

KWESI BOTCHWEY

Worried About Ghana's Rising Debt And Economic Downturn



Prof. Kwesi Botchwey

Prof. Kwesi Botchwey, a former Minister of Finance and Economic Planning under the late President Rawlings' administration, has expressed disappointment in how Ghana's economy has taken a nose dive following the high debts accrued in recent times. According to him, it seems the managers

of the economy have never learnt any lesson from the various governments in the past. Speaking at the launch of the collective Biography of the Ahwoi and Adu-Gyamfi siblings titled 'The Children of House No. D13, South Suntreso Kumasi,' Prof. Kwesi

Botchwey explained: "Sadly, we don't appear to have learnt our lessons. Now moving so perilously close to the edge of the presidency, where we were in the early 80s; with our economy saddled with debts which we

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OUR FAITH AND THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL: ARTHUR KENNEDY WRITES AS HE BLASTS AKUFO-ADDO *page 5*

EX GRATIA

Former Council Of State Member Wants Exorbitant Payments Reviewed



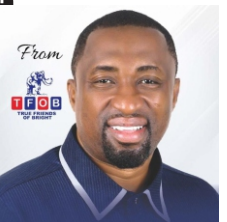
Nana Adjei Ampofo, former member of the Council of State

Nana Adjei Ampofo, a former member of the Council of State, has called for the immediate review of the payment of ex gratia to members of the Council to meet the country's economic realities.

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As He Files Nomination Forms

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The INSIGHT

EDITORIAL

SCRAP THESE CLAUSES!

Captain Kwabena Baah-Achamfour (Rtd), a kingpin in the erstwhile Armed Forces Revolutionary

Council only recently asked for the Indemnity Clauses in the 1992 Constitution to be expunged.

He adduced reasons why Ghana needed to have such needless clauses in the constitution scrapped.

Many were those who supported his call including the late Jerry John Rawlings who, though, was the main target braced the challenge.

Today, Rawlings is no more but the need for the Indemnity Clauses to be scrapped are as urgent as was made earlier.

As a country that prides itself to be advocate of rule of law and social justice, no law should be allowed to glorify, if not protect some leaders.

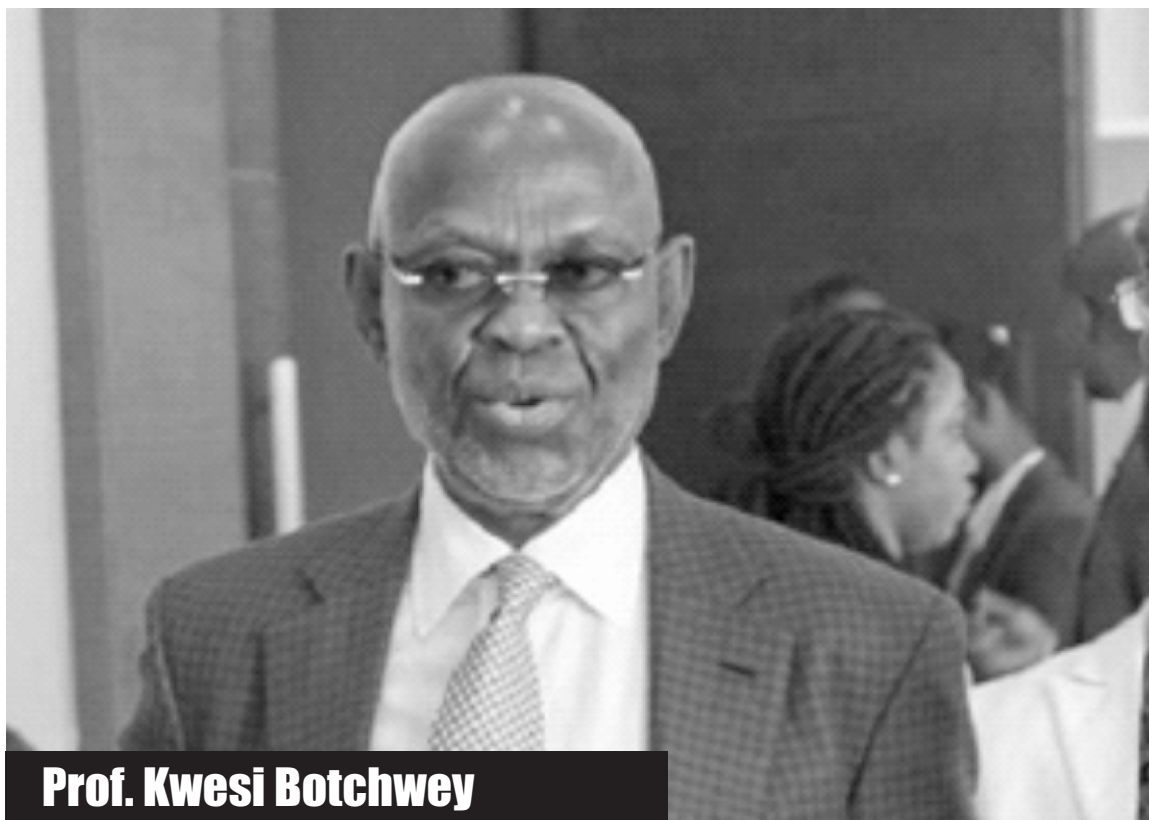
For most constitutions of the world, indemnity clauses exist to protect serving leaders to avoid needless and unnecessary suits and other legal distractions and cease to be functional or effective when the leaders are no longer in power.

