

NASAWU

from page 1

and had requested Labour Commissioner, Bro Matthew Shinguadja, to have the arbitrator removed because he was not "independent." The demonstration was led by NASAWU President Paulus Hango.

A strongly worded statement issued by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare on Thursday dismissed the claims as unfounded, saying that the postponements were on the requests of the parties involved in the dispute or due to their unavailability.

"First Mr Hango asked for the postponement because he was to be out of the country for about three weeks," read the statement. "Etale Fishing and NASAWU jointly requested for postponement due to wage negotiations and lately, Mr Johannes Kapembe of the Africa Personnel Services got sick.

"It is therefore incorrect and misleading to allege that the arbitrator was not neutral in the



Hon. Immanuel Ngajizeko

case at this stage, and in the absence of an Arbitration Award in this matter.

"This is a calculated ploy aimed at influencing the outcome of the arbitration or designed to intimidate and harass the arbitrator to issue the Award

in the favour of NASAWU, regardless of the evidence or facts of the case which has been adduced and presented before the arbitrator.

"Any party to the arbitration Award who is not happy with it can appeal to the Labour

Court. It is therefore premature and highly irresponsible for NASAWU to jump to the conclusion of the arbitration proceedings in the absence of such award."

The Ministry said that whether NASAWU or some of its members did not want the designated conciliators/designators in Erongo Region to hear and determine its cases or not, those conciliators/arbitrators were civil servants legally appointed and designated to hear and determine labour disputes.

It went on to say that they were deployed in terms of the Public Service Act and not on the wishes of any organization or individual and they were employees, too, in their own right, adding that the Labour Act applied to them equally as it applied to NASAWU and its members.

On minimum wages, the Ministry said that it had been calling on the fishing industry to come up with a collective agreement as was the case in other well organized industries such as agriculture, construction

and security, but the industry had not been sympathetic to the call.

The Ministry said that it was surprised by the comments NASAWU had made, saying that the Supreme Court had ruled that to abolish labour hire practices was unconstitutional and added that it could however be regulated. The Ministry had already finalized the draft to replace Section 128 of the Labour Act. The draft was now with the tripartite Labour Advisory Council for consideration and advice.

"TUCNA of which Mr Hango is the President is a member of LAC," said the Ministry. "It is therefore sheer dishonesty or manipulation at best for the NASAWU President to state 'we feel that we are being neglected and the Ministry of Labour do not protect us from exploitation.' The person who was leading the demonstration at the Ministry on the 29th September 2010, sits on the LAC on behalf of TUCNA.

"Needless to say that the po-

sition of the government when it comes to the labour high is unquestionably clear but as a country of law and order, our Supreme Court ruled otherwise and we have to accept the ruling as such.

"If it is NASAWU's understanding that the Ministry can arrest and jail the employers who refuse to implement the wards, then that is not the legal position of our legal system as stipulated in the Labour Act.

"While we accept and welcome our social partners (employees and their trade unions, employers and their organizations) interest they have, contribution they make, and criticism in labour and employment matters, we however despise unsubstantiated utterances aimed at stirring up employees' emotions by some trade union leaders for their own benefits while overlooking their own failures and misleading actions."

Etale Fishing employees were dismissed on August 16 after they were initially suspended by APS,

Jobs

from page 1

Government had developed policies aimed at promoting manufacturing and industrial development, thus creating employment opportunities for Namibians. It also wants to achieve near full employment by 2030, defined as an unemployment rate of 2,3 per cent.

"Our Vision 2030 goals and objectives cannot be achieved with the prevailing high rate of unemployment," said President Pohamba. "We therefore need to revisit our strategies to find lasting solutions to unemployment."

He said that youth unemployment, especially if it is persistent, meant an exclusion of an important part of the labour force from the economy, thus limiting capacity for growth.

Most of the youth who are unemployed have low educational qualifications and lack job experiences, thus making it difficult for them to penetrate the job market, especially as first time job seekers.

"Given this situation, the acquisition of skills through programmes involving vocational and on the job training

assumes greater importance in improving their prospects for more durable employment," said the President.

Government has been putting emphasis on labour based public works, and small and medium scale enterprises as a way of employment creation. It has also invested in setting up vocational training centers, community development centers and national youth schemes for technical skills development. But such efforts, however, have not been sufficient to create more jobs.

"You have all been invited to engage in constructive dialogue and deliberations on the challenge of employment creation in our country," said President Pohamba. "I wish to underline that government is concerned about the high unemployment rate.

"It is because of this reason that government has decided to bring all the stakeholders together to deliberate and jointly find strategic interventions that can help to address the unemployment problem in the short, medium and long term."

Government has put together some thoughts on how things could be done differently. Such thoughts were presented to the

summit for in-depth debate and serious consideration.

Participants interacted throughout the day, identifying their experiences they had encountered with existing policies, laws and programmes, marking policies and practices which inhibited progress towards employment creation.

"Our country is faced with a problem that demands from us as leaders, to take calculated risks in finding solutions," said the President. "We may not succeed in all the actions we will take, but to be afraid of failure and therefore to do nothing, will not bring us any solution.

"Our solution should contain measures that will be undertaken immediately, and those to be taken in the medium and long-term. The solution should not only reduce the unemployment rate, but should have the additional benefits of stimulating economic growth, wealth creation and supporting the objectives of Vision 2030."

"We should be mindful that reducing unemployment and expanding employment may not necessarily require the same policy complements. Reducing unemployment depends not only on job creation, but also considerably on the pace of labour force growth."

Participants agreed that the focus should be on regional competitive advantages to help communities develop economies based on opportunities that exist or specific to each region to stimulate economic growth.

"If we put our efforts and resources together, we will be able to address and overcome the challenges of unemployment and create better living conditions for the current and future generations," said President Pohamba.



Kalahari Holdings has donated a computer to the Khomas SWAPO Party Women's Council. Kalahari Holdings is owned by SWAPO Party. Photo by Levi Upula.



It is Show time! Cwi Henry Nqani, right, and Iamac strolling at the Show Ground. Photo by Levi Upula.

Namibia Today is published by SWAPO Party,
Department of Information and Mobilization.

Tel: 061-276370/78/79/80

Fax: 061-276381

Cell: 081 124 2749

General E-Mail: inform@namibiatoday.com.na

Advertisements: adverts@namibiatoday.com.na

Letters: letters@namibiatoday.com.na

Editorial: editor@namibiatoday.com.na

Personal: asserntinda@namibiatoday.com.na

Queries: enquires@namibiatoday.com.na

Subscription: subscribe@namibiatoday.com.na

SWAPO Party: swapoparty@namibiatoday.com.na

Accounts: accounts@namibiatoday.com.na