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THE

BRIEF

News Worth Knowing



Namibia generates N\$583.8m from visa-on-arrival platform

FRIDAY 23 OCTOBER 2026

MAIN STORY



Namibia generates N\$583.8m from visa-on-arrival platform

Namibia generated N\$583.8 million from its visa-on-arrival platform during the 2025/26 financial year, with 304,691 visas issued through the service, according to the Government's 2025/26 Accountability Report.

The Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security reported that a total of 420,189 documents were issued during the year under review, comprising 367,710 visas and permits, 51,465 passports and 1,014 citizenship documents.

The total exceeded the ministry's target of issuing 119,604 visas, permits, passports and citizenship documents.

The ministry said it implemented the Cabinet-approved visa reciprocity principle

on 1 April 2025, requiring nationals of countries that had not reciprocated Namibia's visa exemptions to obtain visas before entering the country.

The policy was introduced to promote mutuality and fairness in international visa relations, ending the indefinite provision of unilateral visa-free access to nationals of countries that required Namibians to obtain

Crucial Dates

- Bank of Namibia Monetary Policy announcement dates:
 - * 29 October 2026
 - * 10 December 2026

visas for entry.

To facilitate legitimate travel and minimise the impact on tourism and investment, the ministry expanded and digitalised its visa-on-arrival (VoA) and electronic visa services, allowing eligible travellers to apply online or obtain visas at designated ports of entry.

The report said the policy continued to evolve during the reporting period, with Cabinet approving an additional 35 countries for visa-on-arrival eligibility in September 2025.

Visa-on-arrival applications accounted for the largest share of documents issued, with 304,691 visas approved during the year. The ministry also issued 15,193 holiday visas through its online application system and 947 through manual applications.

The ministry received 16,960 online applications for short-term employment permits, of which 13,645 were approved and 3,315 rejected. Manual applications for short-term employment permits totalled 12,782, including 10,943 approvals and 1,839 rejections.

The ministry also processed 4,838 applications for new employment permits, with 2,532 approved, 1,793 rejected and 514 deferred. Employment permit renewal applications totalled 3,068, comprising 2,569 approvals, 384 rejections and 115 deferred applications.

Other documents issued included 4,189 student permits, 1,644 visas for meetings, incentives, conferences, events and sports (MICE), 766 permanent residence permits and 87 study-related temporary residence permits.

In addition to the visa reforms, the ministry expanded its digital capacity through the rollout of the passport system, enabling the live capture of photographs and enrolment of passport applications at regional offices.

The system was introduced at offices

in Gobabis in the Omaheke Region, Keetmanshoop in the //Kharas Region, Oshakati in the Oshana Region, Rundu in the Kavango East Region, and Swakopmund and Walvis Bay in the Erongo Region.

According to the report, the rollout allows these offices to capture applicants' photographs and process application enrolments locally, eliminating the previous need to send physical forms to Windhoek for capturing.

The ministry also strengthened the international authentication of Namibian travel documents. As a member of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) community, Namibia conducted a key import on the Public Key Directory platform on 13 November 2025 to enable the global authentication of Namibian passports.

The developments form part of the ministry's efforts to modernise immigration and passport services while implementing the country's revised visa policy.

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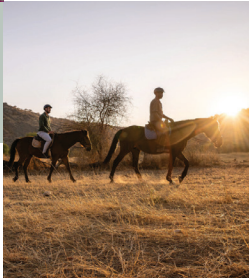
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Namibians could pay more for sugar as govt reviews VAT exemption

Namibians could face a 15% increase in the price of sugar if the government scraps its zero-rated value-added tax (VAT) treatment of the commodity over concerns about the health risks associated with excessive sugar consumption.

Finance Minister Ericah

Shafudah has confirmed that the government is reviewing the tax exemption, raising the possibility that sugar could become more expensive if it becomes subject to the standard VAT rate.

