

# 'SAKAWA'

**TV Operators 'Ban' Sale Of Airtime To 'Mallams', Fetish Priests, Others**



**Kojo Oppong Nkrumah, Minister of Information**

**T**he illegal operations of mallams, fetish priests, money-doublers and others will soon be a thing of the past. The Satellite Channels Operators Association of Ghana (SCOAG) has begun the process to curtail the menace of

illegitimate television content in the Country. According to the association, it has observed with great concern how most television channels have strayed away from the tenet of

broadcasting and resorted to the broadcast of what they labeled as "illegitimate contents." The steps come on the back of an emergency meeting held by the

*cont. on page 3*

**Why The Lancet' Journal Rejects Papers That Don't Acknowledge African Researchers** *page 5*

## **University Don Warns Against Vote Buying In Ghana**



*Dr. Kobby Mensah, a political marketing strategist*

**A** political marketing strategist, Dr. Kobby Mensah, has warned that criminals could take over the country if vote buying in internal party elections is not curbed.

The lecturer with the University of Ghana Business School (UGBS) said

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**Highlighting Achievements Of 6 Female Entrepreneurs**

**Stratcomm CEO Outdoors Book "Dare To Be"**

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# The INSIGHT

## EDITORIAL

### STOP THEM!

The Auditor General's Report released recently about tax irregularities, payroll fraud and other malpractices at the government ministries, departments and agencies including the metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies is most disheartening.

Some of these irregularities have always attracted media attention because of how the nation often loses moneys which could have been used to address some developmental challenges.

For instance the issue of payroll fraud has been a major concern over the years necessitating the introduction of the electronic payment system for public sector workers.

The Controller General's Department also in a bid to stop this malpractice has introduced the verification system for government workers before salaries are paid.

It is therefore most surprising that we continue to record cases of payroll fraud despite all these stopgap measures introduced over the years.

Clearly, the identification and prosecution of these individuals behind this fraudulent practice most of who are public servants is long overdue.

Institutions such as the Economic and Organized Crime Office and the Financial Intelligence Centre need to team up with other state agencies such as the Office of the Special Prosecutor and that of the Auditor General to ensure the prosecution of these criminal gangs and thieves instead of the existing arrangement of reporting and surcharging offenders if this nation-wrecking practice is to grind to a halt.

There is no denying the fact that the 'soft' handling of these 'thieves' behind the 'ghost names' is what has emboldened them and made their exorcism difficult.

## Burkina Faso: Dozens More Bodies Found After Militant Attack

Burkina Faso says 29 more bodies have been found following [a massacre by Islamic extremists, raising the provisional death toll to 79, and that the search for still more victims is being hampered by fears of booby-trapped devices planted "by terrorists to mine the site"](#).

The head of the country's ruling junta, Lt Col Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba, decreed three days of mourning on Tuesday after the weekend attack at the village of Seytenga in northern Burkina, which was one of the bloodiest massacres in a nearly seven-year-old insurgency. "The terrorists came into the town on Saturday, market day," a survivor told AFP by phone. "They opened fire as soon as they entered," which was at around 4pm or 5pm, he said.

"They only aimed at men. They went from shop to shop, sometimes torching it. They opened fire on anyone who tried to run away. They stayed in the town all night," said the man, who had fled to Dori, the nearest large town.

"As soon as the shooting broke out on Saturday evening, I fled into the bush with my family," said another survivor. "We stayed there all night before reaching Dori on Sunday morning. We didn't take anything and we learned that they set fire to homes, so we have lost everything."

Condemning the attack, the European Union estimated the final toll could reach 100 civilians. The massacre is the second worst in the history of Burkina's insurgency, which started in 2015 when jihadists launched cross-border raids from Mali.

Attacks mainly by groups affiliated with al-Qaida and [Islamic State have since claimed thousands of lives, while nearly 2 million have fled their homes](#).

The toll at Seytenga is surpassed only by [an attack in Solhan in the north-east of the country last June that left 132 dead, according to an official toll. Local sources say 160 died](#).

The Soltan attack – and a raid at Inata that killed 57 gendarmes five months later – were key factors behind a military coup in January.

Disgruntled colonels [ousting the elected civilian president, Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, battling a wave of unpopularity for his handling of the insurgency](#).

The new strongman, Sandaogo Damiba, named security his key priority. But after a lull, attacks have resumed. Several hundred civilians and members of the security forces have died in the past three months.

The latest massacre sparked grief and hand-wringing but also calls for stronger commitment in the fight against the jihadists and an appeal for civilians to be armed.

"Where is Burkina going?" the privately-owned daily Le Pays asked in an editorial, deploring the "unparalleled barbarism" of the attack. "We are witnessing a humanitarian catastrophe in [Burkina Faso. Our generation is awaiting a miracle](#)," said Yéli Monique Kam, a [presidential candidate in 2020](#).

