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Shirley Ayorkor Botchway

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Dial *759#

BY Vincent Kubi

THE MINISTER of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, has sacked staff members seconded to the Passport Office for corruption following a surprise visit to the place on Monday.

The action follows *DAILY GUIDE*'s exposé of fraudulent practices throughout the passport application process, which exposes applicants to abuse and frustration.

The minister, visibly enraged, also ordered the transfer of staff personnel who had been in their posi-

Ayorkor Shakes Passport Office

tions for more than a year across the country in order to break their familiarity with the corrupt system.

"This cannot continue. There is too much happening that shouldn't be happening in the passport acquisition system," she fumed.

She added, "If we talk about 'goro people', these goro people are outsiders. They do not work on their own because if the goro person collects somebody's

money, they need to work with somebody from inside to change the dates; this should stop," she explained.

Ms. Ayorkor Botchwey stated that an investigation into the activities of some passport office employees in Accra had commenced, and added that some names had already been mentioned.

The minister said that some passport office employees were undermining the online application process in order to extort money from applicants.

She claimed that some civil servants at the passport offices were making it

impossible for the ministry to maintain sanity in the passport acquisition process.

The minister voiced her displeasure that politicians are frequently blamed for corruption although such acts are primarily planned by civil servants.

"The blame is often placed on politicians, but it is some civil servants who engage in these corrupt practices. We are implementing digitisation efforts and providing an online system, but even that is being manipulated," she pointed out.

DAILY GUIDE reported that deep-seated corrup-

tion and bribery were wreaking havoc on Ghana's passport acquisition system.

The paper was told that exorbitant fees were charged by retired officials, security staff, and even law enforcement officers to expedite passport processing, thereby undermining the system's integrity.

It was reported that contractors involved in the printing and altering of passport dates have been found to charge exorbitant fees ranging from GH¢1,500 to GH¢2,000, while promising passports within a week.

These illegal transac-

tions have spawned a booming underground market in which wealthy individuals manage to circumvent the normal passport processing channels.

Surprisingly, even police officers, immigration officers, and national security officers have been recognised as facilitators of these unethical operations.

These security agents, in collaboration with some Passport Office officials, were able to change the dates of appointments for applicants to go through the biometric, capturing, and verification process in the shortest possible time for a cost of GH¢500.

Police, Immigration, GRA Top Corruption Report

BY Vincent Kubi

A 2022 CORRUPTION report has once again exposed the country's public sector citing major public institutions.

According to the findings of the survey, Ghana Police Service (GPS) emerged as the most susceptible to bribery among all public officials, with an alarming prevalence rate of 53.2 per cent.

This was followed by the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) and the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) with bribery rates of 37.4 per cent and 33.6 per cent, respectively.

Other institutions included Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) with 29.5 per cent, passport agency officials with 29.0 per cent and prosecutors, judges and magistrates with 22.3 per cent.

The survey was conducted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in partnership with the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS).

The report further highlighted that workers at the Lands Commission received the highest number of bribes from Ghanaians seeking the services of the commission.

The report highlights that the average amount the workers receive is GH¢1,669. This is followed by prosecutors, judges or magistrates who receive an average of GH¢1,208.

Officers of the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) receive GH¢950. In contrast, the least amount of GH¢91 is received by health workers apart from doctors, nurses, and midwives.

Notably, elected government representatives exhibited a substantially lower prevalence of involvement in bribery, registering at a mere 2.9 per cent.

Bribes paid to public officials come in different forms. Almost 9 out of 10 of

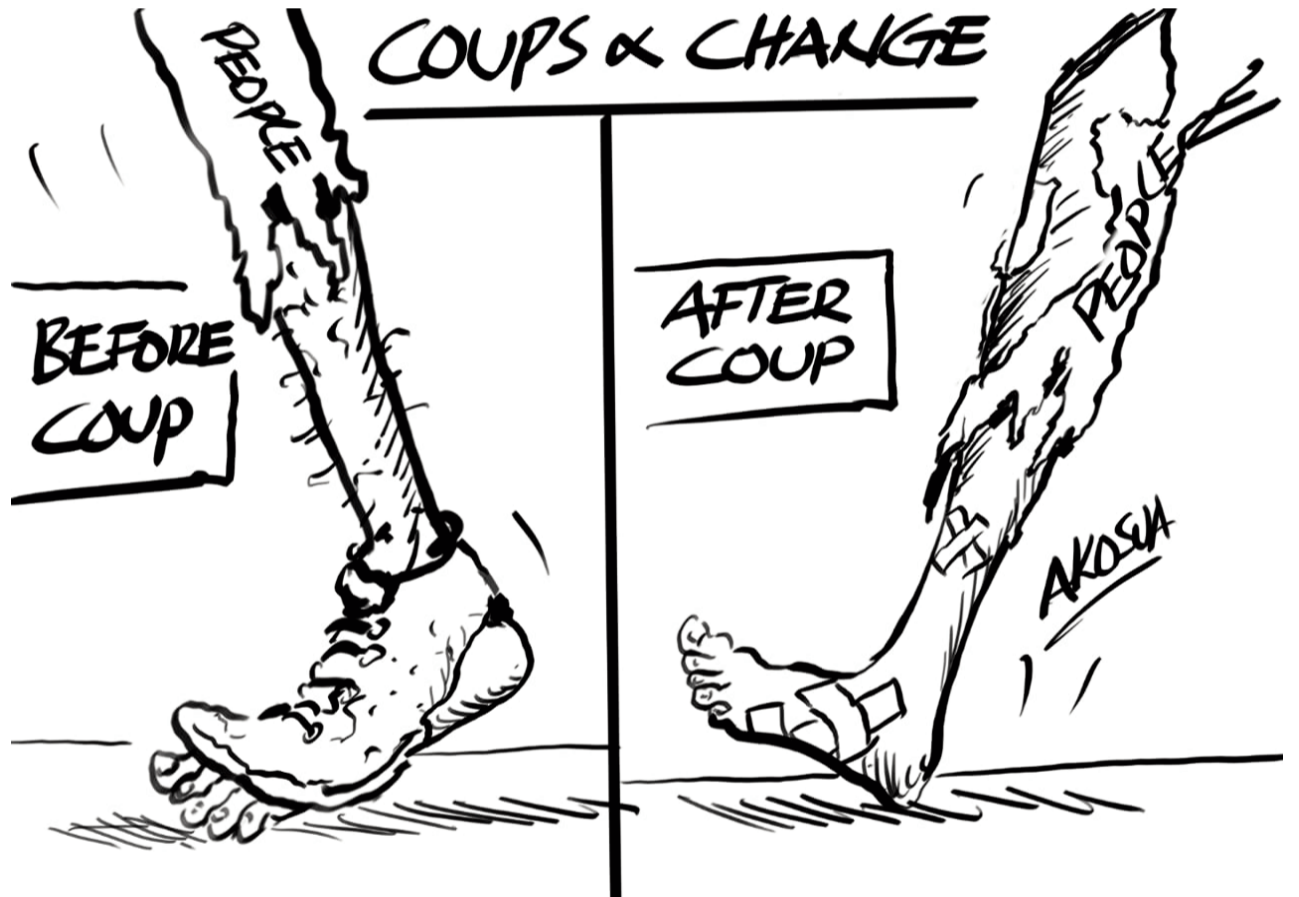
those paid in Ghana are in the form of cash (84.8 per cent).

The report indicated that food and drink and the exchange of a public service for another service are far less common, although in the country's rural areas (17.8 per cent) more bribes are paid in the form of food and drink than in its urban areas (10.1 per cent).

It also mentioned that the total cash bribes paid in the country are the equivalent of almost one third of the 2021 budget of the Ministry of Education.

"Cash bribes are 1.5 times larger in urban than in rural areas of the country, with the national average bribe amounting to GH¢348," it said.

"Given that roughly GH¢17.4 million bribes were paid in Ghana in 2021, a total of roughly GH¢5 billion is paid in cash bribes to public officials on a yearly basis in Ghana, or the equivalent of 32.9 per cent of the 2021 budget of the Ministry of Education," it stressed.



CSA Sets Sept. 30 Deadline For Cybersecurity Licensing Regime



Dr. Albert Antwi-Boasiako, CSA Boss

BY Jamila Akweley Okertchiri

THE CYBER Security Authority (CSA) has announced a grace period until September 30, 2023, within which Cybersecurity Service

Providers (CSPs), Cybersecurity Establishments (CEs) and Cybersecurity Professionals (CPs) are to obtain a licence or accreditation.

According to the authority, the deadline is to ensure players in the cybersecurity sector have the required approval and permit to operate in the country.

The move is also in compliance with Act 1038 and the Guidelines for the licensing of CSPs and accreditation of CEs and CPs.

Subsequently, it will also enable the compliance requirement of the Public Procurement Authority (PPA) which would take effect from October 1, 2023, to ensure that best practices are observed especially in procuring cybersecurity services in the public sector.

Speaking at a media briefing in Accra yesterday, Director-General CSA, Dr. Albert Antwi-Boasiako, said when the regulation is finally enforced, Ghana will become the first country in Africa, and one of the few in the world after the likes of

Singapore, to introduce a licensing regime for, and accreditation for Cybersecurity Establishments and Professionals.

Again, he said the exercise would complement Ghana's efforts in improving its ITU Global Cybersecurity Index ranking from third to first in Africa and among the top 25 in the world.

"This regulatory exercise which has been enforced has significant benefits to the industry including national and global visibility, Cybersecurity Incident and Threat Intelligence Sharing, Industry Recognition and Profile, and Eligibility for Industry Forum Membership, among others.

"The Government of Ghana, through the CA, and other relevant agencies such as the PPA have a shared responsibility of addressing cybersecurity matters and are committed to fighting cybercrime and maintaining the public safety of citizens online," he emphasised.

Licensing/Accreditation Regime

The importance of cybersecurity development to the digitalisation drive of our country necessitated the enactment of the Cybersecurity Act, 2020 (Act 1038), which established the Cyber Security Authority (CSA) to regulate cybersecurity activities, promote its development in the country and provide for related matters.

As a Regulator of Ghana's cyberspace, Sections 49, 57 and 58 of Act 1038 mandate the CSA to license Cybersecurity Service Providers (CSPs) and accredit Cybersecurity Establishments (CEs) and Cybersecurity Professionals (CPs).

