



“United Breweries Limited  
Q2 FY2022 Earnings Conference Call”

October 21, 2022



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**Moderator:** Ladies and gentlemen, good day and welcome to the Q2 FY2023 Earnings Conference Call of United Breweries Limited hosted by Investec Capital Services. As a reminder, all participant lines will be in the listen-only mode and there will be an opportunity for you to ask questions after the presentation concludes. Should you need assistance during the conference call, please signal an operator by pressing '\*' then '0' on your touchtone phone. Please note that this conference is being recorded. I now hand the conference over to Mr. Harit Kapoor from Investec Capital Services. Thank you and over to you Sir!

**Harit Kapoor:** Thanks Michelle. On behalf of Investec Capital Services, I would like to welcome you all to this call and a special welcome to the team at United Breweries for their Q2 FY2023 earnings call. From the management team today we have Mr. Radovan Sikorsky, Director and CFO at United Breweries and Mr. P. A. Poonacha from finance and investor relations. I will now hand over to Radovan for opening comments post which we will open the floor for Q&A. Over to you Radovan.

**Radovan Sikorsky:** Good afternoon, to everyone on the call, thank you for joining. I am here together with Mr. Poonacha and together with him I will be answering some of the questions later on. So just taking you through the Q2 a little bit. In terms of volume growth, we had 23% in the quarter V/s the prior year, primarily driven by Rajasthan, West Bengal and Telangana, that is really a good strong volume performance. The premium segment grew also ahead of the total portfolio growing at 48% while the total portfolio was around 23%, so a nice growth in the premium segment. EBIT for the quarter was at 58% driven by volumes, price increase, but softened a bit by negative state mix. Inflationary pressure on cost of sales continued to impact gross margins as you can see from the financials contributing to a decline of about 508 basis points to 46.7 as we have in the financials. Strong revenue growth combined with the cost control though drove EBIT margins growth by about 277 basis points.

Now on the next page of the summary table with its quarterly results you can see the net sales are up by 18%, EBIT is up 58%, and a margin of 10.8%. On the regional volume growth, we have seen a strong recovery of volume as I mentioned a 23% growth over the COVID affected prior year across all markets and when you look at the year-to-date results 67% growth versus all markets, so that is a nice healthy growth. If we look at the particular regions, the North posted 15% driven by growth in Rajasthan, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh. The West posted 22%, the growth driven by higher volumes in Maharashtra state, I still have to get used to saying some of these states so bear with me, also in Goa, Madhya Pradesh and Silvassa. The East recorded 52%, growth driven by higher volumes and in West



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Bengal and in the South we posted 21%, growth driven by high volumes in Telangana, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala as well.

Turning to the net sales, this was up 18% in the quarter driven by the 23% volume growth as I mentioned, and pricing was up 4%. The negative state mix was around 9% with differential volume growth across the states and with lower levels of revenue. There is an improvement over the previous quarter. If we look at the net sales for year-to-date results that is really healthy as you can see a 67% volume growth. Pricing is also quite strong at 6% on the year-to-date financials with negative state mix of around 11% and as I mentioned before it is the differential volume growth across the states and if you look at the EBIT breakdown on the next slide, you have the presentation with you, the gross profit growth was driven by the volume and price increases however impacted by commodity prices and that is why you see the deterioration in our gross profit margins, but the strong revenue growth drove fixed cost leverage and hence a good control over our costs base, resulted in healthy margins of 10.7% year-to-date. If we look at the trend going forward, we continue to be positive about the category penetration while at the same time driving shares in our premium portfolio and that is key for us. Inflation pressure on cost of goods sold will most likely continue in the foreseeable future and hence we will continue to pursue with further price increases to strengthen our earning, in combination with cost measures to mitigate these cost impacts. We have good capex plans in place for our breweries to meet expected volume growth going into 2023 as well. We remain optimistic on the long-term growth of the industry, let us be clear on that one, and the evolving consumer trends will drive premiumization, we really still believe in that strongly, so these are a little bit on my opening remarks. I think we can then pass to the Q&A and we will try and answer all your questions. Thank you.

