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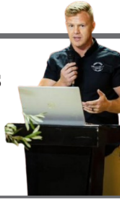

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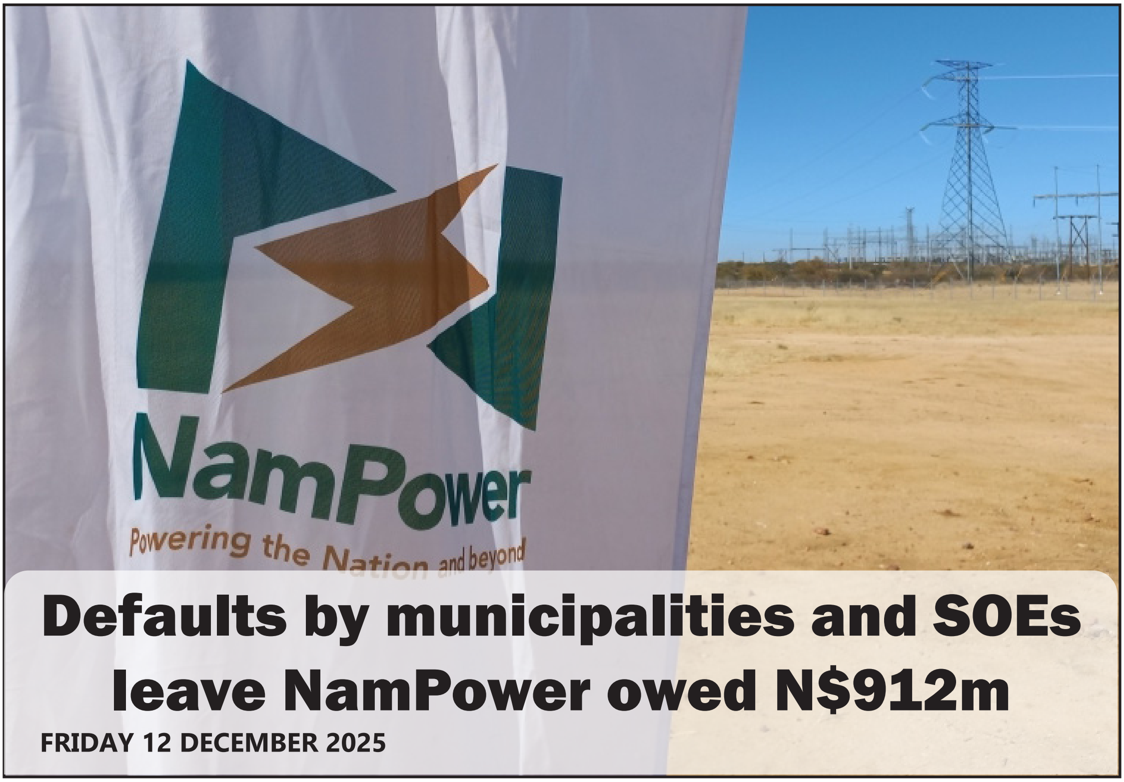


Defaults by municipalities and SOEs leave NamPower owed N$912m

FRIDAY 12 DECEMBER 2025

MAIN STORY

Defaults by municipalities and SOEs leave NamPower owed N$912m

... Rehoboth faces risk of disconnection

Several local authorities, state-owned enterprises and regional electricity distributors have defaulted on repayment arrangements with NamPower, leaving the national power utility owed a total of N$912 million.

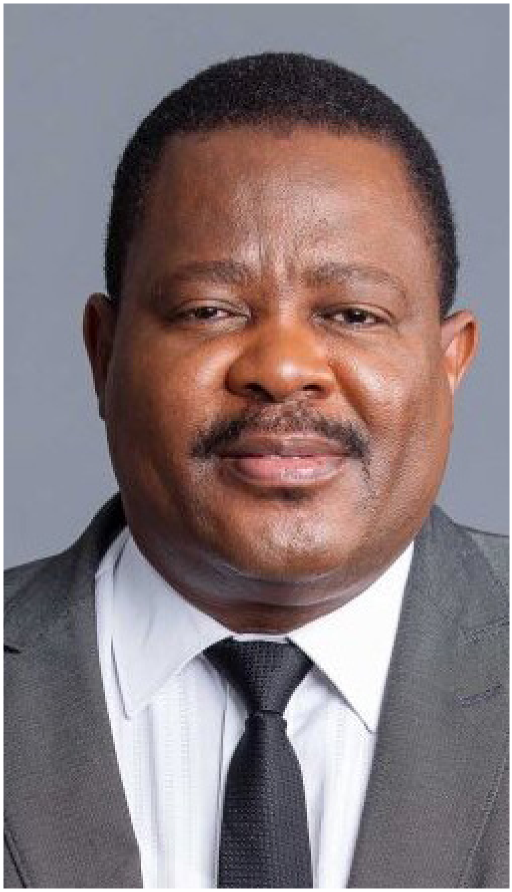
Electricity Control Board chief executive Robert Kahimise said local authorities and state-owned enterprises in breach of repayment agreements account for N$557 million of the outstanding debt as at 25 November 2025.