Accordingly, an exercise to this effect commenced on March 1, 2023, to ensure that only licensed and accredited professionals and institutions are lawfully empowered to engage in business.

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EDITORIAL

Threat Without Diplomacy

WE HAVE become so vulnerable to the extent that some powers in the world, especially the West, think Ghana and other African countries are no longer sovereign.

Challenges have taken away our right to self rule where as a people we can determine for ourselves what is good for the country.

These foreign powers must leave us alone to manage our own affairs whether good or bad. For the fact that we often go cup in hand asking for handouts to rebuild our economy, the West wants to dictate to us what type of food we should eat. Can you imagine why they think we should think and live like Americans and discard our culture?

One of the cardinal principles of global diplomacy, is the non-interference in the affairs of other countries.

When it suits them, the West will invoke principles and protocols to justify their dictatorial actions, including imposing their queer behaviours like LGBTQI upon us. This they do even as our culture, traditions and religious communities frown upon and even find nauseating.

Christians consider it a big sin and affront to the Scriptures, while Muslims look at it as Haram.

We want to tell Madam Virginia Palmer, the US Ambassador to Ghana that, Ghana is a small country and not as richly endowed as the USA.

However, we are a proud people with a proud heritage that is not for bargain even with the highest bidder.

Madam Palmer cannot teach us any lessons in human rights as if we do not uphold civil liberties in our society. What

type of rights do pro LGBTQI advocates and practitioners espouse that our rejection of such practices should be met with threats of sanctions?

Ghanaians find activities of gays and lesbians so nauseating to be tolerated lest they brainwash our children with such social aberrations.

Although we know Ghana is not an island and we live in an interdependent global village, the people are not ready to sacrifice their dignity for gay and lesbian practices.

If our acceptance of LGBTQI will help maintain our friendship with the US and the West, we serve notice to President Joe Biden that we fear "no hoo."

The threat of withdrawal of financial support to us will not cow us into submission to their alien practices to even have sex with animals. They should take

from us that we are ready to pay any price for rejecting gay and lesbian practices so that we remain the proud Black Star of Africa.

And like late President Atta Mills said "di wo fie asem," Madam Palmer must be educated to respect the diplomatic protocols that diplomats are required to follow, and if for her belief in LGBTQI she cannot keep mute about our internal affairs, she is again educated about what our first President Dr Kwame Nkrumah said to those opposed to our self rule thus: "We prefer self government with danger to servitude in tranquility."

So to Madam Palmer, let it be made clear to you that no amount of intimidation will compel us to follow blindly your ungodly behaviours and nauseating beliefs.

Humbling 2023

2023 HAS been a year filled with surprises, volatility, disappointment, unfulfilled expectations, cyclic shock waves and madness and unbridled mouths on our TV and radio stations.

As the New Year draws nearer and nearer, it is important that we take a deep breath, relax and focus on the ingredients that are key to our collective survival. We must get back on the horse and gallop away as we used to do.

This country has seen worse calamities before. In 1983, famine did strike the land and the nation nearly went on her knees. Out of desperation and the need to survive, people ate roots of some trees to survive.

People queued to buy kenkey before they could be cooked by kenkey sellers. The famine spread so wide that parents struggled with their kids to lick empty bowls when they had consumed everything. In a matter of time people started to grow lean like Somali refugees of the early 90s.

To add insult to injury, Heaven refused to open up for the rain to fall. Wild bushfire consumed almost everything, including cocoa farms and other cash crops. Fisher folks returned from their fishing expeditions with empty boats.

That was when the term "Rawlings' Chain" was coined. Hungry men, women and children became so lean that you could count their ribs and the holes between their necks and shoulders could store a bucketful of water.

In recent memory, the country experienced four years of power outages christened, 'Dumso'. Factories collapsed, and workers were laid off. The economy crumbled and it seemed the country was ungovernable.

For the four years that we went through this hell, the people could only complain and stay in the dark. Investors refused to come and the nation was in danger of a total breakdown. In all these calamities, Ghana was able to come out of the troubled waters with chests out.

This country was proudly heading towards the Eldorado when another calamity came knocking on our doors. This time it did not strike Ghana alone but the whole world. Scientists called it Corona Virus. People died like flies across the world and even the developed

countries were mesmerized and taken unawares. Like the Plague of yesteryears, scientists around the world raced against time to find a remedy and thankfully, a vaccine was invented to combat the virus. The government took several measures to save lives and the president spoke to the nation periodically to remind us of the menace.

The "Fellow Ghanaians' episode became a trademark of the president of the republic like Dr. Nkrumah's 'Dawn Broadcast'. Nose masks became so popular that even mad men and women could be seen wearing them. That was

their country. Ghanaians must thank God for small mercies.

Sometimes people spend too much time focusing on problems instead of focusing on opportunities. We have to keep the big picture in mind even when the details or our vision could be micro-managed in an unnecessary way.

We must remind ourselves that we are destined to succeed no matter the difficulties. Problems can be turned around to our advantage if we stay focused and work beyond human endurance. Surprising events can happen. You see, winners see problems as another way to prove themselves. The sages say if you don't have problems, you don't have a job. I have said it many times that you can't prove your merit on calm waters.

A behaviour I dislike about some Ghanaians is that they are always quick to criticize but slow to praise. When fuel prices started hitting the roof, political commentators and hired media men and women took Dr. Bawumia, the Chairman of the Economic Management Team to the cleaners on daily basis.

They used unprintable words to describe the fine gentleman but he kept his cool. Unknown to Ghanaians the man and his team were busy on the drawing board. As the noises and insults went from bad to worse, Dr. Bawumia, the economic whiz-kid came out with the Gold for Oil solution. Doubting Thomases went to town to bastardize the idea and said it was not feasible. Today prices of petroleum products have stabilized and the Dollar problem is gradually improving.

What some people, particularly those who are desperately seeking for political power refuse to accept is that in the face of all the difficulties the economy is going through, projects are being executed.

The free SHS is going on, roads are being built, Agenda 111 is on track, students are being fed at schools, salaries are being paid every month, the National Health Insurance is operational and above all, arm robbers and land guards are being subdued.

The Almighty God, He who delivered Israel is in full control. Somebody should help me say Halleluya!!!

CSA Sets Sept. 30 Deadline For Cybersecurity Licensing Regime

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The rationale for this process is to ensure compliance with Act 1038 and to provide a streamlined mechanism for ensuring that CSPs, CEs and CPs throughout the country carry out cybersecurity-related activities in accordance with approved international best practice while providing greater assurance of cybersecurity and safety to consumers and addressing national security concerns.

So far, 448 cybersecurity professionals representing 40 per cent of the target have undergone the process to get licensed. This is followed by 25 cybersecurity establishments, representing 50 per cent of the target, and 92 cybersecurity service providers, representing 90 per cent of the target also going through the process.

Dr. Antwi-Boasiako said the CSA has, since the commencement of this regulatory exercise, engaged agencies, institutions and associations that offer cybersecurity-related services and hopes those who are yet to register and regularise their activities would do so before September 30, 2023.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO), PPA, Frank Mante, said considering the cross-sectoral nature of cybersecurity and its effects on the socioeconomic development of the country, it is expedient that the PPA collaborates with key agencies to ensure that adequate systems and processes are put in place to promote cyber resilience across sectors.

"This will contribute to the overall objective of the PPA in harmonising the processes of public pro-

urement in the public service to secure a judicious, economic, and efficient use of state resources," he said.

Mr. Mante said the focused areas of collaboration include ensuring that Covered Entities, in procuring cybersecurity services in accordance with the Guidelines developed pursuant to Act 1038, engage Cybersecurity Service Providers who are licensed by the CSA; and ensuring that Covered Entities engage Cybersecurity Establishments and Cybersecurity Professionals who are accredited by the CSA in performing cybersecurity-related functions.

"Through this collaboration, the PPA will ensure that as part of vetting procurement applications to the PPA Board, cybersecurity issues are considered and Cybersecurity Service Providers who submit applications to the PPA Board are accredited by the CSA before being considered for any form of engagement," he stressed.

Furthermore, he said the CSA through the PPA will ensure that covered procurement entities are in compliance with standards and inculcate the licensing and accreditation provisions in their qualification and prequalification criteria for the selection of CSPs, CEs and CPs pursuant to provisions under Sections 22 and 23 of the Public Procurement Act, 2003 (Act 663), as amended, on qualification and pre-qualification of tenderers and service providers.

"This partnership will also go a long way to supporting the PPA in training persons engaged in public procurement regarding the implementation of the Guidelines," he said.

Time With Angel Gabriel
By Eric Bawah
emial: ericbawah@yahoo.com



Trump Indicted For 'Racketeering' Over Georgia Election Meddling



Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis (C) speaks in the Fulton County Government Center during a news conference in Atlanta

A GRAND jury in the U.S. state of Georgia has indicted former President Donald Trump and 18 others in connection with efforts to overturn his 2020 election loss.

The 13 charges unsealed against Trump late Monday include racketeering, violating his oath of office, conspiracies to commit forgery and file false documents, and other offenses.

The charge of 'racketeering' means that Georgia prosecutors must prove that the former president broke two

or more of Georgia's laws as part of a scheme to overturn the election results.

Among those charged along with Trump were former White House chief of staff Mark Meadows, Trump lawyer Rudy Giuliani and former Justice Department official Jeffrey Clark.

Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis told reporters that the defendants were part of a criminal enterprise in the county and elsewhere to "accomplish the illegal goal of allowing Donald J.

Trump to seize the presidential term of office" that began in January 2021.

The indictment details numerous allegations as part of that alleged effort, including making repeated claims of voter fraud to Georgia officials, attempting to persuade Georgia lawmakers to go against election results and appoint a slate of electoral college voters favorable to Trump, and stealing voting data.

"All elections in our nation are administered by

the states, which are given the responsibility of ensuring a fair process and an accurate counting of the votes," Willis said. "The states' role in this process is essential to the functioning of our democracy."

Willis said the timing of the trial in the case is up to the discretion of the assigned judge, but that her office would propose the trial take place in the next six months. She also said that while the grand jury issued arrest warrants for those charged, her office was allowing them to voluntarily surrender themselves by noon on Aug. 25.

