WINDHOEK OBSERVER

Windhoek rent takes a big bite out of youth salaries

Parliament still in turmoil over PSC appointments

Debmarine vessel shutdown cuts diamond output

Double dipping questions hang over finance ED

RENTHIA KAIMBI
Staff Writer

The appointment of Oscar Capelao as executive director of the Ministry of Finance has raised questions about potential conflicts of interest, as he continues to serve on the board of the National Petroleum Corporation of Namibia (Namcor).

Capelao was appointed executive director in December 2025, a role that places him at the centre of government oversight of public enterprises, including Namcor.

He has served as a Namcor board member since July 2024.

His dual position has drawn scrutiny from governance expert Johannes Coetzee, who cautioned that the arrangement presents structural risks.

"If the same person is on the board and in the Ministry of Finance signing off budgets and forecasts, their dual roles could place them where they effectively influence both enterprise financial policy and how those revenues are captured or used by the state," Coetzee said.

He noted that tensions are most evident when dividend decisions arise.

A board member is required to act in the best interests of the enterprise, while a senior finance official may be primarily concerned with maximising state revenue.

Oscar Capelao

Johan Coetzee

"The legal definition of conflict doesn't require wrongdoing, just an interest that could impair objectivity," Coetzee added.

The Public Enterprises Governance Act (PEGA) of 2019 requires board members to disclose any direct or indirect interest that may compromise their objectivity and to recuse themselves from related deliberations.

By virtue of his office, Capelao serves ex officio on the boards of the Namibia Revenue Agency (NamRA) and the Bank of Namibia (BoN).

These appointments are attached to the position of executive director.

His seat on the Namcor board, however, is not.

Section 7 of PEGA limits individuals to serving on no more than two public enterprise boards at the same time, unless a minister grants

> "If the same person is on the board and in the Ministry of Finance signing off budgets and forecasts, their dual roles could place them where they effectively influence both enterprise financial policy and how those revenues are captured or used by the state.
> **-Johan Coetzee**

TO PAGE 2

'Oil security not a concern for now' – Amutse

JUSTICIA SHIPENA
Staff Writer

Namibia's fuel supply remains stable for the next few months despite rising global oil prices linked to tensions in the Middle East, industries, mines and energy minister Modestus Amutse told parliament on Tuesday.

He responded to an urgent oral question from the South West Africa National Union (Swanu) president and member of parliament Evilastus Kaaronda, who asked how prepared the country is for a possible fuel price increase after crude oil prices surged.

This follows as brent crude oil prices rose sharply by 10% to around US$80 per barrel on Sunday.

Analysts say prices could increase even further after recent US and Israeli strikes on Iran raised tensions in the Middle East.

TO PAGE 3

The psychology of motivating employees through training and development

Employee motivation is often viewed through the lens of incentives — salaries, bonuses, promotions, and perks. While these factors matter, they rarely sustain engagement on their own. One of the most powerful, yet sometimes underestimated, drivers of motivation is growth. When employees feel they are learning, improving, and progressing, their sense of purpose and commitment strengthens. Training and development, when designed thoughtfully, tap directly into this psychology.

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NATIONAL

Windhoek rent takes a big bite out of youth salaries

Staff Writer

Young working professionals in Windhoek are spending up to half of their monthly income on rent as housing costs continue to rise faster than wages.

A one-bedroom unit now ranges between N$4 500 and N$7 500 per month, excluding utilities. For many tenants, rent is their largest expense.

An upfront payment of between N$8 000 and N$12 000, including deposits and utility charges, is often required to secure a one-bedroom apartment.

For entry- and mid-level earners taking home less than N$10 000 per month, the financial pressure begins before they move in.

A 27-year-old marketing assistant, who spoke to the *Windhoek Observer* on conditions of anonymity, said she has been searching for a new place for nearly a month.

"Most places I've viewed are above N$5 000. When you add a deposit and prepaid electricity, you need almost N$9 000 upfront," she said.

She earns just under N$10 000 a month.

"After rent, transportation, and groceries, there is very little left. Saving becomes impossible. You work full time, but you're constantly calculating," she said.

"If you want something cheaper, you move further from town. But then transport costs increase."

Tenants say the impact is already shaping their lives.

"When rent takes nearly half your salary, everything else becomes secondary. It changes how you plan your future."

Thirty-year-old junior accountant Miguel Paulus said upfront costs make it challenging for young people to live on their own.

Photo for illustration prurposes only. - *Travelthewholeworld.com*

"It's not just rent. There are water deposits, electricity deposits and sometimes agency fees. You need almost two months' salary before you can secure a place," Paulus said.

He recently viewed apartments priced between N$6 000 and N$7 000 but could not afford the deposit and advance payment.

"You realise quickly that it's not sustainable long term," he said.

Adding, "The hardest thing about accommodation in Windhoek is that landlords only want one tenant in a house; for someone with a small kid or family, we are forced to sacrifice family over accommodation."

Paulus said some young professionals are postponing plans to live independently.

"I know colleagues who are staying with family longer than they intended because rent is high," he said.

Property consultant Helena Uugwanga said demand for smaller units remains strong, especially among single-income earners and young professionals moving to the capital for work.

"There is consistent demand for one-bedroom and bachelor units close to commercial areas. Supply has not increased at the same rate," she said.

She said landlords are adjusting their rental rates due to rising municipal tariffs, maintenance costs and security expenses.

"Operating costs have gone up, and that is reflected in rental pricing," she said.

"As long as demand remains strong and development remains limited, rental rates will stabilise around current levels," Uugwanga said.

Windhoek's population has grown over the past decade and now exceeds 500 000 residents.

Urban migration continues to increase demand for housing, especially in the lower- and middle-income rental market.

Housing analysts have pointed to a backlog in serviced land and affordable housing construction.

Limited serviced plots and delays in infrastructure expansion have slowed the development of lower-cost housing.

Economist Precious Martinus said the crisis reflects the gap between wage growth and housing costs.

"Internationally, housing is considered affordable when households spend no more than 30 to 35% of income on rent," she said. "In Windhoek, many young professionals are spending between 40% and 50%."

She said high rental costs limit savings and delay financial stability.

"When a large portion of income goes to rent, households struggle to accumulate assets, invest or prepare for emergencies," Martinus said.

Many young professionals also support extended family members.

"If one income supports multiple dependents, the effective housing burden becomes heavier," she said.

Last week, the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development announced plans to reactivate a national rent control board and review rental laws. The current framework, based on the Rents Ordinance of 1977, has not been enforced for years.

The ministry said the board will address landlord-tenant disputes and review rules on deposits and rental practices.

Officials acknowledged that market forces have largely set rental prices in the absence of an active regulatory system.

Urban development researcher George Kandanga said reform may improve dispute resolution but will not lower prices in the short term.

"The core issue is supply. As long as demand exceeds available stock in the affordable segment, prices will remain under upward pressure," Kandanga noted.

He said increasing land servicing and speeding up housing development are key to easing pressure over time.

Double dipping questions hang over finance ED

FROM PAGE 1

an exception due to a shortage of skills. While the Act permits ex officio appointments required by law, it further provides that such individuals may not be appointed to a third or additional board beyond those mandated by their office.

Sources said Capelao joined the Namcor board before assuming the executive director role. He now occupies a position in which he oversees the same enterprise through the ministry.

Coetzee argued that the issue extends beyond the numerical limits set out in legislation.

"These appointees are vetted by national intelligence, and that is one political requirement to be politically correct and not criticise the government," he said.

He added that although the law prescribes qualifications and independence, "political interest overrides qualifications and experience, including conflict of interest."

Coetzee also pointed to amendments to PEGA that place public enterprise boards under the reporting line of the prime minister, describing this as "an indication of centralised political interference overriding any conflict of interest of a political nature".

Namcor itself has faced persistent challenges, including allegations of financial mismanagement and leadership instability, heightening sensitivity around governance and oversight.

This publication sent questions to Capelao on Monday, asking whether his appointment as executive director requires him to step down from the Namcor board in line with the spirit of PEGA. He was also asked whether approving Namcor's budget as the ministry's accounting officer, while simultaneously participating in shaping it as a board member, presents a conflict. Further questions addressed potential tensions around dividend decisions and his role in strategic matters requiring Cabinet approval, including the possible sale or privatisation of 18 Namcor service stations.

Capelao had not responded by the time of publication.

Questions were also sent to executive director in the Office of the Prime Minister, Gladys Pickering, to confirm whether Prime Minister Elijah Ngurare granted an exception permitting Capelao to remain on the Namcor board. She had not responded at the time of publication.

Parliament still in turmoil over PSC appointments

JUSTICIA SHIPENA
Staff Writer

The National Assembly descended into disorder on Tuesday after opposition members once again objected to the voting process over the approval of four nominated Public Service Commission (PSC) commissioners.

Parliament had resumed debate on the nomination and re-nomination of PSC members for a five-year term.

When the House adjourned last Thursday, the matter had not been concluded.

The motion, tabled by prime minister Elijah Ngurare, sought approval for the appointment and re-appointment of commissioners nominated by the President.

The matter carried urgency, as the current commissioners' terms expired on Friday and new members were expected to be sworn in by Monday.

During the previous sitting, when speaker Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila put the question for approval, opposition members walked out of the chamber.

Their departure left the House without a quorum, halting the vote.

On Tuesday, the matter returned to the floor. Affirmative Repositioning (AR) member of parliament Job Amupanda raised concerns about the procedure followed by the presiding officer, which was deputy speaker Phillipus Katamelo.

"To recall, you are not the presiding officer. There were members who wanted to contribute," Amupanda said.

He said while he welcomed the opportunity given to the mover of the motion to respond, other members who had indicated they wished to speak were not accommodated.

"I'm very happy that we are at least giving the mover an opportunity to respond, so that whatever we said, whether it's true or not true, can at least be responded to, which is good. I salute that. But there were members on the floor who wanted to contribute. So how do we deal with that matter?" he asked.

Katamelo responded that the matter had already proceeded to voting during the previous sitting but could not be concluded due to a lack of quorum.

"Okay, just take a seat. I don't know; we must be guided because this thing went to voting, mustn't we? It went to voting, and there was no quorum, which means the process must start there," Katamelo said.

He said he exercised his discretion to allow Ngurare, as the mover of the motion, to conclude the debate before the question was put to a vote.

"I just used my discretion that for any motion, there is a mover, and then there is the conclusion; the same person concludes. So it's where I said, now the prime minister must respond to what the contributions were," he said.

Katamelo indicated that once Ngurare had responded, the House would vote.

When the matter progressed to voting, 48 Swapo members voted in favour of the nominations. Katamelo declared the matter agreed upon, as no opposition members participated in the vote.

Opposition members objected to the ruling and disrupted proceedings.

The disorder prompted Katamelo to adjourn the session to Wednesday.

The nominees include ambassador Patrick Nandago as chairperson; Gerson Kamatuka, who has served as a public service commissioner since March 2021, has been nominated for reappointment; ambassador Linda Scott has also been nominated as well as former member of parliament and deputy minister of justice Ludwina Shapwa, who is among the nominees.

Ngurare said the nominees' curricula vitae had been distributed to members before the debate.

Elijah Ngurare

Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila *-Photos: Contributed*

'Oil security not a concern for now' – Amutse

FROM PAGE 1

More than 20% of the world's oil passes through the Strait of Hormuz, a key shipping route.

Tanker traffic in the area has slowed following warnings from Iran, raising concerns about possible supply disruptions.

"For now, the security of oil for the next two or three months is not a serious concern yet for Namibia," Amutse said.

Amutse said the government is monitoring the situation before deciding on any fuel price adjustment.

"We have not yet come to the position of making a determination as to whether we must increase the oil price at the pump or whether we should still wait until we see how things unfold," he said.

He said Namibia sources fuel from the Middle East, India and the European Union, which provides supply flexibility.

According to Namibia Statistics Agency trade data, Namibia imported petroleum oils valued at N$1.5 billion in December. This was N$778 million lower than the previous month, with most imports coming from the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Modestus Amutse - *Photo: Contributed*

"For now we will continue with the price that we have, which we determined last Friday, and make announcements there too until we make other determinations on the basis of the condition in the Middle East," he said.

He added that future price decisions will depend on how the geopolitical situation develops.

