REVENUE
Debmarine Namibia's revenue drops 38% to N\$8.5 billion

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The need for human oversight in AI applications



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News Worth Knowing



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#### Bread (from 6.8% to 14.0%) pand Cake

orice levels of Bread, cake flour (from -2.4% to 21.5%); .0% to 12.0 %).

### O&L eyes international markets for new Model supermarkets, rules out wholesale for now

hlthaver & List (O&L) plans to expand its relaunched Model supermarket brand into international markets while strengthening its presence in Namibia's retail sector

The company is currently in the process of converting its 19 existing stores, which operate under the Pick n Pay brand, to the Model brand, with the first Model supermarkets set to launch on 1 July 2025

This comes as the transition is set to begin on 1 July 2025 and is expected to take approximately two years.

O&L Chairperson Sven Thieme confirmed the group's full commitment to rolling out its supermarket brand following the termination of its franchise agreement with Pick n Pay South Africa, effective 30 June 2025.

"The motivation behind this model marks the beginning of a new era of being fully Namibian. The journey actually started in 1965, when we had to buy a supermarket as a group to sell food and vegetables. At the time, Midgard didn't grant us a licence, so Mr. List purchased a supermarket, which led us into retail," Thieme said.

He further noted that O&L's decision to revive the Model brand aligns with its longstanding history in the Namibian retail industry.

"The name 'Model' is still widely recognised, making it a smart move, not only due to its historical significance but also because it already carries strong brand equity,"



#### 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 name 'Model' is still widely recognised making it a smart move, not only due to its historical significance but also because it already carries strong brand equity.

Thieme added. The company has ruled out wholesale operations for now, prioritising the conversion of its existing stores and a phased expansion strategy.

"For now, it is solely retail. I don't have information on future wholesale plans, but there will definitely be an expansion of the product range over the years. Additionally, this will enable us to expand beyond Namibia," Thieme stated.

Graeme Mouton, Managing Director at Pick n Pay Namibia and the incoming Managing Director for Model supermarkets, outlined the company's vision for the transformation.

"Customers can look forward to a fresh, modern and reimagined retail space that caters to their evolving needs. With a strong focus on local sourcing, we aim to empower Namibian producers and celebrate our home-grown existence," Mouton said.

The first Model supermarkets under O&L's new strategy are set to launch on 1 July 2025, with the company currently in the implementation stage of the transition.

















## Debmarine Namibia's revenue drops 38% to N\$8.5 billion

ebmarine Namibia has reported a 38% decline in revenue to N\$8.5 billion for 2024, attributing the drop to reduced diamond prices and lower production levels. The country produced 2.234 million carats of rough diamonds, marking a 4% decrease from the 2.327 million carats mined in 2023.

Debmarine Namibia Chief Executive Officer Willy Mertens acknowledged the subdued financial performance over the past two years but assured stakeholders of the company's financial resilience.

"Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortisation (EBITDA) reduced by 86% to just under a billion Namibia Dollars, in fact at N\$951 million. Let's look at the movement in EBITDA from N\$6.76 billion in 2022, price or market taking out N\$2.3 billion in 2023 and another N\$4.8 billion in 2024—that is a massive N\$7.1 billion over the past two years," Mertens said.

He attributed the decline to lower diamond prices and production adjustments made in response to market conditions, leading to a 91% drop in free cash flow. Despite a 13% reduction in total assets, Debmarine Namibia maintains a strong asset base valued at N\$13 billion, with equity standing at approximately



N\$4 billion.

To enhance efficiency and recovery rates, the company has invested in two new crawlers for the Benguela Gem vessel. The upgrades are expected to improve recovery speeds by 20% and enable access to different geological deposits.

The downturn comes amid a 3.5% decline in global demand for natural diamond jewelry in 2024, exacerbated by increasing polished stock levels in the midstream sector. Polished



stock levels surged to US\$2 billion in July 2024 before reducing to US\$1.2 billion due to a constrained supply of rough diamonds.

Executive Director of Mines and Energy, Penda Ithindi, highlighted the potential impact of G7 sanctions on Russia and Iran, particularly regarding revenue flows and the technological infrastructure required for verification processes.