The former president's campaign did not wait for the charges to be unsealed before issuing a statement accusing Willis of being a "rabid partisan" and timing the investigation of Trump's actions "to try and maximally interfere with the 2024 presidential race and damage the dominant Trump campaign."

Willis told reporters her decisions are based on the facts and that the law is "completely non-partisan."

"We look at the facts, we look at the law, and we bring charges," Willis said. VOA



Marieke de Klerk (R) was South Africa's first lady between 1989 and 1994

Parole For Man Who Murdered South Africa's Ex-First Lady

THE MAN who murdered South Africa's former first lady Marike de Klerk is set to be released on parole at the end of August.

Luyanda Mboniswa, who was 21 years old when he committed the crime, worked as a security guard at the former first lady's apartment block.

Mrs de Klerk, who was 64 years old, was stabbed and strangled in her Cape Town home in December 2001.

Mboniswa also stole a mobile phone, gold watch and money then was arrested two days after the crime.

He was sentenced to life imprisonment for murder and another life term for

robbery with aggravating circumstances in May 2003.

Twenty years on, he has since been "considered for parole placement having served the minimum required time and will be admitted into the system of community corrections, whereby he is expected to comply with specific set of parole conditions for the rest of his natural life," said prison department spokesperson Singabakho Nxumalo.

Marieke de Klerk was South Africa's first lady between 1989 and 1994. Her husband, Frederik Willem de Klerk was the country's last president under apartheid rule. Their marriage ended in 1996. BBC

Putin Urges 'Peaceful Resolution' As Mali And Russia Discuss Niger

MALI'S MILITARY leader Assimi Goita has spoken on the phone to Russian President Vladimir Putin about the situation in Niger, where a July 26 coup ousted democratically elected President Mohamed Bazoum.

Putin "stressed the importance of a peaceful resolution of the situation for a more stable Sahel," Goita said on social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter.

The Kremlin said in a statement that the call was initiated by Mali.

"The parties specifically focused on the current situation in the Sahara-Sahel region and emphasised, in particular, the importance of settling the situation in the Republic of Niger solely through peaceful political and diplomatic means," it said.

Niger has strategic significance for the United States,

China, Europe, and Russia due to its uranium and oil resources and its role as a hub for foreign forces fighting armed groups in the region.

The call is likely to rattle Western governments that fear growing Russian influence in the Sahel.

Western powers and democratic African governments have called for the coup leaders to reinstate ousted President Bazoum, who they have detained since July 26, but the coup leaders have refused and rejected attempts at negotiation.

West African army chiefs will meet on Thursday and Friday in Ghana to prepare for a possible military intervention, which the main regional bloc, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has threatened to launch if diplomacy fails. ALJAZEERA

Petrol Station Inferno Kills Dozens In Russia

AT LEAST 35 people have been killed and dozens injured in an explosion at a petrol station in southern Russia.

The blast occurred in the Dagestan regional capital, Makhachkala, on the coast of the Caspian Sea, at 21:40 local time (18:40 GMT) on Monday.

Pictures showed a large fire lighting up the night sky and a number of fire engines at the scene.

According to local media, the fire began at a car repair centre near the petrol station.

Russian President Vladimir Putin offered his sincere condolences following the deadly blast.

A state of emergency was introduced in the Kumtorkalinsky district in Dagestan, according to regional head Sergei



Melikov. Some 260 emergency workers have been deployed, while the most seriously injured have been evacuated to Moscow by air, according to the emergency ministry.

Rescue operations are ongoing, the ministry said. As emergency services clear through the rubble, more bodies are being discovered.

Russia's Interfax news

agency quoted doctors as saying three children were among the dead.

It added that the fire had spread over an area of 600 sq m (6,460 sq ft) and that there was a danger of further explosions.

An unnamed witness quoted by Russian newspaper Izvestia said the fire had started at a car park opposite the petrol station. BBC



President William Ruto

Kenya Reinstates Fuel Subsidy After Months Of Violent Protests

KENYA HAS reinstated a small subsidy to stabilise retail fuel prices for the next 30 days, the energy regulator says, in a reversal of government policy after public anger over the high cost of living.

After taking office in September, President William Ruto removed fuel and maize flour subsidies put in place by his predecessor, saying he preferred subsidising production rather than consumption.

The move was also aimed at cutting government spending as the government seeks to get a handle on debt repayments that have forced it to deny market speculation about a possible default.

But the subsidy cuts as well as recent tax hikes have increased living costs and contributed to violent anti-government protests in recent months.

ALJAZEERA

Hawaii Fire Death Toll Hits 99, May Double, Warns Governor

THE DEATH toll in Hawaii's wildfires rose to 99 and could double over the next 10 days, the state's governor said Monday, as emergency personnel painstakingly scoured the incinerated landscape for more human remains.

Last week's inferno on the island of Maui is already the deadliest U.S. wildfire in a century, with only a quarter of the ruins of the devastated town of Lahaina searched for victims so far.

Gov. Josh Green said more fatalities are certain, as emergency responders with cadaver dogs work their way through hundreds of homes and burned-out vehicles.

"There are 99 fatalities that are confirmed," he told a press conference Monday.

Speaking to CNN earlier, Green warned that "over the course of the next 10 days, this number could double."

The historic coastal town of Lahaina was almost totally destroyed by the fast-moving blaze last week, with survivors saying there had been no warnings.

The intensity of the fire and scale of the destruction have made identification of human remains difficult, with some corpses disintegrating as they are uncovered by searchers.

Only three of the 99 victims recovered so far could be identified by their fingerprints, said Maui Police Chief John Pelletier.

Police are encouraging those with missing relatives to give DNA samples that might speed up the

process. Around 25% of Lahaina had been searched, with that expected to rise to 90% by this weekend, said Pelletier.



Jeremy Greenberg, a Federal Emergency Management Agency director, said search conditions were "extraordinarily difficult to work

through." Officials warned of the dangers of unstable buildings and potential airborne toxic chemicals in the area, and said one arrest for trespassing had been made.

Until last week, the town was a bustling tourist hub, packed with shops and restaurants. VOA

Energy Ministry Secretary In Court For Stealing GH¢287k

BY Gibril Abdul Razak

A SECRETARY at the Ministry of Energy, Regina Abanga, has been dragged before an Accra Circuit Court for allegedly stealing GH¢287,775 from the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB).

The accused, who has been charged with 116 counts of stealing, is said to have manipulated the bank's automated teller machine (ATM), which enabled her to steal the money from the bank.

Court documents indicate that Ms. Abanga has purchased a Toyota Vito vehicle with the booty and is also using part to put up a three-storey building.

She pleaded not guilty to all the 166 charges of stealing levelled against her by the prosecution led by Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Evans Kesse.

She was granted a bail in the sum of GH¢250,000 with three sureties, one of whom must be justified with a landed property worth GH¢125,000.

The accused, as part of her bail condition, was ordered by the court presided over by Kizita Naa Quarshie to report to the police every Wednesday until further notice. The case was adjourned to September 25, 2023.

The prosecution's fact presented by DSP Kesse named Irene Aka Antwi, Unit Head Officer, E-Business Operation of the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) Head Office as the complainant in the matter.

The accused, Regina Abanga, is a Secretary

with the Ministry of Energy and holds an account with the Ridge branch of ADB.

The Prosecutor said, between November 2022 and June 2023, the accused person manipulated some ADB ATMs across the Accra metropolis and succeeded in withdrawing a total of GH¢287,775.47 belonging to the bank.

The court heard that on June 15, 2023, a witness in the matter by name Solomon Inkoom, an employee of the bank at its Labone Branch, detected the unusual ATM withdrawals by accused.

The witness subsequently informed the complainant, who in turn reported the unusual withdrawals to the bank's risk team.

Regina Abanga's ATM card was subsequently blocked to prevent her from further withdrawals.

The Prosecutor said, on June 16, 2023 at about 5pm, the accused went to Ridge branch of ADB to withdraw money from the ATM, but the card was captured.

The court was told that the accused then went to the banking hall to report the incident to the bank's management, but she was arrested instead by the bank's risk team and handed over to the Ministries Police.

DSP Kesse said the accused admitted the offence during interrogation and indicated further that she used part of the stolen money to acquire a Toyota Vito with registration number GE-3545 -21 and also to finance a three-storey building which has reached a five-cause level.

Tricycles Banned In Accra Business Districts

BY Ebenezer K. Amponsah

THE GREATER Accra Regional Coordinating Council (GARCC), has charged all Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives (MMD-CEs) as well as Presiding Members to immediately reinforce regulation of operations of tricycles in the Central Business Districts (CBDs) as well as ban the use of party paraphernalias during festivals.

In a statement issued by the Greater Accra Regional Coordinating Council (GARCC), and signed by the Greater Accra Regional Minister, Henry Quartey said the decision to regulate tricycles in the Central Business Districts among others was taken by GARCC, the highest decision making body of the region at its

general meeting on August 14, 2023.

It stated that the unregulated activities and operations of tricycles popularly called "Pragyia" and "Aboboyaa" within the Central Business Districts as well as some principal streets in Accra does not create a conducive environment for businesses to thrive as well as ensure the comfort of travellers.

The situation, it stated, has resulted in heavy traffic congestion and chaotic scenes with indiscriminate parking and flouting of traffic regulations among others, as such the Council deems it very imperative and urgent to regulate the movement of these "Pragyias" and "Aboboyaa" as well as reinforcing the ban on the use of "Aboboyaa" on the motorway and principal streets in the region.

The Council therefore resolved to "restrict the movement of "Pragyia" and "Aboboyaa" in the Central Business Districts (CBDs) of Accra Metropolitan, Krowor, Korle Klottey, Tema Metropolitan, La Dade Kotopon, La Nkwantanang Madina, Ayawaso East, Ayawaso West, Ayawaso Central, Ayawaso North, Ledzokuku, Okaikwei North and Adentan Municipal."

It further indicated that the meeting, which underscored the peace prevailing in the region and affirmed the importance of unity among the chiefs and people by ensuring division is prevented during festivals, also agreed on a ban on the use of party paraphernalia including "hoisting of flags, no wearing of party attires among others during festivals in the region."

Promote Specialised Nursing - Govt Told

BY Nafisatu Abdul Razak

THE GHANA College of Nurses and Midwives (GCNM) has urged the government and other policymakers to enact policies that will promote and support nurses and midwives to pursue specific areas of interest in order to drive the nursing and midwifery professions in the country.

