 million already allocated in the 2025/26 financial year to l address the gaps that have held back youth entrepreneurship.

Speaking at the launch of the programme in Omaheke, Ngurare said the response ids overwhelming since the application process was opened between 1 August and 4 September 2025, the response was overwhelming. In just over a month, "11,475 applications were received from all 14 regions of our country. 6,111 Projects were assessed by the Development Bank of Namibia, 5,070 agricultural applications by Agribank, and 294 eco-friendly projects by the Environmental Investment Fund.

"I am happy to announce that out of this number, 391 applications were received from the Omaheke Region. It demonstrates that the young people of Omaheke are ready to seize opportunity.

From these, 42 successful projects, 3 from each of the 14 regions, will be announced today. This does not mean out of 11,475 applications, only 42 will be beneficiaries of the N$250 million Youth Fund," Ngurare said.

He said only 42 successful beneficiaries were selected for announcement at the launch while more successful applicants are yet to be announced.

"All beneficiaries will undergo entrepreneurship training to prepare them for success. The financing model is inclusive and responsive. Start-ups may access between N$60,000 and N$200,000 at 2% interest. Growth-phase enterprises between N$200,000 and N$1 million at 3% interest. Expansion enterprises above N$1 million at 4% interest," he said..

He added that a grace period of up to 12 months will be given to allow businesses to grow beforerepayment begins". There are no collateral requirements. Let this be clear.

The criteria is that the youth fund must be clear and must be youth friendly. If and when we find that the criteria are not helpful, let's change them for the benefit of the Namibian youth," Ngurare said.

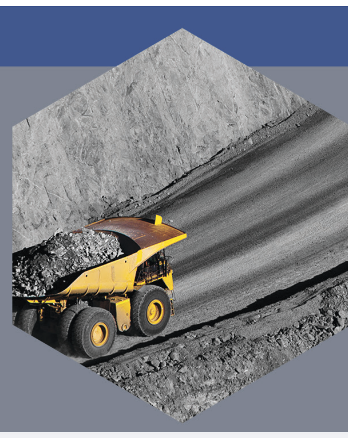
Ngurare said towns and villages in Namibia are filled with ideas, creativity, and energy.

"But the reality of youth unemployment in our country is sobering.

At the same time, Namibia's ranks in global entrepreneurship indices shows a relatively weak entrepreneurial ecosystem, characterised by a high rate of necessity entrepreneurs as opposed to sustainable opportunity driven entrepreneurship.

"The barriers are well known. They are a lack of finance, inadequa

te skills and limited access to markets. The need for funding is among the top four challenges along with startup skills, technology absorption and process innovation," he said. -NBR



Namibia's economy grows to N$64.8 billion

• TIRI MASAWI

Namibia's economy grew by N$6 billion in the second quarter of 2025, expanding from N$58.8 billion in the same period last year to N$64.8 billion.

According to the latest economic figures released by the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA), the domestic economy grew in real terms by 1.6% compared to a 3.3% growth registered in the same period last year.

The statistics agency attributed the performance to the tertiary industries that recorded a growth of 3.9 % in real value added, compared to a 5.0% growth recorded in the corresponding period of 2024.

"Tertiary industries were driven by the following sectors compared to the corresponding period of 2024. Wholesale and retail trade grew by 5.2% compared to 9.1%, education 5.6% from 1.0%, financial services activities 5.0% compared to 9.1% and public administration and defence 3.7% in comparison to 4.3%," Statistician General Alex Shimuafeni said.

Shimuafeni said economic activities in the primary industries improved marginally, witnessing an increase of 0.1% in real value added compared to a 2.7% decline recorded in the second quarter of 2024.

"The growth is attributed to the agriculture and forestry and fishing and fish processing on board' sectors, which registered declines in real value added of 3.5% and 4.4%, respectively.

The declines are reflected in the significant reduction of total animals marketed and a decrease in volume of fish landed," Shimuafeni said

"On the other hand, Shimuafeni said a decline was witnessed in the secondary industries during the period under review, down by 5.8% in real value added relative to a growth of 2.0% registered in the corresponding quarter of 2024. This performance emanates from the manufacturing sector that registered a 9.7 % decline in real value added, compared to an increase of 1.2 percent witnessed in the same quarter of 2024.

