CHINESE COMPANY COMPLETES NAMIBIA'S AIRPORT EXPANSION

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Namibian President Hage Geingob has officially opened a new terminal and a runway built by a Chinese company at Namibia's second biggest airport in the north of the country.

The terminal and runway at Ondangwa Airport, with a cost of 84 million Namibian dollars (US$6 million), was built by Qingdao Construction Company.

The company was awarded the tender in 2013 ahead of other nine companies.

Last week, Geingob officially opened the Ruacana-Omakange road in the northwestern part of the country that was also built by a Chinese company -- China Machinery Engineering Corporation -- and funded by EXIM Bank of China to the tune of 420 million Namibian dollars.

Addressing the gathering Friday, Geingob said he expected that the new terminal and runway will

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establish a new benchmark of functional efficiency and operational safety for airports in the country.

"It also exemplifies our intent as a nation to build world-class infrastructure. I have no doubt that this terminal will fulfill the expectations we have from it and make us all feel very proud," he said.

While thanking Quindao Construction Company for a world class job, Geingob said the government of Namibia cannot go it alone when it comes to infrastructure development.

"The private sector must pull its weight in joining our drive for improved infrastructure since it stands to benefit from this, just like the rest of the country," he added.

He further said Namibia's infrastructure needs are enormous and that a deficit in infrastructure is a serious constraint to the country's ambitions as it will limit the rate of economic growth.

"We therefore need to apply extra effort to bridge any existing infrastructure deficit so that we are able to catapult ourselves to the head of the queue, not only as a logistics hub, but as the preferred destination for investment and tourism in the region and in Africa as a whole," he said.

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