

# NAMIBIA BUSINESS REVIEW

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## SSC board chairperson quits amid salary probe, stalled CEO recruitment



> Justice and Labour Relations Minister Filemon Wise Immanuel

• TIRI MASAWI

**T**HE Social Security Commission (SSC) board chairperson Markus Kampungu has resigned at a time when the institution is under a government-ordered investigation into salary anomalies, and a suspended recruitment process for its next executive officer.

Kampungu is understood to have stepped down during a board meeting last week.

He reportedly handed over his iPad and security access card before leaving office, bringing an abrupt end to his tenure that started in 2024.

His resignation comes as the Social Security Commission faces mounting scrutiny following a directive by Justice and Labour Relations Minister Filemon Wise Immanuel to investigate alleged irregularities in the commission's salary structure.

The minister has also halted the recruitment process for a new executive officer, one of the most senior and highest-paid positions in the state-owned enterprise sector, with an annual package exceeding N\$2 million.

Together, the salary review and stalled hiring process have placed SSC in a period of leadership uncertainty at a time when it is expected to take on expanded responsibilities, including oversight of the Public Service Medical Aid Scheme (PSEMAS) worth N\$3.9 billion a year.

In March, **Namibia Business Review** reported that President Ntumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah directed the Social Security Commission to implement the National Pension Fund, and the National Medical Benefit Fund (NMBF) by 1 April.



> Markus Kampungu

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## Govt spends N\$400m a year to upgrade VTC's education

• TIRI MASAWI

**T**HE government says it is spending about N\$400 million every year to improve standards, equipment and facilities at vocational training centres across the country.

The disclosure comes amid concerns that some Technical and Vocational Education and Training (ProTVET) students are struggling to access Namibia's

emerging green hydrogen sector and are instead being deployed to unrelated tasks during internships.

The ProTVET programme, implemented with financial and technical support from GIZ, is aimed at strengthening vocational training systems and aligning them with industry needs.

"Some of the challenges we see on the ground are that some students who are on work related industrial learning are not

*"The aim is to build a stronger pool of trainers qualified beyond Level 3"*

being trained in the actual field they are being trained in.

Some are in instances working as cleaners because of a lack of a follow up and follow through mechanism from the vocational training centres," Professor Zivayi Chiguvare, head of the Green Hydrogen Institute at the University of Namibia said last week.

Responding to the concerns, Acting Executive Director in the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and

Culture, Knox Otto Imbuwa, said the ministry is working with the Namibian Training Authority and development partners to prioritise funding for equipment in training centres.

He said equipment has been procured over the past five financial years to support training in areas such as electronics, plumbing, auto mechatronics, solar installation and hospitality.

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All processes will now be led by a new board chairperson and a new executive officer.

The recruitment process was launched on 6 March as SSC began searching for a replacement for long-serving executive officer Milka Mungunda, who has led the institution for 10 years.

The process attracted interest from several senior executives across the public and private sector.

Among those linked to the position are Government Institutions Pension Fund (GIPF) operations general manager Elvis Nashilongo, former Namibia Institute of Pathology CEO Kapena Tjombonde, former Old Mutual executive Ndangi Katoma, and businessman Ndeulipula Hamutumwa.

However, the process was suspended after the minister intervened, pending further review.

The board has since been left waiting for direction on whether the recruitment will resume, or whether the job specifications will be revised.

Both Immanuel and Kampungu did not respond to questions sent to them yesterday.

Kampungu had previously confirmed the suspension of the executive recruitment position, saying the board had not been given reasons for the decision.

"We have actually stopped that process and we are waiting for the minister to decide," he said, adding that the board remained in the dark on the next steps.

Sources familiar with the matter say the minister is considering broadening the scope of qualifications and competencies required for the executive officer role as



**"I doubt that the minister, who is a lawyer, will exert his influence in the recruitment of the Executive Officer at the Social Security Commission"**

> Ben Nangombe

part of a wider governance review of SSC.

