

Jobless

from page 1

the role of his Ministry had never been more crucial to the social and economic development of the country than now. Namibia's unemployment rate has been estimated at around 50 per cent.

Creating jobs remained government's top priority and his Ministry had to play a key role in tackling the major challenges facing Namibia and guarantee appropriate framework, proper environment and effective assistance to achieve the goal of decent and productive employment for the people.

"To meet the challenges," he said, "our government is called upon to relentlessly pursue all avenues that hold the promise of job creation, to coordinate the sometimes fragmented government development programmes, to ensure that education and training is relevant to potential employment and to bring together the public and private sectors and communities to act as one in order to maximize employment and self-employment opportunities."

Motivating his Ministry's more than N\$1,14 billion, Minister Ngatjizeko said the Ministry would continue to provide social protection to the most vulnerable and marginalized in the country, particularly in rural areas. He outlined notable successes made by his Ministry in the last financial year.

His Ministry, he added, had



Cde Immanuel Ngatjizeko

thoroughly reviewed and analyzed Namibia Labour Force Survey last year. The survey was conducted in 2008. He promised that the Ministry's analysis would be issued soon. Namibia also conducted its Occupational Wages Survey last year and its findings would be released in the course of this year.

Last year, the Ministry registered 5660 job seekers, he said. This year, that figure increased to 7424. The Ministry's employment officers were only able to canvass 242 employers, compared to 599 during the previous year. This was due to funding constraints.

This year, the Minister promised to table the Employment Services Bill in the National Assembly. It was supposed to be tabled last year but legislative hiccups delayed it. Once enacted, it will strengthen the Ministry's capacity to assist jobseekers to find suitable jobs and other employment-related opportunities throughout the country.

"The proposed legislation will require all private employment

agencies to register with the Employment Services Bureau to be established under the Bill," he said. "The Bill will also require all employers to report employment vacancies to the Bureau as they arise, for inclusion in the national database."

Another important bill to be tabled later this year is probably the Employment Creation Commission Bill, under which a National Employment Creation Commission shall be established. Its main task would be to coordinate and facilitate job creation to maximize national efforts in both the public and private sectors.

To provide scientific labour market information and to ensure that appropriate employment policies and legislation were in place, the Ministry needs over N\$40 million for this purpose alone.

With 38 labour inspectors and nine factory inspectors, the Ministry conducted 491 labour inspections and 400 safety and health inspections at workplaces throughout the country, compared to 1332 and 485 respectively in the previous year.

During the financial year, 486 tripartite meetings were held across the country to promote sound labour relations, compared to 288 the previous year, said Minister Ngatjizeko.

The Ministry was also able to recover over N\$1,4 million from employers where such monies were owing to employees, compared to slightly over N\$1,4 million the previous year.

practices familiar to the armies of France, Portugal and Britain, in their attempts to crush anti-colonial movements in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

US soldiers are dying to prop up the venal puppet regime of Hamid Karzai, which represents a group of brutal warlords and heroin traffickers on the CIA payroll, but, according to the US military's own surveys, enjoys no significant base of popular support in any part of the country.

And, in the final analysis, they are dying in pursuit of a strategy of aggression—elaborated well before 9/11—that is aimed at establishing US military hegemony over energy supplies and oil pipeline routes that are of immense importance to the countries neighboring Afghanistan—in particular, China, Russia, Iran, Pakistan and India.

This strategy is designed to benefit a tiny ruling financial elite at the expense of working people not only in Afghanistan, but in the US as well. Under conditions in which working people are being told that there is "no money" to deal with unemployment, poverty and deteriorating social conditions, the

Democratic controlled Congress is preparing this week to pass another \$59 billion "emergency" supplemental bill to finance the Afghan war and its escalation.

By this summer, as a result of the Obama administration's "surge," the number of US troops occupying Afghanistan will be triple what it was when George W. Bush left office. Far from securing the country, the increased US military presence has only led to a steady escalation of violence and death.

According to a report released by the US Government Accountability Office, US-led occupation forces were subjected to an average of more than 40 attacks each day in March, double the rate for the same month in 2009.

Meanwhile, even according to the Pentagon's absurdly low estimates, the number of unarmed civilians, the majority of them women and children, killed by US-led occupation forces in night raids, bombings, checkpoint shootings and drive-by killings by US convoys also doubled during the first quarter of this year, compared to the number recorded for the same period last year.

The level of bloodletting is set to escalate sharply, with the resistance launching its own summer offensive and US forces preparing for a siege of Kandahar, a city roughly the size of Detroit, which has been a stronghold of the Taliban. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's statement last week that the US military did not intend to "destroy Kandahar in the effort to save Kandahar" was hardly reassuring.

The broad popular hostility in the US to this war, as well as to the continued occupation of Iraq, both launched under the Bush administration and continued under Obama, has not disappeared. But



Several outlets in Katutura bearing illegal mural advertisements of various companies. Photo by Levi Upula.

WHK from page 1

nicipality) for a discussion and adoption of a realistic time frame for the removal of the illegal wall painting within seven (7) days from the date of receipt of this letter," said Kaverua.

"Should you fail to adhere to this request, the City of Windhoek will be compelled to institute legal action against you." He said that the City had been conducting information campaign on illegal mural advertisements since September 2009 in its monthly news letter, Aloe.

