

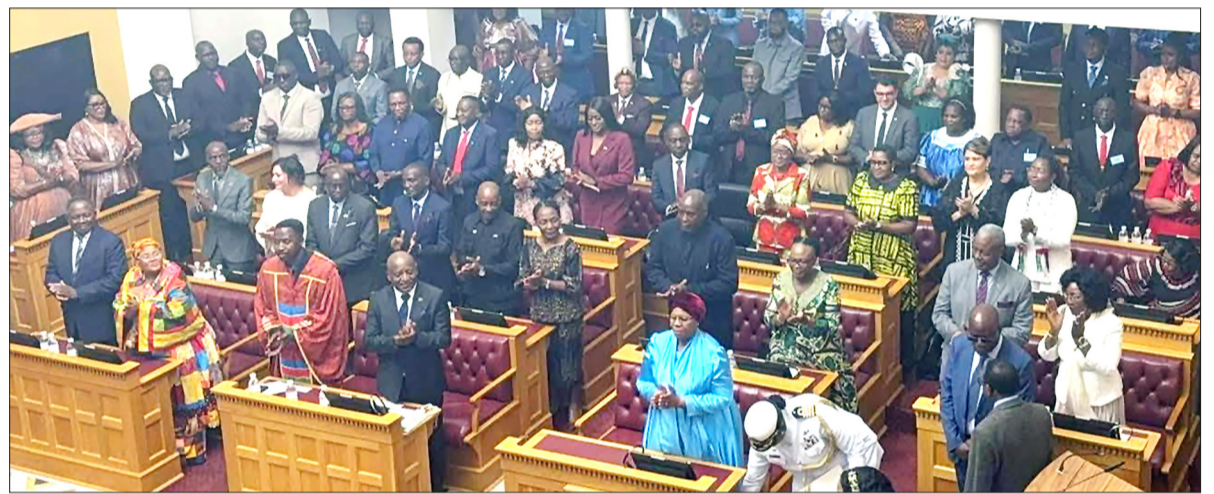
NAMIBIA BUSINESS REVIEW

Where Business meets ideas

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Animal farm

> Namibians to continue paying **N\$55 560** for politicians' water and electricity while Havana residents walk kilometres for water



• VERIPUAMI KANGUMINE

In Havana, Katutura, water is measured in footsteps, three kilometres to go there, three kilometres to come back, often carrying buckets.

In government offices, it is measured in allowances: N\$55 560 a year for water and electricity for ministers and top officials. This money is not paid by them personally, but

comes from the government, meaning that ordinary Namibians pay for it through taxes.

This contrast came into sharper focus last week when President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah approved a new salary structure for Public Office Bearers, confirming the N\$55 560 annual water and electricity allowance for ministers and senior officials, funded by taxpayers.

The same structure applies to the President, Vice President, ministers, governors, chairpersons of regional councils, man-

agement committees, members of parliament and special ministerial advisors, according to a government gazette.

The adjustments are effective from 1 April 2026.

Between these two realities sits a growing conversation about who pays, who benefits, and who waits.

While the structure outlines what will be covered for public office bearers, life in informal settlements like Havana in Windhoek tells a different story.

CONTINUE ON PAGE 2

Build one stadium or four schools? Govt faces N\$500 million dilemma

• TIRI MASAWI

The Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sport, Arts and Culture is facing a difficult decision, whether to build schools that cost about N\$120 million to ease classroom shortages, or construct stadiums that could cost up to N\$500 million to meet in-

ternational standards. The ministry is looking at building major sport stadiums at Katima Mulilo, Mariental and Opuwo but architectural designs alone could cost up to N\$70 million with one stadium expected to cost about N\$500 million on completion.

CONTINUE ON PAGE 2

SPORTS	VS	EDUCATION
<p>COSTS: N\$500 million per stadium</p>		<p>COSTS: N\$120 million per school</p>
<p>STATUS: No international recognized sport stadium</p>		<p>STATUS: Shortage of 4,400 classrooms</p>
<p>EFFECTS: Govt pays more than N\$1.5 million to host Brave Warriors matches outside the country</p>		<p>EFFECTS: 1,000 pupils without school places</p>

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One of those affected is Julitha Lillepus (22), a third-year student at the International University of Management (IUM), who says she walks about three kilometres to fetch water.

She is among many residents in informal settlements who live without reliable access to water and electricity.

"I have to walk three kilometres to get water," she said.

Under the new structure, taxpayers will also pay N\$48 240 annually for water and electricity for deputy ministers.