Arouna Loure, a doctor in the transitional legislative assembly, suggested it was: "time to formally arm the public, especially those living in



areas facing major security challenges.

"It is better to die defending one's lands, weapon in hand, than to be a victim of this barbarism in absolute impotence."

Seytenga had been struck on 9 June in an attack that claimed the lives of 11 police officers. The army then announced that it had killed about 40 jihadists following that raid.

The massacre was "retaliation for the actions of the army which caused bloodshed" within jihadist ranks, government spokesman Lionel Bilgo said on Monday.

In early April, community leaders and fighters from local armed groups began talks with the government's backing, mainly in the north and east of the country.

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## THE INSIGHT

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# 'SAKAWA'

## TV Operators 'Ban' Sale Of Airtime To 'Mallams', Fetish Priests, Others



**Kojo Oppong Nkrumah, Minister of Information**

### from front page

leadership of SCOAG on Saturday, June 18, 2022, where they deliberate on the challenges facing the media space about the content being aired on televisions. "As a human institution, we cannot say we are without flaws and have performed satisfactorily to the admiration of all stakeholders involved in the

effective control of the industry in which we operate and the public of whom we are much concerned about. "It is worthy of note that, the association has also set up a task force with the mandate of censoring contents on the satellite space in order to ensure the public is fed with safe contents for all ages," the statement said.

As a result, SCOAG has asked its members to as a matter of urgency, put a definite end to the broadcast of television content that is "characterised by deceitful/misleading statements."

In doing so, all members have been advised to cease the sale of airtime to content owners whose programs include the display of money and 'juju' with an immediate effect

To make sure it sanitises the media space with a punitive measure, the association has reached an agreement with its service providers to suspend the transmission of any channel that contravenes its directive. Satellite Channels Operators Association of Ghana has thus directed that the broadcast of fetish content depicting grisly images should be "halted" with immediate effect.

This is the full statement;

**SCOAG**

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### MEASURES TAKEN TO CURTAIL THE MENACE OF ILLEGITIMATE TELEVISION CONTENTS

The Satellite Channels Operators Association of Ghana has observed with a great concern how some television channels belonging to our members have strayed away from the tenet television broadcasting and have resorted to the broadcast of illegitimate broadcast contents.

As a human institution, we cannot say we are without flaws and have performed satisfactorily to the admiration of all stakeholders involved in the effective control of the industry in which we operate and the public of whom we are much concerned about.

The association on June 18, 2022, held an emergency meeting to deliberate on the challenges that beckons us with regards to contents on television and unanimously arrived at the following conclusions.

1. All members are to cease the sale of airtime to content owners whose programs includes the display of money with an immediate effect.
2. Members have been asked to put a definite end to the broadcast of television contents that are characterized by deceitful/misleading statements.
3. Halt the broadcast of fetish contents depicting grisly images.

It is worthy of note that, the association has also set up a task force with the mandate of censoring contents on the satellite space in order to ensure the public is fed with safe contents for all ages. As a punitive measure, the association has reached an agreement with our service providers to suspend transmission of any channel that contravenes its directives.

We are therefore entreating the general public to have firm believe and assurance in the us to deliver to the best of our might for a better society.

Ends.

Ezekiel Gyamfi  
P.R.O, Satellite Channels Operators Association of Ghana

## University Don Warns Against Vote Buying In Ghana

### from front page

the syndrome, which some have termed 'moneycracy' had characterized party primaries for years, and was a threat to the gains the country had made through democracy.

To him, political parties ought to adopt universal suffrage as a means of curbing 'cash for votes' which has gained grounds in internal elections in various political parties.

Dr. Mensah contended that it

would be much more difficult for candidates to buy their way through in internal party elections if the electoral college was expanded to include all registered members of the party and not just delegates.

"It is not acceptable for a democracy to experience such a high level of payments," Dr. Mensah said in an interview with Daily Graphic.

"Obviously, if you have to be paid for your vote, I don't think that from the

perspective of the constitution it is legal. Even if it is not criminal, we should have some sanctions against politicians who are seen and have confirmed paying such money for votes. At least, they could be banned from participating in future polls," he stressed.

Dr. Mensah believes if the syndrome was not checked, "we would be selling this country to money launderers or criminal cartels."

"If someone has that amount of money, he can actually take control of this country by sponsoring candidates," he added.

He said the financial resources involved in undertaking the practice of vote-buying was an antecedent for corruption and could affect the decisions of elected politicians.

Dr. Mensah also made an appeal to the Electoral



**Dr. Kobby Mensah, a political marketing strategist**

Commission (EC) and security services such as the Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO) to probe all reports of votes being exchanged in return for cash and sanction culprits.

Source: [myxyzonline.com](http://myxyzonline.com)



# INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORT

## Compiled By Peoples Dispatch

### UK Home Secretary Authorizes Extradition Of Wikileaks Founder Julian Assange

In a disastrous move for press freedom, UK Home Secretary Priti Patel has sanctioned the extradition of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange to the US. The decision was confirmed by the Home Office on Friday, June 17.