**Moderator:** Thank you very much. We will now begin the question answer session. The first question is from the line of Avneesh Roy from Nuvama Institutional Equities. Please go ahead.

**Avneesh Roy:** Thanks. The first question is one of your competitors have recently acquired Beer Cafe does this in any way limit your presence or sales in that retail chain and globally is this common that if a brand acquires the retail chain also and would you also have some thoughts on this longer term?

**P. A. Poonacha:** You are talking about the Bira acquisition of Beer Café, right?

**Avneesh Roy:** Yes?



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- P. A. Poonacha:** Beer Cafe is like a pub restaurant business. What they do is not like a brew pub, while the brew pub is a new concept as you know it is less than a decade old and it is a very small niche segment and as such it expands the beer business, but for our business we are currently not looking at that pub space because like a brewpub business is a very different business. Considering that Bira has limited clout in the root to market, I think they are trying to use this as a root to market.
- Avneesh Roy:** Your presence and sales in Beer Cafe does it get impacted in any way going ahead?
- P. A. Poonacha:** We are present in the Beer Café, but their salience is limited, we can say that.
- Avneesh Roy:** Sure and last question is on the gross margin pressure which is quite common for every company so essentially when do you see good recovery here in terms of barley and packaging material? We are seeing globally also the Ukraine crisis at least from a raw material availability perspective things are now resolving and you also spoke on the price hike so when do you see good recovery in margins? Will it be more FY2024 and H2 will remain under reasonable pressure in terms of margin?
- Radovan Sikorsky:** If I understood you correctly, sorry I am not hearing very well through the sound, but if I understood your question correctly you are asking about the commodity prices for example like barley and how do we see that going forward is that correct?
- Avneesh Roy:** Yes?
- Radovan Sikorsky:** So true as you can see in our margins there is pressure on our commodities and I think that is a global phenomena. You guys all know about that. We will still see some of that continuing going forward. Yes there seems to be some softening on some of these components, but going forward I think it is still too early for us to comment on that, so I still think that pressures on margins will remain and it is a little dependent on our ability to increase prices and also manage our cost to try and mitigate any of that.
- Avneesh Roy:** Sure thanks. That is all from my side. Thank you.
- Moderator:** Thank you. The next question is from the line of Jaykumar Doshi from Kotak Securities. Please go ahead.



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**Jaykumar Doshi:**

Good afternoon and thanks for the opportunity. Could you provide an update on some early indicators or response to Heineken Sliver launch how does it compare versus your earlier launches of Amstel and Heineken Original any numbers or any color could be helpful?

**Radovan Sikorsky:**

So it is very early days really because we just launched recently but we have received very good feedback and also responses through social media in terms of the big launch we did in Bengaluru a few days back. In terms of distribution in outlets, it is on track. We have selected certain outlets and areas where we want Heineken Sliver to be. That seems to be going very well, but it is a little bit too early to say. The rate of sales seems to be good as well with repeat buying but it is still quite small, so I think to give you a bit more comprehensive feedback, I think we need a few more months in the market for Silver.

**Jaykumar Doshi:**

Understand. Do you have plans to launch the product in other states some time later this year or when do you intend to take it to other key states?

**Radovan Sikorsky:**

We are looking at that as well and we will be doing that. We are looking at how well it is now performing but definitely there are plans to roll it out to different states as well and that is still being discussed where and when we would do that.

**Jaykumar Doshi:**

Understood. Now you have called out for the first time that premium portfolio grew about 48% Y-o-Y volumes but I understand that last year this quarter was impacted on trade would have been low so how does premium volumes in the current quarter compare versus September 2019?

**Radovan Sikorsky:**

Poonacha can you answer that one. I do know that far back in 2019.

