N$3.9m profit for Swapo, N$777 000 loss for IPC P.3

The NaCC speaks on Amutse's decisions on Nasan Energies-Vitol and Ohorongo Cement P.4

China urges Namibia to cash in zero tariff deal to boost exports P.6

NAMIBIA BUSINESS REVIEW

Where Business meets ideas

EDITION 41 | VOLUME 41 | 13 - 20 JULY 2026

Has Namibia's Competition Commission lost its teeth?

Handpicked to replace fired Natangue Ithete in December, Amutse has already overturned two NaCC rulings worth N$2.3 billion in just seven months.

Dina //Gowases

• TIRI MASAWI

THE Namibia Competition Commission (NaCC) has rejected claims that it has become a powerless regulator after minister of industries, mines and energy Modestus Amutse overturned two of its major decisions involving deals worth more than N$2.3 billion.

The reversals came just seven months after Amutse was handpicked to replace fired Natangwe Ithete.

Amutse's decisions on the Nasan Energies-Vitol fuel supply agreement and the Ohorongo Cement-Cheetah Cement merger have created debate over whether the commission still has the power to enforce competition rules or whether ministerial intervention is weakening its role.

The two transactions include Whale Rock Cement's acquisition of Schwenk Namibia, the parent company of Ohorongo Cement, in a deal estimated at N$1.5 billion, and Nasan Energies' acquisition of 52 fuel service stations divested by Vivo Energy, valued at about N$817 million.

Critics argue that repeated ministerial reversals could make the commission appear ineffective, while NaCC insists that the minister is acting within powers provided by the law.

CONTINUE ON PAGE 2

> Minister of industries, mines and energy Modestus Amutse

Namibia wants N$16 billion for green energy plans

• TIRI MASAWI

NAMIBIA is positioning itself to access nearly N$16 billion (US$1 billion) in international financing to advance its clean energy ambitions, as the country moves to strengthen its green hydrogen sector.

Acting head of the Namibia Green Hydrogen Programme Josef Mukendwa said Namibia will next year lobby international finance partners in the United States of America for support to fund its decarbonisation plans.

"When you look at the fund revealed today it might seem modest in nature but it is the beginning of a journey that we have been working on as a country.

Next year, we will get a chance to go and motivate our need for financing in the United States of America and we stand a chance of accessing close to US$1billion (about N$16 billion)," Mukendwa said

He was speaking at the launch of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO)Namibia Child project on Friday.

The launch saw Namibia receiving N$8.7 million in its green hydrogen ambitions through a five-year support project driven by the Global Environment Facility, and the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation have injected.

CONTINUE ON PAGE 2

HAS NaCC LOST ITS TEETH: FROM PAGE 1

NaCC spokesperson Dina //Gowases rejected suggestions that the commission has lost its authority.

"The commission is not a toothless institution. It is still carrying out its mandate within the parameters of the Competition Act, and therefore it will continue to do its work," she told Namibia Business Review last week. She said the commission's role remains ensuring fair competition and protecting consumer choice.

"We are mandated with the business of looking at the conduct of how businesses operate within the sector to ensure that there are no barriers to entry, that everyone is competing fairly, and that no one is being hindered from growing in whichever sector they choose to do so," she said.

The debate now facing Namibia is whether the current competition system strikes the right balance between allowing the government to consider wider economic interests and ensuring that an independent regulator can protect competition. //Gowases said the commission does not believe the minister is abusing his powers.

"We are not going to say that the minister has too much power. It is within his mandate to do so," she said.

She added that the commission's ultimate goal is to ensure consumers have choices.

"Ultimately, the mandate of the commission trickles down to the fact that we would want consumers, as users of any services, goods, or products, to have that choice to go to any business entity where we see it fit, where we can afford it, or where we like the quality and so forth," //Gowases said.

//Gowases said the commission is not being undermined because the Competition Act allows the minister to review and change its decisions.

"With regard to the minister overturning the decisions or determinations that we are making, it is actually within his power as mandated by the Competition Act."

THE FINAL SAY

//Gowases said Section 49 of the Competition Act No. 2 of 2003 gives the minister powers to confirm, reject, overturn or amend decisions made by the commission.

"He has the right and is empowered, and those are vested powers within him by the Competition Act, whereby he can either overturn our determination, reject it, confirm our determination, or make additional conditions to the determination," she said.

She said the commission understands that the minister looks at issues beyond competition when reviewing major transactions.

"What the minister does is that he looks at the holistic picture," //Gowases said.

She explained that the minister considers how decisions could affect economic growth, the market, small and medium enterprises, historically disadvantaged groups and youth participation.

"Whatever determination the Minister makes, it is within those parameters of economic growth that the Minister makes those determinations," she said.

OHORONGO-CHEETAH MERGER: JOBS AT THE CENTRE

In overturning NaCC's decision on the Ohorongo Cement and Cheetah Cement merger, Amutse said he was guided by the law and the need to protect Namibian jobs.

In a Government Gazette notice, the minister stated that he had overturned the commission's decision in terms of the Competition Act.

"I have made a determination to overturn the decision of the commission. The reasons for the determination are set out in the schedule," Amutse said.

The minister approved the merger but attached conditions.

These include that the transaction should not result in job losses and that NaCC must monitor whether the merger creates a monopoly or gives the merged company a dominant position in the cement market.

Amutse also ordered that the Cheetah Cement plant should not be destroyed because of the merger.

Instead, he said options must be explored to ensure the plant remains operational and is transformed into a productive facility capable of employing Namibians.

Whale Rock Cement welcomed the decision, saying the merger would protect jobs and improve the viability of the cement industry.

