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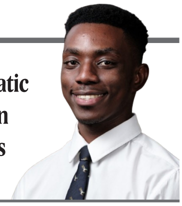
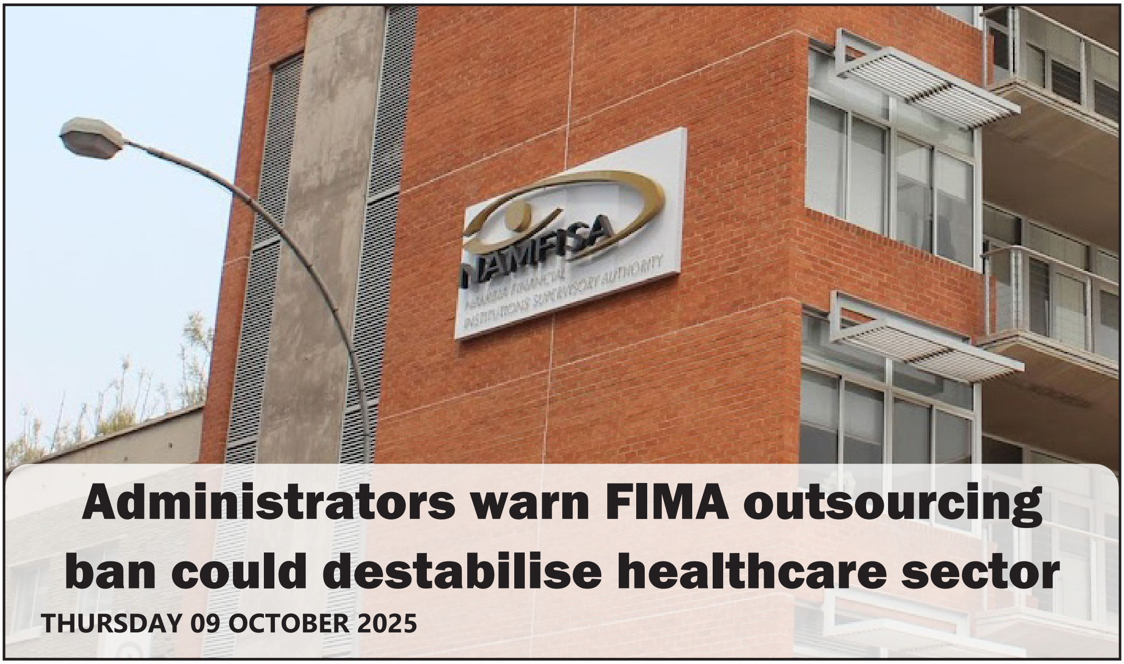


THE BRIEF

News Worth Knowing



Administrators warn FIMA outsourcing ban could destabilise healthcare sector

THURSDAY 09 OCTOBER 2025

MAIN STORY

Administrators warn FIMA outsourcing ban could destabilise healthcare sector

Medical aid administrators have warned that more than 550,000 Namibians are at risk of losing access to private healthcare services if the proposed Financial Institutions and Markets Act (FIMA) Outsourcing Standard is implemented in its current form.

In a letter seen by The Brief and addressed to Namibia Financial Institutions Supervisory Authority (NAMFISA) Chief Executive Officer Kenneth Matomola, the administrators said the restrictions could destabilise the fund administration industry, cause job losses, and limit access to essential healthcare.

The letter was signed by METHEALTH Namibia Administrators, Prosperity Health, Medscheme Namibia Administrators, Clinico Health Group, and Paramount Health.

The concerns centre on the FIMA Act of

Crucial Dates

- **Bank of Namibia Monetary Policy announcement date:**
  - * 15 October 2025
  - * 3 December 2025

2021, specifically Standard GEN.S.10.10, which allows financial institutions to outsource material business functions but prohibits outsourcing principal activities such as claims assessment, healthcare payments, and governance for medical aid funds.

The administrators warned that this prohibition threatens the operational and financial viability of the sector.

They stated that these core functions are "the backbone of fund administrators' core business activities," and restricting them could force many administrators out of the market.