"In light of these challenges, it is crucial to take proactive and strategic measures to stabilize the diamond industry. This response must go beyond cost-cutting and should focus on securing the industry's future and

### Call for Trustee Nominations



Namibia Health Plan is the leading medical aid fund in Namibia. A board of elected and appointed Trustees manages the Fund. All Trustees serve on the Board for a period of 3 years, where after they retire, but may be re-elected or re-appointed.

The Board of Trustees currently has **four** vacancies which require the expertise of a principal member in any of the following areas:

1x Investments | 1x Legal | 2x Marketing

Only nominations that fit these roles shall be considered.

#### In terms of the Fund's rules, any Trustee shall not be:

- Under the age of 21 years.
- · A person who is not a principal member of the Fund.
- A director, member, employee or other official of any organisation serving as the Administrator of the Fund.
- A director, member, employee or other official of any organisation rendering services to the Administrator in connection with the business of the Fund.
- · The Principal Officer, Auditor, Consultant of the Fund.
- · Anyone who has been declared insolvent.
- Anyone with a court judgement granted against him/her (including a default judgement, finding of fraud, financial mismanagement, misrepresentation or dishonesty) or a notice recorded by Transunion ITC in the last 5 years.
- · Anyone with a criminal record.
- · A person of unsound mind.

If you wish to nominate a Trustee to serve on the Board for the next 3 years, the nomination forms are available on our website at www.nhp.com.na.

Please submit your nomination to nhpagm@nhp.na by 12:00pm on Friday, 28 March 2025.

For enquiries, please call +264 61 242 821

All NHP members are invited to attend the 2025 Annual General Meeting to be held on Friday, 27 June 2025.







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protecting the livelihoods that depend on it," Ithindi stated.

He acknowledged the difficult decisions being made amid the industry downturn, including potential job losses. However, he emphasized the need for a human-centered approach in all strategies aimed at mitigating the impact. "The government remains committed to supporting the industry through collaborative measures to navigate the downturn. The conversation has started, and we will continue working closely with stakeholders, including mining companies, employees, and impacted communities, to develop sustainable solutions," he added.

### Call for Appointed Board Member



Namibia Health Plan is the leading medical aid fund in Namibia. A board of elected and appointed Trustees manages the Fund. All Trustees serve on the Board for a period of 3 years, where after they retire, but may be re-elected or re-appointed.

The Board of Trustees currently has **one** vacancy for an appointed Board member, who must be a principal member of the Fund and a long-standing health professional in the medical field with at least 10 years of experience, practicing in any medical discipline, including, but not limited to:

• General Practitioner • Dentist • Hospital Administrator

The prospective candidate must be a Namibian citizen and a registered practitioner with the Health Professions Council of Namibia, with a keen interest in the medical aid funding industry.

#### In terms of the Fund's rules, any Trustee shall not be:

- · Under the age of 21 years.
- · A person who is not a principal member of the Fund.
- A director, member, employee or other official of any organisation serving as the Administrator of the Fund.
- A director, member, employee or other official of any organisation rendering services to the Administrator in connection with the business of the Fund.
- . The Principal Officer, Auditor, Consultant of the Fund.
- · Anyone who has been declared insolvent.
- Anyone with a court judgement granted against him/her (including a default judgement, finding of fraud, financial mismanagement, misrepresentation or dishonesty) or a notice recorded by Transunion ITC in the last 5 years.
- · Anyone with a criminal record.
- A person of unsound mind.

Interested individuals who comply with the above requirements are invited to submit their comprehensive Curriculum Vitae, HPCNA registration and other relevant documents to the Fund's Principal Officer at principalofficer@nhp.na by 12:00pm on Friday, 28 March 2025.

For enquiries, please call +264 61 242 821









## Paratus Namibia invests N\$125.2 million in infrastructure expansion

Paratus Namibia Holdings Limited increased its infrastructure investments, injecting N\$125.2 million in the six months ending 31 December

2024—up from N\$75 million in the same period of 2023.

The company allocated N\$53.6 million to its transformation project, with work-in-



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progress valued at N\$124 million by the end of the reporting period.

"At the end of the period, work-in-progress amounts to N\$124 million and relates to this project. The majority of the capital expenditure was focused on capacity and network expansion to reach more customers nationally," the company noted.



The investment follows Paratus Namibia's 16.43% revenue growth for the period, with 6.5% of that growth attributed to N\$18.4 million in dividends from surplus funds—a sharp increase from N\$100,000 in 2023.