"It will be informed by the continuity of the situation. It will be informed by the availability of the oil itself within the Republic of Namibia and those that are in stock and those that are on the road coming to Namibia to fill the gap as we continue to consume," he said.

"Yes, it is a concern for everyone in the world, including Namibia, and we will continue to inform the people of Namibia as to where we are," Amutse added.

Last week, the ministry announced that fuel prices will remain unchanged for March. In Walvis Bay, ULP95 petrol remains at N$19.58 per litre, diesel 50ppm (parts per million) at N$19.63 per litre, and diesel 10ppm at N$19.73 per litre. The latest fuel price review recorded an overrecovery of 5.04 cents per litre for petrol and underrecoveries of 40.04 cents for diesel (50 ppm) and 89.77 cents for diesel (10 ppm). The dealer margin increased by 2 cents per litre to 238 cents per litre.

At the time, the ministry said international shipping costs declined in February due to improved tanker availability, while crude prices rose because of tightening global supply and strong demand.

NATIONAL

‘We did our part’ – Kapofi on veterans camping outside Swapo HQ

ALLEXER NAMUNDJEMBO
Staff Writer

A standoff between the government and a group of liberation struggle veterans camping outside Swapo Party headquarters has drawn fresh attention, with defence and veterans affairs minister Frans Kapofi saying his ministry has fulfilled its responsibilities.

Kapofi said the veterans’ grievances are not directed at his ministry but at the United Nations.

“They are citing the UN in their demands,” he said.

He added that the group is demanding answers from the UN, not from the ministry.

“We are trying to read what the law is saying because it is in the law,” he said.

Kapofi said he remains available to meet the group whenever necessary.

His remarks came after Independent Patriots for Change (IPC) member of parliament Allosius Kangulu questioned him in Parliament on Tuesday about whether the ministry has plans to address the concerns of the veterans.

The group, members of the Former Refugees Repatriation Association of Namibia (FRRAN), have been camping outside Swapo headquarters in Windhoek since October 2025.

They say they were repatriated from exile in 1989 through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) programme and were promised funds, resettlement and rehabilitation support that was never implemented.

They are demanding what they call the immediate release of funds and benefits promised more than three decades ago.

A group of liberation struggle veterans camping outside Swapo party headquarters. - *Photo: Contributed*

They also want a letter from the UN outlining the terms of their repatriation, rehabilitation and resettlement.

Swapo’s lawyers previously issued the group with a formal eviction notice, giving them 24 hours to vacate the premises or face urgent High Court action.

The letter stated that their continued presence at the headquarters is unlawful and that their grievances have been addressed before, including during meetings with UN representatives.

The association has refused to leave.

FRRAN member Erastus Wilhem said the High Court letter that is being referred to is not a threat because “we did not request the High Court but came to our leaders to discuss the problems at hand.”

The group is also raising concerns about what it calls unequal treatment in veterans’ allowances. They want a standard grant for all liberation struggle veterans, regardless of the categories set out in the Veterans Act.

Last year, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Constitutional and Legal Affairs responded to a petition from the group and recommended that the Ministry of Defence and Veterans Affairs review monthly subventions and welfare grants.

The veterans are now calling for direct engagement with President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah to resolve the matter.

A month ago, UN resident coordinator to Namibia Hopolang Phororo said the UN provided assistance for the voluntary repatriation of former exiles in 1989 and has listened to the concerns raised by the group’s representatives.

She said the repatriation chapter closed three decades ago.

The UN stated that any new consideration of the return does not fall within its mandate. It also said claims regarding unimplemented “resettlement” and “rehabilitation” components under UN Security Council Resolution 435 (1978) are unclear when assessed against UNHCR’s mandate and definitions.

UNHCR said that the 1989 repatriation was voluntary, that donor funds were fully used and accounted for, and that no earmarked funds were retained. It said responsibility for rehabilitation rests with the government of the country of origin.

NEWS

NDP honours members for grassroots work

ALLEXER NAMUNDJEMBO
Staff Writer

The National Democratic Party (NDP) over the weekend honoured a group of long-standing members for their role in strengthening grassroots structures, driving campaign strategies and supporting community development.

The awards were presented during a ceremony held on Saturday at Kamunu Hall in Katima Mulilo. Party supporters and community leaders attended the event.

In a telephonic interview with the *Windhoek Observer* on Tuesday, NDP president Martin Lukato said the recognition reflects the contribution members have made in building the party.

"These members have gone beyond ordinary participation. They have inspired peers, led campaigns, and ensured that our message of economic emancipation, youth empowerment, and social justice reaches the people. Their work reflects the spirit of service, transparency, and equality that defines our movement," Lukato said.

He said the honourees played a central role in implementing a newly introduced organisational framework designed to align resources with stakeholders and coordinate action.

"The system strengthened the party's ability to pursue long-term development objectives while remaining responsive during times of crisis," he said.

Martin Lukato - *Photo: Contributed*

Several awardees were also recognised for promoting the party's "guerrilla strategic campaign system", which Lukato described as a high-impact outreach model aimed at engaging communities and expanding the party's grassroots footprint.

"Their commitment has not only strengthened internal structures but has also enhanced our visibility and connection with ordinary Namibians," Lukato said.

Artists and mobilisers who received certificates of appreciation were acknowledged for using their platforms to promote civic awareness, unity and participation in democratic processes. Lukato said their work helped amplify the party's call for free education, job creation and national unity.

Recipients of certificates of appreciation include Mwemba Rasboom, Benjamine Tembwe, Sikaya Duvert, Simataa Philemon, Libebe Fredreck, Mwanangombe Calvin, Maseho Ovens, Masoktwani Sipelu Group, Matengu Joba and Munembo Fred (Chicco Black).

Certificates of honour were awarded to senior leaders and organisers for their role in shaping party policy, strengthening constituency structures and promoting inclusivity.

"These individuals have consistently demonstrated discipline, loyalty, and vision," Lukato said. "They embody the resilience and determination required to build a Namibia free from poverty, hunger, illiteracy, and political division."

"This ceremony was not only about celebrating individuals," Lukato added, "but about reaffirming our collective mission to build a stronger, more inclusive Namibia."

Political analyst Sackaria Johannes said the event could motivate party members to continue supporting the NDP.

"They will continue working hard for the party if they know that their efforts are recognised," he said.

The NDP was established in 2003 and formally registered with the Electoral Commission of Namibia on 22 October 2004, enabling it to contest national and local elections.

The party contested the 2009 national and presidential elections but did not win seats. It continued to participate in subsequent elections. In the 2019 general elections, the NDP received 4 559 votes, or 0.6%, which was not enough to secure representation in the National Assembly.

In the 2024 general elections, the party obtained 6 647 votes, about 0.61%, and won its first seat in the National Assembly. In the 2025 regional and local authority elections, the NDP secured one seat on the Bukalo Village Council and one seat on the Katima Mulilo Town Council.

Solly Msimanga: Jacob Zuma has handed the shower to Panyaza Lesufi

The Democratic Alliance (DA) in Gauteng has unveiled a tongue-in-cheek billboard depicting Gauteng Premier Panyaza Lesufi taking a shower in a hotel amid the water crisis affecting parts of the province.

The billboard is a dig at how Lesufi recently faced a backlash after saying he was just as affected as ordinary residents by the water problems and "in some instances, I had to go to a certain hotel so that I could bathe and go to my commitments". Lesufi later apologised for his comments, acknowledging that they might have been "interpreted in a manner that suggested the impact of water challenges differs based on one's position in society".

On Tuesday, DA Gauteng leader Solly Msimanga told party supporters in Pretoria that "it looks like Mr Jacob Zuma has handed over the shower to Premier Panyaza Lesufi".

This was another swipe at how, during his rape trial in the early 2000s, then-deputy president Zuma admitted he had not used a condom during sex with his accuser, saying he took a shower afterwards to minimise the risk of contracting HIV.

"We might be laughing at this billboard but there are people in Newclare, Laudium, Hammanskraal, Ekurhuleni and Emfuleni who are still waiting for water to come out of their taps as it used to," Msimanga said on Tuesday, accusing Lesufi of having flaunted his privilege in front of struggling residents.

"He said: 'I will jump into my VIP protection vehicle, which residents are paying for, and I will go to a hotel that you are paying for and take a shower. But you can take a bucket and go to the streets and hope that a water tanker comes along.'"

"This is the type of tone-deaf government we do not need. We are saying to the people of Gauteng and across the country that they will continue doing the same and it will end in tears," Msimanga said in a clear campaign message before the local government elections later this year.

Launching a billboard that pokes fun at the Gauteng premier's recent gaffe about water shortages, the DA said the ANC had lost touch with voters and would lose its majority in all municipalities in the province later this year.

"We said to the premier: 'We want to give you an infrastructure master plan to implement,' but because it's not coming from comrades and it doesn't include people who are benefiting, they don't want it."

Residents had a choice to either continue voting the same way or vote for something different, he said. "We have been struggling with electricity for the past 15 to 16 years and we have said we are going to have the same problem with water."

He said that instead of taking responsibility for the water crisis, the provincial government blamed residents for high usage while failing to acknowledge that municipalities were losing significant amounts of the resource through leaks.

DA federal council chair Helen Zille said Lesufi's ANC would lose its majority in every municipality in Gauteng in the local government elections. Whether the DA garnered more than the 50% needed to govern the province outright was the biggest question the party must ask itself, she said.

"What we know for sure is that the ANC is going to lose its majority. We know that service delivery has failed but there's another reason people don't properly analyse — the ANC leadership has lost touch with the people," Zille said.

"After being in power for (more than 30 years) they think they are important, above everybody else and they can live a lifestyle that nobody else can dream about. When people don't have water for weeks and months, Panyaza Lesufi says: 'What are you fussing about? I just go to a hotel.' He has completely lost touch with everybody's lives. For him, the water crisis means nothing."

-Mail&Guardian

Joseph Kony: how a Ugandan war criminal and his soldiers have evaded capture and endured for decades

Joseph Kony, the leader of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), remains at large two decades after the International Criminal Court issued its first arrest warrants against him and four of his commanders.

The LRA emerged nearly 40 years ago. Between 1987 and 2006, northern Uganda's civilians were caught between LRA brutality – massacres and mass abductions – and a government counterinsurgency. This forced nearly two million people into camps for internally displaced people.

The LRA framed its struggle as resistance to President Yoweri Museveni and the sidelining of the Acholi, the dominant ethnic group in northern Uganda. However, over time violence ceased to be merely a strategy. It became the organising logic of the movement itself.

The YouTube video Kony 2012, produced by the American advocacy organisation Invisible Children, went viral in 2012. It turned a long war into a global cause célèbre. In 2013, Washington followed with a US$5 million bounty, which remains in place.

The International Criminal Court arrest warrants were for war crimes and crimes against humanity between 1 July 2002 (when the court's jurisdiction took effect) and July 2005 (when the arrest warrants were issued).

Today, the LRA is no more than a small, mobile group (possibly 12 to 20 fighters) living off trade, agriculture and protection in one of Africa's least governed border zones. It operates within the remote borderlands of the Central African Republic (CAR), Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The LRA may now be small, but its survival matters.

Kony's continued evasion of arrest – despite two decades of warrants, bounties and military operations – exposes the limits of both regional security cooperation and international justice. Recent intelligence and defector accounts suggest he is still alive, operating in the Sudan-CAR borderlands.

As long as he remains at large, the International Criminal Court's first arrest warrants risk becoming a symbol – not of global justice, but of its limits.

