

BizNewsDigest

THE RATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

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Hum-ho, off to jail we go

On the day of the National Prosecuting Authority's self-imposed deadline to load some suspects into the back of a police van, the Hawks swooped on seven suspects implicated in a dodgy construction tender in the Free State. The suspects include a trio of middle-rank comrades who are bit players in an orgy of self-enrichment by ANC top brass, not least secretary-general Ace Magashule and ex-minister of mining Mosebenzi Zwane. The first clutch of suspects may well be the first to don prison garb, as a consequence of the hours of testimony at the Zondo Commission into state capture. - By Derek Alberts

By Derek Alberts and Bernice Maune

It was an asbestos audit deal gone wrong that lifted the lid on a R255m housing scandal in the Free State and landed the three kingpins - Edwin Sodi, Nthimote Mokhesi and Thabane Zulu - in trouble.

As testimony from witnesses at the Zondo Commission intimated, the lure of easy money was too much to resist when the provincial government awarded a R225m tender in 2014 to undertake an asbestos-roof audit.

After two years of testimony at the commission, the Hawks finally swooped on seven individuals and put the cuffs on six suspects. But Zulu, a former DG at the national department of human settlements, and newly-appointed CEO of the Richards Bay Industrial Development Zone, is reportedly on the run.

Also in the dock, but in relation to evidence in the Bosasa investigation, is another senior ANC official from Gauteng.

The Free State asbestos deal drew



Corruption cabal: Edwin Sodi (left), Thabane Zulu (middle) and Nthimote Mokhesi (right).

plenty of interest for several reasons, not least the brazen appropriation of public funds by thieving individuals and conniving officials. The Free State proved a particularly rich hunting ground for the ANC elite with former premier Ace Magashule and minister of housing Mosebenzi Zwane deeply implicated in the plunder.

A beneficiary was tenderpreneur Sodi whose company Blackhead Consulting won the contract despite not having the accreditation to do the work. He entered into a joint venture with Ignatius Mpambani, the owner of Diamond Hill Trading,

who was gunned down in his Bentley in 2017.

It would appear Sodi's Free State contact was extended to Gauteng, notwithstanding a reputation for shoddy work, perhaps because he subcontracted the work for R21m, and walked away with a R200m profit.

Sodi, his bank statements showed, generously oiled the ever-hungry machine of cadre patronage. Apart from allegedly greasing the palms of his political benefactors, including several ministers in President Cyril Ramaphosa's cabinet, Sodi had paid R600,000 towards a Range Rover

for Zulu, and R650,000 towards a property for Free State housing official Nthimote "Tim" Mokhesi.

Sodi defended the payments, saying he saw nothing wrong in supporting the ANC while doing business with the government. How his interpretation of doing business goes down in court remains to be seen as more arrests are on the cards.

Read also

- Finally, arrests from Zondo Commission
- #Jetgate scandal shows ANC true colours

BRIEFS

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3.1%

42%
Jobless in July
expanded definition

PCC
result delays
3

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Life is one long learning curve

By Alec Hogg

BizNews founder Alec Hogg reflects on fortuitous interventions and mankind's generosity of spirit in this edition of Rational Perspective.

A few weeks ago, my colleague of the past two decades, *BizNews* editor Jackie Cameron, suggested it was high time for me to start a long-form podcast. From that idea emerged the ostentatiously named *The Alec Hogg Show* - the first time in a lengthy career I've used my name in the title. Forgive me for caving on that.

This week, we published its seventh episode, the most challenging thus far as Allen Ambor is so interesting that editing our chat to 30 minutes required dropping half of it.

Then again, Allen may thank me

one day for omitting some caustic comments. He's sure to repeat them, though, in a biography now being worked on with the peerless Gus Silber. Allen expects it will be ready by Christmas. One for the stocking.

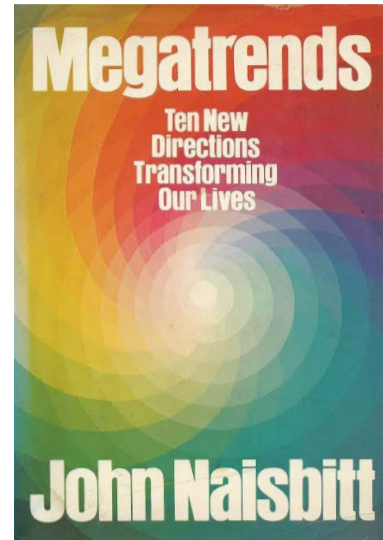
Reflecting on Allen's insights and those of the podcast's guests provided a couple of conclusions.

First, the blessing of how my 19-year-old self's path was diverted from a wannabe horse-racing commentator/reporter to financial journalism.

And secondly, how outstanding members of our species are also the ones who share most generously. Perhaps because they actually have so much to impart.

Soon after I began on my journalistic journey in the early 1980s, a generous soul gave me a life-changing book called *Megatrends*. In it, author John Naisbitt warned that the only way to flourish in a speeded-up world was by embracing life-long learning.

The podcast's guests are both



testimony to Naisbitt's prescience and a useful tool for those of us who believe him.