"NamPower is currently owed a total of N$912 million across various entities. Local authorities and state-owned enterprises in breach of repayment arrangements account for N$557 million as at 25 November 2025," Kahimise said.

Mariental Municipality according to the ECB is the largest defaulter, with N$233.29 million outstanding.

It is followed by Gobabis Municipality, which owes N$70.2 million, Karasburg Municipality with N$59 million, Aranos Town Council with N$58 million, Maltahöhe Village Council with N$34 million, Gibeon Village Council with N$24 million and Bethanie Village Council with N$21 million.

Kahimise said local authorities operating under bulk prepayment arrangements



collectively owe a further N$210 million.

He highlighted Rehoboth Town Council

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as a key concern, noting that it has been on a bulk prepayment system since May 2024 but currently carries a negative balance of N$12 million, a situation that could result in immediate electricity supply disruptions.

He said an additional N$72 million is owed by local authorities, regional councils, government offices, regional electricity distributors and state-owned enterprises that do not have formal repayment arrangements. Among the largest amounts in this category are Lüderitz Town Council with N$22 million, Keetmanshoop Municipality with N$20 million and the ǁKharas Regional Council with N$10 million.

Kahimise also said NamPower is owed N$70 million by Angola's utility company, RNT, reflecting cross-border exposure within the Southern African electricity market.

"We mentioned it even before. Some of them are buying at a dollar, as an example, and selling at 80 cents. It should not be viable business. These are the challenges we are facing, and that risk contributed to these debts, which are also indirectly affecting and impeding the execution of the national mandate," he said.

He said many local authorities have already migrated to prepaid electricity systems, with future supply arrangements expected to follow the same model. Kahimise said Mariental is next in line to be placed on a prepayment system, if it has not already been moved to that regime.

He explained that the prepayment system ensures payments are made directly at the intake point, guaranteeing that the supplier is paid. He warned that if councils fail to load sufficient electricity units, the system will automatically switch off, describing this as a worst-case scenario.

Maranatha Poultry targets N$250m expansion to lift output beyond 800 tonnes

Maranatha Poultry, a recent entrant into the Namibian poultry industry, and its partners plan to invest more than N$250 million to expand production capacity to above 800 tonnes a month.

Managing Director Shaun Esterhuizen said the programme includes upgrades to the hatchery, abattoir and farming operations, with construction expected to be completed in 2026.

He said current output stands at between 200 and 250 tonnes a month, with an interim target of 400 tonnes before capacity is doubled. While the value chain is integrated from farms to the abattoir, the slaughter facility is still operating below its design capacity.

Esterhuizen said reaching 400 tonnes a month will depend on restoring full utilisation at the abattoir and aligning supply from the hatchery and growers. He noted that all parts of the value chain will require synchronised upgrades before further gains can be achieved.

He said the expansion will be implemented in phases, starting with upgrades to the hatchery, followed by improvements to the abattoir to match higher incoming volumes. Only once these steps are completed will output increase towards the targeted 800 tonnes a month.

"At the moment every entity in the chain needs to be upgraded for us to move forward, because the hatchery still needs to supply the volumes that allow the abattoir to run at the level it was built for. That is why we are doing the work in phases, so each part can support the next," Esterhuizen said.

He said the estimated capital requirement for the combined upgrades is between N$250 million and N$300 million.

The investment will cover construction work, completion of primary facilities and improvements to the abattoir to expand slaughtering capacity. Esterhuizen added that Maranatha's sales arm will also require additional trucks and transport capacity to manage higher distribution volumes.

He said regulatory issues were addressed after the company took over the abattoir, with all licensing and fitness requirements now compliant.

"Retail access and potential export routes will only follow once the upgraded facility meets the required technical and hygiene specifications. We had to fix quite a lot when we took over the abattoir to bring everything back to standard, because without those basics in place we cannot even consider moving into retail or exports. The upgrade is what will allow us to meet those higher specifications," Esterhuizen said.

