



Thursday, 8 June 2023

No. 10 - 2023

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTIONS

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Question 1 (2023-02-15)

Hon. Kauandenge (NUDO) asked the Minister of Mines and Energy:

Last year there was a heated debate in the country about who owns our minerals in this country, it was a heated debate that went to the extent that Namibians came out strongly against exploitation of our minerals by foreigners.

Hon speaker, it is important to kick off this question with the quotation from our very own Constitution, our Constitution says “all minerals rights are vested in the state and are regulated by the minerals (prospecting and mining) act of 1992”.

Our minerals (prospecting and mining) act, 1992 (no. 33 stated amongst others that this is an act to provide for the reconnaissance, prospecting and mining for, and disposal of, and the exercise of control over, minerals in Namibia”.

Having quoted the above legal provisions on our statute books one would have assumed that guided by the above, we as a country should have been in total control of our minerals resources, but this appears to not be the case.

It was and it is still disheartening to have noted both the president and the Minister of Mines trying to tell this nation last year that whoever puts the bulk of the money upfront for the exploration purposes control our minerals and have the biggest share in the long run.

I would therefore like to ask the Hon Minister to confirm or deny that this government, and those who were Ministers before him have sold this country minerals for a song or not.

Giving you the benefit of doubt and that you will not answer me like some Ministers in this house do, as if when we ask questions they are doing us a favor, while it is their constitutional obligation to do so, I now ask the following:

1. Is it true that almost all our mines are foreign owned and our government receive a pittance on behalf of the citizens only?

Is it true that Langer Heinrich Mine is 100% owned by Heinrich Uranium PTY LTD and government owns 0% and this is one of the biggest mines in the country?

2. This mine is located at the foot of the Langer Heinrich Mountain in the Namib Desert near Swakopmund. I must add that Namibia is ranked 4th largest producer of uranium worldwide, behind Kazakhstan, Canada and Australia and produce about 7.1 % of uranium oxide worldwide.

Why then does the country not benefit from its uranium and if this facts are correct, why does Langer Heinrich owns 100% of our uranium, while uranium is one of the five minerals resources that were declared strategic by the Namibian Government in 2011, is this hypocrisy on the side of the Namibian Government or simply negligent?

This mine was under care and maintenance and it is about to resume operation in 2024, my question is will it still continue under the same percentage allocation or not?

3. Is it true that Rio Tinto owns 69% in the Rossing Mine, while Government only own 3%, Iranians 15%, SA 10%, others 3%? This is the world's longest running open pit uranium and has been in operation since 1976, and yet our government own only 3%.

This Mine produced 3.711 tons of Uranium oxide, it is the fifth largest uranium mine with 8% of global output, is this correct that we as Namibians owns only 3%?

Your Ministry extended this mine license in August 2022 for another 10 years from 2026 to 2036, one would like to know, have you extended it under this draconian, insensitive terms or are there new terms in which the Namibian people through you as the line Minister will benefit properly?

4. It is true that Scorpion Zinc mine is 100% owned by Vendata and Government own 0%, while Scorpion Zinc mine is the 8th largest zinc mine in the world producing special high grade (shg). This mine has the potential to run for another 15 years, again more 15 years of nothing to the Namibian people I must add, I am aware that the mine is currently under maintenance but with a possibility of reopening soon for another 15 years.
5. Is it true that Tsumeb Smelter is 100% owned by Dundee Precious Metals a Canadian firm and again our government owns nothing at 0%? This smelter process concentrate from the Tsumeb copper mine and is one of the only five commercial scale smelters in Africa?

The same scenarios are and continue to repeat itself as follows: Navachab Mine a subsidiary of QKR Corporation Limited that owns this mine 92.5% and the Namibian government owns a mere 7.5%

Oshikoto Gold Mine B2 Gold owns 90% EVI Mining 10% and GRN 0%

Husab Mine, Swakop Uranium 90%, GRN 10%

Etango Uranium Mine, Bannerman Resources owns 100% and GRN 0%

Trekkopie Mine it is owned wholly by Areva 100% and GRN 10%

Norosa Uranium owned by Forsys Metal 100% and GRN 0%

Rosh Pinah Zinc Mine owned by Glencore 80% and GRN 0% while 20% is owned by others one wonders who are the others.

Otjihase Tschidi Matchless Coper Mines owned by Weatherly International at 95.8%, GRN 2.65 and others 1.6% who are the others?

Hon. Speaker, this point to a rather depressing picture that must not be allowed to continue.

Hon. Minister, you owe this nation a proper explanation as to what is happening to our minerals and why government allows potential investors in our mining sector, without government demanding adequate percentage for our raw materials or minerals, on behalf of the citizens of our country?

6. Is the above painted picture correct and if yes, why is the Namibian Government happy with this status quo and if not happy what are the immediate remedial interventions from the government to address this situation that is so bleak and really disappointing to the core?

How can a country so rich in minerals allow itself to be exploited by foreigners, while receiving peanuts for our minerals?

Question 8 (2023-02-15)

Hon. Diergaardt (PDM) asked the Minister of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security:

People have lost their lives at the hands of the Namibian Police, who are trusted to protect the lives of people. The most direct connection between police brutality and public health is the fact that police brutality kills and injures people. The clearest indication out there is that we don't regard police brutality as a public health issue. Police brutality affects public health because it affects an indicator of population health, which is life expectancy. Police brutality is also a major violation of human rights. Incidents of police brutality in Namibia are swept under the rug.

