Shame on Polytechnic’s refusal to recognize trade unions

Different means have been devised to regulate the world of work in the past. Since the advent of industrialization and the spread of democratic processes, there has been an enactment of a wide range of legislation by different governments all over the world to regulate the world of work. Particularly, due to the need to balance the gap between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have nots’. This is the same in the US, other countries and Namibia is no exception. That is why the Labour Act was promulgated by the law makers to protect the interest of both employees and the employers in the system. The intention of the Act is clearly defined as evidenced in the Labour Act of 2007.

Reference to a one page completed document signed by the Rector, of the Polytechnic of Namibia titled “The facts about trade union recognition at the Polytechnic of Namibia” can be explicitly seen as a deceitful and manipulative style of management at the Polytechnic of Namibia.

It is clear that the document as opined understands the existence of various sections of the Labour Act but fails to understand the intricacies of the very Act and the need for its faithful interpretation.

Apart from the fact that the document shows the malicious philosophy behind the position of the Rector concerning the issue in question, the document did not particularly or totally failed to take a stand on the request for recognition of a union that respects the management ideologies and stands to protect the interests of its members, as the course of championing the mandate of the PON.

And such document shows that the signatory to the document fails to understand that members of the PON are not fools who do not know their right from their left. It is obvious that the signatory to the document has clearly contradicted the stipulations of the Labour Act of 2007 and has twisted the regulations to suit his dreadful deeds.

Let’s take it a step at a time:  
1a) Refers: Implicitly, the constitution of the Republic of Namibia as it protects each individual’s freedom is not upheld by the leaders in PON, hence the long delay in granting the required recognition to the registered union and the individual employees silently coerced from partaking in union activities, examples of which have been seen from the frustration meted on different employees who attempted to pursue the course of unionism in PON.

Contrary to 1b of the document, there has been an unprompted intimidation of employees from freely belonging to the trade union of their choice. 
Employee is either forced to resign from his/ her job when working conditions are made unbearable for such an employee, or the contract is not renewed after the expiration of the contract of employment even if it is expected to be renewed. Clear intimidation is demonstrated by the disposition of the Rector towards several employees in this manner, evidences can be provided.

Reference to the 1c of the document... ‘no union activities during working hours’ this can be regarded as contradicting to the stipulations in Section 65 (1) of the Labour Act of 2007 which states that an ‘employer must not unreasonably refuse access to the employer’s premises to an authorized representative of a registered trade union’. The question of pertinence here is... has the Rector thought of the word ‘unreasonable’? Why is there a long delay in granting the established trade union in the PON the required recognition?

Has the management in any manner not ‘unreasonably’ refused to allow the access to the employer’s premises? Has the management of the PON not unreasonably refused to grant the necessary recognition as stipulated in Section 65, then the necessary action will be used (7) (b) (10)

Meanwhile, there is no need to further expound on the rest of the document as the document has already shown the flaws in the views of the management towards the issue in question. However, the last bolded paragraph indicates that the Council of Polytechnic’s opens its own and willingness to recognize any trade union that meets the provisions of the Labour Act which can clearly be seen as not totally contradictory to the deeds of the Rector.

Really, there is need to probe further, as to why the management of PON refuses to recognize a trade union the necessary recognition to provide ground for the employees to have a voice in participating in the management of the PON without any form of intimidation as stipulated by various constitutional regulations in Namibia!

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Cuba to open medical center against cancer: official

HAVANA, — The Cuban Molecular Immunology Center (CIM) will open a new plant to produce therapeutic monoclonal antibodies to treat cancer, using cultured mammalian cells, an official said Monday.

The new facility was designed by Cuban specialists and equipped with modern technology, which will multiply the CIM's productive capacity by 10 times, said David Curbelo Rodriguez, director of the new plant.

Curbelo added that one of the main purposes of the plant is to meet "the rising domestic demand and the growing export requirements of the monoclonal antibody 'Nimotuzumab,' used for the treatment of advanced tumors of the brain, head and esophagus."

Combined with other traditional therapeutic methods, the antibody Nimotuzumab can significantly reduce the tumor size and increase patients' life expectancy and the quality of life, said Curbelo.

"Nimotuzumab is currently registered in 25 countries and is being tested in clinicals in the United States, Japan, Canada and Germany," he added.

Cuba has a solid experience in research and development of biotech drugs, mainly vaccines, registering about 400 million U.S. dollars of its exports annually. (Xinhua)