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No. 17 - 2023

## NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

# QUESTIONS

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**Question 129 (2023-07-11)**

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

Regarding Ministers who receive S&T from State parastatals. Honourable Minister, it has come to media headlines that the Minister of Higher Education, Technology and Innovation, Hon. Itah Kandjii-Murangii received an amount of N\$ 310 400 in S&T for traveling purposes in July last year. This raises concerns because the university has a history of targeting disadvantaged students who failed to pay tuition fees, at a value that is lower than the amount dashed out to the Minister by the university. Furthermore, the kleptocratic nature of some Ministers to loot State resources under the disguise of 'S&T' is alarming. It is in light with the above statement that I proceed to ask the following:

1. Can the Minister provide which policies and procedures that permits Ministers to solicit traveling S&T from State parastatals?
2. If there is an existence of such policies, what are the mechanisms in place to ensure that tax payers' money is not spent on unproductive trips, and that corruption is limited?
3. How many Ministers have benefited from requesting S&T from parastatals, and at what value? Can it be made public?
4. If such requests are provided for via a policy, why has it not been reported back to the August House during the budget debates?

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**Question 130 (2023-07-11)**

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

Regarding the current issue of lead exposure among infants and children in Rosh Pinah, there have been allegations of a potential cover-up by the mining company, Trevali

Mining Corporation, which happens to be one of Namibia's largest and most significant lead and zinc mines.

A medical report exists that reveals the findings of lead concentration tests conducted on 30 children. According to the report, all 30 children exhibited high levels of lead in their blood. These tests were performed by a medical doctor who was previously employed by the mining company. The doctor recommended concrete measures be taken and advised the company to inform the Ministries of Health and Social Services, Mines and Energy (Mining Commissioner), and Environment, Forestry and Tourism (Environmental Commissioner). Unfortunately, the doctor's contract was abruptly terminated, and he subsequently relocated to Cape Town. It's worth noting that the doctor's employment contract contained a Non-Disclosure Clause, prohibiting him from contacting anyone outside the scope of his employment. Nevertheless, he compiled a report that has been in existence for the past three years. The local clinic in Rosh Pinah is well aware of this situation; however, it appears that Trevali Mining Corporation is attempting to suppress this matter from becoming public knowledge. The health implications of lead exposure in children are significant. At high levels of exposure, lead can severely impact the brain and central nervous system, potentially leading to coma, convulsions, and even death. Another medical doctor conducted tests on 10 children, and in one instance, a one-year-old baby exhibited a lead concentration of 25 in the body, while a two-year-old child had a concentration of 22. The blood lead reference value (BLRV) for children should not exceed 5 micrograms per deciliter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ). In some countries, a blood lead reference value of 3.5  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  is utilized. If this lower value were applied in Namibia, it is possible that more children would be identified as having lead exposure.

This would enable parents, doctors, public health officials, and communities to take early action to reduce the children's future exposure to lead. Children who survive severe lead poisoning may experience intellectual disabilities and behavioral disorders. Even at lower levels of exposure that do not produce obvious symptoms, lead is known to cause a range of injuries across multiple body systems. Lead is distributed throughout the body, including the brain, liver, kidneys, and bones. It accumulates over time in the teeth and bones, and during pregnancy, lead in bone can be released into the blood, thereby becoming a source of exposure for the developing fetus. It is important to note that there is no known level of lead exposure that is without harmful effects. One week ago, officials from the Ministry of Health and Social Services visited the clinic in Rosh Pinah to assess the situation on the ground.

Questions:

1. Honourable Minister, I would like to inquire if you are aware of the existence of a medical report compiled by a former medical doctor employed by Trevali Mining Corporation?
2. Has Trevali Mining Corporation informed you about the elevated lead concentration levels found among children in Rosh Pinah?
3. Is the Mining Commissioner informed about the lead exposure issue and the alleged cover up by Trevali Mining Corporation?
4. Has the Mining Commissioner dispatched a team of investigators to Rosh Pinah to assess the lead exposures and determine the necessary remedial actions?

