



N\$3B HYDROGEN PLANT TO BE BUILT AT SWAKOP NEXT YEAR

CONSTRUCTION of HDF Energy's N\$3-billion hydrogen-to-power plant at Swakopmund is expected to start within the first quarter of 2023.

This was announced by Swakopmund council management committee chairperson Wilfried Groenewald. He said French company Hydrogene de France (HDF Energy) has already measured up 400ha of land east of Swakopmund, and while the town planning could take a while, the company and Swakopmund's municipality have signed a lease agreement for the time being.

"Covering an area of 400 hectares, you can imagine how massive this will be," Groenewald said, adding that the government has given the company the nod to go ahead.

Namibia's significant renewable energy capacity was a major consideration for HDF Energy to launch its 'Renewstable' project, which aims to be commercially operational in 2024.

It will contribute to local clean electricity generation 24 hours a day, thus directly contributing to the security of electricity supply in Namibia.

"Renewstable Swakopmund will be Africa's first integrated solar-hydrogen power project with the aim of providing Swakopmund and surroundings with renewable energy", environmental consultant SLR Environmental Consulting said on behalf of the company in a letter to the municipality.

The project will produce hydrogen using water from the desalination plant north of Swakopmund.

The desalinated water will be led to the hydrogen plant where oxygen is released and hydrogen is kept for storage in a series of storage containers. The stored hydrogen is then used to drive hydrogen fuel cells. Solar power will also be generated.

Approximately 90MW of solar and hydrogen-generated power is then fed from the site into a new, above-ground transmission line, which will connect to the existing Tamariskia substation at Swakopmund.

Given the progress on producing hydrogen power, HDF Energy is also applying for approval to develop a hydrogen filling station.

The facility will include the high-pressure storage of liquid hydrogen.

Source: [https://www.namibian.com.na/117682/read/N\\$3b-hydrogen-plant-to-be-built-at-Swakop-next-year](https://www.namibian.com.na/117682/read/N$3b-hydrogen-plant-to-be-built-at-Swakop-next-year)

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ROAD AUTHORITY PROJECT TR7/1 - ON THE ROAD TO NOWHERE?



Despite the efforts of the Construction Industries Federation of Namibia (CIF) to have the prequalification criteria for contractors altered on the TR7/1 project for the rehabilitation of the 30 kilometre road between Karibib and Usakos, there was no inclination of the Roads Authority under the leadership of Mr Conrad Lutombi to change them. The project is to be financed by a loan by the German government through the Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW).

The result of the decision taken jointly between the Roads Authority and the KfW is that Namibian contractors were once again excluded due to unrealistic technical and financial prequalification requirements. The consequence is that predominantly foreign companies participated, and only those Namibian companies that have a joint venture arrangement with a foreign company. Joint ventures between Namibian companies was not a consideration bearing in mind the steep requirements.

On 12 October the CIF has written to the chief executive officer, Conrad Lumtombi, as the responsible entity for the prequalification process, and had requested that the submission date would be extended and that a meeting would be arranged so that the CIF's concerns about the prequalification criteria could be discussed with the authority in charge.

The submission date was then changed to 10 November 2022, however an audience with the authority was only granted on 7 November 2022. Thus, if indeed, any changes to the prequalification criteria would have been made, there would not have been sufficient time for local contractors to make their submission. The CIF therefore requested another extension of the submission date to the end of January 2023, which would have allowed sufficient time to review requirements and for inclusive bidding to take place. The Roads Authority then informed contractors that the date was extended to 20 January 2023.

During a meeting on 15 November 2022 with the Roads Authority, to review the requirements, the CIF was shocked to be informed that a decision was taken and that the submission date again would be changed to an earlier date, i.e. to 24 November 2022. This again resulted in a predicament that even if the prequalification criteria were to have been changed, there would not have been sufficient time for local contractors to submit a bid by the deadline. Indeed shortly before the revised submission deadline, contractors were informed that requirements had been adjusted.