A routine inspection in Windhoek revealed that a large number of houses have been branded with logos of different

it can find no expression whatsoever within the two big business parties or in the mass media, which largely echoes the official line that the US is fighting a "good war" in Afghanistan.

There is no doubt a broad sense that nothing can be done within the existing political setup, particularly after repeated elections in which masses of people have gone to the polls to express their opposition to these wars and, in 2008, elected as president, Barack Obama, who had appealed to these sentiments, only to take office and dramatically escalate US military aggression in both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The experience of 15 months of the Obama administration has also exposed the bankrupt perspective of the middle class antiwar protest organizations that had maintained war could be opposed by supporting the Democrats against Bush. The Bush administration is gone, the Democrats control both houses of Congress and the war crimes continue. For their part, the protest organizations have become largely inactive, having adapted themselves to Obama's "progressive" agenda. A genuine struggle against war can be waged only through the development of an independent socialist movement of the working class against the capitalist profit system, which is the source of militarism.

This movement must demand the immediate withdrawal of all US and other foreign troops from the Middle East and Central Asia. It must also fight for the dismantlement of the US war machine and the redirection of the trillions of dollars in military spending to pay for reparations to the populations ravaged by American wars of aggression and to deal with the deepening social crisis confronting working people in the US itself.

WSWS

businesses, thus contravening the Municipality's Outdoor Advertising Policy and Regulations.

The biggest culprit in the illegal mural advertisements is Namibia's largest mobile service provider, Mobile Telecommunications Corporation, MTC, which has painted many houses and shebeens in its colours and logo around Windhoek, especially in Katutura.

The owners of such premises have alleged that they have not been paid for publicly advertising for MTC by having the mobile telecommunications company's logos on their houses, shebeens and other structures. Several people who have their houses and business premises painted in MTC colours and logos are now regrouping to approach MTC to come and remove their paints and logos to avoid legal action against them by the Municipality.

"I personally believe that MTC and other companies must go and remove its paints and logos from such houses and premises," said one Municipality's official. "We cannot allow innocent people to bear the costs of something from which they never benefitted a cent.

"They were simply carrying and displaying MTC's advertisements for free. Advertisements are paid for anywhere in the world. Even billboards are paid for when you see them hanging out anywhere in town. In this case, MTC simply exploited the ignorance of the people.

"In a normal situation, MTC could have negotiated with the owners and agreed on a fee which it must pay them monthly for publicly displaying their colours and logos for the duration of such display. However, without the Municipality's approval, this was still going to be illegal under the law, but the owners could have at least benefitted. It is only such companies that have benefitted."

One resident in Okuryangava whose shebeen is painted in MTC colours and logos said he would personally approach MTC to come and repaint his business premise because he did not know that what the company was doing was illegal. He also suggested that Windhoek Municipality should deal with the providers of such advertisements and logos, rather than tak-

ing legal action against the owners of such premises.

"First, I asked them whether they would pay me for having my business premise painted in their colours," he said, on condition that his name did not appear. "They said no. They told us that they would paint our premises only for free. We were not going to be paid any fee. We agreed and that is how I ended up with my place bearing MTC's colours. Those who did not want did not have their premises painted.

"But that is beside the point. The Windhoek Municipality should just order the culprits to remove their illegal advertisements. It is as simple as that. Why does the Municipality want to be hard on poor people when it knows the culprits? It is not fair."

City of Windhoek Public Relations Manager, Liz Sibindi, said that companies whose colours and logos appeared on various houses and business premises had been informed about the City's move.

"They might have signed agreements with owners of such places," she said. "But we as the City of Windhoek have also agreements with such people. We have laws in place on how to deal with mural advertisements.

"The City cannot act against the companies but against the home owners for contravening the City's outdoor advertising by-laws. The companies were informed that the practice is wrong according to the City's by-laws. However, the home owners are the ones who entered into agreements with such companies and as such the agreement has to be nullified by the homeowners themselves.

"The companies must apply to the City of Windhoek and upon approval, outdoor advertisements can be put up. In this case, it is an illegal matter between the home owners and the advertisers, hence the City cannot intervene in these issues of payments between the two parties."

MTC's Public Relations Department could not answer questions as to how the company would help people remove such mural advertisements, referring all queries to MTC's General Manager for Corporate Affairs, Albertus Aochamub. Messages left on his mobile were not replied to.

US from page 1

cupation, this psychological toll is sharply intensified.

For what have 1,000 US American soldiers died? What has justified the shattered bodies and minds of many thousands more? And what can excuse the slaying and maiming of tens of thousands of Afghans over the course of the last 103 months in this, the second longest war in history?

The Obama administration's claims—echoing the lies of Bush and Cheney—that US imperialism is fighting in Afghanistan to prevent another terrorist attack on US soil have been discredited by the military commanders themselves, who estimate that no more than 100 Al Qaeda members are operating inside the country, and acknowledge that their counterinsurgency efforts are directed against indigent resistance.

It is, in short, a filthy colonial-style war consisting of the kind of pacification operations that US forces waged against Native Americans in the 19th century or against Filipinos and Haitians in the early 20th. It involves criminal

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