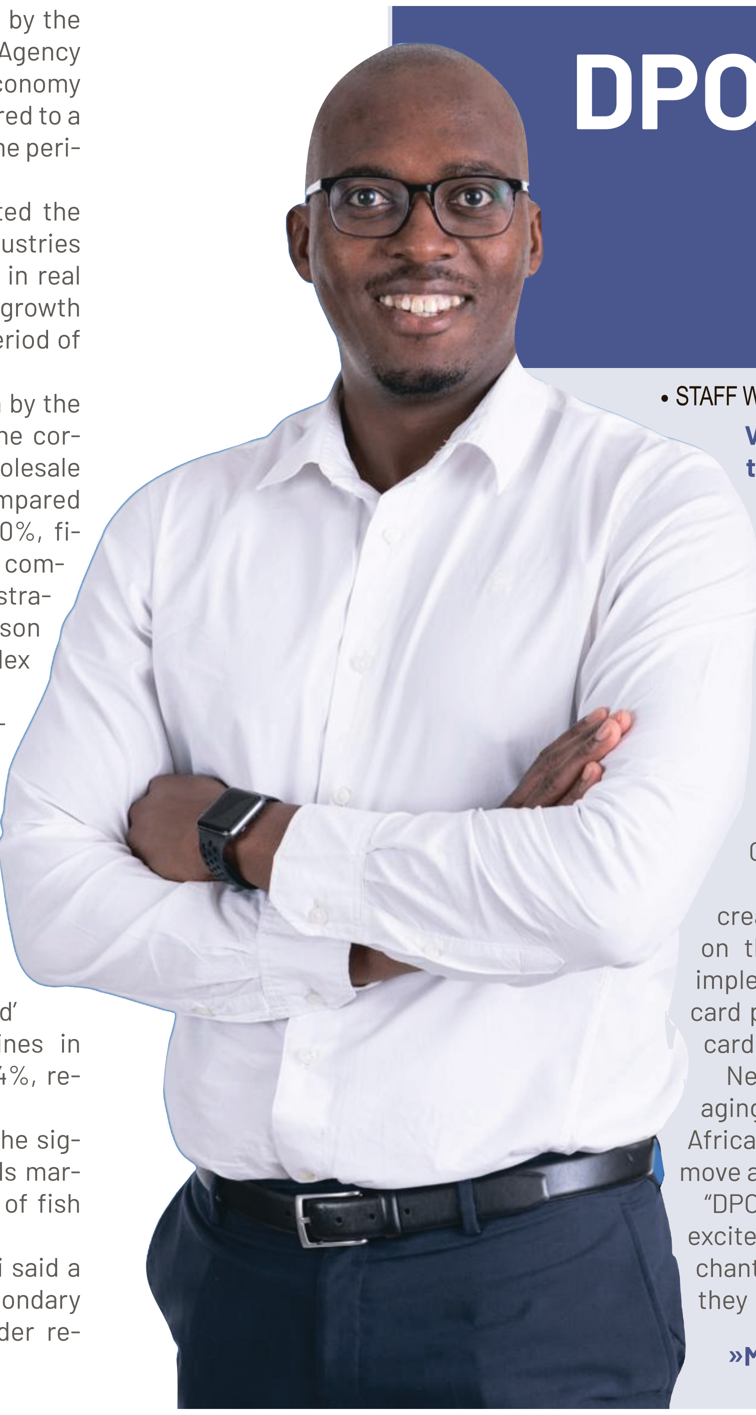
The Statistician General said Government Final Consumption Expenditure maintained a positive performance, registering a 4.2% increase during the second quarter of 2025 compared to a growth of 2.6% registered in the corresponding quarter of 2024.

The performance is owed to an increased number of public servants.

"Moreover, gross fixed capital formation recorded a 5.0 percent increase during the quarter under review, relative to a decrease of 0.6 percent posted in the corresponding quarter of 2024," said Shimuafeni

Shimuafeni added "This is due to an increase in investment of machinery and transport equipment, and construction activities. Export of goods and services accelerated during the second quarter of 2025, growing by 18.5 percent, while import of goods and services for the same period declined by 1.6 percent, resulting in the external balance deficit to shrink, an encouraging feat for the economy," he said. -NBR

DPO Namibia rebrands to enhance digital payment services



»Mpho Sadiki

• STAFF WRITER

Virtual Card Services Namibia, trading as DPO Pay Namibia has rebranded to Network International (Network), a fintech company in the Middle East and Africa (MEA).

This comes after regulatory approvals.

The network offers several payment products and services to merchants and financial institutions.

Network acquired 100% DPO Group, in 2021.

This enabled Network to increase its footprint to 21 countries on the continent, developing and implementing credit, debit and smart card processing systems for all major card issuers in Southern Africa.