This, according to the college, will enable nurses and midwives to stay current with global trends while also providing population-specific, disease-specific care rather than generalist care for improved healthcare results.

"Some critical areas that need prompt attention are Critical Care Nursing, Emergency Nursing, Infectious Diseases Nursing, Advanced Midwifery, Neonatal Nursing and Mental Health Nursing. This will also require an appreciable increase in the release of practicing nurses and midwives with paid study leave," Rector of GCNM, Hannah A.O. Acquah said.

She made this known at



Some of the inductees with the faculty

the GCNM induction ceremony of 1,542 nurses and midwives who have completed their training in a number of specialised areas.

She, therefore, recommended nurses and midwives to enroll in membership programmes so they can contribute to healthcare delivery at their facility level and assist improve national outcomes.

Prof. Victoria Bam, President of the GCNM,

encouraged the government to give the required resources for specialised nursing and midwifery staff to enhance healthcare delivery and patient outcomes.

"Resources are important in enhancing job satisfaction. So we will appeal to the government and other policymakers to provide the necessary resources for nurse and midwife specialists so that they can deliver quality

services to improve our health outcomes, as we work towards achieving the Agenda 2030," she noted.

"It is important, if they mentor them, then the knowledge and expertise they have acquired is being transferred to those who haven't benefited from the training yet. It enhances the skills of these general nurses and midwives so we can improve the health outcomes of our nation," she said.

Correction

WE REFER to a story published in DAILY GUIDE of Tuesday, August 15, 2023. In a story titled "TOR Boss Resigns". We inadvertently and unintentionally used the photograph of Mr. John Eric Taylor, Executive Chairman, Cirrus Oil Service Ltd, instead of Mr. Jerry Kofi Hinson.

We regret the inconveniences this gaffe has caused Mr. Taylor.

We therefore retract his picture from the story and duly apologise to him for the inconveniences caused.

Editor

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Baby Thief Escapes Death

FROM I.F. Joe Awuah Jnr., Kumasi

A SUSPECTED baby thief has escaped death by a whisker after she was beaten by an angry mob at Aboabo Extension in Kumasi, in the Ashanti Region.

The suspect, Auleta Mohammed, a resident of Abirem was, reportedly, caught in possession of a boy of about two years old, whom she had stolen from the densely-populated area.

Confession

The female suspect, believed to be in her early 20s, later on confessed to be part of a group of young ladies who steal babies and sell them to a certain woman for a fee of GH¢50.

According to her, she had successfully stolen two babies and sold them to the said lady, identified as Fati, who is a resident of Boobai, in recent months, to enrich herself.

The suspect, who confessed the evil

activities of her group to her captors, said the woman at Boobai had engaged the services of 10 young ladies to steal babies for a fee of GH¢50.

Niger Trip

According to the suspect, the said woman, after paying them GH¢50 for each stolen baby, would then smuggle the innocent babies to Niger.

The baby thief said she lived at Abirem and had stormed Aboabo Extension near Naira's Mosque on that fateful day, ostensibly, to steal a baby and deliver to her boss for a fee.

Arrest

Unfortunately for her, she was walking fast with the two-year-old stolen boy, when a certain man, who became suspicious, blew the alarm, leading to her arrest on Monday.

The female thief, according to reports, initially insisted that she was

the real mother of the child, but after persistent questioning, she confessed that she was a baby thief.

Having realised that her evil deeds had been exposed, the thief then confessed to her captors in the Hausa language, regarding how they steal babies for a fee of GH¢50.

Beatings

The confession of the lady was said to have angered some of her captors, who decided to lynch her. However, she was lucky as some Good Samaritans rushed to her aid.

In a video circulating on social media, the Good Samaritans were seen using their bodies as a human shield, as they marched the suspected thief to a waiting car and sped away.

Meanwhile, reports indicated that that baby thief was handed over to the police, who have since started their investigation into the case.

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Dr Ibrahim Mohammed Awal

'Afro Nation Still Under Discussion'

BY Francis Addo

MINISTER OF Tourism, Arts, and Culture, Dr. Ibrahim Mohammed Awal, has disclosed government is still in talks with organisers of the Afro Nation music festival to determine the future of the event in Ghana.

According to him, the government is looking at extending its partnership to keep hosting the event in Ghana.

However, he indicated that the previous partnership agreement still holds, except they are looking at extending that relationship.

"Afro Nation has not been taken away from Ghana. We even had a meeting last week. We discussed it. There are certain demands they want and we are trying to look at how to collaborate. It has not been taken yet. But we

have alternatives," he said.

He was speaking in an interview with *Joy FM* at the Editor's Forum programme at the Accra City Hotel on Monday.

"Most likely. Very likely. This year, over the next three years," he added when he was asked if the event was returning to Ghana again.

The Government of Ghana signed a five-year partnership deal with Afro Nation. The first edition was held in December 2019, and the festival took a break due to the coronavirus pandemic, and returned in December 2022.

There have been reports that the music festival may not return to Ghana in 2023, adding that it would rather be held in Nigeria. However, Dr. Awal has assured Ghanaians, its partnership still holds.

I Don't Have An Ex-Boyfriend

- Diana Hamilton

GOSPEL SONGSTRESS, Diana Hamilton, has said she has never had a romantic encounter with a different man except her husband, Dr. Joseph Hamilton.

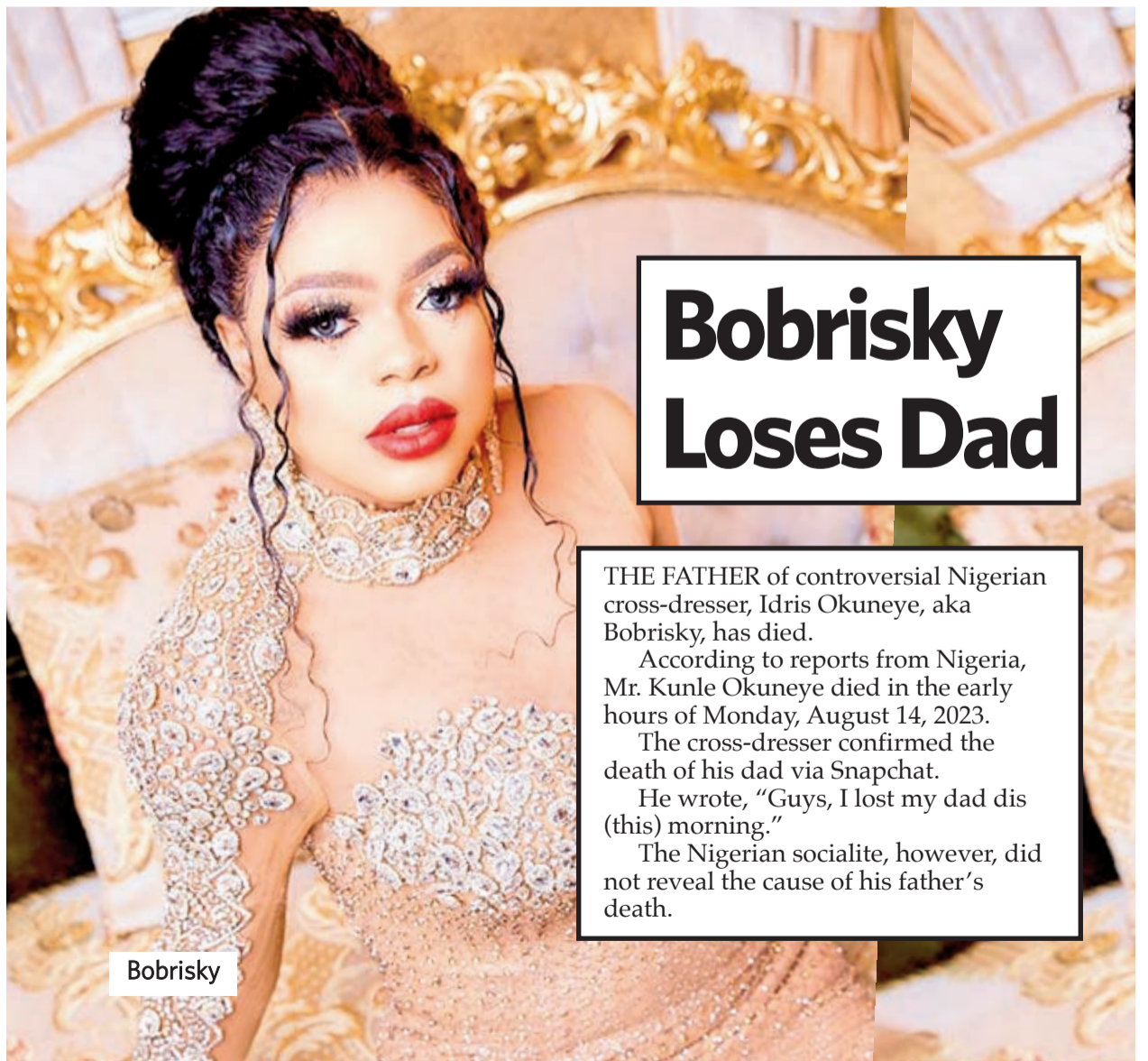
In an interview with *TV XYZ*, she disclosed that he is the only man she has ever had a thing with.

"My husband is actually my first boyfriend. I've never been in a relationship with any other man before. There are no ex-boyfriends in my past; my husband is the only man I've known," she stated.

"I started dating my husband during my final year in nursing school. He came into my life when I was still a virgin," she disclosed.



Diana Hamilton and husband



Bobrisky

Bobrisky Loses Dad

THE FATHER of controversial Nigerian cross-dresser, Idris Okuneye, aka Bobrisky, has died.

According to reports from Nigeria, Mr. Kunle Okuneye died in the early hours of Monday, August 14, 2023.

The cross-dresser confirmed the death of his dad via Snapchat.

He wrote, "Guys, I lost my dad dis (this) morning."

The Nigerian socialite, however, did not reveal the cause of his father's death.

Import Trade Deficit Hits 4.5bn In 2022



Prof Samuel Annim

BY Abigail Atinuke Seyram Adeyemi

THE COUNTRY'S imports in 2022 amounted to GH¢148.6 billion, indicating that imports were GH¢4.5 billion higher than exports which was valued GH¢144.4 billion, the Ghana 2022 Trade Vulnerability Report released by the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) has revealed.