Company spokesperson Tabby Moyo said both cement plants have struggled because Namibia's market is too small to allow them to operate at full capacity.

"We are delighted by the Minister's decision as it will safeguard jobs in the cement industry. As we said in our submission to NaCC, the merger would not result in any Namibian losing their jobs. In fact, more jobs could result from this merger," Moyo said.

However, the Construction Industries Federation of Namibia (CIF) has warned that the merger could reduce competition and negatively affect local contractors.

MONOPOLY FEARS

Seven days ago, Amutse also overturned NaCC's decision involving Nasan Energies' acquisition of 52 fuel stations from Vivo Energy.

The transaction has an enterprise value of US$50 million (approximately N$817 million). The Namibia Competition Commission initially approved Nasan Energies' acquisition of 52 Shell and Engen service stations from Vivo Energy. However, the initial approval included a five-year ban preventing Nasan from sourcing fuel from Vitol (Vivo's parent company) to protect market competition.

This appeared to be the commission's attempt at preventing a monopoly in Namibia's petroleum market. This restriction was successfully overturned by Amutse this month.

The minister said his decision was influenced by economic pressures caused by global energy instability linked to the war in Iran.

He said the conflict had created a financial burden on Namibia's fuel-importing system.

'THE MINISTER COULD WEAKEN INSTITUTIONS'

Public policy analyst Ndumba Kamwanyah warned that the decisions could create risks for competition and open key sectors to monopoly control.

Kamwanyah said the minister needs to clearly explain the reasons behind his decisions.

"It is important for the minister to deeply share with the public what is influencing his decision at such a vital time.

He might risk both an overreach as well as creating monopoly in these key sectors," Kamwanyah said.

He warned that repeated reversals could damage confidence in institutions created to regulate important sectors.

"In future we risk a situation where these institutions might be seen as useless and unable to execute their work," he said.

"There are reasons why certain laws are there and there are also reasons why certain institutions are there.

The minister needs to support them." ***NBR***

NAM WANTS N$16B FOR GREEN ENERGY PLANS: FROM PAGE 1

The project, which will run for 60 months, is aimed at strengthening policies, institutions and technical capacity to support the sector.

David Nghimwenavali, Project Steering Committee Chairperson and National Project Coordinator, said the project marks a move from planning to implementation.

"Today marks an important transition: from preparation to implementation, from project design to delivery, and from ambition to coordinated national action," Nghimwenavali said.

He said the funding may appear small compared to larger financing programmes, but its impact could be significant.

"This GEF grant is different. It is catalytic grant financing, designed to strengthen the foundations that make larger investments possible," he said.

Nghimwenavali compared the project to a mustard seed, saying its value should not be judged by its size.

"In scripture, the mustard seed is described as one of the smallest seeds, yet it grows into something far greater than its size suggests.

In the same spirit, this project may be modest in financial size, but its anticipated impact is significant," he said.

He said the project would focus on strengthening policy, building institutions, improving technical readiness and supporting pilot development.

"It will help Namibia row in one direction," Nghimwenavali said. The launch comes as Namibia continues efforts to position itself as a destination for green hydrogen investment. Nghimwenavali said recent developments, including Namibia's exit from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list, showed progress in strengthening governance and investor confidence.

"These developments reinforce a message that is important for green hydrogen: Namibia is strengthening its institutions, improving governance, and positioning itself as a serious destination for responsible investment," he said.

He said his vision was for the project to unite different sectors behind a common goal.

"My best-case scenario—indeed, my dream—is that this project helps us bring policy, legislation, regulation, institutions, investors, communities, and ordinary Namibians into one rhythm," he said.

The project will be guided by a 15-member Project Steering Committee made up of representatives from government institutions, development organisations, research bodies and private sector stakeholders.

The committee includes representatives from the Namibia Green Hydrogen Programme, Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia (EIF), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Ministry of Industries, Mines and Energy, National Planning Commission, Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board, Women in Green Hydrogen, Youth for Green Hydrogen, Namibia Standards Institute, Development Bank of Namibia, Namibia Green Hydrogen Research Institute and the Institute for Public Policy Research.

Nghimwenavali said gender inclusion was built into the project structure.

"Of the 15 nominated PSC members, seven are women, representing 47 percent of membership, and the nominated Vice-Chairperson is a woman," he said.

The project is expected to directly involve at least 832 participants.

It has set a target of 50% female participation and 20% youth inclusion.

"These are not just statistics.

These are a commitment to governance that is balanced, practical, and inclusive," Nghimwenavali said.

He added that the success of the project would not only be measured by reports produced, but by its ability to help Namibia develop the skills, systems and partnerships needed for long-term green hydrogen development.

Meanwhile, the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia (EIF) will serve as the national executing agency and implementing partner for the project.

EIF chief executive officer Benedict Libanda said the organisation would support the project's implementation at national level. "The role of the EIF is to support the effective execution of the project at national level," Libanda said.

He said the fund would host and support the Project Coordination Unit, assist with planning and budgeting, manage administrative and financial processes, support procurement and contracting, and ensure reporting and monitoring requirements are met.

"As Namibia advances its green hydrogen ambitions, strong execution will be essential," Libanda said.

He said the EIF would ensure that project resources are handled responsibly and that activities are implemented transparently.

"The EIF will therefore work to ensure that project resources are managed responsibly, activities are implemented transparently, and results contribute to national priorities on climate action, green industrialisation, institutional capacity, stakeholder engagement, and sustainable development," he said.

Libanda said the success of the project would depend on cooperation among all stakeholders.

"We also recognise that this project will succeed only through partnership," he said. He thanked UNIDO, the GEF, the Government of Namibia, the Namibia Green Hydrogen Programme and Project Steering Committee members for their support.

