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THE

BRIEF

News Worth Knowing



Govt plans N\$1.045 billion student village project in Windhoek

MONDAY 21 JULY 2025

MAIN STORY



Please note picture for illustration purpose only

Govt plans N\$1.045 billion student village project in Windhoek

A government-backed student accommodation project, valued at N\$1.045 billion, aimed at housing around 3,000 students in 11 residential blocks ranging between three and four storeys, is moving forward to address the persistent shortage of student housing in Windhoek.

Crucial Dates

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

Private rental options in Windhoek were also found to fall short of acceptable living standards, further justifying the need for dedicated student housing.

The planned student village will be developed on a 16-hectare site in Khomasdal Extension 16. The project will be delivered through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) under a Design, Finance, Build, Operate, Maintain and Transfer model.

This follows the completion of a feasibility study, which is currently under review. Procurement will commence once transaction approval is granted by the Ministry of Finance.

According to documents seen by The Brief, the initiative is a response to rising university enrolments driven by the introduction of new academic programmes — growth that has outpaced the capacity of existing on-campus accommodation.

Private rental options in Windhoek were also found to fall short of acceptable living standards, further justifying the need for dedicated student housing.

The two erven earmarked for the

development, Erven 6508 and 6509, will be rezoned for general residential use and consolidated into a single parcel.

Environmental clearance for the project is currently underway. A project manager and engineer have been appointed, while environmental consultants are overseeing the environmental assessment process.

A Scoping Report and Environmental Management Plan have already been submitted as part of the application for an Environmental Clearance Certificate.

Once the required approvals are in place, procurement and construction will proceed under the supervision of the appointed implementing agency.

The implementing agency for the student village project is the Ministry of Higher Education, Technology and Innovation (MHETI), which now forms part of the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sport, Arts and Culture (MEIYSAC).



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NAB calls for boost in local rice production amid soaring imports

The Namibian Agronomic Board (NAB) has raised concern over the country's growing reliance on imported rice, warning that the current situation threatens national food security and demands urgent investment in

domestic cultivation.

According to the NAB's 2025 Market Intelligence Report, Namibia produces fewer than 150 tonnes of rice annually, while average consumption between 2019 and 2022 stood at 26,667 tonnes. In 2022



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alone, the country imported 28,317 tonnes at a cost of N\$314.1 million.

“There is a pressing need to introduce large-scale rice production in Namibia to address the increasing demand, targeting the Zambezi, Kavango, and North Central production zones, which have ample water resources,” the NAB said.

The Board noted that Namibia’s dependence on rice imports, primarily from South Africa, China, and Thailand, leaves the country exposed to price fluctuations and supply disruptions.

“Developing local rice production would create market opportunities for Namibian farmers and enhance the country’s self-sufficiency in grain production, thus reducing its dependency on rice imports,” the NAB stated.

Currently, rice is cultivated on a limited scale at Kalimbeza and the University of Namibia’s Ogongo Campus.

Kalimbeza reached a peak of 95 tonnes in 2020/21, while UNAM’s Ogongo site produced 14.2 tonnes in 2021/22, up from 10.5 tonnes in 2018/19. However, both projects remain far from meeting domestic demand.

“Rice cultivation in Namibia has the potential to become a major source of income and job creation, particularly at the household level and across the country,” the Board said.

On the global front, rice demand continues to rise.

The NAB reported that global consumption exceeded 520 million metric tonnes in 2022. Africa alone imports an average of 15.8 million tonnes annually, valued at around N\$116.7 billion. Within the SADC region, South Africa led with rice imports totalling one million tonnes, followed by Angola, Mozambique, and Madagascar.

“Both global and African rice consumption are on the rise, with global demand exceeding 520 million metric tonnes annually,” the NAB noted.