"The strong contract revenue growth for the period was primarily driven by the signup of new customers across Namibia and higher occupancy at the Armada Data Center. The decrease in HEPS (Headline Earnings Per Share) and BEPS (Basic Earnings Per Share) can be attributed to the increase in the number of ordinary shares in issue, compared to the 31 December 2023 period, following the rights issue completed in June 2024," the report stated.

At the end of the reporting period, proceeds from the rights issue were still being utilized for the deployment of revenue-generating infrastructure.

"Revenue from this infrastructure is expected to materialize and gradually ramp up from the second half of the 2025 financial year as new customers join the expanded network," Paratus said.

Meanwhile, Paratus Telecommunications (Proprietary) Limited (Paratus Namibia), the operating entity, recorded recurring revenue of N\$271 million (31 December 2023: N\$249 million), reflecting an 8.8% growth.

"Non-recurring revenue, which mainly represents Local Area Network installations in the commercial office space and the sale of telecommunication equipment, amounted to N\$34.5 million (31 December 2023: N\$25.8 million)," the results noted.

This represents a 33.4% increase, despite management's strategic focus on growing recurring revenue over lower-margin, nonrecurring revenue.

Paratus Namibia reported a net profit before tax of N\$12.7 million, down from N\$32 million in 2023, while EBITDA stood at N\$112.5 million, compared to N\$121.3 million in the prior period.

## We all have a strategy until we get punched in the mouth

By Onesmus Keudaneko Joseph

If you are familiar with the corporate world, you have likely seen companies unveiling grand strategies, outlining bold ambitions for the years ahead. Yet, despite these bold declarations, many fails to achieve desired outcomes. If strategy is meant to drive success, why organisations and companies fail?

As a practitioner, I witnessed well-crafted but more often than not, I find that firms have no real strategy at all. Instead, they have plans and ideas without a clear strategic direction. This fundamental misconception of strategy lies at the heart of poor performance and, ultimately, corporate failure. As a contemporary writer, I feel compelled to dissect this powerful concept; to clarify what strategy truly is and how firms should approach it.

On the onset, strategy is a powerful and transformative discipline that has occupied my thoughts for years. Its relevance has increased recently due to volatility and complexity of business landscape, where disruption and competition are the order of the day. The term strategy comes from the Greek words strategos and strategia. Strategos means "the art of the general." it highlights the ability to lead both oneself and a team into a future they wish to create. On the other hand, strategia refers to the content of the strategy; the disruptive, ground-breaking ideas that redefine

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On the onset, strategy is a powerful and transformative discipline that has occupied my thoughts for years.

businesses and industries.

Historically, the concept of strategy originates from military practice; it refers to the art of planning and conducting military campaigns, deploying resources, and securing victory. In business, just as in warfare, strategy is about making deliberate choices that create a sustainable unique value. It calls for bold, disruptive thinking that reshapes industries. The on the top of choice is choosing what not to do. The best companies do not succeed because they do everything but because they focus on doing a few things and doing them exceptionally well. The call of strategy is to answer critical questions such as How do we compete? What are we going to do next? What are we truly good at? and how do we differentiate in a way that others cannot?

A simple strategic test I often use goes like; What can a business do that customers want, but competitors can't offer? Just think of that.

Many companies fails because they treat strategy as a static document rather than a dynamic, evolving process.

In reality, no strategy remains perfect once it meets real-world challenges. Mike Tyson said in an interview after a match, "Everyone has a plan until they get punched in the mouth." Many organisations craft detailed strategies but fail to adapt when circumstances change. True strategy requires continuous learning, agility, and resilience.

A perfect example of strategic adaptation is Yango's entry into Namibia's transport sector. Instead of following traditional taxi models, Yango leveraged technology to create a digital ride-hailing service, offering greater convenience and efficiency.

Think of the MTC Maris product; it's revolutionising banking and mobile money in our market.

It is a game changer. Another example is Netflix, which started as a DVD rental business but foresaw the shift to online streaming before its competitors did.

Had Netflix stuck rigidly to its original model, it would have become obsolete.

Strategy is not just a document or a grand plan; it is a mindset and a structured approach to creating sustainable value. Organisations for the future, understand that no plan survives first contact with reality unchanged.

They view strategy as a living, breathing

process that requires constant reassessment and adaptation.