"The EIF remains committed to providing the institutional support required to move this project from launch to practical implementation," Libanda said. ***NBR***

NAMIBIA BUSINESS REVIEW
CONTRIBUTORS
Editor: Tiri Masawi
JOURNALIST
Fredrick Buchane
Veripuami Kangumine
LAYOUT & DESIGN
Monica Smith
Product of: ODULA MEDIA ©
+264 813 369 483 Email: editor@namibiabusinessreview.com | www.namibiabusinessreview.com

N$3.9m profit for Swapo, N$777 000 loss for IPC

• STAFF WRITER

SWAPO ended the 2025/26 financial year with a N$3.9 million profit, a major turnaround from the N$10.5 million loss it recorded the previous year.

In contrast, the Independent Patriots for Change (IPC) reported a N$777 217 loss for the year ended December 2025 after spending more money than it earned.

A snippet of the ruling party's latest financial report, published last week, shows that Swapo received N$107.7 million in political funding and earned an additional N$706,892 in finance income. After spending N$104.5 million, Swapo was left with a N$3.9 million profit.

The result shows an improvement from the previous year, when the party ended the year N$10.5 million in the red.

Swapo's accumulated profit increased from N$3.1 million to N$7 million, while its cash reserves grew to N$7 million by the end of March 2026.

Swapo secretary general Sophia Shaningwa said "the version of the accounts was done in terms of the requirements of the Electoral Act of Namibia. The abridged version of accounts represents a summarised annual financial statements of Swapo party political funding account for the year end 31 March 2026 that were lodged at the Electoral Commission of Namibia."

> Sophia Shaningwa

IPC SPENDS MORE THAN IT EARNS

The official opposition party, IPC, spent more money than it brought in during 2025.

The party earned N$30.8 million in income and N$22 774 in other income. However, its operating expenses reached N$31.6 million, resulting in a N$777 217 loss.

The loss pushed IPC's accumulated losses from N$696,856 in 2024 to N$1.47 million by the end of 2025.

IPC's cash reserves also declined, falling from N$948,314 at the end of 2024 to just N$22,034 a year later.

The party's total assets stood at N$390,061, while its liabilities amounted to N$1.86 million. ***NBR***

Namibian grapes set to enter Chinese market after new export deal

• STAFF WRITER

LOCAL table grape producers are set to gain access to the Asian market after Namibia and China signed a protocol establishing requirements for the export of fresh grapes.

The agreement was signed on 10 July 2026 between the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform and the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China.

The ministry spokesperson Romeo Muyunda announced the development on Monday, saying the protocol marks an important step in strengthening agricultural trade between the two countries.

The agreement allows Namibian grape producers to export fresh table grapes to China, provided they meet strict health, safety and phytosanitary requirements set by Chinese authorities.

Under the protocol, exported grapes must be free from quarantine pests of concern to China and must not contain soil contamination.

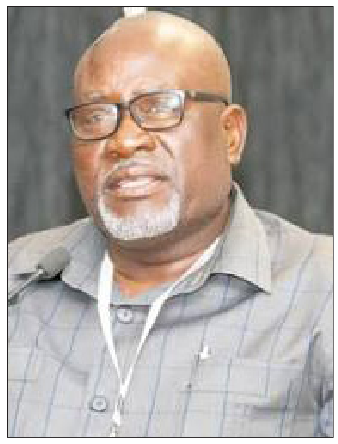
The agreement requires Namibian producers and exporters to comply with several measures, including orchard management, registration of orchards, packing houses and cold-treatment facilities. Producers will also be required to implement integrated pest management systems, proper packaging, traceability measures, as well as pre-export inspections. The Ministry of Agriculture will oversee the registration of facilities and quality management processes, while Chinese customs authorities will conduct compliance checks when the grapes arrive in China. The protocol further requires the approval and registration of all facilities involved in the export process, along with pest monitoring, compliance with international standards and proper labelling of export consignments. "This Protocol marks a significant milestone in bilateral trade relations," the ministry said, adding that it would enable Namibian grape producers to access the Chinese market while ensuring compliance with Chinese laws and safety standards.

> Inge Zaamwani minister of agriculture, fisheries, water and land reform, and minister Sun Meijun.

The agreement will come into effect immediately after signature and will remain valid for three years.

It includes provisions for automatic renewal and amendments through mutual agreement between the two countries.

Namibia and China have committed to continued cooperation to ensure compliance and promote growth in agricultural trade. ***NBR***



The Namibia Competition Commission speaks on Amutse's decisions on Nasan Energies–Vitol and Ohorongo Cement

IN just six months in office, Minister of industries, mines and energy Modestus Amutse has overturned two major decisions by the Namibia Competition Commission (NaCC), raising questions about regulatory independence and the future of competition oversight. *Namibia Business Review (NBR)* sat down with NaCC spokesperson *Dina //Gowases* to unpack the commission's position on the Nassan Energies–Vitol fuel supply agreement, the Ohorongo Cement sale to Whale Rock Cement, and other key issues.

NBR: Since being appointed Minister of Industries, Mines and Energy in December 2025, Minister Modestus Amutse has already overturned decisions relating to the Nasan Energies–Vitol fuel supply agreement and the Ohorongo Cement–Cheetah Cement merger. What is the commission's reaction to these interventions?

//Gowases: Thanks for the questions. Let me just briefly touch on the areas that you have indicated. With regard to the Minister overturning the decisions or determinations that we are making, it is actually within his power as mandated by the Competition Act number 2 of 2003 to do that.