At the centre of the unfolding developments is also a separate but related investigation into SSC's salary structure, with the government seeking to understand reported anomalies and inconsistencies in pay scales across the institution.

The review has raised internal tensions, particularly as it comes alongside the leadership vacuum created by the suspended recruitment process.

Executive Director in the Ministry of Justice and Labour Relations Ben Nan-

gombe said the matter had not yet formally reached his office.

"The board reports directly to the minister and it is the prerogative of the minister to deal with such matters. I am coming from a holiday and if there are any developments they are yet to get to me," he said.

Nangombe dismissed suggestions that the minister's actions amounted to interference in the recruitment process.

"I doubt that the minister, who is a lawyer, will exert his influence in the recruit-

ment of the Executive Officer at the Social Security Commission. In any case, the minister pronounced himself on this issue.

He acted according to the cabinet directive.

Until he has an update on the issue I am not able to give you much on this one," he said.

He added that the minister's intervention, including the salary review and suspension of recruitment, forms part of broader Cabinet-directed governance reforms at SSC. **NBR**



> Knox Otto Imbuwa

"With reference to the response above, the ministry, through the budget allocated to the Namibian Training Authority, continues to support training institutions with a dedicated annual budget that typically averages around N\$400 million," Imbuwa said.

He added that part of the allocation is used to procure equipment for training centres.

"The government allocation is supported by the VET levy to support training and to purchase training materials and build capacity of trainers in both public and

private training centres," he said.

Imbuwa acknowledged challenges faced by ProTVET graduates in accessing relevant workplace training during internships, saying the sector also depends on industry participation.

"For certain specialised training areas, the sector and the Ministry rely on relevant industries to provide training equipment and facilities to trainees in actual work environments or industrial settings."

He said this is done through Work Integrated Learning programmes, which place trainees with employers to combine classroom learning with practical exposure.

"The Work Integrated Learning approach is particularly important in sectors such as electrical engineering training, especially the high-voltage component, where it is not practical to install or simulate high-voltage infrastructure in training centres," he said.

He added that emerging sectors such as green hydrogen offer internship opportunities where specialised equipment is only available at operational plants and project sites.

Imbuwa also said vocational institutions are subject to strict quality assurance requirements by the Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA) and registration processes by the Namibian Training Authority (NTA).

"It should be noted that a significant number of trainers hold qualifications above NQF level 3, and the Ministry contin-

ues to work closely with Namibia University of Science and Technology, and the University of Namibia as well as other sister countries to continually upgrade trainers skills and qualifications."

He said the aim is to build a stronger pool of trainers qualified beyond Level 3 on the National Qualifications Framework, allowing centres to expand training up to Level 6.

Imbuwa said the ministry recently launched the National Work Integrated Learning Policy to strengthen practical workplace exposure for trainees.

According to the ministry, the policy is meant to ensure graduates leave training institutions with hands-on experience and are better prepared for the job market.

He also said the NTA is developing the Skills Development Plan 3, which identifies priority TVET skills needs for the next five years.

"This plan is developed in collaboration with industry to ensure that the limited funding available is aligned with labour market demands and the skills employers demand," he said. **NBR**



# Home Affairs defends 'slow' work permit system amid aviation complaints



> Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security Minister Lucia Lipumbu

• VERIPUAMI KANGUMINE

**T**HE Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security says the process of applying for employment permits in the aviation sector is no different from other industries and must follow established legal procedures.

In April, the aviation industry released a report saying that its sector is facing mounting complaints over delayed work permits and pilot shortages, with operators warning that aircraft are being grounded due to staffing gaps.

Speaking to *Namibia Business Review* this week, executive director Nghindina Daniel said foreign nationals seeking to work in aviation are required to apply through the same system used across all sectors.

"The public and stakeholders are advised that the process of applying for an employment permit in the aviation industry is the same as in all other sectors. Applicants are required to duly complete the prescribed application forms, which are available on the official website of the ministry under the 'Forms' section," he said.