Clearly, there is no way this country can move forward and financial accountability including social justice ensured if former leaders are still heavily garbed and protected by such entrenched constitutional provisions that do not make it possible for them to be held to account for their stewardship.

It is now or never and the indemnity clauses must be scrapped!

KWESI BOTCHWEY

Worried About Ghana's Rising Debt And Economic Downturn



Prof. Kwesi Botchwey

cannot even pay to meet our social obligations.”

Prof. Kwesi Botchwey has consistently complained about the economic challenges facing the country.

At a recent 65th Independence Day Lecture, he said, “our current travails can be overcome provided we level with the people. The solution to a problem begins with recognising that there is one. It must start with the recognition that, it is a crisis and level with the people. We must wind down the hubris, the arrogance, and the show of impunity that the people see.”

Prof. Botchwey indicated that the two areas that affect the economic policy choices are continuity in economic planning and democratic consolidation and suggested that such choices should be looked at as solutions sorted for bettering the current crisis in the economy.

Ghana is currently battling with huge public debt levels and challenges in revenue generation.

The Bank of Ghana reports that the country's public debt has increased to GH¢344.5 billion, which is 78.4 percent of GDP at the end of November 2021, compared to GH¢291.6 billion, or 76.0 percent of GDP at the end of December 2020.

THE INSIGHT

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EX GRATIA; Former Council Of State Member Wants Exorbitant Payments Reviewed



Nana Adjei Ampofo, former member of the Council of State

from front page

He said the review should look at the quantum of money paid to the members, noting that from the figures available to him now, the amount was on the high side. Although he would not suggest what amount should be paid to the council members as ex gratia, Nana Ampofo, who is a legal practitioner of about 45 years standing, said: "I believe that past and present members of the council have been hearing the views of Ghanaians on the ex gratia. Even though many people think that the payment is justifiable, they still think that having regard to the economic situation of the country, the payment should be reviewed downwards."

Nana Ampofo, a former Omanhene of the Goaso Traditional Area, twice served as the representative of the then Brong Ahafo Region on the Council of State from 1993 to January 2001.

He spoke with the media in Accra on

Tuesday on the back of the return of the ex gratia of GH¢365,392.67 paid to a former member of the council, Togbe Afede XIV, which had reignited the debate for the scrapping of the payment. Explaining why he returned the money, Togbe Afede, who is the Agboghomefia of Asogli, said: "I did not think the payment was made to trap me, as is being speculated. I believe it was paid to everybody who served on the Council of State. However, I thought that extra payment was inappropriate for a short, effectively part-time work for which I received a monthly salary and was entitled to other privileges, so I was very uncomfortable with it." Nana Ampofo would not subscribe to the view that the payment of ex gratia to members of the Council of State should be scrapped. "They deserve it," he insisted, explaining that although the members of the council, who constituted part of Article 71 holders, worked part-time, the kind of work they did was worth more than what some full-time workers did.

Describing Togbe Afede as a very truthful person, Nana Ampofo said: "I am not surprised he returned the money."

He maintained that the Council of

State was still relevant in the affairs of the nation.

He posited that although the President appointed advisors for virtually all sectors of national development, those advisors could not take over the duties of the council, as prescribed by the Constitution.

The legal practitioner and former paramount chief asserted that although some of the advisors were bold and ready to provide useful advice to the President, others were so politically blinded that they overlooked many critical issues. "The President may have friends who may advise him, but we need an official group of advisors or an advisory body that is expected to be non-partisan. Even though you can't have it 100 percent non-partisan, the composition of the council is such that when members are taking a decision, they are expected to be fair and non-partisan. I can say without any shred of equivocation that, to a large extent, some of them are fair and non-partisan," he stated.

Nana Ampofo said the constitutional provision establishing the Council of State needed amendment to make some of the pieces of advice the council gave become directives. "Reasonably, the Council of State

must remain advisory in nature, but there is the need to give the council sharper teeth. It appears to have very old teeth and so its authority must be strengthened through the provision of stronger teeth," he said. He said at least there could be a constitutional provision that would compel the President to give reasons for rejecting a piece of advice given by the council. "In some cases, if the council feels bad about something and advises the President on it, and reasonably so, there must be a provision that will compel the President to have another look at the issue or that could compel the President to abandon the idea," he said. Expatiating on the relevance of the Council of State, Nana Ampofo recalled how the council on which he had served, which was chaired by the late Alhaji Mumuni Bawumia, had, at a point in time, told the President at the time, Jerry Rawlings, that the force used to quell the Kumepreko demonstration was excessive. "We also, at a point, told him that he should have been more tolerant with then Vice-President Arkaah in the Jemimah Valley case. "Again, we pointed out to him the general hardship in the country and asked him whether he knew the

price of a ball of kenkey," he said. "In all that, he smiled, and as accommodating and honest as the former President was, he said we were entitled to our opinion but promised that he would take what we had told him," he added.