Speaking during the presentation of the 2026/27 Mid-Year Budget Review in

the National Assembly, Shafudah said the government was reconsidering the tax relief initially introduced to make sugar more affordable for consumers.

“I wish to reassure the nation that we are reviewing the VAT zero rating of sugar consumption. The zero rating was introduced to provide some relief to consumers; however, the health effects of sugar consumption are well known, and we join the rest of the world in promoting health living,” Shafudah said.

The review raises concerns about the future affordability of sugar, with consumers potentially facing higher prices if the government withdraws the exemption.

For example, a packet of sugar currently selling for N\$40 could cost N\$46 if the standard 15% VAT rate is applied and the full tax increase is passed on to consumers.

However, Shafudah did not confirm whether the government intends to remove the zero rating or announce a timeline for implementing possible changes.

The review comes amid growing international efforts to reduce excessive sugar consumption through taxation, particularly to address obesity, diabetes and other non-communicable diseases.

South Africa introduced its Health Promotion Levy in 2018, imposing a tax on manufacturers of sugar-sweetened beverages, such as soft drinks, to discourage

consumption.

The levy is charged at 2.21 cents per gram of sugar exceeding four grams per 100 millilitres of a beverage and is estimated to increase the prices of affected products by approximately 11%.

However, the levy has not been increased since 2019, despite continued concerns about rising obesity and non-communicable diseases in South Africa.

Unlike South Africa's levy, which specifically targets sugar-sweetened beverages, Namibia's review focuses on the existing VAT exemption on sugar. The government has not announced a separate levy on sugar-sweetened drinks.

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Meatco to temporarily resume slaughtering for local market

The Meat Corporation of Namibia (Meatco) will temporarily resume slaughtering on 27 and 28 October 2026 to generate revenue from cattle already held in its feedlots, following a month-long shutdown caused by the foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) outbreak.

However, the corporation has warned that the limited operation will not restore normal production or allow it to resume buying cattle from farmers, as restrictions continue to disrupt access to lucrative beef export markets.

Meatco Deputy Board Chairperson

Stephanie de Klerk said all beef produced during the two-day operation would be sold on the domestic market, where prices are significantly lower than those obtained from premium export destinations, particularly Europe.

The temporary slaughter will be conducted under Standard Operating Procedure Circular v8 of 2026, issued by the Directorate of Veterinary Services (DVS), following the suspension of normal slaughter operations on 23 September.

De Klerk said the arrangement would provide limited revenue but would not

resolve the corporation's worsening financial position.

“Limited slaughter for the domestic market cannot replace the revenue and margins generated through normal export operations,” Meatco said.

The corporation said it remained far from commercial recovery, with the continued loss of export revenue placing increasing pressure on its ability to meet financial commitments.

Despite the shutdown, Meatco has continued honouring its financial commitments to livestock producers and employees, drawing on increasingly constrained cash resources.

De Klerk warned that the corporation could not sustain these obligations indefinitely without sufficient commercial revenue or additional financial support.

“The Corporation cannot indefinitely sustain payments to livestock producers, salaries and other financial obligations without sufficient commercial revenue or additional financial support. The longer the disruption continues, the greater the pressure on our ability to meet these commitments,” she said.

In response, Meatco has introduced emergency cost-containment measures, including restrictions on non-essential spending, procurement and official travel, alongside tighter controls on overtime and recruitment.

Temporary special leave arrangements have also been introduced following the suspension of production.

The corporation is holding discussions with recognised trade unions and employee representatives over further labour cost reductions and other measures necessary to keep the business operational.

Meatco said the discussions were ongoing and acknowledged that the proposed measures would have significant implications for employees.

Meanwhile, the corporation said there was no certainty over when normal slaughtering and livestock procurement would resume.

Any broader resumption of operations will depend on further directives from the DVS,



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Electricity Control Board (ECB) in accordance with Public Procurement Act (Act 15 of 2025). As amended, section 42 hereby invites qualified, competent and registered Suppliers / Service providers to submit bids for the following procurement.

