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News Worth Knowing



Windhoek puts 900-home Cimbebasia Housing Project on hold

MONDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2025

MAIN STORY



Windhoek puts 900-home Cimbebasia Housing Project on hold

The City of Windhoek (CoW) has put the Cimbebasia low-cost housing initiative on hold to implement flood mitigation measures in the area, which has been identified as highly flood-prone.

The project, aimed at addressing the capital's housing shortage, was expected to take up to four years to complete and provide 900 homes on 24 hectares of land south of Mataman Street in Cimbebasia.

Crucial Dates

- Bank of Namibia Monetary Policy announcement date:
 - * 16 April 2025
 - * 18 June 2025
 - * 13 August 2025
 - * 15 October 2025
 - * 3 December 2025

The Cimbebasia low-cost housing project remains a priority for the City.

The municipality was targeting housing unit prices of between N\$380,000 and N\$650,000.

Despite initial plans to finalize the conceptualization phase by December 2021, progress has been slow.

Additionally, the City of Windhoek has yet to secure funding mechanisms for the large-scale housing initiative.

“The Cimbebasia low-cost housing project remains a priority for the City. However, it is currently on hold pending the implementation of flood mitigation measures in the area. Efforts are ongoing to resolve these challenges to ensure the project's timely continuation,” City of Windhoek spokesperson Lydia Amutenya told The Brief.

The decision to delay the housing project follows increasing challenges with flooding in the city, a development that has affected approximately 308 households and displaced around 1,250 residents this year.

Among them, 11 households were severely impacted, with their structures completely destroyed and washed away, leaving

occupants in urgent need of assistance.

Amutenya said the City is currently prioritizing the implementation of flood control measures, including improving stormwater drainage infrastructure, elevating flood-prone areas, and identifying alternative settlement sites.

“Additionally, long-term urban resilience strategies are being integrated into city planning to reduce vulnerability to floods. The City also plans to intensify community education and awareness campaigns to discourage settlement in high-risk areas, such as riverbeds and low-lying zones,” she said.

She added that interventions are assessed on a case-by-case basis, with the City evaluating each situation individually to determine the best course of action for affected residents.

“Where feasible, affected residents in high-risk areas may be relocated to safer locations. However, due to limited land availability, some may remain in their current locations while infrastructural improvements are made to mitigate risks,” she said.

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Namibia's internet speed among world's slowest

Namibia's internet speed ranks 143rd out of 152 countries, with a median download rate of 13.72 Mbps, according to Ookla's Speedtest Global Index.

The country also falls in the bottom 20% globally for digital infrastructure, e-security, and e-governance, as reported by Surfshark's Digital Quality of Life Index.

Cirrus Capital, Head of Data Analytics and Economist, Tannan Groenewald, warns that

a lack of competition is stalling progress, with MTC controlling an estimated 82% of the mobile market and delays in broadband expansion persisting.

"Namibia's strongest component was internet affordability, although this metric considers the work time required based on the average wage to afford the cheapest mobile internet, thus, this is skewed by Namibia's very high inequality. Meanwhile, Huawei's



DRIVING ECONOMIC RESILIENCE: NAMIBIA'S DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGY

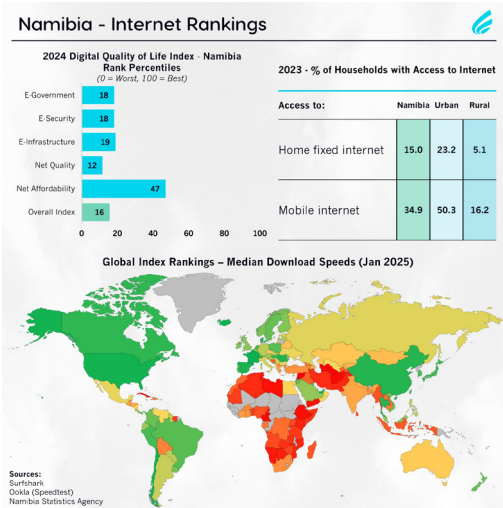
Namibia has developed a comprehensive Economic Diversification Strategy to address critical challenges and promote sustainable growth. This forward-thinking approach aims to reduce economic dependence on a few industries, foster innovation, and unlock new opportunities across various sectors. By leveraging this strategy, Namibia is building a more resilient and competitive economy, poised to thrive in the global market.

