

# Mozambique News Agency

## AIM Reports

Report no.640, 23rd August 2023



## President Nyusi calls for an end to motorway congestion

President Filipe Nyusi on 14 August called for an urgent solution to the dramatic congestion on the N4 motorway between Maputo and the South African town of Witbank. The congestion is on the South African side of the border, with huge queues of trucks, most of them carrying minerals, waiting to make their way to the port of Maputo.

President Nyusi said the key stakeholders in the transport sector must draw up plans for ending the congestion, which is having a serious impact on both the Mozambican and the South African economies.

President Nyusi made this demand at a ceremony in Maputo which launched commemorations of the 120th anniversary of Maputo Port. “The situation is disturbing because the traffic doesn’t move. Discuss this and find a solution”, the President urged.

Mozambicans and South Africans, and the international community as a whole, he added, are waiting expectantly for “creative solutions” to ensure flexibility in the transport of people and goods between the two countries.

President Nyusi argued that the development of the Maputo port and rail complex should be based on a “greater balance” between road and rail transport. This would mitigate the impact on the N4 motorway of the growth in operations of the port. He instructed the port managers and the Transport Ministry to find solutions so that the growth of the Mozambican economy occurs in line with the well-being of the population, and of users of the N4 in particular.

Turning to the commemorations of the 120th anniversary of the port, President Nyusi noted that, after 20 years of public-private partnership in managing the port, the results of the investments made are clear for all to see, guaranteeing safety and operational efficiency, but also making it one of the most competitive ports in the region.

In 20 years, the Maputo Port Development Company (MPDC) has invested about US\$800 million in the port. The knowledge and the capital brought by the MPDC concession said President Nyusi, “have allowed a leap in cargo handling capacity, from five million tonnes in 2003 to 27 million tonnes in 2022.

The General Manager of the MPDC, Osorio Lucas, said that reducing congestion along the N4 must not be at the expense of reducing the port’s business, given the port’s benefits to the economy and job creation. He

believed the way forward was to switch cargo away from the N4 and onto the South Africa-Maputo railway.

“What we want is to find a balanced equation between an increased volume of rail transport, and the continued increase in road transport, but road transport should be outside of the rush hours”, said Lucas.

He added that MPDC and the publicly-owned port and rail company, CFM “are working to integrate our digital systems to make communication easier. The movement of wagons in the port will also become easier”.

Among the measures taken by CFM and MPDC to minimise the N4 congestion is the building of a truck park at Pessene, just outside the city, costing US\$3 million.

A second phase of this project will see some commercial and port processing activities moved from Maputo to Pessene.

### Mozambique looks at new hydrocarbon licencing round

The Mozambican authorities are considering the possibility of launching a seventh hydrocarbon exploration and production tender.

This comes at a time when the National Petroleum Institute (INP) is still clarifying the contracts of the consortia that won the sixth tender, for later approval by the government. The winning companies in that tender were ENI-Mozambique, a subsidiary of the Italian energy company ENI, which will operate in the A6-C area, in Angoche, off the coast of the northern province of Nampula, and CNOOC Hong Kong Holding Limitada, which will work in A6-D, A6-E, A6-G in Angoche, as well as S6-A and S6-B, in Save, which lies between Sofala and Inhambane provinces.

According to the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, Carlos Zacarias, “Negotiations are almost at an end and we hope that by the end of this year, the contracts will be presented to the government for approval so that activities can begin”.

## Health workers resume strike action

The United Association of Mozambican Health Workers (APSUSM) resumed a national strike, on 20 August, warning that it will last for at least 21 days.

APSUSM says it represents all workers in the health service except doctors. It says it has 65,000 members – nurses, laboratory technicians, cleaners, drivers and other auxiliary staff – and claims they will all obey the strike call. If the figure of 65,000 is true, APSUSM would be the largest trade union in the country.

APSUSM chairperson Anselmo Muchave told a Maputo press conference on 19 August that his members are going back on strike because the 60-day period agreed with the government to seek consensus had expired, and there was still no consensus in sight.

The strike had begun on 1 June, but was suspended, Muchave said, after negotiations with the government on 3-4 June. He claimed that the government had agreed to implement the agreements reached within 15 days. Nonetheless, the strike had been suspended for 60 days.

Muchave said the purpose of the strike was to demand better conditions for health professionals and patients, including the provision of medicines in public health units. The strikers also want more and better hospital beds, complaining that currently, most beds don't have mattresses and that when they do exist they are ruined.

The Health Ministry has repeatedly insisted that there is no general shortage of medicines, and even showed reporters around the General Medical Stores in Maputo so that they could see for themselves that there is no shortage of medicines, personal protective equipment or other essentials.

Muchave also stated that ambulances “do not have emergency materials for rapid life support”. He demanded an improvement in hospital food, claiming that the meals served “are not for people but for animals”.

He added that, during the strike, APSUSM members will guarantee minimum services. “Nobody will die because of lack of attendance by health professionals”, he promised. “Care is guaranteed in the emergency services and the maternity wards”.

Meanwhile, the separate strike by doctors, called by the Mozambican Medical Association (AMM), looks set to continue for at least another three weeks. After a national meeting of the AMM, the Association's leadership announced on 20 August that the strike will be extended for a further 21 days.

## Food insecurity affects over three million

Around 3.15 million people, corresponding to 10 per cent of the Mozambican population, are in a situation of acute food insecurity.

According to the executive secretary of the Technical Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition (SETSAN), Leonor Mondlane, the situation is most worrying in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, where about a quarter of the population could be affected.

“Of this group of 3.15 million, we have around 400,000 people who need humanitarian assistance and the rest need development assistance so that they can recover their productive capacity. That is why kits of inputs have been distributed so that families can recover their productive capacity”, Mondlane told the press on the sidelines of a meeting of the National Council for Food and Nutrition Security, which was chaired by Prime Minister Adriano Maleiane.

According to Mondlane, the government has the support of the National Disaster Management Institute (INGD) and other partners, including the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).

Most of the country's food-insecure citizens are concentrated in Cabo Delgado, as the other provinces are in a “more or less balanced” situation.

“The data we still use is from the post-harvest food security assessment. This year will see the launch of the Post-Shock Report, which is currently in the development phase”, she explained. This document will present the main shocks that have occurred in the country, particularly floods and cyclones.