Daniel said all employment permit applications are assessed by the Immigration Selection Board, established under Section 25 of the Immigration Control Act. He said the permits are evaluated based on qualifications, skills, training, and experience, particularly in areas where there is a shortage of suitably qualified Namibians.

"Applicants must also meet all legal re-

quirements, while aviation-related applications must comply with standards set by the Namibia Civil Aviation Authority," he said. Daniel stressed that Namibian citizens are given priority in the labour market, and applications may be declined where suitably qualified locals are available.

He said employers recruiting foreign nationals must demonstrate that local recruitment efforts have been exhausted.

This includes advertising vacancies in local newspapers and on the Namibia Integrated Employment Information System (NIEIS), and submitting evidence that no suitably qualified Namibian candidates were available, including CVs of unsuccessful applicants.

Where permits are granted, Daniel said employers are expected to contribute to national development through skills transfer initiatives, including understudy programmes for Namibian employees.

"Namibia remains open to foreign expertise that contributes to national growth and development.

At the same time, the Government remains committed to promoting employment opportunities for Namibian citi-

zens and ensuring the transfer of skills to build local capacity," he said.

## INDUSTRY RAISES ALARM OVER DELAYS

Despite the ministry's position, a report released in April by the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association of Namibia (AOPA) says the aviation sector is under severe pressure from pilot shortages and permit delays.

The report warns that operational challenges have become so serious that more than 45% of aviation companies have grounded aircraft due to staffing

shortages.

It shows that Namibia currently has 202 Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL) holders, while only 21 new CPLs have been issued since January 2024 – averaging about 10 new commercial pilots per year. On foreign recruitment, the report states that out of 58 foreign pilot and instructor work permit applications submitted over the past 24 months, 20 were rejected and 12 are still pending.

AOPA also says training capacity has been affected, with two approved training organisations reporting that

15 student pilots were unable to continue training due to instructor shortages, while 10 students requested or received refunds because of delays.

The report further notes that recruitment efforts have largely been exhausted locally, with 2,172 pilot and instructor applications received over 24 months, of which only 47 were from Namibian applicants. In contrast, 280 foreign applicants were assessed as meeting operational and safety standards. It warns that the shortages threaten safety, viability, and the industry's economic contribution.

"Local aviation companies require 60 additional pilots and 14 flight instructors to meet their basic operational baselines, and these figures represent a shortfall of 46 percent and 61 percent, respectively," the report said.

AOPA says some operators have already grounded up to 45% of their aircraft due to pilot shortages and is calling for a fast-track work permit system for qualified foreign pilots and instructors, with a proposed 30-day processing cap.

Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security Minister Lucia Lipumbu said the government is working on amendments to the Immigration Control Act to streamline visa and permit processes, including introducing a five-year visa for high-value investors and improving application efficiency.

Her remarks follow President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah's earlier call for a more efficient visa regime aimed at attracting investment and improving Namibia's competitiveness. **NBR**

*"Namibia remains open to foreign expertise that contributes to national growth and development"*

## Nasan Energy's 52 fuel stations threaten fair competition -NaCC

• STAFF WRITER

**T**HE purchase of 52 service stations by Nasan Energies from Vivo Energy Namibia and Engen Namibia has raised both competition and public interest concerns in the downstream fuel sector, the Namibian Competition Commission (NaCC) has said.

Nasan Energies applied in 2025 to acquire the network, but the deal drew objections over possible monopoly risks after concerns emerged about links between Nasan and Vivo Energy's parent company, Vitol.

In a statement issued yesterday, NaCC spokesperson Dina //Gowases said the transaction was approved, but only under strict conditions following competition risks identified during the assessment.

"This transaction raised both competition and public interest concerns in the downstream fuel sector. While the deal promotes local ownership and participation by historically disadvantaged persons, it also carries risks linked to upstream supply relationships that could lead to coordinated conduct in the market," she said.

A key concern, according to the Commission, is the involvement of Vitol and its affiliates in the supply chain.

