



SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY NEWSLETTER

ASTANA DECEMBER 2015



President J.G. Zuma attended COP 21 in Paris



President Jacob Zuma at COP 21, Paris

President Zuma and Minister of the Environmental Affairs, Edna Molewa have left the South African negotiating team in highly capable hands in Paris as they head back home tonight. The country's highly regarded chief negotiator Amb Nozipho Mxakatho-Diseko leads not only South Africa in Paris but the whole G77 plus China! Respected and recognized by technocrats and world leaders alike, she makes our beautiful country shine! All the best Ambassador, the next two weeks will be hectic in Paris!

Beijing to host first BRICS Media Summit on press co-operation



A BRICS media summit was held in Beijing on 1 December 2015, focusing on cooperation between BRICS media organizations.

With the theme of "Innovation, Development, Cooperation and Trust," the summit included forums on topics such as media's role in promoting a closer international partnership, deepening BRICS media exchanges and cooperation as well as how traditional and new media complement each other and diverge.

Leaders of 25 media groups from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa attended the meeting, which was hosted by Xinhua.

First proposed by Xinhua, the summit was jointly organized by Brazil Communication Company, Russia Today International News Agency, The Hindu Group and South Africa's Independent Media.

Media outlets from BRICS countries must foster initiatives to break Western hegemony in news reporting, a senior official from Brazil's public broadcaster told Xinhua in a recent interview.

Media representatives exchanged views on journalism and common info space:

Russian media leaders expected the first BRICS Media Summit, to discuss closer coordination of activities, formation of common information space and ways to address current challenges.

Comprehensive and mutually beneficial cooperation of media organizations is needed within BRICS not only to facilitate the reporting, but also to break the domination of Western media.

In this regard, BRICS media should improve the quality of their products and establish contacts with more countries with different points of views. It is a long-term but worthy efforts for BRICS media to tell more stories on comprehensive aspects of civil society, rather than purely on political and military issues.

Brazilian journalists see BRICS media summit as a golden chance to exchange expertise and experience.

Indian participants who attended the BRICS Media Summit in Beijing said that it is high time for BRICS countries to carry out media cooperation to meet the demand of their respective audiences.

You can find the full article by: <http://www.coastweek.com/3848-Beijing-to%20host-first-BRICS-Media-Summit-on-press-co-operation.htm>

The Education Ministers of the BRICS countries have established the BRICS Network University



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The BRICS countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa – signed a far-reaching agreement on cooperation in education that includes joint research and more collaboration in postgraduate training and co-publishing.

The joint declaration and memorandum of understanding was signed by ministers from the BRICS nations in Moscow on 18 November 2015, according to a statement by South Africa's Minister of Higher Education and Training, Blade Nzimande.

A BRICS Network of Universities will be the anchor for university collaboration across the five countries, and Nzimande said a process had already begun to nominate 12 South African universities to participate.

Among other things it commits partners to "support joint research projects, encourage more collaborative programmes at postgraduate, doc-

torate and post doctorate levels and co-publishing of scientific results by BRICS universities". The BRICS Network University will include 12 higher educational institutions from each country.

International forum "Oil and Gas of Turkmenistan - 2015" under way in Ashgabat



H.E. Ambassador Soni and the representative from Paramount Group, Mr. Maksat Kurpenov on the opening ceremony of Oil and Gas Conference

The South African Ambassador in Astana, H.E. Mr. Shirish M. Soni travelled to Ashgabat on an official visit to attend the 20th International Exhibition and Conference "Oil and Gas of Turkmenistan - 2015" on 17 – 19 November 2015. The forum was organized by the Ministry of Oil and Gas Industry, Mineral Resources and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Turkmenistan.

The forum has brought together over 160 companies from 40 countries, such as Russia, China, the USA, Japan, the Republic of Korea etc. Companies operating in related industries such as metallurgy, chemical, machine building, power engineering and heavy industry also took part in the forum.

Ambassador Soni also met with the representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence of Turkmenistan, and visited the Yoga Center which was launched this year.

According to the speakers, the fuel and energy policy of Turkmenistan, which provides for a significant increase in production, processing and export of hydrocarbons in the coming decade, is supported by the proven and untapped hydrocarbon resources. According to the estimates by international experts, the hydrocarbon resources of Turkmenistan, exceeding 71 billion tons of standard fuel (or oil equivalent), are more than enough to meet the needs of China, Russia, Iran and Europe in the foreseeable future.

The Mission encourages South African companies to look at business opportunities available in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran. Logistics and transport routes will soon be available via the Persian Gulf.



South Africa will be hosting the 35th „World Cup of Geosciences“ in 2016, the prestigious International Geological Congress (IGC), which is undoubtedly the most important activity of the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS). The South African event will take place at the Cape Town International Convention Centre from 27 August to 4 September 2016.



Investing in African Mining Indaba is an annual professional conference dedicated to the capitalisation and development of mining interests in Africa.