The letter further cautioned that removing key revenue-generating functions would make it impossible to sustain operations, including staff salaries and the maintenance of systems built over three decades.

"The collapse of these services would disrupt claims processing and benefit payments for 550,000 Namibians and negatively affect dependent industries such as information technology, courier services, and call centres," the administrators said.

The industry currently employs about 515 people across Namibia, and potential job losses could create widespread socio-economic hardship affecting thousands of dependants.

The letter also warned that smaller employer-based medical aid funds could become unsustainable, leading to consolidation or closure and reducing access to affordable healthcare.

The administrators added that splitting core processes among multiple service providers would heighten operational risks and jeopardise the confidentiality of personal health data.

They argued that FIMA already requires fund boards and administrators to maintain robust governance and risk controls, making a blanket outsourcing ban unnecessary. They further noted that the proposed restrictions are "not aligned with regional or international regulatory frameworks," where outsourcing to regulated administrators is permitted under risk-based oversight.

The administrators urged NAMFISA to adopt a balanced, risk-based approach that safeguards financial stability, protects employment, and maintains access to healthcare. They stressed their commitment to working collaboratively with the regulator and other stakeholders.

The letter was copied to Minister of Finance and Public Enterprises Ericah Shafudah and National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW) Secretary General Job Munjaro, and signed by the Chief Executive Officers and Managing Directors of the five medical aid administration firms.

Similar concerns were previously raised by several major players in Namibia's financial sector, who warned that the proposed outsourcing standard could increase operational costs, reduce competitiveness, and restrict access to specialised skills.

They also argued that certain provisions in the regulation lack clarity, particularly in defining principal and material functions, which could delay approval processes and create inefficiencies.

Industry representatives further cautioned that the rules overlook practical business realities, as many institutions already perform administrative and investment functions within group structures to enhance efficiency and reduce risk.

They recommended that NAMFISA consider a flexible, risk-based framework that allows regulated outsourcing under clearly defined conditions, supported by transitional arrangements to maintain stability and competitiveness.

NaCC flags challenges in reviewing South African cross-border mergers

The Namibian Competition Commission (NaCC) says it continues to face major challenges in reviewing cross-border mergers, particularly those originating from South Africa, due to differing market definitions, delayed notifications, and limited information sharing among regional regulators.

Director of the Mergers and Acquisitions Division, Johannes Ashipala, said Namibia's economic structure makes merger assessments more complex, as most sectors remain highly concentrated and heavily dependent on imports.

"Certain mergers result in fewer independent firms, which increases coordination challenges in already concentrated sectors. When you look at the structure of the economy, you realise there has not been much entry in some of these markets," he said.

Ashipala explained that Namibia often defines markets differently from South Africa and other regional competition authorities, complicating joint assessments and the implementation of remedies.

"In Namibia, we may focus on local or regional markets, whereas other authorities such as Botswana or South Africa might adopt a national market definition. The findings are therefore not always the same, and that creates implementation challenges," he said.

He noted that most mergers affecting Namibia are first notified in South Africa, which delays the local review process and limits the NaCC's ability to influence the final outcomes.

"In most cases, merging parties go to South Africa first and only come to Namibia once that process is concluded. By the time they reach us, the market outcomes are already shaped, and we are told there are no issues," Ashipala said.

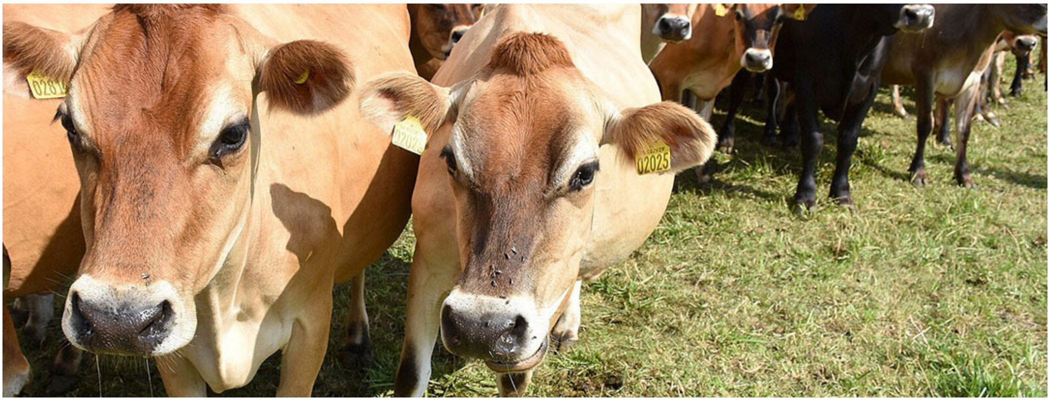
He added that mergers involving South African firms often result in high concentration levels across the region.