He does an assessment in terms of Section 49 of the Act. He has the right and is empowered, and those are vested powers within him by the Competition Act, whereby he can either overturn our determination, reject it, confirm our determination, or make additional conditions to the determination or conditions that we set in that determination. That is within Section 49 of the Competition Act, which gives the Minister those powers. The manner in which we operate is that we operate within the mandate of the Competition Act.

We are mandated with the business of looking at the conduct of how businesses operate within the sector to ensure that there are no barriers to entry, that everyone is competing fairly, and that no one is being hindered from growing in whichever sector they choose to do so.

What the Minister does is that he looks at the holistic picture as the government entity tasked with a high-profile and major ministry, which is the Ministry of Industries, Mines and Energy. When the Minister does his assessments with regard to the major determinations that we undertake or the investigations that we undertake regarding any anti-competitive behaviour, he takes into account how the determinations we make are going to impact the economy, how they are going to impact the market structure, how they will impact small and medium enterprises, the historically disadvantaged people, and youth participation.

NBR: Critics argue that when ministerial decisions repeatedly override the Namibia Competition Commission's rulings, it risks making the commission appear toothless and unable to enforce its own decisions. How does the commission respond to this criticism that it's toothless?

//Gowases: These are things that are part of the Competition Act, which the Minister also considers.

So whatever determination the Minister makes, it is within those parameters of economic growth that the Minister makes those determinations. We are not going to say that the Minister has too much power. It is within his mandate to do so, and I can rest assured that whatever decision he makes is within the interest, the national interest, of the country.

So, in short, we do not have that much of an issue with what the Minister is doing because he is mandated to do so. We have the government that has appointed him to the position that he holds now. What critics are saying is that the Minister is overturning decisions and therefore we might become powerless, and that is not the true stance of us.

What the Minister is doing is taking into account all of those factors, which form part of what the Competition Commission itself looks at, and looking at them holistically to see what type of impact a certain determination, measure, or conduct that businesses are engaging in would have on the national economy and on the economic growth of the country, as well as the choices that we, as consumers, will have at the end of the day.

Ultimately, the mandate of the commission trickles down to the fact that we would want consumers, as users of any services, goods, or products, to have that choice to go to any business entity where we see it fit, where we can afford it, or where we like the quality and so forth.

NBR: Does the commission believe the current Competition Act provides ministers with too much discretion to overturn decisions made by an independent competition regulator? If not, why not?

//Gowases: The Minister is not overreaching his mandate. He is within his powers that he is operating, but I would like to stress that the Minister's office will be best placed to explore more on the determinations that they make with regard to our outcomes and our resolutions that the Board of Commissioners take with regard to the determinations that are brought to our table.

I would really like to also advise that you go on the government website, which is the Ministry of Justice, to see what cases, investigations, or determinations we have made that came out with a different determination by the Minister after the review process and assessment that he did.

It will give you a thorough analysis of how the Minister came to the decisions that he came to and what he wants to ultimately achieve through those determinations.

NBR: How many decisions made by the Namibia Competition Commission have been overturned by ministers since 21 March 2025? Please provide details of each matter, including the decision involved and the outcome after ministerial intervention.

//Gowases: Please visit the Justice Ministry website. All our notices are gazetted there, and you will have a full picture of what it is that we put as conditions and how the Minister came to the conclusions that he did because his determinations are also gazetted as such.

The Commission is not a toothless institution. It is still carrying out its mandate within the parameters of the Competition Act, and therefore it will continue to do its work. It will continue to function as it is required until such time that amendments are done and approved by our government in certain areas of the Act.

We are going to continue to carry out our operations, and we would also like to call on our stakeholders not to engage in this issue whereby people are now feeling that we have become an entity because the Minister overturns our decisions.

As I have noted, in terms of Section 49, parties to any merger or investigation, after we have given them and also gazetted a certain determination, within 30 days they are allowed and mandated, as stipulated in Section 49, to lodge an appeal against the determination that we have made for the Minister to review.

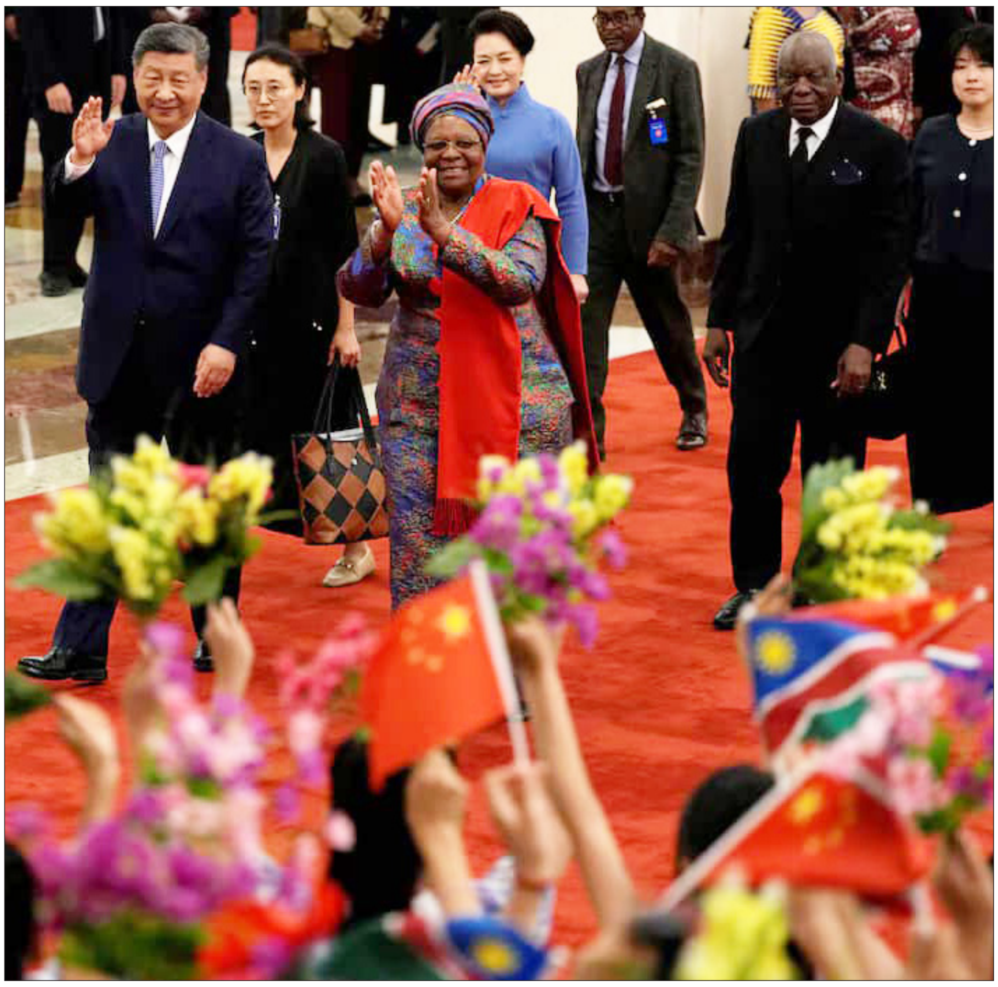
The Minister then has four months within which he should assess that review application and make his determination, and also make that determination through a government gazetted notice.