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'24 Digitalisation Index, which assesses the level of ICT maturity and economic development, ranked Namibia 75th out of 77 countries assessed," he added.

According to the 2023 Census, only 15.0% of Namibian households have access to home fixed internet connectivity, with the proportion among rural households just 5.1%.

"Due to Namibia's low population density and the distance of rural areas from urban localities, providing high-speed broadband internet has proved challenging for current operators. Concerns remain around the lack of competition in the sector," Groenewald explained.

Meanwhile, Cirrus Co-Founder Rowland Brown criticised Namibia's delays in licencing Starlink, arguing that restrictive policies are hindering digital development in a country where rural connectivity remains as low as 5.1%.

This comes as the Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN) last year issued a cease-and-desist order to Starlink, accusing the satellite communications company of operating within Namibia without the required

telecommunications license.

The regulator then revealed that it had already confiscated illegal Starlink terminal equipment from consumers and initiated criminal cases with the Namibian Police against those involved.

"This demonstrates the absurdity of keeping Starlink out of Namibia for so long. For a

PROCUREMENT NOTICE



MTC hereby invites companies to participate in the following procurement opportunity:

TENDER NO: MTC02-25-O

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR THE DESIGN, SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF SERVICE CONTAINERS FOR MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATIONS LIMITED (MTC)

Briefing Meeting:
Friday, 28th February 2025 @ 09H00

Briefing Meeting Venue:
Microsoft Teams, the link will be on MTC's website.

Closing Date: Friday, 14th March 2025 by 14h30

TENDER NO: MTC03-25-O

RREQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR THE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF PROMOTIONAL ITEMS FOR MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATIONS LIMITED (MTC)

Briefing Meeting:
Tuesday, 25th February 2025 @ 14H30

Briefing Meeting Venue:
Microsoft Teams, the link will be on MTC's website.

Closing Date: Friday, 7th March 2025 by 14h30

TENDER NO: MTC06-25-O

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR THE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF GROCERIES AND CLEANING MATERIALS FOR MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATIONS (MTC)

Briefing Meeting:
Friday, 28th February 2025 @ 11H30

Briefing Meeting Venue:
Microsoft Teams, the link will be on MTC's website.

Closing Date: Friday, 7th March 2025 by 14h30

TENDER NO: MTC08-25-O

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR THE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF PRE-PRINTED STATIONERY AND MARKETING MATERIALS FOR MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATIONS LIMITED (MTC)

Briefing Meeting:
Tuesday, 25th February 2025 @ 09H00

Briefing Meeting Venue:
Microsoft Teams, the link will be on MTC's website.

Closing Date: Friday, 7th March 2025 by 14h30



mtc.com.na

Terms of reference are available at:
<https://www.mtc.com.na/procurement/tenders>

country with such low population density and such large areas, Starlink is the ideal technology. However, a mad, nationalistic and protectionist mentality stands in the way of development once again," he said.

Brown contends that there are so many examples in history of where "protecting local industry" from foreign technology ends up leaving a country far behind its peers and the rest of the world.

"See Milton Friedman's Free to Choose episode on hand looms in India (from the 1980s) as an example. You would think we would learn from this, but alas," he said.

Currently, Starlink operates in 18 African countries, with Nigeria being the first to launch in January 2023.

Groenewald noted that where data is available (12 countries), the cheapest Starlink package is more affordable than the cheapest non-Starlink unlimited fixed internet package in five countries.

