

APP-006154

**IRRIGATION BASED AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL
RELEASE OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED MAIZE AND COTTON ON THE FARM
BATAVIA, OSHIKOTO REGION**

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• AUTHORITIES TAKE URGENT STEPS TO PROTECT POPULATION

Oshikoto battles steep rise in malaria cases

More than 250 cases of malaria have been reported in the Oshikoto Region between January and 18 February this year.

CLAUDIA REITER
WINDHOEK

Oshikoto regional health director Joshua Nghipangelwa has urged

community members to seek early treatment following an outbreak of malaria in the region.

According to Nghipangelwa, 256 cases of malaria were reported between January and 18 February this year.

"The regional crisis response team and the district response team have started responding to the outbreak," he said.

He added that the team has investigated a majority of cases and visited the most-affected areas to educate the population about the risks and to distribute long-lasting insecticidal mosquito nets.

"We have also introduced new methods to contain the increasing malaria cases in the region by combatting breeding sites with larvae and spraying houses that have reported cases," Nghipangelwa said.

On the ground

He said health authorities are testing and treating cases both at health facilities and within the community, conducted by community health workers.

"These cases are sporadic. The entire region is affected, but the most-affected constituency is Okankolo."

Nghipangelwa said Onandjokwe District Hospital has recorded the highest number of cases with 92, and most of these cases originated from the Okankolo constituency.

Tsumeb Hospital has recorded 84 cases and Omuthiya District Hospital recorded 80 cases from January to 18 February.

"Everyone is at risk of contracting malaria, so no one is safe," he warned. He urged residents of the region to protect themselves from mosquito bites both outdoors and in their homes.

Ohangwena outbreak



AT RISK: Health authorities are taking steps to counter rising malaria cases in the Oshikoto Region. PHOTO: FILE

In late January, Namibia Media Holdings reported that the Ohangwena Region had recorded a total of 392 cases of malaria.

Of these, 154 cases were documented locally in Ohangwena, while 238 cases originated elsewhere.

George Jeremiah, the acting regional health

director, said at the time that there has been a shortage of testing materials over the past two months, and they now rely exclusively on microscopic tests conducted in laboratories in the region.

"Looking at the statistics for 2023, malaria cases have slightly increased. The local cases are very dangerous, indicating

that the vector is within Namibia and not outside," he said in January.

In their efforts to contain the further spread of malaria, the region deployed a team of 241 sprayers to the three districts last year.

Justine Haikali, the senior environmental and health practitioner in Ohangwena and co-

ordinator of the malaria spraying programme, said the teams had covered 35% of at-risk villages.

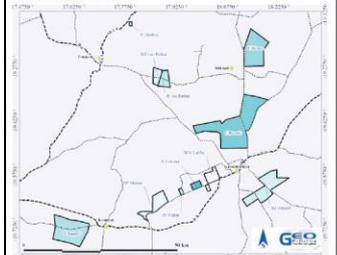
She added that only a few households still refused to have their houses sprayed – unlike in the past when many resisted.

Health authorities also reported that in 2023, four people in the region died from malaria.

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//Karas governor optimistic about regional development

ELIZABETH KHEIBES
WINDHOEK

//Karas regional governor Aletha Frederick says Namibia's oil and gas discoveries present unprecedented opportunities for the region's economic growth and prosperity.

"The potential for massive new green hydrogen development further solidifies our region's position as a key player in Namibia's sustainable energy future," she said during a recent regional consultative meeting for the National Development Plan 6 (NDP6).

The governor said she envisions the region becoming not only "a hub of economic activity but also a beacon of sustainable development in Namibia. With the right support and financing



POTENTIAL: //Karas regional governor, Aletha Frederick. PHOTO: FILE

from the national government we have the power to eradicate poverty, hunger and unemployment in our region."

In addition, Frederick highlighted the importance of local community participation in the vast opportunities presented by regional development.

"As we embark on this journey of envisioning the future of our region, it is imperative that we recognise the immense potential that lies within //Karas – a region blessed with abundant mineral and natural resources, a thriving fishing industry, significant mining activities and an expanding tourism sector," she said.

Frederick also called for the full development of the region's agricultural sector, which is currently "underutilised".

POLICE OFFICER'S FRAUD CASE CONTINUES

KRISTIEN KRUGER
WINDHOEK

The trial of the former police officer Ricardo Nestor, who was initially charged with fraud amounting to more than N\$10 million, continued in court this week.

However, Nestor is now only facing three charges of fraud related to N\$720 000 after the court acquitted him of six charges.

He has already taken the stand and testified in his own defence. The case has been postponed to 19 April for final submissions before conviction.

Nestor further filed an application under Section 174 of the Criminal Procedure Act, arguing that the State had not presented enough evidence for the court to find him guilty.

Direct evidence lacking

Judge Philanda Christiaan acquitted Nestor of six out of the nine charges he faced in November. She found that they had not succeeded in proving a case beyond a reasonable doubt against Nestor.

Christiaan further stated that the State's case is primarily based on circumstantial evidence, with no direct evidence linking Nestor to the crimes committed.