If it takes a bit longer for the Minister to make that determination, it means that he is taking into account all the factors that surround that type of decision before he can make a final determination.

It requires consultations, it requires investigations of their own, and therefore it might take a bit longer. He is within his mandate, should it even go beyond the four months that are given, to ensure that the decision that he takes is going to be in the national interest of the country.

So, I would just like to call on our stakeholders that the Commission continues with its mandate to carry out its mandate. We do things procedurally and as per the guidelines stipulated within the Competition Act, and therefore we are going to continue to utilise those processes, such as stakeholder conferences and also representations and verbal, oral, or written submissions from any interested party. ***NBR***

Namibia secures China deals on infrastructure, mining and energy with state visit



• MEI MEI CHU

CHINA on Friday said it would step up cooperation with Namibia in the Southern African state's energy, farming, infrastructure, and minerals sectors during talks in Beijing between Chinese leader Xi Jinping and Namibian President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah.

Nandi-Ndaitwah has been on a seven-day visit to China since Sunday, seeking investment from the world's top lender and second-largest economy to help implement election pledges to create jobs and diversify the Namibian economy.

"In Namibia, we affirm (an) unwavering commitment to this longstanding friendship between Namibia and China," said Nandi-Ndaitwah, noting that her entourage included dozens of business people.

"Your decision to make China your first state visit outside of Africa after assuming the presidency demonstrates the importance you attach to this significant relationship, for which I express my appreciation," Xi said.

Nandi-Ndaitwah took office in 2025, extending the 34-year rule of the South West Africa People's Organisation that led the country to independence from apartheid South Africa in 1990, despite analysts' doubts over its electoral prospects amid growing frustration over high unemployment and inequality.

COOPERATION IN MINERALS, ENERGY

China and Namibia signed eight documents, including agreements on cooperation in green minerals and a framework agreement on economic partnership.

"China is willing to deepen cooperation with Namibia in infrastructure construction, energy, minerals, agriculture, education, youth, and science and technology," read a readout of the meeting published by Chinese state agency Xinhua.

"Both sides recognise the strategic value of critical minerals... and agreed to strengthen cooperation in the development of key minerals such as uranium, lithium and rare earths," Xinhua reported citing a China-Namibia joint statement.

The statement emphasised the role of promoting local processing — a theme raised recently by a number of African commodity producers — technological transfer and local skills development.

Resource-rich Namibia could become the continent's fourth-largest oil producer by 2030, after Shell (SHEL.L), opens new tab and TotalEnergies (TTEF.PA), opens new tab discovered an estimated 2.6 billion barrels of crude and announced plans to start producing.

Neighbouring Angola produces about 1.1 million barrels per day, and is using that oil wealth to help finance a China-backed overhaul of its economy and shift away from fossil fuels.

CHINESE FIRMS HEAVILY INVESTED IN NAMIBIAN METALS SECTOR

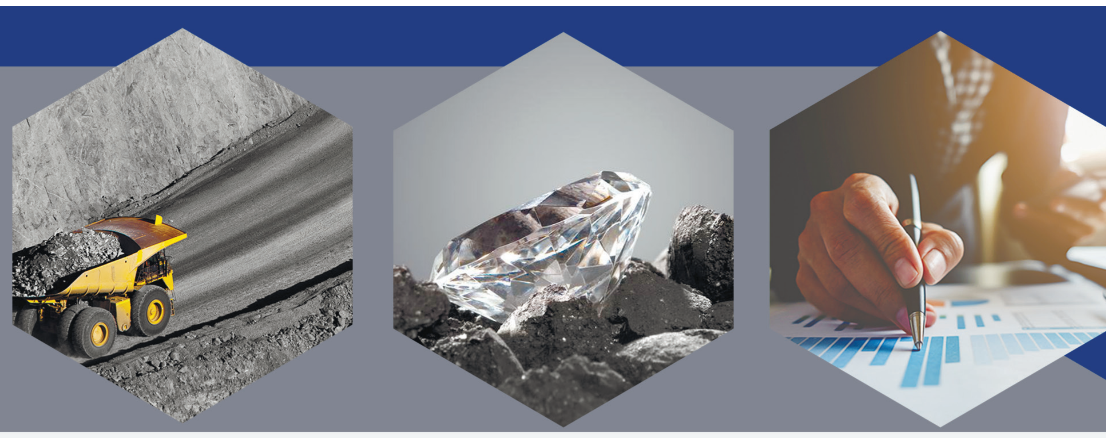
China is a key export market for Namibia, taking around a quarter of the country's total shipments, according to a recent International Monetary Fund report. Of the $1.3 billion worth of Namibian goods China bought last year, uranium accounted for 85%.