"Roughly half the price in Ghana and Kenya, 22% cheaper in Cape Verde, 14% cheaper in Mozambique, and more than 20 times cheaper in Zimbabwe," he added.

Starlink packages are currently sold out in six African countries due to exceptionally high demand. In Zimbabwe, terminals sold out in October, less than two months after receiving permission to operate.

"Its strong demand in other African countries and subsequent impacts suggest that a more competitive ICT industry can drive costs down and improve availability in Namibia's distant rural areas," Groenewald said.

This comes as in the '24/'25 Mid-Year Budget, the Ministry of Finance forecasts the sector to grow at an average annual rate of just 2.3% over the next four years—the slowest among all broad sectors, he said.

Furthermore, MTC reported unforeseen delays in expansion projects in '24, with a shift in focus towards hiring additional personnel.

Namibia's main internet service providers (ISPs) include Telecom Namibia, MTC Namibia, Paratus Telecom, Internet Technologies Namibia, IWAY, and Africa Online. These ISPs offer various services, including fibre, DSL, wireless, and mobile broadband.

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TENDERS



TENDER ENQUIRY NO. E002-ND-2025
INVITATION TO TENDER FOR THE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF 65-SEATER BUSES

1. OVERVIEW
 Namdeb Diamond Corporation (Pty) Ltd (Namdeb) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Namdeb Holdings (Pty) Ltd, and performs land-based prospecting (exploration), mining and rehabilitation operations.



2. SPECIFICATION OF THE GOODS AND SERVICES
 Namdeb hereby invites reputable and qualified suppliers and/or service providers to submit tenders for the supply and delivery of 65-Seater Buses to Namdeb in Oranjemund, and after-sales support.

The supply requirements are any one of the following:
 A) Four (4) Diesel 65-Seater Buses, or
 B) Four (4) Battery-Electric 65-Seater Buses and 1x charger, or
 C) Four (4) Buses which could consist of Diesel and Battery-Electric 65-Seater Buses including or excluding a charger


3. TENDER ENQUIRY DOCUMENT
 Interested parties must contact the following person to obtain a copy of the tender enquiry documents by no later than **16h00 pm (Namibian time) on Tuesday, 4 March 2025**:

Contact: Supply Chain Helpdesk
 Email: Elizabeth.Markowitz@namdeb.com
 Tel.: +264 (63) 23 8502

4. CLOSING DATE
 The closing date for the tender is **16h00 (Namibian time) on Monday, 31 March 2025**, and tender submissions must only be delivered to the address as specified in the tender enquiry document.


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Paratus Namibia cyberattack: What we know so far

By Job Angula

Paratus Namibia, a major telecommunications provider, has confirmed a cyberattack on its systems. The company disclosed that the breach involved ransomware, a type of cybercrime where hackers lock or steal data and demand payment for its release. The attack has been attributed to the Akira ransomware group, a known cybercriminal organisation responsible for multiple attacks worldwide.

Who is Akira, and How Does Ransomware Work?

Akira is a ransomware group that infiltrates systems, encrypts files, and then demands a ransom payment in exchange for decryption keys. They often target businesses and infrastructure, threatening to leak sensitive data if their demands are not met.

Ransomware works by exploiting vulnerabilities—whether through weak passwords, phishing emails, or outdated software. Once inside a system, it spreads quickly, locking users out of their files and systems. Companies then face a difficult choice: pay the ransom and hope for a resolution or refuse and risk permanent data loss and exposure.

What Has Been Disclosed?

Paratus Namibia has been transparent in acknowledging the breach. The company acted swiftly to contain the attack and has been working with cybersecurity experts to assess the damage and restore services. While full details are still emerging, Paratus has emphasised that they are taking all necessary steps to mitigate the impact and strengthen their security.

Investigations Are Ongoing—Avoid



Ransomware works by exploiting vulnerabilities—whether through weak passwords, phishing emails, or outdated software.