To address these risks, the approval includes conditions such as a five-year pro-



> Dina //Gowases

hibition on sourcing petroleum products from Vitol and its affiliates, along with anti-circumvention safeguards.

The Commission has also imposed mandatory disclosure, monitoring and reporting obligations on the merging parties to ensure compliance.

"Merger transactions are required to be



notified and assessed before implementation to protect consumers from potential abuses that may arise from market dominance," Dina //Gowases said.

She said the purpose of merger regulation is to ensure that firms do not gain the ability to raise prices, reduce supply or lower service quality after a merger.

The Commission further warned that it can revoke a merger approval if it was based on misleading information or if any material conditions are not complied with. Nasan Energies said it has an intention to appeal and seek a review of the conditions with minister of industries, mines and energy Modestus Amutse. **NBR**



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## Locust outbreak spreads across Erongo, Hardap areas

• STAFF WRITER

**T**HE Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform has confirmed a desert locust outbreak in Homeb, within the Walvis Bay Rural Constituency in the Erongo Region, with swarms also spreading across parts of Hardap.

In a statement on Tuesday, ministry spokesperson Romeo Muyunda said the locusts are currently in the flying stage.

"In the Erongo region, locust activity has been observed from the Gobabeb Research Centre along the Kuiseb River, extending over more than 50 km within the Namib-Naukluft Park across both the Erongo and Hardap Regions," Muyunda said.

He said the infestation stretches from the Alt Duwisib area, about 65 km from Maltahöhe, moving southeast towards Helmeringhausen.

The outbreak has affected 15 farms, covering an estimated 300 to 400 square kilometres.

"Generally, locusts feed on vegetation, a significant number will cause destruction to grazing and natural vegetation in the infested areas. Furthermore, if not controlled they have potential to cause damage to areas under agricultural production such as crop fields and horticulture," Muyunda said.

The ministry said the swarms have an estimated population of between 5

000 and 10 000.

Muyunda said control operations are under way, with spraying teams deployed using vehicle-mounted sprayers to contain the spread.

He said surveillance has been strengthened, alongside rapid reporting systems involving farmers and local communities.

"Furthermore, the Ministry is currently engaging relevant stakeholders, including the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, to facilitate coordinated control measures, particularly within protected areas where access authorisation is required," Muyunda said.

He urged farmers and the public to maintain regular surveillance and report sightings immediately to the nearest Directorate of Agricultural Production, Extension and Engineering Services office.

According to Muyunda, early detection and rapid response remain critical while the locusts are still in the hopper stage, as control becomes more difficult once they are airborne.

"The Ministry is committed to containing the outbreak and minimising further damage to grazing resources, horticulture, and crop production.

The locusts are destroying grazing and vegetation and may become a threat to horticulture and crop production once they reach areas under cultivation if not urgently contained," he said. **NBR**

## Namibia must rethink its economic model - Aupindi



**"Export of raw materials without value addition is costing the country jobs and industrial growth"**

> Tobie Aupindi

• STAFF WRITER

**PARLIAMENTARY** Standing Committee on Natural Resources chairperson Tobie Aupindi says Namibia must urgently change how it manages its raw materials or risk missing a major economic opportunity.

Speaking at a capacity building workshop with stakeholders of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Natural Resources at Swakopmund last week, Aupindi called for stronger local ownership, more beneficiation, and a shift away from exporting raw minerals.

Aupindi said Namibia's wealth has not translated into broad-based prosperity.

"Namibia stands at a defining moment in its history. Our country is blessed beyond measure with natural wealth that many nations can only dream of," he said.

He questioned why inequality and poverty persist despite the country's resource endowment.

"Why are so many Namibians still struggling in the midst of such wealth? Why do unemployment, poverty, and inequality

continue to affect our people while billions of dollars' worth of resources leave our country every year?"

He said Namibia must rethink its economic model.

"Freedom without economic dignity is an unfinished liberation."

Aupindi argued that continued export of raw materials without value addition is costing the country jobs and industrial growth.