**P. A. Poonacha:**

From pre-COVID days to now the premium salience has gone up. It has gone up from 6% to about 8%.

**Jaykumar Doshi:**

Understood that is helpful and final one your notes to accounts indicate that there is no impact in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh because of the changes that you have introduced and I guess it is almost more than three to four months now so should we assume that this is a steady state now and there will not be any disruption in those markets or any adverse impact on volumes or are you still cautious?

**Radovan Sikorsky:**

I think if it is still early to say that there will not be any impact. So far there has not really been any impact but we are monitoring that carefully. Whenever you do a new sort of a



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route to market, it takes a while to shape out what will happen, so far, it seems okay in terms of invoicing and the volumes but we closely watching that market as we progress.

**Jaykumar Doshi:** That is helpful. Thank you so much. I will go back in the queue.

**Moderator:** Thank you. The next question is from the line of Pritesh Chheda from Lucky Investment Managers. Please go ahead.

**Pritesh Chheda:** Sir what is the volume growth on September 19 base and second did we get any price increase between Q1 and Q2 in any of the states and if you could call to the blended price increase?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** Okay I heard the first part of the question so I will answer that one and may be you can just repeat, because of the bad audio, you wanted to ask about how we are comparing volumes versus 2019, is that correct yes?

**Pritesh Chheda:** Yes that is the first question yes?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** So if we look at volumes versus 2019 in the quarter we were slightly down at around 4% versus 2019, but a lot of the impacted is on account of Andhra Pradesh, in terms of this policy change that happened there about a year ago so it is impacted by that and if you look at the other states there is also a good growth versus 2019, but still on a year-to-date number we have grown 3% versus 2019 and that is where we are very positive about the category. That is how quickly it has actually recovered and we are back to growth versus a normalized 2019, that is quite good news for us.

**Pritesh Chheda:** My second question was Sir did we get any price increase between the Q1 and Q2?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** So you can see that the pricing in Q1 has gone up like 6% so that pricing has gone through. We have looked at taking some pricing in Q2 also, succeeded in Punjab, but of course the pricing that we took in Q1 are now flowing through into Q2 right and because it was taken at different times within Q1, so that is why we able to see the increase in Q2 as well.

**Pritesh Chheda:** So what is the incremental price increase that we have got in Q2 in Punjab or let us say the blended company level?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** Sorry I did not hear that. Poonacha can you take that one. I could not hear the question.



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**P. A. Poonacha:** It is 3%.

**Pritesh Chheda:** 3%?

**P. A. Poonacha:** Yes.

**Pritesh Chheda:** Thank you very much.

**Moderator:** Thank you. The next question is from the line of Himanshu from Dolat Capital. Please go ahead.

**Himanshu:** Thank you Sir. Thanks for the opportunity. Sir can you help me what will be your market share during the quarter and last quarter also?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** Total market share.

**Himanshu:** Yes total market share?

**P. A. Poonacha:** The market share is around 51% plus.

**Himanshu:** What would it be Sir in the last quarter?

**P. A. Poonacha:** Similar. We do not give the exact number because it is basically done on approximation based on data available and after the CCI order, we do not track market share specifically in many states other than where it is available in the government cooperation websites.

**Himanshu:** Okay and secondly other expenses have gone down on a Y-o-Y basis by 3% and this is despite a 23% volume growth on a Y-o-Y basis and there has also been inflationary pressure on freight, etc., front so what is driving this decline in other expenses during the quarter?

**P. A. Poonacha:** As you know there have been a lot of initiatives with respect to cost cutting, now that are margins are squeezed because of the inflationary pressures, so the level we are at, is what will stand going forward. You cannot see anything better, but the level at which we are will be what we will see going forward?

