



Signed, sealed and delivered. This is the agreement that has raised eyebrows within the Polytechnic of Namibia.

## Poly

from page 1

kicked out.

“There has been an unspoken intimidation of employees from freely belonging to the trade union of their choice,” said one staff member. “An employee is either forced to resign from his or her job when working conditions are made unbearable for such employee, or the contract is not renewed after the expiration of the contract of employment, even if it was expected to be renewed.

“Clear intimidation is demonstrated by the disposition of the Rectorate towards several employees in this manner, evidences can be provided. ... Individual employees are silently coerced from partaking in union activities, examples of such have been seen from the frustration meted out against different employees who have attempted to pioneer the cause of unionism at the Polytechnic of Namibia.”

As the battle continues, more eyes are set on which side will win the day. But new damning cases of corruption, nepotism and tribalism are being thrown out into the public, and all fingers point to the Management and, by implication, the Council of the Polytechnic for not taking corrective measures.

One such case is the manner in which tender regulations are being ignored and nobody seems to take action when such violations are brought out into the open. The Polytechnic is apparently buying a bus worth nearly N\$ 1,6 million from a

local company without going through the tender process.

The Polytechnic rules and regulations say that any purchase beyond N\$75 000 must go on tender, but the bus had not gone on tender, and its nearly N\$1,6 million.

“This is not fair,” said one staff member. “This is a public institution. How do we know that ignoring tender regulations does not result in someone somewhere in the management getting a commission on such purchases? Tender regulations are there to make things transparent.

“Once we start ignoring them, then we create suspicions. These cases must be investigated. After all, one top member of management buys his personal cars from the same company that was picked to provide us with such a bus!

“Who said that we could not get a better price elsewhere? We just hope that the Minister and his Deputy will take these things seriously. A commission of inquiry will be the best solution.”

Staff members have also pointed to a “stinking but secret” deal between the Polytechnic of Namibia and Ms Neavera Olivier, Director of Planning and International Relations at the Polytechnic of Namibia, a post she got from being a mere Personal Assistant to the Rector.

Under the agreement, Olivier was to execute part of the project titled “Development of the Business Plan for the Namibian Business Innovation Centre, NBIC.” NBIC is part of the Polytechnic.

The “agreement” was signed by Dr Tjivikua and Ms Olivier on 30 June 2008 and had been wrapped in secrecy, known only by the two. Under the “agreement,” Olivier received N\$30 800, 00, paid into her Nedbank Account Number 11000107348.

“The services rendered by the Contractor (Olivier) are free of all duties, taxes and other charges, including VAT, providing the service is rendered in Namibia,” reads part of the agreement.

“This institution is being run like a cuca shop, with one person taking all the decisions in the manner he sees fit,” fumed one employee. “Is this the right way to run this big institution? That is why Management does not want a trade union here.”

More details have also emerged in the case where the Registrar of the Polytechnic, Comeels Jafta, had his daughter, Ludmilla Jafta, enrolled for Bachelor of Bio-medical Science, though she did not meet the requirements. She is currently in her third year.

Bachelor of Bio-medical Sciences is a sponsored programme. Candidates for this programme must have the minimum 25 points in school subjects, but in addition, must also have Mathematics B; Biology B; Physical Science B and English E on NSSC (O) or 4 in all those subjects on NSSC (H).

Ludmilla Jafta did not meet the requirements but was nevertheless preferred over those who met the requirements. In 2007, the Polytechnic advertised the two programmes under its Health Science Division, namely the Medical Science and Environmental Health programmes. Thirty students were needed in each programme.

More than 600 applications were received from which 30 successful applicants for each programme were selected. When the pre-selection started, many needy students especially from rural areas were allegedly left out, even though they had met the requirements, while Jafta’s daughter was admitted though she had fewer points.

One such student who had applied for the course but was not enrolled even though she had more points than Jafta’s daughter is Eva Shitaatala, who scored 32 points, way above the 25 minimum required.

Ludmilla applied during the application period of 2007, with her Grade 12 August results, which did not comply with the requirements, and her application was unsuccessful. In 2008, pre-selection and registration took place on 31 January, and prospective students needed to produce their final Grade 12 results.