Speculation

At this stage, it is crucial to let the investigation run its course. Speculating on the root cause of the attack can be misleading and counterproductive. Cyberattacks are often complex, involving multiple entry points and tactics. Experts will analyse the incident thoroughly to determine how the breach occurred and what measures can prevent future attacks.

The Bigger Picture

This attack highlights the growing cyber threats facing Namibian businesses and institutions. It underscores the need for stronger cybersecurity laws, investment in protection measures, and better awareness of cyber risks.

Paratus Namibia's swift response and transparency set a strong example, but the incident serves as a warning for all organisations to evaluate their cybersecurity defenses. As investigations continue, lessons from this attack will be crucial in shaping a more resilient digital landscape for Namibia.

****Job Angula is an Information Security professional based in the Netherlands.***



NIDA reports N\$102 million operating loss for 2024

The Namibia Industrial Development Agency (NIDA) recorded operating losses of N\$102 million for the 2024 financial year, according to its latest annual report.

The report provides an overview of NIDA's operations over the past six years and outlines its 2025/26-2029/30 Integrated Strategic Business Plan (ISBP).

The report highlights a 28% increase in total annual expenditure, reaching N\$231 million, while NIDA's total annual income saw a 20% increase to N\$165 million.

Despite this growth in income, expenses outpaced revenues, leading to the substantial operating loss.

Executive Consultant for the CFO Portfolio at NIDA Julius Nghikevali said the Agency has seen a decline in the current ratio.

"A low gearing ratio of 22% has been maintained, despite liabilities more than doubling to N\$248 million. However, the current ratio has declined steadily from 79% in 2019 to 50% in 2024," Nghikevali said.

NIDA's assets have grown by 30% over the past six years, reaching N\$1.37 billion.

Nghikevali expressed concerns over returns on assets.

"The return on assets and return on equity have not been promising. With an asset base exceeding N\$1 billion, we expected a better return, but over the years, we have only seen an 11% return on both assets and equity," he explained.

During the official launch of the report, Minister of Finance and Public Enterprises Iipumbu Shiimi commended NIDA's finance team for their efforts in compiling a



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06:40

Mon-Fri



“With an asset base exceeding N\$1 billion, we expected a better return, but over the years, we have only seen an 11% return on both assets and equity.”

comprehensive financial report.

“The fact that you now have an annual report with financial statements that now says this is how we have spent the money, this is where we are in terms of our financial ratios—that’s a whole mark of transformation and success. This is a very good starting point,” he said.

Despite the challenges, Nghikevali emphasised that the Agency’s asset base remains strong.

A recent valuation exercise revealed that NIDA’s total assets now stand at N\$3 billion. However, he stressed the need for significant adjustments to improve financial sustainability.

“Cost to income remains a key concern, as our expenses have consistently outpaced our revenues. This is a critical area that needs to change, and the property portfolio has seen substantial growth, and this is something we are looking to leverage for better financial returns.”

Founded in 2018, NIDA aims to advance Namibia’s industrialisation agenda in line with the country’s policies and developmental strategies, such as the Growth at Home Strategy, Harambee Prosperity Plan and the fifth National Development Plan.

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Namibia's most affordable compact SUVs

By Max Lodewyk

Compact SUVs have become the preferred choice for many Namibians seeking an a balance between affordability, versatility, and practicality. Whether for urban commuting or light off-road trips, these vehicles offer commendable performance while remaining budget friendly. Below is an overview of some of the most cost effective compact SUVs available in Namibia, highlighting their starting prices, fuel efficiency, engine specifications, and standard features.

1. Renault Kiger

- Starting Price: N\$269,000
- Fuel Consumption: 5.3L/100 km
- Engine Specifications: 1.0L naturally aspirated petrol engine
- Transmission: 5-speed manual
- Power Output: 52 kW / 96 Nm of torque
- Standard Features: 2 airbags, front electric windows, power steering, and rear park distance control. It includes a 5 year / 150,000 km vehicle warranty and a 2 year / 30,000 km service plan.

