

# Transport sector rises from lockdown ashes

The effects of the lockdown on the public transport sector linger on, as businesses barely hang on.

• **CHARLOTTE NAMBADJA**

THE public transport sector has been barely surviving, as restrictions on the movement of people continue to hit the sector hard.

This is the view of various players in the industry, who noted that the financial shortfall currently being experienced will be hard to recoup.

Long-distance transport operators have been hit the hardest, as the lockdown of the Khomas and Erongo regions under the state of emergency regulations in April virtually brought the sector to a standstill.

The two regions have some of the busiest routes for this mode of public transport, the operators said.

In addition, the number of passengers were limited to half the normal carrying capacity of vehicles

in other stages of the state of emergency lockdowns that followed, in keeping with preventative measures for Covid-19.

Silas Ndapuka Transport employs about 98 people, of whom 66 are drivers and others office administrators, security officials and farmworkers.

The owner, Silas Ndapuka, told *The Namibian* that only 32 employees have fixed salaries, as most of the drivers are paid on commission.

Ndapuka said it has been difficult to do business, as there are many expenses the business has to bear like paying monthly instalments for its buses since not all have been fully paid for.

The company owns 17 conventional buses and 16 Iveco minibuses.

During stage 2 of the lockdown, the Namibia Bus and Taxi Association

(Nabta) announced a fare increment of 15% for buses and taxis countrywide to cushion the operators and owners from the lockdown blow.

“Each seat to the north costs N\$300, meaning if 33 people are transported, the total amount made will be N\$9 900. From that, N\$5 000 is for fuel, N\$4 500 to pay the driver and N\$400 for servicing and cleaning the bus. I am then left with no profit at all,” Ndapuka said.

Buses vary according to the number of passengers each carries, and Ndapuka said he understood the importance of social distancing and requested that the number of passengers be reduced proportionate to the size of the bus.

The manager of Sanny Auto Repairs, Itula Elago, also said the business was at a standstill during stage 1 of the lockdown, and only started slowly picking up during stages 2 and 3 of the lockdown.

Nabta national chairperson Pendapala Nakathingo early last month



Photo: Charlotte Nambadja

**TRANSPORT BLUES** ... Sanny Auto Repairs staff pictured at one of Windhoek’s loading terminals.

announced that taxi fares would go back to the pre-lockdown fare of N\$12 per trip. However, he said this only lasted two to three days because the police started to fine taxi drivers for carrying the full capacity of four passengers.

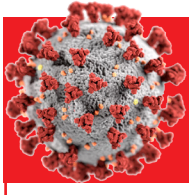
Taxi drivers reverted to carrying a maximum

of three passengers and charging N\$14 a trip, he said.

“We understand it caused confusion among members of the public, but

as we speak the taxi fare remains N\$14. This is just the Covid-19 fare since taxis can only carry three passengers as per social distancing. Taxis can only

change as per directives of Nabta or the government and we have not approved the N\$15,40 taxi fare as proposed on social media,” Nakathingo said.



## Covid-19 Top Statistics

**Worldwide coronavirus cases (20 August):**  
**22 696 857**      **Deaths: 793 272**  
Recovered: 15 397 327  
Active cases: 6 506 258

**Namibia (19 August): 4 665 confirmed infections**      **Deaths: 39**  
**2 200 active cases**  
201 new infections; 2 426 recovered  
43 990 samples tested  
1 613 people in quarantine

**Most-affected countries**  
United States: 5 712 194 confirmed infections      176 648 deaths  
3 063 412 recovered  
Brazil: 3 460 413 cases; 111 189 deaths  
India: 2 900 967 cases; 54 948 deaths  
Russia: 942 106 cases; 16 099 deaths  
South Africa: 596 060 cases; 12 423 deaths

**Most-affected African countries**  
South Africa: 596 060 confirmed infections  
12 423 deaths; 491 441 recovered  
Egypt: 96 914 cases; 5 197 deaths  
Nigeria: 50 488 cases; 985 deaths  
Morocco: 46 313 cases; 743 deaths  
Ghana: 43 260 cases; 261 deaths

**Southern Africa numbers**  
Zambia: 10 372 cases; 274 deaths  
Zimbabwe: 5 643 cases; 150 deaths  
Eswatini: 4 058 cases; 79 deaths  
Mozambique: 3 045 cases; 19 deaths  
Angola: 2 015 cases; 92 deaths  
Botswana: 1 308 cases; 3 deaths

**Source: Worldometer; Ministry of Health and Social Services**

## Oranjemund’s growth ‘not a one-man show’

• **LUQMAN CLOETE**

THE Oranjemund Town Council and OMDis, a town transformation agency, have signed an agreement to accelerate socio-economic development for the betterment of the local community.

The agreement was signed at Oranjemund yesterday.

The government granted Oranjemund, a former mining town, local authority status in 2011.

Oranjemund mayor Henry Coetzee said the co-operation envisaged in the agreement would change the town’s economic landscape significantly. He said the town council recognises the need to achieve a sustainable town.

“It’s a fact that development is not a one-man show, it needs partners. Therefore through the smart partnership as demonstrated today, it can accelerate investment promotion for Oranjemund through mutual understanding,” he said.

The mayor said it was the council’s responsibility to explore ways of improving residents’ living standards through diversifying the local economy. This, he said, would promote employment opportunities, skills development and social enhancement. Coetzee said the council aimed to promote incentives to existing businesses, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and new investors.




“Our aim is equally to diversify and move away from a single economy to a multi-subsector economic town thriving on new possibilities in a stable political and administrative environment,” he said.

The council is happy with progress being made in tourism, industrial, manufacturing, solar, wind energy, commercial and agriculture activities, vocational education and land and housing development within Oranjemund amid the unfavourable global economy and Covid-19 pandemic, Coetzee said.

“We believe these initiatives, once fully implemented, will help and contribute to positive growth and development,” he said.

OMDis general manager Tony Bessinger says the agency’s objective is to assist the former mining town become sustainable by creating SMEs, entrepreneurs and large industries in addition to mining.

He says the agency has engaged stakeholders and investors in an effort to unlock the town’s agriculture potential. Bessinger says the agency aims to achieve its objective by 2030.



**Call for application: Part time Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist to support the Benguela Current Convention (BCC)**

The Benguela Current Convention (BCC) is a multi-sectoral Inter-Governmental Organisation by Angola, Namibia and South Africa (Parties) to spearhead regional collaboration for integrated management, sustainable development and protection of the environment using an ecosystem approach to ocean governance in the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem (BCLME).

The BCC Secretariat invites competent individuals to submit applications for the position of Part-time Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist.

Detailed Terms of Reference is available from Mr. Jackson Kaoti, ([jackson@benguelacc.org](mailto:jackson@benguelacc.org), Tel: + 264 64 406 901).

**The deadlines for the submission of applications is 18 September 2020.**



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## CONTACT

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