



Unveiling Unity: National Symbols Campaign Reaches Otjozondjupa

B2GOLD invests over 7 million in Otjozondjupa Education Sector



Otjiwarongo Municipality transforms waste into valuable resources

Otjozondjupa wins Namport Schools Debate Championship





Editor's Note

Time is the only constant however it goes by so fast. it is unbelievable how fast we got here but it is already the end of the third quarter, which brings us to our next read. in this edition of your quarterly newsletter we bring you exciting developmental stories of what has been taking center stage through out the year 2023. let dive right in with the State of the Region Address by the Governor.

Education has been hip and happening this year with a number of school debate competitions which saw Otjozondjupa scooping the most coveted championship ward hosted by the Namibia Ports Authority with a prize money of five hundred thousand Namibia dollars. Oshikoto region also won a whopping twenty thousand dollars from the debate competition hosted by the Motor Vehicle Accident Fund. This are but some of the stories lined up for you in this edition.

Allow me therefore to take this opportunity to thank you our readers for inspiring this journey of keeping you informed on events and activities which are hip and happening in the region. You are the reason we strive to do better all the times in keeping you informed as our readers.

You are therefore more that welcome to share your comments and advice with the editorial team on how we can improve on the newsletter by sending us an email at pr@otjozondjuparc.gov.na, or you can also share your suggestions or comments on our service in general through our website <https://otjozondjuparc.gov.na> through our online suggestion box under the feedback button on the website.

More exciting is that we now have suggestion boxes at all our Constituency and Settlement Offices as well as at Head Office. we humbly implore on you to make use of them to share your views, comments, questions or feedback on how we can better serve you, thereby having a say in what services we deliver to you our residents.

Merry Christmas and a blessed 2024.

Regards!

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Senior Public Relations Officer

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OTJOZONDJUPA REGIONAL COUNCIL

VISION

“A REGION THAT ENABLES ITS
INHABITANTS TO WORK TOWARDS
PROSPERITY AND IMPROVED QUALITY
OF LIFE”

MISSION

“TO SPEARHEAD INTEGRATED
PLANNING AND OVERSEE
IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC
AND PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURAL
DEVELOPMENT IN ORDER TO UPLIFT
THE LIVING STANDARD OF INHABITANTS
OF THE REGION”.

CORE VALUES

PROFESSIONALISM

INTEGRITY

COURTESY

TRANSPARENCY

ACCOUNTABILITY

OTJOZONDJUPA STATE OF THE REGION ADDRESS

By: Cornelia Shikongo

The Governor of Otjozondjupa Region James Uerikua delivered his fourth state of the region address to account to the sovereigns on the activities, projects and program of Government for the 2022/2023 financial year. The address was in accordance with the Namibian Constitution Art 110 (A) sub-article 5 and 6 and Section 11 (d) of the Regional Council Act No. 22 of 1992. The State of Region Address was aligned to V2030, National Development Plans, Harambee Prosperity Plan 1+2.

Uerikua said "the key focus of the region is to enhance good-governance through strict adherence to all principles of Good-Governance. One key principle is to embody a participatory approach to ensure that every sector whether Government or private, is part of the synergic efforts of prompt, effective, meaningful yet sustainable service delivery."

He added that the economic potential of Otjozondjupa, is that it is centrally and strategically located and boasts of various minerals, and natural resources. This economic strength he said is mainly driven by the Mining, Agricultural, and Tourism industries with contributions from various commercial business ventures. Otjozondjupa region therefore, positions itself as one of the major contributors to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP).



In terms of social progression, in the region the fundamental focus is to ensure that every resident has access to health facilities. To this end, the Ministry of Health and Social Services, renders its services to a catchment population of 170,118 (Census 2011-projections) through the Four (4) District Hospitals namely, Okahandja, Okakarara, Grootfontein and Otjiwarongo; Two Health Centres at Otavi & Mangetti; Nineteen (19) Clinics, One Health Post and 239 Outreach points.

Moreover, Social welfare continues to be one of our focal goals as this involves the survival and "bread and butter" issues of the grass-roots; such as water, nutrition, clothing, blankets, health care services and access to social amenities.

Therefore Uerikua said "I believe that, our region, with concerted efforts from all stakeholders, we can close or narrow the poverty gap as we strive to ensure improved quality of life for the residents especially the most vulnerable members of our society. Let us hold hands and move together. I can gladly say that, the region has made tremendous strides in ensuring meaningful progress in addressing poverty, income and wealth inequalities, through resource mobilization with the help of stakeholders and external partners."



Uerikua Advocates For Developing Underutilised Communal Areas To Alleviate Land Hunger

By: Elago Shipanga

Otjiwarongo - The Governor of Otjozondjupa has urged the government to focus on developing underutilised communal areas in the country rather than purchasing farms to address the land needs of Namibians.

During the 2024/2025 budget consultation in Otjiwarongo, Governor Uerikua, in discussions with the Minister of Finance and Public Enterprise, Ipumbu Shiimi, and a delegation from the National Planning Commission, expressed concern about the increasing cost of purchasing resettlement farms, some of which end up being unproductive.