Chinese firms have invested $4.2 billion in Namibia, data from the American Enterprise Institute think tank shows, all but $100 million of which was in the country's metals sector.

In her inauguration speech, Nandi-Ndaitwah called for a "green revolution", built on monetising the country's agricultural sector and water resources.

The IMF, meanwhile, said structural reforms would help create more jobs, highlighting agriculture and fisheries alongside the emerging oil and gas and green hydrogen sectors.

**** Reporting by Mei Mei Chu and Shi Bu; Writing by Joe Cash; Editing by Jan Harvey - Reuters***



China urges Namibia to cash in on zero tariff deal to boost exports

• STAFF WRITER

CHINA has called on Namibia to take full advantage of its zero tariff policy for African countries by increasing exports to the Chinese market and reducing the cost of doing business.

The call comes after a week-long working visit to China by President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, where Namibia and China committed to strengthening economic cooperation, expanding trade and attracting investment.

President Nandi-Ndaitwah and Chinese President Xi Jinping issued a joint communique following their engagements, committing to align China's zero tariff policy with Namibia's efforts to expand exports, attract investment and create jobs.

Nandi-Ndaitwah concluded her working visit to China on Saturday.

China introduced its zero tariff policy late last year to provide African countries with easier access for their goods into the Chinese market.

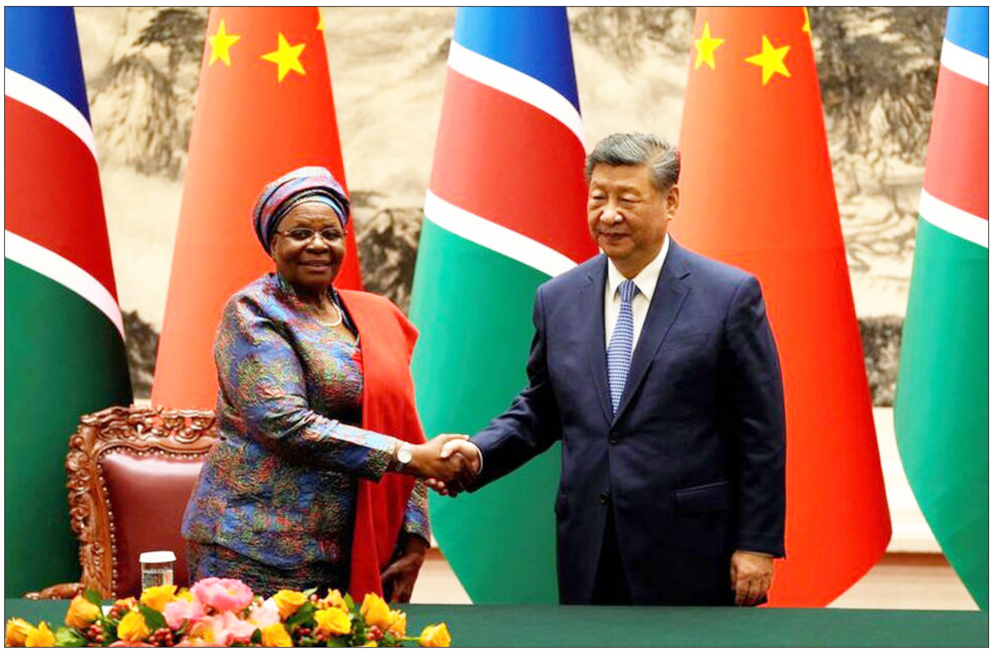
The policy applies to the majority of African countries and is aimed at improving trade relations between China and Africa.

According to the joint communique, China welcomed Namibia's efforts to make use of the zero tariff policy and "green lanes" created for African agricultural products to increase the variety and volume of exports to China.

"The two sides expressed their readiness to build smart customs cooperation partnership and strengthen cooperation on animal and plant diseases prevention and control, food safety regulation, inspection and quarantine under the framework of import and export food safety cooperation mechanism for the countries of the Belt and Road Initiative," the communique stated.

The two countries also agreed to align their economic and trade needs by entering into a framework agreement on economic partnership for shared development.

The agreement is expected to support progress in negotiations and provide a long-term and predictable framework for trade and investment cooperation between Namibia and China.



MINERALS, LOGISTICS AND VALUE ADDITION

Namibia and China recognised the strategic importance of critical minerals in driving global economic transformation.

The two countries agreed to strengthen cooperation in sustainable development, local processing, beneficiation and value addition of Namibia's mineral resources, including uranium, lithium, rare earth elements and other strategic minerals.

Both sides committed to promoting partnerships that encourage technology transfer, local skills development and industrial capacity building.

The countries also identified logistics, maritime transport and trade facilitation as important areas for cooperation.

"The two sides will explore opportunities to strengthen cooperation in logistics, maritime transport and trade facilitation, including through the development of the Port of Walvis Bay as an important gateway connecting Southern Africa to regional and global markets," the communique said.

Namibia and China also expressed appreciation for the role played by the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in supporting Namibia's development cooperation.

The BRI is China's state-backed global infrastructure and economic development strategy launched by President Xi Jinping in 2013.