## Logistics expert adds Beira to its network

The international logistics experts Unifeeder has added the central Mozambican port of Beira to its Mozambique-India-Jebel Ali service to boost trade and connectivity.

The new network transports containers on a round-trip from Maputo, Jebel Ali (Dubai), Mundra (India), Nhava Sheva (India), Mombasa (Kenya), Beira, and back to Maputo.

In a press release, Unifeeder stresses that Beira is a strategic port, playing a crucial role in connecting the landlocked countries of Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi to global trade. It adds that “its strategic location and efficient infrastructure make it a key hub for commerce in the region”.

According to Unifeeder, as a result of the integration of Beira into the existing supply chain network, customers can expect more efficient and reliable transport services.

In particular, “the seamless flow of goods and commodities between India, the Middle East, and East Africa will not only reduce transit times but also lower costs, benefiting businesses of all sizes. This enhanced connectivity will unlock new trade routes, allowing businesses to explore untapped markets and expand their reach”.

Unifeeder is a subsidiary of DP World, a multinational logistics company that holds a 30-year concession to operate the container terminal at the port of Maputo until 2033, with an option to extend for a further 10 years. Globally, DP World made a profit of US\$651 million in the first half of 2023.

## **Security conditions for resuming LNG project attained**

The necessary security conditions for resuming work on the liquefied natural gas (LNG) project in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, led by French oil and gas company TotalEnergies, have been reached according to the Minister of Mineral Resources Carlos Zacarias.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a meeting of the Coordinating Council of his Ministry, held in the northern province of Niassa, Zacarias said the government has been in constant dialogue with TotalEnergies. “After two years, there are signs that the security has been recovered”, said Zacarias. Nonetheless, no date for resuming the LNG project can yet be advanced “because there are matters that must be discussed”.

The TotalEnergies project in Cabo Delgado is budgeted at US\$23 billion, easily the largest foreign investment in Mozambique to date. However, it was interrupted in 2021 when Islamist terrorists attacked Palma town. TotalEnergies declared “force majeure”, and withdrew all of its staff from Palma.

Since July 2021, the Mozambican defence and security forces, with support from Rwanda and the SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM), have been driving the jihadists away from areas near the LNG project. The Mozambican state has resumed control over Palma town and over the adjacent district of Mocimboa da Praia. According to President Filipe Nyusi, the terrorists no longer have any fixed bases anywhere in Cabo Delgado.

## **BNI support for small and medium-sized enterprises**

Mozambique’s National Investment Bank (BNI) has about US\$25 million available to finance the export of goods generated by Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs).

The amount, according to Ancha Omar, the BNI head of Business Development, is provided by the BNI in partnership with Afreximbank to boost credit for the export of goods owned by the SMEs. “The enterprises will have a subsidy of up to US\$6.5 million. The BNI wants to support exporter SMEs to boost their production by developing new products and their expansion to foreign markets”, Omar said in Maputo city during the launch of the fund.

According to Omar, the state-owned BNI prioritises enterprises that guarantee a healthy tax contribution. Those enterprises that need amounts of less than US\$500,000 will have to negotiate with the bank so that alternatives can be found.

“We want to facilitate the growth of SMEs and the country itself, which means the companies may call us so that we can assess their real needs, in the context of these subventions”, she said.

For his part, Evaristo Dias, from the Confederation of Mozambican Business Associations (CTA), stressed

that the measure aims to boost the companies so that they may have the capacity to export their products. “Our country must produce and must reduce imports, which means it must export more. With this, we will have a healthy balance of trade”, he said.

## **CNE announces approved lists of candidates**

Mozambique’s National Elections Commission (CNE) on 18 August announced that it has approved lists of candidates from ten political parties, three coalitions of small parties and eight independent groups of citizens, to compete in the municipal elections scheduled for 11 October.

The 21 proponents in the 65 municipalities submitted 249 lists of candidates to the CNE, which had to inspect and check the authenticity of 69,432 documents. There are a total of 11,567 candidates. 7,775 of them are men and 3,792 are women.

Only the three parties represented in parliament – the ruling Frelimo Party and the two main opposition forces, Renamo and the Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM) – are standing candidates in all 65 municipalities.

None of the minor parties come anywhere near this. New Democracy (ND) is standing in 14 municipalities, and the Action Party of the United Movement for All-Round Salvation (AMUSI) is standing in six. The Democratic Alliance coalition is also running candidates in six municipalities. No other party or coalition is standing in more than three.

As for citizens’ groups, the Association of Informal Workers of Mozambique (ASTIMO) is standing in four municipalities (Maputo, Matola, Marracuene and Beira), while the Association for Child and Youth Development in the Community (ACRIAJUDA) is standing in Beira and Quelimane.

The other citizen groups are ADEMO (Beira) - Association of Mozambican Disabled People; ANAJD (Matola) - National Association of Assistance to Juvenile Delinquents; ASO (Nacala) - Olompa Association; CIDADAOS (Quelimane) - Citizens of Mozambique Association; UMODJA (Mocimboa da Praia) - Association of Natives and Friends of Mocimboa da Praia; and Koxukhuro (Nampula) - Friends of Amurrane Association for a Better Mozambique. Koxukhuro takes its name from Mahamudo Amurrane, the popular Mayor of Nampula, who was murdered in 2017.

As usual, Maputo will have the most crowded ballot paper, with 12 lists standing in the capital, followed by Nampula (eight), Nacala (eight), and Matola (seven).

---

This is a condensed version of the AIM daily news service - for details contact [pfauvet@live.com](mailto:pfauvet@live.com)

---

## Nacala linked to world's largest data cable

The northern port of Nacala has been linked to the world's largest submarine fibre-optic cable system to improve digital communications, enabling the telecommunications company Vodacom to offer its customers a direct international gateway for faster and more reliable internet services.

According to a press release from 2Africa, the consortium that owns the fibre optic cable, the connection was officially launched in Mozambique on 15 August along with a data centre opened by project partner, Master Power Technologies.

The 2Africa consortium consists of eight international partners: China Mobile International; Meta; Bayobab (formerly MTN GlobalConnect); Orange; Center3; Telecom Egypt; Vodafone Group (the parent company of Vodacom); and WIOCC.

The cable runs from the United Kingdom, around the African continent, and onwards to the Middle East and India. In Mozambique, Vodacom is responsible for bringing the cable on-land and for providing the infrastructure for installing the cable in data centres in Maputo and Nacala.