Procurement Reference:	SC/RP/ECB-02/2026/2027
Bid description:	The Review of the Namibia Electricity Supply Industry Distribution Infrastructure Standards
Procurement Category:	Lump - sum consultancy contract Maximum duration 6 months
RFP Issue Date:	Tuesday, 15 September 2026
Clarification Deadline:	Friday, 25 September 2026 at 12:00
Proposal Closing:	Thursday, 05 November 2026 at 11:00
Technical Opening:	Thursday, 05 November 2026 at 11:15
Proposal Validity:	90 calendar days from the closing date
Tender fee / bid security:	None
Bid Documents Availability:	The documents for this bid can be requested on email at procure@ecb.org.na
Two-Envelope Submission:	The Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal must be sealed separately and placed in one sealed outer envelope. The Technical Proposal must contain no price information.

All requests for information of any kind relating to this RFP should be channelled in writing to:

Mrs. Melissa Kahimise procure@ecb.org.na or tel: +264 61 374 300

while the restoration of access to traditional export markets remains subject to regulatory requirements imposed by importing countries.

“We cannot responsibly predict when normal operations will resume or when the Corporation will again be able to operate on a commercially sustainable basis,” Meatco said.

The corporation is also pursuing alternative sales opportunities in the domestic retail, wholesale, hospitality and catering sectors, while assessing permissible regional and international trading opportunities.

However, it warned that these markets would not fully compensate for the loss of higher-value beef exports.

De Klerk called on the government, as Meatco's shareholder, to urgently provide financial and commercial support to help

the corporation withstand the prolonged disruption.

“We therefore call upon Government, as our Shareholder, and our partners across the livestock industry to work urgently towards practical financial and commercial interventions. Meatco cannot shoulder the financial consequences of this crisis indefinitely on its own,” she said.

She warned that the consequences of the shutdown extended beyond Meatco to livestock producers dependent on market access, employees and the wider livestock industry.

The corporation said its immediate priority was to preserve available financial resources, meet essential obligations for as long as possible and maintain the capacity to resume normal operations once veterinary restrictions and market conditions allow.



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BoN briefs President Nandi-Ndaitwah on economic outlook, financial stability risks

Bank of Namibia Governor Ebson Uanguta has briefed President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah on Namibia's economic outlook, inflation and emerging risks to financial stability, as the country prepares for major investments in oil and gas and renewable energy.

The high-level engagement formed part of the central bank's ongoing consultations with key stakeholders on economic developments and policy

priorities.

According to the Bank of Namibia, discussions focused on global and domestic economic conditions, Namibia's growth prospects, inflation expectations and potential threats to macroeconomic and financial stability.

The meeting also covered progress on several major financial sector initiatives, including the Instant Payments Platform, Namibia Financial Sector Transformation Strategy, Gold Acquisition Programme

and Sovereign Wealth Fund.

The central bank said the initiatives

were aimed at strengthening Namibia's financial system, improving financial inclusion and supporting sustainable economic development.

The briefing also addressed the bank's preparations for Namibia's emerging oil and gas industry and green energy transition, particularly efforts to strengthen institutional capacity and international cooperation.

The anticipated development of these sectors is expected to introduce new demands on the country's financial system, requiring stronger regulatory oversight and institutional preparedness.

The Bank of Namibia said the engagement reaffirmed its commitment to providing economic analysis to inform national policy decisions and maintaining regular dialogue with the Presidency.

The central bank also emphasised its commitment to safeguarding macroeconomic and financial stability while supporting inclusive economic development.

Uangata was accompanied by Deputy Governors Leonie Dunn and Nicholas Mukasa, as well as Deputy Director of Corporate Communications and Sustainability Naufiku Hamunime.