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The World Bank Vice President delivered a lecture at the Nazarbayev University



Ms. Gulderaim Seidalina, Translator and Ms. Zhamilya Akmurzayeva, Trade and Info Assistant at the South African Embassy in Astana

The World Bank (WB) Vice President Mr. Cyril Muller delivered a lecture on the theme of "Preparing for a New Normal" at the Nazarbayev University during his official visit to Kazakhstan. In the course of his lecture Mr. Muller spoke about the need for Kazakhstan to adjust to the "new normal" of lower oil prices with exchange rate flexibility and an agile business climate. The key messages of the lecture were: do not expect the return of the past – a new reality will be quite different after the crisis; without structural changes the oil dependant countries take risks to significantly loose in the rise of their economy; depreciation of tenge in Kazakhstan was unavoidable; a flexible exchange rate is required, so that real appreciation/depreciation can follow oil prices; social safety nets and financial sectors are being tested; efficient government programs are essential; and most important is that the potential of the private sector in tradable be unleashed; SMEs can play a special role as they create proportionally more jobs than large companies; and etc. At the conclusion of the lecture, Mr. Muller answered some questions from the audience, explaining his view on measures of efficiency work of the Government to mitigate the consequences of the crisis; the extent to which a flexible exchange rates would exist, management of a freely floating exchange rate; the need of creation of a financial institution to provide assistance to growing producers of Kazakhstan during the recession; the possibility of affection to the ambitions of Kazakhstan to debate in Central Asian countries during the current situation; and his view in privatization of business sector.



SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM

INDABA is one of the largest tourism marketing events on the African calendar and one of the top three 'must visit' events of its kind on the global calendar which will be held from 7 to 9 May 2016. It showcases the widest variety of Southern Africa's best tourism products and attracts international buyers and media from across the world. INDABA has won the awards for Africa's best travel and tourism show. This award was presented by the Association of World Travel Awards.



Cape Town International Jazz Festival (CTIJF) is the largest music event in sub-Saharan Africa. The festival, now preparing for its 17th year. This proudly South African produced event is hosted at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) each year on the last weekend of March or the first weekend of April. The festival annually boasts 5 stages with more than 40 artists performing over 2 nights. The programming - unique to the CTIJF is made up of a 50/50 split between South African artists and international artists respectively. The festival hosts in excess of 37, 000 music lovers over the 2 show days.

First International Congress of Project Managers in Astana



From the left to the right: H.E. Shirish M. Soni, Ambassador of the Republic of South Africa, Mr. Alikhan Baimenov, Chairman of the Steering Committee of the Regional Hub in the civil service, Mr. Bolatbek Abdrasilov, Rector of the Academy of Public Administration under the President of Kazakhstan, H.E. Traian Laurentiu Cristian, Head of the European Union to the Republic of Kazakhstan, Mr. Azamat Oinarov, Chairman of the Board of JSC "Kazakhstan Public-Private Partnership Center"

Ambassador S.M. Soni was invited to the First International Congress of Project Managers in Astana. His Excellency was one of the key speakers during the opening session of the Congress held on 27 November 2015. He shared his ideas on the best combination for training and development for project managers, the importance of transformation and change management in projects, WOW projects and the legacy projects which he participated in. Ambassador S.M. Soni also informed the audience that project management is a tool/methodology used by professionals who execute real work and add value. As such, project management should not be used to create non-value adding jobs. On behalf of the South African Embassy His Excellency invited Kazakhstan to use South Africa as a benchmark for establishing project management offices in government and private sector. Conference delegates indicated a keen interest in taking up this offer.

TechConnect. Tech



Astana hosted the largest tech conference in Central Asia – TechConnect.Tech on 12 November 2015.

The Conference was opened by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan Karim Massimov. He read an address by the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev. "The field of innovation now lives on its own, and I give you my congratulations on it. This road won't be easy.

Not all of you who are here will become successful but this is the great thing about business – you can fail, get up, move forward. A task of the state is to create an infrastructure, institutes, that will help business to develop. Each country dreams to have its own Silicon Valley, but not each country can do it. The goal of the Government is to create an atmosphere which stimulates ideas, and we will help to implement them", said Prime Minister Massimov.

<http://www.techconnect.tech>

"Green Bridge-Platform-Partnership for Advanced Practices and Innovation"



The South African Embassy attended the International Conference "Green Bridge-Platform-Partnership for Advanced Practices and Innovation" arranged by the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan together with the coalition for the "Green" Economy and G-Global Development on 13 November 2015 in Astana. Green Bridge Partnership Program was launched by Kazakhstan at the III Astana Economic Forum in 2010 and received support from two United Nations regional commissions and the UN summit "Rio+20". The official support is provided by the Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan, UNDP in Kazakhstan, the Office of Programs of the OSCE in Astana, the National Company "Astana EXPO-2017".