The Renault Kiger is fuel efficient but lacks certain standard features such as full electric windows and a multifunction steering wheel. Additionally, it is equipped with only two airbags.

2. Nissan Magnite

- Starting Price: N\$265,000
- Fuel Consumption: 5.9L/100 km
- Engine Specifications: 1.0L petrol engine
- Transmission: 5 speed manual
- Power Output: 53 kW / 96 Nm of torque
- Standard Features: 6 airbags, central locking, a tire pressure sensor, a multifunction steering wheel, and front and rear electric windows. Warranty coverage extends for 6 years / 150,000 km with a 3 year / 30,000 km service plan.

The Nissan Magnite features a contemporary design that has gained popularity among young professionals.

3. Chery Tiggo 4 Pro

- Starting Price: N\$270,000
- Fuel Consumption: 6.8L/100 km
- Engine Specifications: 1.5L petrol engine
- Transmission: 5 speed manual
- Power Output: 83 kW / 138 Nm of torque

- Standard Features: 2 airbags, traction control, and stability control. It includes an extensive 5 year / 150,000 km vehicle warranty and a remarkable 1 million km engine warranty for the first owner. The service plan is valid for 3 years / 30,000 km.

The Chery Tiggo 4 Pro marks a strong return for the brand to Namibia, offering an affordable yet stylish compact SUV.

4. Suzuki Fronx / Toyota Starlet Cross

- Starting Price: N\$300,733 (Suzuki Fronx) / N\$299,900 (Toyota Starlet Cross)

- Fuel Consumption: 5.5L/100 km
- Engine Specifications: 1.5L petrol engine
- Transmission: 5-speed manual
- Power Output: 77 kW / 138 Nm of torque
- Standard Features: Brake assist, stability control, ABS, 2 airbags, and a multifunction steering wheel.

The Suzuki Fronx and Toyota Starlet Cross are essentially the same vehicle, with the Starlet being a rebadged version of the Fronx. The primary distinction lies in pricing, warranty coverage and some features. The Starlet Cross offers a 3-year / 100,000 km warranty and a 4 service / 60,000 km plan, whereas the Fronx provides a longer 5 year / 200,000 km warranty and a 4 year / 60,000 km service plan.

5. Mahindra XUV 3XO

- Starting Price: N\$296,999
- Fuel Consumption: 5.3L/100 km
- Engine Specifications: 1.2L turbocharged petrol engine
- Transmission: 6speed manual
- Power Output: 82 kW / 200 Nm of torque
- Standard Features: Engine auto start/stop, stability control, 6 airbags, a multifunction steering wheel, halogen projector lights, and front and rear electric windows. It includes a 5 year / 150,000 km warranty and a 3 year / 55,000 km service plan.

As the latest addition to the segment, the Mahindra XUV 3XO is well equipped, suggesting that Mahindra has carefully analysed the competition to deliver a value packed offering.

The compact SUV segment has experienced substantial growth in recent years, driven by consumer demand for vehicles that offer a raised driving position, enhanced practicality, and durability. These models bridge the gap between hatchbacks and larger SUVs, providing an solid combination of affordability and functionality for Namibian motorists.

***Max Lodewyk is a motoring enthusiast.**

Youtube: maxlodewyk_na

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Navigating the AI landscape: ChatGPT vs. DeepSeek

By Stantin Siebritz

In the dynamic world of artificial intelligence, two prominent names often surface: ChatGPT and DeepSeek. While ChatGPT has gained widespread recognition for its polished conversational abilities, DeepSeek is making waves with its open-source approach.

Let's break down what makes these two AI systems unique and explore the implications of DeepSeek's decision to open-source its model.

ChatGPT: The Polished Proprietary Model

Developed by OpenAI, ChatGPT is renowned for its sophisticated conversational capabilities. As a proprietary model, its inner workings—such as the source code, training data, and algorithms—remain confidential.

