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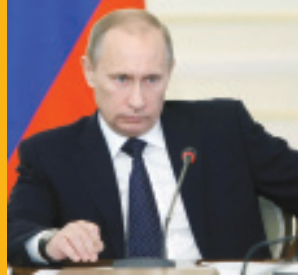
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Corruption allegations fly high at Meat Board

By Staff Reporter

Corruption allegations are flying high at Namibia's biggest red meat producer and supplier, the Meat Board of Namibia. The allegations involve a local audit company, (name supplied) which has conducted several study projects for the Meat Board without going through tender procedures.

It appears that the study projects were carried out without anyone bothering to go through the normal way of outsourcing such services, which usually requires tender invitations to avoid wrong doing or allay fears of corruption.

The situation has been made worse by another allegation that the local audit company that has carried out such studies has awarded a bursary to a child of one of the senior managers at Meat Board, who is now studying at Stellenbosch University in South Africa.



Meat Board's Paul Strydom

The child landed a bursary straight from the Windhoek High School, and this has puzzled several employees at the Meat Board, who now see something fishy about the whole deal and want the case to be investigated.

"Normally," said one employee, "such (study) projects are advertised and tender invited to deal with such a situation. But in this case we are left perplexed by this move which has been going on for some years now. Why do we skip tender procedures?"

"We need some guidelines on how we should deal with such issues. One cannot just wake up one day and say this or that study should be carried by this or that company. It even raises questions as to how and why a child of a senior manager was awarded that bursary.

"What does it tell us as ordinary people? What criteria was used to pick her out of so many children? Coming as it does from a company that has preferably landed such study projects, something somewhere is rotten.

"We have people running this company as if it were a private company. This should not be allowed. This is a public company which must be run like any other public company. If we allow things to go the way they are going, we will find ourselves in a terrible situation."

Namibia Today is in possession of the name of the company that has been awarded

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Outgoing IUM Vice Chancellor, Dr David Namwandi, bidding farewell to his colleagues at IUM. Dr Namwandi was appointed Deputy Minister of Education by President Hifikepunye Pohamba last week. Photo by Uapi Ngava (see story on page 2)

\$6,4b for education

By Esau Muzeu

Namibia will spend over N\$6,4 billion on education over the next financial year, according to this year's financial budget unveiled in the National Assembly by Finance Minister Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila on Tuesday.

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Obama's visit underscores US crisis in Afghanistan

By Bill Van Auken

Sneaking in and out of Kabul under the cover of darkness Sunday, President Barack Obama's trip to Afghanistan only underscored the crisis confronting the

US in the midst of the war's current escalation.

Like similar trips to US-occupied Iraq and Afghanistan staged by former President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney, Obama's flight to Kabul was organized under conditions of extraordinary secrecy, with even Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai, ostensibly the country's sovereign ruler, kept in the dark about the visit until the last possible moment.

Reporters brought aboard the plane were not told where they were going until it had taken off and had their cell phones confiscated. Before taking off, Air Force One was boarded inside a closed hangar to prevent unauthorized US military personnel from learning of the President's departure.

Once in Afghanistan, Obama's six-hour visit—less than half the time it took him to fly there—was restricted to the heavily fortified US Bagram Air Base and the Afghan



President Barack Obama

presidential palace in Kabul, where he was flown by helicopter.

Underlying these precautions is the reality that after eight and a half years of war, neither the Karzai regime nor the 120,000 US-led occupation troops can guarantee security anywhere in the country, including its capital.

The US media largely treated the Afghanistan trip as a matter of Obama boosting the morale of US



President Hamid Karzai

troops—with a selected audience of soldiers and Marines assembled to greet him—and laying down the law to Karzai on issues of official corruption and methods of governance.

The *New York Times* stated that the visit "capped a high-profile week for Mr. Obama in which he achieved a singular victory domestically—signing health care legislation..." It suggested that with this

domestic legislation under his belt, the US President was now in a position to turn his attention to his principal foreign policy initiative: a military "surge" that is deploying an additional 30,000 US troops in Afghanistan.

The reality is that Obama's rhetoric about the US intervention in Afghanistan is just as false as his claims about health care "reform." Underlying both is the deepening crisis of US capitalism and the attempt to resolve it on the basis of aggressive war abroad and a wholesale assault on the working class at home.

In addressing the troops, Obama barked out a potted description of US aims in Afghanistan in a bizarrely incongruous "yes we can" cadence. "We are going to disrupt and dismantle, defeat and destroy al Qaeda and its extremist allies," he said. Obama continued: "That is our mission. And to accomplish that goal, our objectives here in Afghanistan are also clear: We're

going to deny al Qaeda safe haven. We're going to reverse the Taliban's momentum. We're going to strengthen the capacity of Afghan security forces and the Afghan government so that they can begin taking responsibility and gain confidence of the Afghan people."

He repeated virtually word-for-word the lying justifications given by his predecessor for the US war, claiming that 100,000 troops are being deployed in Afghanistan to fight Al Qaeda, whose strength in the country has been estimated by US military commanders at barely 100.

The war, he claimed, is "absolutely necessary, absolutely essential to America's safety and security," adding that "Those folks back home are relying on you."

Unlike his earlier speeches, including the one given at West Point last December in which he an-

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