

# Unam finance official suspended over N\$9m fraud

● **By Marianne Nghidengwa**

**T**HE University of Namibia last week suspended one of its employees after he allegedly tried to defraud the institution of N\$9 million through a fictitious purchase order for a Chinese-owned company.

The person in question – whose identity is known to *Confidante* – is employed in the university's finance department. It is alleged that after creating a fictitious purchase order, the Unam employee also demanded a N\$500,000 kickback from the owner of the Chinese company to facilitate the payment.

The matter came to light when the Chinese service provider went to the university to offer his services and a search in the system showed that the institution had not procured any such services. *Confidante* is also reliably informed that another employee of the institution, said to be an assistant dean, is also under investigation over the matter although he has not been suspended.

It was not immediately clear whether this was the first instance of such fraudulent conduct in which they implicated employee had been involved, or

whether other such transactions had gone unnoticed.

Unam spokesperson Johannes Haufiku this week confirmed the suspension of the implicated employee, but refused to provide more details of the case. "He is currently on suspension.

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The circumstances of his suspension are still the subject of an ongoing investigation, thus we cannot comment any further," he said.

The latest disciplinary action against one of Unam's employees comes after Vice-Chancellor Professor Kenneth Matengu during the opening of the 2019 academic year last week announced the dismissal of eight Unam employees since last year due to instances of theft under false pretenses, fraud, corruption, maladministration, absen-

teeism, misrepresentation, and/or breach of trust.

Matengu said from last year to date, twelve disciplinary hearings were conducted that led to the dismissal of the eight employees mentioned above. It is not clear whether criminal

charges were subsequently laid against the employees implicated in fraud and corruption. He added though that 37 warnings were issued, with 31 of them being recent.

"In the spirit of transparency, you must know today that my leadership will exercise zero tolerance for theft, fraud, corruption and maladministration," Matengu said. He added that more than 80 cases related to misconduct were currently under investigation across the university's 12 campuses.