According to Vodacom's Jose Mendes, "the landing of the 2Africa submarine cable reaffirms Vodacom's commitment to boost digital inclusion in Mozambique and the African continent by increasing access to quality internet services".

He added, "This is an ambitious challenge for which we cannot achieve results alone. Collaboration between other industry players and the public sector is key, to enable the connection of more citizens across the continent".

2Africa stresses that once the fibre optic cable system is deployed, "businesses and consumers will benefit from better quality, reliability, and lower latency for Internet services, including teleworking, high-definition video streaming, as well as advanced multimedia and mobile video applications".

It adds that the system also creates the potential for job creation in sectors such as data centres, call centres, and software development, noting that "this employment opportunity can help contribute to local and national socio-economic development".

According to 2Africa, the connection will also support further growth of 4G and 5G mobile phone technology and fixed broadband access which will provide "better connectivity to underserved and rural areas as well as network resilience".

Since May 2020, the consortium has been laying the 45,000-kilometre-long cable network which has a capacity of 180 Terabits per second. In total, the project will connect 19 countries in Africa and 33 in total.

A study by RTI International, an independent non-profit research institute, estimates that within two to three years of commissioning, the cable will stimulate between US\$26.2 and US\$36.9 billion worth of economic growth on the African continent, equivalent to 0.42 to 0.58 per cent of Africa's GDP.

## Malawi fuel transported by rail from Nacala

The company Nacala Logistics, which operates the northern port of Nacala and the rail corridors from the port, has begun transporting liquid fuels by rail to Malawi. The first operation, according to the Maputo daily "Noticias" on 17 August, consisted of 29 tanker wagons containing 1.1 million litres of diesel.

According to a source from Nacala Logistics, shipments will now be made six times a month. "This is a significant turn of events. In July, a strategic meeting took place at the Port of Nacala, organised by the leadership of the National Oil Company of Malawi (NOCMA), the Malawian Ministries of Energy and Transport, the Mozambican fuel company Petromoc, Nacala Logistics, and others," said the source.

This is the first time that NOCMA has used rail transport to carry fuel from the Port of Nacala. Previously, fuel was supplied to Malawi by road from the central port of Beira and the Tanzanian city of Dar-es-Salaam.

The operation is the result of Nacala Logistics recording substantial improvements in the quality of the rail services linking Nacala to Malawi and Zambia.

Rail transport of fuel contributes to increasing the flow of traffic along the Nacala Corridor, which now delivers ten million litres of fuel per month to customers.

The source stated that Nacala Logistics "is consolidating its role as the driving force of the economies of Mozambique, Malawi and Zambia".

## Mozambique to introduce vaccine against malaria

Mozambique will introduce for the first time a vaccine against malaria next year, according to the Ministry of Health delegate for Vertical Control of Malaria, Ines Antonio.

According to Antonio, who was addressing a journalists' workshop in the central province of Tete, the vaccine will be implemented, in the first phase, in the northern provinces of Nampula and Cabo Delgado. "Afterwards, the vaccination will take place in other provinces", she said. "Mozambique has decided to adhere to this initiative in the context of malaria prevention. However, while the vaccine is not implemented, the government, in coordination with its partners, will continue to distribute mosquito nets in order to avoid infections and deaths". She added that the vaccination will be targeted at children under the age of five.

Antonio also revealed that the campaign to distribute insecticide-treated nets will cover over 29 million people across the country. Over 16.15 million nets will be distributed. Antonio said the first phase of distribution will run from 29 August to 2 September, and the second from 13 to 19 September. She added that the operational costs of net distribution are budgeted at over US\$21.3 million, "but this amount does not include the purchase of the mosquito nets themselves".

## Altona Resources shares jump on positive drilling results

Shares in the London-based mining company Altona Rare Earths PLC jumped by over eleven per cent on the morning of 16 August following the announcement of positive test drilling results from its Rare Earth Elements project at Monte Muambe in Mozambique.

Monte Muambe is an extinct volcano located to the east of Moatize in Tete province.

In a statement to the London Stock Exchange, the company highlighted the results from Target 4 which revealed a record in terms of length and grade. In addition, high-grade ore was confirmed at Target 3 which has “the potential to add to Monte Muambe’s resource base in the next phase of reporting”.

These results are part of an ongoing process to produce a Mineral Resource Estimate (MRE) which will then provide the basis for raising funds from investors to push the project towards construction and production. In the statement, Altona confirmed that the work for the MRE is on schedule with a site visit by geologist Robert Barnett between 7 and 10 August.

According to Altona’s chief executive, Cedric Simonet, “the record high-grade intercept drilled at Target 4, as well as the confirmed presence of high-grade ore at Target 3 are both highly positive discoveries, which show that Monte Muambe still has a lot of resource building potential in store”.

He added, “While we continue to focus on our immediate deliverables, namely the MRE and the Scoping Study, additional exploration work is now being planned for Target 3. We are also planning new exploration work on other, as yet-unexplored targets which were identified from the soil sampling survey we conducted last year”.

So far, the company has drilled over 7,800 metres to support its maiden Joint Ore Reserves Committee (JORC) Mineral Resource Statement which will be published in the Third Quarter of 2023. This is an international reporting standard that is used by investors for evaluating the potential value of a project.

Rare Earth Elements are a group of seventeen metals that are used in a wide array of products including electric vehicles, wind turbines, mobile phone and laptop screens, alloys, ceramics, and weapon systems.

Seventy per cent of the world’s production of Rare Earth Elements comes from China, which has an even tighter grip on the minerals’ processing. For some Western strategists, this dominance in the supply chain is seen as a threat.

Altona has a twenty per cent stake in Monte Muambe Mining Limitada, which holds the rights to prospecting licence 7573L which covers the project area. This stake will rise to 51 per cent following the completion of the MRE and Scoping Study. Altona has an agreement with Ussokoti Investimentos Limitada to increase this stake to seventy per cent by meeting targets based on carrying out exploration and feasibility studies.

## Jeppard Energy Resources to construct green hydrogen plant

The British-based company Jeppard Energy Resources Limited (JER) is planning to develop a solar farm in the southern province of Inhambane that will use electricity to produce hydrogen for the global market.

