

■ Staff Reporter

New MP wants more female politicians

Popular Democratic Movement parliamentarian Yvette Araes has cited the lack of women in politics as the major failure, resulting in women's voices not being heard and taken seriously.

"We need women at all levels, including the top, to change the dynamic, reshape the conversation, to make sure women's voices are heard and heeded, not overlooked and ignored," Araes said.

She said this while delivering her maiden speech in parliament last week.

Citing the 2021 edition of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and Women in Politics map, Araes said despite increases in the number of women at the highest levels of political power, widespread gender inequalities persist.

"A girl should be two things: who and what she wants to be" is a quote by Coco Chanel.

This shows how female empowerment is a must, and women should feel empowered more and more to do what they wish to accomplish in their lives, related to career, education or politics, she said.

"Female empowerment is important because it is essential that women are able to do everything they set their motivations on," she added.

She said when women are treated unequally to men in terms of rights and designation, it is called gender inequality.

However, she added, even in this modern era, this social issue exists.

"Women empowerment is the



Increase... PDM's Yvette Araes wants more women in politics.

Photo: Parliament

process to empower women with their assigned rights and proper place in society," she said.

Araes said as a part of God's creation, women have the similar

rights to live their life freely as anyone on the planet.

However, she said, since ancient times, they are being maltreated and deprived of their rights.

"Today, everything has changed, but this custom has remained unchanged," she said.

She said it is extremely important to empower women in all spaces of society.

"Women deserve empowerment and equal treatment – not just because they are women but because they are capable to lead and deliver quality results just like men," she stresses.

"When we empower women, we empower the entire Namibian nation. Women equally also need to take up leadership roles and cement themselves in spaces that

are male-dominated in societies," she added.

She further lamented in the existing parliamentary structure, which has eight parliamentary standing committees, only one of it is presided over by a woman, saying it is unbalanced.

"Out of all 11 political parties within this August House, there are only two female chief whips. We need urgent and proportional representation in leadership roles to comply with the Affirmative Action Act," she added.

Araes is part of six new PDM members of parliament who were recently sworn into the National Assembly.

Charmaine Tjirare, Araes, Maximalliant Katjimune, Reggie Diergaardt, Mike Rapuikua Venaani and Lukas Hamata were declared duly elected as members of parliament by the Supreme Court.

Authorities destroy over 5 000 weapons

■ Eveline de Klerk

WALVIS BAY – Weapons linked to murders, robberies as well as other illicit crimes were reduced to ashes on Saturday when the Namibian armed forces destroyed 5 532 firearms and 209 933 ammunition at a shooting range outside Walvis Bay.

Some of these weapons destroyed included those that were voluntarily surrendered during the amnesty period last year.

The destruction of the weapons coincides with the International Gun Destruction Day, adopted by the United Nations, which calls on all states to take significant steps to reduce all forms of violence and related deaths within their countries.

Home affairs minister Albert Kawana on Saturday noted that illicit small arms and light weapons continue to pose a serious threat to Africa's peace and security.

"New trafficking channels are being created by criminals, as the security sector in the majority of countries continues to take measures to combat the movement of illicit small arms and light weapons. Africa's porous borders and overstretched border controls make this situation worse," he explained.

He added illicit firearms and ammunition have continued to remain a common feature in most instances, although the causes and factors driving conflicts in the SADC region have changed over the past years.

"In fact, small arms and light weapons continue to be used as weapons of choice for criminals when they infringe human rights of law-abiding citizens and commit crimes, such as murder, gender-based violence and armed robberies," a concerned Kawana said.

He added that SADC, to address these challenges at regional level, adopted the Protocol on the



Gone... Some of the weapons that were destroyed with explosives on Saturday at Walvis Bay. Photo: Eveline de Klerk

Control of Firearms, Ammunition and other related materials in 2001.

In addition, member states also developed and promoted small arms control instruments, best practice guides, and mechanisms to enable cooperation to prevent, detect and address the illicit proliferation of small arms.

Kawana noted it is a daunting task, and member states are facing many challenges, such as limited capacities, particularly in the area of technical personnel.