5. Honourable Minister, I understand that officials from the Ministry of Health and Social Services were sent to Rosh Pinah to meet with the clinic administration. Could you provide us with information on when you plan to conduct joint meetings with your Cabinet colleagues, the Ministers of Health and Social Services, and Environment, Forestry and Tourism, in order to investigate these issues thoroughly and deliver a comprehensive briefing to this esteemed House?

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**Question 131 (2023-07-12)**

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

It has come to my attention that there have been recurring concerns regarding the utilization of subsistence and travel allowance funds by various Ministers, with a recent focus on the Minister of Higher Education, Technology and Innovation, who is alleged to have benefited from such claims across multiple public enterprises within the education sector. However, it is worth noting that this issue extends beyond the Minister of Higher Education, Technology and Innovation, as it appears that several Ministers have also availed themselves of similar arrangements.

During the Fishrot trial, former fisheries minister Bernhardt Esau explicitly mentioned how Ministers would exploit these opportunities to claim excessive subsistence and travel allowances, thereby accumulating substantial financial gains. Furthermore, it is important to highlight that there is currently no provision within the Public Enterprises Governance Act that explicitly authorizes Ministers to request subsistence and travel allowances from Public Enterprises.

In light of these circumstances, I seek clarification from the Minister of Finance and Public Enterprises regarding the legitimacy and appropriateness of these claims made by Ministers, particularly with regard to Public Enterprises. Additionally, I request information on any directives or guidelines in place, or any potential plans to establish them, to ensure proper governance and oversight of subsistence and travel allowances within the context of Public Enterprises.

Therefore, the following questions:

1. Hon. Minister, are you aware that the Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism and his Personal Assistant has been always claiming subsistence and travel allowances from the Environmental Investment Fund (EIF) to attend COP (Conference of the Parties) meetings every year? COP is the main decision-making body of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC).
2. Will you investigate such claims against the Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism and his Personal Assistant and publish such findings/avail it to this August House?
3. Hon. Minister are you aware that even the former Minister of Environment and Tourism, Uahekua Herunga (now Swapo Deputy Secretary-General) used to claim subsistence and travel allowances from the Environmental Investment Fund (EIF) during his short stint as the Minister of Environment and Tourism?
4. Will you investigate such claims against the former Minister of Environment and Tourism and publish such findings/avail it to this August House?

5. Hon. Minister can you confirm or deny that when the Public Enterprises were transferred to your Ministry, you received subsistence and travel allowances request made to the Environmental Investment Fund by the Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism but you refused to accede to such requests arguing that it is wrong and that all Ministries must budget for subsistence and travel allowances. Kindly produce such a letter of request by the Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism and your concomitant response?
6. When will you develop laws, regulations, policies prohibiting the Executive and their support staff from requesting subsistence and travel allowances from public enterprise operating in their sphere of control?
7. Hon. Minister, can you investigate written letters to all the Managing Directors, Chief Executive Officers of all the public enterprises and request them to provide whether they have not received subsistence and travel allowances requests from the Executive, and the amounts thereof?

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**Question 134 (2023-09-05)**

Hon. Smit (PDM) asked the Minister of Finance and Public Enterprises.

It has come to light that a pharmaceutical company majority-owned by a five-year-old child and the child's father, has been awarded a government contract in the order of around N\$1 billion.

This is indeed a shocking revelation, casting a long shadow of doubt over the ability of the Procurement Board to execute its mandate, despite the extensive new legislation that is supposed to plug all these criminal loopholes.

The company in question, Cospharm Investments, is 51% owned by a 5-year old child and the child's father is the owner of the remaining 49%.

This company has been awarded a government tender worth N\$1 billion to supply pharmaceuticals used in cancer treatment and psychotic disorders.

I therefore wish to ask the Honourable Minister the following:

1. How was Cospharm Investments awarded the tender if there is no record of the company on the system of the Business and Intellectual Property Authority (BIPA)?
2. What documentation and records did the Central Procurement Board of Namibia use to verify the authenticity of the company?
3. The minor who is the owner is not part of the Founding Statement of the company that was submitted with the tender. Can you explain this contradiction?
4. How will the 5 year-old minor pay tax to the government seeing that he is the owner of the company? Or will the company be exempted from paying tax seeing that it is controlled by a minor?