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- Establishing, developing and maintaining strong business relationships with existing and prospective Customers to drive Customer retention and generate new business opportunities
- Identifying, qualifying and converting sales opportunities through proactive Customer engagement, networking and regular Customer visits
- Working closely with internal departments to ensure efficient machine availability, order processing, delivery, commissioning and Customer handover
- Maintaining accurate Customer records for machine sales and parts forecasts and opportunity pipelines to support effective business planning and reporting
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- Assisting Customers with fleet application and equipment forecasting
- Assisting Customers with rebuild planning and forecasting
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Not all truth needs to be voiced

By Junias Erasmus

Truth is important, but wisdom teaches us that not everything we know needs to be said.

There are moments when speaking the truth is necessary, and there are moments when silence is the wiser choice.

Maturity is not only about knowing what is true, but also understanding when, how and why to say it.

Many people believe that honesty means expressing every thought that comes to mind.

However, there is a difference between being honest and being careless with words. You may know something about another person, recognise their weakness or understand the truth behind a difficult situation.

Yet, speaking about it may serve no useful purpose other than causing pain, damaging relationships or creating unnecessary conflict.

Words have consequences. Once spoken, they cannot always be taken back. A statement made in anger can destroy trust, while information shared without careful thought can damage someone's reputation.

Sometimes, people use the excuse of being truthful to justify being cruel. They say, "I am just telling the truth," without considering whether their words are necessary, helpful or respectful. The truth should not be used as a weapon to humiliate others.

This does not mean that we should hide wrongdoing, protect harmful behaviour or



“

Many people believe that honesty means expressing every thought that comes to mind.

remain silent when someone is at risk.

There are situations where speaking up is a moral responsibility, especially when honesty is necessary to protect people, prevent harm or ensure accountability. Wisdom is knowing the difference between silence that protects dignity and silence that allows injustice to continue.

In our personal and professional lives, we should learn to think before we speak. Ask yourself whether what you want to say is necessary, whether it will help the situation and whether you are the right person to share it.

Sometimes, the most responsible response is to speak privately rather than publicly. At other times, it is better to listen, allow emotions to settle or keep information confidential.

Silence can be a sign of self-control, respect and emotional intelligence. It allows us to avoid unnecessary arguments and protects us from speaking out of anger or pride. However, silence should come from wisdom, not fear.

We must have the courage to speak when the situation demands honesty, even when the truth is uncomfortable.



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Ultimately, maturity is not measured by how much you say, but by how wisely you choose your words. You do not have to express every thought, expose every secret or respond to every situation.

Learn when to speak and when to remain silent. The truth deserves honesty, but people also deserve dignity. Sometimes, the wisest thing you can say is nothing at all.

* **Junias Erasmus** is

an Interdisciplinary Scholar, Philosopher, and Legal Researcher, with recognised expertise in Artificial Intelligence grounded in a Multidisciplinary foundation in Management Science. He is also a Motivational Speaker. This article is authored in his personal capacity. For enquiries, he may be contacted at Junias99@gmail.com.



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Nandi-Ndaitwah urges local firms to prepare for govt's local-content policy

President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah has urged Namibian businesses to strengthen their production and technical capacity ahead of the adoption of the government's local-content policy, as the country seeks to increase domestic participation in emerging industries.

Speaking at the official opening of the Swakopmund International Trade Expo (SWAiTEX) at The Dome in Swakopmund, Nandi-Ndaitwah said local companies needed to position themselves to supply goods and services to the oil and gas, renewable energy, green hydrogen and rare earth minerals sectors.

She said businesses should identify the requirements of these industries and

develop the capacity to meet demand as new investment projects take shape.

"We can either sell what we produce today, or build the capacity to produce more, process more, innovate more, and compete more effectively," she said.

Nandi-Ndaitwah said preparing local enterprises to participate in emerging industries would support the implementation of the government's local-content policy once adopted.

The President's remarks come as Namibia seeks to ensure that investments in new industries translate into greater domestic production, value addition and employment opportunities.