Hydrogen is, in theory, the ultimate green energy as burning it creates just heat and water vapour. However, the production of hydrogen is often problematic: currently, 95 per cent of the world’s hydrogen is made by burning fossil fuels, releasing vast quantities of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

In Britain, there are attempts to reduce these emissions by producing “blue” hydrogen using carbon capture. The biggest blue hydrogen scheme is being developed by a company called Cadent, which proposes to crack methane gas to produce hydrogen – with the waste products, carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide, pumped into disused gas fields in the Irish Sea for storage.

In contrast, the JER project will be almost entirely free of carbon emissions. Its “green” hydrogen will be produced using photovoltaic solar panels to power electrolyzers that extract the hydrogen molecules in water, with the only by-product being oxygen, making it a 100 per cent sustainable clean energy source.

In the first half of 2024, the company will begin constructing its 12 Gigawatt solar to green hydrogen facility in Mozambique. In an interview with AIM, it revealed that it has already acquired sufficient land to construct the facility, which, once completed, will produce over 4,000 tonnes of hydrogen per day. This will total 1.5 billion kilogrammes of hydrogen per year which will be pumped through a 125-kilometre long pipeline to a dedicated export terminal.

JER plans to expand this first facility in Mozambique and will continue to identify new locations in the Southern Africa region, including South Africa.

Marcus Allington, the Chief Executive of JER, told AIM that “Mozambique will be at the forefront of the transition to Net Zero. We are tremendously grateful for the encouragement and support we have received from both the provincial government in Inhambane and the national Government to identify and secure the land and permits for our first facility”.

He added, “We believe that Africa can play a major role in achieving a sustainable future for the planet and generate jobs and wealth for its people doing this. This facility is a milestone step in our plans for Mozambique and Southern Africa”.

According to Allington, “JER has developed its own hybrid model which allows for industrial partners to join it in the development of solar to green hydrogen facilities on a mutually beneficial basis”.

The company stresses that it will further protect the environment by using non-conventional water sources to avoid taking water that local communities, wildlife, livestock and ecosystems need. It promises that “with a strong environmental and social ethos, JER’s operations avoid damaging the water table or local ecology”.

## **Sugar company loses US\$56 million due to flooding**

The Maragra Sugar Company, in the southern district of Manhica, has lost 3.6 billion meticaís (US\$56 million) as a result of damage to equipment and loss of sugar cane due to flooding on the Incomati River last February.

According to data unveiled by the company's Director-General, Filipe Raposo, cited by the daily newspaper "Noticias", 470,000 tonnes of cane were lost in the sugar cane production fields, representing a loss of 1.6 billion meticaís.

"The losses have seriously affected the sustainability of the company, which led to the possibility of reducing the labour force and/or interrupting activities last April", said Raposo. "However, although the work was not interrupted, the company was forced to reduce the number of workers from the 500 who were linked to the sugar company to the approximately 140 that currently exist".

Assessments made, Raposo added, show that it would take at least one to two years for the company to get back on its feet, and it would require new investment. He added that the company "lost 95 per cent of its sugar cane and the damages from this alone are estimated at around US\$30 million."

## **Mozambique loses 90 million meticaís due to illegal mining**

It is estimated that Mozambique loses revenues in the order of 90 million meticaís (US\$1.4 million) a year due to illegal mining, according to the National Director of Geology and Mining, Candido Rangeiro.

According to Rangeiro, who was speaking at a meeting of the Coordinating Council of the Ministry of Mineral Resources and Electricity, held in the northern province of Niassa, "to end the problem, the government is adopting measures to ease the licensing process and tax collection for the State".

Illegal mining, he explained, causes lethal accidents during the extraction and use of mercury for gold processing. The use of mercury, he added, "contributes to environmental pollution, especially the pollution of rivers".

Work is being carried out, Rangeiro said, to identify organised mining associations to turn them into cooperatives.

According to research undertaken by the Ministry and by the National Statistics Institute (INE) in 2021, the country has 2,162 zones of artisanal mining. 1,577 of these zones, or 72.9 per cent of the total, are active.

## **Bridge inaugurated in Maputo province**

The Mozambican government has spent 56.6 million meticaís (US\$886,000) on replacing the bridge over the Nkalatchane River on the N3 national highway that connects the administrative posts of Impaputo and

Goba, in Namaacha district, Maputo province.

"This is another step forward in the reconstruction process that the government is implementing", the Deputy Minister of Public Works, Cecilia Chamutota, told reporters on 16 August during the inauguration of the bridge.

Construction of the bridge by Mozambican contractor Ereptz Construcões began in April. It is 70 metres long, 10 metres high, and three metres wide.

According to Chamutota, the bridge was installed after the fragility of the pillars of the old bridge became apparent. It was necessary to carry out work on the abutments of the bridge, protection of slopes, and the construction of massifs and access ramps to the metallic bridge. While work on installing the metal bridge was carried out, the contractor built a detour that ensured the link between Maputo and Goba.

"The inaugurated work is part of a broad reconstruction program that is being implemented by the government", said Chamutota. "During the rainy season, the road network in Maputo province was partially affected, which limited the movement of people, goods and services".

"We know that this is a very important connection for our country, as it connects our province to South Africa and Eswatini, said the Deputy Minister. "It is a very strategic bridge because it connects agricultural and livestock production areas".

She appealed to users to obey the established load limit, which is less than 30 tonnes and urged the National Road Administration (ANE) to install a weighbridge to control the size of loads.

## **Deflation for fourth consecutive month**

The average level of prices in Mozambique fell by 0.34 per cent in July, according to the latest figures released by the National Statistics Institute (INE).

July was the fourth consecutive month in which Mozambique experienced deflation rather than inflation. The INE's price calculations are based on the consumer price indices from eight cities (Maputo, Beira, Nampula, Quelimane, Tete, Chimoio, Xai-Xai and Inhambane).

Inflation over the first seven months of the year stands at 2.22 per cent. The annual rate of inflation in July (1 August 2022 to 31 July 2023) was 5.67 per cent.

This is a decline from 6.81 per cent in June, 8.23 per cent in May and 9.61 per cent in April.

Among products which fell in price in July included tomatoes (down by 10.8 per cent), cabbage (10.6 per cent), lettuce (8.6 per cent), onions (7.3 per cent), coconuts (5.6 per cent), and groundnuts (3.6 per cent).