A statement posted on the WikiLeaks Twitter account condemned the outcome as a "dark day for press freedom and for British democracy," adding that "It was in Priti Patel's power to do the right thing. Instead she will forever be remembered as an accomplice of the United States in its agenda to turn investigative journalism into a criminal enterprise."

Assange's legal team will have 14 days to appeal the decision, an action they have confirmed they will pursue: "Today is not the end of the fight. It is only the beginning of a new legal battle. We will appeal through the legal system, the next appeal will be before the High Court."

Assange is being held at the high security prison in Belmarsh after being forcibly removed from the Ecuadorian embassy in London in 2019. If he is

extradited to the US, he will face trial on 18 charges, including 17 counts under the Espionage Act. These are related to the hundreds of thousands of classified documents and diplomatic cables published by WikiLeaks exposing the horrific abuses committed by the US military during the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. If Assange is convicted, he could face a combined prison sentence of 175 years.

Early last year, a District Court had blocked Assange's extradition, declaring it "oppressive" on account of his mental health and high risk of suicide. However, this decision was thrown out by the High Court in December following "assurances" given by US prosecutors regarding the conditions of Assange's imprisonment.

In January, Assange was granted permission to appeal the decision in the Supreme Court. However, the Supreme Court declined to hear the application in March. The following month, the extradition order was [formally](#)

[approved](#) by Chief Magistrate Paul Goldspring of the Westminster Magistrates Court, and subsequently forwarded to Secretary Patel for approval. A Home Office spokesperson stated on Friday that "In this case, the UK courts have not found that it would be oppressive, unjust, or an abuse of process to extradite Mr. Assange. Nor have they found that extradition would be incompatible with his human rights, including his right to fair trial and to freedom of expression, and that whilst in the US he will be treated appropriately, including in relation to his [health](#)." Assange's defense team has dismissed these supposed assurances, highlighting their conditional and reversible nature. They will now have the opportunity to challenge the extradition based on other points of law which have not been subject to the appeals process. These could potentially include grounds such as the right to freedom of expression and if the



(Photo: Anarchimedia) Assange's legal team will now have 14 days to appeal against the decision in the High Court. The move has been widely condemned as a "dark day for press freedom"

extradition was politically motivated. The proceedings have been [marred](#) by shocking revelations, including a [CIA plot](#) to assassinate Assange, and the use of falsified testimonies and illegal snooping by the US prosecution to build its case against him. The WikiLeaks statement says, "Make no mistake, this has always been a political case. Julian published evidence that the country [the US] trying to extradite him committed war crimes and covered them up... Their revenge is to try to

disappear him into the darkest recesses of their prison system for the rest of his life to deter others from holding governments to account." "We will not let that happen. Julian's freedom is coupled to all our freedoms. We will fight to return Julian to his family and to regain freedom of expression for us all," the statement reads. The Home Secretary's decision has drawn global outrage, with the International Federation of Journalists calling it "vindictive and a real blow to media freedom."

### Gustavo Petro Wins Historic Elections In Colombia



The victory of the Historic Pact is a marked shift in the Colombian political scene which has been dominated by conservatives for decades

Preliminary results from Colombia's second round presidential race indicate the victory of the left-wing Historic Pact coalition led by Gustavo Petro and Francia Marquez. The duo had received 40% of the votes cast in the first round, 10 points shy of a first round victory. The progressive duo

was facing off against political outsider Rodolfo Hernández of the League of Anti-Corruption Governors movement who received just under 47% of the vote in the precourt. The period leading up to these elections have been marked by irregularities, violence, and strong media campaigns demonizing the progressive candidates. Days before the polls, the prominent Colombian news magazine *Semana*, published a cover with Petro and Hernández's faces and underneath wrote "ex-guerrillero or engineer". On Election Day itself several irregularities were reported by

electoral observers such as ballots having markings that would disqualify the vote, alleged bribing by the Hernández campaign, the barring of observers from polling stations, amongst other incidents. Progressive movements in Colombia and globally have celebrated the victory of the Historic Pact as bringing a necessary end to decades of conservative politics which have dominated institutional politics for decades. Outgoing President Ivan Duque leaves office with a dismal 80% disapproval rating, largely attributed to his administration's severe mismanagement of the COVID-19 pandemic and the

unprecedented currency devaluation and subsequent economic crisis. Duque's tenure was also marked by constant mobilization by diverse sectors in Colombia. From students to taxi drivers, peasant and Indigenous movements, the people of Colombia maintained an almost constant presence on the streets throughout the four years to make their demands heard. The strongest expression of this popular mobilization was the national strike which rocked Colombia for over two months from late April to June 2021. In the historic national strike,

hundreds of thousands of people took to the street in dozens of cities and towns across the country to reject Duque's proposed tax reform bill as well as to demand an end to his policies of repression and disregard for the lives of his people. The brutal state repression faced by protesters which cost the lives of over 80 people, also saw 1,832 arbitrary detentions, 83 with ocular injuries, 28 victims of sexual violence, and a total of 3,486 victims of police violence. The duo will be sworn in on August 7, 2022.