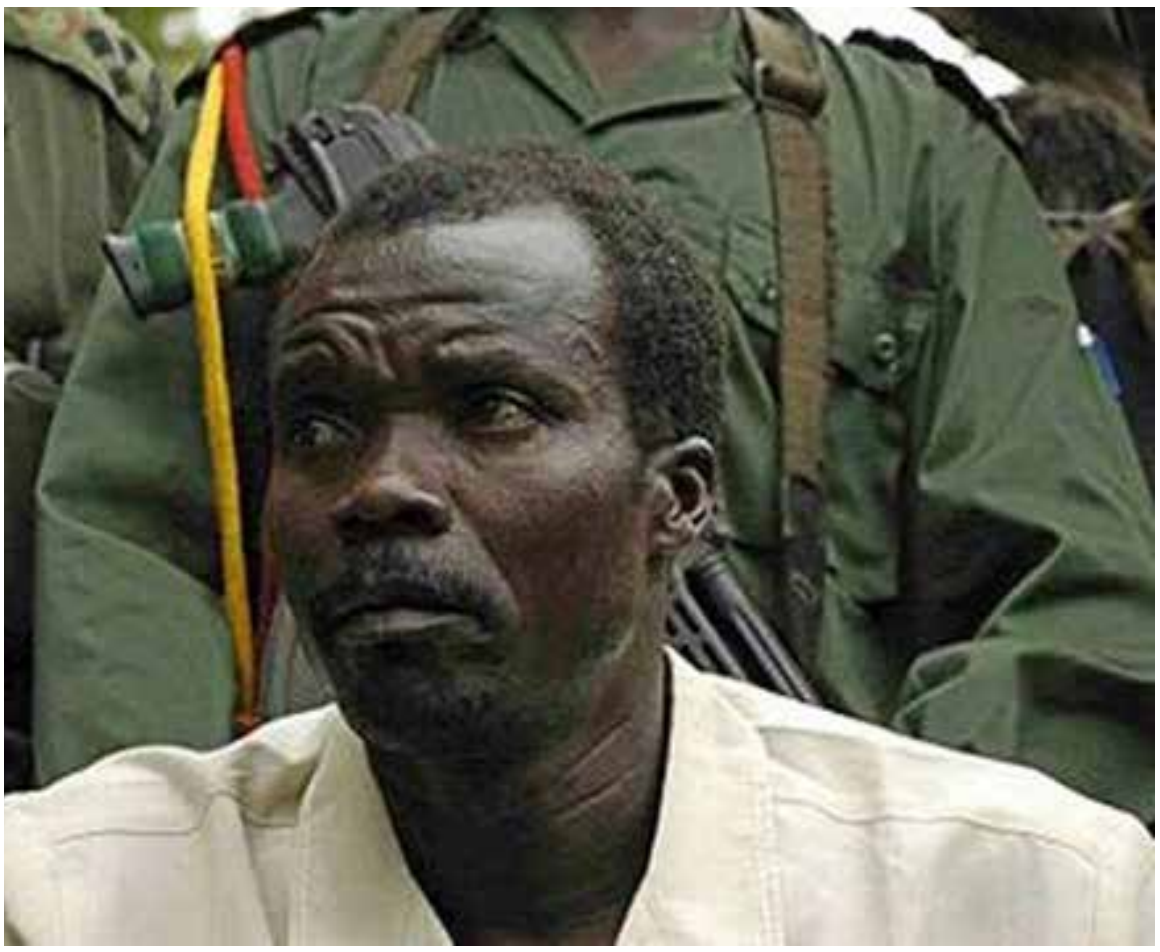
I have been researching the LRA for more than 20 years and in a recently published article, I answer the question: how has the group survived, even in extreme decline?

Drawing on interviews with former combatants, local actors and policymakers, my analysis looks as the LRA's evolving strategies of endurance since 2011.

things have been crucial: borderlands and the lack of political priority.

Borderlands – particularly between Sudan and the CAR, and to a lesser extent with the DRC – have offered Kony and his LRA members a way to disappear, to trade and to buy protection.

At the same time, the shifting political priorities of the states tracking Kony have repeatedly undermined their own goals.



Joseph Kony, the leader of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)

Why borderlands matter

Given their weak state presence, borderlands are often described as peripheral, marginal or forgotten. But in much of Africa, they are not empty spaces. They are active political and economic zones, shaped by cross-border networks of trade, migration, armed mobilisation and patronage.

For rebel groups, borderlands offer a particular set of advantages: access to sanctuaries across borders; rough terrain and low population density; cross-border trade routes; and opportunities to link into alternative centres of power.

This is precisely the kind of environment in which the LRA has been operating.

For roughly two decades, between 1987 and 2006, the LRA was primarily fighting a Ugandan war. The conflict produced vast civilian suffering, including the displacement of nearly two million people into camps – what has been described as "social torture".

From 1994 onwards, southern Sudan became crucial to the war, as Khartoum offered the LRA sanctuary and weapons. Further, before peace talks began in 2006 between Uganda and an LRA delegation, the rebel group crossed into the DRC and established itself in the dense and (at the time) mostly ungoverned Garamba National Park.

Following the collapse of negotiations, Uganda launched Operation Lightning Thunder in late 2008. The operation failed, and the LRA retaliated with massacres in north-eastern DRC in 2008-10.

These attacks were the LRA's last moment of large-scale violence.

Military pressure did not destroy the group, but fragmented it and pushed it out of the DRC.

Anticipating further offensives, the LRA began moving into the remote borderlands between the CAR, Sudan and South Sudan.

art of South Sudan but has long been controlled by Sudan.

From this point onward, Kony's strategy shifted: the group reduced attacks, limited abductions and tried to become less visible.

It was no longer trying to win a war, but trying to avoid being found.

The borderland economy

As looting declined, the LRA needed income streams that attracted little attention. Trade and agriculture became central. In the Sudan-CAR borderlands, established routes for licit goods like bamboo intersect with trade in cannabis, gold, ivory and diamonds.

The LRA did not only participate in this economy, but also taxed it. It set up checkpoints along trading routes.

It also cultivated a variety of crops on a large scale and was active in the trade of honey.

All of this allowed the group to survive quietly from around 2010 onwards, and become part of the border landscape. Its relationships included nomadic cattle herders, armed groups in the CAR and elements of the Sudanese military.

Kony also bought protection with the proceeds of illicit trade. Armed groups provided warnings about military threats and information about who was moving where. When necessary, Kony could move across borders quickly.

But borderlands are not only spaces of opportunity: they are also volatile. Under military pressure, Kony divided his troops into smaller units to avoid detection. That made control harder. His violent internal rule – including the killing of commanders – pushed more people towards defection, leading to two splinter groups in 2014 and 2018.

They still operated under the LRA banner (in the CAR-DRC borderlands), but were no longer under Kony's command. In 2023, through the work of the Dutch NGO PAX and Congolese NGO APRU, and amid growing insecurity, these groups demobilised in the largest LRA defection ever.

The outbreak of war in Sudan in 2023 disrupted the borderland economy. Trade slowed dramatically, increasing hardship and fuelling more defections.

The politics of the chase

The LRA has not been a security priority for Uganda, the CAR, the DRC, Sudan or South Sudan for decades.

The group operates far from capitals, poses little direct threat to state power and is expensive to pursue.

It has largely disappeared from the American political horizon.

Advocacy networks that once kept the issue alive have faded.

Even when Kony's location has been known by various intelligence services and analysts, it has not reliably triggered action. As my recent article shows, this was the case as recently as 2022-2023. In April 2024, reports surfaced that the Wagner group had attacked Kony's trading camp in eastern CAR – but failed to capture him.

The end game that never arrives

The LRA's survival reflects the sanctuary offered by borderlands, and uneven and inconsistent political will, shaped by shifting interests that often have little to do with justice for victims.

The ICC hearings in November 2025 that confirmed war crimes charges against Kony underline this paradox. While the court has built a legal case against him, the conditions that have kept him alive remain largely intact.

-The Conversation

OBSERVER OPINION

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2026

Editorial

Are we outsourcing the bench ?

The Office of the Judiciary this week announced the appointment of former judges from the region to Namibia's High Court. A former judge of the High Court of Botswana, Gabriel Komboni, has been appointed on contract for two years and five months. Two Zimbabwean jurists, retired High Court judge David Mangota and former High Court judge James Devittie, have been appointed as acting judges for three years.

On paper, these are distinguished legal professionals. Their experience is not in question. Regional judicial exchange is not uncommon, and cross-border appointments can, in certain contexts, strengthen jurisprudential coherence within the Southern African region.

Yet the announcement invites a deeper, uncomfortable question: what kind of country are we building?

Namibia is now 36 years into independence. Our legal system, anchored in constitutional supremacy, has matured significantly since 1990. We have produced generations of lawyers, prosecutors, academics, magistrates and judges who have trained locally and internationally. Our universities graduate law students every year. Our courts are staffed by capable practitioners who understand the local context, customary law intersections, constitutional imperatives and the social realities that frame disputes before them.

Why, then, are we importing retired or former judges when we have qualified, capable Namibian legal professionals ready to serve?

This is not an argument against experience. Nor is it an attack on the individuals appointed. In fact, it is worth stating clearly: these jurists reached retirement age in their respective countries not because they were incompetent, but because legal systems must create space for generational renewal. That is how institutions evolve. That is how leadership pipelines are sustained. Retirement is not failure; it is succession.

But succession is precisely what must concern us.

If other countries have moved into a new phase of generational transition, why are we stepping in to absorb their retired capacity rather than accelerating our own? Are we confronting a genuine shortage of suitably qualified Namibian candidates for the High Court bench? Or is there a structural bottleneck in how judicial appointments are processed and developed?

More fundamentally: are we sufficiently investing in mentoring and preparing our own legal minds for elevation to the bench? Judicial competence does not emerge overnight. It is cultivated through deliberate exposure to complex litigation, appellate reasoning, constitutional interpretation and administrative law. It requires shadowing, structured judicial education, and systematic grooming of candidates who can transition from practice to the bench seamlessly.

If such pathways are weak, the solution cannot be indefinite reliance on external stopgaps.

To be fair, there are pragmatic arguments in support of these appointments. Case backlogs remain a persistent challenge. Commercial disputes are growing more complex. Regional expertise may help expedite matters. Temporary appointments can stabilise workload pressures while longer-term reforms take shape.

But temporary measures have a way of becoming habitual if deeper institutional questions are left unaddressed.

Namibia must confront a core tension: are these appointments part of a strategic transitional plan, or do they reflect an implicit lack of confidence in local capacity?

That question matters for nation-building. Confidence in local talent is not mere rhetoric. It is an institutional choice. It signals to young lawyers that the pathway to the highest levels of judicial responsibility is visible and attainable. It tells aspiring jurists that excellence will be recognised within their own borders, not deferred until foreign experience validates it.

> “ Experience has value. But so does succession. And if we are serious about building a self-sustaining judiciary, one that reflects both competence and confidence, then the real work lies not in who we appoint today, but in who we are preparing for tomorrow

If we consistently look outward for senior judicial reinforcement, what message does that send to our own bar and bench?

The irony of this week is striking. Almost simultaneously, Namibia celebrated a milestone: the appointment of Esi Schimming-Chase as the first woman to serve as a permanent member of the Supreme Court. That appointment represents progress, both in gender representation and in the strengthening of our highest court through local excellence.

It demonstrates that Namibia does, in fact, possess legal minds capable of ascending to the pinnacle of judicial authority.

So how do we reconcile that milestone with the decision to look beyond our borders for High Court capacity?

Is this a transitional bridge while local candidates are being prepared? If so, where is the publicly articulated strategy outlining that development pipeline? Are we pairing these acting judges with structured mentorship programmes for Namibian practitioners? Are we using their tenure to transfer knowledge, or merely to fill chairs?

Nation-building is not only about infrastructure and fiscal policy. It is about institutional psychology. A country that trusts its people builds resilient systems. A country that doubts its own capacity risks entrenching dependency.

This is not xenophobia. Namibia has long benefited from regional cooperation and shared expertise. Our legal system itself is rooted in Roman-Dutch law, inherited through colonial structures. We cannot pretend that our jurisprudence developed in isolation.

But independence was not simply about sovereignty over territory. It was about sovereignty over institutions.

Thirty-six years on, we must ask whether we are fully exercising that sovereignty in the development of our judiciary.

If we do not create opportunities for our own professionals, how will our institutions ever become self-sustaining? How will institutional memory and constitutional interpretation evolve in ways deeply anchored in Namibia's lived realities?

And if the answer is that we lack sufficient qualified candidates, then the conversation must shift to education policy, professional development, transformation of briefing patterns at the bar, and transparency in judicial selection processes.

Silence on these questions breeds speculation. Transparency breeds trust.

The Office of the Judiciary would serve the nation well by articulating the strategic rationale behind these appointments. Are they workload-driven? Skills-specific? Transitional? What benchmarks will determine whether future appointments prioritise Namibian candidates?

These are not hostile questions. They are patriotic ones.

Because at its core, this moment forces us to reflect: are we building institutions that stand confidently on Namibian expertise, or are we defaulting to regional imports when pressure mounts?