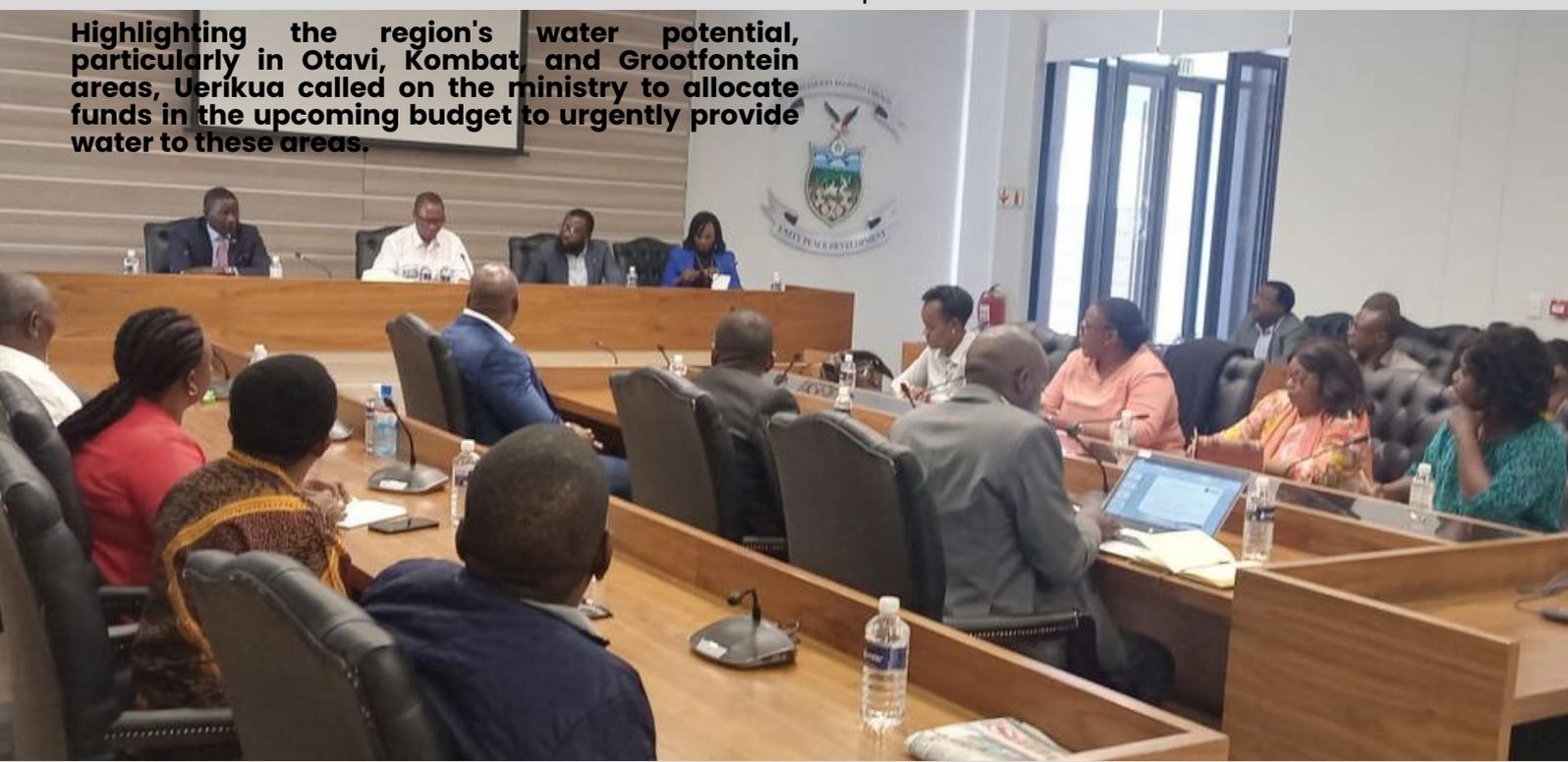
"We have vast unoccupied land on the east side of our region, with abundant grass, suitable for resettling those interested in farming, especially livestock. However, due to the lack of water, the area is uninhabitable. Instead of spending N\$ 10 million on a farm for one person, we should invest that money in channelling water to these areas and resettling hundreds of people," suggested Uerikua.

More than 900 Batswana of Namibian descent, along with over 65 thousand large and small livestock, have expressed their desire to return to Namibia, voluntarily registering for relocation to the land of their forefathers.

In response to Uerikua's proposal, Finance and Public Enterprise Minister Ipumbu Shiimi welcomed the suggestion, emphasising the government's commitment to listening and addressing the people's needs.

"If we invest in something without meeting the people's needs, development has not occurred. I fully agree with you that we need innovative solutions to address the land question. I assure you, Honourable Governor, that we will consult with our colleagues at the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reform and Namwater to assess the best and most cost-effective solution for channelling water to these areas," explained Shiimi

Highlighting the region's water potential, particularly in Otavi, Kombat, and Grootfontein areas, Uerikua called on the ministry to allocate funds in the upcoming budget to urgently provide water to these areas.