"In several cases, combined market shares exceed 65 to 75%, increasing the risk of monopolisation. Smaller economies like ours face additional pressure because we depend on imports, and such mergers can reduce diversity and entry," he said.

Ashipala also pointed out that confidentiality laws restrict the exchange of data with regional counterparts, hindering effective cooperation.

"While we encourage cooperation, confidentiality provisions limit how much we can share. Confidentiality waivers would greatly assist in improving cross-border merger analysis," he said.

He emphasised that addressing these issues is crucial to ensuring that mergers driven by South African markets do not undermine competition and consumer welfare in Namibia and other smaller economies in the region.



Cattle marketing in Namibia falls by 45% in August

The total marketing of cattle in Namibia fell by 45.23% in August 2025 compared to the same period last year, according to the Livestock and Livestock Products Board of Namibia.

The number of cattle marketed according to August 2025 Review, declined from 35,779 in August 2024 to 19,595 this year, reflecting a sharp slowdown in industry activity.

Live exports dropped by 51.27% year-on-year, with South Africa remaining the main destination, accounting for 98.50% of total exports.

Smaller shares went to the Democratic Republic of Congo (1.22%), Botswana (0.21%) and Zimbabwe (0.07%).

The board said the decline was driven by weaker regional demand and lower domestic supply for export markets.

Weaner auction prices, however, showed a notable rebound, rising by 26.07% from N$24.01/kg in August 2024 to N$30.27/kg in August 2025. On a monthly basis, prices increased by 1.03% and are expected to edge slightly higher to N$30.32/kg in September.

"The weaner/B2 price ratio stood at 42% in August, which remains significantly below the benchmark level of 64% used to assess profitability between weaner and slaughter prices.

This imbalance continues to place pressure on feedlot operators and small-scale producers who depend on favourable price relationships for sustainability," the review stated.

In the regional feed market, yellow maize prices in South Africa fell by 8.01%, from N$4,186.83/t in July to N$3,851.65/t in August 2025.

The board noted that while lower feed costs could benefit local producers, the advantage might be offset by subdued export prices and reduced cattle marketing volumes.

Beef carcass prices also recorded a decline. The all-grade carcass price dropped by 5.88%, from N$70.01/kg in July 2025 to N$65.89/kg in August, while slaughter oxen carcass prices decreased by 1.46%. Similarly, B2 carcass prices fell by 3.62% month-on month.

“The all-grade and NAM B2 carcass producer prices are projected to reach N$66.09/kg and N$72.37/kg in September 2025, respectively. Although price forecasts remain stable, the board continues to monitor trends in export and domestic demand to assess possible shifts in market recovery,” the review added.

Internationally, US beef prices rose by 24.08% to N$149.57/kg in August 2025 compared to a year earlier, while EU steer prices increased by 1.90% month-on-month to N$149.28/kg. In contrast, Brazil’s beef prices fell by 0.44% to N$64.36/kg, though they remained 30.38% higher year-on-year.

“Namibia’s B2 prices increased by 1.54% month-on-month, while Uruguay and Australia registered gains of 0.76% and 3.88%, respectively.

On a year-on-year basis, all producer carcass class grade prices rose between 9.43% and 20.07%, reflecting the broader global price recovery despite domestic declines,” the board concluded.