I thus wish to ask the Honourable Minister the following:

1. How many complaints of police brutality in Namibia have been received by the Internal Investigation Directorate to date?
 2. How many Police brutality investigations are currently underway?
 3. How many prosecutions and convictions have been concluded?
 4. Is the Internal Investigation Directorate independent and impartial when investigating incidents of police brutality in Namibia?
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Question 14 (2023-02-15)

Hon. Katjimune (PDM) asked the Minister of Information and Communication Technology:

Hon. Minister,

We have in our possession information about the looting of State funds at the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), particularly in the Infrastructure and Maintenance Department falling under the Transmitter - DTT Projects Section. In 2016, the NBC bought certain generators from a company called Procast Engineering.

On the initial tax invoice, the generators that were bought and paid for were five (5) John Deere generators, which were priced at a total cost of N\$3.3 million. These generators were to be supplied to various NBC stations at Opuwo, Signalberg, Gobabis, Corridor 13 and Eiseb 10. However, the generators meant for Corridor 13 and Eiseb 10 have not been delivered up to date.

What is fundamentally concerning about the procurement of these generators is that the John Deere generators that were initially procured and paid for on the tax invoice are not the ones that were delivered. Instead, Scania generators were delivered at Opuwo, Gobabis and Stampriet. Of these, only the generator at Gobabis works. This points to serious irregularities and fraud in the procurement of these generators and in the general operations of the Infrastructure and Maintenance Department of the NBC.

Even more concerning is that there was no commissioning by Procast Engineering to test the effectiveness of these Scania generators before they were procured, which ultimately led to the failure of the other two generators at Opuwo and Stampriet. These failed Scania generators have joined the more than five (5) generators which are not operational at various offices of the NBC. There are also various payments that were made for the repair and maintenance of certain generators to Procast Engineering, and no repair and maintenance has been done on those generators up to date and have been dumped at the premises of the NBC, pointing to a suspicious and corrupt relationship between the NBC and Procast Engineering.

I therefore ask the Honourable Minister the following:

1. Can the Honourable Minister explain how the Infrastructure and Maintenance Department of the NBC ended up with Scania generators as opposed to the John Deere generators which were initially invoiced and paid for?
 2. Can the Honourable Minister account to this House as to why there has been up to date no repair and maintenance on various generators of the NBC, despite payments having been made to Procast Engineering in 2015 and 2016?
 3. Last but not least, will the Minister launch a comprehensive forensic audit into the financial operations of the Infrastructure and Maintenance Department of the NBC in particular and into the NBC in general in order to get to the bottom of this fraud?
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Question 16 (2023-02-21)

Hon. Kauandenge (NUDO) asked the Minister of Higher Education, Technology and Innovation:

Hon. Minister, I take it on face value that you are all too aware of the Education Act that stipulates that only the University of Namibia is allowed by law to offer LLB degree in Namibia.

Despite this provision in our Education Act which in any case to me is outdated and need urgent review, I must state that to me this is an outright monopolistic policy that have no place in a modern, open and education starved Namibia. I must add that while this policy is still in place, the Qualification Authority of Namibia has accredited Triumphant College to offer a 3 year Law Advanced Diploma course.

Interestingly students studying this 3 year Advanced Diploma course are also funded by NSAF if they qualify making this College amongst those popular higher learning institutions in our country.

Hon. Speaker, I must add that those of us who have actually set in a class, studied into the wee hours of the night, did assignments and actually set for examinations with time limitations, can attest to the fact that, studying Law takes a strong mental state, perseverance and high discipline as it is one of the most difficult field of studies.

Here I'm not talking about the receivers of Honorary degrees who get them on a silver platter, not at all. This is a field in which you must invest your time and commitment, equally it is not a cheap field to study as well.

Therefore it defies logic, and one would want to know what the men's rea was of those who drafted this Education Act was at the time and I'm not referring to the criminal state of mind as in a criminal case, but merely asking the state of mind of those drafters of our Education Act at the time when they drafted this Act.

This question is important because on one hand you have an Education Act that give autonomy to Unam exclusively to offer an LLB degree in Namibia, while you have Triumphant College accredited by the Qualification Authority to offer Law at an Advanced diploma level.

However disappointingly is that students who completed their Advanced Diploma in Law at Triumphant College and apply to Unam must go and re-start their law studies from the first year, is this true Hon Minister as they don't receive credits for subjects already covered during their three years studies at Triumphant College?

Hon. Minister, is it true that a young man/woman from Katutura can study law for three years at Triumphant College and then on completion, Unam does not recognize this qualification and the poor student can be admitted to the law faculty at Unam, but he or she must re start his or her study from scratch?

This then means that a Student who start at Unam doing law will study an LLB for only 4 years, while a student who first goes and study an Advance Diploma in law at Triumphant College, will altogether study for his or her LLB a combined 7 years? What a waste, what a mockery of our education system, what a heartless education system we have in this country.

If indeed this is true Hon. Minister, don't you think this is an urgent matter that must be rectified with the outmost urgency it deserve forthwith, with the amendment of the Higher Education Act?

This is a wastage of our country resources and must be rectified soonest, because Government spend money for three years through NSAF educating this students at Triumphant College that goes to waste after their 3 years study in Law at this college, then Government spend another funds for another four years at Unam for them to obtain their LLB, this is pure illogical, wastage of meagre resources and at best misplaced in all its probabilities.