OTJOZONDJUPA STAKEHOLDERS MEET ON DROUGHT



By: Cornelia Shikongo

Otjozondjupa Regional Council held a plenary meeting to map out modalities for the implementation of the drought relief assistance and the livestock support programme which is scheduled to take off from the 1st of October 2023. The Region was declared drought stricken after the consideration of the Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis through a Cabinet decision No. 14th/29/08/2023/001.

The decision directed that a drought relief programme be implemented in the region from the 1st October 2023 to 30 June 2024. The programme entails food assistance and livestock support covering the following: livestock marketing incentives, subsidy for transporting livestock to and from grazing areas, subsidy for lease of grazing and subsidy for fodder.

Otjiwarongo Constituency Electrifies ten houses of Elderly at the Town

By: Cornelia Shikongo

The Otjiwarongo Constituency Office electrified ten houses belonging to elderly people at the town. The houses which were electrified with the assistance of the Regional Councillor Marlayn Mbakera's office, were identified through her house visits to the informal settlements. It is through this visit where she picked up that a lot of elderly people especially in the informal settlement did not have access to electricity although they reside in serviced informal areas. The Central Electricity Distribution Company – CENORED has serviced most informal areas at the town with electricity however, some residents especially pensioners are unable to afford the N\$ 2500.00 connection fee which is subsidized by CENORED. It is against this background that the Office decided to raise funds to pay for the connection fees for pensioners.

The office has so far identified about sixty pensioners who need electricity connection and the total cost is one hundred and fifty thousand Namibia dollars. However due to limited resources the Office was only able to assist ten beneficiaries to the value of twenty five thousand Namibia dollars. Mbakera said most of the pensioners live with school going grandchildren who need electricity to do their school work and study at night. "Lack of access to electricity may be linked to poverty and in order to address the performance of sustainable development goals, especially goals one and ten, we need to work on offering affordable basic services like land, water and electricity to our pensioners and vulnerable members of our communities" she stated. Further the Otjiwarongo Constituency Councillor called on philanthropists, corporates and individuals come on board and support her Office's initiative called "Electricity is not a luxury" which aims to provide electricity to the less fortunate who are not in a position to afford. The office also plans to look at water connections to pensioner's homes as most of them in the informal areas also get water from stand pipes which forces them to walk pushing wheelbarrows and containers to fetch waters.

Parliamentary Standing Committee to Appraise the Otjozondjupa Railway Station

By: Nancy Muniaro

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Economics and Public Administration recently paid a courtesy visit to the Governor's Office. The Governor James Uerikua was represented by Marlayn Mbakera chairperson of the Otjozondjupa Regional Council. The oversight visit and engagement aimed to appraise the state of the railway transport services infrastructure to diagnose the shortcomings and challenges faced by TransNamib and Ministry of Works and Transport.

The engagement is to heap up efficient and reliable information regarding the railway transport services from the local personnel and local communities to understand their strategies and plan to appease the challenges faced by TransNamib. The Committee complied with proposals by the Ministry of Works and Transport and stakeholders to initiate a system to amalgamate road, air, rail and waterborne transportation modes.

Mbakera emphasized and encouraged TransNamib management to shape up the organization for excellent services as Otjiwarongo is connected to the national railway grid, run by TransNamib, therefore TransNamib leadership should the company around for better, "Be visionary in your leadership and come up with proposal for the Government" said Mbakera.



Acting CEO of TransNamib Webster Gonzo expressed that there is a lot of deception regarding the institution as a result, he states that facts should be told to the public and not to send the wrong message to the nation at large. Despite its current financial pressure, it has pioneered plans for the future such as to provide dependable mode of transportation for the public and to seek an increase in its locomotive capacity.

The Committee expressed consternation on the deteriorating infrastructures that need refurbishing with government support, which has affected the train speed and services on the daily operations. The parastatal seeks to grow its locomotive size and operations for more freight dependable services. The Committee indicated that TransNamib has to transform in offering services and merge plans to increase a return on investments with benchmarking with other stakeholders in order to solicit funds for the organization. Furthermore, a summary report with findings and recommendations will be filled and shared with the National Assembly for more discussions and consultations.



MVA host National Schools Road Safety Debate Competition



By: Nancy Muniaro

The Motor Vehicle Accident Fund (MVA) in collaboration with Namibia Schools Debating Association (NSDA) recently hosted the National Schools Road Safety Debate Competition. The event is part of their broader initiative to empower young people to become advocates for road safety within their communities.

Different schools from all fourteen (14) regions took part in the competition. This year's competition was sponsored by MVA Fund and took place at Paresis Secondary School Otjiwarongo town in Otjozondjupa region under the theme: "National Schools Road Safety". The event aimed to encourage young minds to engage in discussions about road safety, to raise awareness about responsible road users' behavior and to underscore the significance of road safety while fostering informed, responsible and safety conscious citizens for the future.

Furthermore, the competition was for learners to showcase their advocacy skills on the critical issue of road safety and commitment to promote road safety awareness and education. "Thousands of lives perish every year on the roads, and these lives matter a lot. Namibia is one of the African countries that has the best roads, but the country continues to make headlines for the wrong reasons because lives are perishing through car accidents. The jaw of death continues to snatch the lives of our loved ones because we as the road users, be it drivers or pedestrians, decide to be reckless on the roads," said, Dr. Elizabeth Namundjemo NSDA President.