Experience has value. But so does succession. And if we are serious about building a self-sustaining judiciary, one that reflects both competence and confidence, then the real work lies not in who we appoint today, but in who we are preparing for tomorrow

Who – or what – will replace Iran's supreme leader Ali Khamenei

MICHAEL STEPHENS, JOHN KENNEDY

Leadership transitions in dictatorships can signal upheaval – for better or worse – and in Iran that moment has now arrived. The death of the supreme leader, Ali Khamenei, in a US airstrike on Tehran on February 28 marks the most consequential rupture in the Islamic Republic's political system since 1989.

Unlike the managed transition that followed the death of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (who led the country from the 1979 revolution for ten years, after which Khamenei took over) things are different. This succession will take place amid acute domestic unrest, economic crisis and unprecedented external military pressure. What follows now will have far-reaching consequences.

In the end it was an act of war rather than revolution or old age that ended Khamenei's rule. But it had been clear for some time that, like other ageing dictators, he could not continue indefinitely. Until recently, the question of succession focused on the likelihood of preferred individuals rising to take his place, including Khamenei's son Mojtaba or the now-deceased former president, Ebrahim Raisi.

However, the huge protests in January, which drew suggestions from Trump that he would be open to regime change, prompted Khamenei to choose Ali Larijani, a former Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) general and secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, to effectively run the country. The extraordinary capture by US forces of the Venezuelan president, Nicolás Maduro, just a few weeks earlier no doubt also weighed heavily on the Ayatollah's mind.

Iran's military weakness and vulnerability to external pressure are clearly crucial factors. The prospect of ongoing US or Israeli intervention in Iran – and their ability to target individuals in the regime at will – remains decisive. But it is also now essential to consider how domestic factors such as factionalism or a struggle between rivals could emerge in a more unstable succession scenario.

Given the extent of the regime's decapitation in the air strikes of February 28, where some 50 top officials were targeted, it is unclear whether Larijani can maintain the status quo. But the entire Iranian elite will now surely operate under the assumption that their own safety cannot be assured. Nevertheless some senior politicians with governing experience have thus far survived. These include former president Hassan Rouhani, the speaker of Iran's parliament, Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf, and of course Larijani himself.

Potential succession scenarios

It is impossible to predict the future of any autocratic regime, especially one that has lasted for decades in the face of almost constant pressure. But four kinds of outcomes now appear plausible based on internal dynamics alone.

First, a "digging in" scenario, in which a senior cleric is approved by Iran's Assembly of Experts who then seeks to maintain the existing system with minimal changes or concessions. This would not involve any real change to the status quo, at least for the immediate short term. This is the outcome that Khamenei sought. Despite the risk of further targeted strikes, the regime is now attempting to put this kind of organised clerical succession in place.

If this is achieved, it is less likely that the Assembly of Experts would concede to demands for fundamental political change and, therefore, further violence and repression of future protest could follow.

Second, a "cut and run' scenario" in which key leaders decide in due course that their days are numbered and, like Bashar al Assad in Syria, flee the country. If at first this scenario sounds appealing to those who want to see the end of the Islamic Republic, it should be tempered by the very real problem of a power vacuum emerging, leading to institutional chaos and state collapse. Even in 1979, when the late shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, went into exile, there were a multiplicity of potential power brokers waiting in the wings to replace him. Today no such factions exist. There is no guarantee that Iran would become more liberal or open as a result, even with further external pressure.

Third, a "suppression and succession" scenario, in which the regime becomes more reliant on the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps to brutally reassert its authority. This would raise the prospect of a quasi-military junta emerging with weaker clerical legitimacy. Such an evolution could produce a more threatening regime that both stifles dissent and doubles down on resisting US and Israeli pressure.

Fourth is the possibility of a popular uprising actually succeeding. But it remains unclear – given our limited understanding of the situation on the ground – who the Iranian population would support and whether they could succeed without one of Iran's military institutions taking their side. Iranians would have to take to the streets and face the remnants of a tyrannical regime willing to fight to remain in power. This could result in a highly unpredictable situation. But if Iran's dominant institutions are further degraded by consistent US military pressure, this scenario also becomes more likely.

Whatever form succession takes in Iran, the regional consequences will be significant. Israel will have contingency plans and further military options ready, while Gulf Arab states are likely to try and deescalate tensions as fast as possible. Despite their obvious anger at Iran's attacks on their own territory, the key for the Gulf Cooperation Council will be to quickly establish workable ties with whatever regime emerges in the long term and enforce some form of cold peace, while minimising the disruption inside their own countries.

Turkey and Pakistan both have have serious security concerns, particularly if Kurdish and Baloch militants inside Iran try to establish a political foothold as the country begins to fragment.

Meanwhile Russia and China, though wary of losing a partner and facing energy disruption, have limited ability to shape outcomes despite both seeing Iran as a strategic partner.

For Europe, the moment carries both danger and opportunity. Calibrated sanctions relief could reduce escalation, deter civil war and prevent Tehran's deeper alignment with Moscow and Beijing. However, Europe's leverage will largely depend on whether Trump wishes to see through a policy of regime change or not. There are difficult choices ahead, but deescalation with whatever kind of government in Iran emerges should surely be the priority.

-The Conversation

The views expressed in these articles are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect Windhoek Observer's editorial stance.

OPINION

Truth must be faced head on: Power, terror and the crisis of moral consistency

PAUL T. SHIPALE
(with inputs by Folito Nghitongovali Diawara Gaspar)

"If the truth is not faced head on, the lie will not disappear. It will destroy everything."

In the short story The Suit (1963) by Can Themba, a betrayal is symbolised by an object left in plain sight. No one confronts it. No one removes it. It remains in the room silent, heavy, and corrosive until it destroys the household.

Today, the international order feels like that room. A narrative sits at the centre of global politics: that powerful states act primarily in defence of freedom, stability, and global security while their adversaries act from aggression, extremism, or malice. It is a story repeated so often that questioning it can provoke outrage.

But if truth cannot be questioned, it ceases to be truth. It becomes doctrine. And doctrine, when shielded from scrutiny, becomes dangerous.

The politics of naming: Who owns the word "terrorism"?

Why is the word 'terrorism' applied swiftly to some actors yet becomes almost unspeakable when the actors are powerful states?

Terrorism is commonly defined as the use of violence against civilians to instill fear for political ends. If that definition is accepted, then the moral test is straightforward. Does the standard apply universally or selectively?

If non-state groups bomb infrastructure, strike cities, or justify civilian casualties as "collateral damage", they are labelled terrorists.

But when powerful governments launch preemptive airstrikes, destroy infrastructure, or impose policies that result in widespread civilian suffering, the language often shifts:

- "Security operations"
- "Preemptive defence."
- "Strategic deterrence"

Why?

Is the difference moral or merely political?

Who writes the vocabulary of legitimacy?

If the principle is civilian protection, then civilian life must matter equally in all contexts. If the principle is sovereignty, then sovereignty must apply to allies and adversaries alike. If the principle is international law, it cannot bend before geopolitical alignment.

Otherwise, law becomes hierarchy.

History as Mirror: Authority and Humility

History complicates moral claims.

The United States remains the only country to have used nuclear weapons in war, against Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. That fact does not exist to inflame; it exists to remind.

Today, Washington positions itself as a guardian against nuclear proliferation.

The question is not accusation; it is consistency. Does history strengthen moral authority or demand humility in its exercise?

Similarly, Israel frames its security posture as existential necessity. For many Israelis, historical trauma and regional hostility make security paramount. For many Palestinians and international observers, policies in the occupied territories represent prolonged injustice and systemic inequality.

Both narratives exist. The unresolved tension lies in whether international law and humanitarian principles are applied evenly within them. If existential fear justifies preemptive force for one state, it sets a precedent available to all states.

That is not a rhetorical concern. It is a structural one.

Sanctions and silent suffering

Violence does not occur only through bombs.

The long-standing embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba has been condemned repeatedly in the United Nations General Assembly.

Washington describes the policy as a tool to promote political reform. Critics argue that its most tangible effects are economic hardship for ordinary citizens, affecting access to medicine, food, and development.

If suffering caused by bombs is condemned, what of suffering caused by economic strangulation? If fear delivered by airstrike is morally unacceptable, is fear delivered by deprivation fundamentally different? Consistency requires that human dignity be defended regardless of method.

Institutions under strain

The global architecture built after World War III,the United Nations, the World BBank, andthe International Monetary Fund rreflecta world that no longer exists.

The balance of power in 1945 is not the balance of power today. The United Nations Security Council still reflects the victors of that war. Calls for reform, particularly from nations of the Global South and emerging powers, have intensified over decades. Alternative financial institutions, such as the New Development Bank created by BRICS nations, signal dissatisfaction with existing structures.

This is not a collapse. It is a transition.

But transitions are unstable when legitimacy erodes. If powerful states appear to interpret rules flexibly while weaker states face strict enforcement, confidence in multilateralism declines.

And when confidence declines, fragmentation follows.

Selective empathy and the Israeli–Palestinian fault line

No discussion of legitimacy and violence can ignore the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. For many across the Global South, Palestine symbolizes selective justice one people's right to security emphasized, another people's right to sovereignty debated. For Israel and its supporters, national survival in a volatile region remains non-negotiable.

The moral challenge is clear:

If security is universal, it must include Palestinians.

If sovereignty is universal, it must include Israelis.

If civilian life is sacred, it must be sacred without hierarchy.

Selective empathy corrodes credibility.

The crisis of moral consistency

What we are witnessing may not be the collapse of the international order but its moral strain. If:

- Power defines legality,
- Alliance determines morality,
- Fear alone becomes a sufficient justification for force, then the rules-based system shifts toward perception-based enforcement. That shift is dangerous. Because if one state claims the right to strike preemptively based on a projected threat, every other state will eventually claim the same right. Consistency is not idealism. It is a strategic necessity.

The question that will not disappear

This debate is not solely about the United States.

It is not solely about Israel.

It is not solely about Iran.

It is about whether power now determines language.

Whether legitimacy is universal or selective.

Whether international law binds the strong as firmly as it binds the weak.

If the label "terrorist" applies only to the powerless, the word loses moral coherence. And when definitions lose coherence, norms lose authority.

Facing the truth

It seems all Republican Party leaders always lift taxes for the rich, punish the poor and attack a country while hiding under the slogans of "terrorism", "preemptive strikes", etc. What is worse, they campaign under the slogans of "peacemakers", "God's chosen", and "bringing democracy to the world", yet the results show the invasions of Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, and Lebanon, and attempts at regime change in Venezuela, Cuba, Iran, etc. Was the bombing and killing of Iran's supreme leader Ali Khamenei and the invasion of Venezuela and kidnapping of Nicolas Maduro really about the enrichment of "nuclear programmes", "fighting against drugs", etc., or was it about regime change and using both Iran and Venezuela as strategic pieces to prevent China from having control of the oil facilities in those two countries? The world does not need more slogans. It needs clarity.

It needs the courage to question narratives without descending into hatred.

It needs principles applied evenly without exception.

It needs moral standards that survive contact with power.

In The Suit, the tragedy was not only the betrayal. It was the refusal to confront it honestly.

If contradictions in the global order remainunexamined if selective justice becomes normal then the system designed to prevent instability may begin to produce it.

Truth must be faced head on.

Not to condemn blindly.

Not to defend blindly.

But to insist that law is not hierarchy, that morality is not alliance, and that human dignity is not negotiable.

Because history will not ask who was strongest. It will ask who was consistent.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of our employers or this newspaper. They are solely our personal views as citizens and pan-Africanists.

OBSERVERMONEY
A supplement of the Windhoek Observer publication

WEDNESDAY
4 MARCH
2026

Market Highlights

NAD per US Dollar
Weighted average of the banks' daily rates at approximately 10:30 am. Weights are based on the banks' foreign exchange transactions.

NAD per British Pound
Weighted average of the banks' daily rates at approximately 10:30 am. Weights are based on the banks' foreign exchange transactions.

NAD per Euro
Weighted average of the banks' daily rates at approximately 10:30 am. Weights are based on the banks' foreign exchange transactions.