It focuses on expanding infrastructure and economic links across Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America through investments in areas such as transport, energy and digital development.

The two countries committed to using their respective strengths to expand cooperation in several sectors, including oil and gas, energy, green energy, renewable energy technologies, battery value chains, energy storage systems, mining, raw material beneficiation, agriculture, science and technology, education, tourism, infrastructure and human resources.

"China welcomes Namibia's participation in the International Economic and Trade Cooperation Initiative on Green Mining and Minerals, and the Initiative on International Trade and Economic Cooperation Framework for Digital Economy and Green Development," the communique stated.

MORE CHINESE INVESTMENT EXPECTED

China has also encouraged more capable Chinese companies to invest and operate in Namibia while supporting the country's industrialisation efforts.

The two countries agreed that companies operating in Namibia should increase local procurement, create more employment opportunities for Namibian citizens and contribute to skills transfer and human resource development.

Both sides committed to creating a stable, fair and secure business environment for businesses from both countries.

The communique further highlighted future cooperation in digital transformation, artificial intelligence, e-commerce, smart infrastructure, telecommunications and innovation ecosystems.

The countries said these areas would support Namibia's transition towards a knowledge-based economy.

The visit comes as Namibia seeks to expand its export markets and attract more investment to support economic growth.

Through the strengthened partnership, China and Namibia said they intend to deepen cooperation under the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), which they described as playing a guiding role in advancing cooperation between China and Africa.

The two countries said they remain committed to building stronger economic ties that create opportunities for trade, investment and development. ***NBR***

"President Nandi-Ndaitwah and Chinese President Xi Jinping issued a joint communique following their engagements, committing to align China's zero tariff policy with Namibia's efforts to expand exports, attract investment and create jobs"

EDITORIAL

Lets not compromise competition safeguards

THE recent decisions by the minister of industries, mines and energy, Modestus Amutse, represent a severe blow to the core foundational principles of Namibia's free-market economy.

By unilaterally overturning two thoroughly researched verdicts issued by the Namibia Competition Commission (NaCC), Amutse has dismantled essential anti-monopoly safeguards. In a matter of days, political interventions have cleared the way for a single corporate alliance to monopolise the country's entire domestic cement manufacturing industry .

Simultaneously, they have permitted a dominant global energy trading giant to tighten its grip on the local retail fuel sector.

These short-sighted choices weaken regulatory authority, jeopardise fair consumer pricing, and threaten to stifle competition across multiple vital sectors of the Namibian economy.

By reversing the NaCC's decision against Whale Rock (owners of Cheetah Cement) acquiring Schwenk Namibia (the majority shareholder of Ohorongo Cement), Amutse has effectively engineered a devastating absolute domestic monopoly.

Uniting Namibia's only two integrated cement production facilities under a single corporate banner eliminates all internal rivalry.

The broader construction industry relies entirely on stable, affordable inputs to survive. As previously cautioned by the Construction Industries Federation of Namibia , this extreme concentration of corporate power poses an immediate threat to the wider built environment.

Without localized market competition, the newly formed monopoly possesses unbridled latitude to adjust cement pricing at will, artificially squeezing builders and contractors. Higher cement prices will inevitably drive up the development costs of public infrastructure, commercial properties, and affordable housing initiatives, shifting the financial burden onto taxpayers and everyday citizens.

The minister's behavioral conditions—such as a future local ownership target—fail to address these structural risks . A regulated monopoly remains an extractive monopoly .

Amutse's regulatory rollbacks extend dangerously into the downstream petroleum sector. In a parallel ministerial decree, he suspended the NaCC's five-year restriction that barred Nasan Energies from sourcing its fuel directly from global commodities trader Vitol. The core issue centers on vertical integration: Nasan Energies recently acquired fifty-two retail service stations from Vivo Energy, a corporation heavily tied to Vitol .

The NaCC originally imposed this strict sourcing ban to protect independent fuel distribution channels and maintain fair market play .

Overturning this restriction allows Vitol to supply Namibia's third-largest fuel retailer directly, bypassing neutral wholesalers, compromising market diversity, and squeezing out independent supply operations .

Consolidating retail distribution and global supply chains under one dominant hierarchy limits consumer choices.

It leaves the Namibian fuel market highly vulnerable to supply chain manipulations, transfer pricing, and artificial price controls .

To appreciate the gravity of these regulatory failures, one must understand the economic importance of having multiple major players actively competing in both cement manufacturing and fuel distribution.

Healthy market competition acts as a natural check against corporate greed, inefficiency, and price gouging. In the cement sector, robust competition between independent entities like Ohorongo and Cheetah ensures that companies continually innovate, optimize production costs, and pass those savings on to consumers. When multiple manufacturers fight for market share, quality improves, and supply lines remain resilient against sudden industrial disruptions.

Similarly, the fuel distribution sector requires a diverse array of major wholesalers and retailers to thrive. Energy is the literal fuel of the Namibian economy; its cost dictates the price of food, transport, and basic utilities.

Having independent players competing at the pump prevents cartels from forming and safely keeps retail margins fair. When a single global commodity trader controls both the source of fuel and the retail stations, it creates a closed ecosystem that blocks local entrepreneurs from entering the market.

Ultimately, these actions undermine the institutional independence of the NaCC, an organ established to protect the public from exploitation .

When ministerial override is used to bypass competitive scrutiny for short-term corporate convenience, it signals that political leverage supersedes economic logic .

The ministry's true role must be to foster transparent, competitive, and open markets rather than unnecessarily concentrating industrial power. Namibia's economic resilience relies entirely on robust regulatory oversight, active market competition, and fair commercial practices.