HR for HR: The conversation we rarely have

By Victoria Shikongo

As the conversation around mental health continues to grow louder in workplaces, much of the focus is on employees and the support they need.

Organisations are investing in wellness programmes, counselling services, and awareness campaigns to encourage openness and resilience. These are important and necessary steps.

But in reflecting on this, one group often gets overlooked: our Human Resources practitioners.

In every workplace, HR is the department employees instinctively turn to when challenges arise. Whether it is conflict, unfair treatment, or personal matters affecting performance, HR is seen as the mediator, the adviser, and often the problem-solver.

Their role is to listen, to guide, and to resolve issues in ways that protect both the employee and the organisation.

"Their role is to listen, to guide, and to resolve issues in ways that protect both the employee and the organisation.

Yet this is never simple. At times HR becomes the bearer of difficult news. The outcomes they communicate may not match what employees hope for, and HR is often caught in the crossfire. Supporting both the employer and the employee is a delicate balance, and it is easy for resentment to fall on HR when answers feel unfavourable.

Sometimes they are tasked with delivering decisions made by the board or management. Even then, sometimes employees interpret those decisions as personal choices by HR, or an expectation for HR to intervene, creating unnecessary tension and mistrust.

Beneath these visible roles lies an overlooked truth. HR professionals are human too. They carry the weight of others' struggles while shouldering their own. They see unfairness but cannot always speak up.

They may feel silenced, knowing that voicing their concerns could lead to victimisation. Sometimes they face isolation, pressure, and disappointment, yet they are rarely given the grace to give their personal view openly.

This raises a question we hardly ever ask: Who is HR for HR?

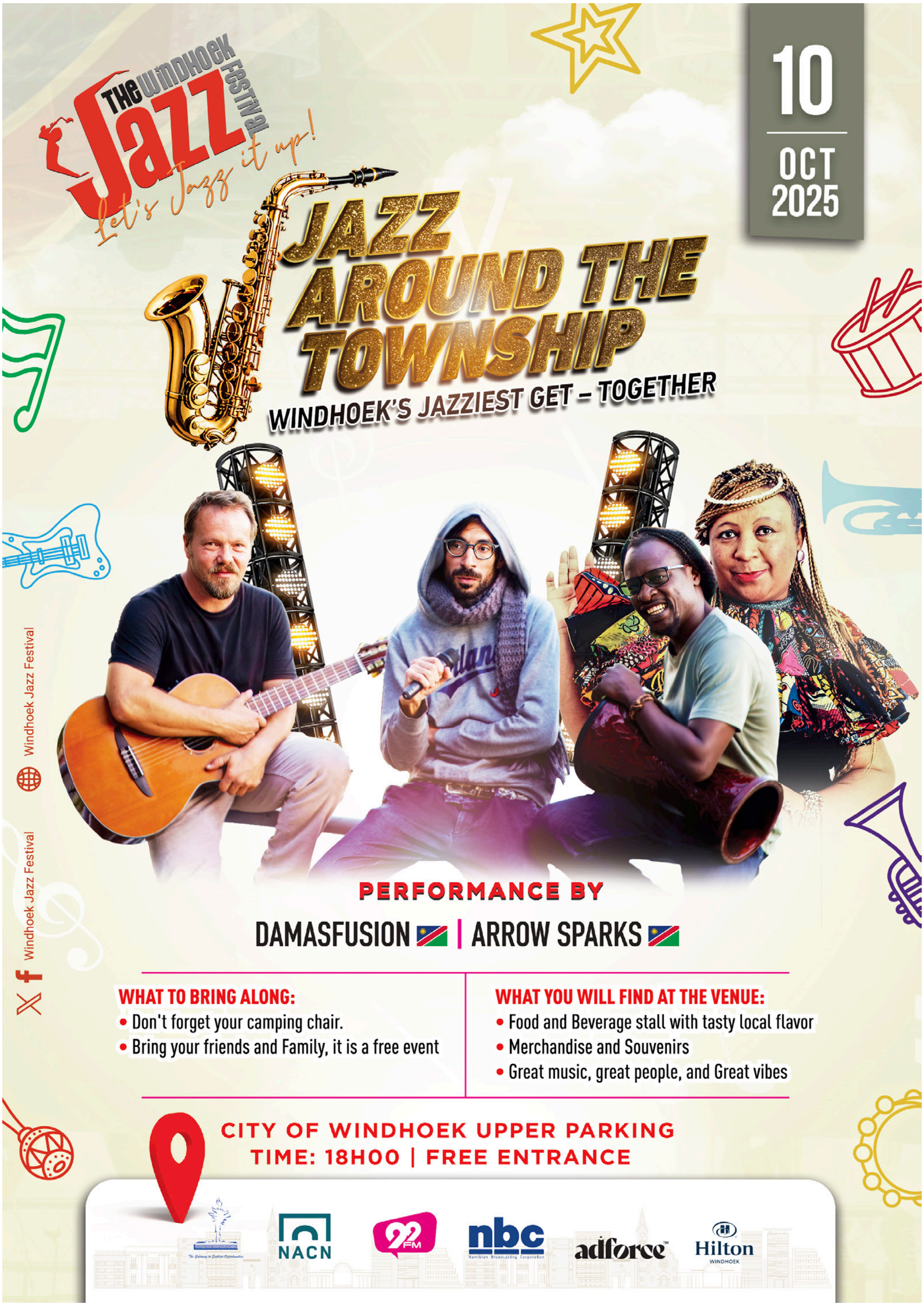
Do we allow them the same space to be vulnerable that we expect them to provide for others? Do we recognise their need for a safe environment where they can be heard and supported? Or do we silently expect them to carry everyone's burdens without ever laying down their own?