The same arrangement sees N\$55 560 allocated annually for ministers, the Director of Intelligence Service, Attorney General, Director General of the National Planning Commission, as well as the President and Vice President.

The Prime Minister will receive a N\$351 175 housing allowance, bringing the total package to N\$1.6 million annually.

The Deputy Prime Minister's housing allowance is set at N\$289 957 annually, pushing the total package to N\$1.3 million.

Ministers will receive a N\$273 311 housing allowance and a N\$1 440 telephone allowance, taking their annual package to N\$1.3 million.

The structure also includes taxpayer-funded cellphone allowances: N\$1 260 for the Auditor General, N\$1 440 for the Director General of the National Planning Commission, N\$1 080 for deputy ministers, and N\$864 for the Chairperson of the National Council, including members and senior party officials.

DISAPPOINTMENT IN HAVANA

For Lillepus, daily life in Havana comes with constant trade-offs.

She told *Namibia Business Review* on Saturday that she often stays after hours at the International University of Management to complete assignments because of a lack of electricity and internet connectivity at home.

"I have resorted to using the electricity at IUM to charge my phone, type my assignment and study because we don't have electricity here in Havana," she said.

To survive, she sells candy, cookies, eggs and bread to pay N\$300 monthly rent for her shack.

She also spends about N\$200 a month on a d.light solar device, which she tops up weekly with N\$50 for lighting at night.

A d.light is a solar-powered system used by low-income households.

Other residents in Havana say they are frustrated by the contrast between their daily struggles and government spending on utilities for public office bearers.

"How can the president issue something like that when we have been living here for over twenty years without electricity or water?" asked Kakuire Hei, who sells clothing merchandise from South Africa.

"Even I pay taxes when I order my clothes from South Africa and you are telling me that those politicians who already have money will be paid from our taxes," she said. Hei called on government to redirect funds to water, electricity and sanitation in informal settlements.

Another resident, Rivaldo Gawaseb, said the decision feels unfair to those living at informal locations.

"President Netumbo you are choking us, you are holding us by the neck... you said we were too few to be poor what happened," he said.

Mona-lisa Rokero, a mother of three, said the lack of basic services forces her to buy food in small quantities because

she does not have a refrigerator.

"There the president is wrong, we are the ones who have voted them into office yet they have left us with nothing," she said.

She called for investment in sanitation, roads and water supply. "We already pay N\$10 per litre of water and I bought our solar power for N\$5 000. Bring the water money to develop our services here and roads and we will pay," she said.

POLICY CONTRADICTION?

The decision comes despite President Nandi-Ndaitwah previously advocating for cost-cutting measures, including reducing cabinet portfolios to 14.

It also comes at a time when Namibia faces high unemployment of 36.9% and youth unemployment of 44.4%, according to the Namibia Statistics Agency's 2025 figures. The country has a housing backlog of about 300 000 units, with nearly 42% of the population living in informal settlements.

The World Food Programme has projected that about 612 000 people are experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity.

"WRONG PRIORITIES"

Social justice activist Shaun Gariseb said government is prioritising benefits for public office bearers while civil servants continue to struggle with salaries.

"The government vehemently refused to give a decent living salary increment to civil servants... yet they increased their medical aid contribution to 100% only to add and increase the perks of Public Office Bearers tremendously," he said.

He said the benefits create a growing gap between leaders and ordinary workers. Gariseb also questioned whether proper economic assessment was done before the decision.

ELITES OVER THE POOR

Unionist Mahongora Kavihuha said the decision shows government priorities are misplaced.

"The government is more interested in the elite rather than the masses," he said.

He added that the state has enough resources to improve basic services but chooses not to.

Political analyst Dumba Kamwanya said the decision reflects a gap between leadership and ordinary citizens.

"While public office bearers are guaranteed over N\$55 000 a year for electricity and water, many Namibians in rural areas and places like Katutura still struggle without reliable access to these same basic services," he said.

He warned that such decisions deepen inequality and weaken public trust.

"When the state subsidises these costs for those in power, while others go without, it risks deepening inequality and eroding public trust," he said.

WHERE ARE THE PROMISES

Basic Income Grant Coalition of Namibia representative Riaani Musutua questioned why funds are available for officials but not for pension increases.

"We were also told that there was not enough money to increase the old-age pension to N\$6 000 as promised during the 2024 elections.

Yet, resources are somehow available when it comes to supporting the wealthy," she said. She called for a universal basic income grant of N\$600 per person monthly for citizens aged 0 to 59.