"Every tonne of lithium exported without local processing represents lost factories, lost employment opportunities, and lost industrial growth. Every unprocessed diamond exported means another missed opportunity for local manufacturing, polishing, jewellery production, and skills development," he said.

He said Namibians must play a central role in the economy.

"Namibians must not remain spectators in their own economy. The wealth beneath our soil belongs first and foremost to the people of Namibia."

Aupindi also proposed that the gov-

ernment consider receiving royalties in physical commodities such as gold, uranium or lithium.

"I suggested that the government should also receive dividends in physical commodities such as gold, uranium, or lithium."

He said this could help build strategic reserves to protect the economy from global shocks.

"I can say that the government has royalty interest and a shareholding interest in that same license, so the government must take its royalty in physical commodities."

On oil and gas, he warned of risks of mismanagement if Namibia fails to prepare properly.

"History teaches us that many resource-rich countries have suffered from what economists call the 'resource curse' – where natural wealth leads not to prosperity, but to corruption, inequality, unemployment, environmental damage, and economic dependency," said Aupindi.

He called for investment in skills and local capacity.

"There is therefore a concern about the shortage of local expertise in highly technical industries such as petroleum engineering, geology, marine operations, refining, and energy infrastructure."

Aupindi urged the creation of a national gas company.

"The government must establish a national gas company that would help Na-

mibia retain strategic control over its energy future."

He said resource governance must be transparent and people-centred.

"Corruption, secrecy, and elite capture pose serious threats to Namibia's future prosperity."

Aupindi added that Namibia's natural wealth must ultimately improve the lives of citizens.

"At the heart of all these proposals lies one central belief – that Namibia's natural resources must improve the lives of ordinary Namibians."

Erongo Governor Nathalia /Goagoses, speaking at the same workshop, also called for faster action on resource governance reforms.

"Stakeholders must move beyond lengthy discussions and focus on implementation. The time for prolonged discussions and studies has passed."

She urged stakeholders to fast-track dialogue and ensure it produces real outcomes.

"There must be a greater focus on communities facing hardship. Resource management must translate into better living conditions."

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Natural Resources must remain mindful of communities living under harsh conditions," /Goagoses said.

She said sustainable management of natural resources must ultimately improve livelihoods and restore dignity for all Namibians. **NBR**



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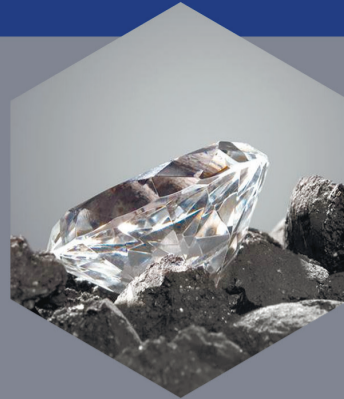
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## Namibia looks for green hydrogen buyers to create 30 000 jobs



• STAFF WRITER

**N**AMIBIA is intensifying efforts to attract green hydrogen buyers and investors as the country pushes to turn its ambitious green industrialisation plans into jobs and economic growth.

Speaking at the World Hydrogen Summit in the Netherlands this week, National Planning Commission Director General Kaire Mbuende urged international companies and offtakers to partner with Namibia in developing its green hydrogen industry.

Mbuende said Namibia wants investors and buyers to support the production of green hydrogen and related products in the country, with the government hoping the sector could create 30 000 green jobs by 2030.

"We don't look at green hydrogen as a narrow energy project. It is at the core of our development agenda as a new frontier of growth and development," he said.

His remarks come as Namibia faces growing pressure to secure long-term buyers for its planned green hydrogen exports amid concerns over production costs and the country's distance from major export markets in Europe.

An Oxford University study cited by The Namibian last year warned that countries in North Africa and the Middle East could have a competitive advantage over Namibia because they are closer to Europe, which is expected to be one of the main markets for green hydrogen imports.

The study noted that shorter shipping distances and lower transport costs could make it easier for countries such as Morocco and Egypt to compete in the emerging market.

