TRAILBLAZERS

Trailblazing the future

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About Trailblazers

Trailblazers are freethinking individuals and focus groups with a shared vision of positively contributing towards advancing developmental discourse. The trailblazers' website stimulates and encourages discourse on Economic development, Political economy, knowledge economy and the green economy. The website serves as a forum for exchanging ideas, views and opinion. It attracts experts, academics, intellectuals and practitioners and anybody interested in contributing towards the debate. It is a site for generating new knowledge & cutting edge solutions for the global socio economic ills. The trailblazers seek to build social capital through the process of informal transmission of knowledge and social media. Also mentor and support practitioners in the specified field of work, through engagement, advice and referrals. The ultimate objective is to ensure professional development and support.

News of Top Stories

Habib defends R9m spend on official residence

Wits's incoming vice-chancellor has rejected attempts to link expensive renovations to difficulty some students face with accommodation. The university has set aside up to R60-million "from our own budget" to help students with bursaries. "We do try intervene and assist [students facing difficulties]," Adam Habib told reporters at a media briefing held at the university's main campus on Monday. In addition, it emerged at the briefing the university will acquire full ownership of the residence valued at R30-million once it has renovated it. The trust of the Price family, which allocated the residence to Wits 40 years ago for use by the university's incumbent vice-chancellors, will transfer ownership to the university, said Rob Moore, the university's deputy vice-chancellor for advancements and partnerships. "They've been benefactors of the university for many years," he said. Reporting on the plans to renovate Savernake, as the residence is known, to the tune of R9-million, the *Star* newspaper featured an unidentified fourth-year student who sleeps in tutorial classrooms because he is without accommodation. The paper reported that the student found the university's student residence expensive. "It's unfortunate to put the two [renovating Savernake and students without accommodation] together," said Habib. He argued that some cases are related to poverty, which is a "big problem in society". "Should we be having students starving? No. As a university we'll try our utmost best to address this, [but] it will not be addressed by a single institution," said Habib. http://mg.co.za/article/2013-04-12-will-habib-heal-wits-divides

AngloGold Ashanti appoints Venkatakrishnan as CEO

(ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI) – AngloGold Ashanti announces the appointment of Mr. Srinivasan Venkatakrishnan (Venkat) as Chief Executive Officer effective immediately. Venkat has been with AngloGold Ashanti for nine years. He was the Chief Financial Officer at Ashanti Goldfields until that company's merger with AngloGold Limited in May 2004, creating what is now AngloGold Ashanti. Shortly after the merger he became Chief Financial Officer of the combined entity and joined the board in 2005. Venkat had also previously been a Director of Corporate Reorganisation Services at Deloitte & Touche in London. More recently, following the departure of the former CEO at the beginning of April 2013, Venkat has been joint interim CEO of the Company, alongside Mr. Tony O'Neill. Mr. O'Neill will remain an executive director on the board and revert to his role as Executive Vice President: Business and Technical Development. Venkat will also remain CFO of AngloGold Ashanti until further notice. A global search for a new CFO has been initiated.
http://www.anglogold.co.za/Additional/Press/2013/20130508_CEO.htm

Coal for Eskom now top priority – Coal Roadmap

SUN CITY (miningweekly.com) – Securing coal for Eskom was now the number-one priority, South African Coal Roadmap chairperson **Ian Hall** said on Tuesday. Addressing the twelfth Coaltrans Southern Africa coal conference at Sun City, the Anglo American Thermal Coal Projects GM said Eskom needed 60-million tons a year of new-mine coal to come on stream in the next few years and 120-million tons before 2020. While a key requirement was to get the new mines up and running by 2015, water-use licences and environmental authorisations might present greater delays than obtaining mining rights. "There's not even a mandatory response time for water-use licences," he added. To develop the required new capacity in South Africa in the next five years would be a high mountain to climb. To complicate matters, there were oddities in the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Amendment Bill, including the declaration of coal as a strategic mineral, which had off-putting price implications, and the demand for greater beneficiation. It was hard to see how South Africa could beneficiate its coal further, given that it used 75% of it domestically to produce 90% of its electricity plus the greatest output of coal-based transport fuels and chemicals in the world. Doing any more with coal would put the country on a collision course with its Copenhagen climate-change pledges. The 27% of South African coal that was exported generated 60% of the revenue from coal, which last year grew 9.6% to R96-billion, making coal South Africa's biggest commodity by sales value. "We should be looking at increasing exports, if possible, as well as meeting the energy demand for the country," he added. The roadmap, which was charting the future for coal to 2040 and which was poised for final release in June/July, had become a process rather than an outcome.
http://www.engineeringnews.co.za/article/coal-for-eskom-now-top-priority-coal-roadmap-2013-05-07

Return of the Mac to 702?

