



ERONGO REGION
Office of the Governor

STATEMENT

BY

**THE GOVERNOR OF THE ERONGO REGION,
HONORABLE NEVILLE ANDRE**

AT THE

**PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE FINDINGS OF THE
EDUCATION FACILITIES FAMILIARIZATION TRIP**

ON

MONDAY, 15TH FEBRUARY 2021

AT

11H30

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Director of Proceedings – Ms Habate Doeses, the Chief Regional Officer-Erongo Regional Council

Mrs. Ernfriede Stephanus – Director of Education in the Erongo Region

Mr. Tobias Amoonga – Chief Public Education and Corruption Officer of the Anti- Corruption Commission and Mrs. Frieda Kanyama – Senior Investigating Officer.

Fellow Citizens of the Erongo Region and Namibia at Large

Esteemed Members of the Media

Good morning

The Covid -19 pandemic had its effects on all spheres of life, our school going children were also not spared.

In order to save the lives of our children, the Namibian Government initiated the Covid -19 Infrastructure grant, which was aimed at assisting schools where there are no ablution facilities, to construct ablution facilities for general hygiene in line with the Covid-19 protocols. The other part was to procure PPE's and other relevant materials to ensure that the safety of our children are guaranteed.

On Wednesday, 13th January 2021, I undertook a familiarization visit to the three schools in the Omaruru Circuit, namely Otjiperongo Junior Secondary School, !Oe #Gab Primary School and Katora Primary School.

I was accompanied on this mission by Mrs. Ernfriede Stephanus, the Regional Director of Education, Ms Natalia Guriras the Deputy Director of Programs and Quality Assurance in the Regional Education Office, Mr. Khaibeb, the Chairperson of the Erongo Regional Education Forum, Mr. Mubasen Narib, the Vice Chairperson of the NANSO in the Erongo Region and Mr Chris Arnold Eixab, the Erongo Regional Chairperson of NANTU.

The main purpose of this visit was to look at:

- a) The Covid-19 readiness and preparedness of the regional education sector
- b) Assessment of the readiness and suitability of the regional educational facilities.
- c) The intake numbers of the 2021 academic year

As I stated in my remarks on January 14th, 2021 during the Media briefing and I would like to quote, “My own observations and findings are that there is still a number challenges that needs to be addressed. Myself and the Regional Education Leadership will embark on a process to ensure that all identified gaps and challenges are addressed and resolved” unquote.

It is against this background that I had a follow-up meeting with the Regional Director of Education, Mrs. Stephanus and Ms Natalia Guriras as well as Mr. Nelson Meroro, where we interrogated most of our findings.

Clearly what we gathered on the ground was that there is serious lack of monitoring development projects, we have also found that the payments signed off, does not collerate with the progress of the work at the different sites, there is also a clear incident of prospective bribery by some of the contractors, who wanted to make a principal sign for work that was not done in order to receive a certain percentage of payment, in return, the Contractors promised the Principle fish and other offers.

Corruption is particular perpetrated and causes economic damages when principles of good governance and systems are not being adhered to. Both in Public and Private Sector there is a need for commitment to the principles of good governance, whereby those entrusted with fiduciary responsibilities display a degree of loyalty, honesty, transparency and accountability. It is against this background that my Office, who has to ensure that incidences of corruption do not take place in the region and to uphold the principles of governance, I am now pleased to submit to the Anti-Corruption Commission to launch an investigation into the alleged malpractices as it pertains to the Covid-19 Infrastructure Grant.

I also call upon those officials involved in corrupt practices to stop as soon as possible and to call on those private companies, that approach officials to indulge in corrupt activities to desist from such or risk facing the law.

My Office is serious and committed to root our corrupt practices from this region. We can no longer tolerate when public monies earmarked for developments ends up into the coffers of unpatriotic Namibians, who in turn deprived the Namibian child of quality education and proper infrastructure to learn in a productive and conducive environment. This needs to stop and the bucks start here today with this submission to the Anti-Corruption Commission.

I would then implore onto the Chief Regional Officer and her team to cooperate fully with the ACC to take appropriate action in line with the Staff rules and the Public Service Act, that governs misconduct.

My Office will continue to engage all other Offices of Ministries and Agencies in the Region to monitor the performance of development projects in the Region.

Our intent with this media briefing, is to call on the ACC to launch a thorough investigation into the alleged corruption and malpractices under the Erongo Region's COVID-19 Infrastructure Funding and bring those culprits to book. I also call on those officials involved in corrupt practices to desist from such practices. I would also like to extend a warning to the Private Companies, that approach Government Officials to indulge in corrupt practices to also desist from such practices.

I would also like to extend a stern warning to anyone who involves themselves in any corrupt practice within our region, that my Office will cooperate with all relevant institutions, such as the ACC to bring such culprits to book.

Under my reign as Erongo Governor, I will not tolerate any corrupt practices and will make sure that we root out corruption in our Region.

I thank you.