EXCHANGE RATES

Major Pairs		
N$ / $	16.1653	03 Mar 2026
N$ / £	21.5924	03 Mar 2026
N$ / €	18.8544	03 Mar 2026
N$ / AOA	0.0173	03 Mar 2026

Repo
6.50
Prime
10.125

Debmarine vessel shutdown cuts diamond output

CHAMWE KAIRA
Staff Writer

Debmarine Namibia decommissioned the Grand Banks mining vessel last year. - *Photo: Contributed*

Namibia's diamond production fell by 7% to 2.1 million carats in 2025 as Anglo American continued restructuring its diamond unit, De Beers, amid weaker global demand for rough stones.

According to Anglo American's 2025 Integrated Annual Report, De Beers produced 21.7 million carats during the year, down 12% from 24.7 million carats in 2024. The company cut production across Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Canada to align outputs with market demand.

In Namibia, output declined mainly due to lower production at Debmarine Namibia.

The decommissioning of the Coral Sea and Grand Banks mining vessels reduced volumes. Higher-grade ore and improved recoveries at Namdeb, the land-based joint venture between De Beers and the Namibian government, partly offset the decline.

De Beers produces about one-third of the world's rough diamonds by value in Botswana, Canada, Namibia and South Africa. Anglo American holds an 85% stake in the business.

The group is moving ahead with plans to separate De Beers from Anglo American through a divestment or a demerger. The company said the move will allow De Beers to unlock value from its "Origins" strategy announced in May 2024, which focuses on streamlining operations and strengthening demand for natural diamonds.

Anglo American said De Beers' portfolio includes large, long-life mining assets with life-extension potential. The company noted that few new kimberlite discoveries have been made in recent years, apart from a recent find in Angola.

In Botswana, production fell 16% to 15.1 million carats due to planned reductions at Orapa, extended maintenance downtime and the transition of the Letlhakane Tailings Treatment Plant to care and maintenance. The company had already scaled down output at Jwaneng in 2024.

South Africa's Venetia mine produced 2.2 million carats as its underground project progressed. Canada's output declined by 7% to 2.2 million carats due to the planned processing of lower-grade ore.

De Beers also advanced its brand strategy. De Beers London refreshed its identity and expanded its retail footprint with new franchised stores in Dubai and Manchester. It opened a flagship store in Paris in January 2026. Forevermark continued its shift to a premium De Beers-owned jewellery retail brand in India while phasing out its former global licensing model.

De Beers reported more than US$100 million in cumulative overhead cost savings under its multi-year streamlining programme.

OBSERVERMONEY

Nedbank Group posts R17.2bn headline earnings

CHAMWE KAIRA
Staff Writer

Nedbank Group Limited reported a 2% increase in headline earnings to R17.2 billion for the year ended 31 December 2025, describing the period as a transformative year marked by strategic restructuring, portfolio repositioning and balance sheet resilience.

Headline earnings per share increased by 2% to 3 706 cents, while diluted headline earnings per share rose by 3% to 3 628 cents. Return on equity measured 15.4%, slightly down from 15.8% in 2024 but still above the group's cost of equity.

Revenue grew by 3% to R73.9 billion. Expense growth of 7% to R43.4 billion pushed the cost-to-income ratio to 57.8% from 55.6%. The credit loss ratio improved to 68 basis points from 87 basis points in 2024.

Basic earnings per share declined by 53% to 1 681 cents. This reflected non-recurring items, including the impact of a once-off settlement with Transnet and portfolio changes during the year. The group declared a final dividend of 1 104 cents per share, supported by strong capital and liquidity levels.

The 2025 financial year unfolded amid geopolitical tensions, policy uncertainty and concerns about US tariffs. South Africa's economy performed better than expected. Real GDP growth more than doubled to 1.2% year-on-year during the first three quarters of 2025, supported by structural reforms that stabilised energy and transport networks.

During the year, the group acquired fintech company iKhokha to strengthen its digital offering and expand support for small and medium-sized enterprises through enhanced payments and inclusive financial services.

In December 2025, Nedbank disposed of its 21% shareholding in Ecobank Transnational Incorporated as part of a reset of its broader African strategy, narrowing its focus to the SADC and East Africa regions.

In the first quarter of 2026, the group announced plans to acquire a controlling stake in NCBA Group plc for about R13.9 billion to expand in East Africa.

Total clients exceeded 8 million for the first time. Growth came from retail, SME and corporate segments.

Digital adoption increased, with higher transaction volumes and values across business lines.

The value of the Nedbank brand rose by 20% to R20 billion. The group gained market share in home loans, vehicle finance, overdrafts and retail deposits. It also reported growth in payments and insurance products.

Sustainable finance lending aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals reached R207 billion, accounting for 21% of total gross loans and advances. This exceeded the 20% target set in 2021.

Nedbank Group managing executive for Nedbank African Regions, Terence Sibiya. - *Photo: Nedbank*

CATALYST
INVESTMENT MANAGERS
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TOP Gainers NSX Local		
Share code	Close	1MoM%
SBN Holdings Ltd	12.69	3.17%
Capricorn Group Limited (prev Capricorn Investment Group Ltd)	26.32	0.61%
Letshego Holdings (Namibia) Ltd	5.30	0.57%
Namibia Breweries	30.16	0.33%

TOP Losers NSX Local		
Share code	Close	1MoM%
Paratus Namibia Holdings Ltd	12.32	-0.08%
FirstRand Namibia Ltd	54.51	-0.02%

TOP 5 Gainers NSX Overall		
Share code	Close	1W%
B2Gold Corporation	99.05	14.91%
Nedbank Group Limited	308.09	7.81%
Momentum Metropolitan Holdings	40.66	2.34%
Paladin Energy Limited	154.75	1.93%
Truworths	58.95	0.89%

TOP 5 Losers NSX Overall		
Share code	Close	1W%
Vukile Property Fund Limited	24.91	-3.22%
Anglo-American plc	771.54	-3.05%
Oceana Group Limited	53.5	-2.39%
Sanlam Limited	103.85	-2.21%
Investec Limited	135.55	-1.78%

Currencies				
	Close	1D%	%MoM	%YTD
USD/ZAR	16.18	-0.17%	0.50%	-3.92%
EUR/ZAR	18.89824	0.08%	-1.44%	-3.31%
GBP/ZAR	21.635086	0.01%	-2.21%	-3.71%
USD/EUR	0.8561644	-0.15%	1.93%	-0.58%

Commodities				
	Close	1D%	%MoM	%YTD
Brent Crude Oil (ICE $/bbl)	72.48	2.45%	7.27%	19.11%
Gold NYMEX Near Term ($/ozt)	5230.5	1.04%	2.96%	20.92%
Platinum NYMEX Near Term ($/ozt)	2365.60	6.05%	-5.87%	16.27%
Copper Cash Official LME ($/mt)	13439.50	1.70%	3.54%	7.48%
Uranium Near Term (NYM $/lbs)	86.30	-1.32%	-5.11%	5.76%

Money Market Rates				
	3 MONTH	6 MONTH	9 MONTH	12 MONTH
Average Bank NCDs	6.82	7.09	7.16	7.32
Treasury Bill Rates	7.39	7.43	7.44	7.39

JSE INDICES				
Share code	Close	1D%	%MoM	%YTD
JSE ALSI	126,991.00	-1.14%	4.1%	10.90%
All Share Industrials	140,760.52	-1.08%	-1.8%	-3.57%
Mid Cap	125,138.27	-1.24%	2.2%	11.65%
Small Cap	114,600.88	0.00%	3.5%	6.16%
Industrial 25	131,355.02	-1.11%	-2.0%	-4.12%
Financial 15	26,977.12	-1.88%	7.3%	10.53%
Resource 10	157,281.42	-0.90%	6.6%	28.35%
Top 40	118,789.66	-1.25%	4.0%	11.41%

World Market				
Share Code	Close	1D%	%1M	%YTD
FTSE100	10,910.55	0.59%	6.88%	10.90%
S&P500	6,851.53	-0.43%	-1.43%	-3.57%
DAX	24,695.26	-0.02%	1.57%	11.65%
ASX	9,200.90	0.25%	2.87%	6.16%
NASDAQ	22,610.62	-0.92%	-4.82%	-4.12%
NSX Overall	2,360.68	-1.99%	6.49%	12.50%
NSX Local	815.85	0.03%	0.59%	1.85%

This data is provided by FACTSET and YFinance as at 02/03/2026

FNB eyes growth on oil and gas investment prospects

CHAMWE KAIRA
Staff Writer

Namibia's economic prospects are expected to be driven by improved agricultural yields, rising uranium production and renewed activity in exploration and construction. - *Photo: Contributed*

FirstRand Namibia has reported strong interim results for the six months ended 31 December 2025, as it positions itself to benefit from expected growth in oil and gas investment and an improving domestic outlook.

Namibia's economic prospects hinge on improved agricultural yields, rising uranium production and renewed activity in mining, exploration and infrastructure.

The anticipated final investment decision (FID) by global oil and gas companies could reshape the investment landscape. A positive FID could attract foreign capital, drive further investment and create opportunities across sectors.

The group said robust monetary policy and improving consumer sentiment should support household spending and private sector credit growth. Growth, however, will depend on national GDP performance and the outcome of the oil and gas FID.

The recent foot-and-mouth disease outbreak may weigh on agricultural output and exports.

For the period under review, FirstRand Namibia recorded a profit of N$1.068 billion, up from N$926 million in the same period in 2024. Headline earnings rose to N$1.066 billion from N$925 million. Return on equity improved to 30.2% from 29.6%.

Interest income declined by 7.2% to N$2.847 billion. This reflected a 25-basis point cut in the repo rate and a 25-basis point narrowing of the prime-repo spread over the past year.

Interest expenses fell by 28.8% due to lower institutional funding. The lower rate environment did not result in a similar reduction in interest paid to depositors due to the endowment effect.

Net interest income increased by 11.2% to N$1.841 billion. The net interest margin improved to 6.3% from 5.4%.

Credit risk metrics improved. Impairment charges declined to N$173 million from N$263 million in 2024. The credit loss ratio fell to 0.4% from 0.7%. The non-performing loan ratio declined to 4.3% from 6.0%. The higher credit loss ratio in the prior year followed regulatory changes that shortened the write-off period for non-performing loans under BID2, which the group has now fully integrated.

Loan defaults declined due to ongoing credit management.

Non-interest revenue, including insurance service results, rose by 3.9% to N$1.396 billion. Growth in fees, card commissions and transaction volumes across digital and traditional channels supported the increase.

Customer acquisition and product innovation expanded the active customer base. Non-interest revenue accounted for 45.6% of total income, compared to 49.1% in the prior year.

Operating expenses increased by 10.4% to N$1.536 billion. The group invested in digital transformation, regulatory compliance and human capital. The cost-to-income ratio rose to 47.4% from 46.5%, remaining below 50%. Staff costs increased by 10.6% due to annual salary adjustments and targeted hiring.

IT costs rose due to investment in technology, data analytics and automation.

Total assets declined by 2.6% after the group exited its structural asset and liability management hedge in January 2025. Net advances grew by 6.6%, mainly within RMB, driven by a 58.7% rise in term loans. Deposits increased by 4.0%, supported by a 9.4% rise in franchise deposits, which offset a 26.7% decline in institutional funding.

Return on assets improved to 3.4% from 3.0%.

FirstRand Namibia maintained a capital adequacy ratio of 20.3% at December 2025, above regulatory requirements. Tier 2 capital contributed 2.1% to total capital adequacy.

The board declared a final ordinary dividend of 221.77 cents per share.

Companies cut debt despite lower interest rates

Staff Writer

Corporates continued to make net repayments in January 2026 despite lower lending rates and contained inflation, reducing overall credit uptake, according to Standard Bank Namibia economist Helena Mboti.

Private Sector Credit Extension (PSCE) slowed to 4.2% year-on-year in January, down from 4.4% in December 2025. Mboti said the slowdown reflected subdued demand rather than tighter financial conditions.

Business credit growth declined by 1.0 percentage point to 3.8% year-on-year in January. Household credit edged up by 0.3 percentage points to 5.8%.

Inflation eased from 3.6% year-on-year to 3.4% in November 2025.

Lending rates also declined under an accommodative monetary policy stance. Mboti said corporates used lower borrowing costs to reduce debt rather than increase credit uptake.

Instalment and leasing credit remained the main driver of PSCE growth. It expanded by 17.4% year-on-year in January 2026, slightly lower than 18.5% in December. Growth came mainly from vehicle purchases by households and businesses. Vehicle sales increased by 4.7% year-on-year, supported by a 6.9% rise in passenger vehicle sales and a 2.1% increase in commercial vehicle sales.