# Why The Lancet' Journal Rejects Papers That Don't Acknowledge African Researchers

By Maina Waruru

Respected global medical journal *The Lancet* will continue to reject papers with data from Africa that fail to acknowledge African collaborators, in the interest of building African research and of promoting integrity, equity and fairness in research collaboration, according to senior executive editor Sabine Kleinert. The journal made the decision after coming across manuscripts submitted by researchers from outside Africa and with data collected from the continent, but with no mention or acknowledgement of a single African collaborator, she told the 7th World Conference on Research Integrity held in Cape Town from 29 May to 1 June.

"We are now rejecting such papers because when you bring us such a paper you probably had a local researcher collecting data for you or you 'helicoptered' to Africa, but you chose not to recognise them, which is not acceptable."

Kleinert — one of the cochairs of the conference hosted by the University of Cape Town — noted that failure to disclose or appreciate work done by others amounted to a breach of integrity, something that every publisher had a duty to look out for. She was responding to a question during a session titled the Implementation of the Hong Kong

Principles in an African Context. The [Hong Kong principles](#) for assessing researchers were formulated and endorsed at the 6th World Conference on Research Integrity held in June 2019 in Hong Kong. Their purpose is to help research institutions that adopt them to minimise questionable research practices.

## Quality, equity and diversity

*The Lancet*, said Kleinert, was strictly focused on the quality of work done when assessing manuscripts but recognised that equity and diversity plays a role when it comes to research conducted in different regions of the world.

The publisher recognised that pricing can be prohibitive, and is a major factor in considering the choice of a publisher for many researchers from low- and middle-income countries. It is for this reason that *The Lancet* now charges different prices for different regions. The Hong Kong principles on research integrity were important to academia in addressing difficulties regarding academic awards, the assessment of research and the ethical conduct of research. They emphasise the importance of research integrity as a measure in rating universities, said Kleinert. In addition, they address a range of issues including career progression, research funding and the questions of quality over quantity, team versus

individual and long-term versus short-term effects of research. Overall, the framework was meant to "foster research integrity and improve its conduct".

## Research networks

Ntobeko Ntusi, chair of medicine in the faculty of health sciences at the University of Cape Town, said Africa was loudly crying for equitable collaborations between African researchers and those from outside the continent for there to be a semblance of responsible conduct of research.

African science, he observed, faced many difficulties including inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, a shortage of supervisors in universities and limited mentorship. To tackle these problems, it was necessary to strengthen and streamline research administration, funding and regulatory bodies.

"We also need to build institutional research networks and create more partnerships between universities to allow them to leverage available resources," Ntusi said.

Examples of such networks and partnerships include organisations such as the African Research Universities Alliance, which has fostered collaborative research between member institutions across the continent.

Through such networks it was possible to start programmes on research integrity and set up disciplinary



societies such as the Ethics Institute of South Africa. Ntusi said the time had come to alter the reward system in universities with regard to academic progression, to ensure that the system valued quality right through supervision, mentorship, scholarship, research culture and "academic citizenship". He made a case for open science, noting that it could play a role in entrenching ethical research conduct by making data freely available to researchers.

"Africa needs a lot of support for open science by providing necessary infrastructure, skills and money," he argued. "Open access is costly but it is what Africa needs."

Many African researchers

required support in the form of discipline-specific training, in the use of public databases and in research methodologies. These, he observed, would contribute to entrenching ethical research conduct and to building a culture of integrity.

Above all, individual commitment to research integrity was necessary and institutions and countries needed to sign the Hong Kong principles, the [Leiden manifesto for research metrics](#) and the [Declaration on Research Assessment](#).

He said the role of institutions in enforcing integrity would be enhanced if universities adhered to the [Declaration on Research Assessment](#) and Hong Kong principles on assessing research, because the two emphasised fairness and rewarded excellence.

## Floodwaters: Malaria Cases Likely To Go Up

The Public Health Directorate of the Ghana Health Service says malaria cases are likely to go up due to insanitary conditions created by floodwaters across the country. Dr. Franklin Asiedu-Bekoe, Director, Public, in an interview with the Ghana News Agency, said flooding was creating breeding homes for the mosquito larvae at homes, office areas, and street corners and feared that could lead to an upsurge in malaria cases. He, therefore, encouraged the populace to clear weedy areas and stagnant waters. "The collection of water in

various containers must also be taken care of, and these containers with eggs trigger the larvae to emerge and grow. Usually, during this time, cases of malaria are high, but they are low when we have the dry season," Dr. Asiedu-Bekoe stated. He also stated that during the rainy season, some people defecate or pour faecal matter into streams and running waters exposing communities to germs and diarrhoea diseases. Dr. Asiedu-Bekoe charged the local Assemblies to implement their sanitation, environmental, and health by-laws to protect the health of the population.