Head of Marketing and Sales Theresa Greeff said more than 1,800 tonnes of poultry have been supplied to the local market to date, supported by more than 120 employees across the value chain.

She said farmers based in Stampriet remain key partners in sustaining production and ensuring consistent quality.

Greeff said Maranatha is currently the third-largest poultry supplier in Namibia and is preparing to expand its presence into the retail market as part of the next phase of growth.

She added that interest is emerging from regional buyers, including a potential partner seeking to introduce the brand into the Democratic Republic of the Congo, although the immediate focus remains on national coverage.

"Our farmers in Stampriet carry a heavy load for us, because farming in Namibia is not easy. Working closely with them is what keeps our production strong as we prepare to expand into more towns and more stores, which is the direction we are moving in during the next phase of our plan," Greeff said.

Why an introduction of a stronger gambling tax is critical for Namibia's long-term prosperity and social wellbeing

By Prime Shaapopi

> **"For years, gambling, in its many forms, has quietly eroded the wellbeing of countless families.**

The proverb "actions speak louder than words" rings particularly true for national policies structured to reform destructive social norms and behaviours.

History has revealed that progress cannot be achieved through speeches, conferences or awareness campaigns alone.

There are moments in a country's development when government must simply act, especially in inherently contentious industries like that of gambling, where the effects ripple far beyond personal choice, toppling into the proliferation of money-laundering networks and inevitably resulting in a viscerally strained financial system and overburdened regulatory network.

Namibia stands at a critical moment in its social and economic trajectory, where the risks of a delayed policy response to the social implications of gambling will far outweigh any potential discomfort concomitant with bold reform.

For years, gambling, in its many forms, has quietly eroded the wellbeing of countless families. Children have seen the hopes of their bright futures dimmed by the glaring lights of the casino halls their parents went to tirelessly and frequent, household savings have been swallowed by sport betting and a plethora of online gambling platforms have instantly destroyed the pensions earned over lifetimes.

Although often rooted in legitimate socio-economic pressures, the rise in gambling culture has planted a widespread reliance on a quick fix but highly volatile coping mechanism.

Perhaps it is now opportune for Namibia to confront the reality so neatly swept under the nation's rug with a decisive fiscal response: the introduction of a significantly higher gambling tax, both on operators and on winnings and to have this set within a framework that prioritises national welfare over dangerous private enrichment.

In many Namibian communities, gambling has become a silent disruptor and has contributed to decades of destruction, broken homes, escalating personal debt and the neglect of children who depend on their parents for stability.

The damage is not only emotional but also tears deep into the pockets of the countries' economics too. Money that should support households, stimulate productive local business activity or be saved for emergencies is instead funnelled into machines and betting platforms owned by wealthy operators; many of whom contribute relatively little to national development when compared to the social cost they impose.

A higher tax regime, ranging between 45% and 50% on both the profits of gambling operators and the winnings earned by gamblers might be a viable response that would both help to compensate for social damage and further act as a deterrent to excessive destructive gambling behaviour.

Such a tax is consistent with global best practices in sectors that create social harm, similar to excise duties on tobacco and alcohol (sin taxes).

Namibia, like many African countries, faces the dual challenge of needing to raise public revenue while also guiding citizens toward economic activities that generate long-term national value.

A substantial gambling tax could provide the country with new fiscal funds that could be allocated toward education, child welfare programmes, mental-health support services and community-based initiatives that counter the effects of gambling addiction.

At the same time, it would send a strong message that the Namibian government is unwilling to subsidise an industry whose profits depend on the financial vulnerability of its people.

Moreover, this policy could reshape behavioural patterns across society. By increasing the financial disincentive attached to gambling, Namibia would encourage its citizens to redirect their time and resources into more productive ventures.

Instead of relying on chance to create wealth, individuals may be pushed to pursue entrepreneurship, innovation and participation in sectors that contribute to GDP growth. In steering citizens away from destructive gambling habits, it is equally important to highlight where their money should possibly be going into savings and long-term investments that build real financial security.

Financial institutions such as Old Mutual, Allan Gray, PSG Wealth, Sanlam, Stanlib or the country's commercial banks offer avenues for ordinary people to grow their wealth slowly, steadily and safely.

Yet many Namibians remain trapped in the belief and mindset that saving or investing is reserved only for those with "millions," a misconception that continues to impoverish households while gambling strips them of the little they have.

