



News, Views & Comments from the World of Building Service Contracting

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ARGENTINA-BUENOS AIRES

Debt Market The Worst Performer In The World

The debt market in Argentina is the worst performer in the world with about 40 percent of the nation's \$136 billion debt in inflation-based securities, whose principal rises and falls with the consumer price index. Merrill Lynch & Co., estimates prices may be rising at a 17 percent annual pace and benchmark inflation-linked bonds have tumbled 24 percent in 2007. According to analysts, inflation is about double the official rate or 8.6 percent and may climb to 25 percent by year end as a result of a 35 percent jump in government spending. Compounding the problem is investor distrust brought on by complaints of government tampering by the biggest union representing employees at the National Statistics Institute, known as INDEC.

AUSTRALIA-SYDNEY

Army Of Cleaners Brought In To Hide Problems

Just before a parliamentary committee is making a site visit, 60 cleaners were brought in to clean Sydney's Royal North Shore Hospital (RNSH) from top to bottom over the weekend. According to the NSW Opposition, the army of cleaners was hired to scour the hospital to make it look good. Hospital staff had been asking for the place to be cleaned for years. The site visit is being conducted as part of an investigation by a select committee after a series of recent medical mishaps.

BELGIUM-BRUSSELS

Promoting Mobility And Lifelong Learning In EU

The European Parliament voted to adopt the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF). The framework has two principal purposes: to promote mobility between countries, and to facilitate lifelong learning. The EQF shifts focus away from learning inputs (such as the length of a learning experience, or the type of institution), to learning outcomes and as a result, it supports a better match between education and training provisions and the needs of the labor market (for knowledge, skills and competences); facilitates the validation of non-formal and informal learning; and facilitates the transfer and use of qualifications across different countries and education and training systems. The recommendation will require Member States relate their national qualifications systems to the EQF by 2010, and that individual certificates or diplomas should bear an EQF reference by 2012.

BRAZIL-SAO PAULO

Trade Fairs Give Small Businesses A Big Boost

In 15 years, Brazilian trade fairs have grown 300% and are now among the most efficient and economic forms for micro and small businesses to conquer their share of the market and expand. According to the Brazilian Association of Trade Fair Organizers (Ubrafe), 30% of the 31,530 exhibitors present at fairs are micro and small companies. In 2007, the number of fairs has risen from 38 in 1992 to 125,

exhibitors have increased from 7,500 to 31,500 and visitors have jumped from 500,000 to 5 million. Most retailers, distributors and tradesmen make a point of visiting the main fairs in their sectors. The fairs also help the economy. In Sao Paulo, which hosts 75% of business fairs in Brazil, turnover is 2.4 billion Brazilian reais (US\$ 1.3 billion) annually and approximately 120,000 jobs are generated.

CANADA-ONTARIO

Imploring The Community To Help Clean Up

The Windsor Citizens Crime Prevention Committee (WCCPC) announced it is hoping to recruit 400 community minded people to help keep 2,000 mailboxes in the area clean and free of graffiti. In the program, sponsored by Canada Post, volunteers get one kit of cleaning equipment. More than 90 percent of postal boxes, are vandalized a year costing an estimated \$75,000 annually to clean. The program focuses on cleaning mailboxes at present, but aims to spread to other vandalism targets in the future.

FRANCE-PARIS

Sarkozy Lays Out Eco-Vision For France

An ecological New Deal proposed by President Nicolas Sarkozy to fight against global warming will require all new buildings to be energy positive, meaning they will produce more energy than they consume by 2020. This will include all incandescent light bulbs to be banned by 2010, single-paned windows be replaced by better-insulated double panes and other electrical equipment considered to consume too much energy be banned as soon as alternatives exist at a reasonable price.

GERMANY-BERLIN

Germany Lowers 2008 Growth Forecast

Germany lowered the 2008 growth forecast to 2.0 percent from 2.4 percent. The release of the Ifo Research Institute Monthly Business Climate Index, a key German economic indicator, also offered a gloomy outlook. Ifo with its survey of about 7,000 companies on the

current business climate and their expectations for the next six months resulted in a fall of the main index to 103.9 points in October from 104.2 points in September. As a result, the index is now at its lowest level since early 2006.

GERMANY-MUNICH

Janitor Helps Save Drunken Oktoberfest Reveler

After an 82-year old janitor heard calls for help, police discovered a man who got stuck in a chimney for 12 hours while trying to climb into a apartment of a friend. The man had had been drinking heavily at Oktoberfest. The 27-year-old was rescued at around 2pm by fire brigade officers who knocked a hole into the side of the chimney to free him. He was flown to a hospital and was treated for hypothermia.