Hon. Speaker, the Minister owes this House serious and factual answers to the above questions, because this scenario cannot be allowed to continue for another day. Parents spend their hard earned money to fund this students at Triumphant College that want to pursue Law for three years, only to be told after they graduate that Unam cannot give them credits for subjects already covered and that they must start afresh, what kind of mickey mouse education is this really, it is simply not on.

When will this monopoly granted to Unam come to an end in this country, whereby they are the only institution that have the right to offer an LLB degree?

Why can't other higher institution of learning in Namibia not offer LLB, if we have the Namibia Qualifications Authority that can accredit such institutions to make sure that they meet the requirements to offer an LLB qualification just like UNAM?

Hon. Minister, you owe this nation an unfettered reply, bone to a bone, as thousands are waiting in anticipation for your answer and I hope that you will do so.

Question 21 (2023-02-21)

Hon. Muharukua (PDM) asked the Minister of Higher Education, Technology and Innovation:

Section 9 (2), of Act 15 of 2015, places the collective duty of the board members to strive to achieve high standards of transparency and accountability taking into account the objects of the said Act and the need to obtain the best value for money in public procurement. Section 10 (1)(c) emphasises that duty on individual members while subsection 1 (a) and (b) demands from individual board members fidelity, honesty, integrity and to act in the best interest of the Board and the procurement system; further, it demands the exercise of a reasonable degree of care and diligence in the performance the boards functions from individual board members.

Honourable Minister the 52% plus unemployment crisis is one that is felt by every household. Every capital project undertaken in the Republic is therefore, not only a lifeline for the citizenry that are to benefit from the end product, but also for those who are engaged in the construction process of our capital projects. One such project is the Okakarara Hotel School, as part of the upgrading of the Okakarara VTC.

I therefore wish to ask the Honourable Minister the following:

1. Is it correct that the project was awarded to Octagon Construction (Pty) Ltd, as the contractor?

2. This contract was awarded to that contractor in April 2019, with the initial completion date of the project April 2021.
3. Is it correct that despite the extension of the completion date to August 2021, the project completion remains pending?
4. Who are the directors of the said Octagon contractor?
5. What is the gross value of the project?
6. Of the project value how much is actually paid to the construction employees of the project?
7. What has hampered the completion of the project on the initial completion date?
8. Why has the company failed to meet the second deadline?
9. Do you then agree that 3 years after the award of the contract and 2 years after the initial extension of the completion date, it falls within the duties of the collective and individual board members to act in accordance with the cited Sections 9 and 10 duties respectively?
10. If you are not in agreement with the immediately foregoing question, why not?

Question 24 (2023-02-22) – *Re-directed by the Right Hon. Prime Minister to the Minister*

Hon. McHenry Venaani (PDM) asked the Minister of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform:

The residents of the Bahnhof community, 20km eastwards of Rehoboth are yet to be afforded the basic services owed to every citizen in an independent Namibia - the very services that are central to actualizing the promise of dignity for our people. For over 32 years, this secluded community, of approximately 800 people have gone without a local clinic, adequate water infrastructure, neither a pre-primary nor a primary school.

The daily realities of the Bahnhof community, and many others like itself, strikingly contrasts the development rhetoric of the National Planning Commission.

Thus, I ask:

1. When in its development planning does the government envisage the establishment a school for the Bahnhof community of the Rehoboth Urban East Constituency- to prevent the need for children to foot distances of over 20km in order to attend school?
 2. When in its development planning does the government envisage the Bahnhof community's enjoyment of adequate access to water by way of permanent water infrastructure?
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Question 30 (2023-02-22)

Hon. Mukwilongo (NEFF) asked the Minister of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security:

Hon. Minister, we have a major problem in our country in terms of issuing work permits, especially to the Pakistanis that are fixing cellphones.

We have many young people in our country that are skilled and experts in this type of industry and yet we are issuing many work permits to the Pakistanis.

1. Hon. Minister, the work permits that have been issued in this type of industry, once they have expired, they should not be renewed again.

Our young people are more than enough in this country to do this type of job.

2. Hon. Minister, I urge you to stop issuing work permits in these industry, so that, it will give opportunity to our youth to grow their business in this industry.

Question 36 (2023-03-02)

Hon. McHenry Venaani (PDM) asked the Minister of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security:

Nearing the month end of December last year the newly appointed Inspector General of the Namibian Police Force was involved in a fatal car crash, where he is said to be the only survivor, leaving three dead. According to a report of The Namibian, titled “Police Chief Involved in Accident”, published 30 December 2022, the police spokesperson Kauna Shikwambi herself described information as “sketchy”. And indeed, sketchy it remains.

Inspector General, Joseph Shikongo, unlike every other person driving a car involved in a fatal accident and would be investigated for culpable homicide, has enjoyed unjustified immunity from the law, and was exempt from arrest and a breathalyser test – in direct contradiction with our laws.

Article 10(1) All persons shall be equal before the law.

While we know it is not within the ambit of their powers for members of the force to initiate the arrest of the Inspector General at the scene of the accident, equality and the values of constitutionalism were well within reach. His Excellency, President Geingob could have invoked his power to order the arrest of the Inspector General.

As if this was not enough to undermine justice, Inspector General Joseph Shikongo remains in office, as head of NAMPOL, the very institution investigating the accident in which three Namibians lost their lives, and he, the driver, was the sole survivor.

Thus, I ask:

1. Does your office recognise the conflict of interest presented by Joseph Shikongo being both the object of an investigation with an implication as serious as culpable homicide, while simultaneously serving as the head of the investigating institution?