She said the Sixth National Development

Plan (NDP6) prioritised economic diversification, industrial development and job creation, with a focus on reducing dependence on raw-material exports.

The plan promotes local processing and beneficiation to increase the economic value generated from Namibia's natural resources.

Similarly, the National Trade Policy 2023–2030 seeks to strengthen the competitiveness of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, diversify exports and expand access to regional and international markets.

Nandi-Ndaitwah said trade exhibitions such as SWAiTEX could help local businesses establish commercial relationships with larger companies,

investors and potential customers.

“They are practical marketplaces where producers meet buyers, businesses test ideas, investors identify opportunities, and entrepreneurs build relationships that can become contracts, partnerships and create jobs, all of which are priority areas of our government,” she said.

She stressed that the success of the expo should be measured by the contracts, partnerships and employment opportunities generated beyond the exhibition.

The President also encouraged Namibian businesses to take advantage of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to expand their operations into regional markets.

She highlighted the Port of Walvis Bay and the Trans-Kalahari, Trans-Caprivi and Trans-Cunene corridors as important infrastructure supporting access to regional and international markets.

However, she said local companies needed to improve product quality, packaging, reliability and compliance with safety standards to compete effectively.

Nandi-Ndaitwah further urged businesses to increase local sourcing and collaborate to fulfil larger orders, while creating training and employment opportunities for young Namibians.

SWAiTEX is being held under the theme “Powering Africa’s Next Economy: Innovation, Inclusion & Industrial Growth.”

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China's zero-tariff policy creates a new export opportunity for Namibia

By Hellen Amupolo

Namibia's next growth opportunity may not lie in discovering new products to export, but in gaining easier access to some of the world's largest consumer markets.

China's decision to introduce a zero-tariff framework for eligible exports from African countries has the potential to reshape trade relationships across the continent and create significant new opportunities for Namibian businesses.

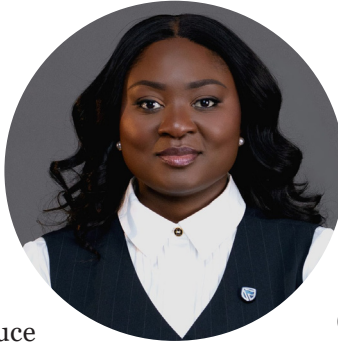
While the policy may appear to be a technical trade adjustment, its implications are far-reaching. Lower tariffs make African products more competitive, improve market access and create new possibilities for businesses looking beyond their traditional export destinations.

For Namibia, the opportunity comes at a particularly important time.

Expanding Namibia's Export Horizons

Namibia has made significant progress in diversifying its economy and strengthening its export base. Sectors such as mining, agriculture, fisheries and manufacturing continue to play a vital role in economic growth and employment.

However, global trade dynamics are evolving rapidly. Businesses are increasingly recognising the importance of diversifying both their customer base and export markets. Dependence on a



Namibia has made significant progress in diversifying its economy and strengthening its export base.

limited number of trading partners can expose exporters to shifts in demand, economic downturns or changing trade policies.

China offers an attractive alternative.

As the world's second-largest economy and one of Africa's most significant trading partners, China continues to demonstrate strong demand for agricultural products, seafood, minerals and value-added goods. These are sectors where Namibia already possesses recognised strengths and competitive advantages.

Namibia is globally known for products such as premium beef, table grapes, high-quality seafood and mineral resources. Improved access to China's vast consumer and industrial markets has the potential to unlock new demand for these products while creating incentives for further investment and expansion.

For local exporters, greater market access can enhance competitiveness, support business growth and generate additional revenue streams.

Beyond Commodities: Unlocking Greater Value

The opportunity extends beyond Namibia's traditional exports.

As China's economy continues to evolve, demand is growing for premium food products, processed agricultural goods, specialty products and sustainably sourced commodities. This creates an opportunity for Namibian businesses to move beyond raw commodity exports and focus on greater value addition.