Network International Group Managing Director Merchant Services, Africa , ~~Mpho Sadiki desc~~ribed the move as historic.

"DPO Pay is now Network, and we are excited about this move. For our merchants and customers, it means that they will not only continue to enjoy the same quality of services, but we now have more muscle to innovate and provide tailored solutions in the market. Our focus is to innovate and enhance safe and personalized payment experiences, and this move positions us to do just that," he said.

> *Namibia is the latest to rebrand following Kenya late last year"*

Namibia is the latest to rebrand following Kenya late last year.

The company said this strategic move will further enhance access to QR code, card payments and mobile payment solutions.

The company said it targets to help businesses and economies grow by simplifying payments and commerce by serving a diverse ecosystem of banks, fintechs, telcos, merchants, governments, and public sector entities spanning over 50 countries. -NBR

> "It is a bad cancer that is eating away at our youth and everyday

EDITORIAL

It's hard knock life for the unemployed

When life gives lemons , make lemonade, they say.

What an irony!

Many say such as if a life of lemonade is anything enjoyable.

But these are the realities that we live with everyday.

It is very difficult for a person who lives in opulence and only dreams of their next million to understand the pain of not having a dollar in your pocket for a good two weeks.

When we talk of poverty and unemployment many might think these are just statistics but reality is there are families behind these figures.

There are fathers and mothers who have to bear the agony of looking at their families and still go to bed without chewing anything.

This week we have a story of a young unemployed man who walks day in day out to guard cars in the Central Business District. His earnings are a measly N$40 to N$50.

In the chase vein the city creams off a good N$2.9 million annually for the same job.

Mind you that N$40 is on a good day , but in reality he might as well head home with nothing.

He is only but one of the many Namibians who continue to toil in the streets without the prospect of getting a job.

Unemployment is a real cancer in our society.

It is a bad cancer that is eating away at our youth and everyday. They wilt into depression and other social challenges.

They definitely need answers from our policy makers, and they need them fast.

It is even disheartening that for this poor unfortunate man who walks a good 10 to 15 kilometres to town everyday to look for the next meal, he must compete with the corporates that have taken over his parking slot.

In such situations one wonders if these young people can not be organised in some sort of cooperatives and encouraged to register close cooperations.

Surely these close corporations can be recipients of such parking tenders in town. They do it anyway.

Only that they have been doing it informally.

If there was ever a time for the city fathers to do business with conscience , perhaps this is it.

Think outside the box, find the basics that these youth can do with ease.

Surely directing cars and making sure they are securely parked is one of them.

Until we align solutions to such societal challenges like unemployment with reality on the ground it will continue to be a hard knock life for these young people.

Prepare for the rainy season

• ERASTUS NGARUKA

As Namibian farmers eagerly anticipate a favorable rainy season, signs of climate change persist.

Although the previous rainy season may have ended with a sigh of relief for farmers, every rainy season has become spatially and temporally unique in terms of its initiation, intensity, distribution, and duration. This means farmers need to continuously prepare for every rainy season, as each season may present different challenges and climate change related risks.

These include floods, lightning, heavy winds, cold, drought, disease, and pest outbreaks, among others.

The previous rainy season provided much-needed relief for many livestock farmers in the country as the grazing capacity improved, although not optimally in terms of value. All the while, the density of unwanted plant species has increased as well. Much of the forage yield from the previous season was underutilized due to poor grazing value, and a significant number of grazing animals, especially cattle,

were drastically reduced during the drought years. This has left significant quantities of grass as fuel load, which can intensify the impact of veld fires that destroy large tracts of grazable land.

Moreover, as much as farmers always wish for a good rainy season to improve their grazing conditions, they must also be cautious of and prepare for the veld fire events at the end of the season.

To this end, it is very important that the rangelands are prepared to benefit from rainfall while ensuring that sufficient forage materials are preserved, protected, and available until the next season. At this point, farmers need to adopt sustainable and restorative rangeland utilization practices such as re-seeding with valuable perennial grasses, bush-thinning, soil rehydration and stabilization to control erosion and excessive run-off, and evaporation. Moreover, farmers need to adopt the application of sustainable grazing practices to preserve valuable grazing materials.

With the positive hope of good showers, farmers need to prepare and protect farm infrastructure and livestock from possible floods, especially in risky areas such as the northern parts of the country.