2. What mechanisms are in place to ensure that members of the force can investigate the accident without fear, intimidation or influence?
3. Why wasn't the Inspector General tested for alcohol at the scene of the accident?
4. Why hasn't the Inspector General been arrested?
5. Why hasn't the Inspector General been suspended?
6. Is it procedural and correct to have a vehicle removed from the scene of a crime or accident before the Crime Investigation Department visits the scene and takes pictures thereof?
7. What are the consequences of negligence or failure to perform due diligence and correct procedures in an instance such as the one above described?
8. Why was the Inspector General's vehicle removed from the accident scene in the absence of the CID and without pictures of the vehicle and scene being taken?
9. What precedent does the handling of this case set?
10. How should the public interpret the manner in which this case has been handled, in consideration of the issues here raised?
11. Can the police be trusted to uphold law and order impartially?

Question 38 (2023-03-02)

Hon. Seibeb (LPM) asked the Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism:

The nation at large, and particularly the policy makers, and implementers of the Landless People's Movement (LPM) and its Policy Unit are concerned about the post-COVID-19 tourism strategy of Namibia. Some African countries, such as Rwanda, Botswana, Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa have developed post-COVID-19 tourism strategies and strategic Plans for implementation. Rwanda has invested heavily in Rwanda Air as part of the tourism marketing strategy as well as supplementing this with Visit Rwanda campaign by sponsoring Arsenal soccer club. Recently, South Africa Tourism Board tried almost this strategy with Tottenham Hotspur before the outcry by the public in that country. We all know by now that KORA investment was a wasted investment.

Hence, the following questions:

1. What is our post-COVID-19 tourism strategy and plan?
2. Is Namibia Tourism Board (NTB) still active and when shall the permanent Chief Executive Officer's (CEO) term come to an end?
3. NTB faced financial problems in the previous two years to the point that they could not pay staff salaries and other related services. Has the situation improved?

4. What is the strategy to attract more tourists as far as our domestic tourism market and international market is concerned?
 5. How much is our annual affiliation/subscription fees at the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) and how many Namibians are working there now?
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Question 39 (2023-03-02)

Hon. Seibeb (LPM) asked the Minister of Urban and Rural Development:

You issued a communication to the Mayor of Khorixas Town Council, Her Worship Hon. Lena #Gaeses on 13 February 2023 informing her about the employment contract of the Chief Executive Officer, which lapsed on 28 February 2023. We understand that there was some meddling with the Special Council Meetings, which were held on 30 November 2022 and 13 December 2022 and that you advised the Council that since no substantive Ordinary Council Meetings were held in terms of Section 15(3) of the Local Authorities Act, 1992 (Act No. 23 of 1992) that those Special Council Meetings remain invalid until confirmation at the proceeding of Ordinary Council Meeting. On 28 February 2023, the governing political party at that local authority recalled two of its Councilors from the town council with immediate effect.

Hence, the following questions:

1. We understand that there are some talks of municipal funds embezzlement at Khorixas Town Council. Will you investigate such claims or refer them to the Anti-Corruption Commission?
 2. Did you approach the Attorney-General to seek a legal opinion on the validity, criminality and forging of the Special Council Meetings which were held in November and December 2022, respectively?
 3. There are claims of misappropriation and embezzlement of funds at the town council. Will you investigate such claims?
 4. Have you notified the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) about such claims?
 5. When do we expect a response on the state of affairs of Khorixas Town Council insofar as it relates to the administration, management, financial audit, human resource audit and development projects audit, and your correspondence with the Attorney-General, the Auditor-General and Anti-Corruption Commission?
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Question 41 (2023-03-02)

Hon. Van Den Heever (PDM) asked the Minister of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform:

AGRIBUSDEV was established in the year 2011 to run 11 Green Schemes. The Agricultural Business Development Agency, experienced serious governance, financial and operational deficiencies. In addition, the running of the Green Scheme according to the Minister of Agriculture, observed that there were institutional challenges in the administration of the schemes. AGRIBUSDEV could not pay salaries to its green scheme workers, while millions were appropriated annually by the central government,

equipment were not functioning, some of the green schemes became a graveyard of broken equipment, spare parts were not available, the smallest decision about the farms were taken at the head office in Windhoek. AGRIBUSDEV was dissolved as a result and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform is now responsible for the Green Schemes in Namibia.

Green schemes are aimed to contribute to the national goals to improve the level of food security at both households level and nationally, and to create employment opportunities in order to provide a secure foundation for sustainable and equitable growth throughout the economy. There is great potential for Green Schemes in Namibia to produce enough food for Namibians, but the situation at Green Schemes is worrisome.

I thus wish to ask the Honourable Minister the following:

1. When AGRIBUSDEV was operational, important equipment on the farms were broken. What is the status of the much needed equipment on the farms at the moment?
2. The ministry has taken over the responsibility of the Green Schemes in Namibia and therefore dissolved AGRIBUSDEV. What will happen to AGRIBUSDEV itself, the state owned company?
3. The employees of AGRIBUSDEV go to work every day just to go sit around, doing absolutely nothing. Please explain the current role of the company since its initial role has been taken over by the ministry?
4. What will happen to the 20 plus or minus employees of the now dissolved AGRIBUSDEV? Will they be integrated in your ministry? If yes, how many?
5. Will the employees of AGRIBUSDEV receive severance packages if the company permanently closes its doors?
6. How is the ministry currently addressing the plight of the plus or minus 500 Green Scheme Workers?
7. What drastic changes has the ministry implemented thus far since dissolving AGRIBUSDEV, to ensure productivity on the Green Schemes?
8. Is the ministry still calling on foreign investors for the Green Schemes? If yes, what will the modus operandi be of the foreign investors?
9. What is the current productivity levels of the Green Schemes since the ministry dissolved AGRIBUSDEV?