According to the report, the value of imports was higher in nine out of the 12 months of that year with September being the month with the largest variation where imports exceeded exports at GH¢4.5 billion.

It also highlighted that the country has 209 import partner countries as opposed to 161 export partners.

The report, presented by Government Statistician, Prof. Samuel Kobina Annim, is the first publication produced by GSS that reports on the country's trading activities.

According to the Prof. Annim, the report is important as it highlights the country's international trade vulnerability which has the potential to constrain the strengthening of the country's economy.

It was produced in partnership with the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) and will be published continuously.

Data on Imports

The report revealed that China is the country's main import partner with a total import value of GH¢25 billion. China is the lead import partner for machinery and electrical equipment (33.3%), chemical products (26.0%), iron and steel (54.4%), plastics (29.3%), and other products (17.0%).

It added that almost two-thirds (63.3%) of the country's imports from Europe are from the United Kingdom (34.2%), the Netherlands (19.2%) and Switzerland (9.9%). Over two-thirds of mineral fuels and oils come from the United Kingdom (84.1%), and the Netherlands (82.3%) making them the country's main trading partner for mineral fuels and oil.

Europe is the only continent where one commodity accounts for over half of all imports, which is 55 per cent of all mineral fuels and oil imported.

It indicated that within Africa, South Africa is the main import trading partner recording 23.8 per cent (GH¢3 billion) of the total value of imports from African countries followed by Egypt (14.3%).

Vehicles and automotive parts are the leading import items originating from the USA accounting for about a third (32.8%) of imports coming from North America.

The import of diesel and light oils, motor spirit, super as individual commodities have a total combined value of GH¢34.9 billion, which represent almost a

quarter of all imports.

Data on Exports

The report stated that about 50.4 per cent of all the country's exports to Europe go to Switzerland, followed by 13.0 per cent to the Netherlands, and 8.9 per cent to Italy.

China and India together make up more than three quarters (78.2%) of all the country's exports to Asia with China amounting to 44.3 per cent and India at 33.9 per cent.

It added that in Africa, 80.6 per cent of the country's exports go to South Africa (51.3%), Burkina Faso (15.7%), Cote d'Ivoire (8.2%), and Togo (5.4%) with plastics (49.7%), iron and steel (43.6%), and chemical products (39.5%) being mainly exported to Burkina Faso. South Africa, with GH¢14.9 billion, is the main export destination within Africa with gold (89.9%) being the main export commodity while Burkina Faso is the second destination for export with GH¢4.6 billion.

The report highlighted that Gold makes up more than one third to half of exports to Asia (35.5%), Africa (46.1%) and Europe (50.4%). More than 90.0% of gold exports go to Switzerland (48.1%), South Africa (24.8%), and India (21.4%).

Mineral fuels and oils constitute the largest share of exports to North America (80.9%) and Asia (42.6%). Over three-quarters (78.0%) of mineral fuels and oils are exported to China (38.1%), Canada (33.0%), and Italy (6.9%).

It also indicated that cocoa is mostly exported to Europe (22.1%), Asia (7.6%), and North America (13.1%). Half of cocoa exports go to the Netherlands (27.6%), USA (12.7%) and Belgium (9.7%).

Switzerland, China, and Canada are the major export destinations with exports over GH¢15 billion each. Exports to Switzerland amount to GH¢26.1 billion making it the country's main export destination with GH¢7.9 billion more exports than China (GH¢18.2 billion) the second leading export destination.



Petrol, Diesel To Increase By 5.7%

A Business Desk Report

PRICES OF petrol and diesel are likely to increase averagely by about 5.7% over the current mean price of €12.45 per litre, beginning today, August 16, 2023, for the next two weeks.

The price of Liquefied Petroleum Gas is also expected to go up by about 11.9%.

According to the Chamber of Petroleum Consumers (COPEC), the

expected increase is due to the 11.00% rise in prices of finished products on the international market and the about 6.79% surge in the price of crude oil, even though the forex or dollar exchange rate has relatively decreased from a previous average of €11.7185 to €11.4538 (-2.26%) per \$1.

All Pump Prices are expected to be within (±5%) error margin of COPEC's prediction.

With the new prices, petrol is expected to sell at €12.97 per litre on the

average, while diesel will go for €13.43 per litre.

The 14.5 kilogramme LPG cylinder is expected to sell at €178.36 within the window.

Commenting, the Executive Secretary of COPEC, Duncan Amoah, urged government to do all it can to reduce taxes on LPG or to subsidise the price of LPG to promote its nationwide accessibility and usage which will eventually help save the environment.

Additionally, COPEC advocated for reduction or take off of some of the fuel taxes to lessen the burden on consumers. The total taxes and levies is about 25% of the retail prices of petrol and diesel.

Vodafone Hosts 100 Girls

BY Abigail Atinuke Seyram Adeyemi

VODAFONE GHANA, in partnership with the Ministry of Communications and Digitalisation (MoCD), has hosted 100 girls at their headquarters in Accra to commemorate National Girls-In-ICT Day.

The girls, who were aged

between 10 and 15, were selected from the Bono, Bono East, and Ahafo regions and hosted in the capital city.

The girls engaged in hands-on experiences that offered them insights into the world of information and communication technology (ICT). They took part in activities such as a mentorship workshop and practical sessions on Cyberse-

curity, Robotics, Networking, Solutions Development, and Digital Transformation.

Mentoring sessions were led by the Vodafone Ghana Women in Technology team who provided key information about the different aspects of ICT and encouraged the girls to pursue STEM learning.

CEO of Vodafone Ghana, Patricia Obo-Nai, stated that



The organisers in a group photograph with participants

the programme was a stepping stone towards creating a future where young women encountered no boundaries in the ICT sector.

"By opening our doors and sharing our knowledge, we are not just educating these girls about technology; we're inspiring them to envision a world where they are the innovators, leaders, and change-makers. At Vodafone Ghana, we believe in the power of diversity, and we are committed to nurturing the next generation of female tech leaders," she stated.

Radio Frequency Plan & Performance Specialist at Vodafone Ghana, Juliana Ametoworgo, said, "I found these mentoring sessions truly inspiring. Personally, I was very impressed with their interest and knowledge in technology, and I am confident with the right guidance these girls will be leading the technology space in the near future."

Participant and student of Nkoranza Methodist Senior High School, Yaa Awhenepa Osei, expressed her gratitude to Vodafone and MoCD for increasing her interest and confidence in pursuing ICT.



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Dr. John S. Yaw Eleblu in a group photograph with some party executives

UG Lecturer Poised To Unseat 'Vigilante' MP

BY Ernest Kofi Adu

A SENIOR Lecturer at the University of Ghana, Dr. John Saviour Yaw Eleblu, has launched a campaign to unseat the North Tongu MP, Samuel Okudze-Ablakwa, whom he sees as a "vigilante chasing people for budget overruns."

According to him, the people of North Tongu deserve a "real MP" explaining that this means somebody who will represent the people and lobby for jobs and development projects.

He added, "And not somebody who is becoming like a vigilante round chasing people for budget overruns."

Flanked by party executives and some supporters, Dr. Eleblu, who filed his nominations at the New Patriotic Party's (NPP's) office in Battor to contest the party's parliamentary candidate slot, said the NDC had not done anything to lift the people of North Tongu and Volta Region out of poverty.

"It is only the NPP that cares and we must begin to reward the party with votes," he intimated.

"It is with great joy that I offer myself to serve the good people of North Tongu through the great NPP. I want to serve my country, region, and district in a leadership position as I have been serving the University of Ghana, the premier University," Dr. Eleblu noted.

He said he had what it takes to be a parliamentary candidate to challenge the opposition NDC's candidate to win the seat, saying, "I am very ready to change the narrative of NPP in North Tongu and bring hope to the party folks in the constituency."

Dr. Eleblu assured that although the NPP has been performing badly in North Tongu, he has the right strategies in place to can-

vas for votes and topple the NDC.

"Our target is to get 30,000 votes in North Tongu and we have mapped out many complementary strategies to achieve this. The first is our membership drive to register a minimum of 10,000 members," he disclosed.

He stated that the NPP has made significant contributions to the constituency's development, including a \$34 million investment in the Togorme Irrigation project, which is expected to serve as a foundational infrastructure for the development of agricultural and agribusiness projects for the needed economic transformation.

He stated that the NPP has ensured the construction of new roads in the area, two new courts for the judiciary to promote the quick delivery of justice, the development of a new market complex in Juapong, and many other projects.

Vision For Constituency

Dr. Eleblu said he would serve the constituency with transformational leadership of service, transparency, integrity, and honesty.

He also stated that he would establish business development centres in all electoral areas, and that residents would be assisted in starting and growing firms in order to produce wealth.

"I will change our constituency into an agricultural hub to feed North Tongu and the entire country and also for export," he said.

Dr. Eleblu promised to facilitate the establishment of three Technical, Vocational, Engineering, and Technology (TVET) centres in the constituency to train the youths to become entrepreneurs.

He also assured he would assist qualified youths in the party to gain

admission into tertiary institutions of their choice, as well as get employment opportunities in the security services and other government agencies.

Who is Dr. Eleblu?

Dr Eleblu has thick political roots and is the son of a former parliamentary candidate in the constituency, Christopher Kofi Eleblu, who previously served as director of the internal audit at the Ministry of Health.

He earned a PhD in Plant Biology from the Université Paris Sud 11, Orsay, France on a fully funded scholarship from the University of Ghana and the French Embassy in Ghana.

He holds a BSc and MPhil degrees in Agricultural Science from the University of Ghana.

He is currently a Senior Lecturer at the Biotechnology Centre and a Coordinator of Research Programmes at the West Africa Centre for Crop Improvement (WACCI), University of Ghana.

He has served as principal investigator on many scientific research projects and has led project teams to train more than 4,000 farmers across West Africa and 300 extension agents.

He has supervised more than 22 PhD students and has over 30 scientific publications in international peer-reviewed journals to his credit.

He has won more than 4 grant-funded projects in 8 years of working with the University of Ghana. He has supported and led project proposal development which has contributed towards raising more than \$10 million from prominent donor institutions such as the World Bank, African Union, European Union, International Atomic Energy Agency, and the KGL Foundation, from the University of Ghana.