5. The same company was accused of selling unregistered medicine to the government's Central Medical Stores two years ago and the State withdrew the case. Please share with this August House:
  - 5.1 Why the State withdrew the case against Cospharm Investments two years ago?
  - 5.2 Why this company still continues to benefit from Government Tenders despite its previous unlawful conduct?
6. We insist that the proper course of law be pursued and that the Procurement Board lays a charge of criminal misrepresentation against Cospharm Investments, and that this case then be investigated by the Commercial Branch of the Namibian Police and prosecuted in a fit and proper court of law.
7. We further pray for an explanation from your Ministry why the Central Procurement Board of Namibia still operates in gross violation of all legal, ethical and professional standards, and that this is allowed to happen, either intentionally or through negligence, on your watch.

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**Question 136 (2023-09-05)**

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

The Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) has been embroiled in a protracted fight between members of former Council as well as infighting among senior members of its Management. The university has been making headlines for all the wrong reasons from allegations of nepotism, tribalism, abuse of power and theft culminating in an ongoing investigation by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) against the Vice-Chancellor.

The former Chairperson of Council warned that '*the institution faces mayhem if critical governance shortcomings are not addressed*'<sup>1</sup>. The crisis at NUST therefore highlights the fundamental challenge faced by higher education, especially when it concerns the erosion of corporate governance, and the comments by the former Chairperson of Council must not be taken lightly. It is clear that NUST is on the verge of collapse and it has become imperative that the Minister intervene.

I therefore ask the Honourable Minister:

1. Can the Honourable Minister provide a comprehensive analysis and account to this August House as to what has led to the collapse in leadership and corporate governance at the Namibia University of Science and Technology under her watch as the responsible line Minister?
2. Has it not become prudent that the Minister appoints the three (3) members of the Panel of Enquiry established in terms of section 37 of the Higher Education Act 26 of 2003<sup>2</sup> (as amended) to investigate the collapse in corporate governance at NUST pursuant to section 37(2)(a) of the Act<sup>3</sup>?

3. Lastly, but most fundamentally, how long will NUST have an interim Council while we wait on the Minister to appoint a substantive Council in terms of Section 7 of the Namibia University of Science and Technology Act 7 of 2015<sup>4</sup>?

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**Question 140 (2023-09-12)**

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

As is common cause, approximately 92% of the country is defined as very arid, arid or semi-arid, and its rainfalls are rare and erratic. In the last decade, Namibia's government declared national emergencies three times due to severe droughts that caused substantial harm to the country's agriculture and economy.

Farmers are now using a combination of nuclear techniques and a water-saving irrigation technology, known as small-scale drip irrigation, for watering their fields. Based on cosmic ray neutron sensors, which provide real-time data on soil moisture, farmers can deliver small but precise amounts of water directly to the plants. We understand the science behind drip irrigation, to be made possible with the help of nuclear and isotopic techniques that can measure moisture levels in both the soil and the plants, and enables farmers to work out exactly how much water and nutrients to use and when.

Irrigation has been a cornerstone of agriculture for thousands of years and has helped food production expand apace with population growth. Today, the 18% of global cropland that receives irrigation water accounts for about 40% of global food production. It is understood that the Namibian government is developing programmes to enhance food security and strengthen food production. The plan includes increasing yields of major crops, such as maize, sorghum and cowpea by 25 to 50 per cent. As part of these efforts, the government is exploring the possibility of introducing more small-scale drip irrigation systems to increase the efficiency of agricultural output, protect water resources and expand the cultivation of other high-value crops.

I, therefore, wish to ask the Honourable Minister the following:

1. Can the Minister of Agriculture provide this August House with the current number of rural areas or known communal areas within the country that have functional irrigation projects, specifically those that yield harvests contributing to our national food production?
2. In pursuit of a deeper understanding of the efficacy of these projects, may the Minister furnish this August Assembly with the most recent data pertaining to the turnover capacity of rural areas operating under drip irrigation systems in Namibia?
3. To facilitate a nuanced evaluation, I request the Minister to present a detailed breakdown of the water capacity of each existing drip irrigation project across the nation. This should encompass the precise capacity of each individual project, alongside their respective geographical locations for reference.
4. It is of paramount importance to ascertain the extent of support that the government extends to the promotion of drip irrigation technology. To this end, could the Minister elucidate the number of hectares of land allocated by the government annually to bolster drip irrigation schemes in rural and communal areas within our nation?