Question 46 (2023-03-08)

Hon. Dienda (PDM) asked the Minister of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security:

Namibia and Botswana signed a memorandum of understanding on the 24th February 2023 to permit citizens of the two countries to use identity cards to cross their borders.

The agreement is said to eliminate barriers to the free movement of people, goods and services. While free movement will be implemented, we cautiously need to ensure that the aspects of criminality and security threats are closely watched.

The integrity of passports is a key component of national and international anti-crime and anti-terrorism strategies. Because travel documents can be powerful tools in the hands of criminals or terrorists, controlling the security of a country's travel document and its issuance processes directly impacts not only national and international security but also international respect for the integrity of the document.

I thus wish to ask the Honourable Minister the following:

1. Namibians can currently only obtain an ID from 16 years. Does this mean that those under the age of 16 must travel with passports?
2. How will this new initiative ensure that national security is not compromised?
3. Please explain the integrity of the new Namibian ID's and the Botswana ID cards in relation to national and international anti-crime strategies?
4. The demand for the new ID cards will increase because of this new initiative between Namibia and Botswana. Does the Ministry have the capacity to meet this demand in terms of issuing the new ID's?
5. What will happen in instances when the courts of law constrains people to surrender their travel documents? Will the people also then surrender their ID cards since the ID cards are now also regarded as travel documents?
6. People use IDs for almost every important issue on a daily basis like financial transactions, applications, and declarations just to name a few. If people have to surrender their IDs when obligated by the courts of law, it will surely negatively impact the lives of the people. Can the Ministry explain how this implication will be addressed?
7. When exactly will this new initiative come into effect?

Question 48 (2023-03-14)

Hon. Swartbooi (LPM) asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation:

The Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation (MIRCO) is entrusted with the primary function of formulating, promoting, and executing Namibia's foreign policy and the conduct of Namibia's international relations. However, MIRCO has for the past years not provided a clear foreign policy, which articulates the country's developmental desires and goals. Namibia's economic and political diplomacy has failed to emerge as one of the key driving instruments in our development agenda. It is against this background that I ask the following:

Questions:

1. What are the core tenets of the Namibian Foreign Policy in terms of Economic Diplomacy?

2. How many Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) did the Minister attract during her tenure in terms of Billions of Namibian Dollars? Please list all the international companies/multinational companies and a number of direct jobs created as a result of this Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)?
 3. How many Local Authorities signed Twinning Agreements to benefit the economic development of communities during her tenure? Can the Minister quantify?
 4. Has the Ministry integrated Regional and Local Government Representatives in their Foreign Policy work? And how many regional and local authority leaders have been taken to market and promote Namibia as a destination of choice?
 5. How many Namibian businesses have been connected to broader International Markets?
 6. Do you have any collaborative/joint priority projects with the Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade (MIT), and Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB)?
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Question 50 (2023-03-14)

Hon. Dienda (PDM) asked the Minister of Information and Communication Technology.

The NBC has its Headquarters located in Windhoek and Regional Offices in Keetmanshoop, Katima Mulilo, Rundu, Oshakati, Otjiwarongo and Swakopmund. A Facebook post was made this morning by a certain Real Estate company, detailing that the NBC building in Swakopmund is up for rent. The post further indicates that the NBC building will be available for rent on the 1st of April 2023.

I therefore wish to ask the Honourable Minister the following:

1. The employees of the NBC Swakopmund Office are unaware of this new development. Why is such important information withheld from the employees?
 2. Why is the NBC Swakopmund building up for rent in the first place?
 3. Information has it that the NBC Swakopmund office is relocating to another building in Swakopmund at the end of this month (March 2023). Is NBC going to rent this building they are moving into? If yes, what will the cost implications be?
 4. Where will the new NBC Swakopmund Offices be located?
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Question 51 (2023-03-14)

Hon. Hengari (PDM) asked the Minister of Urban and Rural Development.

Over 33 years after independence, it is an undeniable fact that urban and suburban areas offer more opportunities for access to valued public services including education, healthcare employment, and land ownership. Because of this, people who were

formerly confined to their villages now travel in large numbers to the urban and suburban areas in search of a better standard of living.

There is no doubt that our rural population is continuing to migrate to towns in search of better opportunities and a better way of life. As the growth of informal settlements in urban areas places strain on the limited resources of local authority councils to provide basic services such as water and sanitation. It is the government's responsibility to ensure that those at the regional and local levels embrace-based and statistical forecast planning methodologies in the establishment, development, and later formalization of rural areas.

Hon. Minister, it is reported that over 200 residents of the Okakarara constituency in the Otjozondjupa region are engaged in mass townland-grabbing at a rapid rate.

As a leadership of this country we are duty-bound to ensure that our communities are conducive by providing efficient and effective service delivery in all sectors. In so doing we will eliminate the risk of mass illegal settlements and land grabbing.

