



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



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07 October 2022

MEDIA RELEASE *(For Immediate Release)*

ATTENTION: News Editors and Reports

OSHIKOTO LEADERSHIP ENGAGED MINISTER OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT AND ROAD AUTHORITY ON THE CONDITIONS OF ROADS IN THE REGION

The leadership of Oshikoto Region yesterday hosted the Minister of Works and Transport Hon. John Mutorwa as well as Namibia's national road networks managing custodian (Roads Authority), to discuss and inspect road conditions in the Region. The meeting forms part of the Regional Council's strategy, to place stakeholder engagements at the centre stage of its operations, in its quest to address the challenges that are confronting the Region.

The Regional Council has been receiving numerous queries and complaints from the residents of the Oshikoto Region and the general public, regarding the poor road conditions and the lack of proper road networks. As a result, the Council has been doing all it can, with the limited resources at its disposal and within the parameters of its mandate, to ensure that the issue of roads reaches the relevant authorities and is addressed.

Speaking during the meeting, the Regional Governor of Oshikoto Region Hon. Penda Ya Ndakolo appreciated the Minister of Works and Transport for responding positively to the Council's invitation, to come and discuss one of the burning issues, which is currently confronting the Region (the issue of poor road networks). The Governor stated that, the views and queries raised by the Regional Councillors during the meeting are not necessarily their own however they represent the aspirations of the people of Oshikoto. Hence urged the Ministry of Works and Transport as well as Roads Authority to go back to the drawing board, strategize and work closely with the Regional leadership to address the issue of roads in the Region.

"We are not here to blame anyone, however, Honourable Minister our Region is in dire need of proper road networks for easy access and improved service delivery. Our people are suffering. Several consultations were held with various stakeholders on the status of roads in the Region but nothing has been done to date" Ya Ndakolo informed the Minister.

On his part, the Minister of Works and Transport, Hon. John Mutorwa raised a concern over the issue of having one road contractor (Roads Contractor Company) for all the five (5) northern Regions (namely: Oshikoto, Ohangwena, Oshana, Omusati and Kunene Regions). He stated that, such approach by Roads Authority delays the process of constructing, upgrading and rehabilitating the Roads in the mentioned Regions.

Meanwhile, he also requested the Roads Authority to distribute resources meant for the construction and rehabilitation of roads in the Country equally to all 14 regions and strengthen stakeholder engagements as well as consultation. The Minister stated that: “We are managing the country of diversity. The issue of no money is understood, however, let us distribute the resources that are available equally and give feedback to the Regional leadership.” He further stated that: “I must say we have done very well with trunk roads as Country, however, when it comes to fitter roads, the work must still continue and everybody must take his/her responsibility seriously,” Hon. Mutorwa said.

During the current Financial Year, the Roads Authority allocated N\$ 22.9 Million to Oshikoto Region, which is a 12% of the total budget of N\$ 225.5 Million allocated to the five northern Regions (Oshikoto, Ohangwena, Oshana, Omusati and Kunene Regions respectively) for the routine maintenance of roads.

As from 2022/23 - 2023/24 Financial Year, Roads Authority plans to re-gravel the Engoyi - Omuntele road (15 Km), Okankolo - Onyuulaye road (18 Km), Casablanca - Onalusheshete road (38.9 Km) and Onyati - Onkumbula road (67.3Km), with the work set to commence, once the new contractor is appointed. Meanwhile, during the 2023/24 FY, Road Authority plans to surface two (2) unsealed roads in the Region, namely: Engoyi - Omuntele (15 Km) and Omuthiya - Onanke (31 Km).

The consultative meeting and site visits were attended by the Minister of Works and Transport, who was also the invited guest, Oshikoto Regional Governor, Hon. Ya Ndakolo, Chairperson of Oshikoto Regional Council Hon. Samuel Shivute, Regional Councillors, Management and the representatives of Road Authority.

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