However, regardless remaining unrealistic requirements, prevented Namibian contractors to qualify and bid.

It is very disappointing as at the end Namibians - as taxpayer - have to pay off the loan. Yet our Namibian contractors cannot participate. A simple rehabilitation of the road between Usakos and Karibib is involved. Local contractors have more than adequate capacity to do the job.

In terms of the financial pre-qualification requirements, they are also so steep, that Namibian contractors cannot participate, especially taking into consideration the recessionary environment in which we operated over the last seven years.

Wondering what else could be done to convince the authorities that it is important to engage local capacities, the CIF remains seriously disappointed that this is still happening, even though the CIF has engaged not only the Roads Authority but also central government.

How is this possible in this day and age, when our economy is practically in shambles and we are fighting to create jobs and to ensure that we and our employees have food on our tables?

BE ALERT WHILE BANKING ONLINE

"As we approach the festive season, we want to remind customers to be vigilant while banking, especially online, said Jacqueline Pack who is Bank Windhoek's executive officer of marketing and corporate communication services."

Online banking allows customers to access their bank accounts to do financial transactions through the internet on their smartphone, tablet, or computer.

It is quick and enables customers to pay their bills and transfer money without visiting or calling a bank. Online banking is of great convenience. But, with all the publicity about online identity theft, it is essential to be alert while banking online.

Customers should guard their valuables by not giving their confidential information to strangers. This is because online fraudsters can easily impersonate a bank. Customers must use different means to help ensure the financial institution is legitimate and safe to transact with. By law, banks cannot solicit customers' passwords, account numbers, or other personal information. Suppose a customer gets an email asking them for personal information. In that case, they should contact their bank immediately and report such emails.

While on the internet, customers should access the online banking website by typing the uniform resource locator into the address bar rather than clicking links they might see in an email, an instant message, or another website. They should check for anything that looks unfamiliar and unprofessional such as spelling mistakes.

SECURE COMPUTER

Maintaining active, up-to-date antivirus, spyware, and firewall protection is crucial. Customers must keep their operating system and other applications updated with the latest security patches and avoid transactions at wireless hot spots or internet cafés.

Customers should never respond to emails, instant messages, or phone calls asking them to go to a website to resolve an account problem. This is called "phishing", a form of identity theft that depends entirely upon the victim's cooperation. These requests are never legitimate.

PASSWORD PROTECTION

Using a strong password with at least eight characters, with a combination of numbers, letters, and punctuation symbols, are advisable. Customers should not use the same password for banking and other online accounts.

The password should always be kept safe and should not be left in a file on a computer, sticky note, or monitor, and the passwords should be changed regularly.

PHYSICAL SECURITY

Personal identification data is more likely to be stolen physically than online. Customers should guard their banking personal identity number by not sharing it with anyone, including their bank or security guards at automatic teller machines.

Any documents that contain identifying information should be shredded before being disposed of in dustbins. Customers should not leave credit cards, bank statements, or other financial documents where fraudsters can access such information.

The most effective way to beat fraud is to be vigilant and proactive. For instance, customers can log onto their financial statements regularly and immediately report unauthorised transactions. They can also check their annual credit report from an accredited and reputable credit bureau to spot accounts that fraudsters may have opened without the customer's knowledge.

Source: <https://www.namibian.com.na/117823/read/Be-Alert-While-Banking-Online>

Contributions

Please send all contributions to:
info@cifnamibia.com

We will cover your information on new tender awards, product developments, new appointments, events, as well as advertise your jobs free of charge. Should you wish us to follow up on any stories or trends, please let us know.

The CIF reserves the right to edit any submissions and make corrections, omit material, or do minor reorganisation if required. The CIF also reserves the right to reject any submissions for any reason. This may not be a reflection of the quality of the material. Though we would consider relevance to the audience and whether the material is too redundant with existing or planned material.