I thus ask:

1. In what way has the Ministry intervened in this mass-land grabbing taking place in Okakarara?
2. People generally move from rural areas to urban and semi-urban areas due to the lack of electricity and well-functioning water supplies. Has the Ministry engaged other line Ministries and stakeholders in charge of facilitating the provision of water and electricity in the surrounding rural areas of Okakarara? If not, why not and when does the Ministry intend to engage this stakeholders?
3. This issue of land grabbing keeps reinventing itself, each year, what amicable strategies and mechanisms are being employed to resettle these residents and when will these be employed?
4. What strategies does the Ministry intend to employ to address the issue of under-development of rural areas across the country?

Question 52 (2023-03-15)

Hon. Seibeb (LPM) asked the Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism.

We took note of current conversations in Namibia about the concerns by hunting associations in southern African countries, constituting Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) are enraged that hunting trophies will not be allowed to enter the United Kingdom territory. This will have a major implication to our tourism sector.

Questions:

1. Hon. Minister, are you aware of this latest development?
2. Did you meet other Ministers of Environment and Tourism forming core of the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) to address this situation?

3. What is our two-way tourism traffic and tourism statistics with the United Kingdom?
 4. How much, in monetary terms and services and industry are we stand to lose out as a country?
 5. Hon. Minister, did you meet the Ambassador of the United Kingdom to discuss this critical situation?
 6. What remedial action will you employ to address this situation?
 7. Have you engage the Namibian Chamber of Environment (NCE), Namibia Tourism Board (NTB) and Federation of Namibian Tourism Associations (FENATA) in this regard to get better advice and commitment to ensure that our trophy hunting industry is not affected in economic terms negatively?
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Question 53 (2023-03-15)

Hon. Seibeb (LPM) asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation.

President Kais Saied of Tunisia drew international criticism and concern of stoking anti-Black racism in which he ordered a crackdown on sub-Saharan African migrants and lashed out at a perceived plot to erase Tunisia's identity. The comments fanned racist abuse targeting black people in Tunisia, and prompted some African countries to evacuate their citizens.

Questions:

1. What is our diplomatic relationship with Tunisia, both in political and economic context? What is the two-way trade between our two countries?
 2. How many Namibians live in Tunisia? If any, do we have evacuation plans?
 3. Hon. Minister, you did not condemn Tunisian President but you condemned murderers of George Floyd etc. in the past. Why don't you condemn the actions of the racist Tunisian President? And do you approve his racist ideology?
 4. Did our President (Dr. Hage Geingob) raised his concern about this renewed racism occurring at the African Union level?
 5. Hon. Minister, have you summoned the Tunisian Ambassador to Windhoek and inquire about their country's stance regarding racism?
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Question 54 (2023-03-15)

Hon. Seibeb (LPM) asked the Minister of Finance and Public Enterprises.

We received information in good confidence that NIDA was unable to pay salaries for its workers in Naute Dam month end, and did not also pay overtime for over six months.

Questions:

1. Is it true that NIDA did not pay its workers at Naute Dam for last month, as well as overtime in the past six months?
 2. How did NIDA ended up employing the current manager at Naute Dam, who has failed in Aussenkehr at the grape farms?
 3. Is NIDA meeting production targets and if so, why are they not paying the workers overtime which is due to them?
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Question 55 (2023-03-15)

Hon. Dr. Iijaambo (SWANU) asked the Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism.

Our different species of animals roam the diverse beautiful savanna, forests and grasslands of Namibia. Some will be found in the length and breadth of our deserts.

Since time immemorial people cohabitated and lived off the variegated species of important animals in our country, like lions, they only slaughtered what they needed to consume. Not for pleasure.

Considering the emotive and absolutely sensitive land issue, SWANU of Namibia suggest that there be a ceiling for land ownership in the country.

The land issue was, continue to be, and will always be of pivotal importance.

Consequently, unless we undo what was officially and legally systematically promulgated by the apartheid regime, we cannot have an equitable, egalitarian and transparent society. Our martyrs perished as a result of the genuine struggle for land.

The following questions are therefore worth serious consideration.

1. Why do we allow ourselves to be part of the trophy hunting bandwagon?
2. If all animals are part and parcel of Namibia's biodiversity, who solely benefit from the trophies hunted?
3. Why allow few bourgeois around the globe, especially from developed countries to devastate our animals through trophy hunting?
4. Have we reduced our variegated precious animal species to trophies that does not benefit all?
5. How many rich individuals are allowed to hunt how many trophies per annum?
6. What will our future generations be left with, if we are so desperate about the lucrative profits gained from trophy hunting currently?

7. According to the licensing department of the Ministry, a trophy hunting licence is worth N\$100. Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members, Fellow Namibians, the average amount of a single Big Five easily amounts to ±N\$50,000-00. Who possesses the hunting licence?
 8. The reality of our country's political economy and common sense, which happen not to be common, dictates that this boils down to the unresolved restitution of the prevalent land question. Who own our land?
 9. Does our sovereignty's political will if any, capacitate us to redefine and re-demarcate ourselves?
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Question 56 (2023-03-23)

Hon. Smit (PDM) asked the Minister of Industrialisation and Trade.

About ten years ago, the government of the Republic of Namibia reportedly spent more than N\$130 million on two abortive projects in the Republic of Congo, and in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

These two projects were at the time described as trade parks for the transmission of Namibian goods into the two Congo's, and even beyond. It was claimed at that point in 2012 that a trade hub near the Brazzaville harbour and a cargo depot near Lubumbashi in the DRC's Katanga Province will open up trade for Namibian goods into the central African market.

Needless to say, both projects were abandoned as pipedreams, but only after a very substantial amount of government resources had been wasted. According to reports at that time, the accumulated losses for both ports were in the vicinity of about N\$130 million by the time they were abandoned.