Take it from me, strategy is not about complexity; it is about clarity. It is not about predicting the future; it is about shaping it. So, ask yourself: Does your organisation have a strategy, or do you just have a something else?

\*Onesmus Keudaneko Joseph is Business Strategy **Practitoner** unith strong focus on foresight strategic and futures literacy. currentlu He is the Manager Intellectual Property **Enforcement** and Frameworks at BIPA. writes in his He personal capacity.



#### PROJECT FINANCE DIRECTOR

Oluwe Project Engineers CC is a project management firm based in Windhoek. For the above position, we are looking to employ on a 5-year contract basis, a mature individual with a strong financial background and experience at an executive level, coupled with construction industry-specific IT and internal control systems knowledge with a focus on the road construction and maintenance sector.

#### Key attributes:

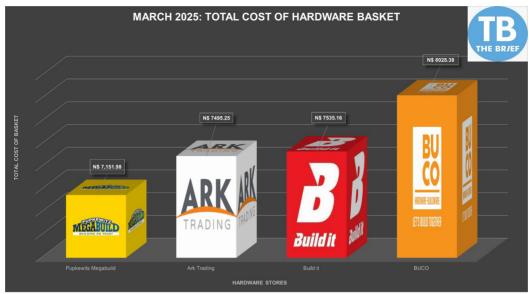
- ✓ Leadership acumen
- ✓ Excellent project management skills
- ✓ Financial modelling expert-level competency
- ✓ Analytical
- ✓ Excellent communication & report-writing skills

#### Qualifications and Experience

- Chartered Accountant
- · Construction management qualification will be an added advantage
- 5+ years' experience in the construction sector at senior managerial level

Closing date:31 March 2025

Please forward your application accompanied by a detailed CV and certified copies of qualifications to info@oluwe.com.



## Pupkewitz still the cheapest in March Hardware Price Survey

Pupkewitz Megabuild has maintained its position as the most affordable hardware retailer for the third consecutive month in 2025, solidifying its reputation as the go-to choice for budgetconscious builders and homeowners.

Meanwhile, the March hardware price survey reveals that BUCO has surpassed its competitors as the most expensive retailer, with prices increasing by 3.88% compared to February 2025.

March 2025 Hardware Price Rankings (Total Cost of Standard Basket)

Pupkewitz Megabuild – N\$ 7,151.98 ( 0.73% increase than February)

Ark Trading – N\$ 7,495.25 (11.80% decrease)

Build-it – N\$ 7,535.16 (2.59% decrease)

BUCO – N\$ 8,028.38 ( 3.88% increase, now the most expensive)





#### **Price Shifts and Trends**

Ark Trading recorded the biggest price drop (-11.80%), reinforcing its reputation as the most budget-friendly hardware retailer.

BUCO's prices surged the most (+3.88%), officially making it the priciest retailer for March 2025.

Pupkewitz Megabuild (+0.73%) and Build-it (-2.59%) remained relatively stable, with Ark Trading now ranking slightly cheaper than Build-it.

Spotlight on Key Materials (Price Movements from February 2025)

| Material                           | Pupkewitz<br>Megabuild | Ark<br>Trading | Build it    | BUCO        |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| 32.5 Cement<br>(Ohorongo,<br>50kg) | N\$101.99              | N\$102.49      | N\$101.50   | N\$102.02   |
| Aluminium<br>Sliding Door          | N\$2,499.00            | N\$2,774.17    | N\$2,734.76 | N\$3135.57  |
| Interior<br>Hardboard<br>Door      | N\$269.00              | N\$415.75      | N\$298.20   | N\$302.21   |
| Paint (20L)                        | N\$988.00              | N\$939.23      | N\$1,111.99 | N\$1,031.08 |

#### **Survey Overview**

The monthly hardware price survey, conducted by The Brief, tracks construction material prices across Namibia's leading retailers. This survey serves as a vital resource for contractors, businesses, and homeowners looking for cost-effective options.

Stay tuned for April's update to see how prices shift next month!