**Himanshu:** So there is no one off or anything in this particular line item during this quarter?



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- P. A. Poonacha:** No one offs.
- Himanshu:** Okay and can you just tell us Sir what will be A&P spend as a percentage of revenue during the quarter?
- P. A. Poonacha:** It remains constant as a percentage of topline as it was in the last four or five quarters.
- Himanshu:** Okay and Sir what are the initiatives which are driving such significant decline if you can just highlight a few of them?
- P. A. Poonacha:** Decline in cost.
- Himanshu:** Yes decline in costs in other expenses line item?
- P. A. Poonacha:** Like I said most of our administrative costs are being relooked at and this has helped us reach a new level, and it would remain at that particular level going forward.
- Himanshu:** No issue and that is it from my side and all the best.
- Moderator:** Thank you. The next question is from the line of Krishnan Sambamoorthy from Motilal Oswal Institutional Equities. Please go ahead.
- Krishnan S:** My question is on I again see that West Bengal and Haryana this quarter doing handsomely? Now in that states like UP, West Bengal and Haryana because of differential taxation between beer and spirit are we also seeing a pickup in the erstwhile non seasonal consumption of beer as well because beer is relatively cheaper than spirits in the states.
- P. A. Poonacha:** I mean we are better off in West Bengal than we are in the past because the gap between the pricing of spirits and beer vis-à-vis alcohol content has now narrowed down so we are looking at better time now but still spirits are favorably taxed. If you compare alcohol volume by volume, spirits are taxed far lower than what beer is so we cannot say that we are fully out of the woods, but we are better off than what we were.
- Krishnan S:** Okay that is useful. My question was more is the seasonality of beer consumption also reducing a bit compared to the past in these states?



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**P. A. Poonacha:** Seasonality yes. Like I said the pricing has put us in a better situation, so the seasonality effect has come down but it will still be there that is what I was trying to reiterate because still spirits are taxed at a lower rate when you compare it by alcohol volume.

**Krishnan S:** Okay that is clear. My second question is you indicated that the demand is great and also about capex plan? Can you just quantify that number for FY2023 and FY2024 your capex plan?

**P. A. Poonacha:** Yes, considering we are an operating company of Heineken, our capex plans are done from January to December. For the coming January to December the capex spend we are looking at somewhere in the region of Rs.350 Crores.

**Krishnan S:** That is it from my side.

**Moderator:** Thank you. The next question is from the line of Litika Chopra from JP Morgan. Please go ahead.

**Litika Chopra:** Thanks for the opportunity. Sir my question is a little more medium term rather than welcome to United Breweries I wanted to just check with you is there going to be disproportionate focus to drive the premium part of the portfolio now which is also witnessing more competition and does not in that process you would kind of put lesser focus on the mass beer segment and a related question is in that context how should one think about profitability? UBL had generated almost 16% to 17% operating margins in the past? We are now currently hovering between 12% to 13%, there is a lot of gross margin pressures but assuming we go back to normalized levels of gross margin would A&P spends need to increase disproportionately to drive the premium mix and probably we need to settle with a more like mid teens kind of margins or do you think the business over the next three to four years has the potential to go back to those high teens margins any initial thoughts or the way Heineken is approaching the other India business now?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** So I will take that one, thank you for the question. So in terms of premium, we can see that there is appetite for premium products also in India and we want to be strong in that segment as the leader. So disproportionate growth, well yes, we for sure we would like to achieve that. Lose focus on our main-stream, definitely not. Kingfisher remains the bread and butter of our company and it is an extremely important brand for us so the focus remains. Actually, when we look going-forward we will continue doing strong activities around the Kingfisher brand so that needs to be clear. As you know we also do extensions on Kingfisher like Kingfisher Ultra, so it is a great brand. In terms of gross profit margins



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and the impact of the growing premium, apart from main stream so we are also looking at driving more margin via premium, but currently premium is still at quite a small scale, also the pricing is a challenge there, because of the smaller scale we need to work through that in terms of cost of sales for the premium brands in order to improve those margins, but that will come with scale, no doubt about it and it will help our gross margins. In the longer-term on the gross margins of course it is our plan to get back to previous levels and we believe we can get there. It is just that as we now currently under inflationary pressures that are seen across the globe, hence we are a bit under pressure with gross margins and taking up prices in India, we try and do what we can State by State and we will continue to do that, but sometimes it is a little bit more difficult in certain states to take pricing and therefore there can be a bit of delay in catching up on some of the cost of sales growth.