Man Butchers Wife To Death

FROM Emmanuel Opoku, Takoradi

A 32-YEAR-OLD man identified as Kwame Andam has allegedly butchered his wife, Elizabeth Danquah, to death after a quarrel ensued between them at Awoyie in the Mpohor District of the Western Region.

The suspect, who is currently in the grips of the Manso police in the area, was said to have murdered his 28-year old wife after the deceased allegedly threatened to divorce him.

According to sources, the suspect, for some time now, has been subjecting his wife to severe beatings, particularly, when he gets drunk.

"When the deceased's mother managed to convince her daughter to separate herself from the husband, the suspect got drunk one day and went to confront the wife's mother at her residence," a source noted.

Speaking to *DAILY GUIDE* in an interview, the Assembly member for Anjo Electoral Area, John Donkor, mentioned that the unfortunate incident happened at Awoyie, a farming community in his electoral area at about 7am on Monday August 14, 2023.

He said information he gathered indicated that for some time now the suspect and the deceased had been quarreling, probably as a result of the excessive intake of alcohol by the husband which usually ended in fights.

"I gathered that the woman's mother advised her to leave the husband for fear of being maimed by the suspect," he said.

"So the lady had left the husband's house and was staying at a different place far away from where the husband was staying at Awoyie," the assembly man narrated.

He, however, indicated that on that fateful Monday morning, the wife decided

to visit the husband with whom she has a son and even helped the suspect in his charcoal production business.

He said a neighbor later heard the two fighting again with the wife shouting for help. "The principal witness who is the neighbor of the suspect then saw the wife come out from their room with cutlass wounds".

"When the lady came out, the suspect still chased her with the sharp cutlass into a nearby bush and butchered her to death and tried to escape," the assembly man revealed.

He pointed out that immediately the sad news reached him and other opinion leaders in the area, they launched a search party to find the suspect.

"Kwame Andam was subsequently arrested by the search party and was handed over to the police while the body was deposited at a hospital's morgue," he disclosed.

23rd NR GJA Awards Launched



Alhassan Shani Shaibu with GJA Executives, CSOs and journalists in a group picture after the launch

BY Eric Kombat, Tamale

THE GHANA Journalists Association (GJA) Northern Regional branch has launched this year's awards in Tamale, Northern Region, with the theme: "Promoting Responsible Behaviour To Protect Environment: The Role of Media."

Mr. Yakubu Abdul-Majeed, Northern Regional Chairman of the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA), stated at the launch that the media plays an important role in building a better society and that there is an urgent need for Journalists, particularly those in the North, to constantly update their skills and knowledge in order to fully live up to their responsibilities.

He urged his colleagues to use their platforms to promote unity, moral uprightness, and social cohesion.

"I want also to charge colleagues in the region to make your medium and space available for healthy debates on issues of national importance with the view to foster unity, devel-

opment and progress and by so doing, we would not only be creating and sustaining peace and unity in the North but rather the whole country," he stated.

According to him, the theme was picked because of the times journalists are in and how the environment might signal disaster for them.

He stated that the awards were open to all journalists in the Northern, Savannah, and North East Regions.

"We have constituted three seasoned and knowledgeable practitioners as members of the Awards Committee to take charge of the entries and selection of winners. We are confident that the team will do a diligent job," he noted.

The committee comprises Mr. Iliasu Adam Chairman from Minerals Commission, Dr. Ilias Mumuni, UDS faculty of Communication, and Nii Odenkey Abbey Communications Manager, USAID Feed the Future Ghana Market Systems and Resilience Activity.

The Northern Regional Minister, Mr. Alhassan Shani Shaibu, commended the executives and entire

members of the Ghana Journalists Association in the region for their hard work in ensuring the continuous celebration of the event.

"Indeed the significance of it cannot be underestimated. Not only has it generated a positive momentum in motivating Journalists to put up their best, but it has also galvanized the Association in terms of member solidarity and projecting the best image. Reward for hard work is obviously a great recognition and any institution desirous of progress must uphold this at all times."

The Northern Regional Minister called for a closer collaboration between state institutions and Journalists in the region to address issues of the environment.

The Northern Regional Secretary of the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA), Mr. Albert Futukpor, revealed that the awards is open to all journalists working in the print (including news agency), electronic and online media in the Northern, North East and Savannah Regions.

According to him, the awards are open for works published in 2022 and that entries should cover works published from January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022.

He, however, noted that entrants may submit entries for a maximum of two categories, and not more than two published works should be submitted for each category.

"However, one work shall not be entered in more than one category," he added.

Who Leads The NPP In The 2024 National Elections In 'Breaking The 8'? (1)

BY Elijah K. Amanor, Secretary, NPP – USA Massachusetts Chapter

THE NEW Patriotic Party (NPP) is a center-right and liberal-conservative political party from the democratization of Ghana in 1992. It has since been one of the two dominant parties in Ghanaian politics, with its leaning rival being the center-left National Democratic Congress (NDC).

Since democratizing Ghana in 1992, the two parties have both won four elections. The NDC in 1992, 1996 led by His Excellency Jerry John Rawlings on both occasions, in 2008 led by His Excellency John Evans Atta-Mills who passed away mysteriously in July 2012 and John Dramani Mahama (the then vice president) was sworn in as the president. His Excellency John Dramani Mahama was approved by the NDC to lead the party into the 2012 polls and retained the seat for the NDC to complete the eight-year (two terms) regime for the party.

The NPP on the other hand, won the 2000 and the 2004 elections led by his Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor, and again in 2016, and 2020 led by His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo thus, the current sitting president and the governing party. The fourth republic has seen two major parties; the NDC and the NPP win two per of elections by two different leaders. Hence, serving two terms each before losing to the other party. The question now bemoans;

Who wins the 2024 elections? Will the NDC win the 2024 elections maintaining the trend of two-term order? Or

Will the NPP break the two-term record and win for a third term ("Break the 8")?

The NDC held their primaries on May 13, 2023 where they overwhelmingly endorsed the former president John Dramani Mahama to be their flagbearer in the 2024 elections. John Mahama took over from Evens Attah Mills after his demise in July 2012 and went on to be the flagbearer for the NDC leading to the December 2012 elections. John Mahama won the elections but ended up serving only one-term. Even though the party (NDC) served two-terms from 2008 to 2016 John Mahama became the only president to serve only one-term in the fourth republic. This makes it possible for him to contest as a flagbearer for the NDC again. The question however is, will the NDC be able to win the 2024 elections? Given the regular raw trajectory on how elections are won by parties in this fourth republic, it will be safe to attempt to predict that the NDC will be winning the 2024 election, since the NPP would have been done serving two-terms by the time.

The NPP however, are very poised to breaking the 8, hence, the slogan, "BREAKING THE 8". The question one will ask is; is it possible? The Ghanaian electorates have become very discerning over the time relative to the 90s and the early 2000s. More and more people are becoming more

educated over the time and are no longer deciding who to vote for by mere personal looks or propaganda as it were. Like every other democratic country, the two major parties have their huge following, but notwithstanding their followings, there are also a section of electorates in between these two major parties (floating voters) who do not belong to either of them. These are the electorates who decides who wins the election every election year. These electorates are even more discerning; they want to be convinced about their decision; they don't just throw their votes around. These are the electorates that either party (NDC or NPP) would need to be convincing.

Given, that the NDC already have a known candidate; a former president in the person John Dramani Mahama after their internal election which was held in May 13, 2023; the NPP delegates will equally be choosing a candidate come November 4 as their flagbearer heading into the 2024 elections. The major question in this article is who will this be? The track record of the NDC and their flagbearer is well known especially in the area of how they address issues on the political train. The NPP therefore needs a flagbearer that can defy the odds, address issues, as well has have a plan to speak to issues that can sway the floating voters in its direction. In choosing a flagbearer for the NPP the delegates need to consider the following issues in determining how they cast their vote.



The writer



Dr. Bawumia

1. The need for unity as a party after the primaries
2. An understanding of our opponent and their campaign-rhetoric
3. An understanding of the economic issues with combat strategies

The need for unity as a party after the primaries.

The NPP won the December 2008 elections but could not win the absolute majority hence the need for a run off where we (the NPP) eventually lost to H.E. John Evans Atta Mills may his soul rest in peace. Our inability to win that election and thus break the 8 at the time was due to lack of unity in the party at the time. The two major factions; the "Nana Addo faction" and the "Alan Cash faction" were hardly united leading to that election, a thing that should never repeat itself again if we are to break the 8 in this 2024 elections. Our inability to unite the party continued after the 2011 primaries leading into the 2012 elections which further hurt our prospects in that election. I bet people would be wondering by now if our democratic process (within the NPP party) is a healthy one then? Unlike the NDC who have always imposed leaders on their members, the NPP on the other hand has been very democratic in its

internal dealings since 1992 and that will not change now. What needs to be strengthened are the discerning minds of the electorates to elect a person with the skill to unite the party after the primaries, because in my opinion, it is the party's unity that is winning the election and not necessarily the person on the ticket.

The party is currently has ten candidates contesting in this year's presidential primaries. The NPP party now have a super delegate conference where large number of contestants are streamlined into at most five contestants to contest in the national delegate conference. This became a measure to help resolve the frustration of a run-off and too long sitting hours like had happened in the 2007 primaries. I am not going to waste your time trying to least out the names of the candidates to talk about their strength and who should be that candidate to be elected for this needed unity.

The NPP delegates are very discerning enough to deduce who the candidate for this mission should be and will vote massively for that candidate, having in mind the need for the Party's unity in "breaking the 8". Questions in your mind? Wondering who this person is that can foster the party unity I am talking about?

Horoscope



ARIES (March 21-April 19)

Keeping things balanced today will prove challenging, Aries. Take this seriously because it's probably needed more than ever. You might be the arbiter in situations where a battle exists between old and new. Take advantage of opportunities. Make sure you're in on the deal.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

Passions may run high, Taurus, and you could be right in the thick of things. Today may be a bit more intense than usual. Conflicting energies will butt up against each other in your head, and you might need to make an important decision now.



GEMINI (May 21-June 21)

Indecision may leave you standing at the station after all the trains have left, Gemini. Hop on one that's going in your direction. Add your name to the roster of active participants. Today isn't a day to wait for opportunity to come to you. If you see something you believe in, move toward it.