This closed-source approach offers several advantages:

- **Quality Control and Security:**



“

Ransomware works by exploiting vulnerabilities—whether through weak passwords, phishing emails, or outdated software.

OpenAI can implement stringent quality control and security measures, ensuring a stable and refined product.

- **User Experience:** Users benefit from a seamless experience, with updates and improvements managed by a dedicated team.

However, this approach also has its drawbacks.

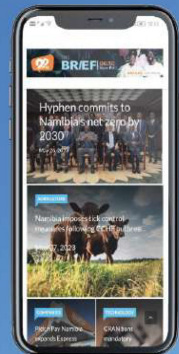
The lack of transparency means users and researchers must trust the company's

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assurances regarding bias mitigation, data privacy, and ethical use.

DeepSeek: A Community-Driven Alternative

In contrast, DeepSeek has chosen to open-source its model. Open sourcing means that the underlying code and design are available to anyone. This approach has significant implications:

- **Transparency:** The community can scrutinize the model for biases, security vulnerabilities, or flaws, fostering trust and accelerating improvements through community contributions.

- **Democratized Innovation:** Smaller organizations and independent developers can experiment with cutting-edge AI without the high costs associated with proprietary systems, spurring creative applications and research breakthroughs.

However, open sourcing is not without challenges.

The risk of misuse is a concern, as malicious actors could adapt the model for harmful purposes. Additionally, open-source projects may face coordination issues, inconsistent updates, or fragmentation if different groups fork the project in divergent directions.

The Future of AI: Balancing Transparency and Control

DeepSeek's decision to open-source its model highlights a broader philosophical debate in the AI community: Should the benefits of transparency and community collaboration outweigh the potential risks of misuse and lack of centralized control?

Proponents argue that open-source models drive innovation, enable robust peer review, and create a level playing field. Critics caution that without sufficient oversight, these models might inadvertently spread biases or be repurposed in ways that compromise user privacy or security.

In summary, both ChatGPT and DeepSeek offer valuable approaches to AI development. ChatGPT's proprietary model provides a polished product with robust safeguards, while DeepSeek's open-source strategy champions transparency and community-driven innovation.

The choice between them depends on your priorities: if you value a turnkey solution, ChatGPT might be the better choice; if you prefer to be part of an evolving, collaborative community, DeepSeek's open-source model could be the way forward.

Understanding these models helps us navigate the fascinating future of AI with greater confidence and insight.

****Stantin Siebritz is the Managing Director of New Creation Solutions, a software engineer and an Artificial Intelligence specialist.***

CLOSING DATE:
28 February 2025
before 17:00
(Only short-listed
candidates
will be contacted)

VACANCY



Suitably qualified candidates are invited to apply for the following position at the Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN) in Windhoek, Namibia.

EXECUTIVE: ENGINEERING & TECHNICAL SERVICES [E3] (Five (5) Year fixed term Contract)

Applicants meeting the above criteria should register their applications including motivation letter, CV, and relevant qualifications at Direct Hire by clicking on the following link:

<https://cran.mcirecthire.com/External/CurrentOpportunities>

Assumption Date: Wednesday, 01 October 2025

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Postal Address: Private Bag 13309, Windhoek, Namibia Tel: +264 61 222 666
Email: info@cran.na Website: www.cran.na

Alexforbes Namibia named Top Employer for third consecutive year

Alexforbes Namibia has been recognised as a Top Employer by the Top Employers Institute for the third consecutive year.

The Top Employers Institute said the certification highlights the company's ability to attract and retain top talent through a flexible, high-performance work environment. The recognition, also underscores Alexforbes Namibia's focus on employee experience, talent development, and workplace culture.

Stéfan du Preez, Managing Director at Alexforbes Namibia, welcomed the recognition, emphasizing its significance in the company's evolving work model.

"Winning the Top Employer award once again is a testament to our unwavering commitment to excellence, innovation, and our people. This recognition is especially meaningful as we continue to thrive in a flexible, remote working environment. It proves that success is not defined by where we work, but

by how we work," Du Preez said.