**Litika Chopra:** Sure this is helpful and non gross margin the other cost whether it is AMC or whether it is the fixed costs and so Mr Poonacha did refer to some of the cost saving initiatives? There is a lot of extra cost that you can take away from the system still in your view? Can it be run even more efficiently? How do you think about that?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** Definitely, we can still do more in terms of that. I think UBL has done a good job on driving costs down and as the previous comments from Poonacha showed the cost saving achieved. There are definitely more opportunities, particularly still in productivity at the breweries and also bottle returns and these type of things that we can drive cost downwards, so as I step into this role and I have only been there for it is like four to five weeks I will be reviewing that as well, but I am sure when I compare it to others there are opportunities for more.

**Litika Chopra:** Sure and the last question from me is that given your experience in different markets with Heineken when you look at the per capita consumption levels, demographic profile, the constraints that you see on from a regulation standpoint what is the realistic target for premium share in the overall revenue mix in your view in your portfolio may be five years down the line can it be 20% or 30%? What could be that realistic share?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** In terms of the per capita consumption obviously we see a lot of opportunity there as well and that is why we are in the market and we want to make sure that the category grows in a responsible manner. In terms of premium share, you are right quoting 20% to 25% would be something to aim for in terms of premiumization as a category so we can see that the trend is there. Like I mentioned 48% growth in the quarter is excellent so I think to get to those sort of 20% mark is definitely achievable.



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**Litika Chopra:** Great. Thank you so much and wish you the best in the new role.

**Moderator:** Thank you. The next question is from the line of Pratik Rangnekar from Credit Suisse. Please go ahead.

**Pratik Rangnekar:** Thanks for the opportunity Sir. Just one clarification on the volume growth versus pre COVID so when you had called out 8% growth over pre-COVID in 1Q was AP impact in the base then as well and excluding AP what would be the growth will it be possible to call that out please?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** Sorry I did not hear that properly. Poonacha can you try.

**P. A. Poonacha:** I will just give you a vis-à-vis 2019 Andhra Pradesh used to be 6% of our volume salience with the drop seen because of the change in policies there, it is down to 3% of our volume salience.

**Pratik Rangnekar:** Okay got it thank you and just one more question. Usually we complete the buying of barley for the year in advance? Is that now done till the next peak season and how much higher is the purchase price for say this year versus last year?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** If I understood correctly you are asking how secure is our barley till the end of the year or for this year is that correct?

**Pratik Rangnekar:** Yes that is right? Are we done with the barley buying for the year and how much higher is the purchase there?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** So yes, we are secured of course for 2022 and we are already looking into 2023 to secure ourselves. Obviously, the barley crop will come through I think it is around March or April next year. Prices have gone up. You have heard my predecessor talking about the price increases that were there. There has been a slight dip recently in the markets, but the pressure still remains and the prices are definitely higher than they used to be in the previous years. We have procured quite a lot, but there is still an opportunity if prices do come down so that we can pick up at better pricing at the backend and going into the next year. It is still difficult to tell in these volatile times what is going to happen. Poonacha anything else to add on that.

**P. A. Poonacha:** I think you have covered.



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**Pratik Rangnekar:** Thank you and all the best.