CANCER (June 22-July 22)

Something might be shaking the very ground you stand on, Cancer. Just when you thought everything was calm and stable, suddenly the ground begins to rumble. Secure your footing, hold on, and stay flexible. A few steps in a different direction may position you in a safe area where you can ride out the storm with no problem.



LEO (July 23-August 22)

Follow your heart instead of your wallet, Leo. Start with yourself and choose where to spend your resources. Take an active role and be on the lookout for opportunities to grab hold of and profit from. You may find a conflict going on in your world. Stand up for what you believe in and don't be afraid to rock the boat.



VIRGO (August 23-September 22)

Your adaptable nature will be put to the test today, Virgo. Try to go with the flow. Remember that you have a rudder with which to steer. You can float down the river freely, but don't think that this means you have to give up all control. You have the power of choice, so use it.



LIBRA (September 23-October 22)

Today is a significant day, astrologically speaking, Libra. It may be an affirmation of your pioneering spirit. Be the champion of the new and bizarre. There's a window of opportunity opening to reveal a golden chance. Forces that seem to conflict may actually work well together.



SCORPIO (October 23-November 21)

There may be some tension in the air for you, Scorpio. Large forces are moving through your life that are suddenly coming into conflict. People who have been on a certain path for a long time now have to face the music. How well have you physically and mentally prepared?



SAGITTARIUS (November 22-December 21)

Your ability to juggle many tasks is going to come in handy, Sagittarius. Information may fly and you could be asked to step up and contribute your wealth of knowledge. You may come into opposition with someone with a superior attitude. Remember that the old ways aren't always best. They may have worked in the past, but things have changed.



CAPRICORN (December 22-January 19)

You feel like a scared child who wants to hide under the bed today, Capricorn. Keep in mind that there are just as many monsters under the bed as there are out in the world. At least you can see the ones outside and perhaps even enlist the help of others to combat them.



AQUARIUS (January 20-February 18)

Today may feel like everything's coming to a head for you, Aquarius. Even the slightest action might face resistance. The more stubborn your attitude, the harder it will be to progress. Your job is to infuse playfulness into every situation.



PISCES (February 19-March 20)

You'd do well to discipline your actions today, Pisces, and keep a level head. Unexpected events may rise to challenge established authority. Don't jump to any sweeping conclusions. Make sure you gather the facts before you act. Don't simply recoil and shrink into a cave.



The victim after the incident

Woman Burnt Over Fish Debt

BY Daniel Bampoe

A 48-YEAR-OLD woman, Adwoa Ketsewa, who bought GH¢20 fish on credit from a fish seller to prepare food for her family is currently battling for her life, after being bathed with hot soup for failing to pay the debt.

The incident occurred at Assin Asamankese in the Assin South District of the Central Region when the fish seller, Ekuia Dermaa, who lives at Assin Achiase went to the victim's house to demand the GH¢20.

The victim explained that she didn't have money on her when the woman came demanding for it.

She pleaded with the woman to return the following day for the money, but the fish seller refused to understand. Driven by anger, she grabbed the boiling hot palm nut soup the victim was preparing and poured it on her body.

The suspect immediately after pouring the hot palm nut soup on the victim, run to her house.

The victim screamed for help, and neighbours came to her aid and sent her to the hospital for treatment.

The case has since been reported at the Assin Manso Police Station, as the suspect is yet to be arrested.

Mentally Challenged Persons Swarm Akyem Oda

BY Daniel Bampoe

SOME UNKNOWN mentally challenged persons have allegedly been deployed to the township of Akyem Oda in the Birim Central Municipality of the Eastern Region, as the chiefs and residents have shared their frustrations over the incident.

Some drivers who work at dawn in Akyem Oda also alleged that some container vehicles come to the town and stop at vantage points to drop the mentally challenged people in the town, but couldn't identify those vehicles with their registration numbers.

According to residents, the presence of the mentally challenged persons is causing fear and panic, as they feel their lives are in danger, especially school children who walk along the road to school.

However, the Municipal Chief Executive (MCE) of the area, Victoria Adu, who expressed worry over the incident, explained that the mentally challenged people have invaded the entire streets of the Oda township, as they suspect they were being dumped into the town at dawn by unidentified psychiatric hospitals from Greater Accra.

The MCE further disclosed that she will consult the security agencies in the municipality to stop anyone who tries to dump such people into the town, as speculated by the people.

Meanwhile, the Kranti-hene of Akyem Kotoku Traditional Area, Obrempong Gyamfi Saforokyere II also appealed to the government to take immediate steps to halt the invasion of the town by the mentally challenged persons.

Communities In Tano North Get Electricity

FROM Daniel Y Dayee, Tano North

SANITATION AND Water Resources Minister, Freda Prempeh, who is also the Member of Parliament (MP) for Tano North Constituency, is leaving no stone unturned in her efforts to provide critical social amenities to all communities in her constituency in order to better people's lives.

To the delight of the people, the NPP MP has connected more communities in Tano North constituency to the national grid.

Yesterday, she was assisted by Deputy Minister of Energy William Owuraku Aidoo in pressing the button that turned on the lights for newly connected communities.

The beneficiary communities include Assen, Nkrakrom, Adwirasu, Baasure, Tano Ano and Atuduro Besa, all in the Ahafo Region.

At Assen, where the Minister hit the button with the help of Northern Electricity Distribution Company (NEDCo) officials, she emphasized the importance of elections in bringing progress to people.

She stated that it was the ambition of the NPP government led by President Nana Addo to bring development to people's doorsteps regardless of their geography.

As a result, she requested the people to re-elect the NPP administration and herself as an MP in 2024.

According to the Minister of Sanitation, the government would supply



The MPs, Nananom and NEDCo officials jointly pressing button to connect communities to the national grid

solar in areas where the national grid cannot be extended, adding, "Electricity is important especially for the future of children who need to study and do a lot of things especially in this era of technology."

She also pledged to bring the power inside classrooms so that students could use it for their studies.

"You vote otherwise all the time, but this should allow you to change your mind and keep the government in place. Elections are for progress," she noted.

The Deputy Energy Minister, who is also the MP for Afigya-Kwabre South, William Owuraku Aidoo, tasked NEDCo with delivering electricity bills to homes on a regular and timely basis so that they do not default in payment when the bills build up, claiming that the residents are largely peasant farmers.

He advised them to take advantage of the availability of electricity by engaging in businesses such as hair-dressing, tailoring, and cold stores to make cash and improve their lives.

Seth Kofi Dankwah, the deputy education director in charge of Tano North District, has urged the Parent Association (PA) and the School Management Committee (SMC) to ensure that power is used for the benefit of students.

You can now watch television to learn about what is going on in other parts of the country and throughout the world, adding, "It will also aid you with your Information and Communication Technology (ICT) studies."

Samuel Kyeremeh, assemblyman for Assen Electoral Area, thanked the MP and government on behalf of the chiefs and people for their ongoing efforts to improve their lives.

Volta NPP Group Campaigns For Bawumia

BY Vincent Kubi

THE BAWUMIA Fun Club, a group of enthusiastic New Patriotic Party (NPP) youth in the Volta Region, has urged delegates of the region to vote for Vice President Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia as the party's flagbearer in the upcoming delegates conference of the ruling NPP ahead of the 2024 general elections.

The group emphasised the significance of selecting the right leader to guide the party in the forthcoming elections.

According to the group, the delegates should carefully consider their decision, highlighting Dr. Bawumia's

commitment to the party's ideals and his remarkable track record of public service.

Mr. Rashid Raji, the Regional Coordinator of the Bawumia Fun Club and a devoted member of the NPP, made the call when speaking to a group of NPP delegates across the region at Dzodze in the Ketu North Constituency where he was rallying support for the Vice President.

According to Mr. Raji, "Dr. Bawumia has consistently demonstrated his dedication to the progress and development of our great nation. His tireless efforts in various capacities, including his role as Vice President, have showcased

his competence, integrity, and vision for Ghana's future."

The Bawumia Fun Club has been actively mobilising support for the Vice President in the Volta Region, engaging with party members and residents through grassroots campaigns and community outreach programmes. They believe that Dr. Bawumia possesses the necessary qualities to lead the NPP and steer the country towards prosperity.

"The Volta Region has immense potential for growth and development, and we firmly believe that Dr. Bawumia's leadership will unlock this potential and bring about positive change," Mr. Raji stated,

adding that "His inclusive approach and dedication to addressing the needs of all Ghanaians, regardless of their background, makes him the ideal candidate to lead our party and the nation."

Endorsement of the Vice President as flagbearer of the ruling party by the Bawumia Fun Club, has gained significant attention and support from various NPP members and stakeholders within the Volta Region. They believe that his candidacy will not only unite the party but also resonate with the electorate across the country.

The group has been campaigning for the NPP since 2012 and began polling station to polling station campaign in the region since Dr. Bawumia declared his intentions. The Vice President's competence and humility make him the best candidate to lead the party into victory, according to Raji.

Delegates in the region expressed their excitement and the need to give the hardworking and innovative Vice President a resounding victory. However, they also appealed to Dr. Bawumia to assist them with a pool tractor and farm inputs to boost their farm produce.



Members of the Club

MGL Partners Chale Wote Festival 2023

ORGANISERS OF the biggest street art festival in Ghana, Chale Wote Festival, have officially partnered with the Multimedia Group Limited (MGL) ahead of the 13th edition of the festival.

They have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the media outfit to push the unique Ghanaian culture and heritage through art, music, and dance among other creative expressions.

The partnership makes Multimedia Group Limited the first

media outlet to have the privilege to support the goal of the festival since its inception in 2011, to promote Ghana's historic culture and art across the globe.

Speaking at the signing event, General Manager of Joy Brands, Fiifi Koomson, expressed delight about the partnership, adding that the ChaleWote Festival falls in line with the company's plans to use its platforms to sell Ghana.

He gave an assurance that the company would provide full sup-

port before, during, and after the festival for the betterment of the festival and the ultimate purpose of projecting Ghana internationally.

Following the partnership agreement, Anny Osabutey, a member of the Chale Wote Festival, also demonstrated the team's excitement.

