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## ❖ Column Corruption – A social disease • Part 145

# Quantifying the cost of corruption

Job Amupanda said in a presentation on 6 September 2018 at the Namibia University of Science and Technology, "Namibia is not the Land of the Brave, we are the Land of the Cowards". We are cowards unless we hold our leaders ac-

countable for the cost of corruption. A leader does not engage in corrupt relationships where the language of exploitation, greed and pride are harming the poor and unemployed (Roberts). The Namibian of 8

August 2018 reported that executives at TransNamib allegedly were instrumental in approving three pay-outs of N\$24 million in total, while the estimated value of the services provided apparently was a mere N\$3 million.

These payouts allegedly took place without quotations and/or inviting tenders. The company was not registered for Value Added Tax (VAT) at Inland Revenue. This case illustrates a network of connec-

tions. The current CEO, according to the board delayed providing information about the payouts to a law firm that investigated the matter and drafted a report to the minister, John Mutorwa. The former suspended CEO and current strategic executive was reinstated without disciplinary hearings being finalised. The current CEO and former suspended CEO previ-

ously worked together. Such examples feature in the media on a weekly basis, some alluding to corrupt relationships between staff members and board members, manifesting in abuse of power and irregularities. Neither corrupt relationships nor abuse of power as manifestations of corruption correlate with good leadership.

If the allegations are true, conflict of interest seems likely. Spending N\$24 million while the value has been estimated to be N\$3 million is a waste of money and corruption.

### HUGE COSTS

Fifty-one houses of N\$350 000 each could have been built with the wasted N\$18 million. This means a possible 204 people, at an average family size of four, were deprived of a decent home. In the process, 102 children have been deprived of a conducive environment to study and excel in life. This is only the approximate cost of the alleged corruption, calculated on a conservative basis. The unit cost price of a house can be halved if alternative material is used, like converting containers into houses as already done in Angola and for office use at the coast.

This means 408 people could have been provided with a home.

It is appropriate to reflect on our leaders and their awareness about the cost of corruption. What will it take for leaders in Namibia to become aware of the implications of corrupt dealings?

It is time to quantify the impact of short sighted decisions which deprive and exploit citizens.

Political and other leaders must gain an understanding of the inhumaneness of corruption. There is an urgent need for leaders to become aware of and develop their consciousness, in order to pursue a purpose bigger than themselves.

What legacy will our leaders leave? One of devastating deterioration of the most vulnerable? Of disconnection from the people they are supposed to serve?

What will it take to hold our leaders accountable for the cost of their corruption?

### References

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