**Moderator:** Thank you. The next question is from the line of Karan Taurani from Elara Capital. Please go ahead.

**Karan Taurani:** Thanks for taking my question. My question is around the Heineken Silver launch which was there? Do you not think there could be some kind of cannibalization in the economical premium category because Kingfisher is around the same price point your thoughts on that please?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** I guess you are talking against price points versus ultra. The way we approach it is also different consumers choose different brands, Silver is also quite a bit marked for the younger sort of consumer sort of the 25 to 30 category or 20 to 30 category so I think we feel that there is a place for both brands in the market, particularly with the fact of how quickly premium is growing so the opportunity exists for both brands to work together in a growing market so I am optimistic for both.

**Karan Taurani:** So you do not believe growth for Heineken Silver will come at the cost of loss for Kingfisher Ultra or something of that sort because is this the way to kind of as you said, you told in a detailed manner that you want to focus on both the brands Kingfisher as well as Heineken but these of strategies can we see this further as well wherein Heineken is kind of made to stand with Kingfisher in a particular range and that actually leads to a loss of Kingfisher's market share in the future unintentionally?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** I did not hear that properly unfortunately.

**Karan Taurani:** My question basically was that can we see this coming more up in the future as well wherein you have got brands of Heineken standing on par with Kingfisher's brands in the premium space which is available economical premium or higher premium range and that could lead to unintentional loss of market share for Kingfisher?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** In terms of total market percentage share, potentially yes, because the premium is growing, but Kingfisher is also playing with its Ultra brands in the premium segment. The thing is we are optimistic about the total category growth right. That is the big opportunity for beer and Kingfisher as a main stream brand has a big role to play in this so I would not be too much concerned about the fact that there is a bit of decline on the back of a growing premium segment so if you look at total category there would be, but you know when we dissect categories, we then look at our market share growth within those categories so we



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look at our market share within main stream and we look at our market share within premium and that is important for us as well that within main stream Kingfisher will not be losing and within premium we are gaining share and the category is growing.

**Karan Taurani:** Right thank you. That is it from my side.

**Moderator:** Thank you. The next question is from the line of Vishal Punmiya from Nirmal Bang Institutional Equities. Please go ahead.

**Vishal Punmiya:** Thank you. I just wanted to understand or hear your thoughts on the operating margin profile of the company for the next two to three years assuming that the gross margins revert back to the 2018-2019 levels and the kind of sales that you are doing currently are sustainable? Would you rather see a better margin profile or would you put all those back into growing the premium portfolio or the other new launches that you do?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** Of course, we want to grow our operating profit margins going forward and I am not going to really comment on what we believe the margins will be in two to three years time. It is a little bit difficult. We do internally forecast that. It is based on what we know. Like I mentioned in terms of the gross profit margins. You see the decline, we are aware of that and we are working with our teams in terms of procuring at the right prices, getting the best prices, securing supply and also having quality supply. It is difficult to say at the moment how long it will sustain, but like I said there could be some shoots of hope going into 2023, but at the moment it is still anyone's guess in terms of that. Now again on the premium versus main-stream, premium should bring in the medium to longer term better margins right because of the price points, but we need to work also on the cost part of that in terms of the cost of sales part, get the scale so then that comes. We just need to be a little bit patient on that one, but as premium grows and as our scale grows it can get just be very good for our margins going forward.

**Vishal Punmiya:** Sure. Secondly any update for the current quarter in terms of Delhi how the change in policy or changes in policy impacting the overall environment in Delhi? How is that panning in 3Q?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** Poonacha may be you can give it a little bit of an update on those changes in Delhi.

**P. A. Poonacha:** In Delhi effective August 2022, the state government has reverted back to the policy they had prior to November 2021. The previous policy was every manufacturer had to have their own depot within the State of Delhi to bring in the beer that are manufactured outside



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Delhi, because there is no production facility within Delhi, and then distribute it, but in the interim the manufacturer was allowed to have one super distributor to do the job, but now since the announcement the state government has made, that they will revert back to the old policy with the open statement that this is only temporary and they will review what needs to be done going forward. With that being the case. with the Government making such statements. people are not ready to invest, so the market is very volatile. We really cannot do any kind of projection in this kind of a scenario.