The Conference was opened by the Minister of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan Vladimir Shkolnik. He read the welcome speech of the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Karim Massimov. "Astana will become an effective platform to showcase the world's best development trends in the use of solar energy, light, biogas, marine and thermal water. President Nursultan Nazarbayev set a target for the development of "green" economy and the achievement of total energy consumption of at least half through alternative renewable energy by 2050. Speaking at the UN-GA70 President Nazarbayev proposed to open the International Centre for the development of "green" technologies and investment projects in Astana under the auspices of the UN." Ambassador SM Soni remembers attending his first round table with diplomats, government and stakeholders in Astana, in 2012, where the Green Bridge Partnership Programme was discussed.

<http://www.gbpp.org/>



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A new born baby entered the world thanks to a South African Embassy's employee



Ms. Bernora Siddikova, newly born Akzhol and his mother

An employee of the South African Embassy in Kazakhstan helped a 21 year old woman to deliver a baby on Saturday 31 October 2015 while traveling to her hometown by train. The delivery happened in the Astana - Turkestan train. It was the birthing woman's third child. The woman was travelling with her husband and two kids. Ms. Bernora Siddikova was the only person to respond to the sudden child delivery. She didn't have much time to spare. The woman was lucky to travel in the same train as Ms. Bernora, who, at least, has a medical background but has never worked within her speciality. In the Embassy she occupied a temporary position.

"It was breath-taking", said Ms. Bernora, becoming steady after the chaotic delivery. The newborn boy's parents requested Ms. Bernora to name the child. According to Kazakh tradition only the most respected elders, mainly grandparents, can name kids. Since the delivery happened while travelling, Ms. Bernora offered to name him Akzhol, which means "Light Road" in Kazakh. Fortunately, the mother and her son are in good health and they were taken to a nearby maternity house. After being discharged from the hospital and reaching their final destination, Ms. Bernora reunited with the new-born boy and his parents. Bernora said that it is a really blessing to be a God Mother.

World Culture Festival 2016, Delhi, 11 to 13 March

Mrs. Ruweida Soni is appointed as the Africa coordinator for the World Culture Festival where she will showcase African dressing, drumming and dancing.



Cape Town named second best beach city in the world by National Geographic



National Geographic has told the world what Capetonians will tell you they know already: Cape Town is one of the best beach cities in the world. Cape Town was named as the "second best beach city in the world", losing out to Barcelona in Spain.

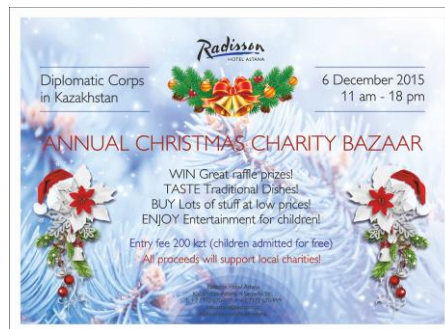
The African capital of cool sprawls on a peninsula that divides the icy Atlantic from the warmer Indian Ocean, putting some 20 beaches within striking distance. The Clifton beaches, known for the posh homes that overlook them and stellar sunset-viewing, are sheltered from the region's strong trade winds by a mountainous ridge. Further north, the breeze is unleashed at surfing sweet spots Milnerton and Blouberg. Families favor the eastern False Bay coast for warmer water and tot-friendly tidal pools.

The other cities are Honolulu, Hawaii; Nice, France; Miami Beach, Florida; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Santa Monica, California; Sydney, Australia; Tel-Aviv, Israel; Vancouver, British Columbia

Dear Friends!!!

The South African Embassy in Astana invites you to begin the festive season with feelings of carrying, sharing, gratitude and unconditional love. We invite you to attend and enjoy the Charity Bazaar, where you will find a lot of food, drinks and different items from more than 60 countries. There will be 2 lotteries where you can win beautiful and valuable prizes from different countries.

We will be glad to see you at the Radisson Hotel on 6 December 2015 at 10:00!!!!



South African-inspired bunny chow restaurant wins best breakfast award in UK



What do you get when you stuff a full English breakfast into a hollowed out brioche loaf? An award-winning breakfast, that's what Think: Freshly baked brioche loaf filled with home cured bacon, sausage, button mushrooms, bobotie spiced beans and homemade black pudding topped with a fried egg.

The philosophy at Bunnychow is, "if it tastes good, cram it in!" Inspired by the original bunny chow created in Durban in the 1940s, Bunnychow has been serving their own take on a "bunny" since 2013.

When Atholl Milton first launched the company, he took the dish around London in a truck. The menu includes the Full English Bunny, Piri Piri Pork Bunny, Veggie Bunny, Chakalaka Bunny and Durban Bunny.

As part of National Breakfast Week, Bunnychow CEO Atholl Milton was awarded most innovative breakfast in the UK award by TV chef Phil Vickery.

The Mission invites everyone visiting South Africa to experience eating a Bunnychow at Patel's Café on Grey Street, Durban where Bunnychow originated.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!

Ambassador SM Soni, Mrs. Ruweida Soni and the staff of the South African Mission in Astana wishes that your Christmas is filled with lots of happiness, peace and love...ooh and lots of presents!!!

And this New Year brings you closer to all those that you treasure in your heart! Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!



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