Take note:

- [Connect to the BizNews Premium Whatsapp Group](#)
- [Connect to the Premium Interactive Whatsapp group](#)
- [View the Rational Radio webinar with Charles Savage of Purple Group, Wilhelm Hertzog and Mark Ingham](#)
- [View the latest BizNews Share Portfolio webinar](#)

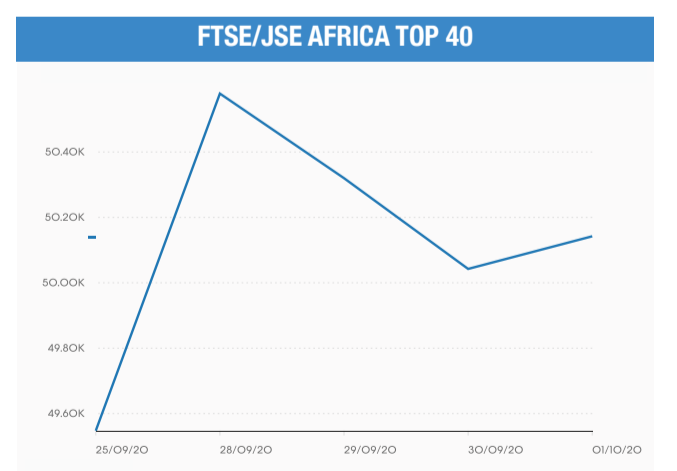
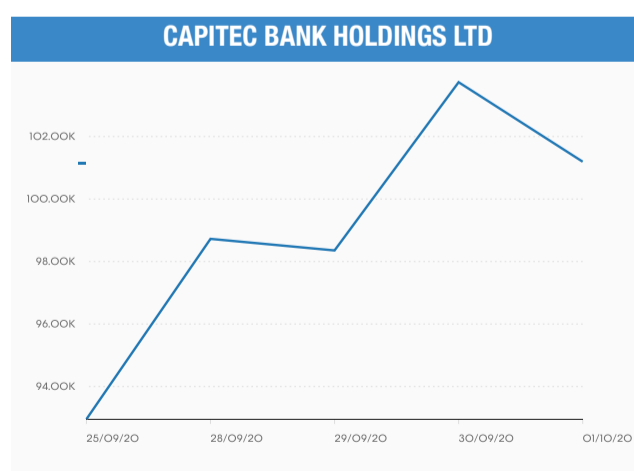
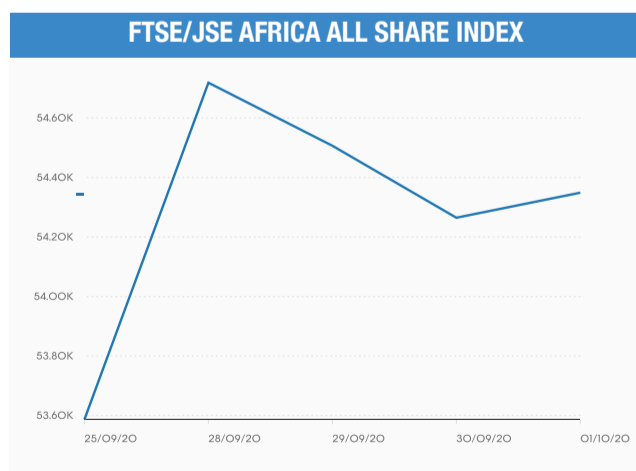
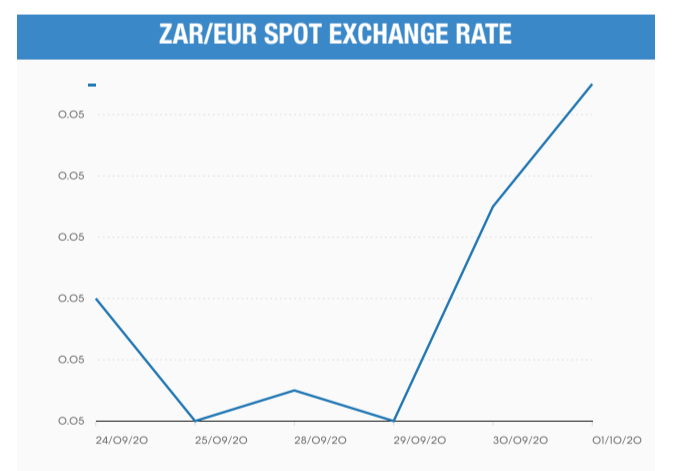
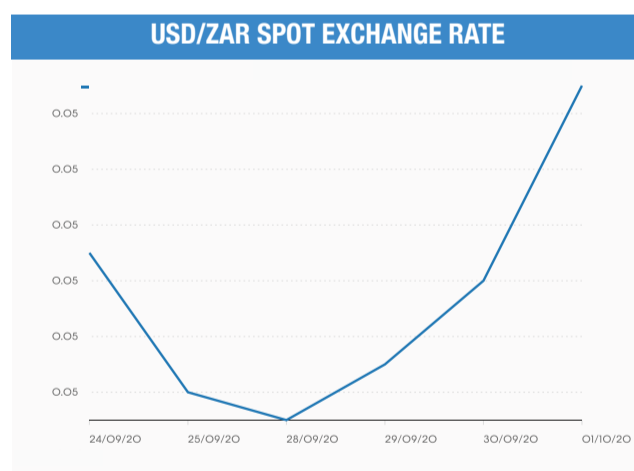
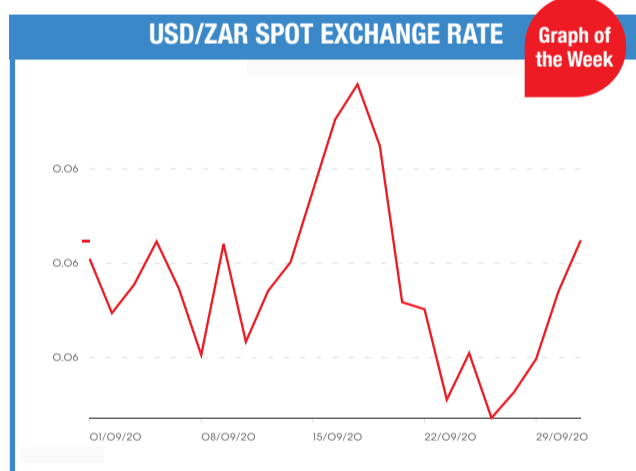
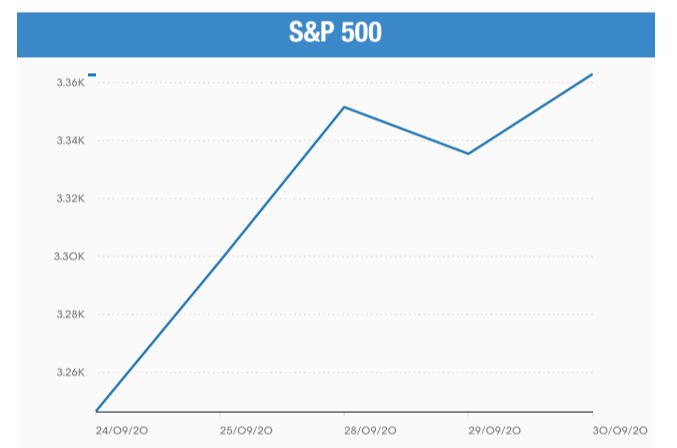
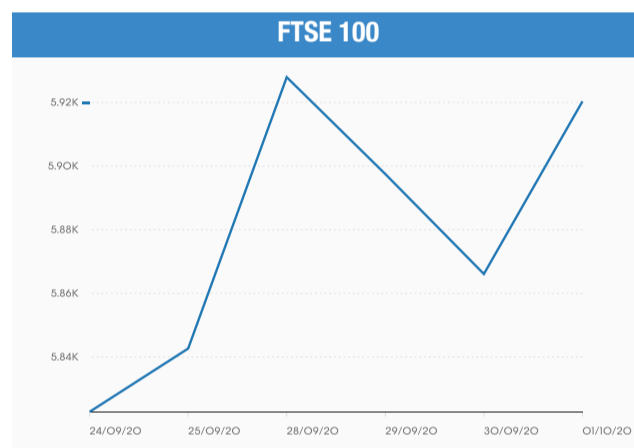
For more insight:

- [The Tesla conundrum – Elon will keep surprising us](#)
- [Alec Hogg: An SA investment proposition: the phenomenon called Easy Equities](#)

Market snapshots

A quick, but comprehensive look at the some of the world's financial and currency markets over the past month. In our Graph of the Week, we highlight the see-saw volatility of the Rand against the US Dollar over the past month.

Source: Bloomberg



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FINANCE

Fascinating insights into exceptional people

It's been a busy month at BizNews, with the launch of three new products. This weekly BizNews Digest is aimed at giving readers all the main stories in one easy-to-download PDF format and Inside Investing podcast highlights our top money-focused interviews.

Perhaps best of all is *The Alec Hogg Show*, which features in-depth

interviews with some of South Africa's most fascinating people.

Guests this month include: Paul O'Sullivan, ace corruption-buster; Nick Hudson, who has exposed the flaws in Covid-19 models; young restaurant entrepreneur Tasha Sideris; foxy futurist Clem Sunter; Sygnia founder Magda Wierzycka; Leon Louw, the Marxist-turned-Free Marketeer;

and the incomparably eccentric Allen Ambor, the founder of Spur restaurants.

You can access these inspiring half-hour podcasts, produced by BizNews founder and award-winning broadcaster Alec Hogg, through Spotify, Iono.fm or on BizNews Radio.

You can also follow the links to the interviews, below.



Paul O'Sullivan

In the inaugural episode, the BizNews founder engages with Paul O'Sullivan, nemesis of the corrupt. O'Sullivan opens up about his Irish childhood that sounds a lot like that in Frank McCourt's classic *Angela's Ashes* to the reason why he has channelled the fruits of a successful business career into bringing the powerful to society's heel.

Nick Hudson

South Africa possesses many extraordinary people few of us ever hear about until they get pushed into the spotlight by unusual circumstances. Like the Covid-19 pandemic which was grabbed as an opportunity by politicians to stir up fears enabling them to wield unfettered power. We get to hear what makes PANDA co-ordinator Nick Hudson tick. Riveting.



Tasha Sideris

In this biographical podcast, we get a unique insight into an OCD workaholic who has already surpassed the achievements of her successful restaurateur father. After reaching her targets in SA and UAE, she is about to introduce Tasha's into new geographies, including the UK and Australia.