The long-term benefits could be significant. Increased participation in international value chains can stimulate investment, encourage innovation and support job creation across multiple sectors of the economy.

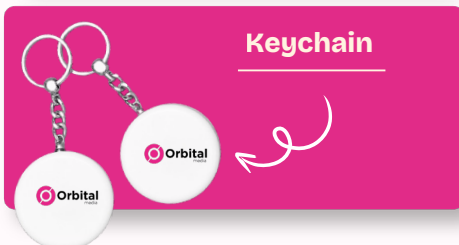
For a country focused on industrialisation and economic diversification, access

to a larger market provides a powerful incentive for businesses to invest in new capabilities and expand production.

Strengthening Africa-China Trade Links

The significance of this policy extends beyond tariffs. It signals China's continued commitment to deepening economic ties with Africa at a time when global trade patterns are becoming increasingly fragmented and uncertain. For African businesses, stronger trade links with China provide access not only to a large market, but also to one of the world's most important centres of manufacturing, investment and consumption.

The China-Africa trade relationship has strengthened considerably over recent decades, creating new pathways for African exporters to connect with global



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demand. For Namibia, this presents an opportunity to position itself more strategically within evolving international supply chains.

As sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, manufacturing, logistics and energy continue to expand, access to larger international markets will become increasingly important to sustaining growth and attracting investment.

Turning Opportunity into Export Growth

While improved market access creates opportunity, it does not guarantee success.

Exporters must still meet international quality standards, comply with regulatory requirements and build strong commercial relationships with buyers. Successful participation in global trade requires preparation, market intelligence, access to finance and a clear understanding of cross-border business environments.

This is where strong partnerships become critical.

At Standard Bank Namibia, we work closely with businesses to help them identify export opportunities, navigate international markets and access the financial solutions required to compete effectively across borders.

Importantly, Standard Bank Group's strategic partnership with the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) provides an additional bridge between African businesses and one of the world's largest markets.

Through this network, Namibian businesses can gain access to valuable market insights, trade expertise, cross-border payment solutions and potential commercial connections that support export growth.

Trade finance, working capital facilities

and documentary trade instruments can also help businesses manage risk, improve cash flow and fund expansion into new markets.

While businesses must still confirm product eligibility, rules of origin and other market-entry requirements, the combination of improved access and the right support structures can significantly strengthen their ability to participate in international trade.

A Window for Growth

Namibia stands at an important moment in its economic journey.

Alongside emerging opportunities in sectors such as renewable energy, logistics, manufacturing and value-added processing, expanding access to international markets will be essential for driving sustainable growth and job creation.

China's zero-tariff policy should not be viewed simply as a trade concession. It should be seen as a strategic opportunity for Namibia to accelerate export diversification, strengthen economic resilience and deepen its integration into global markets.

The businesses that benefit most will be those that act early, invest in competitiveness and position themselves to meet growing international demand.

For Namibia, this is more than an opportunity to increase exports. It is an opportunity to strengthen the country's role in global trade, create new avenues for growth and write the next chapter in its economic development story.

The opportunity is open. The next step is ensuring that Namibian businesses are ready to seize it.

*** Hellen Amupolo, Executive Officer: Business and Commercial Banking, Standard Bank Namibia**

Arandis Dry Fish Factory drives value addition in Namibia's fishing industry



Arandis Dry Fish Factory is driving value addition in Namibia's fishing industry through the processing and packaging of horse mackerel into dried fish products, creating opportunities for local employment while seeking to expand production through modern drying technology.

The company has invested N\$1.4 million in a fish-drying machine as part of efforts to improve production efficiency, reduce post-harvest losses and expand access to domestic and potential export markets.

The company processes locally sourced fish for households, retailers, restaurants and wholesalers, with plans to increase production capacity and strengthen its position in the processed fish market.