It further estimated that hydrogen production costs at the proposed Hyphen project could range between €5.43 (N\$110) and €9.21 (N\$190) per kilogramme, while overall project development costs were projected to rise from more than N\$100 billion to around N\$220 billion.

Despite these concerns, project developers and government officials maintain that Namibia remains among the world's most competitive locations

for green hydrogen production because of its strong solar and wind resources.

Mbuende said Namibia has identified several industries linked to green hydrogen that could attract investment and create value locally. These include solar panel manufacturing, wind turbine manufacturing, lithium refining, synthetic fuels production and hot briquetted iron production.

According to him, Namibia has already put policies and programmes in place to support the industry and attract investor confidence.

He said the country developed the Green Hydrogen and Derivatives Strategy to guide the sector, while the Green

Industrialisation Blueprint launched in 2024 aligns hydrogen projects with industrial development plans.

"We have established the Namibia Green Hydrogen Programme to support the emerging ecosystem and promote investor confidence," he said.

Mbuende said Namibia has already moved beyond the planning stage, with several projects currently under development.

"Today, Namibia has nine green industrial projects at different stages of development. These include the Daures Green Hydrogen Project, Cleanergy Solutions Namibia, Hyphen Hydrogen Energy, Envision-Zhero Ammonia Plant, Hydrogen de France, and Hylron Os-hivelam," he said.

He also stressed the importance of infrastructure such as ports, roads, rail, water systems and electricity networks in supporting the sector and attracting international buyers.

"No green hydrogen economy can emerge without ports, transmission systems, water infrastructure, roads, rail, storage, industrial land and efficient logistics," he said.

Mbuende said Walvis Bay and Lüderitz are central to Namibia's green hydrogen plans, with Walvis Bay expected to serve as a logistics hub for Southern Africa and Lüderitz playing a key role in the southern hydrogen corridor.

He added that Namibia has already signed cooperation agreements with major European ports to help position the country as a future green hydrogen export hub. **NBR**



**"European investors that mining remains one of the pillars of Namibia's economy"**



# ANALYSIS & OPINION



EDITORIAL

## The more things change, the more they remain the same

**T**HE Social Security Commission is a vital institution in safeguarding the safety nets for all Namibians.

It is even getting more vital now that the government has taken the decision to have the commission running the affairs of the universal health care fund that will guarantee every Namibian quality health care.

Not only does the commission serve as the backbone of the country's social well being but it also plays a big role in assisting communities with financial support. Recently the commission announced its scheme where communities and schools can access up to N\$100 000 in small loans for development. This was welcomed by many.

One would love to see such a trajectory where the commission continues till infinity.

Alas the more things change, the more they remain the same.

This week, we are greeted by news that the board chairperson of the commission has thrown in the towel. Reasons point to frustration over political interference in internal processes.

Perhaps this is not a challenge that faces the commission alone but several other parastatals. It is a cancer that many who believe in corporate governance would like to see weeded out of the state owned enterprises sector. The sector is vital for economic growth and efficient service delivery.

Interference in Namibian parastatals, real or perceived, undermines corporate governance, drives financial instability, and compromises service delivery.

It leads to the appointment of unqualified loyalists, stifles operational efficiency, and drains state resources through corruption.

This ultimately betrays the public trust and affects the country's socioeconomic development.

When line ministries and political figures bypass established recruitment processes, state-owned enterprises are frequently saddled with inexperienced or politically motivated boards and executives.

Again if the line is not drawn between the board's responsibilities and the minister's influence, corporate governance policies are compromised and perennial challenges become the order of the day.

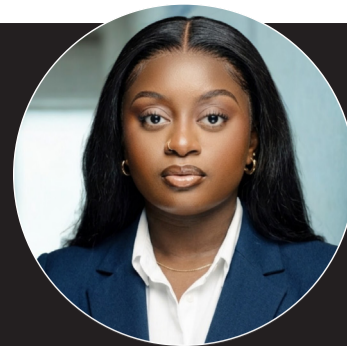
Political blatant meddling prevents commercial entities from operating on pure business principles. Consequently, meritocracy is abandoned in favor of patronage, which alienates skilled professionals and demoralises existing staff.