Clem Sunter

Like other guests on this show, Clem was selected on the basis that if his story were captured in book form, it would likely be a bestseller. The only surprise is why South Africa's most famous futurist hasn't written that autobiography already. Clem Sunter is a prodigious writer, having written 17 books, the most recent of which refer to how we can all learn from foxes in this world of warp speed change.

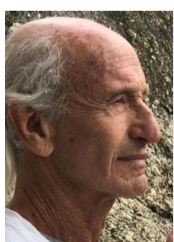


Magda Wierzycka

This episode features Sygnia founder Magda Wierzycka, a visionary financial services entrepreneur whose story is an inspiration for all. A rags to riches story of penury in Poland when the country was a vassal to the Soviet Union, to a role model for anyone possessing the grit and determination to overcome the odds. Today Magda is living her dream - but in her words, getting there "hasn't been a picnic."

Leon Louw

Leon is a Marxist-turned-Free Marketeer who emerged from a conservative Afrikaner background to embrace communism before having his views reversed by a street vendor in her 70s. For almost 50 years Louw has provided a clear voice of rationality in a country where economic policies have been shaped by political rather than wealth-creating agendas.



Allen Ambor

In Episode 7 our guest was wannabe musician, Allen Ambor, creator of the 600-store Spur restaurant group, which he started in 1967 with an instantly successful steakhouse around the corner from Cape Town's Newlands rugby stadium. Eccentric, focused, and opinionated yoga teacher Allen is still living a full life. In this interview he doesn't hold back, whether it's on the reason for his departure from Spur or advice for budding entrepreneurs.

IN SHORT

Thou shalt not speculate online - Mboweni

Finance minister Tito Mboweni has waved the big stick at small-time forex traders, warning that offshore currency speculation is illegal in SA. Responding to a parliamentary question, Mboweni said online platforms advertising forex trading are not allowed and therefore are not registered in SA with any of the financial sector regulators, and so operate illegally, similar to online gambling platforms. But illegal online forex trading platforms should not be confused with authorised brokers who use trading platforms to manage and execute market positions, he said.

No entry for high-risk country visitors

Leisure travellers from countries with coronavirus infection rates higher than South Africa, including Britain, the US and France, will not be permitted to enter when South Africa's borders open up on October 1, foreign minister Naledi Pandor said. However, business travellers from countries considered "high-risk," which also include the Netherlands, Russia and India, with scarce and critical skills including diplomats, repatriated persons and investors will be allowed to enter.

Icasa outlines broadband auction dates

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa will publish the invitations to apply for the licensing process for the Wireless Open Access Network (WOAN) and the International Mobile Telephony (IMT) spectrum no later than October 2. The authority plans to make available 406 MHz of spectrum for the provision of mobile broadband services with various empowerment obligations to be imposed on successful bidders. The closing date for IMT spectrum applications is December 28 and March 30, 2021 for the Woan ITA.

Cut taxes to jumpstart car sales - Naamsa

South African car makers have asked the government to reduce taxes to between 35% to 38% on new vehicle is part of a proposed stimulus package for the coronavirus-hit sector. The proposal, to snip the 42% tax on new vehicles, aims to boost local sales of new cars was presented to the government by the National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of South Africa (Naamsa).

Motorists caught in Catch-22 licence chaos

The chaos at Driving Licence Test Centres has led to calls for the validity of expired driver's licence cards to be extended and a moratorium to stop motorists with expired driver's licence cards from being fined. There have also been calls for the validity period of driver's licence cards to be extended from five to 10 years and for the renewal of driver's licence cards to be outsourced to other entities. The Automobile Association said a moratorium on fining motorists without renewed driving licences must be implemented as a matter of urgency and immediate steps taken to fix the current renewal processes.

Deloitte's last roll of Tongaat dice

Sugar producer Tongaat Hulett has reappointed Deloitte to audit its financials for another year but the company has promised it will hold the firm accountable for signing off on the company's misstated financials but it needs to get its house in order first. Deloitte has been auditing Tongaat for 82 years and will do so for another year before new auditors, which the sugar producer is in the process of appointing, come in for 2022.

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LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT OFF-SHORE INVESTMENT?

PARTNER CONTENT

Joburg Indaba Nuggets

brought to you by BizNews

By Bernard Swanepoel

Due to the Covid-19 social distancing rules, the Joburg Indaba, SA mining's premier event, has had to go online.

It's a new reality, and one which creates the perfect context for this critically important sector of the SA economy to pause and reflect: How should we RESET in the aftermath of a global pandemic?

One of the unique features of this event has always been that it is focused and intimate.

It gets the Who's Who of the mining industry together in one venue for two days of blunt and honest conversations about the real issues facing the industry. None of the corporate spin or PR. No exhibitors' flea markets. No parallel sessions, nor wild parties! Just



Coal CEOs respond to negative market sentiment and pressure regarding ESGs at Joburg Indaba Coal Day

candid, constructive engagement. Some of the advantages of being in the same room are hard to

replicate, but the online platform does have its advantages: firstly, we have more international CEOs

and investors participating than ever before (see programme here). Secondly, audience participation

is probably easier via the online platform. Most importantly, the content will now be available and accessible long past the actual event.