He added that the company's approach, centered on 'Insight, Advice, Impact,' aims to provide clients with informed financial guidance while fostering a collaborative and growth-oriented work culture.

According to Alexforbes Namibia, its investment in competitive benefits, continuous learning opportunities, and an inclusive workplace has been key in maintaining industry leadership.

The company stated that its flexible work model enhances employee well-being while promoting collaboration and productivity.

David Plink, CEO of the Top Employers Institute, acknowledged the achievement, stating:

"Consistency in a not-so-consistent world? Amidst constant change—through technological advances, economic shifts, and evolving social landscapes—it is inspiring to see people and organisations rise to the challenge."

The Top Employers Institute, which certifies organisations that implement outstanding people strategies, stated that more than 2,400 organisations across 125 countries or regions have been certified in 2025, positively impacting the lives of over 13 million employees worldwide.



VACANCY

OHORONGO CEMENT is operating a world class cement factory near Otavi in northern Namibia. This is one of the most modern cement plants in Africa and proudly Namibian. To ensure the continued excellence of this cement plant, we are looking for highly motivated employees who will contribute to different positions with their individual skills to the success of the plant. As an important player in the Namibian economy, Ohorongo Cement reduces unemployment, develops skills and delivers cement of world class quality to Namibia and abroad.

OHORONGO CEMENT has the following vacancy open for applications, and the position is based at Plant Sargberg, between Otavi and Tsumeb, Namibia:

• PRODUCTION ENGINEER

CLOSING DATE: 07 MARCH 2025

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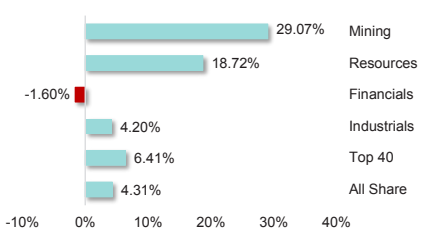
Commodities

Spot Gold	2939.89
Platinum	967.56
Palladium	952.87
Silver	32.58
Uranium	65.70
Brent Crude	74.58
Iron Ore	102.92
Copper	9551.89
Natural Gas	3.97
Lithium	9.85

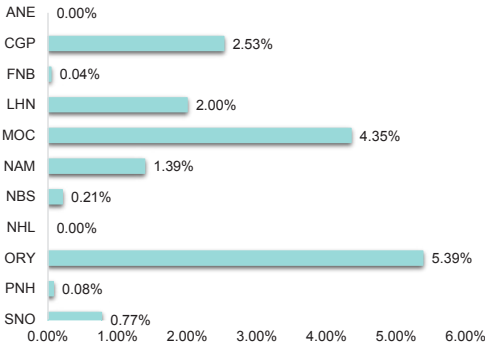
Currencies

USD/ZAR	18.3759
EUR/ZAR	19.2300
GBP/ZAR	23.1791
USD/CNY	7.2483
EUR/USD	1.0454
GBP/USD	1.2614
USD/RUB	92.2600
CPI	3.20%
Repo Rate	6.75%
Prime Rate	10.50%

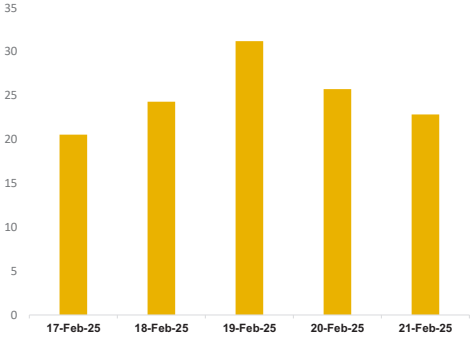
JSE Sectors: Year to Date in %



NSX Local Stocks: Year to Date in %



JSE ALL SHARE VALUE TRADED (ZAR BILLIONS)



Global Indices: Year to Date in %