He said their health departments must check the medical records of food vendors and ensure they adhere to the highest hygienic standards. "The other issue is that Ghanaians must also own their health; they must eat their foods hot because you cannot be sure of the quality of the food," the Director said. "Let's ensure hand washing under running water; let's not leave our health in the hands of others. [COVID-19](#) is around; there is influenza and monkeypox," Dr. Asiedu-Bekoe stated.

Source -- GNA

## Salute For Ft. Lt. rtd. Duku Agyemang On Father's Day

The children, relatives and loved ones of Ft. Lt. rtd. DUKU AGYEMANG have hailed him for his exemplary fatherly love and leadership skills which extended to the broader family lineage. In view of the accomplishments of the ex-military officer in successfully raising his children and members of the extended family, they have in unison, on the celebration of 'Father's Day' wished him a belated Happy Father's Day. "Happy Father's Day to our



father, Uncle, in-law and grandpa Ft. Lt. rtd. DUKU AGYEMANG May the Lord keep you under the canopy of his abundant blessings Amem", they said in a message over the weekend.

# Shisha Is A Threat To Ghanaian Youth; Govt Must Urgently Ban It - CSOs

## *A lady smoking Shisha*

**T**he Vision for Alternative Development, Ghana (VALD-Ghana) and its partners have called on the government to urgently ban the use of shisha as it is a threat to the Ghanaian youth.

The partners, which include the Ghana NCD Alliance and others, said their attention was drawn to a viral video in which some students from the Sunyani Senior High School were seen smoking shisha, one of the tobacco industry's deadliest products.

They said as civil society organisation (CSO) actors, they were very much concerned about the dangers this act would have on the health of these young girls involved, hence the call for an immediate ban on the product instead of regulating it.

The CSOs made the call in a release signed by Mr Labram Musah, the Executive Director of Programmes of VALD-Ghana and the National Coordinator, Ghana NCD Alliance and copied to the Ghana News Agency.

The release said: "We are even more disturbed about the action taken by the authorities of the school to suspend these girls. The school authorities and the Ghana Education Service must be more concerned about the effects the product has had on these young girls and provide them with some medical and counselling attention."

It noted that there is a need for intensive investigation by the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) to attain further information about the facility where the shisha is being offered and whether it meets the regulatory standards.

"This is a clear violation of the Tobacco Control Measures of the Ghana Public Health Act (Act 851) of 2012, which seeks to protect children from the use and exposure to tobacco smoke," it stated.

The release said the CSO actors in health led by VALD-Ghana had in the past called on the FDA and the Ministry of Health (MoH) to use either an administrative fiat or guidelines to ban shisha in Ghana, but no action was taken.

"Shisha over the years has become a fashionable product among the second cycle institutions and at the tertiary levels and more common in many communities of Ghana. It is therefore important to note that regulating the deadliest product by the FDA given the recent increase in consumption, especially among the youth, is certainly not deterrent enough, putting the future of our children at risk," it stated.

The release said additionally, considering the health implications of smoking shisha as research revealed, a session of shisha was equivalent to smoking over 100 sticks of cigarettes, thus it has



## *A lady smoking Shisha*

become more expedient to ban it rather than regulate it, adding that many of the products were also illegally sold as they do not meet the required standards.

It further stated that research by the Ghana Health Service indicates that most of the country's youth have ditched the smoking of traditional tobacco cigarettes for e-cigarettes and shisha and that the rate at which the young people were smoking the products has shot up to 5.3 per cent, higher than the traditional use of tobacco which stands at 2.8 per cent.

The release said despite the ban on tobacco-related advertisements and the law against smoking in public places, the consumption of tobacco and its related products were still on the rise in Ghana.

"A study on 'The Economics of Tobacco Control/Taxation in Ghana' facilitated by VALD-Ghana

revealed that the youth and women especially are now getting hooked on flavoured tobacco/cigarettes and shisha because of its appealing fragrance.

"There is a misconception held by many people that shisha is safer than cigarettes because of its contact with water, however, according to the American Lung Association, at least 82 toxic chemicals and carcinogens have been identified in hookah/shisha smoke," it stated.

The release said smoking shisha increases the risk of oral cancer, lung cancer, and heart diseases, among others; moreover, the body fluids exchanged with multiple people sharing one pipe which was not cleaned properly or at all, present another avenue for the spread of infectious diseases.

The VALD-Ghana and its partners acknowledged the

efforts of the FDA in promoting education and awareness creation on the harmful effects of tobacco use, "However, we believe it is time we take giant steps which go beyond education and sensitization.

"We, therefore, call on the MoH and the FDA as a matter of urgency to begin the process of outlawing the shisha products in Ghana. Many countries including, Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and Cameroon, among others, had taken bold steps in banning shisha in their respective countries, because of the public health threat it will have on their children and their youth."