"There are no facts presented that prove that the accused had access to the computers, the login credentials or the internet banking profiles of any of the complainants,"



STILL IN COURT: Fraud accused Ricardo Nestor and his legal representative, Albert Titus. PHOTO: FILE

Christiaan said in her judgment. She further said there is no evidence that Nestor received or drew on the funds transferred from these accounts.

The charges on which he was acquitted relate to allegations that Nestor defrauded Namibia Marble and Granite near Karibib and/or Carmen Bianca Wittreich of an amount of N\$10 million. Additionally, there is a further charge that he defrauded, among others, Spot-On Discount Liquor and Meransha Properties.

Additional charges

The charges that Nestor still faces pertain to Tayo Namibia. It is alleged that Nestor falsely represented to Tayo Namibia that the bank account of Walcon Construction had been changed from Bank Windhoek to Standard Bank and that Tayo



Namibia should pay an amount of N\$720 000 into the Standard Bank account for work that was purportedly done by Walcon Construction.

Nestor is currently in custody at Windhoek Central Prison.
kristien@nmh-hub.com.na

City acts swiftly against illegal paper dump

ELIZABETH KHEIBES
WINDHOEK

On Monday, a pedestrian in Windhoek's Agste Laan witnessed unidentified individuals dumping thousands of documents from the education ministry at an unauthorised location.

The documents included old question papers and curriculum vitae. The ministry's executive director, Sanet Steenkamp, confirmed that the photos and videos sent to her by Namibian Sun displayed several personal and public documents from the ministry being discarded unlawfully. "These are indeed from the ministry, from the examination directorate. I have since given clear instructions that they need to retrieve these documents and correctly dispose of them," Steenkamp said. "Some things are usually kept for archival purposes, and in this case, I believe that someone did not do what was expected of them. We apologise for this," she added.

Aggressive

According to the witness to the unlawful document dump, the culprits passed a designated dumpsite in the Kupferberg area and "care-

lessly" got rid of the documents at a random place.

"I approached the private vehicle and tried to question the men about the dumping, but that led to aggressive responses instead," the bystander said.

"I started taking photos and videos that I planned to share to get help clearing up the area," the source, only known as Ruben, explained.

City acts promptly

City of Windhoek officials, who were given access to the photos and video, later tracked down the driver from a licence plate that was shown in the images and resolved the matter.

"We managed to locate the illegally dumped waste alongside Sam Nujoma Road on the way to Daan Viljoen. Due to the nature of the waste, which is paper that can easily blow away, our team cleaned up," the City said.

"We also managed to locate the culprit through the vehicle registration number and he will be fined an amount of N\$1 608 for illegal dumping. This will be billed on his municipal account," city spokesperson Lydia Amutenya said.

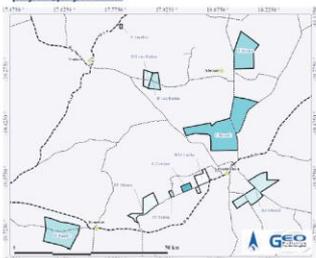
Amutenya highlighted continuous efforts by the municipality to keep the streets of Windhoek clean and said they cannot tolerate illegal dumping of waste.

"Waste must be disposed of properly at our respective landfill. We also have waste recycling initiatives where this type of waste can be recycled," she said.

Ondangwa electrification project advances

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• LIGHTS ON

The Ondangwa council has provided 300 electrical connections and is working on connecting around 153 households at the moment.

TUYEIMO HAIJULA
ONDANGWA

As the Omahenene electrification project in Ondangwa advances, the council hosted a community meeting on Tuesday to inform affected residents of the procedures that will be used to connect their houses.

The project, funded by the mines and energy ministry and executed by Nored, was initially scheduled to be implement-

ed in the 2020-21 financial year, but due to Covid-19, it was rescheduled to take place between September 2023 and January this year.

Ondangwa town spokesperson Petrina Shitalangaho-Mutikisha said council provided 300 electrical connections and is currently working on connecting around 153 households.

"We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the residents of Uuskopa, Omahenene and Epya for their patience and cooperation during the construction work in Omahenene. Their understanding and support have allowed this project to be carried out as planned without any interruption or delay from their side," Shitalangaho-Mutikisha said.

Omahenene is one of the oldest informal settlements in Ondangwa and is classified as a low-income area.

Quality of life

Shitalangaho-Mutikisha added that the

process of household connections has started, and homeowners who qualify for household connections will get connected.

"They will be required to have a letter of recommendation from the council with matching details of what is on their certified copy of the Namibian identification document," she explained.

"Overall, the importance of house electrical connections cannot be overstated, as they are integral to the safety, functionality and comfort of modern homes," Shitalangaho-Mutikisha added.

She said although in the past there were a number of challenges associated with an area without electricity, this will now be a thing of the past with streets, dark areas and homes being electrified.

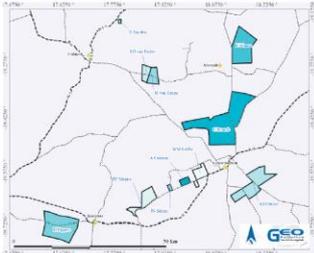
She urged residents to look after their property, saying the council will focus on electrifying other areas and not repairing vandalised items.



PROGRESS: The Ondangwa electrification project is advancing. PHOTO: TUYEIMO HAIJULA

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