Despite small gains in local output, Namibia’s rice sector plays a limited role in the wider market. The Board highlighted the volatility of international prices and



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GIPF hereby invites qualified, competent and registered companies to submit bids for the under-mentioned:

Bid Number	Bid Description	Non-refundable Document Fee	Enquiries	Closing Date
CS/RFP/ GIPF- 01/2025	Survey Analysis Service Provider for GIPF for the 2025 – 2027 Financial Year Periods	N/A	Gisela Naris E: gnaris@gipf.com.na T: +264 61 205 1746	05 August 2025 at 12:00 p.m.
NCS/ RFP/GIPF- 01/2025	Implementation of GIPF File Plan	N/A	Julia Shipanga E: jshipanga@gipf.com.na T: +264 61 205 1745	06 August 2025 at 12:00 p.m.

Details of Bid Submission:
Sealed bids citing the bid number and detailing the services to be rendered should be posted or hand delivered to:

The Chairperson: GIPF Procurement Committee
GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS PENSION FUND
GIPF House, Ground Floor, Reception
Corner of Dr Kenneth David Kaunda and Goethe Street
P.O. Box 23500
Windhoek, Namibia

Proposals received after the deadlines will not be considered.

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There is a pressing need to introduce large-scale rice production in Namibia to address the increasing demand, targeting the Zambezi, Kavango, and North Central production zones, which have ample water resources.

significant variation in retail prices within the country, ranging from N\$56.09 to N\$168.28 per kilogram in 2023 depending on type and origin.

“To fully seize these opportunities, it is essential to establish a comprehensive information and knowledge base on global, continental, and regional rice production and marketing trends,” the NAB said.

In terms of trade, Namibia re-exported a modest 7.75 tonnes of rice to Zambia in 2022, valued at US\$4.8 million. Smaller

quantities were also sent to Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The NAB concluded that realising Namibia’s rice potential will require coordinated efforts, including public and private investment, technical support, and improved market infrastructure.

“Increased rice production could significantly benefit Namibian farmers and traders in the developing world, offering them more opportunities to grow their businesses,” the Board



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The price of a swipe



Every year Namibians are treated to staged announcements about banking fees. A card swipe here, a bundle package there, and pages of claims about “financial inclusion.”

What no one explains is the system behind the fees—the layers of agreements and cross-charges that decide who pays what every time a card is used.

Now, thanks to an investigation by the Namibian Competition Commission, a little of that machinery has been forced into the light. The Commission’s probe into the Payments Association of Namibia (PAN) and the country’s commercial banks found that, for years, they didn’t simply compete on fees. They agreed on them.

Through a Payment Clearing House Card Schedule, interchange fees—the charges banks levy on each other for card transactions—were fixed across the industry. The Commission’s own summary makes it clear: instead of each bank setting its own rates based on its own costs, they collectively agreed a schedule. That is textbook price-fixing, and under Section 23 of the Competition Act, it’s prohibited.

PAN has now admitted the contravention and entered into a consent agreement, with a penalty of just under N\$320,000 pending court confirmation. That sum is a rounding error compared to the decades of fees collected under a structure that denied customers the

benefit of genuine competition.

This matters because interchange fees are not abstract. They are baked into every card payment in Namibia. A retailer pays them to their acquiring bank. Those costs roll into the prices of goods and services. Customers see only the surface charge—if they see anything at all. The system’s complexity shields the real economics from scrutiny.

When banks hike charges and frames it as digital progress, that increase sits on top of an already-fixed interchange layer. These announcements are published, word for word, in media outlets that rarely interrogate them. And all of it happens against the backdrop of month-end ATM queues, a blunt reminder that genuine access and affordability are still elusive.

The Commission’s findings should change the conversation. This isn’t just about one year’s fee sheet. It’s about how payment systems are governed, how agreements are structured, and how a lack of transparency keeps customers in the dark. Until interchange rates are set through real competition rather than collective agreement, and until banks stop dressing regulatory disclosures in marketing fluff, no amount of app upgrades or free SMS alerts will make the system fairer.

Namibians deserve more than rehearsed announcements. They deserve to know exactly where their money goes each time they swipe.

****Briefly is a weekly column that’s opinionated and analytical. It sifts through the noise to make sense of the numbers, trends and headlines shaping business and the economy — with insight, wit and just enough scepticism to keep things interesting. THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ARE NOT OUR OWN; we simply relay them as part of the conversation.***



MTC Opens 38th Mobile Home in Omuthiya, eyes further expansion

MTC has increased its number of Mobile Homes to 38 with the launch of a new outlet in Omuthiya, Oshikoto Region.