Musutua also referenced the Swapo Party's 1989 manifesto, saying it promised redistribution of resources to ensure dignity for all Namibians. "But what has happened to that promise?" she asked. **NBR**

BUILD ONE STADIUM OR FOUR SCHOOLS FROM PAGE 1

Minister Sanet Steenkamp says the choice comes down to limited resources and growing demands across both sectors.

Speaking to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Youth, Civic Relations and Community Development last week, she said government must decide how best to use the money available.

"As a country, we should decide whether to construct one stadium for more than half a billion. For juxtaposing, we construct schools now for N\$120 million and this is where the ministry says we must really come up with a blueprint," she said.

PLANS HIT A COST WALL

Government had committed to building stadiums across the country, but those plans have been disrupted.

The Confédération Africaine de Football (CAF) introduced strict design requirements for stadiums to meet international standards, pushing costs higher than initially expected. Steenkamp said design and documentation alone for stadiums in Katima Mulilo, Mariental and Opuwo could exceed N\$70 million.

"That's because of the high cost of international standards. Can we move forward with the plans and designs that are to be constructed because we know it will be problematic to get a budget and to finish in the phase that we intend to," she said.

CLASSROOMS STILL MISSING

While stadium plans are under pressure, the education sector faces its own urgent needs.

Some schools across the country do not have enough classrooms, forcing learners into overcrowded spaces or makeshift structures.

Namibia faces a chronic shortage of over 4 400 classrooms, leaving over 1 000 pupils without school places in early 2026, particularly in the Khomas and Erongo regions.

This has added pressure on the ministry to prioritise building more schools.

A COUNTRY WITHOUT A HOME STADIUM

At the same time, Namibia has gone seven years without a stadium that meets international standards.

This has forced the national football team, the Brave Warriors including the national womens team, to play their home matches in other countries, increasing costs. The government pays more than N\$1.5 million per match to host them abroad.

STADIUMS BRING VALUE TOO

Economist Omu Kakujaha-Matundu says the construction of stadiums is long overdue.

"The government has weighed the trade-offs, the reason why it neglected the construction of sports stadiums," he said.

He added that N\$500 million is not excessive if the project is managed properly.

"The main thing is that the companies procured to do the job should be entities with a good track record. That will avoid inefficiencies that could lead to cost escalation," he said.

According to him, large construction projects create jobs and stimulate economic growth.

With a high marginal propensity to consume, the multiplier effect could be quite strong," he said.

He also highlighted the role of sport in youth development.

"Sports for schools have been neglected. It deprived the nation and young people from becoming professional sports people," he said.

Analyst Ndumba Kamwanyah says the trade-off is clear.

"Spending over N\$500 million on one stadium means giving up several priorities such as schools, clinics, or roads," he said.

"A stadium brings national pride, tourism, and allows teams to play at home, but schools directly improve education and long-term economic growth."

He said government should focus on projects with the biggest long-term impact. "In simple terms, one stadium at N\$500 million equals about four schools," he said.

A BALANCING ACT

Former Namibia Football Association vice president Izak Fredericks says the country is facing a classic development dilemma.

He said Namibia must balance international sporting standards with urgent domestic needs, all within a tight budget.

"The trade-off isn't just stadium or school. It's about opportunity cost, economic returns, and national identity," he said.

Fredericks explained that schools offer long-term benefits linked to jobs and economic growth, while stadiums generate

returns mainly during events.

Fredericks said hosting matches at home would reduce costs, but not enough to recover the full investment quickly.

"Education addresses unemployment and skills gaps, while sport builds cohesion and national pride. Both matter, but schools are a constitutional right; stadiums aren't," he said.

Fredericks said high costs are driven by international standards, which require specialised infrastructure such as lighting, media facilities and large seating capacity.

He also warned that consultancy and design costs are rising, consuming large portions of project budgets.

To manage costs, he suggested phased construction, building essential parts first and expanding later.

He also recommended using standardised designs and upgrading existing stadiums instead of building new ones.

Fredericks proposed building one main stadium that meets international standards, while developing smaller regional facilities.

This approach, he said, would balance affordability with the need to host international matches.

Social justice activist Herbert Jauch says government must focus on urgent needs first.

"Education, health care and housing are among the most urgent," he said.

"Sports facilities rank a bit lower and should predominantly serve local needs cost-effectively."

However, he acknowledged the need for at least one stadium that meets CAF standards. **NBR**



Schlettwein wants all national parks fully opened to Namibians

• STAFF WRITER

Former Cabinet minister Calle Schlettwein has called on government to go further in removing concession restrictions in national parks, saying access rules should not only be changed in Sossusvlei but “everywhere similar exclusions exist.”