Mr. Osabutey, on behalf of his team, promised to provide the necessary support to the Multimedia Group in every activity of the event.

The festival is celebrated a week after the Homowo festival of the Ga people, on the high streets of Jamestown, Accra.

This year's event will be held on the major streets in Osu, Accra, from August 21 to 28.

Activities and exhibitions for the festival will be held on major grounds, including Independence Square and Osu Castle.

Nonetheless, the opening of the event will take place on the streets of the Osu community on August 21 at 3 pm.

Some major activities for the 13th edition of the festival are photo exhibitions, street painting, graffiti murals, interactive installations, street boxing, movie screening, processions, design labs, among others.

All the activities will be aired live on the multimedia brands, including Joy FM, Joy Prime, Hitz FM and other brands of the Multimedia Group.



Anny Osabutey



Natty Borax

'International Collaborations Driving Growth Of Afrobeats'

SPOTIFY, THE world's most popular audio streaming subscription service, has revealed that one of the key drivers of Afrobeats globally is international collaborations.

The surge in popularity of Afrobeats has been immense over the past few years, with most of its artistes shattering streaming records and also headlining major shows around the world.

The result of Afrobeats crossing West African borders and its prevalence in the mainstream media has not only impacted music, but has also been a vehicle for food, dance, and language export.

According to Spotify-commissioned research conducted by Kuvora, 28% of fans believe that international collaborations are one of the key factors driving the growth of Afrobeats.

"Afrobeats' journey has been fascinating to watch; the export story we have seen with the genre has been so encouraging, from Mexico to Saudi Arabia - African music is reaching new audiences.

"We know Afrobeats is going to continue shattering even more ceilings, and we are so excited to see how this genre has taken African culture to the world," says Jocelyne Muhutu-Remy, Spotify's Managing Director for Sub-Saharan Africa.

Interestingly, Ghana has seen 181% yearly growth in Afrobeats streams since Spotify launched in the region.

In Accra, the top streamed Afrobeats songs are Ruger's 'Asiwaju', Omah Lay's 'Soso', Young Jonn's 'Xtra Cool', Ayra Starr's 'Rush' and Asake, and Fireboy DML's 'Bandana.' -GNA



Davido

Natty Borax Returns With 'Okukuseku'

HIPLIFE/REGGAE artiste, Natty Borax, has announced his presence in the music industry with a new song titled, 'Okukuseku'.

The mid-tempo song has a powerful beat arrangement with good vocals.

According to Natty Borax, his new song has garnered positive feedback from the masses.

"My new song is 'Okukuseku'. The feedback has been positive. Anytime we drop, it's like fire; it'll take time because it's a conscious vibe," he said.

The creativity in the song is commendable and it has the potential of becoming a hit in the Ghanaian music scene.

Natty Borax is now under the Moskitoe Entertainment Label, which is poised to push the artiste

back to stardom and make him a global icon from Ghana.

The versatile musician revealed that he's making his comeback, after almost a decade of absence from the music scene, under the banner of a new record label, Moskitoe Entertainment.

"I'm back and with a new label; Moskitoe Entertainment, It's an acronym which stands for most kind to everyone. You can stream my music on all platforms," he stated.

Born Nat Adjetej Larbi, Natty Borax has etched his name in Ghanaian music history through iconic tracks such as 'Odo Nkooa', 'Asie Ho', and 'Odo Be Wo Dea' alongside Daddy Lumba, as well as 'Ahuofe Hema' with Deeba, among others.

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Andre Onana wiped out Sasa Kalajdzic

Officials To Miss Games Over Onana Error

SIMON HOOPER and Michael Salisbury will not be included in the referee appointments for next weekend's Premier League games after they failed to award a stoppage-time penalty to Wolverhampton Wanderers in Monday night's 1-0 defeat to Manchester United at Old Trafford.

Goalkeeper, André Onana, clattered into Wolves' Sasa Kalajdzic in the sixth added minute at Old Trafford, but on-field referee Hooper did not award a penalty, and the VAR, Salisbury, failed to intervene. Richard West, the assistant VAR for the match, will also not be selected.

Salisbury initiated a lengthy VAR check but said the incident was not a clear and obvious error.

Wolves' boss, Gary O'Neil, said afterward that Jon Moss, the manager of the Select Group 1 officials who referee in the Premier League

(PGMOL), had told him it was a mistake.

"I was told live that they didn't think that it was a clear and obvious error," O'Neil said. "But having spoken to Jonathan Moss, and fair play to him for coming straight out, he has apologised and said it was a blatant penalty that should have been given."

"I feel bad because he has come out honestly. I spent the afternoon with him, trying to understand the new guidelines and trying not to get myself booked with the new guidelines, which I failed to do."

Since Howard Webb took over as chief refereeing officer for refereeing in the Premier League, the organisation has admitted errors and taken action against officials who make mistakes to show greater transparency.

It is the second time Salisbury has been stood down in recent months.

Ex-Kotoko Defender Drags TP Mazembe To FIFA

FORMER ASANTE Kotoko defender, Ismail Abdul-Ganiyu, has escalated a financial dispute with his current club, TP Mazembe, by lodging a complaint with FIFA.

Ganiyu's grievance pertains to unpaid sign-on fees owed to him by the Congolese club since his arrival in February 2023.

Having made the move to TP Mazembe from Kuwaiti side Al Talaba on a two-and-a-half-year contract, Ganiyu's situation has taken an unexpected turn.

The revelation comes through a report by African football expert, Micky Junior, who shed light on the financial impasse between the player and his club.

Ganiyu's football journey holds roots in the Ghanaian scene. He initially showcased his skills at Wa All

Stars (rebranded Legon Cities) before transitioning to Karela United. His impressive performance then led him to join the ranks of Asante Kotoko in 2018, where he enjoyed a productive stint spanning three seasons.

During his tenure with the Porcupine Warriors, Ganiyu secured the coveted Ghana Premier League title in the 2021/22 season, showcasing his prowess on the field. This accomplishment was a stepping stone for him to earn a call-up to the Black Stars for the 2022 Africa Cup of Nations qualifiers.

Unfortunately, despite his initial inclusion in the squad for the qualifiers, Ganiyu's hopes of competing in the main tournament in Cameroon were dashed as he was eventually omitted from the final squad. GHANASOCCERNET



Ismail Abdul-Ganiyu

Boys' Brigade Host Global Fellowship GM

FROM The Sports Desk

THE GENERAL Manager of Global Fellowship of Christian Youth, Bill Stevenson, has arrived in Ghana from UK via Nigeria for a three-day working visit with the Boys' Brigade (BB) Ghana.

He was met on arrival last night by President of the Boys' Brigade Ghana Council and former President of Ghana Boxing Authority (GBA), Moses Foh Amoaning.

He is expected to pay a courtesy visit to the Vice President, Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, at the Jubilee House today and later call on the Youth and Sports Minister Mustapha Ussif, and executives of the National Youth Authority (NYA).

Thereafter, he will be expected to have a working lunch with executives of Boys' Brigade Ghana at the MJ Grand Hotel and later in the evening, have a Boys' Brigade parade night as well as Boys' Brigade Parliament at Nungua Ebenezer Presby.



Bill Stevenson, General Manager of Global Fellowship of Christian Youth

Mr. Stevenson and executives of the Boys' Brigade Ghana will meet the seven affiliate brigade churches in Ghana and later embark on sightseeing on Thursday.

The Global Fellowship GM as part of his West African tour is expected to

inaugurate a Boys' Brigade district band in Effiakuma, Sekondi and Takoradi.

He is scheduled for a special meeting with executives of Ghana National Petroleum Corporation (GNPC), Hisense Ghana, and Ghana Gas.

According to the former GBA boss, his office will among other things, discuss the possibility of arranging a Boys' Brigade youth entrepreneurship programme, exchange programmes for officials, as well as embark on anchor projects with support from NYA.

From Ghana, he will travel to Uganda and other parts of the continent before returning to the UK.

"I cannot tell you how excited I am about visiting the BB in Ghana. This will be my first time in West Africa, and I am really looking forward to learning more about the work of the Brigade in your beautiful country," he stated.

Global Fellowship is effectively the Boys' Brigade equivalent of the United Nations; and BB Ghana has been an active member for many years.

Spain Reach First WWC Final

OLGA CARMONA struck late to lift Spain to a thrilling 2-1 semifinal win over Sweden yesterday and sent them into a first Women's World Cup final.

Wearing the captain's armband, Carmona's 90th-minute strike from the edge of the area pinged off the crossbar and into the net two minutes after Rebecka Blomqvist had levelled the match for Sweden in front of a baying crowd of 43,217 at Eden Park.

Teenager Salma Paralluelo, Spain's quarterfinal hero against the Netherlands, produced magic off the bench again, putting her side in front in the 81st minute and breathing life into what had been a slow-burning, cagey affair.

Less than a year after a player revolt tore the squad apart, La Roja will have the chance to lift the trophy on Sunday when they face co-hosts

Australia or England in the decider.

Peter Gerhardsson's Sweden bow out after another defeat at the penultimate hurdle, having made the semi-finals in France four years ago and at last year's European Championship.

"It felt like a punch in the stomach when they managed to take the lead again straight away. There are no words," Sweden defender Magdalena Eriksson told Swedish radio.

"I'm incredibly disappointed, we gave everything we had, we even managed to equalise. We fought against a headwind today, we didn't succeed."

Spain netted late on to snatch a place in Sunday's Women's World Cup final.

Fifteen Spain players had threatened to quit last year if Coach Jorge Vilda was not moved on, but on Tuesday his decision to replace play-



Spain's players celebrate after beating Sweden 2-1 to reach the final of the Women's World Cup

maker Alexia Putellas with Paralluelo before the hour mark proved decisive.

In a match-up of Iberian attacking flair and Swedish defensive resilience, Spain were the livelier side early on but had nothing to show for it.

Full back Carmona blazed just

wide with a low, long-range effort in the 14th minute and midfield dynamo, Aitana Bonmati, thrashed a wild shot past the same right post from the edge of the area.

However, Sweden finished the half ascendant with a typical salvo of set-piece pressure.

A few minutes from the break, Spain dealt with a fright as Nathalie Björn chested the ball down and crossed to an unmarked Fridolina Rolfö in the area.

But the Sweden winger's volley was well covered by goalkeeper, Cata Coll.