#### **Surveyed Items List:**

- Roofing Galvanized IBR Copper Tube 460 Class o
- Aluminium Window (Bronze)
- Aluminium Sliding Door (Bronze)
- Brick 7 MPA
- Brickforce 150MM 15M Roll
- Brickforce 75MM 15M Roll
- Lintel Concrete 1200X110X75MM
- Lintel Concrete 1800X110X75MM
- Lintel Concrete 900X110X75MM
- Ceiling Board 1200X3000X6.4MM
- Door Frame Steel 813X2032X115X1MM
- Lockset 2 Lever
- Interior Hardboard Door 813X2032MM
- 32.5 Cement Ohorongo
- 42.5 Cement Ohorongo
- Paint 20 Liters



## Namibia processes over 3,000 e-visa applications in two weeks

amibia has processed more than 3,000 electronic visa-on-arrival applications within two weeks of launching its new online visa system, the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security has announced.

The e-visa platform, introduced to streamline entry for nationals from countries that have not granted Namibia reciprocal visa exemptions, will officially take effect on April 1, 2025.

"This milestone reflects Namibia's commitment to seamless travel and increased accessibility for visitors. Eligible travellers can apply online in advance, receive an approved e-visa, and enjoy a

hassle-free arrival experience at designated entry points," the ministry said.

Under the new visa regime, fees are set at N\$1,600 (US\$90) for applicants from non-African countries and N\$1,200 (US\$70) for citizens of African nations. The system is designed to ensure reciprocity, meaning travellers from countries that extend similar visa privileges to Namibians will benefit from the streamlined process.

The policy applies to nationals from 31 countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, France, Australia, Japan, and several European and Central Asian nations.



### The need for human oversight in Al applications

#### By Stantin Siebritz

In the realm of artificial intelligence (AI), the line between reality and fabrication can sometimes blur, leading to what experts term "AI hallucinations."

These occurrences underscore the critical necessity for human oversight, especially when AI-generated outputs serve as foundations for real-world industry applications.

#### **Understanding AI Hallucinations**

AI hallucinations refer to instances where AI systems produce outputs that are plausible-sounding but are either incorrect or entirely fabricated. This phenomenon arises because AI models, particularly those in natural language processing (NLP), generate responses based on patterns in the data they were trained on, without a true understanding of the information. Consequently, they might



The potential for AI to generate inaccurate or misleading information necessitates the involvement of human subject matter experts.

"hallucinate" facts or details that don't exist.

#### **Examples Across Domains**

1. Natural Language Processing (NLP): AI chatbots might generate authoritative-sounding text that is factually incorrect. For instance, an AI might fabricate legal cases or medical conditions that have

no basis in reality.

Image/Video AI-driven Generation: image tools can produce visuals that are surreal or nonsensical. A notable example involves AIgenerated videos where human figures perform physically impossible resulting movements, in eerie and unrealistic portravals.

**3. Coding Generation:** AI systems designed to write code can sometimes produce syntactically



correct but functionally flawed code. These "hallucinations" can introduce subtle bugs, leading to software that behaves unpredictably or insecurely.

#### The Imperative for Human Oversight

The potential for AI to generate inaccurate or misleading information necessitates the involvement of human subject matter experts. Their role is to critically evaluate and validate AI outputs before they are applied in real-world scenarios. This oversight ensures that decisions, products, or services built

upon AI-generated content are accurate, reliable, and safe

### Case in Point: Legal Industry Missteps

pertinent example highlighting consequences of unchecked AI use occurred in South Africa, Alaw firm, Surendra Singh and Associates. faced severe repercussions after allegedly using AI to draft court papers without proper oversight. court not only dismissed the submissions but also ordered the firm to cover the legal costs from its own funds and referred the matter to the Legal Practice Council for further action. This incident underscores the dangers of relying solely on AI without human verification, especially in fields where accuracy is paramount.

### Drawing Parallels: "The Mask" Analogy

To illustrate the importance of human oversight in AI applications, consider the 1994 film "The Mask," starring Jim Carrey as Stanley Ipkiss. In the movie, Stanley, a mild-mannered bank clerk, discovers a mysterious mask that transforms him into a green-faced, zoot-suited trickster with reality-bending powers. While the mask unleashes his suppressed desires and grants him extraordinary abilities, it also leads him into chaotic and uncontrollable situations when left unchecked.