Some prices, however, rose over the month, including unprocessed maize (13 per cent), dried fish (4.4 per cent), fresh fish (0.9 per cent), and wine (4.9 per cent).

The July deflation occurred in all the cities where the INE collects data. The sharpest price fall, of 0.75 per cent, was in Inhambane, followed by Chimoio (0.67 per cent), and Xai-Xai (0.46 per cent). In Maputo, Nampula and Quelimane, the price fall was 0.25 per cent.

## Education Ministry has 500 million meticaís for school construction

The Ministry of Education has 500 million meticaís (US\$7.8 million) available to conclude the construction of unfinished schools.

According to the Minister of Education, Carmelita Namashulua, speaking on 16 August at the opening of a meeting of her Ministry's Coordinating Council, the amount will prioritise buildings that are already more than 50 per cent complete.

"School infrastructures and their equipment remain a priority for the education sector", the Minister said, explaining that the government's five-year programme envisaged the construction of 3,355 classrooms for primary education, of which 2,791 have been completed, accommodating 278,600 pupils.

"I want to reiterate my exhortation to all provincial managers to be more engaged and swifter in building school infrastructure", added the Minister.

By the end of the first half of the current year, she said, a further 86 classrooms had been built, two secondary schools had been rehabilitated in the northern province of Nampula, and three others had been extended in the southern province of Maputo and the central province of Zambezia.

"It is crucial to involve community leaders, cooperation partners, and the population in general so that classes in the open air and classrooms built of flimsy materials can be eliminated", Namashulua said, adding that "as part of the improvement of teaching and learning conditions, the acquisition of 66,070 school desks is planned for this year".

However, the Minister also stated that delays in the provision of teaching materials, school management, and compliance with programmes are still challenges for the sector. "There is a need for greater involvement of the private sector to ensure compliance with the activities planned within the teaching and learning process", she said.

## Audit in Defence and Interior ministries ends by September

The audit underway in the Defence and Interior Ministries to ensure greater transparency in the payment of wages, through the electronic payroll (e-folha), should be completed by the end of September.

According to the Deputy Minister of Economy and Finance, Amílcar Tivane, who was speaking to reporters on 15 August at the end of the weekly meeting of the Council of Ministers (Cabinet), "by the end of August, the Ministry of Economy and Finance will begin the exercise of registering the military personnel of the Defence and Security Forces (FDS), guaranteeing that there will be funds for the full payment of wage arrears".

"We need to understand the complexity of the reform, and therefore the wealth of information that is needed, relating to the employees' attributes and others associated with their career in the specific area", he added.

In mid-July, the Defence Ministry claimed there was no evidence that about 7,000 "ghost soldiers", who did not exist, were unduly receiving wages.

The alleged discovery of ghost soldiers was the result of a "proof of life" exercise carried out in 2022 in the public administration, in which all state employees and agents were asked to prove their existence. Once the process was finalised and the accounts done, it was allegedly discovered that there were around 7,000 military personnel who were only on the payroll, but who did not exist.

However, when asked if the soldiers had already been paid their wages, Tivane declined to give the exact number of soldiers currently registered. "Regarding the staff, I will not go into metrics here, since this is information related to the Defence and Security Forces; but the most important thing is to stress that all efforts are being made to ensure that, in the coming days, we conclude the regularisation of the wage arrears", he said.

According to Tivane, the current system for paying wages in the FDS will gradually be discontinued, moving to the new system (e-folha), a platform that involves efficient information processing.

"What we have to do is check the quality of the information, enter it into the system, run the payroll generation model, check that the wages for each member of the Defence and Security Forces correspond to what would be expected and the sectors must validate it", Tivane said.

Concerning the wages of civilian state employees, Tivane said that so far the data for 95,000 out of a total of 385,000 employees has been processed, which could reduce the late payment of wages that has taken place in recent months.

## EDM recovers four tonnes of stolen cables

Mozambique's publicly owned electricity company, EDM, on 10 August recovered about four tonnes of stolen copper cables that were being stored in a house in Machava, on the outskirts of Maputo.

The copper, seized by an EDM Inspection team, was the result of theft from EDM's electrical installations and is valued at about 10 million meticaís (US\$157,000). "After the discovery of the material, the Mozambican Police (PRM) were called in. One person was caught red-handed at the house and was taken to the fifth PRM precinct, in the Machava-Sede neighbourhood", according to an EDM press release.

EDM notes that the vandalism of infrastructure has been one of the company's major challenges, as it causes great losses not only for EDM but also for the population which is deprived of electricity.

In Maputo province alone, from January to July this year 72 cases of vandalism of electrical equipment were recorded which caused major losses to the company, making it difficult to achieve the goal of universal access to electricity by 2030. EDM calls for community vigilance and the denunciation of any act that undermines the integrity of electrical installations.

## Fitch expects strong economic growth

The Fitch ratings agency predicts strong economic growth in Mozambique with real GDP growth expected to reach 6.4 per cent this year and to average 4.9 per cent over 2024-2025. This is a significant increase from the 4.2 per cent growth rate seen last year.

In an analysis released on 11 August, Fitch states that this growth primarily reflects “a Liquefied Natural Gas-led increase in the output of the extractive sector, as the production capacity from ENI’s Coral South floating LNG platform increases to 70 per cent and 90 per cent in 2023 and 2024, respectively”.

However, Fitch has kept its key Long-Term Foreign-Currency Issuer Default Rating (IDR) rating for the country at CCC+ due to what it calls a “substantial credit risk” reflecting “elevated government debt levels, persistent fiscal deficits, weak public financial management, low GDP per capita, weak governance indicators and a challenging security situation”.

Despite this, Fitch welcomes “the agreement of a three-year US\$456 million Extended Credit Facility with the International Monetary Fund in 2022, positive momentum in the development of the liquefied natural gas sector, and measures to address the fiscal slippage of 2022” which, it notes, “provide some support to creditworthiness”.

The rating agency also stresses the positive effect on the economy of “the resumption of the construction of Total’s US\$20 billion LNG project, which we assume will begin in the first quarter of 2024, given the improvements in the security conditions in Cabo Delgado throughout 2023”.

According to Fitch’s analysis, the debt-to-GDP ratio will decline as a result of strong economic growth. In addition, it notes that the Mozambican currency, the metical, has been stable relative to the US dollar, although it warns that “renewed external pressures could lead to significant depreciation of the exchange rate”.