Article 71 office holders include the President, Vice-President, Members of Parliament, Ministers of State, members of the Council of State, political appointees, and public servants with salaries charged to the Consolidated Fund but enjoying special constitutional privileges.

Article 71 (1) and (2) of the 1992 Constitution stipulated that the determination of the salaries and allowances of the Executive, the Legislature, and the Judiciary paid from the Consolidated Fund will be determined by the President, on the recommendations of a committee of not more than five persons appointed by him and acting upon the advice of the Council of State.

The President approves the ex gratia of Parliament and other Article 71 holders, save that for himself/herself, while that of the President and the Executive is approved by Parliament.

GTEC To Deal With Operating Tertiary Institutions Without Accreditation

Florence Anim

Per its mandate in Act 1023 empowered to regulate tertiary education in the country, the Director General of the Tertiary Education Commission GTEC, Professor Mohammed Salifu has said, persons operating tertiary institutions without accreditation from the commission will face a 15 to 20 year jail term or GHs10000 to 20000 fine. He stated "We are mandated to regulate tertiary education in all forms with a view to promote efficient and effective management, provision of consistent quality service, advancement and application

of knowledge and development of appropriate human capital". He advised the general public to verify from the commission the status of private tertiary institutions, as to whether they are accredited or not, before they enrolled in them. The Director General was speaking at a media engagement, organized by the commission in Accra to equip them on the activities and operations of the commission. Professor Salifu indicated that persons who are using fake titles and qualifications were likely to face jail term or fine penalty. He said persons would be deemed to have committed an offence and would serve the penalties therein

accordance with the law.

"It is very painstaking to squire such qualifications, therefore, we would not allow some Persons to devalue them. The provision of the law requires us to protect those qualifications," he continued. He also called on institutions that awarded honorary doctorate degrees to let the awardees know the difference between an honorary and research doctorate. This according to Professor Salidu would let the honorees know when and how to use their doctoral titles appropriately.

He encouraged the media to collaborate with the commission especially in helping them identify persons who operate institutions without accreditation. "Collectively we need to protect the public interest and integrity and prestige of our Tertiary Education System and qualifications awarded," he stressed. The Director General advised the media to be vigilant and request certificate and authorization of individuals before allowing them advertise on their mediums. The National Council for Tertiary

Education and the National Accreditation Board have been merged under the New Education Regulatory Bodies Act, 2020 (Act 1023) to form the Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC). Accordingly to Professor Salifu, the Act was given a Presidential Assent on August 21, 2020, paving way for the Governing Board to be appointed and inaugurated on November 25, 2020. He also assured private tertiary education institutions of the commission's support to their growth and contribute to national development.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORT

Compiled By Peoples Dispatch

Thousands Of Australian Public Service Workers Go On Day-Long Strike

Public sector workers in the Australian State of New South Wales have gone on a day-long strike. According to different estimates, anywhere between 30,000 and 40,000 public service workers in the country's most populous State walked out of their jobs as part of a "day of action" last Wednesday, June 8, demanding better pay.

The strike was organized by the Public Service Association of NSW (PSA) and included prison guards, court sheriffs, child protection officers, school support staff and customer service workers. The strike came after union members rejected a deal proposed by the State's conservative government led by Premier Dominic Perrottet of the Liberal-National Coalition. The deal offered a 3% wage increase and AUD 3,000 (around USD 2,165) in "appreciation pay" to certain categories of health workers for their service during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The union has been demanding a 5.2% wage hike and the abolition of the State's wage cap on

public wages. Although the cap on salary hikes was first introduced in the State in 2008 under a Labor Party government, it was first legislated as an official policy in 2011 when the Liberal-National Coalition government came to power. The cap began at 2% in 2011, when it was introduced and was later amended to 2.5%. Earlier this week, Premier Perrottet amended the cap to 3% and promised to amend it to 3.5% by next year. The promised cap not only falls far short of what the workers demanded, but the government also has ignored repeated calls by workers across the State to abolish the cap altogether. Striking workers also questioned why the government has not extended the appreciation pay to other public sector workers who also not only worked on the frontlines of counter-pandemic programs, but were also crucial in disaster management during the Eastern Australian Floods earlier this year, as well as during bushfires which have been an almost

annual occurrence in the State. "We're not just unhappy, we're very, very angry," said PSA general secretary Stewart Little. "And we're not the only ones that are angry ... the police, the teachers, the firefighters, I think you'll find that they're unhappy. Why are we being treated differently? Why don't we have a fair and independent industrial umpire set wages instead of politicians?" Hundreds of employees also marched in Sydney's prominent locations, including Central Business District, State Parliament House and Macquarie Street, as part of the strike, with placards that read "Strike The Cap". Demonstrations were also held in other major regional centers of the State like Newcastle, Dubbo and Wagga Wagga.