Even small, consistent contributions can compound into meaningful stability over time, giving families a future far more predictable, secure and dignified than anything promised by a slot machine or betting slip.

Redirecting money from chance-based losses into regulated, transparent financial products is not only a personal financial decision, but more importantly, a national corrective measure against the culture of quick-wins that has harmed families for years.

This is especially important for a young population that must be oriented toward industries that generate employment and sustainable income. A culture of hard work, skill-building and real economic contribution should not be overshadowed by the grand illusions of fast money such as for lack of a better word "FOREX" and "OkaBetting".

The functional efficiency of NAMRA in recent years provides a strong institutional foundation for implementing this policy effectively. With improved revenue administration, better enforcement capacity and growing public trust in the tax system, Namibia is well-positioned to ore adequately regulate the gambling sector.

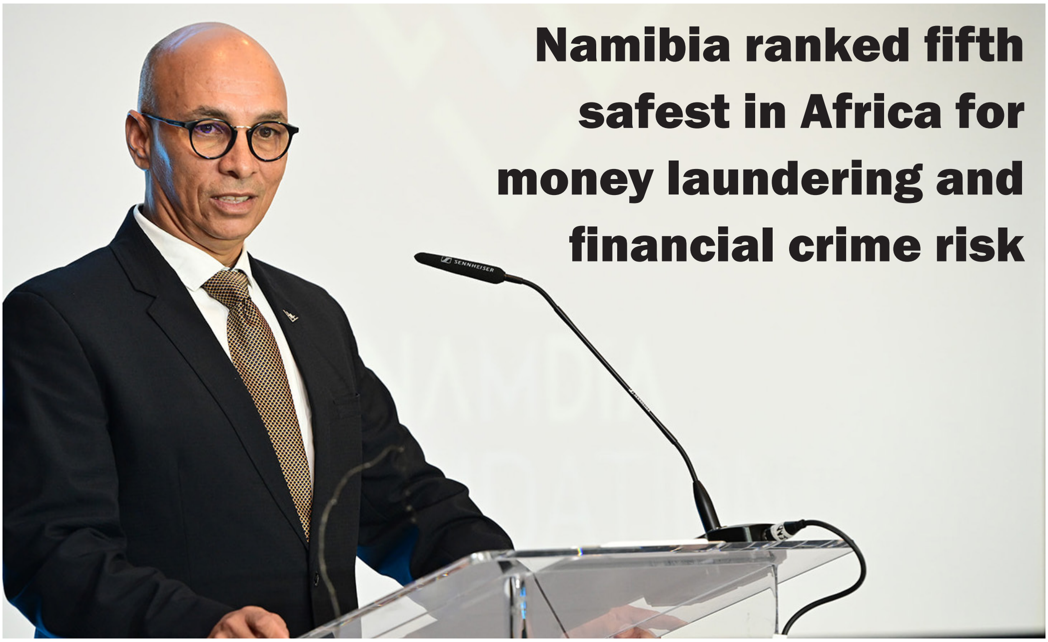
NAMRA could ensure that operators comply fully with their tax obligations, prevent tax leakage, monitor winnings and close loopholes that currently allow gambling-related revenue to escape appropriate taxation. This would ensure that gambling, where it continues to exist, pays its fair share to the nation whose citizens it exploits.

Introducing a higher tax on gambling is not merely a revenue-raising measure; it is a moral and developmental stance. Namibia must protect its families, reinforce its social fabric and prevent the long-term erosion of human potential caused by unchecked gambling addiction.

This policy would help restore financial discipline in households, prioritise the wellbeing of children (upon whose shoulders the future of the country rests) and ensure that national resources are not quietly drained into an industry that gives back little to nothing in the grander scheme of the country's development.

Ultimately, Namibia remains desperate for this reform not because it is punitive but because it is responsible. A higher gambling tax would slowly realign national priorities toward productive growth, protect vulnerable communities and ensure that economic activity within the country contributes to building a resilient and prosperous future for a younger generation population.

** Prime N.K Shaapopi CA(Nam) is a Namibian professional with an interest in taxation, strategies, policy reforms and finance, global economic integration, African economic diversification and the industrialisation of African and global markets and economies. The views and opinions expressed in this article are solely his own and he writes in his personal capacity.*



Namibia ranked fifth safest in Africa for money laundering and financial crime risk

Namibia has been ranked the fifth safest country in Africa, placing it among those with the lowest exposure to money laundering and financial crime risks on the continent, according to the 2025 Basel Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Financial Crime Risk Index.