IN a dramatic turn of events, political analyst Eusebius McKaiser might return to his former employer Talk Radio 702 after he quit the station at the end of March. Insiders at Primedia, the media group that owns 702, say MacKaiser had a fallout with his new bosses at the soon-to-be-launched radio station Power FM. Power FM, which is owned by media mogul Given Mkhari's company MSG Afrika Investment Holdings, is set to hit Gauteng airwaves in July. Sunday World understands that the anchor had a disagreement with Mkhari about his role at the station. We also understand that McKaiser was quick to contact his former boss, 702 station manager Pheladi Gwangwa, to ask for his old job back. Even though both parties deny the account, a senior employee at 702 says McKaiser asked Gwangwa if he could make a return to their Sandton studios. McKaiser, who was presenting Talk at 9 before he left 702, denies that he had a fallout with Mkhari. He laughed and said: "Whoever you spoke to, you should lose them ... I love Given. We get along," he says. But McKaiser points out that he did not leave 702 on bad terms and there is no bad blood between him and the station. He says, however, that making a return so soon after his departure will have a negative impact. "You can't play around with the listeners. There needs to be consistency," he says. McKaiser is the author of the book, There's a Bantu in My Bathroom, which was published in October last year. The former Wits University academic told our sister paper, The Times, earlier this week that he had not signed a contract with Power FM and that he was not with 702 either. He was quoted as saying he was working on his second book on the Democratic Alliance. Gwangwa was also cagey but did not rule out the possibility. "I don't know anything about that. If he does ask for it [his job], we will consider his application," Gwangwa says. Mkhari also denies any knowledge about the fallout and says he respects McKaiser as a broadcaster. Despite reports linking McKaiser to Power FM, where he was due to host the breakfast show and mentor young broadcasters, Mkhari says his station has never confirmed any of its presenters, including McKaiser. "We haven't said who's coming or who isn't," he says.
ww.sundayworld.co.za/news/2013/05/12/return-of-the-mac-to-702

R2.7bn of funding available to youth

Cape Town – Youth entrepreneurs will have R2.7 billion in funding available to them with the announcement by Minister of Economic Development Ebrahim Patel that the Small Enterprise Finance Agency (Sefa) will put aside R1.7 billion in funding for youth entrepreneurs over the next five years. This follows the announcement last month by Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe of a R1-billion fund set up by the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) to finance youth entrepreneurship. Presenting his Budget Vote Speech on Tuesday, Patel said Sefa will aim this financial year to approve R220 million in finance to entrepreneurs aged between 18 and 35 years old. He said Sefa in 2012/13 approved loans to the value of R435 million - which is 106% higher than the combined approvals made by its predecessors - the SA Micro-finance Apex Fund (Samaf) and Khula Enterprise Fund as well as the IDC's small business finance portfolio. Sefa was launched in April last year after a merger between Khula and Samaf. Patel said the IDC was also making progress in funding industrial projects, with funding of R27 billion approved in the last two years – 48% higher than in the preceding two years. He said IDC funding had helped the country make several inroads into local industrialisation. South Africa's first of 240 locally manufactured innercity buses are set to roll off the production line from a Germiston factory in June, to meet orders by the cities of Cape Town and Johannesburg. Added to this by 2015, two out of three mini-bus taxes will have been assembled in South Africa, while the country had landed an export contract to make trains for Mozambique. Patel also outlined several large new industrial developments. These include: the expected launch in July of the largest Manganese cinder plant near Hotazel, in the Northern Cape; the investment of R2.2 billion so far by commodities trading giant Noble Resources to set up a soya crushing plant and a R250 million investment by a Turkish investor to restart the Cape based steel mill Cisco in August. He said the national infrastructure build programme had created about 150 000 jobs, with much of these created by the S'hamba Sonke road building initiative, with 31 000 jobs. He expected that the number of those employed in infrastructure development to increase significantly over next two decades, on the back of a R4-trillion pipeline of projects. Patel has also issued a trade policy directive to the International Trade Administration Commission (Itac) to limit the export of scrap metal. A notice issued by Patel in the government gazette called on exporters, scrap metal merchants, foundries and other stakeholders to comment on the directive. Briefing media before presenting his budget vote speech, Patel explained that the directive was necessary because large exports of scrap metal, largely to Asia, had led to job losses at many of the country's foundries. He pointed out that to produce iron from scrap metal requires less energy than when one uses iron ore to produce iron. Patel noted that the directive won't result in a direct prohibition of all scrap metals exports, but that it would none the less have the effect of reducing the scrap metal exports. Itac will help Patel's department to recognise the appropriate mechanisms, and have already had extensive consultations with industry stakeholders to come up with such a mechanism. He said the Competition Commission will launch an enquiry soon into the pricing costs and the state of competition in private health care. The department also presented a status report on four of the accords – national skills, youth employment, the green economy and local procurement. – **SAnews.gov.za**
http://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/r27bn-funding-available-youth-entrepreneurs