Ludmilla Jafta’s results were like these: English 3; Biology 3; Mathematics B; Physical Science C; Accounting C; and German C. Such results showed that she did not meet the requirements for the Bio-medical programme because she did not obtain a B-symbol for Physical

Science.

On the other hand, Shitaatala, who applied with her final Grade 12 results had the following points: Biology B; Mathematics B; Physical Science B; Oshindonga B; Environmental Management C; and English E. She fulfilled the minimum requirements and the additional entry requirements but she was not accepted in the programme.

“This is unfair in the extreme,” said one source. “Ludmilla was supposed to be put on a waiting list. The Registrar may argue that his daughter obtained more points if one converts the symbol on a Polytechnic evaluation scale. But there are no indications that the students with the most points would be accepted. It only says that the minimum and additional requirements are a must.”

Sources also say that while

pre-selections were conducted by the relevant department, they add that the Head of Department could not waive admission requirements which were approved by the Senate of the Polytechnic of Namibia without input from the Registrar.

“He also should have written an explanation as to why such a decision was made but no where does such documentation exist. And the Rector made a poor job of it by not investigating it thoroughly. The ability to corrupt the process of admittance at the Polytechnic suggests that such practices are rampant and thrive under the management of the current top management of the Polytechnic.”

Efforts to reach Dr Tjivikua or Olivier for comments have proved fruitless as they were said to be out of the country.



Polytechnic staff members demanding that a trade union be established at the Polytechnic to protect them from management abuses. Photo by Levi Upula.

## Food

from page 1

Caprivi lowland maize and livestock where assistance is being spatially distributed, it mainly covers the low altitude areas of Caprivi such as riverine woodlands and the eastern flood plains, Katima Mulilo, Impalila Island and the Kavango River Basin.

These findings were discussed at Cabinet last month and remedial measures were identified. At least 2440 metric tons of maize meal will be required to address the survival threshold, while 7 877 metric tons of maize meal will be required to ensure a livelihood protection threshold.

As a result, Cabinet has decided that free food handouts targeting labour poor households, those who cannot work, in the Caprivi, Kavango, Hardap and Karas regions, should be given as part of the short term measures.

Food and cash for work should also be given, targeting labour rich, that is those who can work, households among the very poor and poor group household cat-

egories in the Caprivi, parts of Kavango, Hardap, Karas, Omaheke and Otjozondjupa regions.

To succeed, Cabinet has also decided that more effective planning and coordination of government services in rural areas should be stepped up.

The following measures were also decided upon as medium term solutions: poverty reduction through income generation projects among enterprising households, creation of productive assets through small stock provision among asset poor households in southern Namibia, settlement of very poor and landless, labour tenants, particularly fast-tracking of the implementation of strategic food reserves in regions where they don’t exist, and improvement in the delivery of agricultural inputs to ensure increased productivity.

Long term suggestions approved by Cabinet include improvement of more competitive livestock pricing systems, improving access to basic education among the rural populations, setting up a regional early

warning system for countries within the Zambezi and Cuvelai basin, more effective coordination between flood affected communities, traditional authorities and regional and central government, as well as permanent relocation of populations in high risk flood affected areas.

Short term interventions will cost more than N\$59 million. Of that amount, over N\$14 million is needed to address the survival threshold, while over N\$45 million will be needed to ensure the livelihood protection threshold.

“Cabinet authorized the Office of the Prime Minister to clearly specify the targeted beneficiaries referred to under the short term measures and to rather refer to individuals instead of households where appropriate,” read a Cabinet release.

“Cabinet furthermore directed the Office of the Prime Minister to assess the quality of the maize meal stock to be procured from the Kavango Region for the food relief programme, while also directing the Office of the Prime Minister to extend food relief programme to informal settlements in urban areas

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](mailto:inform@namibiatoday.com.na)

Advertisements: [adverts@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:adverts@namibiatoday.com.na)

Letters: [letters@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:letters@namibiatoday.com.na)

Editorial: [editor@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:editor@namibiatoday.com.na)

Personal: [asserntinda@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:asserntinda@namibiatoday.com.na)

Queries: [enquires@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:enquires@namibiatoday.com.na)

Subscription: [subscribe@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:subscribe@namibiatoday.com.na)

SWAPO Party: [swapoparty@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:swapoparty@namibiatoday.com.na)

Accounts: [accounts@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:accounts@namibiatoday.com.na)