It is time to rethink how organisations support those who are tasked with supporting everyone else. HR practitioners need a trusted space, a sounding board, and strong systems of care. Their well-being is not an afterthought. It is fundamental to the health of the entire workforce. When HR suffers in silence, the effects ripple through the culture of the whole organisation.

So, who listens when HR needs to be heard? Who advocates for them when they feel unseen? And where do they go when they simply need to exhale?

The time has come to start this conversation. Because the question remains: Who is HR for HR?

*** Victoria Shikongo is an MBA graduate with a bachelor's in marketing and over ten years' experience in media. She writes in a personal capacity.***


The Windhoek Jazz Festival
Let's Jazz it up!
10 OCT 2025
JAZZ AROUND THE TOWNSHIP
WINDHOEK'S JAZZIEST GET – TOGETHER
PERFORMANCE BY
DAMASFUSION | ARROW SPARKS
WHAT TO BRING ALONG:
• Don't forget your camping chair.
• Bring your friends and Family, it is a free event
WHAT YOU WILL FIND AT THE VENUE:
• Food and Beverage stall with tasty local flavor
• Merchandise and Souvenirs
• Great music, great people, and Great vibes
CITY OF WINDHOEK UPPER PARKING
TIME: 18H00 | FREE ENTRANCE
Windhoek Jazz Festival
Windhoek Jazz Festival
NACN
nbc
adforce
Hilton
WINDHOEK

Govt moves to resolve SA's tomato export ban as grapes face risk

The Namibian government is working to resolve South Africa's suspension of export permits for Namibian-grown tomatoes, with table grapes now also facing a potential ban.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform (MAFWLR) confirmed that South Africa withdrew export permits for certain Namibian perishable products, including tomatoes, effective September 2025.

The move followed findings by South Africa's National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPOZA), which cited non-compliance with phytosanitary requirements.

The ministry said it has taken note of South Africa's decision to withdraw export permits for certain perishable products originating from Namibia, effective August 2025.

Namibia's National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) has formally requested a bilateral engagement with NPPOZA to clarify the technical concerns and explore interim measures that could enable the resumption of exports.

While an in-person meeting has not yet taken place, the two organisations continue to engage through written correspondence to resolve the issue.

The ministry also confirmed that discussions are ongoing regarding a possible ban on table grape exports to South Africa in 2025, with efforts under way to ensure compliance and restore trade flows as soon as possible.