Furthermore, interference in procurement boards and tender allocations paves the way for systemic corruption. Political actors often use their influence to steer lucrative contracts toward favored individuals or foreign entities. This compromises transparency, flouts regulatory compliance, and inflates costs, resulting in the massive misappropriation of funds that could otherwise be used for essential public services.

Ultimately, this persistent political control creates a culture of non-accountability, as parastatals expect government bailouts rather than facing market discipline. When key institutions are used as political playthings rather than independent drivers of the national economy, it chases away foreign investment, exacerbates national debt, and places a heavy, unsustainable burden on the Namibian taxpayer.



**"This ultimately betrays the public trust and affects the country's socioeconomic development"**



## Outsmarting Rental Scammers ...What Every Namibian Home Seeker Should Know

• Aisha Shipanga

**F**INDING a place to rent in Namibia has become stressful enough on its own.

Rent is expensive, good places are taken quickly, and many people are urgently looking for accommodation.

Unfortunately, scammers know this too, and they are using people's desperation to steal money through fake rental listings and dishonest "rental finder" schemes.

Recently, The Namibian reported that police are seeing more cases of rental scams happening through Facebook and WhatsApp.

Some people have lost thousands of dollars after paying deposits for houses or apartments that either did not exist or were never actually available for rent.

What makes these scams dangerous is how believable they can look. Most scammers use attractive photos of modern apartments or beautiful homes and advertise them for prices that immediately grab attention.

Usually the rent is much cheaper than what you would normally find in areas like Kleine Kuppe, Eros, or Klein Windhoek. The goal is to make people panic and rush before thinking carefully.

One thing I always tell people is this: never pay money before viewing a property in person and signing a lease agreement.

No matter how convincing someone sounds, no matter how urgent the situation is, you should never send a deposit before physically seeing the place yourself. Many scammers will claim they are "out of town," "busy at work," or "currently overseas," and will ask you to secure the place first with payment. That is one of the biggest red flags.

Another mistake many people make is trusting social media too quickly. Just because someone has a Facebook page, followers, or WhatsApp business account does not automatically mean they are legitimate. Scammers have become very smart online. Some even steal real property photos from estate agency pages and repost them as their own listings.

It is also important to pay attention to pressure tactics. Scammers like creating urgency because they do not want you to think too much or ask too many questions. They will say things like, "There are many people interested," or "If you don't pay today, the place is gone." A legitimate landlord or agent will understand if you want time to inspect the property properly and

go through the agreement first.

Another tip is to verify whether the person advertising the property is actually registered. In Namibia, estate agents and people handling rentals professionally are supposed to be registered with the relevant authorities. If someone cannot provide proper business details or refuses to identify themselves clearly, you should be cautious.

People should also be careful with payment methods. If somebody only wants cash payments, e-wallet transfers, or payments into personal accounts without a quotation or paperwork, that should immediately raise concern. Proper rental transactions should always include financial documentation and a written agreement.

A lot of people also overlook small warning signs during communication. Sometimes scammers avoid phone calls completely and only want to text. Others become aggressive or defensive when asked simple questions about the property. If somebody gets irritated because you asked to view the place first, that is already telling you something.

Students and young professionals are especially vulnerable to these scams because they are often under pressure to find accommodation quickly before work or school starts. In many cases, people are desperate and scared of losing an opportunity, which is exactly what scammers rely on.

One useful thing people can also do is search the property photos online. Some scammers steal pictures from old listings or websites. A quick reverse image search can sometimes reveal that the same photos are being used somewhere else under a completely different name or location.

At the end of the day, rental scams are successful because scammers know how emotional the housing situation has become. When someone urgently needs a place to stay, it is easy to ignore warning signs and make rushed decisions.

The best way to protect yourself is to slow down, ask questions, verify information, and trust your instincts. If something feels suspicious or too good to be true, it probably is.