**Vishal Punmiya:** Understand. Thanks team and Happy Diwali to everybody.

**Moderator:** Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, this would be the last question for today which is from the line of Jaykumar Doshi from Kotak Securities. Please go ahead.

**Jaykumar Doshi:** Thanks for the opportunity. When I look at your volumes in the first six months of this financial year, it is marginally higher than the same period of 2019 and you just called out that we have gained market share so it implies that overall beer industry volumes have barely grown versus pre-pandemic level in this six month period? When we look across other categories, we have seen pent up demand and much higher growth rates so why do you think this category has not seen any pent up demand at all and why is it lagging most other consumption categories wherein prior to pandemic this category was growing faster at least in volume terms than a few other consumption categories so any market study or ground research that you may have done that explains this disconnect?

**Radovan Sikorsky:** So like Poonacha mentioned, yes in terms of market share, we are broadly flat right year-to-date so the market we see growing at around 3% in total industry. I cannot compare to others categories because I do not have the facts, but I think looking at our industry we also just need to bear in mind the impact that policy changes have on the market, correct, so I think Poonacha mentioned earlier, a market like Andhra Pradesh which was a big volume for us in the past, due to the policy change, there has been a significant decline in the volumes and I think it is in the region of 70%, so you need to take into account that sort of negatives within the category, so if you look at the other States, if you look at growth rates in Uttar Pradesh are 48%, Telangana which is growing in the region of I think it was around 15% and some of the others as well, we see a lot of opportunity and growth in the category. The thing is you need to just take into account some of these policy changes and the impact that they have on particular States, so we are very bullish about the beer category going forward.,



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**Jaykumar Doshi:**

And what is the base growth that you think the capable growth should be now that we have normalized? Should it be like mid single digit, high single digit or do you think double digits is also possible base case assumption that you have?

**Radovan Sikorsky:**

Sorry really I did not catch that question in terms of the audio.

**Jaykumar Doshi:**

What is the base case assumption for the category growth is appropriate in your view? What should be the normalized beer category growth going forward? Should it be 5% or 7% or more closer to 10% kind of volume growth?

**Radovan Sikorsky:**

If I understand correctly what do we believe how the category will grow in the coming years is that the question?

**Jaykumar Doshi:**

That is correct thank you?

**Radovan Sikorsky:**

Again, these are just assumptions, but we believe that the growth rates of high single digits is definitely a possibility and hopefully higher. Of-course inflation does play a bit of a role on this, but still like I said the category is going to grow, I am sure and we think that the sort of rates of strong single digits, we can see going forward.

**Jaykumar Doshi:**

Understood. Thank you so much. This is a very helpful.

**Moderator:**

Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen as that was the last question for today, I would now like to hand the conference over to Mr. Harit Kapoor for closing comments.

**Harit Kapoor:**

Thank you Michelle. On behalf of Investec Capital Services would like to thank the management of United Breweries for taking out time for this call as well would like to thank all the participants for joining into this call. I would now like to hand over to Radovan for his closing comments. Over to Radovan.

**Radovan Sikorsky:**

Yes, thank you and hopefully next time when we have this call, I will be in Bengaluru and I will have a better audio connection because it has been difficult calling from London through a mobile phone and hopefully I can catch up with a lot of you. Just on closing, like I said, yes there is pressure on margins, but we as a business, we will manage that, going forward in terms of what we can do with pricing, cost, etc., and with our brands. We have strong brands in place so we have the ability to play and grow the category going forward and on that we remain optimistic that the category will continue to grow. There will be premiumization and that can in the medium to longer-term, just be good for our margins



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going forward, that would be my closing remarks and thank you every one for joining us and hope to see you soon in India.

**Moderator:** Thank you. On behalf of Investec Capital Services that concludes this conference. Thank you for joining us and you may now disconnect your lines.