The dispute began on 11 August 2025 when a Sonop Farms truck was stopped on the Namibian side of the border and informed that the company had allegedly been non-compliant with phytosanitary regulations for several years — a claim the farm said it was unaware of.

Sonop Farms CEO, Albert van der Merwe, said the matter stemmed from an administrative oversight by Namibia's NPPO rather than any pest outbreak or phytosanitary threat to South African crops.

Later in August, Van der Merwe's legal representatives successfully argued in the Gauteng High Court that the alleged non-compliance applied broadly to all Namibian producers, not just Sonop Farms, whose export permit had been the only one revoked at the time.

They also argued that South African authorities had not followed due process, having failed to issue formal notification to either Namibia or the affected farm, in breach of the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (PAJA).

Following the court ruling, Sonop Farms resumed tomato exports to six South African provinces until 18 September, when the South African government announced that all export permits for Namibian fresh produce producers had been withdrawn pending further review.

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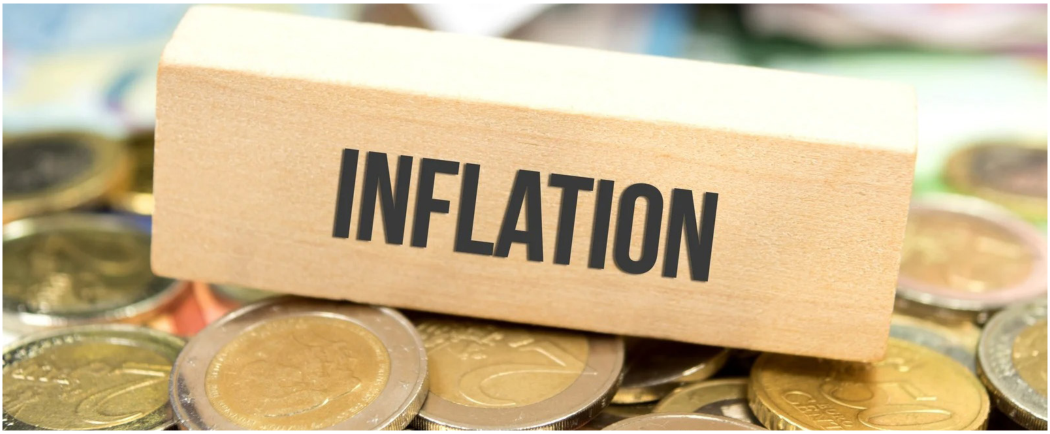


Food, housing and alcohol drive Namibia's 3.5% inflation rate

Namibia's headline annual inflation rate stood at 3.5% in September 2025, according to the latest figures released by the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA).

The main contributors to price growth were increases in the categories of Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages (6.5%), Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco (5.2%), and Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and Other Fuels (2.5%).

"The headline annual inflation rate for September 2025 stood at 3.5%, slightly higher than the 3.4% recorded in September 2024. On a monthly basis, inflation remained constant at 0.0%, consistent with the month-on-month inflation rate recorded in the previous month," said NSA Statistician-General and CEO, Alex Shimuafeni.

The NSA report highlighted that within the food category, the most significant price increases were recorded for rice (11.6%), milk, cheese and eggs (9.1%), fruits (8.6%), and sugar, jam, honey, syrups, chocolate and confectionery (6.9%). However, consumers experienced some relief as prices for oils and fats fell by 2.8%.

The transport category showed little movement, recording a 0.1% increase, largely due to stable fuel prices. Meanwhile, education costs rose by 3.7% year-on-year, reflecting higher tuition fees at private institutions.

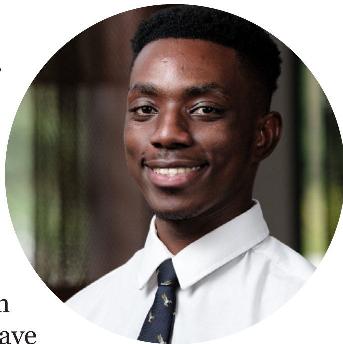
"Annual inflation for the purchase of vehicles accelerated to 4.4% in September 2025, compared to 2.8% registered a year ago," the report stated.