Amutse's recent interventions run directly counter to these objectives, leaving local businesses and consumers to navigate the very harsh consequences of a stifled, monopolized marketplace

The Country We Wrote About Before Anyone Asked Us To

• DR. VICKI L. OTARUYINA

DRIVE east out of Windhoek at dawn and the landscape empties quickly. Mountains give way to gravel plains, gravel plains dissolve into horizons that seem endless, until you arrive at dunes shaped by winds older than any nation on either side of the Atlantic. Namibia does not need the Caribbean's attention to be extraordinary. It has always been extraordinary on its own terms.

That is precisely why this edition exists.

An Honest Admission

Most other countries in this series arrived with a bridge already partially built between it and the Caribbean: a diaspora community, familiar cultural influences, or established travel connections. Namibia arrived with almost none of these.

Ask many Caribbean travelers to name three things about Namibia and you are likely to hear silence, or perhaps Sossusvlei's dunes recognised from a photograph rather than from genuine understanding.

That reality says something about The Africa Guide's editorial philosophy. We are unapologetically diaspora-first. We do not attempt to speak for an entire continent or reduce fifty-four distinct nations to a single narrative. Instead, we seek to understand every country on its own terms while creating meaningful connections between Africa, the Caribbean, and the wider African diaspora.

Namibia challenges us to do something different: help create introductions where meaningful relationships have yet to be built.

A Country That Refuses Simple Narratives

Namibia's history resists simplification. It became independent only in 1990, making it one of Africa's youngest sovereign states. Since independence, Namibia has also become an international reference point for community-led conservation. Its communal conservancy model demonstrates how wildlife protection, tourism, and local ownership can reinforce one another. For Caribbean destinations seeking sustainable tourism models, Namibia offers lessons that deserve far greater attention.

What Building a Connection Requires

There is currently no Namibia-Caribbean travel corridor, no established cultural exchange programme, and few institutional partnerships. Rather than seeing that as a limitation, we see it as an invitation.

Every meaningful partnership begins with a first conversation.

The question is not whether the relationship already exists. The question is whether we are willing to begin building it. That conversation could start with tourism authorities, universities, conservation organisations, cultural institutions, and entrepreneurs who discover they have more in common than geography might suggest.

Why This Matters

The easier editions in this series demonstrate that The Africa Guide can tell stories people already recognise. Namibia demonstrates something more important. It shows that our commitment to a diaspora-first editorial approach is not a slogan. It is a discipline that encourages curiosity even where no obvious audience demand exists.

We believe that authentic introductions create lasting relationships, and that curiosity, once given somewhere honest to land, builds its own momentum.

An Invitation

Namibia did not need to ask to be part of the Africa-Caribbean conversation. Its story, conservation leadership, and experience as a young African nation make it a conversation worth having.

If The Africa Guide has a role, it is not simply to report on existing relationships. It is to help create the conditions in which new ones can emerge through storytelling, research, and strategic engagement.

Every lasting partnership begins with an introduction.

Consider this ours.

**** Dr. Vicki L. Otaruyina is Founder and Group CEO of The Africa Guide, a diaspora-first narrative, tourism, and destination diplomacy platform advancing meaningful connections between Africa, the Caribbean, and the global African diaspora through storytelling, research, and strategic partnerships. www.theafricaguide.net***

China sends agricultural experts to Namibia under N$28m cooperation project

• STAFF WRITER

CHINA has deployed more experts to Namibia to support agricultural development under a South-South Cooperation project valued at US$1.74 million (N$28.5 million).

The experts are part of the South-South Cooperation (SSC) Project Phase II, a partnership between Namibia, China and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform welcomed five new Chinese experts on 10 July, while bidding farewell to four experts who had completed their assignments.

Acting executive director at the ministry, Petrus-Canisius Nangolo, said the project has become an important platform for technical cooperation, knowledge sharing and capacity building.

"Today's occasion reflects the strength of the partnership between the Republic of Namibia, the People's Republic of China, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)," Nangolo said.

The project focuses on improving Namibia's agricultural and fisheries sectors through technology transfer and skills development.

Key areas include aquaculture, horticulture, livestock production, value chain development, plant health, seed production, poultry production, soil fertility management, vocational training and fisheries development.

Nangolo said China committed a team of 14 experts and technicians to support the project.

"Eight long-term experts have already been deployed and have been working closely with our institutions and farmers across the country," he said.

He added that the newly arrived experts would strengthen technical support and knowledge transfer activities.

The project was launched in October 2024 by the then Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform.

Nangolo said the cooperation between Namibia and China is based on "mutual respect, solidarity, and a shared commitment to development."

FAO Namibia officer-in-charge Ferdinand Mwapopi said South-South Cooperation helps countries share agricultural knowledge, skills and resources.

"FAO's South-South and Triangular Cooperation serves as a primary driver for transferring agricultural knowledge, skills, and resources among countries of the Global South," Mwapopi said.

He said FAO has used the model for more than 40 years to support sustainable food systems and strengthen agricultural innovation.

Mwapopi thanked the ministry for supporting the project, including assisting with the onboarding of experts and providing support with visas, transport and accommodation.

The SSC Project Phase II is funded through a Trust Fund Agreement between the Government of China and FAO.

Nangolo said the project has already produced positive results in skills development, technology transfer and capacity building.

"These achievements are a clear indication of the project's positive contribution to agricultural skills development, technology transfer, and capacity building," he said.

He added that the project also supports the empowerment of women and youth in agriculture.

Nangolo thanked the departing Chinese experts for their contribution to Namibia's agricultural development.

"Your hard work, professionalism, and technical expertise have left a lasting impact," he said.

He said the knowledge and skills shared by the experts would continue to benefit farmers and institutions in Namibia. *NBR*