The Championing Road Safety, grand finale was between Oshikoto region and Ohangwena region as tension rose for the critical battle. "Who was going to be crowned as champions and take the trophy to their perspective region? This was the question on the faces of the judges and spectators alike. The debate enhances public speaking and analytical skills and participants will also become Ambassadors for road safety. The final of this show piece saw Oshikoto region emerge as the overall winner, with Ohangwena region scoping the second price and Kavango West region taking third place. This debate competition proved to be a great source of learning, built confidence and has truly imparted knowledge and created teamwork among the school learners.

MVA Fund will continue implementing road safety interventions to make roads safer for everyone, as mandated by its governing act and the fund urges the public to report crashes to its toll-free accident response number, 9682 as doing so could help save lives.



OTJOZONDJUPA ARE NAMPORT DEBATE CHAMPIONS



By: Cornelia Shikongo

Otjozondjupa region has been crowned the overall winners of the Namport National Debating Competition 2023 held at Walvisbay. The Region received a cash prize of N\$500,000.00, courtesy of the Namport Social Investment Fund. The prize money will be dedicated to supporting a noble cause that is still to be identified within the region. The Champions were greeted with a warm welcome home by the Regional Governor Honorable James Unomasa Uerikua who applauded the Champions for a job well done. Congratulations to Team Otjozondjupa!



Secondary School Pupils Champion a Sustainable Future for their Nation

By: Elago Shipanga

Grootfontein - In a remarkable display of youth-driven foresight, two secondary school learners from Otjiwanda Secondary School, in Otjozondjupa Region, are calling on the government to stop the status quo of exporting raw materials if vision 2030 is to be realised. These young visionaries are advocating for their country to prioritise local value addition and processing of its abundant natural resources.

Vision 2030, is Namibia's purposeful development plan that seeks Namibia become a prosperous and industrialised nation, developed by her human resources, reducing unemployment, income inequality and poverty in the process. enjoying peace, harmony and political stability. The vision launched by Founding President Sam Nuuyoma in 2004, premised Manufacturing as a catalyst to industrialisation. With only seven years left before 2030, the pupils feel the ambitious dream could be over if drastic measures are not taken to stop the export of raw minerals.

Their concern stemmed from Namibia's longstanding practice of exporting raw materials, such as minerals, fish, and agricultural products, without significant processing or value addition with more emphasis on the extractive industry.

"Yes we have abundant mineral resources in our country, if you look at our mines currently we have gold, diamonds, uranium and many others. All these are sent out to other countries where they are processed into products, how is this benefitting us when we let companies send out our minerals basically for free and even sometimes importing these finished goods at a high cost", queried grade 10 learner Alfeus Mapowe.



Mapowe added that the country needs to have laws compelling multinational companies to set up processing facilities and manufacturing plants that can turn the country's natural resources into finished or semi-finished goods. This will not only allow the country to derive maximum benefit from its resources but also help create employment locally.

Grade 12 Advanced Subsidiary Learner Chriss Albert whose subjects includes Chemistry, says, ownership of the natural resources needs to be relooked at so that the government can have 50% stakes. "Our minerals are so precious and valuable for us just to be holding a few percentages of ownership.

These companies are just after profit, they do not care about us. They are looking after their own interest, if they are unwilling to partner with our government on an equal footing then the mineral should stay in the ground until someone who can agree to our demands come or for us as the future generation like ourselves, by then we could have gained enough knowledge and skills to extract and process our own minerals".

The pupils were reacting to the presentation by the National Petroleum Corporation of Namibia (Namcor) on what it means for the recent oil discovery offshore the country's ocean and in the Kavango basin. During their presentation at the Career Expo at Otjiwanda Secondary School, which was organised to expose the learners to different career paths, said the oil discovery has a potential to propel Namibia to become the next Dubai by 2040.





Unveiling Unity: National Symbols Campaign Reaches Otjozondjupa

By Elago Shipanga

National symbols play a crucial role in shaping a country's identity and nurturing a sense of belonging among its citizens. These symbols often encapsulate the nation's rich history, values, and aspirations. In the case of Namibia, the national flag, coat of arms, national anthem, and other symbols bear deep historical and cultural significance.

Otjozondjupa Governor James Uerikua expressed his enthusiasm for the campaign, stating that the National Symbols Campaign is a testament of government commitment to preserving and promoting Namibia's unique identity. He emphasised the campaign's timely arrival, providing an opportunity to educate the public on the significance of these national symbols.

"During flag hoisting ceremonies, it is disheartening to observe some individuals not standing at attention. Even those responsible for hoisting the flag may not display the appropriate reverence. As evident, the red portion of our flag represents the blood shed for our freedom, as echoed in our national anthem. How can we honour and respect that sacrifice? I urge us to be patriotic, comprehend, and respect our national symbols," reiterated Governor Uerikua.

Dr. Peya Mushelenga, the Minister of Information and Communication Technology, emphasised the unifying power of national symbols. "As we gather here in Otjozondjupa to launch the regional phase of the national symbol campaign, we recognize that national symbols possess the ability to bring people together, transcending differences and uniting us with a common purpose.