In this first edition of *Joburg Indaba Nuggets*, brought to you by BizNews, you will have the opportunity to listen to conversations from the recent Coal Day, as well as the PGMs day, which were both hosted by me, on behalf of Paula Munsie's Resources for Africa team. *Joburg Indaba Nuggets* is a joint venture between Resources for Africa, BizNews and THINKspiration. The theme for this year's online Joburg Indaba event on 7 and 8 October is 'RESET'.

The world, South Africa and indeed the mining industry are in a very different place to a year ago. Different responses, strategies and tactical approaches will be explored, building on sector specific discussions at both the Coal and PGMs day events which preceded it.

Nugget #1: The SA mining industry has handled the COVID-19 pandemic well

It is not surprising that the mining industry has responded both speedily and efficiently to both the pandemic as well as the subsequent lockdown restrictions.

At last month's PGMs day, Roger Baxter, CEO of the Minerals Council of SA gave an insightful overview regarding why the mining sector is leading our country's COVID-19 response.



Roger Baxter

Nugget #2: ESGs: impact on coal – it's time for stakeholders to talk to each other!

It is amazing that despite so many passionate anti-coal crusaders on social media, it is difficult to get these 'activists' to leave the comfort of their echo-chambers to engage with the coal mining industry.

Even in a clear area that will require multi-stakeholder participation, like a just transition from fossil fuels to renewables, we prefer to talk ABOUT each other rather than WITH each other!

The upcoming Joburg Indaba on 7 and 8 October will take this topic forward with a keynote address by André de Ruyter.

At the recent Joburg Indaba Coal Day, John Smelt, an ex-Rio Tinto executive responsible for Investor Relations, shared some sober views about how ESG investors are causing major mining companies and funders to avoid coal mines and projects.



John Smelt

Nugget #3: Coal CEOs respond to negative market sentiment and pressure regarding ESGs

Two months ago, at the Joburg Indaba Coal Day, panel leader Ian Cockerill asked the panelists about their views on the challenges facing the coal industry, and their specific company's responses to these.

Hear what these CEOs – Mike Teke (Seriti Resources), Lucky Kgatle (Sasol Mining), Vuslat Bayoglu (Menar) and Bontle Aphane (Arnot OpCo) – had to say.

Nugget #4: Anglo American Platinum's CEO shares her vision

Natascha Viljoen, Anglo American Platinum's new CEO is clear about where she is taking the company and what she needs to do.

Below is her response when asked by Joburg Indaba Chairman, Bernard Swanepoel, about her new role and how she plans to reimagine the future of mining at Anglo American Platinum.

"If I think of our industry and specifically Anglo American Platinum, I think about it in terms of three buckets. I think about it firstly as the ore body that we are the custodians of. And that's really the only thing we cannot change in the way we do business.

I think, on the other hand, of the bucket of investors' capital that we are accountable for as the second bucket. Then really extracting the value out of the ore body is the third bucket. And probably the most important bucket to bring all of this together would be our

people bucket that extends to our communities.

So if I think of the future and I look at where we are today, I think the most important aspect that we should be thinking about is firstly, how do we interact with our ore body, to ensure that we are accountable and responsible in extracting maximum value?"

Natascha also expands on Anglo American Platinum's technology roadmap for the future in this audio clip.



Natascha Viljoen



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Joburg Indaba Nuggets

brought to you by BizNews

Nugget #5: Stephen Forrest's Rhodium Rant

It's not often that erudite, articulate and dapper Stephen Forrest goes on a rant... but when he does it's worth listening to!

"I have a little moan as well. Why do we call the UG2 reef UG2? It should be called Rhodium Reef! I mean, it's ridiculous! We've an acronym for the most precious metal. I encourage you all to call UG2 Rhodium Reef!"

Listen to what led up to his passionate plea, and Stephen's assessment of the Rhodium market and its challenges. He talks about the inability of the SA mining industry to adjust their mining plans adequately to the market needs for Rhodium, which on the one hand results in record Rhodium prices but on the other hand causes significant problems for customers.



Stephen Forrest



Nico Muller

Nugget #6: How does one justify mining in Zimbabwe?

One can't move ore bodies to where it's convenient for a mining company to operate.

The fact that most of the world's cobalt will have to come from the DRC causes significant dissonance in the compelling narrative of the energy storage industry. It is noteworthy that Elon Musk just announced a new generation of batteries that will use nickel and manganese thereby de-linking his company from cobalt.

In the case of PGMs this is particularly relevant as most of the world's PGMs are mined in SA, Russia and Zimbabwe. Both Nico Muller, CEO of Implats, and Natascha Viljoen, CEO of Anglo American Platinum make cogent arguments for why being in Zimbabwe at this time still makes sense.

Nugget #7: Can we get some of what these PGM marketing guys are on?

To end a long day of online presentations with so much optimism was something special.

Earlier, PGM industry CEOs were cautiously optimistic about the sustainability of their companies to generate record free cash.

The customer facing industry bodies are clearly led by people who are either much more optimistic, or who are just seeing the green shoots a little more vividly!

Benny Oeyen, Executive Head, Market Development at Anglo American discussed the PGM market with Anton Berlin, VP Sales at Norilsk Nickel and Kevin Eggers, Partner at AP Ventures.