The initiative forms part of efforts to increase the economic value derived from Namibia's marine resources by expanding

local processing activities and supporting employment across the fisheries value chain.

Arandis Dry Fish Factory Executive Director David Ipinge said dried fish could also provide an affordable and practical source of protein for Namibian households, particularly as the country grapples with the impact of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) on the livestock industry.

"In these turbulent times, when we are facing the challenges of foot-and-mouth disease, fish can become a good alternative source of protein. Given that many Namibians do not have refrigerators, dried fish is a practical option for households to meet their protein needs," Ipinge said.

He said the ability to preserve fish without refrigeration could make dried fish particularly suitable for households with limited access to electricity and cold-

storage facilities.

Arandis Dry Fish Factory currently markets naturally dried horse mackerel, packaged in three-kilogram boxes, with products available in different size categories.

The company's N\$1.4 million investment in drying equipment is aimed at improving its processing operations through technology designed to reduce drying times, improve product consistency and limit contamination associated with traditional open-air drying.

Unlike conventional sun-drying methods, which can take between two and three days depending on weather conditions, heat-pump drying systems can potentially reduce processing times to between eight and 18 hours, depending on fish size, moisture content and operating conditions.

The technology uses a sealed stainless-steel chamber in which fish is placed on trays and dried through a combination of controlled heating, air circulation and moisture removal.

Operating temperatures of approximately 35°C to 55°C allow moisture to be extracted without exposing the fish to excessive heat that could affect its texture and quality.

The system also removes moisture from circulating air, creating controlled drying conditions that can help processors achieve more consistent results while reducing dependence on favourable weather.

For local processors, the technology offers an opportunity to increase production cycles, reduce spoilage risks and improve the quality of dried fish supplied to domestic and regional markets.

The enclosed processing environment also reduces exposure to dust, insects and rain, addressing some of the hygiene challenges associated with open-air fish drying.

Heat-pump systems can also offer lower

electricity consumption than conventional electric resistance dryers, although actual savings depend on equipment specifications, processing volumes and operating conditions.

The investment could enable the factory to handle larger volumes of raw fish and produce more consistent products for formal retail and wholesale markets.

Beyond processing, the Arandis operation has the potential to support employment across fish handling, preparation, drying, packaging, storage and distribution.

The company's activities could also create opportunities for local suppliers, transport operators, packaging businesses and distributors involved in moving processed fish to consumers.

Arandis Dry Fish Factory targets households, market vendors, restaurants, takeaway businesses, wholesalers and potential export buyers, positioning dried horse mackerel as a locally processed product with opportunities for wider commercial distribution.

The company says its processing approach focuses on maintaining product quality, hygiene and nutritional value without the use of preservatives.

The development highlights opportunities for smaller Namibian businesses to participate in fisheries value addition through processing technologies that can extend product shelf life, reduce post-harvest losses and improve marketability.

While the company has confirmed the N\$1.4 million investment in the drying machine, it has not disclosed its current production capacity, number of employees or projected employment opportunities.

The extent to which the investment will increase output and employment will depend on production volumes, market demand and the company's ability to expand its processing operations.

The AI policy gap: Are parastatals being left behind?

By Hafeni Kashimbonde

Just last week at the opening of the 9th National ICT Summit in Ongwediva, Information Communication and Technology Minister Emma Theofelus announced that Cabinet has directed her ministry together with the Office of the Prime Minister to co-develop an internal AI policy aimed at civil servants to dictate how they can safely and ethically use artificial intelligence in public administration.

While this directive heavily impacts the broader public sector it strictly focuses on public service and civil servants, effectively remaining silent on immediate binding mandates for the private sector and parastatals.

What does this mean?

An Office of the Prime Minister internal public service directive does not automatically bind parastatals outside of their explicit statutory mandates unless it is formally extended to them through a broader national framework.