Over the past year, New South Wales has witnessed massive workers' actions resisting the State government's policies, including by teachers, health workers and

transport workers.

Major unions like the Transport Workers Union of Australia (TWU), Australian Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU), NSW Nurses and Midwives Association (NSWNMA), Health Services Union (HSU), Ambulance and Paramedics Union, and NSW Teachers Federation have organized State-wide industrial actions against the government's policies.

This movement successfully put enough pressure on the system for it to break. And we can't forget the lengths they went to maintain control. With absolutely no meaningful evidence against him and a [growing list of corruption](#) by the courts and law enforcement, dropping all charges against Prakash was the only inevitable conclusion here—and, still, he was dragged through the system for 8 years, punished and restricted for resisting their attempt to take his life. He was [silenced](#) for telling his



story and for exposing systemic injustice. The people's fight had to learn to combat that, had to be stronger, and had to continue to grow. And that's how the struggle for the freedom of others must continue until we've built something entirely new.

Today was momentous, because it shows just how powerful we are if we unite in struggle! Never doubt the power of the people, the power of organizing!

Venezuelan Workers March In Support Of Govt And Reject Exclusion From Summit Of The Americas



On June 9, thousands of Venezuelan workers took to the streets of Caracas in support of President Nicolás Maduro's government and in rejection of the country's exclusion from the Ninth Summit of the Americas. (Photo: Nicolás Maduro/Twitter)

Thousands of Venezuelan workers took to the streets of the capital Caracas in support of President Nicolás Maduro's economic protection policies for workers and in rejection of the country's exclusion from the Ninth Summit of the Americas.

The workers gathered at the Candelaria square and marched to the office of the Vice-President of the Republic. Representatives of different trade unions delivered a letter to Vice-President Delcy Rodríguez, in which they thanked the socialist government for approving their demands and reiterated their support for President Maduro and the government of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) in the face of US attacks. Vice-President Rodríguez received the multitude of

workers and thanked them for their support. She highlighted the leading role of the Venezuelan working class in the country's economic recovery, which has been severely affected by nearly 500 unilateral coercive measures imposed by the US against Venezuela. "There are no miracles, there are victorious struggles," she said. Rodríguez called on the people to remain united in defense of the country's sovereignty and independence, and against attempts by some sectors to sabotage the recovery process. She said that the salary increase decreed in March by President Maduro

constituted a first strategic step to recover the income of the workers, affected by the impact of the US sanctions.. Meanwhile, President Maduro, who was in Algeria as a part of an official tour, thanked the Venezuelan workers for their massive support through his Twitter account. "All my appreciation and affection for the workers of the country. Congratulations for the massive march held in the beautiful city of Caracas. Thank you all for showing your love and support, you know that you can always count on me, on a people's president," he wrote.

In addition to the internal support, President Maduro's government received support from numerous Latin American and Caribbean leaders. Various leaders boycotted the Summit of the Americas, hosted by the US from June 6 to 10 in Los Angeles, California, and sent delegations in their place. Meanwhile, several of those who attended explicitly condemned the exclusion of Venezuela, Nicaragua and Cuba from the Summit, and called for the lifting of the over six-decade-long blockade against Cuba and sanctions against Venezuela and Nicaragua.

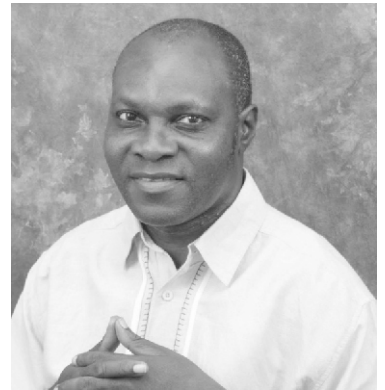
OUR FAITH AND THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL: ARTHUR KENNEDY WRITES AS HE BLASTS AKUFO-ADDO

During the 1992 US Presidential campaign, there was a debate between the Bush and Clinton campaigns about morality and ethics in leaders. The Republicans projected President Bush as a moral man, upright, religious and patriotic. A man who was in effect "a better man" in the eyes of God than his opponent, Bill Clinton, who had been plagued by allegations of infidelities, draft-dodging and corrupt land deals. Mr. Clinton and the Democrats countered that faith was not just personal. They argued that while having a

nice family life devoid of scandal mattered, other things mattered too. They insisted that being willing to fight for better schools, healthcare and housing for the poor was perhaps, a better manifestation of a person's faith than fidelity to his wife and having a nice family. That argument echoed the liberation theologians that "God is on the side of the poor". President Nana Akufo-Addo has pledged to build a National Cathedral to honour God for his victory in 2016. There is nothing wrong with that pledge or the pledge to "protect the public purse". In the last week, in has come to light that contrary to the President's pledge to have this