The Basel AML Index, an independent assessment that measures national vulnerability to financial crime, shows steady improvement by Namibia over the past three years. The country's score declined from 5.09 in 2023 to 4.89 in 2024, and further to 4.78 in 2025, on a scale where lower scores indicate stronger resilience and reduced risk exposure.

"The Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC) is pleased to announce Namibia's continued progress in strengthening its defences against money laundering and financial crime, as reflected in the 2025 Basel Anti-Money Laundering and Financial Crime Risk Index Score," said FIC Director Bryan Eiseb.

According to the FIC, the improved ranking directly supports Namibia's National Development Plan 6 (NDP6) target of reducing illicit financial flows from 9% of GDP in 2024 to 5% by 2030.

Eiseb said that while the progress is significant, continued vigilance remains essential, particularly in improving beneficial ownership transparency, strengthening anti-money laundering and counter-financing of terrorism effectiveness, and completing a comprehensive National Risk Assessment in 2026.

"This sustained improvement affirms Namibia's commitment to safeguarding the integrity of its financial system. It also reflects the joint efforts of supervisory bodies, law enforcement agencies, accountable and reporting institutions, and policymakers who continue to strengthen AML/CFT compliance, coordination and enforcement. The reforms undertaken across the national AML/CFT ecosystem are producing measurable, internationally recognised results," he said.

Be wise enough to listen to what the person Is not saying

By Junias Erasmus

> A friend may smile, but the tightness in their expression whispers of unspoken struggles.

In every workplace, home, or social space, communication is often understood as the exchange of spoken words.

Yet, the most powerful messages are rarely found in what people say, they are hidden in pauses, hesitations, body language, tone, and the emotional silences between sentences.

To be truly wise, we must learn to listen not just with our ears, but with our awareness, empathy, and emotional intelligence.

"Be wise enough to listen to what the person is not saying" is more than advice; it is a leadership principle, a relationship builder, and a tool for personal growth.

In any interaction, people rarely express the full weight of their thoughts or feelings. A colleague might say "I'm fine," while their voice reveals exhaustion. An employee may not openly admit they are overwhelmed, yet their declining productivity tells a different story.

A friend may smile, but the tightness in their expression whispers of unspoken struggles. Wisdom lies in observing these subtle cues and responding with understanding rather than assumptions.

Listening beyond words requires emotional maturity, the ability to read the emotional environment, sense discomfort, and recognise when something deeper is being communicated indirectly.

Great leaders, parents, mentors, and partners are those who listen with their eyes and intuition as much as with their ears. They notice the tone behind the message and the expression behind the smile.

They understand that silence is not emptiness, but information that requires patience and curiosity.

In professional settings, this skill becomes particularly important. Many employees fear expressing vulnerability, concerns, or dissatisfaction. For example, a team member may not openly admit they need help with a project, but missed deadlines or withdrawn behaviour may indicate the need for support.

Leaders who pay attention to what is not said can intervene early, preventing burnout, conflict, or disengagement. They build trust because people feel understood without the need to struggle for words.

Similarly, in personal relationships, communication often goes beyond speech. People express love, frustration, fear, or disappointment in subtle ways: changed routines, emotional distance, delayed responses, or small gestures that reveal more than any explanation could.

By listening to what remains unspoken, we show deeper care. We acknowledge not just the words, but the humanity behind them.

Being wise enough to listen to the unsaid is not about assuming or reading too much into everything.

It is about approaching others with compassion, curiosity, and a willingness to understand. It means asking gentle questions like, "Are you truly okay?" or offering space for someone to express themselves when they are ready.

It is about recognising the signals of someone who needs encouragement, a break, or simply a listening ear.

This type of listening strengthens relationships because it communicates, "I see you. I hear you. You matter." It builds work environments where people feel psychologically safe, free to grow, make mistakes, and communicate honestly.

It creates families where emotional needs are noticed and supported. It helps communities become more connected, caring, and resilient.

Wisdom is not found in speaking the most, but in understanding the most. When we learn to listen beneath the surface, we become better leaders, better partners, and better human beings.

We learn to respond with empathy instead of judgment, patience instead of pressure, and support instead of silence.

The world becomes a kinder place when more of us are willing to hear what others struggle to say.

So, strive to be that wise individual, the one who listens to the gentle signals, the one who notices the quiet changes, the one who cares enough to understand the silent stories. Sometimes the words people cannot speak are the ones they need you to hear the most.