His comments come after the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) announced a reversal of earlier access restrictions at Sossusvlei and Dead Vlei, allowing both self-drivers and Namibian tour operators to once again enter the area under revised arrangements.

A concession is a right, privilege, or property granted by a government or entity (like a landowner) allowing a party to operate a specific business, use land, or provide services, often for commercial profit.

Schlettwein welcomed the decision but said it exposed a bigger policy problem in how concessions are structured in protected areas.

“It is with appreciation that we note the reversing of the decision to disallow self-drivers and Namibian tour operators from entering the Sossus and Dead Vlei areas. Great, and thank you MEFT,” he said. But he did not stop there.

“Please do the same for other areas where Namibians, whether self drivers or tour operators, are still excluded,” Schlettwein said.

He said that concessions in national parks must be fair and balanced, warning that some current arrangements benefit a single operator while placing financial pressure on the wider public.

“A concession in a national park, i.e. an exclusive right of access thereto, must take into account the consequences of both affected and affected interests,” he said.

“In the Sossusvlei and similar concessions, one has one individual who gets the total financial benefit of access to the park, whereas the rest of the citizenry, including tour operators and tourists, are financially burdened.”

Schlettwein added that government must ensure it hears all stakeholders before making such decisions, questioning how earlier restrictions were justified.



“The government in its decision-making process is obliged to hear both sides. It would be interesting to see what considerations convinced the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism to take such a one-sided decision,” he said.

Prime Minister Elijah Ngurare also weighed in, saying Sossusvlei should remain open for broader public benefit.

“Sossusvlei must be open for unrestricted use, firstly by all Namibians, and secondly by international visitors,” Ngurare said, adding that the line ministry will continue to administer the relevant regulations.

The MEFT has since confirmed the updated arrangement for shuttle services between the Sossusvlei 2x4 parking area and the 4x4 section leading to Dead Vlei.

In a notice issued by executive director Sikongo Haihambo last week, the ministry said only two categories of operators will be allowed to provide shuttle services from 01 May 2026.

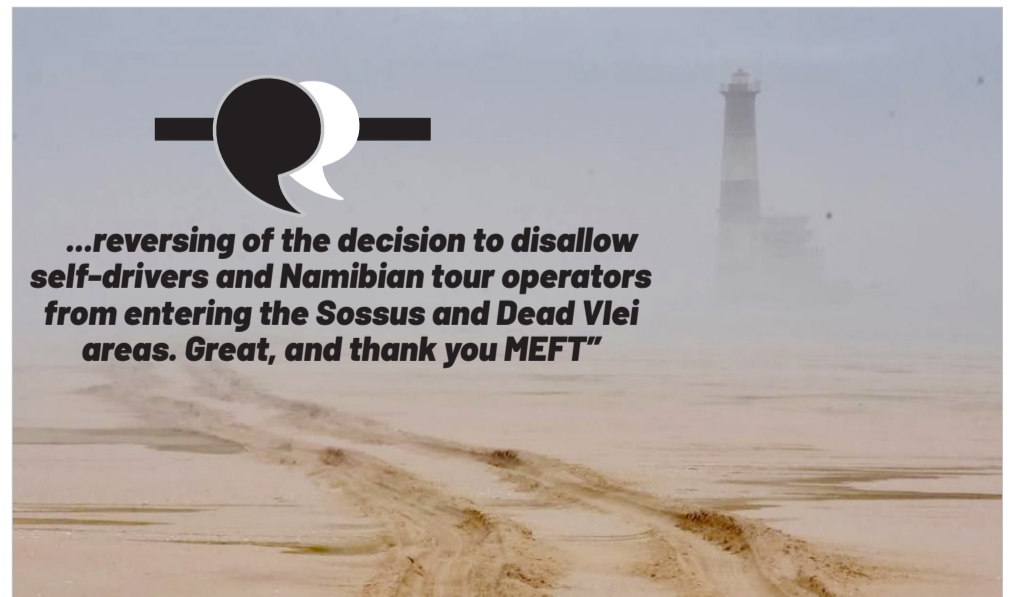
These include Grow Namibia trading

as About Adelt Sossusvlei Management, as well as tour guides employed by lodges within and around Namib-Naukluft Park who are registered with the Namibia Tourism Board and transporting their own clients.

“All visitors to Dead Vlei will be required

to use authorised shuttle services, and self-driving beyond the 2x4 parking area will not be permitted,” the ministry said.