They were joined by Trevor Raymond, Director of Research of the World Platinum Investment Council, Matthias Dohrn, SVP at BASF and Tim Schlick, COO of the Platinum Guild International.

There are not many other places where you could learn from such a distinguished and knowledgeable panel about the prospects for PGMs so succinctly.

But be warned...you would want to buy some exposure to PGMs after listening to this!

LATE REGISTRATION!

By special arrangement, BizNews community members are invited to participate in the Joburg Mining Indaba

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Joburg THE INDABA

INVESTING IN RESOURCES AND MINING IN AFRICA

Nugget #8: What's next for Sibanye-Stillwater?

Neal Froneman has taken Goldfields' cast off SA gold assets and converted them into a significant precious metals company.

In 2018, during safety incidents, he feared for the company's survival as it was caught with huge debt post its acquisition of Stillwater, the Montana-based palladium mine. Now he is ready to diversify, even beyond PGMs and gold. This clip is definitely worth a listen.



Neal Froneman

THIS YEAR'S SPEAKERS:

Honourable Minister Gwede Mantashe - Department of Mineral Resources and Energy SA

Sir Mick Davis

Mark Cutifani - CE, Anglo American

Mark Bristow - President and CEO, Barrick Gold Corporation

André de Ruyter - Group CE, Eskom Holdings SOC Limited

Mxolisi Mgojo - President, Minerals Council South Africa and CEO, Exxaro Resources

Sandile Zungu - Chairman, Zungu Investments Co.

Roger Baxter - CE, Minerals Council South Africa

Dr Martyn Davies - MD, Emerging Markets and Africa, Deloitte

Nolitha Fakude - Chairperson, Management Board, Anglo American in South Africa

Mike Fraser - CEO, South32

Neal Froneman - CEO, Sibanye-Stillwater

Thandi Orleyn - Chair, Impala Platinum Holdings Ltd and Chair, BPSA

Thembelani Gantsho - CEO, Kudumane Manganese Resources

Mosa Mabuza - CEO, Council for Geosciences

Charl P de Malan - Senior Metals & Mining Analyst, Van Eck (New York)

Olivia Markham - MD, Natural Resources, BlackRock (London)

Nico Muller - CEO, Impala Platinum

Professor Bob Scholes - Professor of Systems Ecology, Global Change Institute, Wits

Deshnee Naidoo - Mining Executive

July Ndlovu - CEO, Anglo American Coal South Africa

Lucky Kgatle - Senior Vice President, Sasol Mining

Christine Ramon - Interim CEO, AngloGold Ashanti

André Joubert - CE, Ferrous Division, African Rainbow Minerals

Dr Fiona Perrott-Humphrey - Senior Adviser, Mining Team, Global Advisory, Rothschild & Co UK

Andries Rossouw - Partner, PwC South Africa

Peter Steenkamp - CEO, Harmony Gold Mining Company Limited

Mike Teke - CEO, Seriti Resources

Dr Nombasa Tsengwa - Executive Head, Coal Operations, Exxaro Resources

Peter Davey - Independent Non-Executive Director, Impala Platinum Holdings Ltd

Douglas Upton - Investment Analyst & Partner, Capital Global (London)

Natascha Viljoen - CEO, Anglo American Platinum

Mpumi Zikalala - MD, De Beers Group Managed Operations

Srinivasan Venkatakrishnan - Venkat

Charl Keyter - Group CFO, Sibanye-Stillwater

Boipelo Lekubo - CFO, Harmony Gold Mining Company Limited

Jongisa Magagula - Executive Director, Investor Relations and New Business Development, African Rainbow Minerals

Errol Smart - MD and CEO, Orion Minerals

Lullu Krugel - Chief Economist, PwC

Eric Croeser - MD, Accenture

Mpumelelo Mkhabela - Chairman, Menar

Alistair Hodgkinson - Executive Vice President, Projects, DRA Global

Arjen de Bruin - MD, OIM Consulting

Claire McMaster - Executive Head: HR, Fraser Alexander

Bongi Ntsoelengoe - Cluster Executive Manager, Mining, CSIR

Alex Fenn - Head of Technology and Innovation, Sibanye-Stillwater

Robin Bolton - Executive, Sustainability, IsoMetrix

Zandile Cindi - Senior Manager (Resources), Accenture

Laxman Shekhawat - Business Head, Vedanta Zinc International

George Cheveley - Portfolio Manager, Ninety One (London)

Claude Baissac - Chief Executive Officer, Eunomix

Glen Mc Gavigan - Executive Head of Technical and Projects, Kumba Iron Ore

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GOOD HOPE

Control your life in a Google world

By George Cocolas

This past week I finally got to experience the taste of defeat. The unique flavours of humble pie. The tart tang of frustration's salty tears as they coursed down my cheeks. (I am exaggerating a tad on that last one). And all this for what?

Well, in a fit of anger at the brazen, craven manipulation that Google uses to subvert, suppress or de-platform information that I am seeking out, I decided to switch Search engines from Google to Microsoft's Bing. "Ooooooh" I hear you say. "That's brave". Well, yes. It was.

Current groupthink

I follow many websites or writers that do not kow-tow to the current groupthink as decided by deeply liberal social media and search curators. I visit sites and seek news that offer deeper and contrarian insight into the stream of "News" that we are being spoon-fed. "News" ... it kills me to even use that misnomer. And yes, I'm talking to you, the average reader (sheep) getting his newsfeed from Facebook (bless) or from Google news or Twitter (sigh).