Cathedral built with private funds, significant public expenditures have been made in relation to the project. In response to concerns raised, the Minister of Finance, Hon. Ken Ofori-Atta has urged Ghanaians not to "snuff out our religiousness or spirituality because we are poor". Now doesn't the Bible enjoin us to be truthful? Does John 8:32 not state, "And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free"? How does lying to Parliament and the public enhance our spirituality? As to the more substantive question of using public resources to fulfill a private pledge to honour God, it does not sit well with me and it should not sit well with any person of faith. The Bible says, in Matthew 25:40, "And the king will say, 'I tell you the truth that when you did it to

one of the least of these my brothers you were doing it to me." How do we justify using the resources of a country that has children schooling under trees, the sick lacking in hospital beds and underpaid teachers to build a Cathedral to God? It appears to me that fighting corruption, building schools, building hospitals and returning unjustified ex-gratia to the public purse would do more to enhance our spirituality--anaa? The use of public funds to build a National Cathedral in a nation which needs so much, in my view, smacks of "Phariseism"! Let the eminent members of the infamous board of of this mis-conceived National Cathedral wake up to their



Arthur Kobina Kennedy

divine calling and speak truth--to power and to our country. Let the faithful say, "Amen". Those who stay silent in the face of evil are complicit. May God bless Ghana.

14th June, 2022.

Landguards Strike At Hobor ...Destroy Farms And Chase Landowners With Machetes

Some landguards have reportedly destroyed farmers and chased away landowners at Hobor in the Ga East Municipality of the Greater Accra region. As at the time of going to press, it was gathered that the hoodlums had again struck at a farm belonging to one of the landowners destroying palm plantation and pineapple farms. Some individuals identified as Malik, Mohammed and Abotsi reportedly carried out the operation allegedly with the support of police officers from Amasaman. Nii Adjete Conney, the Abusuapayin of Hobor expressed worry about happenings in the area.



According to him landguards have taken over the area and destroy people's property in the night and dawn. He said his Okro and corn farms have been burnt by some of these land guards.

He therefore, appealed to the Inspector General of Police (IGP), George Akuffo Dampare and President Nana Akufo-Addo to come to their aid and flash out the thugs from the area.

AUCTION SALE

Auction sale of Petroleum products about 700 metric tones of automotive gas oil aboard Bluefoss / Sirius Voyager Chemical Tanker Vessel IMO 7419042 at Takoradi Harbour will be sold on

Monday 20th June 2022 at 10:00am. Property of Clement Alexander Clements /Bluefoss Ordered by the D/Sheriff Tema High Court There is a reserved price. AUCTIONEER: Coastal Mart Auctions Contact: 0200797708/ 0244664497

Afoko Trial: State Closes Case After Parading 16 Witnesses

State Prosecutors have closed their case after parading 16 witnesses in the case in which Gregory Afoko and Asabke Alangde are standing trial for murder.

Afoko and Alangde are being accused of the acid incident which led to the death of New Patriotic Party's (NPP), Upper East Regional Chairman Adams Mahama.

The two have pleaded not guilty to conspiracy and murder and have been held in lawful custody as the trial wears on.

In court on Tuesday, June 14, the prosecution led by Mrs Marina Appiah-Opare, a Chief State Attorney announced the closure of the state's case after Chief Inspector Augustus Nkrumah, 16th Prosecution Witness was discharged.

Lawyer Andrew Kudzo Vortia, counsel for Asabke Alangde (2nd Accused) grilled the investigator before he was discharged by the court.

"My Lord, we will not call any other witness," Mrs Opare, the Chief State Attorney told the court presided over by Justice Efua Merley Wood, a Justice of the Court of Appeal sitting with

additional responsibility as a High Court judge.

"My Lord, before we close our case, I will like to bring to the attention of the court the fact that PW7 – Chief Inspector Blay during his testimony tendered in evidence photocopies of 1st Accused person's investigation caution statement.

She explained that the prosecutor informed the court (earlier) that, "he will bring the original statement to replace the photocopies in due course and this is the statement date 22 May 2016 obtained from A1," he explained.

"We brought the original copies and we want to replace them with photocopies," she intimated.

The original document was admitted to replace the photocopies after the defence lawyers indicated they had no objections.

Statutory document

The Chief State Attorney also addressed the court and the jury on the 'Statutory Document' which contained details of the

committal proceedings held at the Kaneshie District Court in 2019.

"My Lord, ladies and gentlemen of the jury before the accused persons were brought to the High Court for trial, they were arraigned before the District Court for what we called committal proceedings.

"This was done... and captured in a document we called Statutory Document and before the prosecution closes its case, it is supposed to tender in evidence the statutory statement," Mrs Appiah-Opare noted.

While presenting details of what was captured in the Statutory Document she said, both accused persons agreed that they were served with charge statement.

They also pleaded a defence of Alibi to say that, they were not at the crime scene at the time the said incident occurred.