5. I seek clarification on the strategies and mechanisms the government intends to employ to assist and incentivize farmers who demonstrate a commitment to investing in drip irrigation schemes.
6. Building on the notion of expanding the reach and efficacy of drip irrigation, could the Minister provide an accurate figure regarding the total hectares of commercial farms currently benefiting from drip irrigation technology?
7. Additionally, I am interested in understanding the overarching policy framework designed to augment and replicate successful models similar to that of Morocco, wherein drip irrigation has been notably successful. Does a policy to that effect exist?

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**Question 141 (2023-09-12)**

Hon. McHenry Venaani (PDM) asked the Minister of Health and Social Services.

Universally, it is strongly held that quality, affordable and accessible health care is the foundation for our citizens to lead productive and fulfilling lives and for our country to have a strong economy.

Without a doubt, health is an essential part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular, the SDG 3.8 target aims to achieve universal health coverage (UHC), including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health care services, and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.

Without UHC, we will not be able to make the most of our strongest asset: human capital.

I, thus, put to you Honourable Minister, the following questions:

1. What is the current *status quo* as regards Namibia's Universal Health Coverage (UHC) policy framework?
2. Has a feasibility study been conducted in this regards, and if so, when does the government envisage to fully implement UHC policy framework?
3. How do we, as a country, ensure that people have access to the health care they need, when they need it, wherever they live, without suffering financial hardship?
4. What is the current *status quo* regarding the PSEMAS in the light of recent plans to ensure sustainability of the Medical Aid Scheme?

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**Question 142 (2023-09-12)**

Hon. Auchab (UDF) asked the Minister of Urban and Rural Development.

Uis was downgraded to a Settlement in 2010, we are in the 13th year after downgrading. With the current economic activities taking place in Uis, I am convinced that Uis deserve



to be upgraded to the level of a Village. This move will pursue sustainable development, effective governance and an improved quality of life for all residents of Uis.

1. May the Honourable Minister share the progress of Uis after 13 years under the care of Erongo Regional Council, and how often does the Ministry receive reports from the Erongo Regional Council?
2. What criteria has been used to monitor the progress of Uis to regain its status?
3. Lastly, Honourable Minister, what is the criteria that Uis needs to meet before it can be declared as a village again?

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**Question 143 (2023-09-12)**

Hon. Auchab (UDF) asked the Minister of Urban and Rural Development.

The case of Mr Khamseb is provocative Honourable Minister, the pain is too much, your knee is on Khamseb's neck and he cannot breath.

Because of justice, I personally consulted you and your Deputy Minister on separate occasions over this case.

Secondly, I brought you and the Regional Councilors and Governor of Kunene on the same table to discuss the issue and to find a solution.

Thirdly, if you remember Honourable Minister, we had a very fruitful discussion on the spot where you are seated now, together with the right Honourable Prime Minister over the same case.

Honourable Minister, after all this meetings, you have withdrawn the case against Mr. Khamseb, meaning there is no case against Mr. Khamseb.

But Honourable Minister, as I speak, Mr. Khamseb's employee number to receive his salary is not yet issued by your Ministry for 2 years, meaning Mr. Khamseb has not been paid for more than 2 years now, but still (he) Mr. Khamseb is serving Kunene Regional Council and your Ministry loyally and diligently.

1. Honourable Minister, do you have any other legal reason as to why Mr. Khamseb cannot be issued with an employee number to receive his monthly salary?
  2. How would you react if you were not paid for more than 2 years and only surviving on S & T and workshops allowances?
  3. I demand to get a prompt response from you as the head of the Ministry as it is unfair to treat a patriotic Namibian Citizen who is serving the Government and the people of the region, even though you have decided to withhold his salary till date.
  4. Honourable Minister, you must come clear as to what is the issue here. Is Mr. Khamseb being treated like this, because he is affiliated with UDF?
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**Question 144 (2023-09-12)**

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

A private medical company trading under the registered name of Paramount Health Care Centre (Pty) Ltd on 9th March 2017 unlawfully retrenched six female employees without following the set provisions and requirements of Section 34 of the Labour Act 11, 2007. Honourable Minister, one of the selected employees, a certain Ms. Shireen Rooi was on maternity leave; been eight months pregnant at the time she was served with a notice stating her last day will be 13th April 2023.