The attempts to establish such trading depots or trade hubs were confirmed by the then Minister of Finance, Hon. Calle Schlettwein.

Now it appears these projects are not dead after all. Despite the gross negligence and wastage of ten years ago, the government propaganda mouthpiece, the New Era newspaper during February this year ran a prominent article on the government's renewed attempts to establish so-called "industrial estates" at Brazzaville and Lubumbashi.

Even quoting a spokesperson for the Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade, New Era remains very vague on the detail of the endeavours. What can, however, be gathered from the New Era report is that both pieces of land are undeveloped and there is little mention of the N\$130 million that has already gone into these two projects.

It is a veritable farce to refer to the two pieces of land as "estates." New Era quotes the ministry as saying that roads will have to be built and that the ultimate idea is to establish trading hubs for Namibian meat and other products to access the markets in central and West Africa.

Therefore, I now ask:

1. Is this reports by the New Era newspaper true?

2. Did the Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade put out a statement claiming that it is the ministry's intention to develop the two sites?
3. Has a feasibility study been done for these two projects and if so, will the Hon. Minister publish them for public scrutiny?
4. What are the budgeted costs for developing both trade hubs, and over how many fiscal years will the project run?
5. What is the amount of money that has already disappeared into the two sites?
6. In which currency will the projects be financed?
7. What are the estimated costs for both, i.e. the trade hub near Pointe Noire in Brazzaville and the dry port near Lubumbashi?
8. Where will the N\$1 billion estimated by New Era come from to finance these projects?
9. In which language will the bi-lateral agreements be drafted?
10. Who are the Namibian civil servants who will drive the process?
11. What is the involvement of the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation?
12. Who will oversee and supervise the two projects if indeed, two construction sites will have to be managed during the construction phase?
13. If these projects ever come to life, who will manage them?
14. Finally, unsustainable projects like these can only materialise if they are driven by specific individuals behind the scenes. Who are the people that will benefit if these projects go ahead?

Question 57 (2023-03-28)

Hon. Kauandenge (NUDO) asked the Minister of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security.

Hon. Minister it was only yesterday when Namibians fought bitterly against South African racist Government apartheid laws, pledging that once we attain our independence we will get rid of all those oppressive laws. It is therefore surprising that we have laws such as the 1989 Public Gathering Proclamation still on our statute books in this day and age in an independent Namibia. A proclamation that was used to put many of our people in prison during that time and we haven't changed it to fit with the new independent Namibia narrative.

Equally of late we are informed that police brutality against innocent civilians are on the increase as to date over 248 civil cases against the police have been opened for assault to illegal detention of members of the public. This has resulted in Government paying over 3 Million and still counting after being found guilty by the courts.

I thus ask:

1. The right to protest can be located in Article 21(1) (D) of our Constitution, Hon. Minister do you agree with me that the 1989 Proclamation on Public Gathering is in total conflict with the provisions of our Constitution and that it needs to be amended with immediate effect?
2. In light of the above stated ever increasing cases of civil cases lodged against the Namibian police officers, do our police officers get basic legal training in order for them to establish the Mens Rea and Actus Reus in any given case before arresting a person, to avoid being sued later for illegal detention or arrest of a member of the public?
3. Because this are the two most important elements for one to get a conviction in especially criminal cases. Is it perhaps also not here at the level of investigation and arrest where many cases are thrown out, because they are dead on arrival and the magistrate has no other option then to struck them from the Roll?
4. Would you agree with me that although Police officers act on behalf of the State in the execution of their duties that somehow they must be made to pay from their own pockets, when found guilty of brutality and disregarding the law when arresting or dealing with members of the public?
5. Because as it stand they can beat someone, or arrest someone without following due process and at the end of the day the State is liable and pays up, which means us the tax payers continue to foot the bill of those unruly police officers?
6. Hon. Minister do you still maintain that you have a professional police force in this country, while the evidence suggest that you have a police force that is at war with its own citizens, and that lacks the most important ingredients that must be present when working with civilians which is empathy?
7. Finally Hon. Minister do you agree with me that we as people representatives must be able to identify and repeal oppressive laws now while we can, while we have this positions of power, failure to do so once we become ordinary citizens we or our kids, families risk to face the same ordeal, and by that time when we cry out and pinpoint the shortcomings in those laws, Namibians will say but you were there, you had all the powers to change those laws but you conveniently ignored them, because at the time the system protected you and you did not feel them?

Question 58 (2023-04-11)

Hon. Katjimune (PDM) asked the Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation.

Honourable Minister,

The Social Security Commission (SSC) had a Post-Retirement Medical Aid Benefit for its employees, which was a condition of employment. This benefit was terminated as a condition of employment on 30 November 2023 through an agreement between NAPWU and the SSC, on the advice of Octagon Actuaries & Consultants.

The employees were then presented with four options by the actuaries in as far as their accrued benefits are concerned. The options were as follows:

Option 1: Receive Benefit as Cash

Option 2: Transfer Benefit to a Preservation Fund

Option 3: Purchase an Annuity with insurance company

Option 4: Eligible employees who are 55 years of age or above may opt to remain on the Post-Retirement Medical Benefit

It has emerged that 92% of the employees chose Option 1, which is to receive the benefit as cash, and this choice was approved by the board in 2022. The employees were also informed that the payments will be made on 25 September 2022. The employer even went as far as issuing quotations reflecting the amounts employees were to receive on 25 September 2022, and employees then went to banks and took out loans. The SSC even guaranteed banks that the money will be paid.