Submission of no case to answer

Following the closure of its case, lawyers of the accused persons Stephen Sorwah Charway (A1) and Andrew Kudzo Vortia (A2) have indicated they will file



Gregory Afoko

submissions of no case to answer.

According to EIB Network's Court Correspondent Murtala Inusah, the accused persons per the intended application are literally saying to the court that there is no case to answer and that the prosecution has not sufficiently proven the legal threshold to establish the commission of a crime in the court of law against them.

By Court

Justice Merley Wood after listening to the parties ordered

the accused persons to file submission of no case on or before June 27.

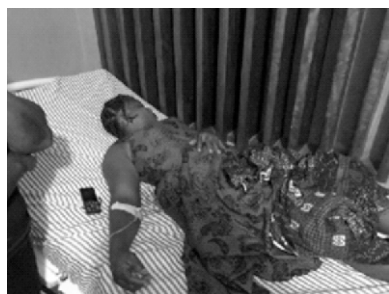
The prosecution is also directed to respond to the submission of no case on or before to July 11.

The court is expected to rule on the application by July 30.

The case has been adjourned to June 27, 2022, for the accused persons to be brought to the court to satisfy the two weeks remand requirements of accused persons on remanded into Prisons Custody.

Source: kasapafmonline.com

Akatsi South: Suspected Robbers Kill One, Others Hospitalised



A victim of robbery attack in the hospital

One person has been killed, while four others have been hospitalised following a robbery incident at Makafui and Sons Lotto company at Ayitikorpe in the Akatsi South Municipality of the Volta region on Monday night. The suspected robbers numbering six invaded the company's premises at about 8:30 pm at a time only a few of the workers had returned from their daily closing routine.

The incident led to the death of one of the company's

drivers, Dotsey Dogbatey - who was shot in the back by the armed men while other workers sustained injuries and were hospitalised.

Narrating his ordeal, one of the victims and workers of the company, Yaw Gakpo said, "I had just returned from closing and was going to drop my car key and just when I entered the office to drop the key, the people entered the premises and started shooting sporadically. They demanded to see the director and I told them I did not know where he was and so they began beating me." He added that "when the robbers got to the gate, the gate was locked so they banged it violently until the deceased (Dotsey Dogbatey) moved to open it; thinking it was some other colleagues who had returned but just when he opened the gate, they shot him."

Cecilia Gadasu, a cook at the

company said, "I was serving food to those who had returned from closing when the robbers invaded the place and demanded that I lead them to where the money is. I told them I'm only a cook and didn't know where the money is kept and so they molested me. They spoke Ewe, wore black dresses and were masked."

The deceased according to his sister, Akwelley Dogbatey has left behind three children. The sobbing sister told journalists that, "He is my younger brother but when I heard the announcement on the radio that the place was under attack I just said he wouldn't be involved because he would usually report there late. But a few minutes later, I had a call from my twin sister that our brother was shot, then the second call came and so I rushed out only to come and see my brother's body dead."

"I am heartbroken and can't control my tears. He began work at the company last year but that was busy work was not good for him so he decided to work at the company to feed the children. Dotsey has died leaving these children including an infant behind," she lamented while sobbing.

Three of the four persons who sustained various degrees of injuries were rushed to the Akatsi South Municipal hospital while one other was taken to the Ho Teaching hospital for medical attention. The victims revealed that they were ordered to lay with their faces on the ground during the robbery. Other sources close to the company have also revealed to Starr News that an undisclosed amount of monies were taken away from the engine room where proceeds of daily operations are kept.

This latest robbery incident is

the second to have hit the company in barely one year. In May, 2021 robbers attacked the company and took away huge sums of money, in an incident, the CEO Mr Kumadzi was shot in the leg.

Reports later emerged that some of the suspects were arrested and were assisting the police in investigations before this latest incident. The 2021 crime reports from the Ghana Police Service revealed that situations in the Akatsi South Municipality have heightened in recent times with robbery, petty theft, rape, and the use and trading of illicit drugs topping the chat on crime statistics.

Is Corporate Lobbying Influencing US Positions At The WHO?

By Ana Vracar

As delegates at the 75th World Health Assembly discussed health policies for diseases strongly associated to commercial factors, including obesity and alcohol misuse, they did so in the shadow of several new reports pointing to the many ways in which transnational companies manage to dodge public health guidance and attempt to influence decision-making processes at the World Health Organization (WHO) itself. Despite ample evidence of the deterioration of global health governance under the multi-stakeholderism paradigm, the Assembly missed out on taking a strong stance against the industry's interference with the WHO's work. Instead, the United States' delegation argued in favor of a completely different line of action, openly calling for a more open rapport between the United Nations (UN) agency and the industry through increased multi-stakeholderism.

A silent shift from multilateralism to multi-stakeholderism has been underway at the WHO for some time now. This, among other things, has enabled the industry to influence WHO discussions despite the existence of formal mechanisms regulating their relationship, e.g. the Framework for Engagement with Non-State Actors (FENSA). But in addition to trying to find a place at the table at WHO, transnational companies and other industry representatives have been looking for 'innovative ways' of circumventing existing WHO rules that impact their practices.