Paramount Health Care Centre (Pty) Ltd received medical records from Ms. Shireen Rooi that she was due for her confinement, but opted to serve her with a letter of retrenchment on 9th March 2017. Ms. Shireen Rooi's confinement was on 22nd April 2017, whilst her employment was terminated on 13th April 2017. Section 26(5) of Part D of the Labour Act 11, 2007 sets out the following; "An employer must not dismiss an employee during her maternity leave or at the expiry of that leave on any grounds contemplated in section 34.

Furthermore, a certain Ms. Jolean Louw was also part of the six selected employees that applied for annual leave on 8th March 2017, which was approved by the Director of Operations and she was also served with the notice of retrenchment on 9th March 2017. The actions of Paramount Health Care Centre (Pty) Ltd violated Section 30(5)(a) and Section 33 of the Labour Act 11, 2007 which sets out that an employer must not give notice of termination during any period of leave to which the employee is entitled in terms of Part D of this Chapter.

Honourable Minister, on 19th April 2017, Ms. Jolean Louw and Ms. Shireen Rooi referred a dispute of Unfair Labour practices to the Office of the Labour Commissioner. The first female Arbitrator who adjudicated over the case and who later on was recused from the dispute by the Labour Court of Namibia on 20th March 2020 had private discussions with Paramount Health Care Centre (Pty) Ltd Operational Manager without the knowledge of the applicants regarding their legal Aid funding which was approved by the Directorate of Legal Aid through a formal application. These and some other irregularities contributed to this case being unresolved.

To this very date, the dispute filed by the applicants has not been arbitrated yet. This very dispute is still at the conciliation stage and has reached the six-year mark ever since 19th April 2017.

If, therefore, wish to ask the Honourable Minister the following:

1. The first female Conciliator/Arbitrator that was assigned and appointed by the Office of the Labour Commissioner was recused by the Labour Court of Namibia on 20th March 2020 due to her lack to adjudicate properly over the dispute and the gross procedural irregularities she committed as an Arbitrator. Are the competencies of the Conciliators/Arbitrators up to standard and how are their performances assessed and monitored?
2. The second Conciliator/Arbitrator that was assigned and appointed by the Office of the Labour Commissioner refused and denied the applicants their Constitutional Right as set out by Article 12(1)(a) right to present their material evidence before

the arbitrator during the arbitration proceeding. How will this unjust practice be resolved?

3. How will your office ensure that the unfair dismissal of Ms. Shireen Rooi during her maternity leave is resolved and she is fairly compensated?
4. How will your Ministry ensure that the unfair retrenchment of Ms. Jolean Louw during her annual leave is addressed and she is fairly compensated?
5. Will the other four employees who were also unlawfully dismissed be reinstated and compensated?
6. Honourable Minister, written complaints have been submitted to the Labour Commissioner Mr. Henry Kassen as well as the Deputy Labour Commissioner Mr. Kyllikki Sihlahla during December 2018 and again during March 2023. Until this present date, your Office as well as the Office of the Labour Commissioner has not yet reverted to Mrs. Jolean Louw regarding her formal complaint on how the Office of the Labour Commissioner as well as the arbitrator have administered and adjudicated over her dispute filed on 19th April 2017. When will your Office address this already long overdue Labour Dispute as a matter of urgency?
7. Can your Office provide this August House with an overview of the general performance of the Office of the Labour Commissioner, the number of unresolved Labour Disputes, the challenges encountered, and how these challenges can promptly be addressed?
8. What measures does the Office of the Labour Commissioner have in place to ensure compliance from different employers on the rulings made by the Labour Commissioners Office?

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**Question 145 (2023-09-12)**

Hon. Hamata (PDM) asked the Minister of Justice.

Recently, there have been reports in the media that six Public Prosecutors at the Oshakati Magistrate's Court resigned between January and August 2023. While some Public Prosecutors have cited ill health and unbearable conditions, others were apparently transferred against their will.