Finding a home should be an exciting step, not a traumatic financial lesson. The more informed people become about rental scams, the harder it will be for scammers to continue taking advantage of Namibians trying to find a safe place to live.

**\*Aisha Shipanga is a Real Estate Agent.**

# Dangote to set up in Namibia before year ends



*"Dangote Industries group coming into the Namibian market will be beneficial through employment creation, security of fuel supply not only for the locals but for the SADC region at large"*



• Eric Mhunduru

**T**HE minister of industries, mines and energy, Modestus Amutse says they expect the Dangote Industries group to install fuel injection pipes at their site in Walvis Bay, before the end of this year.

In an interview with **Future Media's business** report last week, Amutse said they are busy reviewing certain Dangote Industries group agreements, regarding

the connection to the national jetty.

He said they will have pipes that will be used to inject fuel from their vessels to their storage facility.

"I should say, I have observed and I have engaged with them several times. We had meetings, planning the way forward and then briefing the ministry as to the progress, and they are doing well."

"Actually, they have already acquired the land that they needed to start put-

ting up the infrastructure. And where we are now, we are busy reviewing certain agreements with them regarding the connection to our national jetty, because they have to have pipes that would be used to inject fuel from the vessels to their storage facility and so on."

"It is quite a lengthy process, but the good of it is that we are understanding each other and the progress so far, I am satisfied with."

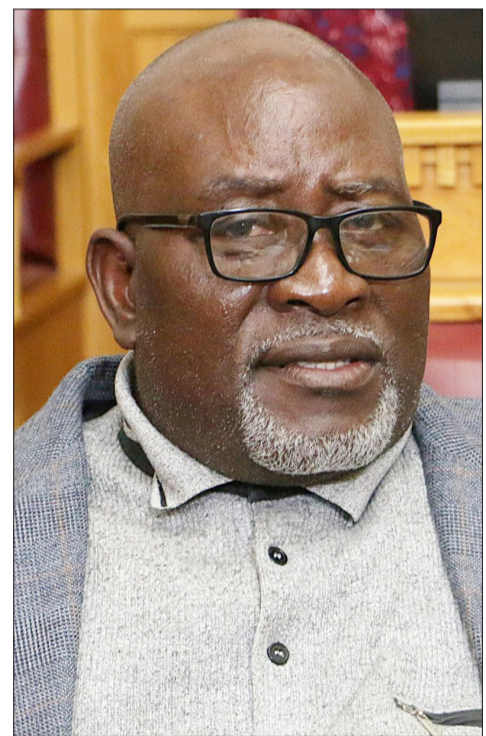
"Actually, this year, we may already see maybe the first 10 or 2 or 3 being installed at their site, because the site was the most important thing, but now they are done with it. So, it's a matter of, and they have already set up a calendar of events. I see progress with those timeframes," said Amutse.

He said the Dangote Industries group coming into the Namibian market will be beneficial through employment creation, security of fuel supply not only for the locals but for the SADC region at large.

However, Amutse could neither disclose the supply model the oil company will implement once operational nor the extent its presence will have on the regional fuel prices.

"What it means to the economy of Namibia is in many folds and one of it being employment creation, but one of it also being to an extent attending to the security of fuel supply, but I, at the moment, cannot anticipate the prices because like I say, prices are something that are informed by the market.

"Depending on how the market will be at that stage, to determine whether the price of fuel will become lower than now or increase, I am not sure, but the anticipation is that, of course, once they are here, they will eventually supply SADC



**> Minister of industries, mines and energy, Modestus Amutse**

because the focus of Dangote is not necessarily Namibia.

"It is more about SADC. The supply model will be designed once they have established themselves in the Republic of Namibia, which model we will inform the public about, but at the moment, I think it is too premature if we have to go into detail about how they will trade at which price and so on because the focus now is them establishing themselves," he said.

The Dangote Industries group announced its intentions to invest about N\$2.4 billion to establish a tank farm at Walvis Bay, primarily for the regional market. \* **FUTURE MEDIA**

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