Reliance on industry undermines right to health

A recent report by WHO has shown that the breastmilk substitutes industry is relying on innovative forms of marketing to avoid regulation put into place by the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes. Among other things, producers are using direct marketing through social media, including through advertising through influencers and pregnancy/parenting social media support groups. Such marketing campaigns

undermine trust in breastfeeding among mothers who are in the position to feed their infants, and by doing so they contribute to worse health outcomes among both women and children. But while the producers' attention has been shifting away from the Global North, the consequences of their practices have left a lasting mark on child nutrition in the US itself.

The baby formula shortage which the US has been experiencing for the past couple of months has a lot to do with the breastmilk substitute industry being given a key role in the field of child nutrition. This has deprived many children – particularly those from working-class and poor families, as well as Black and Latino communities – of the health benefits of breastfeeding. But it has also meant that even the slightest disruption in the production process of a chosen few companies would lead to problems in procurement of baby formula.

In other words, while US delegates at the World Health Assembly were busy advocating for heavy industry involvement in health policy making, at home they were experiencing the effects of this very approach.

A lobbying operation of wide scope

Avoiding existing WHO mechanisms and recommendations is not the only way that industry has interacted with global health governance for the past years. An analysis of lobbying expenditures by the various industries associated with negative health outcomes published in *Global Health Governance* has pointed to record-breaking amounts invested by the corporate sector into lobbying US positions at the WHO.

During a webinar on multistakeholderism hosted by the Geneva Global Health Hub (G2H2) in the week preceding the World Health Assembly, David McCoy, one of the co-authors of the report, stressed that when the US is concerned “since 2016,



A commercial exhibit at the venue of the 72nd World Health Assembly in 2019. Photo: People's Health Movement. A new report shows that US corporations and their umbrella organizations are allocating increasing amounts of money for shaping delegates' interventions at WHO, with potentially disastrous effects on health

parties associated with production and marketing of breastmilk substitutes, alcohol, biotechnology and pharmaceuticals have consistently been among the top ten sources of lobbying expenditures related to WHO.” The amount of money allocated for lobbying has steadily increased in the same period, going from an annual average of around US\$ 12.5 million in the period 2006-2015, to US\$ 14.2 million in the period 2016-2019, to US\$46 million in 2020 alone, corresponding to the time when the Trump administration announced the US would leave the WHO. Investment in WHO-related lobbying has been steadily increasing since the establishment of Engaging America's Global Leadership (EAGL), an industry umbrella organization which believes that WHO's work undermines US interests and that, because of this, the US should secure firmer control over the organization's operations. Quite unsurprisingly, this effort would be supported by US-based companies who are already worried that public health international norms impede trade, and they might do so even more if they are shaped independently of

industry inputs. To prevent that, EAGL and its members, as well as other corporate stakeholders, are allocating a lot of money to lobby against specific WHO programs, for example programs related to alcohol consumption. But they are also investing in lobbying on WHO procedures, operations and mechanisms like FENSA, apparently with the intention of weakening the organization and making it more susceptible to industry interests. Finally, they also spend time and money to prepare US delegates who take part in WHO meetings. This is done in parallel to amplifying a narrative about how WHO is not capable of fulfilling its role, which includes accusations of the agency of being “anti-science”, “divisive”, and suffering from a “lack of transparency and accountability.” Basically, industry is describing the WHO with all the adjectives that have been used to characterize transnational corporations at one point or another – except those descriptions have much more ground.

True fences needed for limiting corporate influence over WHO

“We see the importance of WHO, of a multilateral system

of governance in general. A way to protect that is to show the lines of attack: the industry's questioning of the legitimacy of multilateralism, of the scientific basis of WHO, which is basically an attack on science itself. It is important to counter this narrative”, said David McCoy during his presentation. To be able to do this, further research into corporate lobbying practices in other WHO countries who enjoy an informal and undeserved amount of power in the forum, like the European Union, will be necessary. But this alone will not be enough to block industry attempts to gain more influence over WHO. Instead, a lot of responsibility remains with WHO member states, who should be looking into ways of putting in place stronger mechanisms than FENSA. When it comes to industry involvement in the WHO, a fence might be more appropriate.

Read more articles from the latest edition of the People's Health Dispatch and subscribe to the newsletter [here](#).

Race For NPP National Organizer Slot... Bright Essilfie Promises 'Goodies' For Grassroot As He Files Nomination Forms



A National Organizer hopeful for the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP), Mr Bright Essilfie Kumi on Wednesday June 15, 2022 filed his nomination forms at the NPP headquarters to contest the position of the National Organizer of the party in the upcoming national executives elections.

According to him, there are undeniable records on the grounds which have attested to the fact that the party needs a new dynamic national organizer like him who can help to break the eight-year jinx for the NPP.