This, among a very crucial concern of Public Prosecutors being underpaid and having no motor vehicle and housing allowances, is a negative aspect, which is attributed to failures of employee retention strategies in the office in question. You will agree with me that employee turnover as a result of resignation disrupts teams, raises costs, reduces production, and results in lost knowledge. Public Prosecutors are the drivers of our criminal justice system. Sometimes justice is swift. Other times, it crawls.

Notwithstanding the speed with which Namibian courts do their business, justice must always be served. And true justice needs to be swift, sure and seen. Criminal justice in this country is dysfunctional and in a state of crisis. Because of staff shortages, the prosecution service is faced with a large backlog of cases, often resulting in long pre-trial detentions.

Hence, it is essential for the Office of the Prosecutor-General (OPG) Management to realize the importance of employee attraction, satisfaction and retention.

It is equally important to ascertain the real motives behind these continuous resignations.

I, thus, put to you Honourable Minister, the following questions:

1. Why are dedicated Public Prosecutors resigning in such numbers, and what does this trend signal about the state of our justice system?
2. Is it justifiable that Magistrates receive motor vehicle allowances and other perks while Public Prosecutors, tasked with prosecuting dangerous criminals, do not?
3. Do these salary disparities between Public Prosecutors and Magistrates not affect morale, job satisfaction, and the quality of legal representation in our courts?
4. What are the consequences of underpaying prosecutors in terms of case backlogs, delays in justice delivery, and the overall efficiency of our judicial system?
5. Does the current compensation structure for prosecutors align with international standards and best practices, or does it risk compromising their independence and impartiality?
6. How do the current compensation and working conditions for prosecutors impact public trust in our justice system, and what are the broader implications for the rule of law?
7. What reforms and actions can be taken to rectify the identified issues and ensure that justice is not only served but is seen to be served in our society?
8. Could you provide an update on the status of the Prosecutor's Bill? If such a Bill doesn't exist, what are the reasons behind the absence of a comprehensive Prosecutor's Bill aimed at addressing critical issues concerning prosecutors, including their welfare and safety?

Honourable Minister, the safety of Public Prosecutors should be paramount and that differences between the salary scales of Public Prosecutors and Magistrates should be addressed as a matter of urgency.

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**Question 146 (2023-09-12)**

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

The National Policy on Tourism and Wildlife Concessions on State Land refers to a concession as “the right, whether full or restricted or shared or exclusive to conduct tourism activities and/or to commercially use of State owned plant and/or animal resources (collectively referred to as wildlife resources) on business principles in proclaimed protected areas and any other State Land for a specified period of time.”

Further the granting of concessions in Namibia by the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, and previously other authorities, dates back over several decades. The concessions mostly for tourism, hunting and timber in proclaimed protected areas and on communal land.

Concessions also create opportunities for business development and the economic empowerment of formerly disadvantaged Namibians through the tourism, hunting and forestry industries.

Communal conservancies, on their part, are self-governing, democratic entities, run by their members, with fixed boundaries that are agreed with adjacent conservancies, communities or land owners.

The first four communal conservancies gazetted in 1998 were NyaeNyae in the east of Namibia; Salambala in the north east, on the border to Botswana ≠Khoadi-//Hôas, in the Kunene Region; and Torra, spreading westwards towards the Skeleton Coast.

These pioneer conservancies established the model for economic survival and growth in harsh rural settings. As legal entities with wildlife utilisation plans, they were allowed to hunt. Broadly, hunting falls into two areas: trophy hunting, which brings income to pay for game guards and anti-poaching activities, and meat harvesting, which provides a valuable dietary supplement.

For those conservancies with tourism potential, tourism enterprises were established through joint ventures with the private sector, which could bring capital and experience.

As wildlife numbers grew and were sustained by conservation measures, lodges found a sure footing in some conservancies, bringing income and creating employment.

However, not all conservancies have the potential to earn strong incomes from trophy hunting or tourism. Many are on marginal land with little wildlife, but with a strong conservation value to Namibia.

The latter makes it curious whether and how successful and profitable the average conservancy and how concession holders actually become prosperous and empowered in Namibia.