The release also called for a deliberate plan to rollout education in the schools, especially the second cycle and tertiary institutions on the negative effects of tobacco use on their health.

**Source -- GNA**



# Highlighting Achievements Of 6 Female Entrepreneurs

## Stratcomm CEO Outdoors Book “Dare To Be”



As part of efforts aimed at celebrating women in enterprise for their dedicated and successful entrepreneurial skills which have resulted in salable brands across the world, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Strategic Communications Africa (STRATCOMM Africa), Madam Esther Cobbah has highlighted the achievements of six young Ghanaian women in a book entitled, “Dare To Be”. “Dare To Be” is a compilation and celebration of the entrepreneurial journeys of six outstanding Ghanaian women in the film, fashion, music, cosmetic, and food industries. The book gives vivid accounts of individual achievements by these young entrepreneurs who have grown their brands and made waves by cutting a niche for themselves in the competitive international market and seeks to share with readers, their experiences, lessons, as well as words of advice for people in similar circumstances.

Apart from their struggles, the book is also a compilation of experiences that can motivate other women to be their most authentic selves, leveraging their resources, no matter how limited, to the best of their capabilities. Speaking at a colourful launch of the book at Sealine View at McCarthy Hill in Accra over the weekend, Madam Cobbah said she loves to celebrate women, hence the book, 'Dare To Be'. She pointed out that knowing the odds women face, often in male-dominated environments, one cannot but DARE TO BE!

“In celebrating the stories of these amazing young women, I hope others will be encouraged to step forward in their own authentic selves and be the best they can be.”

“Numerous women in Ghana run enterprises that they started. They can be found in their homes, in front of their houses, in our markets, in kiosks, and

indeed, in small and large offices. Their stories need to be told. The more we project enterprise through such sharing of stories of entrepreneurs, the more we can expect the development of a culture of entrepreneurship in Ghanaian society. We need as a country to be more deliberate about documenting the stories of our entrepreneurs, and have our business schools reflect these experiences in their study of the world of business.” “What is portrayed through the experiences of the young female entrepreneurs -their strivings to build their businesses, their resilience in the face of adversity, their joys in success and their unrelenting quest for excellence- will, I believe, resonate with many women. I truly cherish celebrating these and similar women. This is just the beginning”, she stressed. Madam Cobbah noted that resilience is what she cherishes in the face of adversity, a trait she learnt from her late mother, Mrs. Victoria Adwoa Asaawa Cobbah at a tender age. “I was blessed to have had a front row seat in what I call her school of entrepreneurship. Though I was only eleven when she died in a tragic motor accident, she had involved me in all her enterprises -everything, including selling kenkey, baking bread, cakes and biscuits, selling home-made toffees, crocheting table cloths, knitting booties and sweaters and making clothes, as she sought to provide for all her children. She managed to put me, her “baby last” into Mmofraturo boarding school in Kumasi literally two days before sadly departing this earth. May she rest in peace. She never gave up amidst tough times. She would sing

hymns as she went about household management activities from early dawn, giving expression to her Christian faith, her confidence that God would take her through the storms of life.”

She said none of the obstacles that confront women should make them give up on their dreams. “I truly appreciate how these amazing young ladies I am celebrating in this book, continue to strive to achieve their dreams. I met each of them separately and each made a lasting impression on me. Each of them had something that retold to me parts of my own life journey, particularly, my entrepreneurial journey. I have been struck by their determination to achieve their dreams even amidst setbacks they have experienced. They continue to inspire me. I hope other women can also be encouraged by these stories to follow their dreams, overcome adversity and give expression to the enormous talents God has endowed them with. DARING TO BE, against the odds - is the authentic expression of who we are as women!”, she added.

The six successful women entrepreneurs are **Kafui Danku** who is a multiple award winning filmmaker/actress and author. She is best known for her charm, beauty and poise as she combines creativity with confidence and commitment. She was crowned Miss Greater Accra in 2004, and went on to become a Miss Ghana 2004 Finalist. She holds a bachelor's degree in English Language from the University Of Cape Coast, Ghana. Kafui is the founder of Abc Pictures Ltd.

**Freda Obeng-Ampofo** is globally trained and 100% Ghanaian and has over ten years' experience in program management, communications and research in the NGO, private and public sectors across four continents. She graduated from Sciences Po in Paris, France, and worked with the European Union Delegation in Accra as well as the United States Agency for International Development. Prior to that, Freda worked with a private firm in Washington DC, sourcing US market for wines from Provence, France, and furniture from Thailand.

She also worked for several other organizations prior to moving back to Ghana to start KAEME which is a cocoa butter cream that is selling across the globe.

**Awura Abena Agyeman** is co-founder and CEO of WEAR Ghana Ltd- one of Ghana's foremost fashion labels whose vision is to become Africa's most loved brand. She believes that businesses should be both profitable and impactful; and is using her company as a tool for creating opportunities for underprivileged people, especially marginalised women. She holds a BSc in Agricultural Economics from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.