Junias Erasmus works in the Financial Sector. He is a Management Scientist and Operational Researcher, a Strategic Scholar & a Motivational Speaker. This article is written in his personal capacity. For inquiries, contact him at Junias99@gmail.com

Old Mutual appoints Johannes Abraham as Group Assurance and Forensics Manager

Old Mutual Namibia has appointed Johannes Abraham as its new Group Assurance and Forensics Manager within the Corporate Governance team.

Abraham joins the insurer from Letshego Holdings Namibia, where he served as Fraud Risk Manager.

A Certified Fraud Examiner with more than 18 years' experience in law enforcement, Abraham brings a strong background in fraud risk management, security and forensic investigations. Old Mutual Namibia said his appointment is expected to strengthen governance, assurance and risk oversight across the business.

Abraham holds a Bachelor of Commerce in Law, a Master of Science in International Business with Law, a Master of Science in Fraud and Risk Management, and qualifications in Criminal Justice and Forensic Investigations. He is also a Certified Balanced Scorecard Professional and holds a Certificate in Enterprise Risk Management. In addition, he is currently a Doctor of Business Administration candidate.

The company said Abraham's experience in building and leading risk frameworks will support its ongoing focus on strong corporate governance and effective assurance practice

The role of government and large corporate entities in supporting SMEs for sustainable economic growth and job creation in Namibia

By Annas Salom Nangombe

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a critical role in Namibia's socio-economic development. According to the Namibian Statistic Agency, SMEs contribute a significant portion to Namibia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and account for nearly one-third of total employment.

These enterprises are the lifeblood of the economy, serving as catalysts for innovation, poverty reduction, and local economic diversification.

Despite their economic contribution, SMEs in Namibia face persistent challenges that limit their growth potential.

These include limited access to finance, high tax rates, lack of adequate business management skills, weak market linkages, and lack of policies and legislation to support them. A recent study by Cirrus Capital has indicated a loss of approximately 30,000 business, majority are SMEs.

The Government, through the Department of SME may strongly advocate for SMEs by creating an enabling ecosystem that fosters growth and sustainability.

This includes the formulation and implementation of SME-friendly policies, efforts to formalize informal business, other SME financing schemes, blended finance, implementation of SME tax incentives to allow small enterprises to reinvest profits into expansion and innovation as well as strengthen financial support structures in addition to the newly established National Youth Fund.

For meaningful transformation, the urgency of transforming the current National Equitable Economic Empowerment Framework (NEEEF-Bill) into an official Act of law to accelerate the promotion of inclusive economic participation is essential.

“The Government, through the Department of SME may strongly advocate for SMEs by creating an enabling ecosystem that fosters growth and sustainability.

One of the recommended elements of this Legislation will be the mandatory of Enterprise and Supplier Development (ESD) Program. A binding strategic initiative to integrate SMEs into the supply chains of large corporations. ESD encourage large enterprise to source goods and services from local SMEs, thereby creating sustainable market opportunities and stimulating local production.

The second leg of ESD program is commitment contribution to ESD Fund. A regulation for corporate entities in addition to their corporate social responsibility to contribute a certain percentage of their Net profit after tax (NPAT) to finance and support SMEs, which include mentorship, training and capacity development programs and formalizing informal business among others.

For the successful implementation, this Act will drive socio-economic transformation and broaden participation in the economy through the broad based black economic empowerment (BEE) scorecard. Corporate entities will be evaluated on their contributions to local empowerment, enterprise development, and inclusive procurement practices in addition to ownership, management, skill developments and other elements. Failing to achieve a minimum score in this area may results in penalty and effectively dropping the company's overall BEE recognition level. The scorecard will also play a vital role for large entities in obtaining contracts, licenses and rights to trade in Namibia. This makes compliance a business imperative for large entities.