"However, capacity-building efforts and programmes continue to improve with the support of critical stakeholders, such as Interpol. Hence, today, we accomplish another

milestone – the destruction of firearms and ammunition – in order to create a safer society. The last time we witnessed a similar activity of this nature was in 2007 when more than 9 000 firearms were destroyed. Today, Namibia destroyed 5 532 firearms and 209 933 ammunition."

Also speaking at the illicit weapon destruction, Erongo governor Neville Andre said illegal weapons remain hugely problematic in society.

"While we place a lot of emphasis on illegal or unlawfully possessed firearms, we must also bear in mind that violence is also committed with lawfully owned firearms, albeit on a lesser scale," he said.

- edeklerk@nepc.com.na

Stock theft accused remanded in custody

■ Loide Jason

A former Brave Warriors and African Stars footballer and four of her co-accused, who were arrested last week over stock theft charges in the Dordabis area, have been remanded in custody, following their court appearance last Friday.

Riaan Cloete (40), Isaac Gømaxab (38), Michael Khawaxab (31), Wesley Khawaxab (21) and Ali Khawaxab (22) appeared in the Katutura Magistrate's Court on Friday.

Their case was postponed to 29 July for further police investigations.

The accused may in the meantime apply formally for bail.

According to Khomas police spokesperson Silas Shipandeni, a case of stock theft was registered at Dordabis on Tuesday.

He said, while members of the police were on patrol, they came across a white Hyundai with a whole beef carcass.

"It was only the driver who was in the above-stated car at the time of interception by authorities. Upon preliminary investigations, it led to the arrest of four suspects, who are employees of Farm Brack, where the cow is alleged to have been stolen. Investigations further revealed that the vehicle in question belongs to a certain police officer from VIP Directorate."

said Shipandeni. - ljason@nepc.com.na



OKAHAO TOWN COUNCIL

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given in terms of Section 63 (2) (b) of the Local Authorities Act, (Act 23 of 1992) as amended, that the Council of Okahao Town intends to sell by way of private treaty the following immovable properties:

#	Name of Applicant	Erf No.	Size (m ²)	Location	Zoning	Purchase price
1	Clocknet Vocational Training Centre	2234	2,741	Extension 9	Institutional	N\$317,745.00
2	Pandeni Shidolo	2300	352	Extension 9	Residential	N\$23,320.00
3	Armas Ashlungu and Terttu Iileka	180	567	Okahao Proper	Residential	N\$20,350.00
4	Kalumbi Shanguka	2177	2263	Extension 9	General Residential	N\$441,002.00
5	Israel Shigwana Mvshuna	2268	342	Extension 9	Residential	N\$22,720.00

Objections to the sale of the listed properties should be done in writing and forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer on or before Friday, 5th August 2022.

Written objections shall be addressed to:

The Chief Executive Officer
Okahao Town Council
P.O. Box 699
Okahao

Enquiries: Ms. B. Mvashindange
Tel: 065 2522045

PUBLIC INVITATION

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED SUBDIVISION OF ERF 133 INTO PORTION A AND REMINDER AND PERMANENT CLOSURE OF PORTION A AS A PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN EERHARNA TOWN, OSHANGETWA REGION, NAMIBIA.

Notice is hereby given to all interested and Affected Parties (I & APs) that an application will be made to the Environmental Commission in terms of Environmental Management Act (No. 7 of 2007) and its Regulations (2012) for the following intended activity.

Proprietor: Monte Carlo Guest House

Project name & Description: The proposed development will entail the following activities:

- Subdivision of Erf 133 which is a Public Open Space into Portion A and reminder
- Permanent closure of Portion A as a Public Open Space

Project Location: Erf 133 Eerharna is situated in Eerharna Townlands north 650m close proximity to the Eerharna Open Market where the Monte Carlo Conference facilities are currently developed on.

Project Size: 30352 m².

Environmental Consultant: Ouholamo Trading & Environmental Solutions cc.