The ministry added that the arrangement forms part of its concession agreement aimed at controlling access to the sensitive desert environment. **NBR**



...reversing of the decision to disallow self-drivers and Namibian tour operators from entering the Sossus and Dead Vlei areas. Great, and thank you MEFT”

Improve your understanding of AI, Nandi-Ndaitwah tells workers

• VERIPUAMI KANGUMINE

President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah has urged Namibian workers to improve their understanding of Artificial Intelligence, warning that failure to adapt could put jobs at risk as technology reshapes the workplace.

Speaking at the Workers' Day commemorations at Opuwo on Friday, Nandi-Ndaitwah said Artificial Intelligence has drastically changed the working environment and threatens some jobs if workers do not upskill.

"As workers, we must know that capacity building has no age limit. As long as you are able to work, you are in a better position to gain more skills. Hence, a call for inservice training," she said.

Nandi-Ndaitwah called on employers to work with workers to arrange training programmes through the number of courses available on the internet.

She said capacity building will help find solutions to different factors reshaping the workforce and impacting the country's economy, including the decline of national mining and fishing resources, global shifts, and technological changes.

She said the prosperity of the nation depends on partnership between labour



Trade unions must advocate not only for fair wages and conditions, but also for continuous learning, reskilling, and upskilling



> President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah

and employers to work towards ending the classification of the labour force into categories of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled.

"For us to drive maximum benefits from our labour, let all of us be skilled in what we are doing. In advancing this theme, we must also reaffirm a fundamental truth: the prosperity of our nation depends on a genuine partnership between labour and employers," she said.

The President called on trade unions to evolve and adapt to the new era in order to prepare workers for emerging challenges, including advocating for fair wages and continuous upskilling.

"Trade unions must advocate not only for fair wages and conditions, but also for continuous learning, reskilling, and upskilling."

"Trade unions must work with employers including the government in order to ensure that when one door closes, another is already within reach for the Namibian worker," she said.

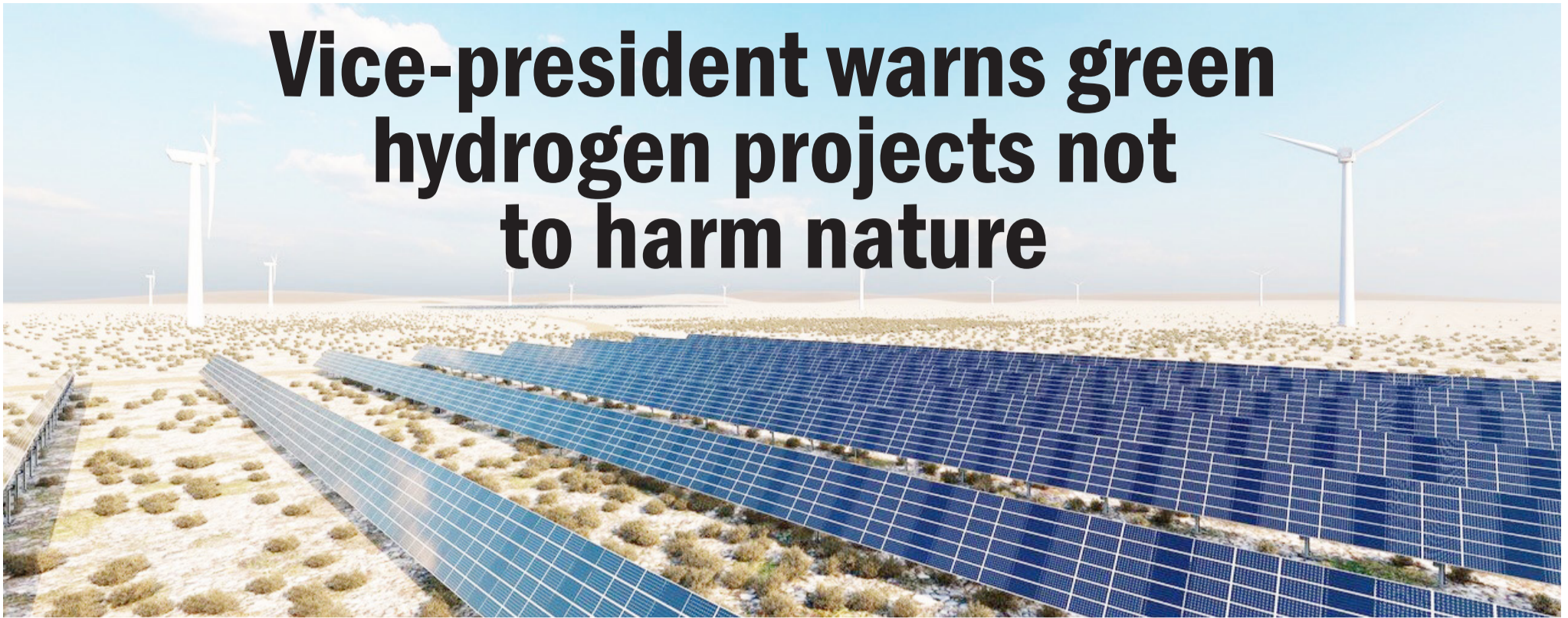
She added that employees, employers and unions should work together to equip workers with the necessary transitional skills for emerging economic opportunities.