They serve as a reminder that we are part of something greater, a nation founded on democratic principles, freedom, and equality. These symbols occupy a significant place in any nation's identity, serving as powerful unifiers."

Mushelenga highlighted that the national flag, coat of arms, and other symbols represent the cohesion and uniqueness that define a nation. The national anthem, he noted, signifies the sovereignty of countries and binds nationals together in the spirit of brotherhood and sisterhood.

"As we launch the Otjozondjupa activation of the national symbols campaign today, our aim is to deepen understanding and appreciation of these symbols among the region's residents. By promoting awareness, we hope to foster a sense of national pride and unity," stated the Minister.

The Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, as the custodian of the Nationhood and National Pride program, along with other stakeholders, will initiate a series of educational workshops and awareness campaigns in schools and communities. These sessions will provide residents with insights into the history, significance, and meaning behind each national symbol.



B2Golds spends over 7 million on Education in Otjozondjupa

By: Cornelia Shikongo

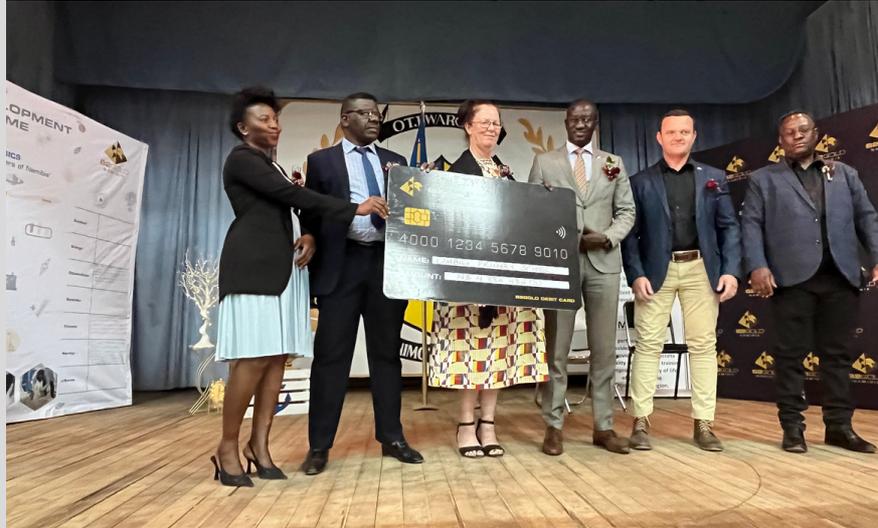
B2Gold Namibia handed over projects it funded in the region on education. In 2023 alone, B2Gold Namibia has demonstrated its unwavering commitment to the education pillar by allocating substantial sponsorship funds amounting to seven comma two million Namibia dollars. B2Gold Namibia Country Manager John Roos said the funding of this projects is a significant investment which showcases the Company's determination to nurture the educational landscape and harness the intellectual potential of the region.

Education is the cornerstone of progress, a beacon of hope for the next generation, and the key to unlocking the potential within each and every one of us.

Therefore commitment to this philosophy is exemplified through the sheer size of our National CSI portfolio, with focus on four pillars being: health, education, arts and culture, livelihoods, environmental conservation Roos stated. "We firmly believe that an investment in education is an investment in the future of our nation and a testament to our dedication to the well-being of the communities in which we operate.

Since 2014, our partnership with the Ministry of Education, Arts, and Culture has contributed to various educational initiatives in Otjiwarongo and Otavi, focused on improving school infrastructure, providing essential tools and teaching equipment, and enhancing the capabilities of our dedicated teachers", he reiterated. A few examples of such support includes: School Infrastructure which saw the construction of classrooms at the Otavi Primary School, Shalom Primary School, and Khorab Secondary School. The construction of a school hall at Karundu Primary School and renovation of the dining hall at Paresis Secondary School in Otjiwarongo.

The construction of the Ombili Primary School in Otjiwarongo – a project with multiple phases which is expected to be fully complete by 2025 and will provide a school to about one thousand learners from grades one to seven. Under the Tools and Teaching Equipment some of the projects that benefited are: the provision of machinery and equipment to Khorab Secondary School in Otavi for their Joinery and Woodwork workshop, fostering vocational skills development.



Furthermore, B2Gold also established a garden for practical teaching and a school feeding programme at Otavi Primary School. Similarly the mine also supports the EduVision, a project implemented by the Edugate Academy that aims to equalize the quality of teaching and learning received by pupils in rural areas with that of their peers in urban areas through e-learning.

In terms of Teachers' Capability Enhancement: In Otjiwarongo, the Company funds the salary of an additional science teacher at Otjiwarongo Secondary School, ensuring pupils have access to quality science education. B2Gold has also been providing textbooks and supported the upkeep of school infrastructure at Otjiwarongo Secondary School since 2015.

It also supported the Otjiwarongo Teachers Resource Centre with computers, printers, storage devices, tertiary education books as well as secondary and primary textbooks, empowering teachers with the tools they need to excel in their roles. Ross said their commitment to improving science education extends nationally, with science teachers participating in a project called the Little Shop of Physics (LSOP) programme an initiative which breaks down barriers to exploring and learning physics, making it practical, fun, and creative for both teachers and pupils.

