

Education Ministry Rubbishes Media Reports On Gallop Project

The Ministry of Education (MoE) has described as mischievous, an allegation that the Minister of Education, Dr. Yaw Adutwum cooked-up a report on \$1.2M Galop Project to deceive the World Bank. According to the Education

Ministry there is no iota of truth in the said publication and called on the public to treat with contempt such media reports. A statement reacting to the allegation issued yesterday by Felix A Baidoo, Press Secretary, Ministry of Education said, "The

latest our attention has been drawn to is a report titled, "Did Adutwum Cook-up Report On \$1.2M Galop Project?" published on the front page of the Monday, 15 August, 2022 edition of the Chronicle. The news report which, obviously seeks to indict the hardworking honourable

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Dr Yaw Adutwum, Minister of Education

Alan Calls For Peace, Unity In NPP

... As He Kicks Against Politics Of Ethnic And Religious Propaganda



Hon. Alan Kyerematen

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Dr. Anthony Yaw Baah, TUC Secretary General

TUC REJECTS TARIFF HIKES

Laments Rising Inflation, High Fuel Costs, Others

The Trade Union Congress (TUC) says the utility tariff increment announced by the Public Utilities Regulatory Commission (PURC) is unacceptable at this time of

high inflation in the country. "We told PURC and the utility service providers that in this day and time that inflation is on the high side, where the economic situation

is unbearable for workers in this country, we think that any decision of any increment in utilities should have been suspended.

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Ken Ofori-Atta, Minister of Finance

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The INSIGHT

EDITORIAL

DEAL WITH THESE IRREGULARITIES!

The Auditor General's Report released recently about tax irregularities, payroll fraud and other malpractices at the ministries, departments and

agencies including the metropolitan and municipal and district assemblies gives cause for concern.

Already, the call by a section of the public for persons behind government's payroll fraud or 'Ghost Names' to be prosecuted has been hailed as a suggestion in the right direction.

The prosecution of these individuals most of whom are public servants has been long overdue.

Despite the introduction of electronic payment system, the fraud still goes on, an indication that the crime is being perpetuated by a well-organised criminal network.

Clearly, should the state agencies especially the Office of the Special Prosecutor and that of the Auditor General up their game by ensuring the prosecution of these criminal gangs and thieves as suggested, instead of the existing arrangement of surcharging them, this nation-wrecking practice will 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.

There certainly has to be a shift from surcharging to prosecution. Until that is done, eradicating this canker which only enriches these few individuals in our society will be difficult, if not a mere rhetoric.

With the level of technological advancement, there cannot be any excuse for allowing 'Ghosts' in the government's payroll.

The ghosts have to be hunted out and the only way to do that is to prosecute the individuals behind the 'mystery' of 'ghost names'.

Alan Calls For Peace, Unity In NPP ... As He Kicks Against Politics Of Ethnic And Religious Propaganda

PRESS STATEMENT BY HON. ALAN
KYEREMATEN

I stand for Unity!

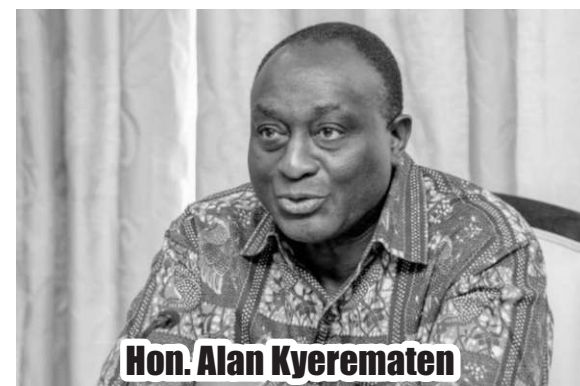
My attention has been drawn to disturbing headlines and discussions in the media, in respect of comments made by Mr. Hopeson Adorpe, after a peaceful health walk organized by individuals from all walks of life, in particular sympathizers of our great Party NPP, in the city of Kumasi on 13th August, 2022. I understand, with great concern, that the unintended consequences of these comments, have generated strong reactions from different sections of the Ghanaian public, with the potential of creating divisions within the rank and file of our Party, at a crucial time in its history.