The new shop, opened on Friday, is the first in the town and will serve residents of Omuthiya and nearby villages who previously had to travel to other towns such

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as Ondangwa for basic MTC services.

MTC Chief Commercial Officer Octivious Kahiya said the decision to set up in Omuthiya followed strong customer growth in the area.

“MTC’s intent and desire to have a presence in Omuthiya has been on the planning radar for nearly two years. What gave further motivation to this was the astonishing customer growth witnessed not only in Omuthiya but also in the region and from the surrounding constituencies,” he said. Kahiya added that MTC will continue expanding its network this year.

“Within this calendar year, we anticipate opening stores in the north-eastern part of the country. Emphasis will be given to Katima Mulilo, Divundu and Rundu,” he said.

Residents welcomed the new facility.

“I will no longer have to spend money on transport fares to Ondangwa for MTC

services. We are happy, and we welcome MTC in our town,” said Sakaria Shivute, 58, a resident of Omuthiya.

Information and Communication Technology Minister Emma Theofelus, who officiated the launch, said all Namibians deserve access to digital services.

“Omuthiya is the capital town of Oshikoto Region, and the residents there, just like any other, deserve access to quality ICT services,” she said.

She urged locals to take ownership of the facility, calling it “development on our doorstep”.

Oshikoto Governor Sacky Kathindi said the new shop will support rural communities and small businesses.

“This mobile home stands as a symbol of progress. The geographical location should no longer be a limitation for accessing mobile services or digital tools that can uplift livelihoods,” he said.



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The impact of talent management on organizational success

By Junias Erasmus and Ester Shangadi

In today's dynamic business environment, the strength of an organization lies not only in its financial capital, cutting-edge technology, or market share but significantly in its people, the human capital that drives innovation, productivity, and long-term sustainability.

Talent management has emerged as a critical strategic function, encompassing the systematic attraction, development, retention, and deployment of high-potential employees.

When executed effectively, talent management not only enhances organizational agility and competitiveness but also becomes a cornerstone of lasting success.

Talent management is more than a buzzword; it is a deliberate and continuous investment in people who can deliver on business objectives. Forward-thinking organizations understand that high-performing employees do not just appear, they are cultivated.

A robust talent management framework allows companies to identify skills gaps,



“

Talent management is more than a buzzword; it is a deliberate and continuous investment in people who can deliver on business objectives.

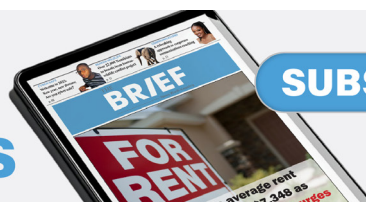
align individual performance with corporate goals, and create career pathways that inspire growth.

This alignment ensures that the right people are in the right roles, performing at their highest potential. When employees feel valued, seen, and invested in, they are more engaged and motivated, translating into measurable improvements in efficiency, innovation, and customer satisfaction.

Effective talent management reduces costly turnover and enhances institutional knowledge retention. In competitive markets, the loss of top talent can disrupt operations and diminish morale.

Organizations that prioritize succession

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Effective talent management reduces costly turnover and enhances institutional knowledge retention.

planning, mentorship, and leadership development are better positioned to weather change, ensuring continuity and resilience. These initiatives also build a strong internal pipeline of future leaders, reducing dependency on external recruitment and reinforcing organizational culture from within.

Talent management strengthens the employer brand. When an organization is known for nurturing talent and providing meaningful growth opportunities, it becomes an employer of choice, attracting top-tier candidates who want to be part of a values-driven and forward-thinking team.

This, in turn, creates a virtuous cycle: strong talent begets better performance, which further enhances the company's reputation and ability to attract even more skilled professionals.