HALF-CONSTRUCTED MHDP HOUSES TO BE COMPLETED

The Ministry of Urban and Rural development has appointed a construction company to ensure half-built houses constructed under the Mass Housing Development Programme are completed speedily.

The Minister of Urban and Rural development, Erastus Uutoni, handed over 319 incomplete Mass Housing Development Programme (MHDP) houses in Swakopmund to New Era Construction.

The company has been tasked to complete the houses for occupation. The contract period is for 18 months and brings to an end a long-standing court saga that resulted in the houses standing incomplete for almost five years.

"The Ministry of Urban and Rural development is on the move and will ensure delivery of housing and land", Uutoni said at the event hosted in Matutura.

He implored the contractors, New Era Investment, to complete the houses within the 18-month time frame.

The first batch of 111 of the 319 houses is envisaged to be completed within six months. The houses are part of 891 commenced-but-not-complete homes constructed under the MHDP in Swakopmund.

The mayor of Swakopmund, Dina Namubes, beseeched the contractor to employ members of the community.

Namubes also reiterated that the municipality is committed to creating a sustainable, livable, and inclusive city by providing decent housing, employment creation, and opportunities for education as well as access to all types of amenities within a reasonable distance.

With the inception of the MHDP, a total of 1 837 houses were planned and commissioned for construction in Swakopmund. Of this total, 1 332 houses have been completed and handed over to the beneficiaries thus far.

The MHDP was launched and implemented by the government in 2013 and was aimed at increasing investment in the affordable housing sector and significantly increasing the supply towards meeting the demand for housing in Namibia.

Source: <https://www.erongo.com.na/local-news-ero/half-constructed-mhdp-houses-to-be-completed2022-11-02>

WAYS SMALL TO MEDIUM CONTRACTORS CAN EASE INFLATION PAIN

Inflation is growing at an alarming rate and shows no sign of slowing - and construction is vulnerable.

Here follows some strategies you can implement to ease the inflation pain:

Track & Control Your Spending

According to some sources, 40% of construction companies don't track their spending. Yet, getting good spending visibility is a necessity in taking good care of your business finances. Only once you know where, when and how much is spent can you start making informed financial decisions.

Create A Spending Strategy

In times of disruptive changes in the market, it's more likely to make rash decisions that will ultimately prove to harm long-term growth or, at least, not bring the best return on investment. That's why it's very important to create a clear distinction between strategic and non-strategic expenses. If you can think through your long-term goals, you will be able to determine which expenses support this goal - so that when trying to cut costs, you will look somewhere else.

Cut Expenses Where Possible

Now that you've determined your long-term strategy and you have a detailed picture of your spending, you are in a great position to decide where to cut expenses without much pain.

Don't Bid away Your Profit Margin

The construction market is very competitive, which leads companies to bid on unsustainably low-profit margins. It can quickly turn bad when prices go up. Competing on the price alone can very quickly take away your profit and put you in a tight spot if the inflation rate grows. Instead, you can try to increase the competitiveness of your offer by bringing in value beyond the price. Focus on the experience and quality, speed of delivery, sustainability of your projects or even excellent communication with a client.

Purchase Materials Ahead of Time

If it's possible, try to purchase all materials you'll need right at the start of a project. With the inflation in material costs and supply chain issues, you can save a lot of money, time and stress if you stock up on materials right at the beginning of the process. This stops the costs you estimated when signing the contract don't get thrown out of the window with the spike in prices two months into the project.

Ensure Consistent Cash Flow

It's crucial to establish a good monitoring process over your company's finances and establish financial metrics that are updated and regularly inspected.

Take Good Care of Your Employees

Take care of your team. Inflation affects all of us on a personal level with costs of living getting higher and uncertain social and economic situations putting everyone under a lot of stress.