Fitch expects international reserves to increase from US\$2.7 billion in 2022 to US\$3 billion this year and US\$3.5 billion by the end of 2025. This will be driven by lower food and fuel import costs, a marginal contribution from LNG exports, and the resumption of Total’s Rovuma Basin Area 1 project, of which 12.5 per cent of the total investment will have to be contracted domestically.

Fitch is one of the three main credit rating agencies (the others being Moody’s and Standard and Poor’s).

## Commander of Africom visits Maputo

The Commander of the US Africa Command (Africom), Marine Corps General Michael Langley, visited Maputo on 15 and 16 August in order, according to a press release from the US embassy, to “reinforce the US government’s partnership with Mozambique to build a peaceful and prosperous future”. Langley and his delegation met with President Filipe Nyusi and with armed forces chief of staff Admiral Joaquim Mangrassa.

The embassy release added that Langley “discussed the importance of the US-Mozambique security partnership and progress in stabilising the situation in northern Mozambique”.

“I came here to discuss with Mozambique’s security leaders how we find opportunities to address our shared challenges together,” said Langley. “We discussed how we can achieve our common goals and expand our partnership. This includes integrating defence with diplomacy and development – the three Ds – to support our partners in Mozambique and build resilience to conflict and the myriad of challenges facing Mozambicans on a daily basis”.

Langley’s visit follows US Secretary of Defence Lloyd J. Austin’s meeting with President Nyusi in Washington at the 2022 US-African Leaders Summit, and after the two leaders spoke by phone on August 2.

“In addition to increased engagement between senior officials”, the release added, “the US-Mozambique security partnership has also expanded in the realm of training. Since 2021, the US Department of Defence conducted five Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) programs between US Special Operations Forces and Mozambican Commandos and Marines”.

The US Department of Defence, it continued, “also conducted numerous tactical combat casualty care (TCCC) and combat lifesaver training courses for the armed forces”. Mozambican forces recently took part in a maritime exercise “Cutlass Express” and participates in the International Military Education and Training (IMET) programme.

## US\$20 million needed for Angoche fishing port

The Mozambican government is mobilising over US\$20 million to build a fishing port in Angoche district, in the northern province of Nampula, according to the Minister of Sea, Inland Waters and Fisheries, Lidia Cardoso.

The Minister said on 8 August, during the delivery of fishery equipment in Angoche, that “the project already exists. A public tender was launched and some candidates had been approved to start the process. However, the initial budget is no longer enough”.

In 2019, the previous Minister of Fisheries, Agostinho Mondlane, stated that US\$33 million was available to build the port.

“The fishing port is strategic, taking into account that only two fishing ports are operational in the country, in Maputo in the south, and Beira in the central province of Sofala. Having a fishing port means that we will also have dry or wet docks for ship repair”, said Cardoso.

The Minister added that Quelimane port, in Zambezia province, has difficulties in terms of infrastructure, but “we are trying to solve them. It is difficult for the fishermen from the coastal zone of Angoche to resort to Maputo and Beira for the maintenance of their boats”.

To boost the fishery sector, according to data unveiled by the Minister last week, about 90 million meticais (US\$1.4 million) have been invested in the northern province of Nampula alone.



## **Cholera outbreak under control in Nampula**

Deputy Minister of Health, Ilesh Jani, has guaranteed that the recent cholera outbreak, in the northern province of Nampula, is now under control and does not pose a great danger.

Jani, who was speaking in Maputo on 14 August, during the launch of the Immunity and Coverage Survey after the COVID-19 Vaccination Campaign in Mozambique (IMUNECOV), said that isolated cases still occur, but teams from various sectors are already on the ground working to prevent new outbreaks.

The cholera outbreak was declared in five districts of Nampula province, namely: Nacala, Memba, Nampula, Erati and Meconta. The latter two were recently declared free of the disease.

“In Erati and Meconta, the situation is stable, as parameters proposed by the World Health Organisation were followed, so that the end of the outbreak can also be declared,” he said.

The latest outbreak of cholera has affected over 30,000 people and 141 people have died since the Health Ministry declared the epidemic last September.

As for IMUNECOV, Jani announced that at least 4,700 households in all provinces of the country will be covered by this survey. In these households, the Ministry of Health expects to cover about 20,000 people, including adults, and children aged between one and 12 years old.

“The Survey aims, firstly, to assess the coverage of the COVID-19 vaccination campaign. Secondly, it will allow us to understand the current levels of protection of the Mozambican population”, he said. “Through this survey, we will collect biological material that will allow us to measure the level of antibodies in the population”.

“We are also going to understand the current number of active COVID-19 infections”, he added.

## **Corruption one of the main problems facing INAE**

Corruption, poor knowledge of the relevant legislation, and lack of uniform operational procedures are among the main challenges facing Mozambique’s National Inspectorate of Economic Activities (INAE), according to INAE spokesperson, Tomas Timba.

Speaking at a press conference in Maputo on 14 August, held to commemorate the 14th anniversary of the creation of INAE, Timba acknowledged that corruption involves members of INAE’s staff, who ought to be inspecting economic institutions and punishing the irregularities that they find.

A further problem, he added, is that INAE is unable to cover the entire national territory. Its lack of resources restricts its activities to the main urban centres.

“If we look at the statistics”, said Timba, “in 14 years we were able to verify, three, four or five cases of corruption. The relevance of this could be debatable, but

for us, the ideal would be to eliminate corruption altogether. We don’t want any case of corruption. The standardisation of procedures, also within the institution, remains a challenge”.

As for inspecting the prices of basic goods on the Mozambican market, Timba stressed that INAE inspectors are on the ground doing their job. “The fact that nowadays we are not constantly talking with the mass media does not mean that we are not doing this work”, he said. “We are working on the task of fixing maximum profit margins. We have to look at the overall economic conjuncture, and we shall see that it is not only the Mozambican market that suffers increases in the prices of basic goods”.

Timba says INAE hopes that the government will transform it into a National Authority of Economic Activities. He believed this would make it a more powerful body.

## **Quirimbas Reserve launches business plan**

The Quirimbas Biosphere Reserve, in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, has launched a new business plan focused on environmental conservation and sustainable development. The instrument was launched on 12 August, in the Cabo Delgado provincial capital, Pemba, by the provincial governor, Valige Tauabo, who said “It will allow the adoption of measures aimed at the rational exploitation of the natural resources available in the Quirimbas National Park”.