"Our response, therefore, must not be fear, but preparation; not uncertainty, but adaptability; not decline, but renewal. The question before us is not whether change will come.

The question is whether we are prepared for the change," she said. **NBR**



Vice-president warns green hydrogen projects not to harm nature



The vice president encouraged youth in the //Karas region to engage Hyphen for opportunities available in the project



> Vice President Lucia Witbooi

• STAFF WRITER

Vice President Lucia Witbooi said green hydrogen projects being developed in the country should not come at the expense of protecting the natural environment or cultural heritage.

She made the remarks after visiting the site where Hyphen Hydrogen Energy plans to develop an N\$190 billion green ammonia project in the southern part of the country on Sunday.

The Hyphen Hydrogen Energy project is being developed near Lüderitz inside the Tsau //Khaeb National Park.

"The development we are pursuing here is designed to be responsible, sustainable, and inclusive ensuring that economic progress does not come at the expense of protecting our natural environment or cultural heritage," she said.

Witbooi said the success of the Hyphen project will be measured by its ability to change the lives of Namibians.

She said government is pleased with the progress achieved in the green hydrogen sector to drive participation by Namibians through skills development, enterprise and supplier development, and local content participation.

"This project is designed with the local community in mind, aimed at creating job opportunities, supporting local small and medium enterprises, and cultivating a workforce ready for the new green economy," she said.

The vice president encouraged youth in the //Karas region to engage Hyphen for opportunities available in the project.

"I urge for strong collaboration between all stakeholders involved in this project. Let us work in unity of purpose for the shared benefits of this development in this region and the country at large. Once again, I thank the Hyphen Hydrogen Energy and all partners for driving this project towards positioning our country as a global leader in energy transition," she said.

She said Namibia stands at the threshold of a new economic frontier.

"Our green hydrogen strategy is not an abstract policy - it is a national pathway to job creation, economic diversification and inclusive economic growth," she said.

She said government fully supports the development of the green hydrogen sector, and the Hyphen project as the flagship project and strategic catalyst within the sector.

"This project is being developed within the framework of Namibian law, under a transparent and structured agreement with the Government, and in full alignment with Namibia's national development priorities," she said. **NBR**



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"5.1% increase was driven mainly by growth in net loans and advances, short-term negotiable securities, and trading and investment securities"



Banks own assets worth **N\$188** billion in Namibia



• STAFF WRITER

Namibian banks continued to show strong performance, with total assets rising to N\$188.2 billion at the end of December 2025.

This is according to a Financial Sector Stability Report jointly released on Friday by the Bank of Namibia, and Namibia Financial Institutions Supervisory Authority (NAMFISA).

The report, released on Friday, shows that the 5.1% increase was driven mainly by growth in net loans and advances, short-term negotiable securities, and trading and investment

securities.

It also found that banks remained well capitalised, profitable and liquid during the period, with improvements in asset quality in the second half of 2025.

"Profitability rose over the same period, reflecting increases in net interest income, operating income and net trading income.

Moreover, banks' liquidity position remained adequate and well above prudential requirements, ensuring their ability to meet short-term obligations," the report said.

On debt levels, the report shows that household debt growth slowed in 2025, while corporate debt increased slightly due to higher borrowing, especially overdrafts.

Annual household indebtedness dropped to 2.1% at the end of 2025, down from 4.0% in 2024.

Corporate debt, however, rose modestly, pushing total debt to N\$198.3 billion at the end of 2025, up from N\$193.4 billion a year earlier.

The report said domestic debt increased by 6.8% to N\$53.4 billion, driven by higher credit uptake by businesses, including overdrafts, instalment and leasing credit, as well as other loans and advances.

The residential property market also remained stable in the fourth quarter of 2025, supported by stronger collateral buffers, although mortgage credit growth remained low.

House prices increased by 7.79%

year-on-year in December 2025, with the national weighted average reaching N\$1.42 million.

The report said higher house prices helped strengthen borrower equity and improved the banking sector's ability to absorb potential losses.