**Emi-Beth Quantson** is the founder and CEO of Kawa Moka Coffee. She previously served as the Executive Secretary at Ghana Oil Club, and also as a Programme Coordinator with Impact Business Leaders' Africa Programme.

**Aisha Ayensu** is the Founder and Creative Director of the internationally acclaimed luxury fashion label, Christie Brown. Named after another inspiring female, her grandmother, the brand represents a taste of true neo-African culture in a chic modern and classic style. Mrs. Ayensu holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Ghana, Legon and embarked on the journey to creating the brand in her final year. She had her training in fashion from Joyce Ababio College of Creative Design. With years of experience in the industry spanning over a decade, Christie Brown has garnered global coverage by magazines such as Harper's Bazaar, Vogue Italia and Marie Claire; with television features on Studio53 and CNN to name a few. She has clothed many high-profile women and celebrities like Alicia Keys, Kelly Rowland, Jackie Appiah, Joselyn Dumas, Genevieve Nnaji and made costumes for Beyoncé's Mrs. Carter Tour.

**Vera Hamenoo-Kpeda (MzVee)** better known by her stage name MzVee, is a Ghanaian singer, afropop, dancehall, and R&B artiste. Her debut solo album features several hit singles including 'Borkor Borkor', 'Natural Girl', and 'Dancehall Queen'. She has won many awards, including the New Artiste of the Year award at the 2015 Ghana Music Awards. The writer of the book “Dare To

Be” **Ms. Esther Amba Numaba Cobbah** is Founder and CEO of Strategic Communications Africa (Stratcomm Africa), which she founded 28 years ago. She has grown the company from a study table, through a shipping container, to a multi-award winning organization that provides 360-degree communication services and products to individuals and organisations, public and private, local and international. Madam Cobbah has almost 40 years' experience in the local and international communications industry. Stratcomm Africa has remained a leader in Ghana's marketing communications industry for nearly three decades. Stratcomm Africa is a multiple award-winning total marketing communication agency with over two and a half decades of experience in providing communication support to individuals and organisations, public and private, local, and international, with award-winning success. Stratcomm Africa offers services in Public Relations and Reputation Management Digital Communication, including Social media management, Advertising and Marketing, Communication for Development (C4D), Activations and Event Management, Communication Research, and Training and Facilitation. Stratcomm Africa specializes in evolving and implementing integrated communications strategies and is focused on promoting excellence in communication as an essential tool for Africa's prosperity in this digital age. Stratcomm Africa continues to employ its expertise in environmental communication and behaviours change communication to mobilize floriculturists, flower enthusiasts, policy makers, private sector organisations, civil society groups, as well as media to work together to develop and grow this sector in Ghana. With support from Stratcomm Africa, the Movement is already collaborating with like-minded initiatives in other African countries, with a view of connecting Africa through horticulture/floriculture.

# Breakthrough In Fresh Quest For Cancer Cure



*A patient undergoing cancer screening*

**M**edics across the world are keeping their fingers crossed in the hope that a recent breakthrough in cancer drug trial will swiftly move through relevant approvals.

In drug trials conducted by researchers from New York's Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK) Cancer Center, all the 12 patients had their cancer successfully treated.

They were treated with a medication called dostarlimab which is sold under the brand name Jemperli.

The researchers, as quoted by The New York Times, said dostarlimab is an immunotherapy drug used in the treatment of endometrial cancer but that this was the first clinical investigation of whether it was also effective against rectal cancer

tumors.

"I believe this is the first time this has happened in the history of cancer," medical oncologist Luis Diaz Jr. from the MSK, the senior author of a new paper reporting the results, told The New York Times.

The news has been received with optimism, with the executive director of the Ocean Road Cancer Institute (ORCI) in Dar es Salaam, Dr Julius Mwaiselage saying he has read the news with hopefulness even as he was looking forward to the outcomes of further studies.

"We have received the news well. However, with only a few people involved in the testing, much more will still be required on the trial phase for the drug to become acceptable and work," he said.

Dr Mwaiselage said further trials will have to be conducted on different people including men, women, youth, children, and the elderly.

"These people must go through the first stage, the second stage and the third stage in the experiment," said Dr Mwaiselage.

He said cancer cases were currently rising across the world, noting however that the only sure way of surviving the disease was early testing and treatment.

"Much as we remain optimistic, it is important to note that it takes time for a drug to work. It takes several years ranging from three up to four years for it to be officially approved after the trial phase but if it proves very encouraging results, it could take even just one year," said Dr Mwaiselage.

In line with the approval mechanism, as soon as it goes through all the relevant trials in the US and also the Tanzania Medicines and Medical Devices Authority locally, hospitals will have to start using it.