I ran back to Google (market share 92,5%) quicker than an ANC politician scoping out his latest prey.

For many years I have followed a number of the highest-respected think-tanks, writers, websites, periodicals – in all facets of life: Business, ethics, current events, philosophy. You name it and I probably read it. Well, at least they were highly respected until the NYT and Google and Facebook and Twitter decided they were no longer fit for my consumption.

Scrubbed websites

The American Spectator, The Gateway Pundit: These websites no longer come up in a search. Article references and articles from such websites have been scrubbed. *Breitbart News* – well, as of writing it has lost 99.7% of its Visibility Index.

It reminds me of the very opposite of the "No shoes, No shirt, No Problem" paradigm. Except now it is "No Groupthink, No MSM-narrative, No way Jose". Give up your job security badge at the front desk. Thank you for flying Air STTW (Submit-to-the-Few).

Orwell's *1984* seems positively

myopic in comparison. Come on now Georgie-boy.... Now think Big! Bigger! Biggest! – when you think of writing the sequel to *1984*.

So back to this article's title. How was the experience of cruising the internet on Bing? It was pathetic. It was as useless as a big penis on a eunuch. Or on a woman. Careful....

There were so few pictures. So little information. Such denuded search results. Practically no links to arbitrary and obscure information sources.

I ran back to Google (market share 92,5%) quicker than an ANC politician scoping out his latest prey. Really, really fast. (What chance poor SOEs with such predators on the loose?).

How to slay the beast

So how to slay the beast? Or at least evade its sticky manipulative and politically correct tentacles. Go directly to the website that you enjoy and read all their news right there and then.

Sign up for direct emails from your favourite websites. Use a VPN



George Cocolas qualified as a chartered accountant with Arthur Andersen (oops) and then went on to become a rated sell-side analyst. He has worked for Merrill Lynch, CLSA and Banque Paribas. He now lives on the Athens Riviera with his husband and a brace of borzois and greyhounds.

network for most things. Make it as hard as possible for them to commoditise you. Keep your Twitter if you must. But join Parler, where free speech is a founding pillar of the communication network. You will see news videos, photos and commentary that has been aggressively shut-out from your eyes. Including SA farm murder footage.

Share your findings with your friends via links in direct emails. Yes you, you lazy sods. Not on Social

Media. Yes – the snail-mail of the 1970s will protect your information sharing. At least for now.

Finally, and most importantly, repeatedly remind yourself that free choice, unimpeded thought and free speech are your birth rights as a human being. It is not to be decided on your behalf by "Da Man".

Google's corporate motto was "Don't Do Evil". Ha. Give me a break you supreme hypocrites.

[Read the full article here](#)

THE WRY EYE

Barking mad

Whiskey maker Jack Daniels is barking mad over a dog toy that resembles its classic Old No 7 bottle, complete with black labels and white text. Claiming the Bad Spaniels Silly Squeakers dog toy infringes on its trademark, it wants the US Supreme court to overrule a judge who held the toys were "expressive" and conveyed "a humorous message". Not amused, the whiskey maker claims the same judgement also confused consumers "into believing that Jack Daniels sponsors a dog-toy spotlighting poop."



Stupid or sloshed?

A survey into the drinking habits of Britons unearthed some head-scratching beliefs. Of the 2,000 adults surveyed, 5% count wine as one of their five-a-day quota of fruit and vegetables, because its made from grapes, and therefore must be healthy. The ignorance is understandable; the study also found that 35% of British drinkers are confused by alcohol. That's not surprising because where else in the world would 5% of alcohol consumers think Swedish pop group ABBA was a beer?

Kafka and StatsSA

Remember the furore over the -51% drop in GDP and StatsSA conceding the annualised rate painted a worse-than-dire picture of a 16.4% quarterly drop in 2Q 2020? To balance the scales, StatsSA states that unemployment actually dropped at the height of the coronavirus lockdown, to 23.3% (2Q) from 30.1% (1Q). The explanation is a Kafkaesque gem – for people to be unemployed, they have to be actively looking for a job but during Stages 5 and 4, people couldn't look for work, so they were not unemployed. Joblessness solved.

Ashtray ethics

Oh dear, Philip Morris International, the global purveyor of tobacco products laced with addictive-forming substances and worse, has a real problem on hand – how to sound truthful in the face of mounting evidence of its falsehoods and contradictions. Only a spin doctor with the ethics of an ashtray could come up with disingenuous claptrap like this: "PMI is building a future on a new category of smoke-free products that, while not risk-free, are a much better choice than continuing to smoke."

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Bok showdown to test combinations

By Derek Alberts

Springbok watchers hoping for clarity on what lies ahead for rugby in South Africa after the weekend's belated start to a truncated domestic season were left scratching their heads.

Not too much should be read into the weekend's proceedings – the Springbok Showdown draft pick and the double header featuring the Super Rugby franchises of the Bulls, Lions, Sharks and Stormers.

The proceeding did however, highlight the conundrum the Springbok coaches find themselves in.

