

JSE hits worst month since Covid

The JSE all-share index ended 0.45% down on Friday in a third week of losses, with the cumulative drop since the war on Iran began at the end of February now at more than 14%, making it the bourse's worst month since March 2020, when SA went into a hard lockdown to reduce the spread of Covid-19.

With daily mixed messages coming from the US regime and what appears to be no clear plan, it is anybody's guess when the war might end.

Gold prices slipped more than 2% on Monday to a four-month low, as an escalating Middle East conflict stoked inflation concerns and the expectation of higher global interest rates.

Spot gold fell 2.7%, extending losses into a ninth consecutive session. The metal, which fell to its lowest since January 2, lost more than 10% last week.

"With the Iran conflict into its fourth week, and oil prices hanging around the \$100 level, expectations have pivoted from rate cuts to potential rate hikes, tarnishing gold's appeal," said Tim Waterer, an analyst at KCM Trade. "Gold's high liquidity appears to be hurting it during this risk-off period," he added.

Asian shares fell and oil prices stayed well above \$110 a barrel, as investors weighed US and Iranian threats to target energy facilities.

The closure of the Strait of Hormuz

keeps crude elevated, stoking inflation fears by pushing up transport and manufacturing costs.

While rising inflation typically boosts gold's appeal as a hedge, high rates curb demand for the non-yielding asset.

The spread of more than \$13 a barrel between Brent crude and WTI (West Texas Intermediate, the primary benchmark for oil prices in the US) is the widest in years.

With international buyers paying a massive premium for Brent, this spread acts as a competitive advantage for US industry while signaling intense inflationary pressures on the global energy sector. - **Business Day-Reuters**

Business



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Bookie numbers soar out of sight

Rise Mzansi raises oversight concerns as online gambling pumps through the cracks

TARA ROOS

SA's gambling industry is issuing more than 3,000 licences a year, with the number of operators, particularly bookmakers, expanding sharply in recent years, raising concerns about gaps in enforcement and whether licensed operators are being adequately monitored.

This emerges from a written parliamentary reply to Rise Mzansi MP Makashule Gana, which shows annual licence volumes have remained roughly around 3,000 between 2019 and 2025.

Most licences relate to limited payout machine (LPM) site operators and bookmakers, with provinces continuing to issue approvals at scale.

However, it is the growth in bookmaker licences that has drawn particular concern.

In a letter to trade, industry & competition minister Parks Tau, Gana said SA now has more than 400 registered bookmakers, a lot higher than international peers.

It has double the number of bookmakers in Australia, more than five times those in Brazil and 15 times as many as Denmark.

The number of bookmakers has risen from 288 in 2020 to 402 in 2025, representing growth of about 40%, outpac-



WAGERING SPIKE: SA has double Australia's bookmakers, more than five times as many as Brazil, and 15 times as many as Denmark. Picture: SUPPLIED

ing expansion in other gambling segments.

Cross-boundary cracks
Gana pointed to sharp increases at the provincial level, with bookmaker numbers more than doubling over five years in Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape, North West and the Free State.

He raised concern that the rapid expansion of online betting — much of which stems from provincially issued bookmaker licences — may not be matched by effective oversight and enforcement.

Provincial authorities are responsible for licensing and monitoring operators, but Gana argued that the current system does not adequately account for online gambling activity that operates across provincial boundaries, potentially creating gaps in supervision and compliance.

He called for an immediate moratorium on new bookmaker licences, introduction of a national licensing framework for online operators, and a review of existing licensing requirements to align SA with

international best practice. "We cannot allow the pursuit of profit to outpace our ability to regulate and protect the South African public," Gana said.

The parliamentary reply shows that while casino licences remain tightly capped in provinces, the expansion of LPM site operators and bookmakers continues to drive overall licence volumes, raising broader questions about the state's ability to enforce compliance in a rapidly growing and increasingly digital market.

Law-dropping crime stats

Separate data provided in reply to a question from Rise Mzansi MP Songezo Zibi to the police minister points to potential gaps in enforcement capacity.

The reply shows that just 36 illegal online gambling cases were reported to the SAPS over the past five financial years, resulting in 39 arrests and 22 convictions.

Over the same period, 32,958 cases of illegal gambling were recorded, of which 99.9% related to land-based operations, highlighting the limited number of detected online cases.

The police also identified structural challenges in tackling online gambling, noting that websites can easily be created and removed, complicating enforcement, while some cases collapsed due to legal challenges about search warrants. — **Business Day**