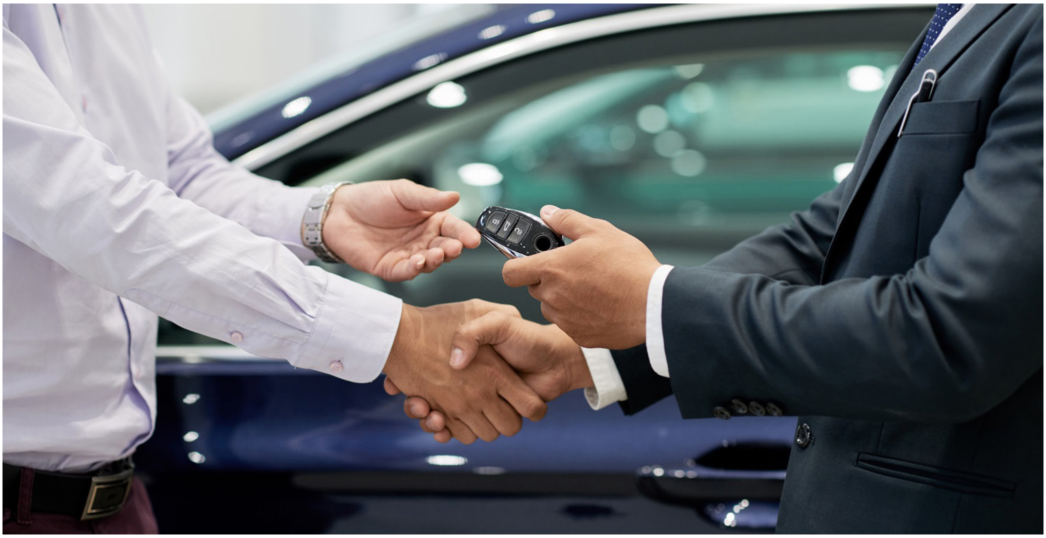
Effective implementation and enforcement of these initiatives can help create a fairer and more inclusive economy, ensuring that SMEs receive tangible benefits from corporate ecosystem to enable planting back resources, knowledge, and market access into the SME sector.

This will boost SME operations, enhance productivity, and create more employment opportunities. Over time, successful SMEs grow to become large corporate entities themselves, contributing even more to GDP and preserving a cycle of inclusive economic growth.

The BEE Act, when properly enforced, ensures that transformation is measurable and large corporations play their role in economic inclusivity. Strong enforcement and transparent monitoring of scorecards will help Namibia realize a self-sustaining and equitable business environment.

With these initiatives, Namibia can cultivate a thriving SME sector that fuels innovation, drives employment, contributes significantly to GDP, and ensures that economic prosperity is shared across all sectors of society.

Annas Salom Nangombe is a highly skilled finance, audit, and governance professional with a strong academic background and diverse industry experience spanning lending, corporate governance, accounting, finance, internal auditing and financial reporting. He currently serves as a Lead Consultant at Excel Consulting Group, where he advises clients on Tax, strategic financial management, risk, and financial reporting.



Namibia vehicle sales hit highest november level since 2018

Namibia's new vehicle sales climbed to 13,364 units year to date, representing a 14.1% increase compared with the same period last year, according to IJG Securities.

IJG said this is the highest level recorded by the end of November since 2018, with passenger vehicle sales also reaching their strongest point since 2016.

"The twelve-month cumulative total rose by 15.5% year on year to 14,464 units. While this remains below the 2016 peak of 22,646 units, it is the highest level since January 2019 and continues to reflect steady growth," the firm said.

Toyota maintained its dominant position across the new passenger vehicle, light commercial vehicle and medium commercial vehicle segments, capturing 52.9%, 73.7% and 31.4% of year-to-date sales respectively.

Volkswagen ranked second in the passenger vehicle segment with a 13.6% market share, while Ford secured 11.6% of the light commercial vehicle segment.

In the medium commercial vehicle segment, Mercedes-Benz placed second with a 25.7% market share, followed by Hino at 23.6%.

Scania recorded the largest share of year-to-date sales in the heavy and extra-heavy commercial vehicle segment, accounting for 26.3% of the market, followed by Volvo Trucks with 14.6%.

A total of 1,244 new vehicles were sold in November, representing a 1.8% month-on-month decline from the 1,267 units sold in October, but a 13.8% year-on-year increase from the 1,093 vehicles sold in November 2024.

IJG noted that commercial vehicles accounted for 59.0% of November sales, with 734 units sold, while passenger vehicles made up the remaining 510 units.

"Year to date, 13,364 new vehicles have been sold, reflecting a 14.1% year-on-year increase from the 11,708 units sold over the same period last year. On a twelve-month cumulative basis, new vehicle sales rose by 15.5% year on year to 14,464 units," IJG said.

Passenger vehicle sales in November stood at 510 units, down by 42 units or 7.6% from the 552 vehicles sold in October.

Year-to-date passenger vehicle sales totalled 6,183 units, marking a 17.3% year-on-year increase from the 5,272 vehicles sold in the same period in 2024, and the highest year-to-date figure at the end of November since 2016.

Over the cumulative twelve-month period, passenger vehicle sales reached 6,695 units, up 17.9% from the 5,679 units sold over the same period in 2024.