All I & APs are encouraged to register and raise concerns or provide comments and opinions. Submit your name and contact details. All I & APs will be provided with a Background Information Document (BID) during the meeting or can be requested from the Environmental Consultant. Please submit all your issues, comments, and opinions to Ouholamo Trading & Environmental Solutions cc by **03 August 2022** or attend the public meeting.

Public Consultation Meeting: on 25 July 2022 at 14H00 to 15H00

Venue: Monte Carlo Guest House Conference Room Eerharna

Contact Tel: +254 81227164 or
Email: erha.spd@outlet.com



■ Edgar Brandt

The management of Cheetah Cement have called demands by the Mineworkers Union of Namibia unrealistic, and labelled threats of industrial action by the 200-strong workforce as counter-productive.

The MUN on Friday informed Cheetah Cement, owned by Whale Rock Cement (WRC), of a strike scheduled to start tomorrow, 19 July 2022, at 07h30.

According to a letter from MUN's Northern Regional Organiser Brian Tjihero to Cheetah Cement, the strike will be in compliance with agreed striking rules. Employees will also gather at the demarcated picketing area at the entrance to the cement factory.

The cement company and the MUN have been in protracted wage negotiations since October 2020 at its Otjiwarongo plant. However, thus far, these negotiations have failed to yield positive results. This led to a Certificate of Unresolved Dispute being issued by the Office of the Labour Commissioner. On 8 February 2022, the majority of the employees thus voted in favour of industrial action.

According to WRC, their offer to workers, which the company said will be backdated to January 2021, includes an 80% company contribution towards employees' medical aid, minimum N\$500

Strike could stop Cheetah in its tracks



Imminent... Workers at the Cheetah Cement factory outside Otjiwarongo. Unresolved wage disputes have resulted in workers planning to down tools from tomorrow, 19 July 2022. Photo: Nampa

housing allowance across the board, N\$800 salary increase for all employees earning less than N\$6 000 per month, and a N\$500 salary increase for those earning more than N\$6 000 per month. The company is also willing to provide a meal allowance of N\$30 per every working day as well as a shift allowance as per exemption certified conditions currently at 10% of basic salary, going up to 15% in the next two years as an added benefit.

WRC currently pays an 8%

night shift allowance, which the company pointed out is 2% more than stipulated in the Labour Act 11 of 2007.

"WRC also puts it on record that during the entire Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdowns that affected the company's operations, no amount of money was deducted from the employees for not being at work. As a measure to ensure that employees had enough money to survive, WRC utilised leave days, going as far as to pay employees their full remuneration even if they

did not have enough leave days to cover the lockdown period," read a statement from WRC general manager, Kevin Lee.

Lee added that WRC also paid employees half salary bonuses at the end of 2020 and full salary bonuses at the end of 2021, although the company did not make any profit during this time.

Meanwhile, the WRC statement shows that Cheetah Cement employees are demanding a 9% salary increase across the board; 15% pension contributions across

the board; 100% medical aid cover (including cover for two dependents); an increase of a N\$2 500 housing allowance across the board; salary adjustment to market-related salaries, and for these increases to be backdated to April 2020.

"WRC is disturbed by the position taken by MUN and the workers' representatives, in particular taking note of the fact that Cheetah Cement has not operated for six consecutive months in each year that it has been in existence. Despite being affected by the pandemic and nationwide lockdown, WRC was also affected by the unstable economy since 2016, which had negatively affected the Namibian construction industry, and led to a reduced demand for cement. Moreover, all the increases and benefits offered to employees by WRC translate to an average increase of at least 45% cost-to-company, an increase that is unheard of in the prevailing Namibian economy," Lee stated.

He said the WRC is committed to retaining all its current employees, and improving on work conditions as revenue improves.

"However, these unrealistic demands and the threats for industrial action are counter-productive and could result in unwanted job losses," he added. - ebrandt@nepc.com.na

Government ends Covid regulations

■ Paheja Siririka

The Namibian government has removed all restrictions imposed on account of Covid-19 but insists on citizens to voluntarily comply with public health and social measures and ensure that good hand hygiene becomes part of the new normal.