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WALTER SISULU LOCAL MUNICIPALITY
TENDER NOTICE AND INVITATION TO TENDER
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Project Description	Bid Number	Closing Date	Enquiries
Provision Of Training Service Provider for MFMP in line with Treasury, SETA, QCTO, and SAQA requirements for a period of one three years	Bid-Number: 78/2025/2026	Date: 15/04/2026 Time: 12H00pm	Technical Enquiries may be directed to MS N Mazaleni at (051) 653 1777 or ntombekhaya.mazaleni@wslm.gov.za SCM Enquiries may be directed to Mr. N Mshicileli at (051) 653 1777 or ntembeko.mshicileli@wslm.gov.za
Provision of Training Service Provider Management Training On Leadership And Team Management and Strategic Planning & Implementation SAQA ID - 116341 For a period of three years	Bid-Number: 79/2025/2026	Date: 15/04/2026 Time: 12H00pm	Technical Enquiries may be directed to MS N Mazaleni at (051) 653 1777 or ntombekhaya.mazaleni@wslm.gov.za SCM Enquiries may be directed to Mr. N Mshicileli at (051) 653 1777 or ntembeko.mshicileli@wslm.gov.za
Provision of Training Service Provider for performing Basic Life Support and First Aid Procedures SAQA ID - 119567 For a period of three years	Bid-Number: 80/2025/2026	Date: 15/04/2026 Time: 12H00pm	Technical Enquiries may be directed to MS N Mazaleni at (051) 653 1777 or ntombekhaya.mazaleni@wslm.gov.za SCM Enquiries may be directed to Mr. N Mshicileli at (051) 653 1777 or ntembeko.mshicileli@wslm.gov.za
Provision of Training Service Provider for Maintenance and Care of Engineering Hand Tools SAQA ID - 258957 for a period of three years	Bid-Number: 81/2025/2026	Date: 15/04/2026 Time: 12H00pm	Technical Enquiries may be directed to MS N Mazaleni at (051) 653 1777 or ntombekhaya.mazaleni@wslm.gov.za SCM Enquiries may be directed to Mr. N Mshicileli at (051) 653 1777 or ntembeko.mshicileli@wslm.gov.za
Provision of Training Service Provider for General Road Maintenance SAQA ID - 15187 for a period of three years	Bid-Number: 82/2025/2026	Date: 15/04/2026 Time: 12H00pm	Technical Enquiries may be directed to MS N Mazaleni at (051) 653 1777 or ntombekhaya.mazaleni@wslm.gov.za SCM Enquiries may be directed to Mr. N Mshicileli at (051) 653 1777 or ntembeko.mshicileli@wslm.gov.za
Provision of Training Service Provider Preparing and laying Precast for Block Paving SAQA ID - 261717 for a period of three years	Bid-Number: 83/2025/2026	Date: 15/04/2026 Time: 12H00pm	Technical Enquiries may be directed to MS N Mazaleni at (051) 653 1777 or ntombekhaya.mazaleni@wslm.gov.za SCM Enquiries may be directed to Mr. N Mshicileli at (051) 653 1777 or ntembeko.mshicileli@wslm.gov.za
Provision of Training Service Provider for Peace Officers SAQA ID - 37224 for a period of three years	Bid-Number: 84/2025/2026	Date: 15/04/2026 Time: 12H00pm	Technical Enquiries may be directed to MS N Mazaleni at (051) 653 1777 or ntombekhaya.mazaleni@wslm.gov.za SCM Enquiries may be directed to Mr. N Mshicileli at (051) 653 1777 or ntembeko.mshicileli@wslm.gov.za

Bidders must take note of the following bid conditions:

Walter Sisulu Local Municipality is inviting suitable, qualified and experienced service providers for the above mentioned services. Contract will be based on the National Treasury General Condition of Contracts. The bids will be evaluated on the basis of the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act (Act No. 5, 2000), and the revised regulations pertaining thereto 2022 **Price and Specific Goals: Price 80, Specific Goals 20**

Tenders must be submitted in the tender box. Detailed specifications are contained in the tender documents that are available at No 1 Jan Greyling Street, Walter Sisulu Municipality Office's Supply Chain Management Unit upon payment of a non-refundable fee of R890.00 for each document (direct bank deposit to FNB, 62476326965) from Tuesday, 24 March 2026, or can be e-mailed at a request to ntembeko.mshicileli@wslm.gov.za after the payment has been received for bidders who are unable to collect the document, please be advised to use notice number as a reference on the proof of payment alternatively download tender document on e-tenders

Failure to submit or complete supplementary information will result in the tender being non-responsive.

All bidders must submit latest Municipal Rate charges and taxes Statement of the Company and all its Directors from their respective Municipalities and must not be older than three months showing that they do not owe their respective Municipality, the municipal account must not be more than 90 days in arrears or attach a valid signed lease agreement, signed by both Lessor and Lessee. Bidders residing on areas not subjected to Municipal rates are to submit a confirmation from the Municipality's Finance Department confirming that such a bidder is not liable for municipal rates.

Failure to complete ALL MBD forms as stipulated in the Tender Document will result in a tender being deemed non-responsive

NB: No quotations will be considered from persons in the service of the state.

Failure to comply with the above conditions will invalidate your offer.

The Council reserves the right to disqualify any service provider whose members and or shareholders owe the municipal rates, taxes and Municipal Charges.

The Walter Sisulu Local Municipality does not bind itself to accept the lowest or any bid

All alterations in prices/quotes must be signed for and failure to sign will result in tender being deemed non-responsive.