On the one hand, there's pressure to field a competitive squad in the on-off, and now on again Rugby Championship in Australia next month. On the other hand, there's a precious need to manage the South Africa-based contingent of top-flight players who are seriously undercooked for what promises to be a vengeful campaign Down Under.

This dichotomy played itself out over the weekend. First up, the draft picks highlighted two modes of thinking among the Springbok



Bongi Mbonambi (left) and Thomas du Toit

selectors. While a draft system may throw up the odd surprise pick, Rassie Erasmus and Mzwandile Stick favoured an inclusive approach in the green team, while Jacques Nienaber and Deon Davids built their gold squad around a distinct Stormers spine.

The spine refers to key decision-making positions, of hooker (Scarra Ntubeni), eightman (Sikhumbuzo Notshe), scrumhalf (Herschel Jantjies), flyhalf (Damien Willemse) and fullback (Warrick Gallant).

The gold team's reasoning is

pragmatic; with less than a week in which to prep a team, it's wise to go with an established core that also happens to include the muscle of Bok props Steven Kitshoff and Frans Malherbe. Whether the game plan will have space for the intuitive play of Sharks skipper Lukhanyo Am and the pace of Sergeal Petersen and Rosko Specman remains to be seen.

So too is whether green coaches Stick and Erasmus can knit a group of individual players into a workman-like squad. Bracing for

Top teams off to Europe

In a decision that has sounded the death-knell for Super Rugby, SA Rugby will field the Bulls, Lions, Sharks and Stormers in an expanded PRO16 competition in Europe next year.

[Read the full article here](#)

a bruising battle upfront, they're looking to human tank Thomas du Toit - a blindside pick at loosehead - for some front row grunt, along with Sharks teammate Ox Niche and Bok tighthead Trevor Nyakane.

The green team is overflowing with talent at loose-forward, led by Bok captain Siya Kolisi and Word Cup hero Dwayne Vermeulen at eight with Juarno "Trokkie" Augustus lurking the wings.

Elton Jantjies will have his hands full, trying to bring a potpourri of three-quarters, from Frans Steyn (36) to Sevens maestro Seabelo Senatla and Yaw Penxe of the fallen Kings, into play.

With an eye firmly fixed on the Australian trip, the coaches will hope for clarity in some of the trickier combinations, and more so with a horde of young talent rattling the gates. They will also pray for no more injuries to key players, not with a worrisome injury count of Europe-based players that has muted the snarl up front.

Also read:

- Europe beckons for SA rugby franchise
- Casualties mount
- Rugby Championship doubts

The full Springbok Showdown squads

SPRINGBOK GREEN SQUAD

Props: Ox Nche*, Thomas du Toit**, Trevor Nyakane**, Luan de Bruin
Hookers: Bongi Mbonambi**, Schalk Erasmus
Locks: JD Schickerling, Hyron Andrews, Oupa Mohoje*
Loose-forwards: Siya Kolisi**, Arno Botha*, Duane Vermeulen**, Junior Pokomela, Juarno Augustus
Scrumhalves: Sanele Nohamba, Embrose Papier*
Flyhalves: Elton Jantjies**, Manie Libbok
Centres: Frans Steyn**, Wandisile Simelane, Jeremy Ward
Outside backs: Seabelo Senatla, Yaw Penxe, Gianni Lombard, Malcolm Jaer
Coaches: Rassie Erasmus and Mzwandile Stick

SPRINGBOK GOLD SQUAD

Props: Steven Kitshoff**, Dylan Smith, Frans Malherbe**, Ruan Dreyer*
Hookers: Scarra Ntubeni*, Dylan Richardson
Locks: Salmaan Moerat, Marvin Orié*, Jason Jenkins*
Loose-forwards: Marco van Staden*, Nizaam Carr*, Sikhumbuzo Notshe*, Vincent Tshituka, James Venter
Scrumhalves: Herschel Jantjies**, Jaden Hendrikse
Flyhalves: Damian Willemse**, Curwin Bosch*
Centres: Rikus Pretorius, Lukhanyo Am**, Werner Kok, Manuel Rass
Outside backs: Sergeal Petersen, Rosko Specman, Warrick Gelant**
Coaches: Jacques Nienaber Deon Davids

** Springbok RWC squad members * Capped Springbok Test players

Blinkered fans and blistering genius

By Derek Alberts

There's a real temptation, especially after a lengthy break, to read too much into a one-match result by partisan rugby fans and their media, as evidenced during the opening weekend of encounters in the Superfan Saturday double header at Loftus Versveld.

In the bigger scheme of things - the

state of South African rugby after a six-month hiatus - the results (Bulls 48 Sharks 28; Stormers 34 Lions 21) are meaningless. Of deeper interest is whether the teams were allowed to execute a game plan, adapt it, or even improvise, and show off their skills to boot.

The brimming talent, depth and blistering pace of the youngsters, in the Cheslin Kolbe genius, was a revelation. Less surprising was that the day was a metaphor for modern

rugby, that forward power and set pieces firing on all cylinders create the space for more expansive play.

Singing the praises of a Bok-heavy Stormers' power scrum dominating a game Lions team, or hailing the Bulls for giving an experimental Sharks squad a proper *snot-klap*, is what fans do. Less intuitive is taking off the blinkers and marvel at the game's complexities and its nuances, and the genius of new talent. That's more helpful and a lot more fun.

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