



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

**ANSWERS BY HON. TJEKERO TWEYA
MINISTER OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY
ON NOTICE OF QUESTION BY REINHOLD NAUYOMA
02 JULY 2015, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Comrade Speaker, Honorable Members

Let me thank the Hon. Member for the questions and hasten to appreciate that it is not for himself alone, but also for the information to the nation through this august House.

Allow me to put these questions in context by referring to the Supreme Law, the Constitution of the Republic Article 21: Fundamental Freedoms

(1) All persons shall have the right to:

- a) Freedom of speech and expression, which shall include freedom of the press and other media,

And rest of the freedom (b) – (j) in sub-section (2) it says:

- (2) "The fundamentals freedoms referred to in Sub-article (1) hereof shall be exercised subject to the laws of Namibia, in so far as such law imposes reasonable restrictions on the exercise of the rights and freedoms conferred by the said sub-article, which are necessary in a democratic society and are required in the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of Namibia, national security, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence".

But Article 22 gives limitations to such Fundamental Rights and Freedoms and

I quote:

"Whenever or wherever in terms of this constitution the limitation of any fundamental rights of freedoms contemplated by this chapter is authorised, any law providing for such limitation shall:

- a) Be of general application, shall not negate the essential content thereof, and shall not be aimed at a particular individual;
- b) Specify the ascertainable extent of such limitation and identify the article or articles hereof on which authority to enact such limitation is claimed to rest.

It is against these Constitutional provisions that the overwhelming majority of Namibians have since the birth of the Land of the Brave, have in their wisdom proudly invested their trust and elected the,

SWAPO Party to govern them believing it will preserve and nurture our hard won freedoms and democracy. We freed all citizens to enjoy the right to trustful information that as guaranteed under our constitution and the establishment Act of NBC of 1991 as

a public broadcaster. It is the oath we all took in this august Namibian House and an oath I, as the custodian Minister, shall always uphold.

Question 1:

On the Ewilyamanguluka programme in our NBC Oshiwambo Language Radio station, it is true that a moratorium was placed on this programme and on all other radio stations' call-in programmes as well. The nation knows that the reasons for these actions were many and justified. Firstly, abuse of the airwaves to insult our leaders both national and sub-national became a daily nuisance and intolerable. Secondly, promotion of divisive and tribalistic tendencies in our communities didn't bode well for our country's future. We need to build a strong and unified nation that is at peace with herself, neighbour and beyond. To that end, in 2009 Cabinet instructed the national public broadcaster to ensure effective controls were put in place before these programme can return to air.

Comrade Speaker, Honourable Members,

I am happy to report that all Radio stations have since re-introduced call-in programmes over the past 2 years and our Oshiwambo language radio station will be next. In the further consolidation of our democracy and furtherance of freedom of speech, our Oshiwambo language service will re-introduce the programme known as Ewilyamanguluka as of Friday 17 July 2015. It will air on Mondays to Thursdays between the hours 19h15 and 20h00 on a weekly basis. Why only now?

Further to that, and to dispel the myth that NBC tramples on rights of citizens to free speech, I want to also share with this august House a list of the other 8 radio stations and the call-in programmes the air as follows:

| Radio Station | Programme Name | Flight Times | Flight Days | Format |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Afrikaans Language Radio Station | Se Jou Se Language Radio Station | 16:30 - 17:15 | Monday-Thursday | These are call-in and topic specific shows and host guests who often come in to comment or provide feedback on concerns/challenges raised by listeners. |
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|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 2. German Service Language Radio Station | TelefonHörer | 18h00-19h00 | every second Tuesday | Chat show/call-in followed up by feedback shows |
| 3. Damara/Nama Language Radio Station | showKhom #Gaots ra-e khom | 09:20 - 10:00 | weekdays from Monday to Friday | Chat show/Call - in program followed by feedback shows |
| 4. Tirelo Ya Setswana Language Radio Station | Dilo Makwati | 11h05 – 11h30 | Monday - Friday | Chat show/call-in program followed by feedback shows |
| 5. Otjiherero Language Radio Station | Indjo Kepu | 16:05 - 17:00 and 20:00 - 21:00 | Tuesdays and Thursdays | Chat show/Call - in programme followed by feedback shows |
| 6. Rukavango Languages Radio Station | Mudukuli | 19h15 to 20h15 | Week days Mondays Wednesdays and Fridays | Chat show/Call-in followed by feedback shows |
| 7. National Language Radio Station | The People's Parliament | 19:00 and 20:30 | Monday to Friday | Chat show/Call-in followed by feedback shows |
| | The 9 th Hour | 09:00 and 10:00 | Monday-Friday | Topic specific followed by feedback shows |
| 8. Silozi Language Radio Station | Nako ya Maikuto | 20:00 - 20:55 | Tuesdays and Thursdays | Chat show/Call-in followed by feedback shows |
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|-------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 9. Oshiwambo Language Radio Station | Ewilyamanguka | 19:15-20h00 | Monday to Thursday | Chat show/ Call-in followed by feedback shows |
| 10. !Hara Language Radio Station | TBC | | | |
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Question 2:

Since our successful migration from analogue to digital broadcasting on the 17th June 2015 all our language radio services have been decentralised and will be available wherever you are in this land of the brave. They have indeed become national available to respective Language communities. That is development and progress. From my response in question 1, I believe this question is already covered.

Question 3:

Unfortunately the Hon. Member has not been briefed correctly and honestly. There was no threat by the minister for the people to speak freely and voice their questions and views on the programme of Mudukuli. In fact it is to the contrary. The Minister is obliged by the Constitution, I quoted earlier and the Government Policy and by the commitment from HE the President, that no Namibians should feel left out in the Namibian House, and I add that inclusive of our visitors, to be treated with dignity and respect as their fundamental human rights.

I said; "The program was created for the purpose of promoting democracy, public debate, etc. but should it be abused through insulting, instigating hatred, humiliating or using derogatory language towards other citizens or promoting racism, etc, such language will not be tolerated or allowed and the programme will be removed from air, as it happened in other language services." This is what a responsible SWAPO Party Government as fully mandate by the 80% National Assembly Voters and 87% Presidential election voters will do in furtherance of the expressed wishes of the Namibian People.

I am pleased to inform the Honourable Member and the public at large that the residents in the 2 Kavango Regions understood me correctly and the programme is serving its purpose.

In conclusion,

Hon. Speaker and Honourable Members, with all these open line programmes in all languages, including national radio, should the caller fail to adhere to this good conduct

to express his/her views on air, we have a delaying device and the presenter will use this device And not allow deplorable express to go on air.

It's our responsibility to maintain the peace, stability and build a united Namibian Nation with respect and pride.

Finally, this august House and the Namibian House all over the republic wherein our gallant citizens find themselves, should rest assured that our government will guard their aspirations jealously and provide them quality and timely information. There shall be no thirst for information in this country. Namibians, we shall not fail you in this regard and we shall honour the trust bestowed on us and His Excellency, the President against exclusion as clearly expressed in the 80% and 87% SWAPO Party and President Geingob's landslide victories respectively.

I Thank You