JAPAN-TOKYO

Trying A Virtual Marketing Experience

A new web-based 3-D alternate reality called Second Life is creating an opportunity to exploit the brave new world of virtual interaction. Japanese businesses have focused on figuring out how to effectively exploit Second Life to get their corporate message across and companies such as Nissan, Mitsukoshi department store and telecom giant Softbank, are staking claims. Analysts say the potential advantages from virtual marketing are significant, and that both businesses and their customers benefit. Second Life residents who visit the Mitsukoshi virtual shop can walk away wearing happi coats free of charge, while at Nissan they can give a new car a test drive – things until now impossible on even the snazziest corporate Web site. Japan, with 7 percent of all active users, has the third-largest representation in Second Life after the U.S. and Brazil.

NEW ZEALAND-AUCKLAND

Lack Of Cleaning Standards Creates Hazard

The lack of national standards for cleaning up meth labs has led to an inconsistency in the cleaning process. While testing and cleaning companies say they abide by their own best practice standards, there is no common approach and

as a result, there is no guarantee a 'cleaned up' lab in one part of the country will meet the same standards as one in another, creating a potentially hazardous situation for cleaning staff and residents who move in after the cleaning is complete. According to the Ministry of Health Communicable Disease and Environmental Health Policy, guidelines around the clean up of meth labs are being developed in consultation with relevant agencies and are due to be introduced in early 2008. However, the guidelines will have no mandatory standard with a statutory effect.

NEW ZEALAND-CHRISTCHURCH

Fraud Charges Over Franchise Sale

Two men sold franchise agreements for cleaning businesses by making false representations verbally, or in brochures, letters, and the agreements themselves. Stewart John Brown, faces nine charges of fraud and four of forgery and Robert Llewellyn Parr, faces a charge of obtaining by deception and one of fraud. One complainant paid \$62,000 plus GST for a Clean Co carpet cleaning and water-blasting franchise and was told he could have made somewhere around \$80,000 in sales in the first year in a business with a very high profit margin. In fact, after being in business since early 2003, the best sales in a year had been \$7,000.

SOUTH KOREA-SEOUL

Most Provinces Are Growing

According to a report by the National Statistical Office, the growth rate of gross regional domestic product, or GRDP, was an average of 4.8% nationwide from 2001 to 2005. South Chungcheong Province's economy had the fastest growth while Seoul only grew at 2.7%. Daegu had the lowest growth rate of 2.1%.

TAIWAN-TAIPEI

Programs Help Start New Businesses

Since 2003, Taipei City's Department of Social Affairs through the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and six other civil groups has been offering minority women free training

courses. One single mother, who joined the program in 2004, is now the founder and the manager of the Good Helper company. The company, which she founded with NT\$100,000 in 2005 after taking the classes, offers housekeeping services. She began by cleaning the homes of her neighbors and the nearby community. Now her clientele ranges from small families to chain bookstores, monthly revenue has reached NT\$100,000 and the company has more than 30 full-time employees.

THE NETHERLANDS-AMSTERDAM

Older Workers Dominate Workforce

The number of employees aged 55-64 years in the workforce nearly doubled between 1996 and the first half of 2007, to more than 47 percent. The largest increase was in the 55 to 60 year age group. Women in the age group, in particular, doubled their participation rate to over 45 percent from 1996 to 2006. The gross participation rate of those aged 55-64 in The Netherlands has been higher than the average in the European Union since 2002, however, the number is nowhere near the percentages in Scandinavia and Great Britain.

UK-LONDON

Membership Of CSSA Soars

Recently elected Chairman of the CSSA, Douglas Cooke is delighted that membership of The Cleaning & Support Services Association has increased by over 20% this year.

This is a significant growth in membership and reflects the concerted effort throughout the first nine months of the year by the CSSA with its alliance partners working together with a newly formed small working party to bring the benefits of association membership to the industry. The results have been positive in recruiting a number of small and medium sized businesses to the association. In the past, membership has been drawn from a narrow cross section of the industry and with Douglas' appointment, becoming the first Chairman from a smaller company, it has now become a priority to promote the CSSA to businesses

of all sizes and sectors within the cleaning and support services industry.

Douglas Cooke, Chairman says, "The CSSA, under the day to day leadership of Andrew Large, has formed a working party of MD's of small and medium sized companies to further reinforce the attractiveness of CSSA membership to other companies in the sector. We will continue to actively promote this and our aim is to have significant membership growth year on year."

The CSSA, based in London, offers its members a wide range of benefits and expert services and currently represents 70% of the contract cleaning industry throughout the UK. In addition, the Association has also recently held its first quarterly networking lunch with Edward Lonergan, Global Chief Executive of Johnson Diversey being the first speaker and hailed as a resounding success. These networking events, to encourage new members will continue and venues will be spread across the country with personal invitations sent out to approximately twenty industry leaders. The association is also working on 'Best Practice' models for the industry and announcements will be made on these over the next few months.

Member feedback from the CSSA's new members also shows a new appreciation for the services and benefits that the association offers.