Overdraft lending strengthened to 7.2% year-on-year in January from 4.3% in December. The increase was largely household-driven after months of contraction in 2025. Household overdraft demand improved from a contraction of 10.7% in December to positive growth of 1.4% in January.

Business overdraft demand declined as companies in manufacturing, financial and telecommunications sectors reduced existing debt.

Demand for other loans and advances slowed to 4.7% year-on-year in January from 6.6% in December. Household growth in this category fell by 2.9 percentage points to 3.4%. Business demand eased to 6.9%. Mboti said households are using lower lending rates to reduce term loan exposure while continuing to use instalment credit and overdrafts.

Mortgage credit showed slight improvement but remained weak. Overall mortgage growth stood at 0.1% year-on-year in January, up from a 0.1% contraction in December.

Business mortgage demand remained in contraction at 0.3%, though this was better than negative 0.9% previously. Household mortgage demand rose to 0.3%.

Mboti said the low but improving mortgage growth may signal gains in household confidence and willingness to commit to long-term borrowing.

She linked this to lower lending rates, regulatory signals on fees and interest rates, optimism around emerging sectors and fiscal support. The planned 5% government salary increase could support mortgage demand, though house prices and borrowing costs may still weigh on growth.

Banking sector liquidity declined by 11.8% to an average of N$4.5 billion in January, in line with seasonal trends in the first quarter. Liquidity remains adequate to support credit conditions.

International reserves increased by 0.6% to N$51.9 billion in January, mainly due to SACU receipts. Mboti noted that the downward trend in import cover during 2025 points to narrowing reserve buffers, which could limit central bank flexibility if shocks arise from South Africa or the global economy.

Helena Mboti

Reserves stand at 9.6 times currency in circulation, indicating capacity to meet short-term debt obligations and support macro-financial stability.

Digital social grant payments set for launch

Staff Writer

Bank Windhoek has reaffirmed its commitment to Namibia's financial modernisation agenda following its participation in a high-level engagement on the rollout of Government-to-Person (G2P) payments under the national Instant Payment Programme (IPP).

The meeting brought together minister of finance Ericah Shafudah, Bank of Namibia governor Ebson Uanguta, deputy governor Leonie Dunn, Bank Windhoek managing director James Chapman and other industry participants forming part of the first cohort implementing the IPP.

Discussions focused on alignment, operational readiness and progress on the G2P digital payments rollout through Instant Payments Namibia (IPN), the entity established to operationalise the country's instant payment solution.

Bank Windhoek, the Bank of Namibia and two other institutions are leading the G2P use case. The bank is testing social grant payments on the new instant payment platform to ensure system stability, security and efficiency before full rollout.

The initial phase will include a select group of beneficiaries who already receive social grants or pension payments digitally into their bank accounts and who are familiar with digital channels. The phased rollout aims to test the system end-to-end, confirm stability and strengthen security before expanding nationally.

Participants received updates on regulatory and infrastructure developments. These include the deployment of fraud management tools within the IPN environment, the implementation of a national dispute management framework and the gazetting of fees linked to instant payments and transactions.

The high-level alignment engagement was attended by the minister of finance, Ericah Shafudah. - *Photo: Bank Windhoek*

Shafudah described the programme as a key step in modernising Namibia's financial system and advancing the country's transformation agenda.

She highlighted priorities such as understanding beneficiary financial behaviour, introducing incentives to shift from cash to digital payments and strengthening cooperation between industry, ministries, regional councils and communities.

Chapman said the Instant Payment Programme marks an important development for Namibia's financial system, inclusion and transparency.

He said Bank Windhoek remains committed to disciplined execution and close cooperation with public and private partners to support the sustainability of the instant payments ecosystem.

He stressed the need for a phased approach. "Digitisation must be done responsibly. By prioritising system stability, affordability and beneficiary readiness, we can ensure that this national initiative delivers meaningful and sustainable value for all Namibians."

NSI wraps up talks on new standards rules

Staff Writer

The Namibian Standards Institution (NSI) has concluded stakeholder consultations on the review and formulation of the standards regulations.

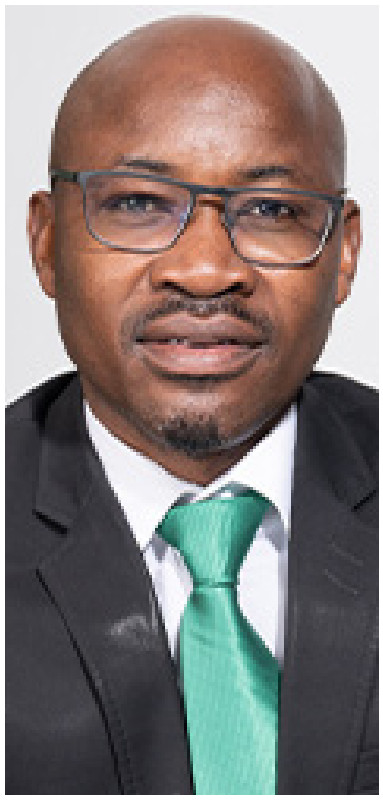
The consultations took place in the Khomas and Erongo regions. They form part of a national process to strengthen Namibia's standards and regulatory framework and ensure it responds to economic changes, technological developments and international regulatory practice.

The current standards regulations were promulgated in 2013 after the Standards Act of 2005 came into effect. Since then, Namibia's economic and regulatory environment has changed. Trade integration has increased. Industrial activity has expanded. Expectations for stronger regulation and market oversight have grown.

These changes prompted a review of the regulatory framework to ensure Namibia's technical regulation systems remain credible and aligned with international practice.

The review also supports the Revised National Quality Policy (2020–2025). The policy aims to strengthen the National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) and improve the quality, safety and competitiveness of local products and services to boost exports and diversify the economy. A key focus is alignment with international standards.

The review seeks to reinforce



NSI chief executive officer Eino Mvula - *Photo: Contributed*

Namibia's national quality infrastructure, which includes standardisation, testing, inspection, certification and compliance systems. These systems help ensure that goods meet quality and safety requirements. They protect consumers, support industry competitiveness, facilitate trade and safeguard the environment.

NSI said improved regulatory instruments will enable it to deliver standardisation and conformity assessment services that support public health, safety, environmental protection and economic development. The proposed measures aim to ensure the regulatory framework remains practical and able to address emerging risks and market demands.

Participants, both in person and online, submitted technical input and raised implementation concerns. Issues included the availability of accredited testing services, representation and expertise within standards development structures, institutional capacity and public understanding of standards and their role in health, environmental protection and economic development.

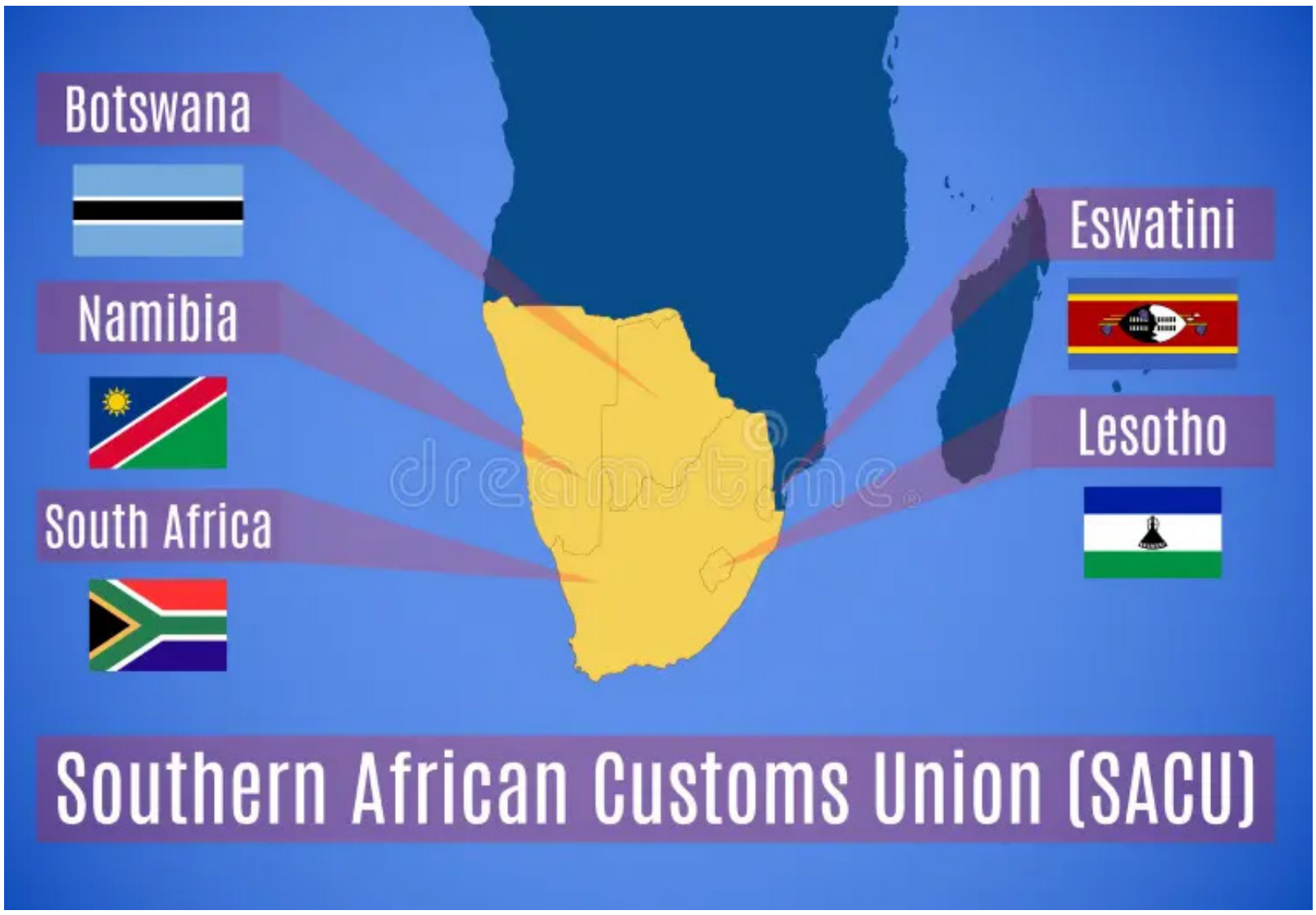
NSI chief executive officer Eino Mvula stressed the importance of the process.

"We gather not only to share insights and discuss future directions for administering the Standards Act but also to shape the future of Namibia's national quality infrastructure as a cornerstone for socio-economic development and competitiveness. The success of this process depends on active stakeholder participation and our collective commitment to good regulatory practice."

Mvula said the process is guided by inclusivity and transparency. He noted that stakeholder participation remains critical in developing effective legal and operational frameworks for standards and regulatory systems.

Credit cycle moderating in an orderly manner

Staff Writer



SACU inflows sustaining reserves at N$51.9 billion support the view that Namibia's monetary framework is operating effectively. - *Photo: Contributed*

The January 2026 money and banking data show that the credit cycle is slowing in an orderly way. Liquidity conditions are normalising on a seasonal basis. The monetary environment remains supportive of growth.

Private Sector Credit Extension (PSCE) growth eased to 4.2% in January from 4.4% in December.

Simonis Storm said this does not signal a change in the underlying credit trend. Corporate credit growth softened but remains positive in most major sub-sectors, except commercial property finance. Borrowing patterns still point to investment in productive assets rather than speculative activity. Household credit has started to improve after a long period of weakness.

Simonis Storm said the return of household overdraft credit to positive growth after twelve months of contraction is the most important development in the January data. It shows that earlier interest rate cuts are starting to ease financial pressure on households, especially lower-income groups that rely on short-term credit to manage cash flow.

Mortgage lending remains weak. Total mortgage credit grew by 0.1% year-on-year in January after contracting by 0.1% in December. Simonis Storm said this small improvement does not signal a recovery in the property market. High construction costs, rising utility tariffs and a mismatch between housing supply and household affordability continue to limit growth. The firm does not expect mortgage credit to make a meaningful contribution to PSCE growth in 2026.