Questions:

1. How many concessions are gazetted as of 31st August 2023 and where are they found? If possible, can the Honourable Minister provide a list?
  2. Who are the beneficiaries of the concessions, and how are such benefits determined and distributed or disbursed if such benefits are monetary?
  3. How many conservancies are registered and gazetted, and where are they found?
  4. Does the Ministry have monitoring tools and systems in place that enables it to track the performance of conservancies and tourism activities operated in conservancies?
  5. How much revenue was in total generated over the past 5 years and how was that revenue shared between the State and the conservancies and concession holders?
  6. How many previously disadvantaged Namibians, who participate as investors, are benefitting from tourism and hunting in conservancies and concession areas?
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**Question 147 (2023-09-12)**

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

The Namibian working class confronts formidable challenges when it comes to unaffordable housing. The burgeoning property rental market, fueled by market dynamics, has left hundreds of thousands of ordinary, hardworking Namibians in the precarious position of being tenants. With housing costs soaring beyond their means, exacerbated by stagnant wages struggling to keep pace with inflation, the dream of homeownership remains elusive for many. The gap between income levels and the cost of urban land and housing continues to widen, underscoring the urgent need for comprehensive housing policies and initiatives that can provide affordable and sustainable housing solutions for Namibia's working class. This factors are well elucidated in a book by revered financial writer Chloe Timperley in her book titled "*Generation Rent: Why You Can't Buy A Home Or Even Rent A Good One*".

It is therefore undeniable that the significant majority of our working class people cannot afford to purchase a property of their own, and have resorted to become tenants and rent. The harsh reality unfurls as rental rates in Namibia reach exploitative and exorbitant heights, pushing tenants into the labyrinth of subpar housing options while greedy landlords fatten their coffers. This crisis ought to have been resolved by the proposed Rent Control Bill, which is earmarked to operationalise the Rent Control Board in an effort to control renting prices in our city, towns and villages as well as handle and investigate complaints between tenants and land lords. It does appear however, for reasons known only to himself, that the Minister has been dragging his feet in bringing this crucial piece of legislation which would bring relief to tenants across our country to Parliament for debate.

This is despite the fact that under Pillar 3 of the of the Harambee Prosperity Plan 2 (Social Progression), the SWAPO government promised to "Promulgate the Rent Control Bill by the end of 2021 to enable the operationalization of Rent Control Board(s) and implementation of Rent Control Measures"

I therefore ask the Honourable Minister:

1. Why has the Honourable Minister dragged his feet in bringing the Rent Control Bill to Parliament?
  2. When can we expect the Honourable Minister to table the Rent Control Bill in Parliament?
  3. What are the hindrances in bringing this crucial piece of legislation to this August House?
  4. Last but not least, what is the ideological posture of the SWAPO government regarding the property renting market in relation to the larger question of the inadequate mechanisms in place to address housing shortages across our local authorities in the country?
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**Question 148 (2023-09-13)**

Hon. McHenry Venaani (PDM) asked the Minister in the Presidency.

It is widely known that the Presidential Economic Advisor, James Mnyupe, who is also the Green Hydrogen Commissioner, has been assigned to manage the Green Hydrogen (GH2) Implementation Authority Office at the Ministry of Mines and Energy under the GH2 Namibia Program.

I thus wish to ask the Honourable Minister the following questions:

1. Given that Mr. James Mnyupe holds multiple roles as the Presidential Economic Advisor, the Green Hydrogen Commissioner, and the manager of the Green Hydrogen Implementation Authority Office, is there not a risk of duplication of duties?
  2. How does the Government justify one individual holding multiple roles across different public sectors, and what measures are in place to prevent potential conflicts of interest?
  3. Are there established procedures for ensuring that the tasks and responsibilities in each of Mr. Mnyupe's roles are distinct, to avoid redundancy and ensure effectiveness?
  4. Does the appointment of the same individual to multiple roles violate the principles of separation of powers, especially if the roles are meant to have checks and balances on each other?
  5. How does the Government ensure that the roles of Presidential Economic Advisor and Green Hydrogen Commissioner do not overlap or conflict with the duties of the Green Hydrogen Implementation Authority Office?
  6. What are the key performance indicators (KPIs) for each role Mr. Mnyupe holds, and how is his performance being objectively evaluated?
  7. Is there a documented rationale for assigning these multiple roles to a single individual, and if so, could it be made transparent for public scrutiny?
  8. Given the multiple hats worn by Mr. Mnyupe, how is the Government ensuring that the policies and strategies of the Green Hydrogen Implementation Authority Office align with the broader economic objectives advised by the Presidential Economic Advisor?
  9. Are there protocols for the Presidential Economic Advisor to recuse himself from discussions and decisions that may affect the GH2 Namibia Program, to prevent any perception of conflict of interest?
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**Question 149 (2023-09-13)**