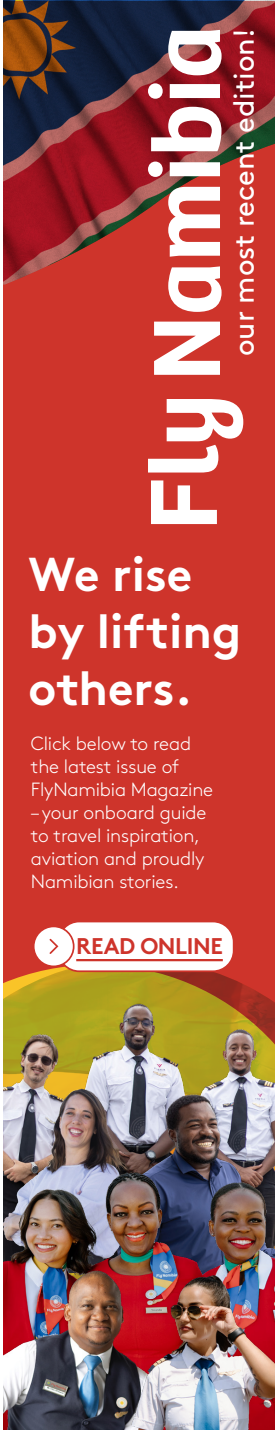
While systems, policies, and technologies play their part, it is ultimately people who innovate, collaborate, and execute. Companies that fail to invest in talent risk

stagnation, disengagement, and ultimately, irrelevance in the marketplace.

On the other hand, those that recognize talent as a strategic asset will not only survive but thrive. Talent management is not an HR responsibility alone; it is a leadership imperative.

Talent management is no longer a 'nice-to-have' but a decisive factor in organizational success. The businesses that will lead the future are those that lead their people well today. By creating environments where talent is discovered, nurtured, and empowered, organizations unlock their full potential and secure a legacy of excellence.

***A dual-perspective analysis and reflection by Junias Erasmus and Ester Shangadi. This article is written in the authors' personal capacities and does not reflect the views or positions of their respective employers. For inquiries, contact them at Junias99@gmail.com or Oufroester@gmail.com**



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Telecom to roll out high-speed fibre in Usakos under smart city agreement

Telecom Namibia and the Usakos Town Council have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to roll out new fibre infrastructure in the town, as part of efforts to transform Usakos into a smart city.

According to a joint statement by the two parties, the partnership aims to improve digital connectivity, stimulate economic

development, and enhance access to public services. “The agreement outlines a joint commitment to build modern ICT infrastructure that will support the town council’s current and future development initiatives.”

The planned fibre network is expected to deliver high-speed internet and enable value-added services across several

sectors, including education, healthcare and small business development.

“Partnerships with entities like Telecom Namibia are not just welcomed – they are essential. They lay the foundation for sustainable economic growth, improve public service delivery, and bring us closer to our vision of a connected, thriving Erongo Region,” Erongo Regional Governor Natalia/Goagoses said during the signing ceremony.

/Goagoses also urged the public to help protect telecommunications infrastructure from vandalism and theft, warning: “Damage to these systems carries a high cost and poses a serious threat to achieving development objectives.”

Telecom Namibia noted that the agreement builds on its ongoing smart city collaboration with OMDis in Oranjemund, where it deployed 67.6 kilometres of new fibre routes.

According to the company, the Oranjemund project contributed to expanding its national fibre network, which now spans more than 13,000 kilometres.

“Reliable connectivity is at the heart of any smart city,” said Telecom Namibia CEO Stanley Shanapinda.

“Our experience in Oranjemund has demonstrated how critical connectivity is to the success of a smart city ecosystem. We are confident that Telecom Namibia is the ideal partner to support

Usakos in becoming a digitally advanced, inclusive, sustainable and thriving community.”

Usakos Town Council CEO Lesley Grand Goreseb described the partnership as a turning point for the town.

“This partnership with Telecom Namibia is a pivotal moment for Usakos. We are excited to embark on this journey to become a smart city, bringing unparalleled digital opportunities and a higher quality of life to our residents,” he said.

“This collaboration will undoubtedly unlock new avenues for economic growth and innovation within our community.”

According to Telecom Namibia, the fibre services to be rolled out in Usakos will be based on the Oranjemund model, with internet speeds ranging from 8 Mbps to 120 Mbps.