“It has been five years since the Quirimbas National Park was declared a Biosphere Reserve. As we all know, to maintain this coveted status it is important to adopt a set of measures that allow the rational exploitation of natural resources available in the Park”, he explained.

According to the governor, the management and business plan of the Quirimbas Biosphere Reserve lives up to the constitutional obligation to promote initiatives to ensure the ecological balance, conservation, and preservation of the environment, guaranteeing the improvement of the quality of life of the population residing in the area of the Reserve.

He added that the provincial executive, following the protection of biodiversity, recently proceeded with the planting of mangrove seedlings in the district of Quissanga, in an initiative aimed at the restoration of the mangrove forest.

“Likewise, we proceeded to deliver 13 cheques to Community Committees, which are located in the Quirimbas National Park area, to fund community initiative projects as a way of stimulating their participation in biodiversity conservation efforts,” the governor said.

He added that the provincial government is continuing to work to involve communities in all initiatives aimed at preserving biodiversity, to keep intact the indicators that determined the declaration of the Quirimbas National Park as a Biosphere Reserve.

## Assembly amends legislation on money laundering

Financial bodies found to be involved in money laundering will be fined between two and ten million meticaís (from US\$31,000 to US\$156,000) under the revised Law on Preventing and Combating Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing, approved on 10 August unanimously by the Assembly of the Republic (AR), the Mozambican parliament.

The law, proposed by the government, also establishes penalties and sanctions for terrorist acts and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

“The sanctions will be between one to five million meticaís when the crime is committed by a non-financial body”, said Justice Minister Helena Kida, as she introduced the bill. “Donations and other financial contributions destined to non-government organisations must be through bank transfer in the name of the organisation or through a cheque”.

She added that it is essential to ensure that the legislation preserves individual rights, and ensures due process of law and the opportunity for defence and appeal for those accused of such crimes.

“After learning about the terrorist or terrorist organisation, it is up to the Attorney General's Office (PGR), in coordination with the Foreign Ministry, after notifying Mozambique's Financial Intelligence Office (GIFIM) to designate the terrorists, with all the necessary identification information to be published within 24 hours in the Official Gazette”, Kida said.

“The information on terrorists must contain the full name, other names by which the terrorist is known, such as a nom de guerre or nickname, gender, date and place of birth, nationality, and country of permanent residence, tax identification number, areas or countries of activity”, the Minister added.

The information should also include the full name of any organisations involved, including any acronyms or other current or previously used names, the logo, the address where the head office is registered, the nature of the business, the main sources of funding and known assets.

“In cases of requests for removal from the list, the PGR must decide within ten working days on the action to be taken”, she said.

The need to amend the law arises in response to the dynamics of organised crime that has been of great concern in recent years, taking into account the Islamist terrorism that has been plaguing the northern province of Cabo Delgado.

Amending the law is part of the government's drive to have Mozambique's name removed from the “grey list” of countries drawn up by the international Financial Action Task Force (FATF). The amendments are in line with the recommendations made by a FATF committee, which is expected to analyse the Mozambican legislation in the first half of next year.

The FATF website explains that the grey list “identifies countries that are actively working with the FATF to address strategic deficiencies in their regimes

to counter money laundering, terrorist financing, and proliferation financing. When the FATF places a jurisdiction under increased monitoring, it means the country has committed to resolving swiftly the identified strategic deficiencies within agreed timeframes and is subject to increased monitoring”.

As of June 2023, there were 26 countries on the grey list, including Mozambique

Much more serious is the “blacklist”. This names countries “with serious strategic deficiencies” in countering money laundering and terrorist financing. For countries identified as high-risk, “the FATF calls on all members and urges all jurisdictions to apply enhanced due diligence, and in the most serious cases, countries are called upon to apply counter-measures to protect the international financial system from the ongoing money laundering, terrorist financing, and proliferation financing risks emanating from the country”.

As of June, there were only three countries on the blacklist – Iran, Myanmar and North Korea.

## Unemployment rate stands at 18.4 per cent

18.4 per cent of the adult Mozambican population is unemployed, according to the latest Household Budget Survey (IOF 2022), unveiled in Maputo on 9 August by the National Statistics Institute (INE).

According to INE demographer, Abdulai Dade, who presented the survey, “The unemployment rate at the country level is 18.4 per cent. Among men, it is 18.7 per cent and women 18.1 per cent. There is no significant difference by sex. In the urban area (31.0 per cent) it is higher than in the rural area (12.1 per cent). We have Maputo city and province with the highest unemployment rate, with 36.5 and 33.1 per cent respectively”.

“The central province of Tete has the lowest unemployment rate, of about 13 per cent”, he added.

As for the employment rate in Mozambique, according to the 2022 IOF, it stands at around 71.4 per cent, with 81.5 per cent in rural areas and 54.4 per cent in urban areas. “The fact that it is higher in the rural area depends on the concept of work. In the rural areas, as soon as dawn breaks the population goes to the fields and because this is an economic activity, it is considered employment”, Dade explained.

The figure is slightly higher among men (73.2 per cent) than women (69.8 per cent). The lowest employment rates at the national level are in Maputo province and city, with 53.7 per cent and 48.3 per cent respectively, and the highest are recorded in Zambezia (79.0 per cent) and Tete (78.4 per cent).

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), a person is considered to be employed, if he or she is aged 15 or over and has worked for at least one hour in the last seven days prior to the survey, if he or she helps a family member in the production of goods and services, without remuneration, or if he or she does not work but was employed during the period in question.

## Mozambicans spend US\$11 a month on food and drink

The average monthly per capita expenditure on food and non-alcoholic beverages was 734 meticaís (US\$11.49), according to the latest Household Budget Survey (IOF 2022), unveiled on 9 August by the National Statistics Institute (INE).

According to the survey, the amount corresponds to 3,358 meticaís per household and the percentage of expenditure on food and non-alcoholic beverages is more significant in rural areas, at 49.3 per cent, compared to urban areas where it accounts for 27.8 per cent of total expenditure.

“Expenditure on transport is more relevant in urban areas (15.5 per cent) than in rural areas (7.3 per cent). The same is true in the division of restaurants, hotels, bars and similar with a relative importance of 9.4 per cent in urban areas and 4.7 per cent in rural areas”, says the survey.