The New Patriotic Party has always stood for unity, peace and progress for every Ghanaian. Without a doubt, these are the very same virtues that I have worked tirelessly to uphold, in my years of service to Ghana and to the NPP.

It is a fact that the peaceful health walk was independently organized, and joined by thousands of well-meaning Ghanaian citizens across Kumasi, to express their passion for the NPP, in addition to their genuine support for what I have come to represent in the Party, through years of dedicated service. Much as I do appreciate this show of support, I would like to strongly caution against any acts or omissions of any individuals or groups of individuals that may disturb the peace and harmony in our party.

It is important that we all fight what seems to be emerging as a dangerous trend in our body politic in Ghana, of using misinformation and propaganda in instigating disunity along ethnic, religious and political lines.

I passionately believe that it is impossible or inappropriate, to diminish or distort the fundamental contributions and stature of any of the founding fathers of the NPP tradition, and I encourage Party faithfuls to focus on this indisputable



Hon. Alan Kyerematen

fact. Indeed, it is the dedicated service of all the celebrated as well as unsung heroes and heroines of our great Party, that has, and continues to give life to the NPP, till this day. To borrow a leaf from the school ode of my Alma mater, Adisadel College, *"Others have laboured, and we share their glory. Ours is to do exploits and add to their gain. Those who come after will take up our story."*

I encourage Party faithfuls to be vigilant and consistent in protecting this cherished unity, that has made our great party a beacon of hope to the people of Ghana, over the past 30 years.

Let us all pull together, and focus on the task of emerging victorious, in the challenging times we are faced with today as a country.

I stand for Unity!

Long live the NPP and long live Ghana!

.....signed.....

Hon. Alan Kyerematen

THE INSIGHT

ACTING EDITOR - **BENJAMIN AKUFFO**
(0244669960)
benjaminakuffo65@yahoo.com

Secretary - **Gifty Agyemang**

Design and Graphics - **Godwin K. Attah**

Production Manager - **Kweku Menz**

PUBLISHERS

Militant Publications Limited

P. O. Box NT 272

Accra-Newtown, Accra

Tel: 0244379344/0242836930

Email: theinsightonline20@gmail.com

LONDON CONTACT

5A Westminster Bridge Road, London SE 1- 7XW

Tel: 0171-6201430

E-mail: prattc22@aol.com

Education Ministry Clears Air Over Gallop Project

from front page

minister says, "it has emerged that the Minister of Education, Dr Yaw Adutwum presented what is suspected to be a fictitious report supposedly to convince the World Bank for the release of US\$1.2 Million meant to execute the Ghana Accountability for Learning Outcomes Project (GALOP) 7.2B, a project he and the Ministry never executed..." The statement noted that "In two separate communications, the lead sponsor, WB and lead implementing agency, MoE, exhaustively addressed all the unfounded allegations and claims, factual inaccuracies, misleading interpretations and other concerns with the hope of bringing clarity and closure to the issue. Unfortunately, however, it is now clearer than before that those behind such character assassinating reports are deliberately embarking on a vicious smear campaign project against the patriotic, selfless and hardworking Minister of Education, Dr Yaw Adu-Twum for reasons best known to themselves. This is the full text of the statement; PRESS RELEASE

MoE CURES MEDIA MISCHIEF ABOUT

GALOP PROJECT

Recently, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the World Bank (WB) painstakingly responded to misleading media reports about the GALOP Project that the two institutions and other implementing agencies are working on to improve teaching and learning experience at the basic level of education. In two separate communications, the lead sponsor, WB and lead implementing agency, MoE, exhaustively addressed all the unfounded allegations and claims, factual inaccuracies, misleading interpretations and other concerns with the hope of bringing clarity and closure to the issue. Unfortunately, however, it is now clearer than before that those behind such character assassinating reports are deliberately embarking on a vicious smear campaign project against the patriotic, selfless and hardworking Minister of Education, Dr Yaw Adu-Twum for reasons best known to themselves. Otherwise, what could motivate them to continue publishing unfounded allegations and claims against the honourable minister and other officials after the World Bank came out to clarify issues and

vindicate the honourable minister and his team?

The latest our attention has been drawn to is a report titled, "Did Adutwum Cook-up Report On \$1.2M Galop Project?" published on the front page of the Monday, 15 August, 2022 edition of the Chronicle.

