



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, IMMIGRATION, SAFETY AND SECURITY

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MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

**RESPONSE TO THE ISSUE PUBLICATION OF 10 FEBRUARY 2026 ENTITLED
“INDIAN DEVELOPER CONTROLS NAMIBIA’S ONLINE VISA SYSTEM”**

The Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security (MHAISS) rejects and wishes to correct the wrong information contained in the above-mentioned publication regarding the Ministry’s online visa application portal and the allegations made against Commissioner Ankur Kathuria. The Ministry kept contact with and notified the journalist concerned that the Ministry was in the process of submitting its responses to the questions sent. It is regrettable that the journalist proceeded to publish his story without getting the Ministry’s side.

In keeping with our motto of “serving with excellence” which places greater emphasis on efficient and impactful service delivery to the public, the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security developed an electronic services (E-Services) platform, which serves as a gateway to all its online services. The online visa-on-arrival portal, the subject matter referred to in The Issue publication, is a component of the above-mentioned e-Services platform. This portal is specifically designed to enhance seamless applications for visas by tourists and investors who wish to visit and invest in our country.

Ownership and Governance of the Online Visa application and payment portal

The portal was developed and is administered by an in-house team of the Ministry of which Commissioner Ankur Kathuria is a member. For the record, the Namibian Correctional Service (NCS) is a Department of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security, and as such, Commissioner Kathuria is a staff member of the Ministry and his involvement in the development and administration of the portal is in line with his assigned duties and his expertise

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in Information and Communication Technology (ICT). As such, the system is a property of the Government under the administration of MHAISS and is not a privately run and operated system as it is alleged or insinuated by *The Issue publication*.

The inhouse development of the system saved the Ministry huge costs that are usually associated with the development of systems of such magnitude using private service providers. This innovative approach also resulted in capacity building within the Ministry's team that was directly involved in the development and is responsible for the ongoing maintenance and administration of the system.

There is or was any no additional remuneration to Commissioner Kathuria and the entire team for their involvement or role in the development and administration of the system beyond their basic remuneration as public servants/employees of the Ministry.

In light of the above, the allegations that "*the online visa portal is being run and operated by a single individual Ankur Kathuria*" is devoid of any truth and is somewhat malicious. In the same way, we are also dismissing in the strongest terms the allegations or insinuation of any payment to Commissioner Kathuria in respect of the online visa application system.

“Alleged sole discretionary powers to manage the said system and allegedly also refuses to grant the ministry’s IT department access to also be able to operate it”

As we have pointed out herein above, the Ministry's online visa system is operated by a team of staff members with expertise in ICT. Each one of the team members is responsible for and assigned a role based on his/her level of expertise.

In light of the above, the alleged sole discretionary powers and refusal to grant access to other IT team members is devoid of any truth.

Alleged “discretionary powers to overrule the ministry’s decisions to decline visas, by issuing rejected individuals with visas despite ministerial refusal”

The allegation that Commissioner Kathuria possesses discretionary powers to overrule ministerial decisions or to issue visas contrary to official determinations is false and without factual basis.

Applications for visas are considered and decided on by a committee duly appointed in terms of the relevant provisions of the Immigration Control Act of 1993. Commissioner Kathuria is not a member and therefore has or plays no role in the work of this committee and is thus not involved in the visa application decision-making process. As such, the purported overruling or discretionary powers by Commissioner Kathuria is baseless.

“Funds paid for visa application on the said online system are first paid into Asian Pacific’s Kenyan based, before such funds are brought to Namibia.”

The Ministry has no knowledge of or a relationship with a party by the name Asian Pacific.

The Ministry, however, confirms that it has contracted the services of a Namibia-registered and domiciled payment gateway provider for the collection of fees generated through online visa applications. The said service provider is a licensed Third-Party Payment Service Provider and Payment Facilitator Service Provider in terms of the relevant law administered by the Bank of Namibia. The visa fees are directly paid into a Namibian bank account.

In light of the above, the allegations contained in the publication are refuted.

“Indian Developer Controls Namibia’s Online Visa System”

The Ministry condemns the racial profiling tone of the publication. For the record, Commissioner Kathuria has a legal domicile status in the country which was officially granted to him in terms of the Immigration Control Act of 1993. As we have also already pointed out, Commissioner Kathuria has been employed in line with the relevant governing laws and procedures.

The publication gives the impression that, if it was true that the developer is “Indian”, it is wrong for Namibia to procure requisite services from outside its borders or from experts or nationals of other countries. This misinformed view is far from the prevailing reality that globally ICT infrastructures and solutions are generally a mixture of homegrown and international technologies and standards.

We trust that the information cleared the wrong impression created by The Issue publication.

ISSUED BY:


NGHIDINUA DANIEL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