It added that the mortgage market remained stable, with primary mortgages continuing to dominate, reflecting a market largely driven by owner-occupied properties with lower speculative risk.

Since the October 2025 Financial Sector Stability Report, overall risks to the financial system have remained broadly unchanged, except for the macroeconomic environment, which has shown some increase. **NBR**

ANALYSIS & OPINION



EDITORIAL

One day the poor will have nothing to eat but the rich

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was a Genevan philosopher, writer, and composer.

His ideas influenced the Enlightenment - the French Revolution, and modern political and educational thoughts.

At least this is according to literature that many of us have consumed in the past decades of our time in academia.

He believed that humans are inherently good but corrupted by society, advocating for a "social contract" based on the "general will" to ensure freedom and equality.

His famous work, *The Social Contract* published in 1762, argued against the divine right of kings and for popular sovereignty, defining the relationship between individuals and society.

He was quite a mind-grIPPING philosopher of his time and indeed one that continues to shape political and social discourse in contemporary times.

Rousseau is credited for the quote "When the people shall have nothing more to eat, they will eat the rich".

The quote is often adapted as "One day the poor will have nothing to eat but the rich".

While often attributed to him to criticize wealth inequality, it was popularised after his death during the French Revolution.

Alas, his prowess in literature and influence on society did not die with him.

It still lives in modern societies with real influence on real people.

In Namibia, we seem to live this thought by the day.

Only last week President Nandi-Ndaitwah approved a new salary and allowance structure for herself, Vice President, ministers, governors, chairpersons of regional councils, management committees, members of parliament and special ministerial advisors through a government gazette.

The salary structure for Public Office Bearers commits Namibians to continue paying N\$55 560 annually for electricity and water usage by ministers and members of the executive.

The adjustments are effective 1 April 2026.

The approved structure will see Namibians paying N\$48 240 annually to foot the water and electricity bills for deputy ministers.

Tax payers will pay N\$55 560 to cover the water and electricity bills for ministers, Director of Intelligence Service, Attorney General, Director General of the National Planning Commission, President and Vice President.

The new salary structure will also see the Prime Minister receiving N\$351 175 in housing allowance taking his full salary package to N\$1 651 832 annually.

The Deputy Prime Minister's housing allowance is now pegged at N\$289 957 annually taking the overall salary structure to N\$1 349 761.

Ministers will get a housing allowance of N\$273 311 and a telephone allowance of N\$1440. The adjustments take the ministers' annual salary to N\$1 342 572.

The President also approved a salary structure that will see tax payers' paying N\$1260 for cell phone bills for the Auditor General, N\$1440 for the cell bill of the DG of National Planning Commission, N\$1080 for the cellphone bill of deputy ministers, N\$864 for cellphone bills of the Chairperson of the National Council.

This is despite the president coming into office on the back of cutting unnecessary expenditure in her tenure.

What is also striking is that the president's decision comes at a time when many Namibians simply have no access to water and electricity.

Others walk kilometres in towns to access community water points.

In such scenarios their anger is perfectly understandable.

And just like in Rousseau's literature the poor in Namibia have every good right to be angry against such pampering of the elite at the expense of the ordinary folk.

And such folklore will see the Namibian poor, contemplating the rich as their next dinner menu.

Preparing Layer Hens for the upcoming winter season



• HANKS SAISAI

As the winter season approaches, farmers raising Layer Hens for fresh egg production are encouraged to prepare key management aspects of their operations to maintain production capacity throughout the winter.

The winter season naturally affects egg production due to shorter daylight hours, which signals hens to rest. During this period, hens also require more energy to keep warm. The winter season has several adverse effects on layer hens, such as:

Reduced Egg Production: Hens naturally reduce or stop laying eggs as days shorten. Their bodies prioritize warmth and energy conservation over reproduction. Increased

Feed Consumption: This is due to the reduction in foraging options, such as bugs and greens, amongst others. Moreover, hens burn more calories to maintain body temperature.

Health Risks: Extreme cold can lead to frostbite on combs and wattles if the coop is damp or drafty.

Farmers can implement several management strategies to ensure consistent egg production during the winter months.

A first step would be to introduce artificial lights in the chicken coop to ensure the hens have access to 16 hours of light daily. The main way a hen 'senses' light is through a gland located on her head called the pineal gland.

The pineal gland is very sensitive to light and controls the majority of a hen's hormonal behaviours, including laying and broodiness.

A hen must sense sufficient light for an adequate period to trigger a hen's laying cycle.

The winter months are often characterized by shorter daylight hours, implying that a chicken's pineal gland will not sense enough light to maintain an active reproductive system through the winter months. In general, a hen needs 12 to 16 hours of light to produce eggs consistently.