Use of tip-ex is prohibited and the bidder will be deemed non-responsive

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Evaluation on functionality for Bid Numbers: 78/2025/2026 ,Bid Number:79/2025/2026,Bid Number:80/2026/2026,Bid Number:81/2025/2026,Bid Number:82/2025/2026,Bid Number:83/2025/2026,Bid Number:84/2025/2026

Points For Specific Goals As Listed Below

51% Race (Black Owned Entity): 6 (30%), 51% Youth (18-35): 2 (10%), 51% Gender (Women): 4 (20%), 51% Disability: 2 (10%), 51% Locality (within WSLM): 4 (20%), 51% black military veterans: 2 (10%) and non-compliant contributor: 0 (0%)

The specifications, detailed functionality including mandatory documents (eligibility criteria) and bid conditions are attached in the tender documents.

Completed bid documents and supporting documentation are to be placed in a sealed envelope endorsed with **RELEVANT PROJECT NAME AND BID NUMBER** must be delivered to Walter Sisulu Local Municipality, at No. 1 Jan Greyling Street, Burgersdorp, reception area, and placed in the **Tender Box not later than 12H00 Noon on WEDNESDAY 15 APRIL 2026** at which time the tenders will be opened in public.

Telegraphic, telephonic, telex, facsimile, e-mail and late tenders will not be accepted.

Tenders may only be submitted on the tender documentation that is issued. Requirements for sealing, addressing, delivery, opening and assessment of tenders are stated in the tender data and tender documents.

Issued by:
KHAYALETU GASHI - MUNICIPAL MANAGER -

Startup Spot



BOHLAHE BUZANI

Imported solutions need not be seeds on stony ground

The launch of the Pilot Biogas and Water Reuse Project in Buffalo City is a step in the right direction.

It signals a municipality thinking about the future, about sustainability, and about how to respond to the growing pressures on energy, water, and infrastructure.

As crumbling infrastructure affects homes and businesses alike, we hail such willingness to explore new solutions.

Uncomfortable question

But beneath the optimism lies an uncomfortable and necessary question.

Who owns this innovation? Partnerships with other governments, Germany in this case, bring valuable expertise, funding, and global best practice. There is real value in learning from countries that have already made progress in areas such as waste-to-energy and water reuse.

However, sustainability is not only about technology. It is about ecosystems.

It is about whether solutions can take root locally, adapt over time, and continue delivering value long after the initial partners have stepped away. And there's the rub. Across Buffalo City and the broader Eastern Cape, there are local entrepreneurs already working on recycling, water purification, waste collection, and alternative energy solutions.

Many of them operate at small scale, often with limited resources, but with a deep understanding of the communities they serve.

They are already solving problems, just without the same visibility and support. And when projects of scale are introduced, these local players are rarely positioned as partners.

At best, they are spectators. At worst, they are completely excluded from the value chain.

A truly integrated approach to waste, water, and energy should not only connect systems. It should connect people. It should ask important questions like where are the local SMEs in this project?

Who is being prepared to maintain and operate this project in the long term? How does the project fit into a local green economy that can outlive the pilot phase? Without deliberate inclusion, the risk is clear.

The infrastructure may work, but the ecosystem will not.

Imagine a new scenario

Now imagine a different approach. Alongside the German partnership, the metro could have issued an open expression of interest to local businesses, innovators, and co-ops.

Not add-ons, but part of the core project design. A structured panel of local SMEs contributing to implementation. Entrepreneurs involved in operations, maintenance, and data monitoring. Small businesses supported to innovate on top of the infrastructure being introduced.

This is how you move from a project to an ecosystem. SA already speaks strongly about localisation, inclusive growth and the role of SMEs in the larger economy.

At the centre of a ripple

But these principles must move beyond policy and into the design of real projects. Municipalities, in particular, sit at the centre of this opportunity. As service providers they could act as economic enablers. By opening up projects like this to local participation, Buffalo City could build a pipeline of skills, businesses, and innovations that strengthen the metro from within. It could ensure knowledge is not only transferred, but embedded.

That economic value is not only created, but shared. Because the real test of this pilot is not whether it works on paper or during its initial phase. It is what happens five years from now. Will we still need external expertise to maintain it? Expand it? Or will there be a network of capable local firms that have grown alongside it and are ready to take it forward?

This is not a rejection of global collaboration. It is a call to deepen it. Buffalo City has an opportunity to lead, not only in adopting sustainable technologies, but in redefining how public sector innovation is done.

International partnerships and local entrepreneurship need not be separate conversations. A single, intentional strategy is a feasible, win-win path to take. Because in the end, sustainability is not only about cleaner energy or reused water. It is about building local economies that are capable of sustaining those systems. And that begins with ownership. *Buzani is a business consultant and youth empowerment advocate, as well as a founding member of an award-winning SME in Mdantsane*

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Today's Puzzle

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HOW TO PLAY:
Every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes. Solutions, tips and a computer programme can be found at www.sudoku.com

4	5	9	6	7	1	3	2	8
6	8	2	9	3	4	1	7	5
1	7	3	5	8	2	4	9	6
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8	9	7	2	1	5	6	4	3
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7	3	1	4	5	9	8	6	2

Solution