On his part the Otjozondjupa Governor James Uerikua thanked B2Gold for the goodwill gesture stating that nation development is a collective effort and Otjozondjupa as a region is grateful for the footprint of B2Gold in the region especially in terms of assisting Education. He called on all friends of education to come on board and meet government halfway in the provision of quality education to the Namibian child and advance the education agenda

Lack of Science and Language Teachers Haunts Education Ministry

Elago Shipanga

Otjiwarongo - Namibia secondary schools are battling with a critical shortage of language and science teachers, warned Education and Arts & Culture Minister Anna Nghipondoka, at an Otjondjupa regional school career fair last month. The Minister blamed a lack of career guidance as one of the leading causes of the (shortages).

"Many times, either they (students) are not informed or for other reasons, many learners end up in one career. As of now the ministry is sitting with an oversupply of Lower Primary Teachers, who we cannot place at any school, while we have an undersupply of Science, English and Indigenous Language teachers at Secondary level.

In response to the crisis, Nghipondoka said her ministry has directed the National Council for Higher Education to probe the discrepancy between graduate specializations and the job market, which the Minister said is not an issue exclusive to the education sector. She urged higher institutions to tailor their programs to the country's developmental needs.

The remarks were made at the official opening of the Ritja Career Fair and Expo, where the minister explained that a lack of career guidance in certain schools is one of the contributing factors to high failure rates in secondary schools.

"We undertook regional visits after we analysed the results. We wanted to understand what is causing our learners to fail, we found that at some schools there is no career guidance taking place. How can the learners be motivated to study if they do not know what they can become if they pass?" queried Nghipondoka.

The minister also praised the expo for inviting companies and institutions to share information with learners to guide them on making informed decisions about their careers.

"The dream of the Namibian Child can only be realized if we support and nurture them," stressed the education minister while calling Schools principals together with the Life Skill Teachers to make sure they implement career guidance programs at their school that will open up learners' minds to less saturated fields of studies.

Turning her attention to the learners who filled the Donatus Secondary School Hall to the brim, Nghipondoka cautioned the learners against drugs and alcohol use, saying nothing good will come out of that but wasted time and destroyed futures. " Make sure that this day makes a difference in your life, what we are doing here today will be in vain if you are not receptive to the information you are given here".



Speaking at the same occasion Captain Abener Hamukwaya part-owner of the Namibia Aviation Training Academy (NATA), Namibia's only black owned aviation training institution, said he has travelled to different schools encouraging learners to take up careers in the Aviation industry saying it is high time previously disadvantaged Namibians take up space in this sector. "Whatever background you come from, whatever you are going through today should not deter you from achieving your dreams" encouraged the former Air Namibia pilot.

Hamukwaya said with the development of Green Hydrogen in Luderitz to start soon, and the recently discovered oil offshore the country's coast there will be a high demand for fixed wing aircraft and helicopter pilots. Learners who aspire to become pilots were given a tour of the single engine piper aeroplane at the Otjiwarongo Airstrip that NATA brought to the fair.

Otjiwarongo Transforms Waste into Valuable Resources



By Elago Shipanga

Otjiwarongo - The Otjiwarongo Municipality is embarking on an ambitious initiative to turn its waste into valuable commodities through the Water Treatment and Waste to Energy project. Acting Chief Executive Officer Erickson Mwaanyekange made this announcement during the project's inception workshop at Otjiwa Lodge on Wednesday.

Mwaanyekange emphasised that the project holds the potential to create an alternative source of water for the town by recycling and reusing wastewater generated within its borders. He noted, "Currently, Otjiwarongo's demand for water stands at 130,000 cubic litres per month, while Namwater supplies us with just over 45,000 cubic litres a month. This project will bridge the gap between demand and our current water supply."

This initiative aligns well with Namibia's National Development Plan 5 and the Harambee Prosperity Plan, forming an integral part of the Municipality's regional and spatial development strategy. Funding for the project preparation, totaling 30 million Namibian Dollars, has been secured through a grant from the African Development Bank.

The Waste to Energy aspect of the project is set to transform solid waste collected from the town and encroacher bushes from local farmers into Biomass fuel, with the capacity to generate 5 Megawatts of electricity. Currently, Otjiwarongo produces and collects 5.5 tons of solid waste each month.

However, to optimise the plant's operations, it will require approximately 20 tonnes of solid waste. Otjiwarongo is exploring partnership agreements with neighbouring local authorities to transport their solid waste to the facility.

During the launch of the workshop, Urban and Rural Development Minister Erastus Uutoni praised the government's commitment to infrastructure development as a catalyst for economic growth. He implored the town's leadership for undertaking this project highlighting the potential for job creation and the competitive advantage it could provide in attracting further investment to the town.

Uutoni emphasised, " Your dedication to addressing critical issues of wastewater management and energy generation demonstrates your commitment to the community's well-being. Wastewater treatment and waste-to-energy projects are integral components of modern urban planning. They not only contribute to improved public health by safeguarding our water resources but also offer innovative solutions for energy generation, reducing our carbon emission into our atmosphere and promoting economic growth. The overarching goal of wastewater treatment facilities is to protect both humans and the ecosystem from harmful elements found in wastewater."