The telco said this model would serve as a blueprint for future smart city projects across Namibia.

“This project will set a benchmark for other towns. It will require closer cooperation between town councils and the ICT sector to realise smart homes and businesses. We are positioned and experienced to replicate this success in other towns, delivering significant value through future-proof fibre technology that offers lower maintenance requirements and increased speed capacity,” Shanapinda added.



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Leadable or manageable: The true test of leadership lies in the followers

By Trophy Shapange

A good leader does not merely cast vision, they adapt their approach based on who is in the room.

While some followers are self-motivated, driven by purpose and potential, others require structure, deadlines, and the occasional colour-coded spreadsheet to stay on track.

This reveals an important truth: the success of leadership should not be judged solely by the charisma or authority of the leader, but by their ability to respond to the needs, nature, and readiness of their followers.

As part of my leadership development journey, I have drawn deep inspiration from two remarkable men, my father and my Godfather, who led our community side by side, guiding us toward unity and peaceful coexistence.

Their leadership was not built on dominance, but on respect, empathy, and service. What made their leadership particularly effective was their ability to adapt their approach based on who they were leading and the nature of the decision at hand.

They understood that not every situation required the same style, and not every person responded to the same form of guidance. By adjusting their strategy to suit the context and the people involved, they were able to lead with both wisdom and impact.

At home, my father had a rule that



Leadership requires followership, but not just any kind, leadable followership.

captured this philosophy perfectly: "If I cannot lead you, I will manage you." And trust me, that was not a motivational quote, it was a survival warning. Looking back, we often wondered whether we were being raised or project-managed.

That principle, humorous as it may seem, shaped not only our upbringing but also our personal development. It left a lasting impression on me, and today I find it increasingly relevant across all spheres of life, personal, corporate, and even political.

Leadership remains one of the most discussed, yet most misunderstood, concepts in these spaces. Too often, we define it by the person at the top, whether a CEO, president, team captain, or manager.

But leadership is not only about the figure in front; it is just as much about those who follow. Without them, leadership is incomplete. More importantly, it is defined and shaped by the type of followers it seeks to inspire or manage.

Let me be clear: the concept of "If I cannot lead you; I will manage you", is not a failure of leadership, it is a response to the reality

that not everyone is leadable.

Leadership is a two-way street. A leader can only lead those who are ready to be led. The rest must be managed.

We often romanticize leadership as a universal solution to all organizational and societal problems. “We need a new leader.” “The leader has failed us.” But how often do we reflect on the nature of the followers?

Have we cultivated a culture that welcomes leadership, that respects direction, accountability, and vision? Or do we merely exist to resist, complain, and deflect responsibility?

Leadership requires followership, but not just any kind, leadable followership. Being leadable means, you are teachable, adaptable, disciplined, and committed to a collective goal. It means you are willing to trust the process, give the benefit of the doubt, when necessary, and hold yourself accountable before pointing fingers.

In contrast, those who resist direction, question everything from a place of ego or insecurity, or simply show up without a willingness to contribute meaningfully, these individuals are not leadable. They can only be managed.

In essence, management is necessary when people lack internal discipline. It relies on rules, controls, deadlines, KPIs, and constant supervision. It is administrative, not transformational. Managing is about containment; leading is about liberation.

A team of leadable individuals allows a leader to focus on vision, strategy, and growth. A team that is unleadable forces the leader to constantly course-correct, micromanage, enforce discipline, and fix what should already be functioning.

This means that if you find yourself being managed, closely monitored, frequently corrected, or consistently excluded from strategic decisions, pause and reflect. It may not be about your leader at all. It might be about you.

And if you are open to guidance, take initiative without waiting to be told, accept feedback with a constructive attitude, and align yourself with the greater mission rather than doing the bare minimum, you demonstrate the qualities of a leadable individual.