However, the Minister then autocratically decided to reject the choice of the employees and instead instructed them to choose either option two or three. Hence, no payments have been effected up to date, and this has created friction within the workplace at the Social Security Commission and left employees in a precarious financial predicament:

I therefore ask the Honourable Minister:

1. What informed your autocratic decision to go against the democratic vote of the employees in choosing Option 1, rather than Option 2 and 3?
2. What is plan to ensure that this impasse is resolved and that the employees are given what is rightfully due to them and that the payments are paid out expeditiously?
3. Last but not least, how are you planning to remedy the low morale at SSC that has emanated from this unfortunate situation?

Question 60 (2023-04-13)

Hon. Swartbooi (LPM) asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation.

In recent times news emerged that the small Island of Great Britain was at pains about Namibians of Ovaherero descent who have taken to live in Britain for economic reasons. The number of applicants for asylum to the UK which have been declined are said to be at one thousand Namibians. They have an exceptionally rude Home Secretary by the name of Suella Braverman.

Among the reasons for the decline of these applications is that Namibia is a safe country without any political oppression and marginalisation. This is far from the truth and it is our information that many of those Namibians that wish to stay in the UK are doing so out of lack of economic opportunities in the country of their birth, viz, Namibia.

For many of these Namibians to return to Namibia would mean a life of pauperism and as Thomas Hobbes espoused, a life of solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short. It is not strange that the UK government, along with its historic imperialist, racist logic of domination for self-gain, deciphered that they will not recognize the legitimate

challenges confronting these Namibians. In fact, the entire EU has been spitting out African asylum seekers for the last two decades, simply on the basis of the color of their skin, completely ignoring the impact of the neo-liberal economic policies that they imposed upon the African people, with disastrous economic and social consequences.

Yet, these same EU and UK and broader Western governments would be eager to participate in the African brain-drain, by inviting Africans to apply for citizenship in their countries when they have a skills-shortages and are in need of qualified and competent African labour. Yet, poor African societies have invested billions to educate these African professionals, and they take them at will without even refunding the African societies for the dollar-to-dollar investments made to be built local capacity for our own development. This is of course the sad story of the global north fighting the economic and social progress of the global south.

Questions:

1. There is a suggestion by the British government, which they denied unconvincingly to us, that UK VISA laws will change, requiring Namibians to possess VISAS as a prerequisite for entry into the Island of Britain. What is the progress in this matter since the last time this issue was raised here?
2. What is the Namibian government's view and retort on its citizens, namely the Ovaherero in the UK, being harassed, labelled, and criminalized as trespasses and delinquents by the UK, without any authoritative evidence being canvassed to amplify their assertions? Has there been case-by-case reporting on this issue and have there been talks to resolve this question of national importance, or are we just bowing to the whims of the small Island country of Britain?

Question 61 (2023-04-13)

Hon. Swartbooi (LPM) asked the Minister of Finance and Public Enterprises.

The Zambezi Waterfront Tourism Park has not been functioning since 2016. The only time the Waterfront was optimally utilized as a COVID-19 quarantine facility. There is a 100 million dollars needed to revamp the Zambezi Waterfront Tourism Park. We are informed, after 189 million dollars was used, and 57 million dollars vanished into thin air, no arrests or inquiries were made to determine how the latter amount was spent. The land still belongs to Katima Mulilo Town Council.

This resort is in a prime location to gain greater tourists numbers from 5 different countries on the Kavango – Zambezi river's. However, two years ago, it was expressed that Government must stop building tourism facilities as it does not have the capacity to manage these profitably. This was said by the Minister of Environment and Tourism, Pohamba Shifeta.

Therefore the questions:

1. Why has there not been any concerted effort made to follow through on how \$57 million were either lost or stolen?
2. What is the eventual plan of the government to ensure that the Waterfront of Katima becomes profitable?

3. Will the Minister state whether they will investigate the whereabouts of the \$57 million, and when he will do so?
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Question 62 (2023-04-25)

Hon. Isaaks (LPM) asked the Minister of Mines and Energy.

Last year, around about the same time, the Electricity Control Board approved a tariff adjustment, and Nampower subsequently increased tariffs with 5.8%. At the time the ECB in its tariff adjustment brief stated that the review was made after a 2-year pause.

The ECB stated that “annual electricity tariff reviews are conducted to ensure that utilities charge appropriate tariffs to collect enough revenue to enable reliable and efficient operations at affordable rates.”

This year again, Nampower asks the ECB to approve an upward adjustment of 16.85%.

I have not seen the brief of this year, and is thus in the dark about reasons for a rather steep increase that is proposed.

Nampower reported a drop in sales amounting to about 5 percent and a loss of profit before interest and tax to the tune of 2.3 billion NAD compared to a 1.1 billion profit in the preceding year.

Nampower blamed the losses on weak collection of payments from customers, economic downturn of the past 5 years exacerbated by Covid 19.

1. Can the Hon. Minister confirm that Nampower is facing for the first time in 5 years some financial woes, occasioned by sluggish economy and Covid 19, therefore external factors and to what extent those are the prevalent reasons? How much of the losses could be attributed to management, under or over reporting or other internal factors?
 2. With inflation expected to slow to 4.0 percent in 2023, why is Nampower requesting 12 percent more in tariff increase?
 3. How growth in revenues does Nampower expect from the tariff increase, and...
 4. How much of revenue coming from an increase will be directed to improving Nampower generation capacity?
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