Overall, the survey says, households living in Mozambique spent an average of 8,661.00 meticaís per month, equivalent to 1,893.00 meticaís per person. The average monthly expenditure of households in the country is almost double the national minimum wage in force in 2022, which was 4,591.68 meticaís.

According to the survey, average monthly expenditure in the urban areas was above the national average, with 12,548.00 meticaís per household (2,686.00 meticaís per capita) while in the rural area, it stood at 6,680.00 meticaís (1,475.00 meticaís per capita).

According to the IOF 2022, of the total expenditure of Mozambican households, 40.1 per cent was spent by the richest 10 per cent of the population, while the poorest 10 per cent only spent 0.9 per cent of the total expenditure.

“Analysing the structure of expenditure, according to the position of the head of the household in the labour process, it is noted that households whose heads work in international bodies/embassies and public companies have the highest levels of monthly per capita expenditure with 6,900.00 meticaís and 6,727.00 meticaís, respectively”, the report stresses.

The IOF 2022 also puts the total number of households in Mozambique at 6,909,016, of whom 66.2 per cent live in rural areas. The northern province of Nampula and the central province of Zambezia have the highest number of households (20.6 per cent and 18.3 per cent of the total, respectively), while the southern province of Gaza (4.6 per cent) and Maputo City (3.9 per cent) have the lowest percentage.

The document shows that a large proportion of heads of household are farmers (64.6 per cent), followed by non-agricultural workers (9.2 per cent).

“The majority of heads of household are self-employed without employees (78.9 per cent), followed by workers in private companies (9.9 per cent) and in the public administration (5.4 per cent). On average, Mozambican households consist of 4.6 members, with

the largest share having between three and four members, representing 33.0 per cent. This is followed by households with five or six members (29.6 per cent)”, reads the document.

Out of every 100 households, the report says, 71 are headed by men and only 29 are headed by women. It also notes that 50 per cent of households are headed by people under the age of 41.

In terms of methodology, the INE visited each household in its sample for seven continuous days. Data collection for the IOF was done over 12 months to capture the variability of expenditure, income, and other socio-economic characteristics during the year.

## Kenyan investment in Mozambique reaches US\$76 million

Kenyan private direct investment in Mozambique amounted to US\$76 million over the last five years, according to the Mozambican Minister of Industry and Trade, Silvino Moreno.

According to the Minister, who was addressing a Mozambique-Kenya Business Forum held in Maputo on 11 August, most of the investments are in the sectors of industry, agriculture and agro-industry, services, transport and communications, hotels, and tourism.

The business forum between the two countries comes as a result of the three-day official visit of the Kenyan President, William Ruto, to Mozambique.

At the forum, Moreno also said that direct investment from Kenya will contribute to the growth and diversification of the national economy and exports of raw materials and processed products.

“Aware of the entrepreneurial and innovative capacity of Kenyan businesses, the government invites entrepreneurs from Kenya to focus on areas and projects such as the revitalisation of the clothing, textile and footwear, metalworking, chemical, rubber, plastic, and food fortification sectors”, he said.

The revitalisation of the textile industry in Mozambique was proposed recently by Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi during the Annual Conference of the Mozambican Private Sector.

According to Moreno, the Mozambique-Kenya Business Forum is “an opportunity to launch the Joint Trade and Investment Committee between the two countries, a platform that will boost and monitor the evolution of economic trade and investment cooperation, including trade facilitation issues”.

He pointed out that Kenyan businessmen in Mozambique can also invest in the electricity and mineral resources sectors, specifically in the Mpanda Nkuwa hydroelectric project on the Zambezi River and natural gas exploration in the Buzi River Basin in the central province of Sofala.

The one-day Business Forum drew together business figures and members of the government from both countries.

## Exports earn US\$1.7 billion in the first quarter

The sale of Mozambican goods to the rest of the world earned the country US\$1.7 billion over the first quarter of 2023, an increase of US\$4.4 million when compared to the same period in 2022, according to the Quarterly Balance of Payments Report, unveiled by the Bank of Mozambique.

“The positive evolution registered in export revenues is essentially justified by the growth in sales of products exported by mega-projects, with emphasis on the extractive industry (natural gas, heavy mineral sands and rubies, sapphires and emeralds), with an increase of US\$280.1 million”, says the document, explaining that “exports of products from other sectors of the economy, such as manufacturing (aluminium) and energy, recorded declines in sales of US\$140.7 million and US\$8.8 million, respectively”.

The document says that India, with US\$288.8 million, occupied the top position as the main destination of exports, with a weight of 17 per cent of total exports. The main Mozambican exports to India were coal, cashew nuts, and vegetables.

South Africa was in second place taking 15.1 per cent of Mozambique’s exports, valued at US\$256.6 million. It was the main purchaser of Mozambican electricity (from the Cahora Bassa dam) and of the natural gas produced onshore in Inhambane province.

Sales to the United Kingdom, with a weight of 8.1 per cent of total exports, earned the country revenues of US\$137.4 million, notably from aluminium and liquefied natural gas.

Exports to Croatia gave the country revenues of US\$117.5 million (6.9 per cent of total exports), with the main products exported being natural gas, coal, and tobacco.

China, with a share of 6.5 per cent of Mozambique’s total exports, purchased heavy mineral sands, graphite, oilseeds, and fruit.

“In the period under review, the bill for the import of goods fell by around 66.1 per cent, to US\$2 billion, essentially reflecting the 94.8 per cent reduction in imports by the mega-projects, compared to the 28.9 per cent increase in the import bill for the rest of the economy”, explained the note.

The document also says that imports of goods in the first quarter of 2022 were influenced by the registration of the arrival of the Coral Sul liquefied natural gas (FLNG) floating platform, as part of gas production in Area 4 of the Rovuma Basin, valued at around US\$4.6 billion. Excluding that amount, data for the first quarter of 2023 show an increase of 8.4 per cent compared to the same period in 2022.

South Africa ranked first as the main country of origin of Mozambican imports, with a weight of 23.2 per cent of total imports, amounting to US\$481 million.

“China, with a weight of 14.4 per cent of total imports, ranked second as the main supplier of goods to Mozambique, with emphasis on the supply of electrical appliances, agricultural materials, tractors and fuels. The United Arab Emirates, with a contribution of 12.7 per cent of total imports, ranked third”, reads the document.

---