Instalment sale and leasing credit remains the main driver of credit growth. It expanded by 17.4% year-on-year. Both households and corporates continue to focus on asset-backed borrowing that supports productivity rather than property or unsecured loans. Simonis Storm expects this pattern to continue while the property market remains weak.

From a monetary and external position, the data remain stable. Broad money supply (M2) grew by 7.6%, above inflation. SACU inflows supported international reserves, which stood at N$51.9 billion. The contraction in net foreign assets narrowed. Banking sector liquidity remains tight on a seasonal basis but shows no structural stress.

Simonis Storm forecasts PSCE growth of between 4.0% and 5.0% in 2026. The outlook depends on further Bank of Namibia rate cuts, household income recovery and the pace of corporate investment in key sectors. The firm said risks are slightly tilted to the upside if the external environment remains stable and fiscal discipline continues.

The non-performing loan ratio stood at 4.3% in the fourth quarter of 2025. Simonis Storm said this level remains manageable and does not point to systemic stress. Sound capital adequacy, steady provisioning and a lending mix focused on asset-backed credit continue to support the resilience of the banking sector. - Simonis Storm Securities

Rich tomorrows start with brave todays

CHRISTOPHER FREYGANG
Staff Writer

There's something almost magical about the early years of adulthood. Everything is new, everything is possible, and the future still feels wide open. But that same freedom can also make money feel like something you'll "figure out later". It's easy to think wealth is something older people build, once careers are settled and life feels less unpredictable. The truth is the opposite. Your younger years give you one of the most valuable financial assets you'll ever have, and it's not a fancy salary or an investment plan. It's time.

Wealth isn't built overnight. It grows quietly, almost invisibly, through small decisions repeated consistently. Think of it like planting something. If you put a seed in the ground today, it won't become a tree tomorrow. But if you give it time, sunlight, water, and room to grow, you'll look back years later and realise the biggest change happened when you weren't looking. Money works the same way. Even small amounts invested early grow into something meaningful because they have years to multiply.

But building wealth young doesn't only happen through a financial product. It happens through habits. It's choosing to avoid lifestyle inflation when you get your first "real" job. It's learning to live on a little less than you earn, even when what you earn doesn't feel like a lot. It's understanding that being broke from overspending feels far worse than the momentary discomfort of saying no to something you can't really afford. It's realising that managing money well is not about deprivation but direction. Every rand you save or invest is a vote for the future version of you, one who has choices, freedom and stability.

One of the biggest myths young people face is the idea that they need a high income to build wealth. You don't. What you need is consistency. A small amount saved or invested every month beats a large amount saved once in a while. When you're young, the habit matters more than the number. If you can train yourself to set something aside automatically before you see it or spend it, you build a muscle that carries you for life. And when your income grows, that habit grows with you.

Another overlooked advantage of starting early is the freedom to make mistakes. When you're older, financial mistakes can have higher stakes: children to support, a home loan, responsibilities that can't be paused. But when you're young, you have room to learn. You can experiment with budgeting styles, try out investment options, figure out what kind of spender you are, and adjust without everything unravelling. That learning curve becomes a gift to your future self, a future where you aren't scrambling to catch up.

And then there's confidence. Money confidence doesn't come from having a lot; it comes from feeling in control. That feeling starts the moment you make an intentional financial decision, no matter how small. It starts when you check your statements instead of avoiding them. When you decide what your money should do instead of wondering where it went. When you choose long-term peace over short-term pressure.

The goal isn't to become wealthy next year. The goal is to build a foundation that quietly strengthens your future without forcing you into constant stress today. You don't need a complicated plan to get started. You just need to start. Set aside something small. Make one better money choice this month than you did last month. Learn one thing about how money works. And then keep going. Your future self is already out there waiting. And they will be so grateful you didn't wait to build the life they get to live.

Christopher Freygang is a wealth manager at Old Mutual Wealth, Old Mutual Namibia.

Christopher Freygang

Overcoming career plateaus: Phase of stagnation and low motivation

At some point in our professional journey, many of us encounter a phase where progress feels slow, motivation dwindles, and the excitement we once had for our work begins to fade. This state, commonly referred to as a career plateau, can feel unsettling. For some, it is accompanied by symptoms of stress, anxiety, or even depression, as the lack of progress takes a toll on mental health and self-esteem.

Career plateaus are not unusual; they occur across industries and career levels. According to, stagnation often emerges when employees outgrow their roles, face limited organizational opportunities, or lose a sense of purpose in their work. Left unaddressed, these phases may lead to burnout, emotional exhaustion, and reduced job satisfaction.

However, reaching a plateau does not necessarily signal the end of growth. With the right strategies, support, and sometimes guidance from a therapist or through career counseling, these phases can be transformed into opportunities for reflection, skill-building, and renewed motivation.

In this blog, we'll explore:
What career plateaus are and why they happen
The emotional impact, including effects on stress, anxiety, and depression
The role of mindset and self-esteem in navigating stagnation

Practical strategies to reignite motivation and move forward
How professional support, such as therapists and career counseling, help in overcoming obstacles.

If you've been feeling stuck, unmotivated, or disconnected from your career, you're not alone. By the end of this read, you'll have not just clarity but also actionable tools to reclaim your confidence, self-esteem, and drive.

Understanding the Career Plateau

A career plateau can be defined as the stage in a professional's journey where the likelihood of vertical progression, such as promotions or salary increases, diminishes significantly. But it's more than just about promotions. Plateaus manifest in different ways:

Structural plateau – Advancement opportunities are limited due to a flat organizational hierarchy. Even highly competent employees may find there are no higher positions to move into.

Content plateau – Work begins to feel repetitive or monotonous. The daily tasks no longer challenge creativity or intellect.

Skill plateau – When employees stop learning or upskilling, their growth stalls. In fast-changing industries like technology or marketing, outdated skills can cause stagnation.

Salary plateau – Compensation stagnates despite increasing workload, leading to frustration and reduced motivation.

Industry plateau – Broader economic factors or industry downturns create barriers to advancement. For instance, professionals in print journalism or retail may feel trapped as industries evolve.

Research shows that professionals often mistake plateaus as personal failures when they are often the result of structural or situational barriers . Understanding that it's not always about individual inadequacy is the first step in approaching the issue with compassion and strategy.
Emotional Impact & Recognizing the Signs
Career stagnation rarely affects just the professional side of life. It seeps into mental and emotional well-being. Signs include:
Loss of enthusiasm – Work feels draining rather than energizing.

Declining motivation – Procrastination increases, and even basic tasks feel burdensome.

Frustration and irritability – Stress spills over into personal relationships.

Low self-esteem – Belief in one's professional value decreases.

Symptoms of depression and anxiety – Sleep disturbances, overthinking, or feelings of worthlessness can emerge, especially if the plateau persists.

According to, prolonged stagnation often leads to emotional exhaustion and disengagement. This emotional toll can spiral into burnout, recognized by the workplace as a syndrome linked to chronic stress. Acknowledging these signs early can prevent deeper emotional consequences.
Recognizing that a plateau is situational, not a reflection of incompetence, can protect self-esteem and mental well-being.

Capacity Building

with

Diamond Training Institute

The psychology of motivating employees through training and development

Employee motivation is often viewed through the lens of incentives — salaries, bonuses, promotions, and perks. While these factors matter, they rarely sustain engagement on their own.

One of the most powerful, yet sometimes underestimated, drivers of motivation is growth. When employees feel they are learning, improving, and progressing, their sense of purpose and commitment strengthens. Training and development, when designed thoughtfully, tap directly into this psychology.

At its core, motivation is deeply connected to three psychological needs: competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Employees are more engaged when they feel capable in their roles, when they experience a sense of control over their work, and when they feel connected to others. Effective training supports all three.

Training enhances competence by building confidence and capability. When employees develop new skills, uncertainty decreases. Tasks that once felt stressful or intimidating become manageable. This shift has a profound psychological effect. Confidence fuels engagement, and engagement drives performance. Employees who feel competent are more likely to take initiative, solve problems proactively, and contribute ideas.

Development also strengthens autonomy. Contrary to common assumptions, training does not restrict employees; it empowers them. Skilled individuals operate with greater independence, make better decisions, and require less supervision. When employees perceive that learning expands their professional control and mobility, training becomes a source of motivation rather than obligation.

Motivation through training also depends heavily on relevance. Employees disengage when learning feels abstract or disconnected from real work. When training is aligned with immediate challenges, career progression, or meaningful organisational goals, participation becomes purposeful. People are far more motivated to learn skills they can see themselves using.

Recognition plays a subtle but critical role as well. When organisations invest in employee development, they send a powerful psychological signal: you are valued, you are worth investing in, your growth matters. This perception strengthens loyalty and commitment.

Employees interpret development opportunities as trust, which often translates into higher discretionary effort. However, motivation does not emerge from training alone. Reinforcement is essential. Without opportunities to apply new skills, feedback from managers, and visible acknowledgement of progress, learning quickly fades. Coaching, practice, and supportive leadership transform training from a temporary event into sustained behavioural change.

Organisations that understand the psychology behind motivation treat training not as a compliance requirement, but as a strategic engagement tool. They design development experiences that build confidence, encourage participation, and align learning with personal and organisational success.

Ultimately, motivated employees are not simply those who are rewarded — they are those who are growing. When individuals feel they are becoming more capable, more confident, and more prepared for future opportunities, work gains meaning. Training and development do more than build skills; they build belief, momentum, and commitment.

OBSERVER LIFESTYLE
A supplement of the Windhoek Observer publication
WEDNESDAY
4 MARCH
2026

Gospel artist celebrates 17 million views

ALLEXER NAMUNDJEMBO
Staff Writer

Gospel artist Evangelist ForceCome Kamangili is celebrating a major milestone after his song OKUDULIKA reached 17 million views on TikTok.

The track, whose title means "Obedience is better than Sacrifice", is the sixth song on his Opina album and was produced by Tulela Music Production.

"I'm feeling joyful and jubilant as my gospel song 'OKUDULIKA' (Obedience is better than Sacrifice) hits 17 million views on social media platforms," he said in a telephonic interview with the *Windhoek Observer* on Tuesday.

He said the song has drawn strong engagement on TikTok and Facebook, where users are creating videos and dance content around it.

"I'm thrilled to see people creating content with it, dancing and appreciating God for what He did in their lives. It restores lost hopes, encourages obedience to the Almighty God, and creates happiness on different platforms, especially TikTok and Facebook," he said.

The artist described the 17 million views as a sign that gospel music continues to reach wider audiences.

"It's a milestone that highlights the growing impact of gospel music, from a niche tool to a force that can produce, stream, and even top viral charts," he said.

He thanked fans for supporting the song and sharing it widely.

"Seeing such high engagement means the tool performed its function effectively, speeding up creation, helping artists overcome writer's block, or enabling new forms of content creation," he said.

The message of OKUDULIKA comes from 1 Samuel 15:22. According to the artist, the song focuses on the importance of obedience and trust in God.

The song is available on major music platforms, with copies distributed across the country.

The artist also spoke about the challenges behind producing music. He said creative blocks, technical problems, financial pressure and mental strain often stand in the way.

"But it's worth it when people connect with the music and it brings them joy and hope," he said.

Evangelist ForceCome Kamangili. - *Photo: Contributed*

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) STUDY FOR THE PROPOSED REZONING OF ERF 2419, OMULUNGA EXTENSION 2, GROOTFONTEIN, FROM RESIDENTIAL 1 TO BUSINESS

Notice is hereby given to all Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) that application for Environmental Clearance Certificates will be submitted to the Environmental Commissioner in terms of the Environmental Management Act (Act No.07 of 2007) of the following activities.

Project title: Proposed Rezoning of Erf 2419, Omulunga Extension 1 from "Residential 1" to Business 2

Location: Grootfontein, Otjozondjupa region

Proponent: John T Heita Urban and Regional Planners

EAP: Green Gain Environmental Consultants cc

Project Description: The proponent intends to apply for the rezoning of Erf 2419, Omulunga Extension 1 from "Residential 1" to Business 2. The intention is to establish a mixed development consisting of shops, restaurants, offices and rental units. In terms of the Environmental Management Act (Act No.07 of 2007), the rezoning of land from Single Residential to commercial use cannot be undertaken without any EIA being undertaken.

I&APs are hereby invited to register, request for Background Information Document (BID), and send their comments to eia@greengain.com.na on **13 March 2026.**

The need for a public meeting will be communicated to all registered I&APs.