Being led is a privilege. It means someone believes in your capacity to grow and contribute. Being managed

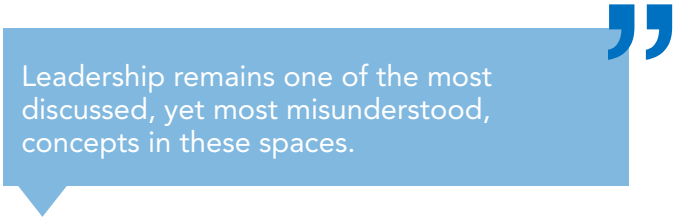
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Leadership remains one of the most discussed, yet most misunderstood, concepts in these spaces.

is a necessity when trust, discipline, or initiative is missing. When your leader spends more time managing you than mentoring you, something is broken, and it may not be them.

Great leaders do not just lead, they adapt. They study their followers and respond accordingly. When they find people who are mature, visionary, and self-aware, they lead. They inspire, delegate, and elevate.

When they encounter people who are disorganized, resistant, or immature, they shift to management. They supervise, instruct, and contain.

This does not mean the leader has failed. It means the strategy has shifted. A shepherd does not lead wolves the way they lead sheep.

A general does not lead undisciplined recruits the way they lead battle-hardened soldiers. Leadership is about situational intelligence, not one-size-fits-all charisma.

Therefore, instead of constantly evaluating our leaders, perhaps it is time we evaluated ourselves. Are we leadable?

Do we inspire leadership, or do we exhaust it? Are we aligned with the mission, or are we merely present for the

paycheck or popularity? Organizations, families, and nations do not rise because of brilliant leaders alone. They rise because of the synergy between visionary leaders and mature followers. Both must be present. Both must grow.

It is easy to blame poor leadership. But sometimes, the problem is not that we lack good leaders.

The problem is that we are not ready to be led. Until we make ourselves leadable, we will continue to be managed, supervised, and micromanaged, and we will call it oppression instead of self-inflicted limitation.

So, before you ask your leader to lead better, ask yourself: am I leadable, or merely manageable?

In leadership, as in life, the best outcomes are not created in isolation. They are coauthored by leaders who dare to lead and followers who dare to be led.

****Trophy Shapange is the Managing Director of Lebela Fund Managers. The views expressed in this article are his own and not those of his employer.***



NamibRe appoints Mbahupu Tjivikua to Board of Directors

NamibRe has appointed Mbahupu Hippy Tjivikua as a new member of its Board of Directors, effective 1 July 2025.

The reinsurance company said Tjivikua brings over two decades of leadership experience across strategic operations, stakeholder management, transport, logistics, and project implementation.

He currently serves as Chief Executive Officer of the Walvis

Bay Corridor Group (WBCG), holds a Master of Science in Operations Management and Leadership from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in the United States, as well as several other professional qualifications from international institutions.

Tjivikua becomes the eighth member of the board, chaired by Faniel Kisting.

NamibRe Managing Director Patty Karuaihe-Martin also sits on the board as an ex-officio member.

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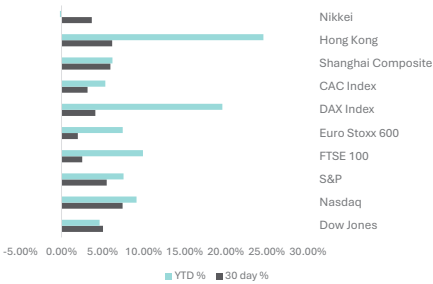
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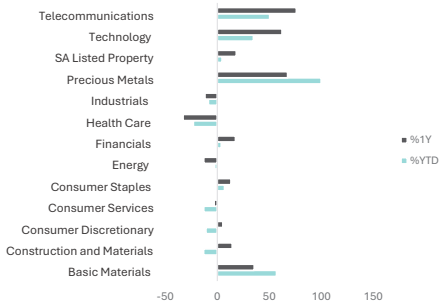
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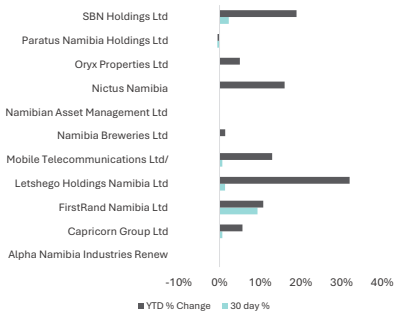
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