This narrative mirrors the potential pitfalls



#### **VACANCY**

#### **CHINESE CUISINE CHEF**

The incumbent will report to the Head of Administration

#### **ROLE ACCOUNTABILITIES:**

- Ensure all Health, Safety and Environment standards and policies are adhered to.
- Lead by example through compliance with the company purpose and values.
- Ensure all food preparation adheres to safety, health, and hygiene standards.
- Preparation of food for the guests at the Company Guest House.
- Develop and design seasonal or permanent menus, focusing on traditional Chinese flavors and dishes.
- Managing kitchen inventory and ensure ingredients are stocked and ordered as needed.
- Oversee the cleanliness and organization of the kitchen.
- Ad hoc tasks as required.

#### QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED:

- Grade 12 certificate with a Level 2 National Certificate in Chinese cuisine chef qualification authorized by Chinese Institution or equivalent.
- A minimum of ten (10) or more years' experience in Chinese cuisine.
- Proficient in Chinese cooking techniques.
- Skilled at adapting traditional recipes while preserving authentic flavors and introducing new ideas to the menu.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills in both English and Mandarin.

#### **CLOSING DATE: MONDAY 28 MARCH 2025, AT 16H00**

Please forward application to the email: stsrecruitment3@sinomine.na
Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.
Applicants, who are not contacted within two weeks after the closing date, should consider their application unsuccessful.

The recruitment process will be administered as prescribed by Namibian Affirmative Action Act. Women and person with disability are encouraged to apply.

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#### **APPLICATION PROCEDURES:**

All applications meeting the minimum requirements must be accompanied by a non-returnable detailed curriculum vitae, certified copies of qualifications and identification documents. Applications should clearly indicate the position being applied for and should be sent as one PDF attachment. Applications not adhering to these rules will not be considered.









Human oversight remains indispensable to ensure that AI serves as a tool for innovation and efficiency, rather than a source of

of AI systems. Just as the mask amplifies Stanley's inner impulses without discernment, AI can generate outputs that, without human supervision, may lead to unintended and potentially harmful consequences. Stanley's iconic exclamation, "Somebody stop me!" epitomizes the need for intervention to prevent the havoc that ensues when unchecked power is allowed to run rampant.

#### **Mitigating AI Hallucinations**

To reduce the risk of AI hallucinations, organizations can adopt several strategies:

- **Human-in-the-Loop Systems:** Integrate human experts into the AI workflow to review and validate outputs.
- **Robust Training Data:** Ensure AI models are trained on accurate, diverse, and comprehensive datasets to minimize biases and inaccuracies.
- **Transparency and Explainability:** Develop AI systems that can provide explanations for their outputs, allowing humans to understand and assess the reasoning behind AI-generated content.

While AI offers transformative potential across various industries, it is not infallible. Human oversight remains indispensable to ensure that AI serves as a tool for innovation and efficiency, rather than a source of misinformation or error. As the adage goes, "Trust, but verify." In the age of AI, this means blending machine capabilities with human judgment to achieve the best outcomes.

\*Stantin Siebritz is Managing Director of New Creation Solutions, and a Namibian Artificial Intelligence Specialist

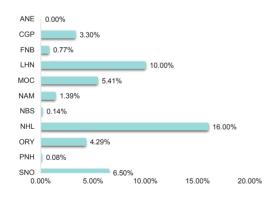


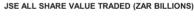
#### Commodities 2999.63 Spot Gold . Platinum 1001.29 Palladium 970.50 Silver 30.95 Uranium 63.70 Brent Crude 70.98 Iron Ore 96.22 9732.96 Copper Natural Gas 4.06 Lithium 9.85

| Currencies |         |
|------------|---------|
| USD/ZAR    | 18.1220 |
| EUR/ZAR    | 19.2300 |
| GBP/ZAR    | 23.5166 |
| USD/CNY    | 7.2295  |
| EUR/USD    | 1.0913  |
| GBP/USD    | 1.2977  |
| USD/RUB    | 83.6752 |
| CPI        | 3.60%   |
| Repo Rate  | 6.75%   |
| Prime Rate | 10.50%  |

# 23.72% Mining 23.72% Resources Financials 1.26% Industrials 7.67% Top 40 5.19% All Share

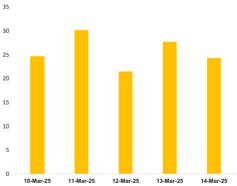
#### NSX Local Stocks: Year to Date in %





10% 20% 30% 40% 50%

-10%



#### Global Indices: Year to Date in %