Regionally, the Khomas Region recorded the lowest inflation rate at 2.9%, while the Zambezi and Omusati regions experienced higher rates of 4.1% and 4.3%, respectively. The NSA attributed these regional differences to varying price movements in food and housing.

Core inflation, which excludes volatile items such as food and fuel, stood at 3.8%, slightly above the headline rate, indicating underlying price pressures in essential goods and services.

The power of automatic recurring transfers in growing your savings

By Tulinawa Kalimba



> "The beauty of automation is that it removes temptation.

Saving money is one of those things everyone talks about, but few people manage to do consistently.

Between rent, transport, food, and the endless small expenses that pop up each month, it is easy to say, "I'll save next month." But before you know it, the months turn into years, and your savings account still hasn't grown.

That is why I discovered one of the simplest yet most powerful financial tools available: automatic recurring transfers. It is not flashy or complicated, just a small, consistent action that makes a world of difference over time.

How It All Began

Beginning of the year, I decided to further my education and register for the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) programme, a dream that required serious financial commitment. At the time, many of my peers opted to take student loans to fund their studies.

It was tempting; the money would have been available immediately, and I would not have to worry about saving bit by bit. But something inside me wanted to take a different route. I wanted to prove to myself that with discipline and structure, I could finance my studies without debt.

That is when I set up an automatic recurring transfer, a fixed amount moving from my main account to a dedicated "CFA Fund" savings account every month. At first, it was just N$500. It did not feel like much, but it was something.

The key was consistency. Every month, on the same date, that money moved automatically before I could even think of spending it. Over time, as my income grew, I increased the transfer.

The Power of Habit

The beauty of automation is that it removes temptation. Once I set up that transfer, saving became effortless. I did not need to rely on motivation or willpower, it just happened quietly in the background.

Months later, I looked at my balance and realized I had built up a solid amount without even feeling the strain. When the time came to pay for my CFA registration, exam fees, and study materials, I did not have to apply for a loan or borrow from anyone. I simply used the money I had been saving automatically. That moment, clicking "Pay" knowing it came from my own savings, was one of the most rewarding experiences of my financial journey.

Why It Works

Automatic recurring transfers turn saving into a habit. When you schedule a fixed amount to move into your savings account, whether weekly or monthly, you are essentially paying yourself first. The money leaves your main account before you even notice it is gone.

It is the same principle businesses use when they deduct taxes or pension contributions automatically, except this time, you are doing it for your future self. You do not need a big salary or a financial background to start.

Even saving N$200 or N$300 a month makes a difference. What matters most is consistency. Over time, the small amounts add up, and when an opportunity or emergency comes, you will be ready. My CFA story is just one example. Whether your goal is to start a business, travel, buy a car, or build an emergency fund, automatic transfers can help you get there.

Final Thoughts

Looking back, I realize I did not just save money, I built a mindset. I learned patience, discipline, and the power of small actions repeated consistently. Today, as I continue my CFA journey debt-free, I am grateful for the simple decision to automate my savings.

So, if you have ever struggled to save, try setting up that automatic transfer. Let technology handle the discipline for you. It may not seem like much at first, but one day, you will look back and realize that those small, consistent steps quietly changed your financial story, just like they did mine.

Tulinawa Kalimba is an accountant serving as a trainee at Bank Windhoek and a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) candidate.

The Market Lens

Enriching Generations

SIMONIS STORM

Commodities	
Spot Gold	4013.68
Platinum	1666.29
Palladium	1487.37
Silver	42.33
Uranium	81.00
Brent Crude	66.13
Iron Ore (in CNY)	796.00
Copper	10669.00
Natural Gas	3.35
Lithium	9.25

Currencies	
USD/ZAR	17.16
EUR/ZAR	19.88
GBP/ZAR	22.90
USD/CNY	7.12
EUR/USD	1.16
GBP/USD	1.33
USD/JPY	153.03
Namibia CPI	**3.50%**
Namibia Repo Rate	**6.75%**
Namibia Prime Rate	**10.50%**