Moreover, farmers need to adopt techniques of harvesting rainwater and storage for later use in gardens and other household needs. On the other hand, moist environmental conditions also predispose the prevalence of insects such as mosquitoes, ticks, and biting flies. These insects can transmit common diseases such as lumpy skin disease and tick-borne diseases such as sweating sickness and anaplasmosis (gall sickness), among others. To this end, farmers need to vaccinate their animals, especially against lumpy skin disease by November, as it can also disturb cattle marketing when there is an outbreak.

Similar to the previous rainy season, there will be a high prevalence of internal parasites, especially the liver fluke, among others. The liver fluke's intermediate host is a snail, and as it moves around, it leaves parasites on the grass or in water. It is therefore vital for farmers to understand the seasonal prevalence of parasites and related symptoms such as itching, anemia, bottle jaw, diarrhea, and running nose, and to select the correct anthelmintics or antiparasitic remedies.

As much as rainfall provides relief for livestock farmers, it can also be a disturbance to the well-being of livestock. Apart from diseases and parasite prevalence, rainfall also comes with cold and windy conditions, lightning strikes, and damp environments that can be unhygienic and uncomfortable for livestock, for example, muddy kraals. Livestock kraals should always be cleaned and sheltered to protect animals from rain, cold, wind, and lightning. These stressful conditions can result in incidences of lung infection (pneumonia or pasteurellosis), especially in goats and sheep.

However, pasteurellosis can be prevented through vaccination. Furthermore, rainfall also affects livestock foraging activities, limiting their foraging time and daily intake as they run for cover to avoid getting wet. To that end, extra feed should be provided to compensate for the possible loss of dry matter intake and to enhance the animals' metabolism for them to keep warm from metabolic heat.

Lastly, livestock farmers need to maintain hygienic and safe environments for their animals to ensure that their welfare and performance are not compromised. Moreover, farmers need to keep abreast of information related to climatic activities and prepare for every possible challenge that can come with every rainy season.

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> **"Under the law, only the Minister has the authority to remove a beneficiary"**

Govt to prioritise marginalised groups in fish quota allocation

• IMELDA AMBONDO

The Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform, Inge Zaamwani-Kamwi says the government will prioritise marginalised groups, including persons with disabilities, women, veterans, and youth, in the allocation of fishing quotas.

She was responding to a question by Popular Democratic Movement (PDM) parliamentarian Diederik Vries during a parliamentary session last week Tuesday.

Vries raised concerns about the authenticity of partnerships between Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and vulnerable groups in fishing quota applications and the risks of their exclusion from decision-making processes.

According to Zaamwani, citizenship remains the "pivotal criterion" in determining eligibility for quotas, with specific provisions to support marginalized communities.

She said the Ministry uses national identification documents and medical reports to verify applicants' details and disability status.

"The Ministry is in the advanced stages of finalising a comprehensive Scorecard. This Scorecard will enable us to engage directly with marginalised communities and persons with disabilities for validation, ensuring a truly inclusive and equitable process," she said.

The Minister acknowledged reports of some shareholders being threatened with removal from shareholding structures.

She said that under the law, only the Minister has the authority to remove a beneficiary.

"In accordance with Section 42(1) of the Marine Resources Act, 2000, the authority to remove a beneficiary from a Fishing Right vests solely with the Minister, No other party possesses the legal mandate to effect such changes." she said.

Zaamwani also addressed concerns about companies failing to honour their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) commitments after securing quotas.

» Hon. Inge Zaamwani-Kamwi

"CSR commitments are part of the Performance Matrix for each Right Holder. Failure to honor these commitments ultimately leads to a reduction in the performance score, which affects quota allocation and the extension of fishing rights." she said.

She said the ministry requires rights-holders to submit documentation such as proof of expenditure, photos, and beneficiary letters to verify the impact of CSR projects.

Vries had further questioned whether CSR and equity arrangements should be legally binding rather than voluntary.

"The Ministry places strong emphasis on the fulfillment of CSR commitments made during the initial application phase. Non-compliance results in a diminished performance rating," Zaamwani said.

The Minister reaffirmed the Ministry's open door policy, inviting aggrieved stakeholders to raise complaints directly.

"I wish to underscore the Ministry's commitment to transparency, equity, and inclusive participation across all levels of the fishing sector," she said.

"Affected shareholders, including those from vulnerable communities, are encouraged to present grievances to the Ministry through the Executive Director."

Zaamwani added that, "Our broader objective is to make sure that all beneficiaries, particularly marginalized groups, fully participate in and benefit from the nation's marine wealth." -NBR