"The encouraging experiments have allowed various people to comment and we are waiting to see if they will finally announce the involvement of more people in the trials. Should that be done, we are more than willing to participate and see how our cancer patients can get treatment in the

future," said Dr Mwaiselage.

Without revealing actual data of cancer patients in Tanzania, Dr Johnson Katanga from Ocean Road said the problem was huge in the country to the point that the government has set up treatment centers in some regions including Mbeya, Kilimanjaro and Dar es Salaam. "We also receive patients from neighboring countries of Mozambique and Malawi among others," he said.

He said it was encouraging that the drug has shown positive results in human being which suggests that it has gone through some trial stages. "For drugs to start working they must go through four phases where they start in animals and then in humans. What our colleagues did is in the third stage where a small group of people have been tested and later, they will look at the results of those drugs before and after," said Dr Katanga

Dr Katanga added that after some trials, they will increase size of the population to ascertain the efficacy of the drug after which authorities in the respective countries will send the drug certified by the World Health Organisation (WHO) to be used worldwide.

"If WHO approves these drugs, we have a good time to use the drugs in the country with the approval of

TMDA. We could then buy them from MSD or import them," Dr Katanga

Also known as colon cancer, rectal cancer begins in the rectum at the lower end of the digestive tract.

Available literature shows that early cases can begin as non-cancerous polyps which often have no symptoms but can be detected by screening.

Its symptoms depend on the size and location of the cancer, with some commonly experienced symptoms including changes in bowel habits, changes in stool consistency, blood in the stool and abdominal discomfort. Its treatment depends on the size, location and how far the cancer has spread. Common treatments include surgery to remove the cancer, chemotherapy and radiation therapy.

The trial has since been hailed as a first in cancer treatment.

Immunotherapy harnesses the body's own immune system to identify and destroy cancer cells.

The trial focused on a subset of rectal cancer patients whose cancer had a specific mutation, MSK said the researchers said in the statement quoted by The New York Times.

**Source:** [theeastafrikan.co.ke](http://theeastafrikan.co.ke)

# International Feminist Brigade Begins In Venezuela

**W**omen from the five continents have travelled to Caracas to participate in the I Alexandra Kollontai International Feminist Brigade, which began last Friday June 17 and will conclude on June 27. The aim of the brigade is to exchange experiences on women's community organization and in building popular feminism. There are 29 women from 20 countries, including Swaziland, South Africa, Lesotho, Ghana, Zambia, South Africa, Kenya, Cuba, the United States, Palestine, Morocco, Romania, Turkey, and Iraq, who will tour five Venezuelan states getting to know communes and other popular organizations led by women. The brigade is organized by the International Peoples' Assembly (IPA), the Simon Bolivar Institute for Peace and Solidarity (ISB), and is part of the feminist training program

"Manuela Saenz". "We understand that the fundamental mission of this Brigade will be to debate on the concept of revolutionary popular feminism, because we understand that feminism is also a space of struggle in dispute. That is why we want to meet with women who build territorial organizations in Venezuela, in defense of sovereignty, dignity and the struggle for a socialist feminism," says Laura Franco, one of the organizers of the event.

Franco highlights how since the ascension of Hugo Chávez as president and now with the government of Nicolás Maduro, the process of social transformations in Venezuela, called Bolivarian

Revolution, has a feminist character. "The Bolivarian Revolution has the face of women. They occupy the main positions of leadership of popular power in Venezuela. US imperialism identifies that Venezuelan women are the engine and the social base of support of the Revolution, that is why it tries with a series of attacks to demoralize, depoliticize, and discourage women believing that in this way it could carry forward its plans to overthrow the government. What we are showing is that this will not happen," says the Venezuelan feminist activist.

Since 2015, Venezuela has been suffering an economic blockade imposed by the United States that generates an estimated annual damage of US\$ 30 billion and has

caused the withdrawal of 60% of the country's Gross Domestic Product in six years.

The Brigade kicked off with an analysis of the current context with a feminist perspective led by Layan Fuleihan of the IPA and Erika Farías of Frente Francisco de Miranda. This presentation was followed by a panel with Lidice Altuve, the vice president of ISB, María Leon of the national board of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), and Diva Guzmán, the Minister of Women and Gender Equality, on the perspectives of current and historical feminist struggle in Venezuela. These exchanges will continue throughout the 10 days of the brigade where participants will meet with different organizations

and leaders throughout Venezuelan territory to learn more about their experiences.

Fuleihan stated in her intervention that "We don't have this opportunity every day and we must take advantage of it. We are here to learn and accompany our Venezuelan sisters. We are here to stand against capitalism and imperialism." The name of the International Brigade seeks to honor the 150th anniversary of Alexandra Kollontai, who was the People's Commissar for Social Welfare in the Soviet Union. In 1917, she was the first Soviet ambassador, in 1924, in Norway, and is a world reference of socialist feminism.

*With reports from* [Brasil de Fato](http://Brasil de Fato).