He stated that when given the nod, he will use his vast experience to change the mindset of Ghanaians to vote for the NPP in the 2024 general elections, adding that he will change the fortunes of the youth. He indicated that there is a lot of discontent among some faithful who have gone to the extent of

'throwing curses' at the party. He explained that the aggrieved members worked hard and sacrificed time, resources and efforts to help the party secure victory in 2016 and 2020, however they have been side-lined and 'forgotten'.

"Truth speaking, if the party does not put things in order, we are losing, we cannot break the eight. The things I'm hearing based on my rounds [are not good]. From executive to the grassroots there are many things that need fixing for the eight to break itself. Saying break the eight jinx is a mere sloganeering; break the eight with what?," Mr. Bright Essilfie expressed these sentiments when he granted an interview with senior journalists after he filed his nomination to contest the position of the national youth organizer. After monitoring what is happening on the ground, Mr. Bright Essilfie told journalists in Accra lamenting that most people, particularly the grassroots members of the NPP feel left out especially when it comes to opportunities.

He revealed that NPP at the grassroots as well as financiers are unhappy due to what he described

as "unfair distribution of opportunities." They have struggled and fought hard to move the party out of opposition and so if there is any benefit, they should be counted for their sacrifices, he said.

He noted that if "we went to the grassroots levels of the NPP, things are not sort as the current leadership of the party touted to many Ghanaians that it were.

He pointed out that the noise of breaking the eight jinx is just an slogan, asking that what are we doing to break the eight jinx? He explained that the other persons who were neglected by the party in the grassroots levels are unhappy, saying that what are the proactive actions and steps the leadership of the party are taking to encourage these disgruntled members and supporters to have hope in the NPP in order for them to vote the party to break the eight jinx.

"It is the important that the grounds of the NPP are infertile, the people have seen that the leadership that we operate in terms of our organizational structures and foundations are not all that strong for the NPP to be saying we are breaking the eight jinx.

"Because mobilizing resources and other things and opportunities are not coming, and it is simply means that we don't have the system to test that and we just going there to tell your friends that can you give ten guys for police.

According to Mr. Essilfie Kumi, when given the nod he will set up a database system that would ensure a fair distribution of opportunities for Party members and businessmen who invest in the party.

The Database System Analysis is expected to capture the names of members, when they joined the party, their contributions to the party, as well as record all the contributions of the party's financiers to ensure even distribution of opportunities.

"So I am saying that the delegates of the NPP to vote for me as their next national youth organizer because I have experience who joined the NPP in 1996 and I worked tirelessly in the 2016 general elections, I have the group in the whole country, I have also hold position outside the country," he stressed.

He repeated that he has tirelessly worked for the 2016 general elections for the NPP to win the political power and that his portfolios is still in but "I am still solving many problems for the

NPP across the country."

He noted that he is currently helping the NPP to create jobs every where from northern to southern sectors of the country and that many top shots of the NPP had known his personal contribution he has made to the development of the party since he joined NPP in 1996.

He said at the end of the day it does not mean how good leader you are but it is about how your leadership affect those are following you.

"And the opportunities they think to get, the life changing opportunities they get and not necessarily coming to the delegates congress and be shouting that hey fellow Krukudus and that this decision is not enough to solve the problem of the members of the party," he complained.

According to him, the members and supporters should feel your leadership and of course telling "you without a portfolio."

When asked who are the failure within the current leadership of the NPP, he responded that those who failed cut across cited an example of the circumstance of the current struggling of the youth wings of the party to get opportunities within the party.

Excessive Partisanship Stands To Cripple Ghana's 4th Republic - Speaker Alban Bagbin

The Speaker of Parliament, Alban Bagbin, has said excessive partisanship stands to cripple the 4th Republic if care is not taken. He said the current 8th Parliament, due to its composition, gives Parliament the golden opportunity to be as independent as it can be. Addressing the third in a series of Eminent Guests lectures at the UPSA Law school, Mr. Bagbin said, "many Ghanaians are gradually losing faith in the power and promise of democracy to make their lives better".

"It, therefore, behooves

Parliament to guarantee the development needs of the people, Safeguard their civil liberties, and Protect and preserve the very fabric of their society," Speaker Bagbin posited.

The UPSA Law School has sought to broaden the horizon of its students through engagement with eminent personalities in all facets of social life.

Speaking as its third lecturer on the future of Parliament in Ghana's democratic governance, Speaker Alban Bagbin said by virtue of the Constitution, the Executive

has a lot to say in political appointments in the country. He said the notion of majoritarianism must be erased.

On the issue of emoluments for MPs, he said contrary to popular opinion, MPs rarely benefit from ex-gratia.

Mr. Bagbin made a case for a review of the Constitution to ensure key influencers in society get to Parliament to ensure true representation.

He also noted that the current dispensation most times leaves MPs in a fix.

The Dean of the UPSA Law School, Professor Kofi Abotsi



presented a plaque to the Speaker for his contribution to the development of democracy in Ghana.

Source:
gbcghanonline.com