President Hage Geingob announced this at the 45th, and for now, the last monthly Covid-19 public briefing until further notice. He said the Covid-19 public updates would be withdrawn (unless the situation necessitates such interventions). The health ministry will brief the public on the pandemic-related issues on Thursdays through the government information centre.

Geingob added there is no doubt the physical and emotional toll of what we went through, as a nation will remain a scar that will be felt for many years to come.

"We are now at a stage where we can significantly lower the scale of our investment in the fight against Covid-19," he said, adding that the control of the pandemic will be carried out in the same way as was for Hepatitis E.

On 2 March 2022, the health ministry announced the end of the Hepatitis E outbreak in Namibia after it was declared a plague in 2017. The liver disease cost 66 lives in the country, leading up to September 2020. Hence the need to replicate measures under Hepatitis E when handling

Covid-19. With no regulations in place, the ministry will continue doing more awareness raising, promoting hygiene and all other measures until the pandemic is eradicated.

"The government will intensify the vaccination campaign. We believe that vaccination is necessary to protect the nation against any outbreak of new variants of Covid-19.

Foreign travellers must present vaccination certificates at point of entry," said Geingob.

He said Covid-19 necessitated lockdowns with far-reaching implications on the economy and that in due course, the government will provide, in the National Assembly, a detailed accountability report related to interventions in the



Individual responsibility... President Hage Geingob has called on Namibians to take personal responsibility against Covid-19 as all measures have been removed.

Photo: Contributed

fight against the pandemic. There have been numerous concerns and doubts about the spending of Covid-19 funds.

"Companies closed down, supply-chain disruptions affected business operations and many jobs were lost as a result. As a government, through various relief measures, including a grant to more than 500 000 citizens, we endeavoured to limit the economic scarring from Covid-19," recalled Geingob.

Health minister Dr Kalumbi Shangula said Namibia's approach to combating Covid-19 has been and continues to be focused on saving lives, restoring livelihoods, and contributing to the recovery of the economy.

"Sadly, the total number of

deaths is 4 060 since the beginning of the pandemic. The number of deaths decreased from 18 deaths reported during the preceding 29 days, to 13 deaths reported during 30 days of the dispensation ending at 00:00, 15 July 2022," he said.

Shangula stated that the decision to remove the Covid-19 restrictions gazetted does not mean the pandemic is over.

"Our data continues to illustrate consistently that the overwhelming majority of Covid-19 cases being hospitalised, those in high care and ICU, and those succumbing to Covid-19 are invariably unvaccinated persons! So please, fellow Namibians, I implore you to get vaccinated, protect yourselves and those around you," he pleaded. - psiririka@nepc.com.na

PUBLIC INVITATION

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED SUBDIVISION OF ERF 133 INTO PORTION A AND REMINDER AND PERMANENT CLOSURE OF PORTION A AS A PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN EERHARNA TOWN, GHANGWENA REGION, NAMIBIA.

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Proposer: Monte Carlo Guest House

Project name & Description: The proposed development will entail the following activities:

- Subdivision of Erf 133 which is a Public Open Space into Portion A and remainder
- Permanent closure of Portion A as a Public Open Space

Project Location: Erf 133 Eerharna is situated in Eerharna Townlands NO 859 in close proximity to the Eerharna Open Market where the Monte Carlo Conference facilities are currently developed on.

Project Size: 30352 m².

Environmental Consultant: Ouholamo Trading & Environmental Solution cc.

All I&APs are encouraged to register and raise concerns or provide comments and opinions. Submit your name and contact details. All I&APs will be provided with a Background Information Document (BID) during the meeting or can be requested from the Environmental Consultant. Please submit all your issues, comments, and opinions to Ouholamo Trading & Environmental Solution cc by 03 August 2022 or attend the public meeting.

Public Consultation Meeting: on 25 July 2022 at 14H00 to 15H00

Venue: Monte Carlo Guest House Conference Room Eerharna

Contact Tel: +264 81 2277164 or Email: erica.soli@gmail.com

OUHOLAMO

OKAHAO TOWN COUNCIL

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