Hon. Smit (PDM) asked the Minister of Finance and Public Enterprises.

During July 2023 the Management of TransNamib Ltd sent out letters to its pensioners informing them that it would no longer contribute towards their post-retirement/post-employment medical aid schemes as undertaken as part of their retirement conditions as from the 1st January 2024.

As a result of the above notifications a letter was addressed to the Acting CEO of TransNamib Ltd on the 17th July 2023 by De Beer Law Chambers informing him that any attempt to unilaterally change the conditions of post-employment/post retirement is unacceptable and would be resisted.

No response was received from TransNamib Ltd to the letter of 17th July and so a further letter was addressed on the 8th August 2023 by De Beer Law Chambers on behalf of approximately 180 individuals to the Acting CEO of TransNamib Ltd and a copy was also hand-delivered to the office of the Government Attorney requesting certain information and an assurance that TransNamib Ltd would continue paying its share of pensioners' medical aid contributions to medical aid providers as per contractual agreement after the end of 2023.

No response has been received from either TransNamib Ltd or from the Government Attorney.

Honourable Minister, I would point out that TransNamib Ltd's actions are illegal and an act of insolvency. Also, in 2002 the High Court ordered TransNamib Ltd to pay over all contributions when it also tried to "save costs" by attempting to opt out of its legal obligations with regard to post-retirement medical aid contributions. (Reference (P) A 245/02)). TransNamib Ltd had to pay the plaintiffs' costs and will no doubt have to do so again if this matter has to go to litigation.

I therefore ask:

1. Can the Honourable Minister tell this August House whether TransNamib Ltd and its Board of Directors obtained the consent of the shareholder, the Government of Namibia, to take an illegal decision to terminate its contributions to the medical aid providers of its pensioners?
2. Can you inform this August House whether the illegal decision referred to has been rescinded and assure the pensioners of TransNamib Ltd that TransNamib Ltd will continue to honour its obligations to their medical aid providers after 1st January 2024?

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**Question 150 (2023-09-14)**

Hon. Mootu (LPM) asked the Minister of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security.

Four Namibian male farm workers named Bernard Neibeb, Rodney Willemse, Gerson Willemse, and Siefries Uirab mysteriously went missing, according to the family of missing persons the last time that they were seen is when they entered a police car with a Tsumeb registration number.



The four males were out on bail of N\$500.00 (five hundred Namibian dollars) in connection with a stock theft case 108/2017 and were said to have begun negotiations with the farm owner to drop the case and return to their workstation. Thus, the reason that the police officer in a grey police vehicle registered N 307 T, picked up the farm workers to be transported to the farm owners on the 8th of September 2017 and were unreachable ever since. This brought panic to the family members, and the matter was first reported to the Grootfontien Police station on the 11th of September 2017. Subsequently there was a no show of the accused members at set date of the court case on two occasions. It is important to note that the gentlemen where the bread winners of their families and their dependents are left impoverished, without hope and the constant worry of where the next meal will come. When the Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare was approached they were unable to assist the children of the missing persons with grants since the status of their fathers are unknown.

It is with the above statement that I shall proceed to ask the following questions:

1. In terms of the Police Act, Act 19 of 1900 the Namibian Police is mandated to investigate reported crimes. Can the Minister provide insight on the status of the police investigation from when the case was reported to their office on the 11th of September 2017?
  2. In an article titled 'Over 170 people missing' by Confidante on 3 December 2022, indicates that the Namibian Police (Nampol) has revealed that they are yet to find 179 people including 29 children. Can the Minister provide a detailed report on the statistics of missing person to date, and why the Namibian Police is decelerating in solving cases of missing persons?
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