(Cont. to pg.13)

(from page 12) ...The Minister stressed the importance of transparency, accountability, and community involvement throughout the project cycle. He noted that community ownership and support are vital for ensuring the project's sustainability and its goal of enhancing the quality of life for town residents while safeguarding the environment.

At the same event, Otjozondjupa Governor James Uerikua expressed his desire for the project to benefit all of Otjiwarongo's more than 45,000 residents beyond employment creation. He singled out electricity as an area where the community could benefit from lower tariffs, urging the regional electricity distribution company, Cenored, to explore integrating Waste to Energy results to reduce electricity costs for end-users.

"Undertaking the Water Treatment and Waste to Energy project, we have an enormous opportunity to make a substantial dent in reducing the effects of climate change in our country. Furthermore, we have a promising platform to lower electricity prices. The Waste to Energy component of this project should alleviate the burden of energy costs for end-users," Governor Uerikua asserted.

The Water Treatment and Waste to Energy project will help stimulate the circular economy at the town, thereby reducing the dependency of Otjiwarongo on the mining and agricultural sector.

Grootfontein Paves the Way: Prioritising Infrastructure Development



By: Elago Shipanga

Grootfontein - The Grootfontein Municipality is charting a strategic course to guide its planning and developmental aspirations. The inaugural 2024/2025 - 2027/2028 Strategic Plan, a landmark initiative for the town, is poised to steer the Municipality in delivering services to its constituents and attracting investments.

Jason Linus, the Human Resource Strategic Executive, emphasised, "To effectively tackle the challenges faced by the council in providing social services, land, and housing, while concurrently fostering economic development, the creation of a Strategic Plan was imperative to articulate our strategic intent."

Defined by its visionary goal to "be the living fountain for prosperity for all by 2030," the Municipality has identified five key thematic areas to guide its strategic trajectory over the next five years. These areas include enhancing efficiency in urban planning and infrastructure for social development, delivering serviced land, promoting good governance, strengthening stakeholder relations, and driving economic development within the town. Within the realm of infrastructure development, the municipality envisions the construction of a wastewater treatment plant,

oxidation ponds, and a new water reservoir to meet the demands of its burgeoning population. Additionally, the strategic plan outlines the construction of over 250 low-cost housing units. Road infrastructure upgrades also feature prominently, with plans to convert more than six kilometres of gravel roads to bitumen standard or interlocks at the town.

Leveraging its proximity to the maize triangle, the country's agricultural hub, Grootfontein aims to attract investments in value addition and agro-processing to boost the town's economy and generate much-needed employment opportunities.

This strategic plan aligns seamlessly with national planning initiatives, including Vision 2030, the fifth National Development Plan (NDP5), Harambee Prosperity Plan II, and other government policies aimed at uplifting the socio-economic conditions of the Namibian population. The Grootfontein Municipality is setting a dynamic course, poised to realise its mission to create a conducive environment by delivering quality services to all inhabitants and to become a tourism and agricultural hub.

NAMIBIA HOLDS 2023 HOUSING & POPULATION CENSUS

By: Cornelia Shikongo

Namibia held the 2023 Housing and Population Census from the 18 September to the 4th of November 2023. The process kicked off with a listing exercise which entails the identification of dwelling units and institutions. This process took place from 18-22 September and it was then proceeded by the actual enumeration from the 25-13 October 2023.

The purpose of the census is to collect data which indicates how many people live in the country, their gender, age, living conditions, access to basic services etc. Census counted every person (including babies, old aged, and persons with disabilities) found within the boundary of Namibia, including those that may not be registered with the Ministry of Home Affairs yet, the migrants as they are using goods and services provided by government. The Census reference night was the 24th of September 2023.

Otjozondjupa region had a total number of eight hundred and sixty six people who were employed as Census Officials. Otjozondjupa Regional Council also availed nine staff members to assist with publicity of the Census project, these were the Senior Administrative Officers from all seven constituencies, an Information Officer from the Ministry of Information and



Communication Technology and the Senior Public Relations Officer.

These were the officials who went around the region to inform the residents and the Census project and why it was important for everyone to be counted. The Census project was hailed as a success by the Namibia Statistics Agency as about 90 per cent of the people who were found in Namibia on the reference night were counted. The census was held under the theme: 'Play your part, be counted.' The results of the census are anticipated to be publicized by the Namibia Statistics Agency next year (2024.)



NAMFISA Engage Otjiwarongo Public on Consumer Credit Draft Bill

By: Elago Shipanga

The Namibia Financial Institutions Supervisory Authority (NAMFISA) held a public consultation in Otjiwarongo on the Consumer Credit Draft Bill. This move is poised to transform the landscape of consumer lending in Namibia and ensure that the voices of consumers and stakeholders are heard.

The public consultation is aimed at sensitising the public about the draft bill and to solicit the public inputs to increase awareness and educate consumers on their financial rights and obligations in the credit market.