Green Gain Consultants

Inquiries
+264 81 142 2927
info@greegain.com.na
https://www.greengain.com.na

PUBLIC NOTICE

Thavira Enterprises has been appointed by the owner of **Erf 754, Oshakati Extension No. 2,** to apply to the Oshakati Town Council and the Urban and Regional Planning Board for the:

- **REZONING OF ERF 754, OSHAKATI EXTENSION NO. 2 FROM "SINGLE RESIDENTIAL" WITH A DENSITY OF 1:900 TO "GENERAL RESIDENTIAL" WITH A DENSITY 1:700m²**
- **SUBSEQUENT SUBDIVISION OF ERF 754 OSHAKATI EXTENSION NO.2, INTO PORTION A AND THE REMAINDER**

Erf 754 is located east of Oshakati, within Extension No.2. The respective Erf which measures 1488m² in extent, is currently zoned as "Single Residential" as per the Oshakati Zoning Scheme and it lies on a flat terrain with an existing building on it.

In order to maximize the development potential of the property, the owner of the Erf intends to rezone Erf 754, Oshakati Extension No. 2 from "single residential" with a density of 1:900 to "General Residential" with a density of 1:700m² which will allow for higher-density residential development, and subsequently subdivide Erf 754 Oshakati, Extension No.2 into Portion A and the Remainder.

Please further take note that -

(a) For more enquiries regarding the rezoning application, visit the Oshakati Town Council's Town Planning Department, or the applicant at the address listed below.

(b) any person having objections to the rezoning concerned or who wants to comment, may in writing lodge such objections and comments, together with the grounds, the Chief Executive Officer of the Oshakati Town Council and with the applicant within 14 days of the last publication of this notice, i.e., no later than **17 March 2026**

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND QUERIES, KINDLY CONTACT:

Applicant

No. 200 Long Island Street | Windhoek | +264 83 601 0712 | P.O. Box 1438, Oshakati | thaviraenterprises@gmail.com

Local Authority

Oshakati TOWN COUNCIL

The Chief Executive Office
Oshakati Town Council
P/Bag 5530
906, Sam Nujoma Road

Oshakati
AlinaAmwaama@oshtc.na

CALL FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION/COMMENTS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A 20MW SOLAR PLANT ON FARM HAGABIB, HARDAP REGION

This notice serves to inform all interested and affected parties that an application for an environmental clearance certificate (ECC) has been placed with the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, in terms of the Environmental Management Act (No.7 of 2007) and the Environmental Regulations (GN 30 OF 2012).

Proponent: Ms. J Nels

Location: The location for the proposed solar photovoltaic project is situated along the D1232 gravel road, on farm Nagabib approximately 60km South of Windhoek, in Naruchas Hardap Region, within 15km radius close to the Naruchas Substation.

EAP: OTAH Consultants
Mr. Henry Nakale
Email: otahconsultants@gmail.com
Tel: (264) 816680633

PUBLIC NOTICE: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) STUDY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A GRAVEL ACCESS ROAD (6KM) FROM IIPANDA-YAAMITI SETTLEMENT TO ANDREAS AMUSHILA PRIMARY SCHOOL IN THE OMUSATI REGION

The public is notified that an application for an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) will be submitted to the Environmental Commissioner as required under the Environmental Management Act No. 7 of 2007 and its 2012 EIA Regulations. The proposed project is a listed activity in the EIA Regulations that cannot be undertaken without an ECC, which is issued upon approval of an EIA Study (EIA Scoping Report and Environmental Management Plan (EMP).

The Proponent: Ministry of Works and Transport (MWT)

Appointed Environmental Consultant: Serja Hydrogeo-Environmental Consultants CC (*Serja HGE Consultants*)

Project Description: Upon obtaining the ECC and completion of the project design by Caldera Consulting Engineers CC, the MWT intends to construct a 6km access gravel road from Iipanda yaAmiti Settlement to Andreas Amushila Primary School. The access road aims to improve accessibility from Iipanda yaAmiti Settlement (Combined School and Clinic). The proposed 6km access road will start from Iipanda yaAmiti Settlement to Andreas Amushila PS, and falls within the Etayi Constituency. Activities associated with the road construction include the abstraction of construction materials from 1 or 2 borrow pits in the area and the construction water supply in proximity to the proposed road route.

The public is therefore invited to register as Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) and submit comments, concerns (**in writing**), or receive further information on the EIA Study. The deadline for registration as I&APs and submission of comments, issues, or concerns is **Friday, 27 March 2026.**

Community Consultation Meetings will be held along the road route, particularly in Iipanda yaAmiti Settlement, Oheke and Enkombo Villages. Meeting details (exact dates, times, and venues) will be communicated via emails (to registered stakeholders/I&APs), Etayi Constituency Office, and village headmen/women in due course.

Contact Persons: Ms. Fredrika Shagama & Mr. Stefanus Johannes (Project Environmental Assessment Practitioners)

Mobile No: +264 (0) 81 749 9223 / +264 (0) 81 400 0570

Email: eias.public@serjaconsultants.com (direct emails or scanned/photos of legible handwritten letters)

SERJAHGE CONSULTANTS

NOTICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Notice is hereby given to all potentially Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) that an application will be submitted to the Environmental Commissioner in terms of the Environmental Management Act (No. 7 2007) and Regulations (GN No. 29 of 2012) for the following proposed activity.

Activity Name
Construction of a Solar Voltaic Plant in the Sachinga Area, Zambezi Region

Project Location
Sachinga Area *(-17.593280°, 23.990232°)*

Project Description
The Proponent intends to construct a 20MW solar plant in the Sachinga Area. The proposed activity is among those listed in the Annexure of Schedule (GN No. 29 of 2012) of the Environmental Management Act, pertaining to energy generation, transmission and storage activities. It is therefore required that an Environmental Clearance Certificate is acquired before the proposed project proceeds.

Proponent
LinX Energy Company (Pty) Ltd

Environmental Assessment Practitioners:
Namib Consulting Services CC.

Public Meeting:
Date: 05 March 2025
Time: 09H00
Venue: Sachinga Khuta

Registration as I&APs:
To obtain the BID or submit comments, please register as I&APs at the following details:
Contact: 081 – 499 4488 or 081-291 0649
Email: namibconsulting@gmail.com

Closing Date for Submitting of Comments:
Before or on the 06 March 2026

OBSERVERSPORTS
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WEDNESDAY
4 MARCH
2026
www.observer.com.na
PARAGON MEDIA

Andre scores injury-time winner for Wolves against Liverpool

AADAM PATEL
Football reporter at Molineux

Andre scored a 94th-minute winner as bottom club Wolves beat the defending Premier League champions Liverpool.

Mohamed Salah looked to have rescued a point for Liverpool after Rodrigo Gomes gave Wolves the lead - but in added time, Andre's strike took a deflection off Joe Gomez to send Molineux wild.

For the fifth time this season, Arne Slot's side conceded an injury-time winner.

This was just a third league win of the campaign for Rob Edwards' side, who look destined to drop to the Championship yet have beaten Liverpool, Aston Villa and drawn against Arsenal in their past three home games.

Edwards celebrated Andre's late winner with a sprint down the touchline - although the 43-year-old was feeling the effects of the physical exertion afterwards.

"It's the groin this time," he told BBC Sport afterwards. "I felt it falling apart."

For Liverpool, victory here could have taken them level with Manchester United and Aston Villa - third and fourth respectively - on 51 points, but they remain fifth. Wolves remain bottom and 11 points from safety.

There was a poignant touch to the night - before kick-off, both sets of fans remembered Diogo Jota, the former Wolves and Liverpool forward who died in a car crash last July. There were banners in display in the home and away sections to pay tribute to the Portugal international.

Slot made one change from Liverpool's 5-2 win over West Ham with Jeremie Frimpong coming in for Joe Gomez, while Edwards made four changes from the side that beat Aston Villa last Friday.

The Liverpool head coach had admitted during the build-up that he no longer found most Premier League games a joy to watch because of the increasing dominance of set-pieces across the top flight.

And the first half at Molineux was largely dull, with Liverpool dominating possession but barely testing goalkeeper Jose Sa and struggling to beat the first man from their corners.

With Ryan Gravenberch on a booking after a poor first half, Slot replaced the Dutch midfielder with Curtis Jones at the break and the visitors raced out of the blocks in the second.

But two of Wolves' substitutes combined to break the deadlock as Tolu Arokodare held off Virgil van Dijk and found Gomez, who expertly dinked the ball over Alisson.

A minute later, 17-year-old Rio Ngumoha hit the post for Liverpool - who levelled shortly after when Jean Ricner-Bellegarde gave the ball away and Salah scored his first Premier League goal since November.

With both sides hunting a winner, it was end-to-end in the latter stages and it was Wolves who took the three points.

The second half was certainly more of a joy to watch - but not in the manner that Slot or Liverpool would have liked.

Wolves analysis: Not playing like a side destined for the Championship

Rob Edwards' side may be on their way down to the Championship but this was another performance that must have left the home fans thinking how they are bottom of the pile.

Edwards made four changes, perhaps with one eye on Friday's FA Cup tie, but his side battled throughout the first half and executed their gameplan to perfection after the break.

Joao Gomes was impressive in the middle of the park and Edwards got his changes spot on after the break.

Arokodare and Rodrigo Gomes combined brilliantly for Wolves' opener and even after Salah levelled, Wolves went for the winner.

And they were rewarded with Andre's strike while those inside Molineux will never forget Edwards' run down the touchline to celebrate the winner.Wolves have now won their past two Premier League games - having won only one of their previous 32.

Liverpool analysis: One of the most damaging defeats of their season

This was a brilliant opportunity for Liverpool in their pursuit of Champions League qualification and one they ultimately wasted.

Slot's side have lost nine Premier League games this season and this will go down as one of the more damaging defeats, against a Wolves side who have struggled throughout the campaign.

Liverpool were uninspiring in the first half and though they upped the ante after the break, they simply did nowhere near enough to test Sa in the home goal.

For all the talk of how they had improved on set-pieces, they rarely threatened here and were punished for some lazy defending.

Salah ended his Premier League drought but even his goal came from a Wolves mistake. The fact is that Liverpool massively missed the influence of Florian Wirtz, who is expected to return next week.

Nevertheless, Slot's side should never have lost this game and it speaks volumes about their struggles that for the fifth time this season, they conceded a stoppage-time winner - the most ever by any team in a single Premier League campaign. -BBC

GOSSIP

Barcelona to step up efforts for Tottenham defender Micky van de Ven, Bruno Fernandes future at Manchester United depends on Champions League qualification and Aston Villa keen on Fulham's Harry Wilson.

Tottenham defender Micky van de Ven, 24, is wanted by Barcelona, who are set to intensify their efforts to sign the Netherlands international in the summer. (Sport - in Spanish), external

Manchester United are prepared to offer Portugal midfielder Bruno Fernandes an improved deal worth up to £400,000 a week - but the 31-year-old will base a decision on his Old Trafford future on whether the club qualify for the Champions League. (Mirror), external

England midfielder Kobbie Mainoo's long-term future at Manchester United is still up in the air as talks over a new contract for the 20-year-old drag on. (Mail), external

Arsenal have been told by Inter Milan that 20-year-old Italian forward Pio Esposito is not for sale at any price. (Gazzetta dello Sport - in Italian), external

Juventus are set to revive their interest in Paris St-Germain's French forward Randal Kolo Muani, 27, who is currently on loan at Tottenham. (Calciomercato - in Italian), external

Aston Villa are one of the clubs interested in 28-year-old Wales attacking midfielder Harry Wilson, whose contract at Fulham runs out in the summer. (Fabrizio Romano), external

Brentford are set to offload up to five players in the summer, including 23-year-old Portugal midfielder Fabio Carvalho.

Manchester United have no intention of selling English midfielder Mason Mount, 27, in the summer despite interest from Aston Villa and Fulham. (Football Insider), external

Juventus appear to have made progress in extending the contract of 26-year-old Serbia striker Dusan Vlahovic, whose deal runs out in the summer. (Tuttosport - in Italian), external

Bayern Munich and Austria midfielder Konrad Laimer, 28, have halted talks over a new contract as there is a large gap between the expectations of both parties. (Sky Sports Germany)