The operational and administrative mandate of the office is grounded in the Public Service Act, 1995 (Act 13 of 1995) which applies solely to core government entities and explicitly omits parastatals.

Challenge:

Parastatals often govern critical national assets such as power grids, water supplies transportation and network. They also adopt AI innovation such as predictive maintenance, workflow and process intelligence much faster than traditional ministries do.



Parastatals often govern critical national assets such as power grids, water supplies transportation and network.

Left outside a structured national AI framework, these entities may adopt siloed, unregulated AI tools which can expose critical infrastructure to automated cyberattacks and algorithmic manipulation.

Unlike the state, parastatals deploy automated technologies that directly impact citizens, such as allocating social grants, processing tax data, or determining municipal services.

Failing to mandate strict algorithmic accountability and bias checks on these entities can lead to catastrophic service failures. These should have been prioritized.

When an AI system deployed by a private firm like “Old Mutual” fails for example, liability laws are relatively straightforward. However, when an autonomous or automated system operated by the “Ministry of Finance” causes a massive breakdown in Tax refund payments, this lack of clarity leaves affected citizens with limited legal recourse and creates confusion within state legal departments.

Solution:

Failing to mandate strict algorithmic accountability and bias checks on these entities can lead to catastrophic service failures.

Even in the absence of explicit, standalone national AI laws, parastatals remain bound by corporate governance laws, companies acts, and national privacy protections (e.g., POPIA in South Africa or Data Protection Bills in Namibia).

Parastatals that embed responsible AI governance practices in their business now will not only be better positioned to comply with future AI regulation, but will also satisfy their current legal obligations and meet the growing expectations of investors,

counterparties and regulators.

**Hafeni Kashimbonde is an independent governance expert and the former company secretary at FirstRand group and FNB Namibia. He currently lends his expertise to Joburg Ballet as a member of two key boards: the Social, Ethics and Transformation Committee and the Remuneration, Nominations and Governance Committee.*

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LLPB to recruit 36 veterinary graduates for internship programme

The Livestock and Livestock Products Board (LLPB) has approved plans to recruit and deploy 36 veterinary graduates as interns to strengthen practical veterinary skills and support animal health services in Namibia.

LLPB Chief Executive Officer Vehaka Tjimune announced the initiative during the third annual Best Students Award

Ceremony at the University of Namibia's (UNAM) Neudamm Campus.

Tjimune said the programme would provide veterinary graduates with practical workplace experience, allowing them to apply their academic knowledge while working alongside experienced veterinarians.

“The graduates will have an opportunity to

The internship programme is expected to strengthen graduates' diagnostic skills and improve their readiness to enter the veterinary profession.

work alongside experienced veterinarians and gain practical experience, particularly in diagnosing animal diseases,” Tjimune said.

The internship programme is expected to strengthen graduates' diagnostic skills and improve their readiness to enter the veterinary profession.

It will also help bridge the gap between academic training and the practical requirements of veterinary services, particularly in animal disease diagnosis.

However, the board did not disclose when recruitment would begin, how long the internships would run or where the graduates would be deployed.

Meanwhile, the LLPB awarded N\$5,000 each to two UNAM students in recognition of their academic performance in animal science. Paulina Fillemon received the Best Student in Animal Science award, while Innocent Hiangoro was recognised as the

Best MSc Animal Science Graduate.

Fillemon was also named the overall top student in the Department of Animal Production, Agribusiness and Economics (DAPAE), earning an additional N\$10,000 from Kamab Simbra and a floating trophy.

Tjimune encouraged students to pursue careers in animal science and veterinary services, emphasising the importance of technical skills, practical training and determination.

“Your time as a student is a stage in your life that requires resilience, determination and a clear sense of purpose,” he said.

He also urged students to make use of the knowledge and practical training provided by academic staff to prepare for employment in the livestock industry.

The internship initiative forms part of the LLPB's efforts to support skills development and provide veterinary graduates with practical experience in Namibia's livestock

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