Peter Ellis, Chief Executive of T C Contractors, who has recently joined the CSSA, says "I am very pleased that TC Contractors has joined the CSSA. They offer a valuable information and networking resource for my company and I look forward to working with them as the business grows"

The views are echoed by Bill Wilkerson from Exclusive Contract Services, another contract cleaning company that has recently joined the CSSA. Bill states: "In the time that we have been full members, I as a senior manager, and the company as a whole, have been immensely impressed with the flow of information that has come down through the CSSA network. This flow of information is two way, allowing us the opportunity of expressing our views and concerns directly to the people that influence and set the very legislation that governs the cleaning and associated industries. I fail to

see how any organization within our business, regardless of size, can contemplate long term success without the support of the CSSA "

US-CALIFORNIA

Electronic Nose Sniffs Odors

An electronic nose that can identify, classify and quantify when necessary the vapor or odor that poses a concern or threat has been developed by the Chemistry and Chemical Engineering Division at California Institute of Technology in a combined effort with NASA. An array of simple, readily fabricated chemically sensitive conductive polymer film and broadly-cross reactive sensors respond to a variety of odors. The Cal Tech Nose is able to function well in normal room temperatures and varied settings. It can detect an odor and then, by robotics, turn its attention to the odor or vapor it identifies as a concern.

US-DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

She Will Keep The White House Clean

A former head of cleaning operations at Marriott International has become the new executive housekeeper at the White House. 50-year-old Jenny Butero, who was personally recommended for the job by Bill Marriott, began her career as a bellhop for Marriott in 1979. She rose up through the company ranks to oversee cleaning operations for Marriott's 400,000 rooms and 20,000 housekeepers. She was also instrumental in upgrading rooms with 300-thread count sheets and an extra pillow on each bed.

US-GEORGIA

MRSA Truly Super

A new study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), also known as the superbug, strikes 31.8 out of every 100,000 Americans, making it more common

than flesh-eating strep infections, bacterial pneumonia and meningitis combined. 94,000 serious infections and 19,000 deaths each year can be attributed to the disease, making it more deadly than AIDS. MRSA is most prevalent among African Americans and the elderly, and is also common with very young children under one year of age.

US-ILLINOIS

Security Firm Fired For Sleeping On Job

A \$13.3 million security contract is currently being rebid at two water filtration plants in Chicago, safeguarding Chicago drinking water, considered one of the highest terrorist targets in the country. Armed guards at a private security company were caught sleeping and Water Management employees found gaping holes in the company performance. Until a new contract is awarded, city employees, serving as watchmen, will guard the plants.

US-MICHIGAN

Nationwide Janitorial Firm Pleads Guilty

The co-owners of a nationwide janitorial service have pleaded guilty to conspiring to defraud the federal government and harboring illegal immigrants. Over 200 illegal immigrants, mostly from Mexico, were arrested in a nationwide sting at Rosenbaum-Cunningham International, Inc. Richard Rosenbaum faces up to 10 years in prison and a \$500,000 fine and Edward Cunningham faces a five-year prison term and up to \$250,000 in fines. Both face restitution amounts that could exceed \$16 million.

VIETNAM-HANOI

Bird Flu Virus Strain In Vietnam Mutates

The Vietnamese Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development reported that the Bird flu virus strain in Vietnam has mutated. While the strain is becoming more dangerous, the mutation is not big enough for the virus to transmit among humans. Vietnam has detected seven bird flu patients

from five northern provinces since May 10th of which four died. Vietnam is encountering high risk of bird flu reoccurrence late this year, when cold weather condition is more favorable for the development of viruses.

CORPORATE MEMBER NEWS

Stepping Up To Assist Schools Fighting MRSA

JohnsonDiversey has increased production of its most effective line of disinfectants for schools and has advised school officials to fight infections in schools with the same strategies used in health care environments.

The company has a team of experts with knowledge and experience to advise school officials on the most effective methods for addressing the spread of MRSA. JohnsonDiversey provides the latest in cleaning and disinfecting procedures through print materials, training programs and customer technical service. Information about MRSA and procedures for combating infection is available on the company Website.

The company has increased production of its patented AHP-technology line of EPA-registered disinfectants, Oxivir TbTM and Carpe Diem TbTM. These products are available under the brands Johnson Wax Professional and Butchers, respectively. Only Oxivir Tb and Carpe Diem Tb disinfectants offer a 60-second kill time, which is highly effective against pathogens such as MRSA, but with a health hazard rating of zero, which means it has a product-safety profile well-suited for use in schools.

UPCOMING EVENTS

17th Congress of the World Federation of Building Service Contractors

Buenos Aires, Argentina
October 26-29, 2008

Visit the WFBSC website at www.wfbsc.org
for more information.



WFBC MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

ALL BUILDING SERVICE CONTRACTING COMPANIES THAT ARE MEMBERS OF ONE OF THE ASSOCIATIONS THAT IS A WFBC MEMBER, ARE AUTOMATICALLY MEMBERS OF THE WFBC.

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