New commercial vehicle sales rose by 19 units or 2.7% month on month to 734 units in November. On an annual basis, sales increased by 31.3% from the 559 units sold in November 2024.

"Year-to-date commercial vehicle sales increased by 11.6% year on year to 7,181 units, which is 745 units more than the 6,436 vehicles sold over the corresponding period last year and the highest year-to-date level at the end of November since 2018," IJG said.

Of the total commercial vehicles sold in November, 646 were light commercial vehicles, reflecting a 2.2% month-on-month increase and a 33.5% year-on-year rise.

Medium commercial vehicle sales totalled 24 units, an 11.1% decline from the 27 units sold in the previous month, while heavy commercial vehicle sales reached 64 units, marking a 14.3% month-on-month increase.

From calculators to intelligence: How AI can transform banking in Namibia

By Stantin Siebritz

When a leading Namibian financial institution recently launched its upgraded vehicle finance calculator, the reaction was lukewarm: "Nice. About time."

Enter the purchase price, interest rate, and repayment term, and it spits out an estimated monthly instalment.

Convenient, mobile, and familiar - essentially a smarter version of the Casio calculators from the 1990s.

But the real transformation isn't about moving from paper to digital. It's about shifting from tools that compute to systems that can reason with financial information.

Think of the leap from playing Snake on a Nokia 3310 to streaming Netflix on a smartphone: same device in your hand, but a completely different universe of capability.

What AI Brings to the Table

Large Language Models (LLMs) are AI systems trained on vast amounts of text and data. They can understand questions, detect patterns, and generate human-like responses.

Combine them with finance-specific models and workflow automation, and you create an engine that can read bank statements, interpret behaviour, flag risks, and even provide advice - an always-available junior consultant who never tires. The real value lies in integrating this engine into banking processes.

> **"The Bank of Namibia has signalled interest in fintech and AI, and formal guidance on automated decision-making, data usage, and model governance is expected.**

A Namibian Pain Point: Manual Statement Analysis

Consider a common challenge: bank statement analysis. Whether applying for vehicle finance in Ongwediva, an SME loan in Katima Mulilo, or a home loan in Windhoek, someone still manually checks statements for income regularity, bounced debits, gambling habits, short-term loans, and unexplained cash flows. For businesses, analysts hunt for seasonality, cash vs card mix, and whether "profit" is real.

Now imagine an AI-powered Bank Statement Analyser built for Namibia. Upload PDFs or images from any bank, and within seconds it reads, cleans, and structures the data.

It categorises spending into salary, fuel, groceries, gambling, micro-lenders, airtime, school fees, stock, and tax. It reconstructs monthly cash flow and highlights trends: "Net surplus declining over six months" or "Customer services three micro-loans totalling N$3,200 per month."

From Intuition to Measurable Risk

Risk signals stop being guesswork and become quantifiable. The system can flag heavy cash withdrawals, chronic overdrafts, frequent salary advances, or spikes in gambling.

For SMEs, it can detect client concentration or mismatches between stock purchases and reported sales. It's like having an analyst who has read millions of statements and remembers every pattern.

Shared Benefits

Customers receive plain-language coaching: "Reduce takeaway spend by N$800/month and you could qualify for an extra N$40,000 in vehicle finance in six months," or "Consolidate these two micro-loans to lower your rate." Branch queues shorten; loan officers in Rundu or Keetmanshoop start with a machine-generated summary instead of a stack of PDFs. Simple cases can be approved same day; complex cases get human attention informed by dashboards, not highlighters.

Augmentation, Not Replacement

Namibia faces skills shortages and long travel distances for customers, not a surplus of credit analysts. AI should upgrade staff into high-performance advisors - diagnosticians rather than data clerks - allowing them to spend more time explaining, structuring deals, and spotting opportunities.

Guardrails Are Essential

The Bank of Namibia has signalled interest in fintech and AI, and formal guidance on automated decision-making, data usage, and model governance is expected. Financial data demands strict privacy, encryption, and sensible retention. Explainability matters: customers must receive clear reasons - "Declined due to three unpaid debit orders and unsecured repayments above 60% of net income" - not a cryptic red cross.

The Local Opportunity

Namibia can build locally tuned tools that understand our pay cycles, informal flows, transaction descriptions, and regional languages. The next leap isn't a prettier calculator - it's systems that truly understand. Get it right, and in five years we'll view today's calculators the way we view dial-up and VHS: nostalgic, but obsolete.

Want to experience the future of banking? Try my AI Bank Statement Analyser here: https://financeconsultant.streamlit.app/