In regions where winter temperatures drop to about 6 oC or lower, farmers can also install solar-powered infrared heat bulbs to maintain warm temperatures of about 28 oC in the coop.

This will aid in minimizing a hen's usage of feed to generate heat and in maintaining egg production.

The second consideration would be ensuring that the water in the chicken coop does not freeze. In many operations, dehydration is a common cause of reduced egg production.

Therefore, during the winter months, farmers are urged to ensure that the hens are provided with adequate water at room tem-



perature to ensure they remain hydrated.

This will help farmers in maintaining egg production during the winter months.

Another preparatory measure is to ensure that the coop environment is kept dry, well-ventilated and free of moisture to prevent ammonia buildup and frostbite.

Hens should be maintained in a clean, dry environment with a room temperature of about 28 oC to minimize their exposure to cold, harsh conditions. Cold coops often cause cold stress, leading to reduced egg production. Consequently, hens affected by cold stress consume more feed to generate energy and keep warm.

It is therefore advisable that farmers increase the daily recommended feed intake

for each layer hen from 110 grams to 130 grams of Layer mash during winter.

Additionally, the coops must be equipped with canvas roll-down curtains on the side to keep out cold winds and help maintain a warm environment in the coops.

If the measures above are implemented in a timely and correct approach, farmers can still maintain good egg production rates and ensure their hens remain productive throughout winter.

Finally, farmers are advised to rear the Lohmann breed of layer hens as it adapts well to the various climatic zones in Namibia.

***Hanks Saisai IS THE Technical Advisor: Crops & Poultry at Agribank**



"We are delighted to welcome Edelweiss' initial decision to serve Windhoek"

Namibia's Europe link grows with Edelweiss Air expansion



• STAFF WRITER

Edelweiss Air will ramp up its upcoming non-stop service between Zurich Airport (ZRH) and Hosea Kutako International Airport (WDH) from two to three weekly flights from 15 July 2026.

Namibia Airports Company Chief Executive Officer and Air Connect Namibia Chairperson, Bisey /Uirab, wel-

comed the announcement in a statement released last week.

"The Edelweiss announcement is a strong vote of confidence in both our country and the long-term potential of the Zürich-Windhoek service," said /Uirab.

"We are delighted to welcome Edelweiss' initial decision to serve Windhoek. The airline's decision to add an additional frequency demonstrates what we as a country can achieve through constructive collaboration with our project stakeholders and the broader community," he added.

He said the expansion strengthens Namibia's position as a globally connected destination and supports the country's shared mandate of growing air access and the economy in a sustainable and impactful way.

Edelweiss Air said it will introduce its Airbus A350-900 flights from Monday, 1 June 2026, operating twice weekly before increasing to three weekly flights from 15 July 2026.

Namibia Airports Company spokesperson Dan Kamati said the additional third weekly frequency is currently planned for Edelweiss' first season of operation on the Zürich-Windhoek route.

According to the Namibia Airports Company, the Edelweiss expansion represents another significant milestone for Namibia's international connectivity and reinforces the country's growing appeal as a premier tourism and investment destination in Southern Africa.

The increased frequency will provide travellers from Switzerland and surrounding European markets with greater flexibility, improved seat availability and more convenient itinerary options when travelling to Namibia, particularly during the July-October tourism season, the company said.

The Namibia Airports Company added that the increase in flight frequency will also support increased inbound tourism to Namibia's iconic destinations, including Etosha National Park, Sossusvlei, Swakopmund and the Skeleton Coast.

In 2023, Namibia's airports served 10 international destinations.

By mid-2026, that number is expected to increase to 17 destinations via direct or non-stop services, indicating that Namibia is close to doubling international connectivity within a three-year period.

With the addition of a third weekly frequency, the Lufthansa Group, through Edelweiss and Discover Airlines, will op-



> Bisey /Uirab

erate 13 direct weekly flights between its European gateways and Windhoek.

The group will contribute more than 152 000 annual seats, further strengthening Namibia's position as a key access point to European markets.

Air Connect Namibia continues to work with existing and prospective carriers to improve Namibia's international route network, support tourism growth, and facilitate trade and investment to strengthen the country's competitiveness as a connected Southern African gateway.

Air Connect Namibia, established in 2024 and led by the Namibia Airports Company, is a collaborative air service development initiative mandated to improve air access to the country.

Project stakeholders include the Namibia Airports Company, Namibia Tourism Board, Gondwana Collection, Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board, Walvis Bay Corridor Group and the City of Windhoek. **NBR**

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