Source: <https://archdesk.com/blog/9-ways-contractors-can-ease-the-pain-of-rising-inflation/>

GOVERNMENT WELCOMES JOB GROWTH

South African government welcomes the results of the quarterly labour force survey for quarter three: 2022, which revealed that 204 000 jobs were gained between the second quarter of 2022 and the third quarter of 2022. The labour force survey also revealed that the total number of persons employed was 15,8 million in the third quarter of 2022.

This means that the official unemployment rate in South Africa decreased by 1,0 percentage point from 33,9% in the second quarter to 32,9% in the third quarter of 2022. The unemployment rate according to the expanded definition of unemployment also decreased by 1,0 percentage point to 43,1% in Q3:2022 compared to Q2:2022. The largest jobs gain were recorded in manufacturing (123 000), followed by trade (82 000), construction (46 000), transport (33 000) and community and social services (27 000).

Whilst this is welcomed news ahead of the festive season, the South African government acknowledges that the country has a long way to go and more work needs to be done to address the challenge of unemployment in the country. Despite an increase of 25 000 in the number of employed youth during the third quarter, the results show that the youth (aged 15-34 years) remain vulnerable in the labour market.

Minister in the South African presidency, Mondli Gungubele said: "Government is doing all within its power to attract and create a conducive environment for investment and business to thrive in South Africa. As a country, we are implementing the economic recovery and reconstruction plan to build a sustainable, resilient and inclusive economy. We are pleased with the growth of the employment rate but more must be done".

Government together with the business sector, organised labour and other partners are committed to addressing the challenge of unemployment. Citizens are encouraged to support local businesses and embrace entrepreneurship. "Let us work together to improve the employment rate of South Africa, leaving no one behind. But in short, we are very encouraged by these results and hope that these green shoots building upon previous quarters are starting to signify the turn in our economic outlook", Mondli concluded.

Source: <https://www.gov.za/speeches/government-welcomes-job-growth-30-nov-2022-0000>

SA CEMENT AND CONCRETE INDUSTRY FACING MYRIAD OF CHALLENGES

The entire South African cement and concrete industry is threatened by multiple challenges of economic decline, the crisis in the construction industry, cheap imports and environment-related issues, industry body Cement & Concrete South Africa (CCSA) has said.

CCSA says that some 35,000 local jobs are on the line, together with ZAR billions of investments in the sector's long value chain. A key global challenge faced by the sector is its significant carbon footprint.

The climate change challenge to the industry's sustainability lies in the fact that cement manufacturing emits significant quantities of greenhouse gases which impact South Africa's decarbonisation commitments as it moves towards Net Zero, within the framework of the Just Energy Transition Investment Plan (JET IP).

Cement and Concrete South Africa chief executive officer, Bryan Perrie, comments, "As responsible stakeholders committed to playing our part in South Africa achieving its Nationally Determined Commitments (NDCs) in terms of the United Nations framework convention on climate change, the local cement sector has committed itself to 'Vision: Net Zero Carbon' by 2050".

The industry has been under huge pressure due to a toxic cocktail of factors. In addition to the general economic downturn and decline in investor confidence, the sector was hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. The construction industry is in crisis and is now confronted by the threat of construction mafias that have sprung up across the country which has a direct impact on the cement and concrete sector.

Local cement production capacity is around 20 million tons, but is currently producing just 12 million tons. In excess of one million tons of cement imports – the equivalent of an entire cement plant enters South African market annually.

Source: <https://cconlinenews.com/2022/11/21/sa-cement-and-concrete-industry-facing-myriad-of-challenges/>



CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES FEDERATION OF NAMIBIA'S TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

The Construction Industries Federation of Namibia (CIF) offer various short-courses to its members and non-members in the construction sector.

The training programs provided are as follows:

- Scaffolding erectors
- Scaffolding inspectors
- Safety representative
- Working at heights

All training includes:

- Brötchen & coffee
- Lunch & refreshment
- Training materials
- Attendance certificate

For bookings or if you need any further information, then please contact:

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