The Consumer Credit Draft Bill, designed to overhaul the consumer lending sector, is part of NAMFISA's ongoing efforts to strengthen the financial regulatory framework in Namibia. The bill aims to create a fair, transparent, and competitive credit market while safeguarding the rights and interests of borrowers.

Victoria Muranda, Corporate Communication Manager at NAMFISA, said the inputs from the public will help the financial regulatory body to shape the draft bill that not only safeguard the rights of consumers but also set out obligations for the lenders.

"By soliciting input from all relevant stakeholders, NAMFISA hopes to draft legislation that safeguards consumer interests and encourages responsible lending practices. This proactive approach is expected to bring about positive changes in the consumer credit landscape, ensuring that access to credit is both accessible and secure for all Namibians".

The draft bill seeks to promote fair, transparent and responsible market conduct in the consumer credit market, and to protect consumers of credit by encouraging responsible borrowing, avoidance of over-indebtedness and fulfilment of financial obligations by consumers of credit.

It further aims to discourage reckless credit granting by credit providers, promoting fair treatment of consumers in the consumer credit market by balancing the respective rights and obligations of credit providers and consumers. It further compels credit providers to give full disclosure of information and transparency about interest, costs, fees and other charges levied in respect of the provision of credit in order for the consumers to make informed choices.

At a time when access to credit is crucial for many Namibians, the public consultation on the Consumer Credit Draft Bill demonstrates NAMFISA's commitment to responsible and inclusive financial practices. The authority seeks to gain insights and feedback from the public, consumer protection organisations, financial institutions, and other stakeholders to ensure that the bill addresses the evolving needs and challenges of the consumer credit market.



Who does the Consumer Credit Bill apply to and what laws will be affected by this Consumer Credit Bill?

The Consumer Credit Bill applies to all types of credit agreements in Namibia, where money is borrowed, or goods or services are bought on credit. In general, it does not cover transactions between family members or people who are related. The Consumer Credit Bill replaces and changes some existing laws related to credit, such as the Usury Act, Credit Agreements Act, and Microlending Act.



www.namfisa.com.na

Contact us during office hours: +264 61 290 5000 | Toll free: 0800 290 500



Otjozondjupa Regional Council,
Management & Staff wishes the
residents of the region and
Namibia at large a

MERRY
CHRISTMAS
and
HAPPY NEW YEAR!



STAFF MOVEMENT

APPOINTMENTS/PROMOTIONS/TRANSFERS/ RETIREMENT/RESIGNATION/DEMISE/DISMISSAL

Mr Goliath Kapepu
Control Administrative Officer:
Okandjira Constituency Office
Early Retirement: 31 August 2023

Mr Cgaesje Tsamkagao
Artisan Handyman: Tsumkwe
Settlement Office
Retirement: 31 August 2023



Mr Nelson Meroro
Deputy Director: Planning &
Development
Promotion: 30 September 2023



Mr Erasmus Sheelekeni
IT Technician
Promotion: 31 August 2023



Mr Abed Iyambo
Administrative Officer:
Tsumkwe Constituency
Office
Promotion: 30 September 2023



Ms. Julia Josua
Administrative Officer:
Transport Section
Promotion: 31 October 2023



Ms Ester Nangolo
Switchboard Operator
Retirement: 31 October 2023

PUBLIC NOTICE

OTRC 001/10/2023



Otjozondjupa Regional Council

The Otjozondjupa Region Council hereby calls upon Customers of services in the Settlements of the region – being both Residents and Institutions, to honour their commitment and pay their municipal bills. As per the Regional Councils Act No. 22 of 1992, the Otjozondjupa Regional has the mandate to ensure the prevalence of basic service delivery in all the proclaimed Settlements of the region, in terms of water, sewer, roads, waste removal and land delivery. From the provisions of these services, Council is further, mandated through the Regional Councils Act No: 22 of 1992, Section 31 (1) (a): to recover cost of provision of certain services and therefore, the funds of the Regional Council shall consist of: “the rates, charges, fees and other moneys levied and received by the Regional Council under any provision of this Act in respect of immovable property situated within a settlement area in its region and services rendered by it or the regulation and control of any matter in a settlement area.” As a Government entity, the Regional Council is a non-profit making Government Institution and thus cost recovery for services rendered, is merely aimed at breaking-even and ensuring sustainable continuation of provision of basic services.

To ensure effective and transparent service delivery Council has approved a Debt and Credit Policy, to guide both Council and the Customers in terms of municipal-account management. As per the Debt and Credit policy, the Disconnection Notice and the approved Disconnection List as well as the Monthly Invoice, should all serve as a notice for water disconnection as they all bear an alert caution thereof and thus Council is might not necessarily issue further notifications to customers, when it has to disconnect the water due to non-payment. It is in line with the above that Council calls on all its customers in all the Nine (9) Settlements, to honour their bills and avoid disconnection. Customers owing Council are thus encouraged to visit the Office within their localities for arrangements on settling their debt. This in turn will also enable Council to honor its commitments to the bulk-service providers to ensure that all the inhabitants of the region, enjoy continued and uninterrupted service delivery!

Hope you find this in order.

OTJOZONDJUPA REGIONAL COUNCIL

<https://otjozondjuparc.gov.na>

ONDJUPA THROUGH THE LENS