The news report which, obviously seeks to indict the hardworking honourable minister says, "it has emerged that the Minister of Education, Dr Yaw Adutwum presented what is suspected to be a fictitious report supposedly to convince the World Bank for the release of US\$1.2 Million meant to execute the Ghana Accountability for Learning Outcomes Project (GALOP) 7.2B, a project he and the Ministry never executed..."

Where and when did it emerge and who suspects that the Minister presented a fictitious report to World Bank to obtain funding for a project that was not executed?

Why are we doing this to ourselves as a people?

Are these people saying that they are more knowledgeable and wiser than the World Bank when it comes to

project funding, implementation, monitoring and evaluation?

Why would the World Bank go ahead and release fund after discovering all these claims, and, if they released the funds mistakenly before realising what these mischievous reporters are saying, why are they not recalling the fund and sanctioning us?

Ordinarily, we shall not be bothered about such unfounded allegations and deliberate misinformation, however, we deem it expedient and highly imperative to detoxicate the media landscape of such maliciously published toxins before they affect the perception of the general public.

The World Bank has intelligent and hardworking officials who painstakingly verify project reports before approving them for further deliberations and work. And, the GALOP went through such vigorous system and process before adoption. They have found nothing wrong with our report and have no ill-suspensions about the lead



Dr Yaw Adutwum, Minister of Education

implementing agencies and or their officials.

The bank has made that sufficiently clear. And, the Ministry's communications outfit is prepared to give further clarification to issues that anybody does not understand about the project. The honourable minister and ministry have nothing to hide.

This is why we question the intent of those behind such publications.

END

Singed

Felix A. Baidoo

Press Secretary

TUC REJECTS TARIFF HIKES

Laments Rising Inflation, High Fuel Costs, Others



Dr. Anthony Yaw Baah

"We told them our piece of mind, but I think that they did not bother and have gone ahead to increase utilities," Mr Joshua Ansah, the Deputy Secretary General of the TUC, said in an interview with the Ghana News Agency (GNA) in Bolgatanga.

He said the increment would put pressure on members of

the TUC, noting that, "this is the time we are also negotiating the minimum wage and the base pay, so you can imagine what is going to happen. At the moment, workers cannot bear the economic hardship in this country.

"As a union, we think that is unacceptable. We will also do our best to get a salary increase that does not fall below any of the increases announced by the government. We are ready to do that."

"If Government has gone ahead to increase utilities, fuel prices and anything that it wants when we also get to the negotiation table, that is where we will also base all our might on," the Deputy Secretary General said.

He said once the announcement for increment was made, there was nothing TUC could do,

but emphasized that "We will also marshal all forces and ensure that we get salary increases that will march increases announced by the utility service providers."

He said the increment was not business friendly as indicated by the PURC and described it as "killer increases" announced to workers of the country and reiterated that workers would not accept salary increments below those increases.

Mr Ansah said the TUC earlier announced that it would not accept anything below the inflation figure even before the Cost-of-Living Allowance (CoLA) became an issue, and further emphasised that the TUC would

not accept anything below the inflation rate.

He explained that "We accepted the 15 per cent because there is a hurdle ahead of us, that is the base pay, and the minimum wage for 2023, but they have worsened the situation. Even currently, workers are suffering. We have sacrificed for far too long."

The Deputy Secretary General called on workers to be patient and have trust in the leadership of the TUC, and rally behind them to fight a good course for the ordinary Ghanaian worker.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORT

Compiled By Peoples Dispatch

Drone Strikes At US Military Base In Syria's Al-Tanf Reiterate Its Dubious Role

By Abdul Rahman

Two drones on Monday struck the US' illegal al-Tanf base in Syria, according to a statement issued by the US forces. No group has taken responsibility for the attack so far in which no casualties were reported, *Reuters* reported. The attack on al-Tanf comes at a time when the base is at the center of accusations by the Syrian government which claims that it is being used to support the loot of billions of dollars worth of Syrian oil resources and prolonging the war in the country. According to the US statement, one of the drones was engaged by its forces and destroyed before it could enter the base. The second drone landed inside the building but did not cause any casualties or significant damage. The attack came hours after an Israeli [airstrike](#) killed three Syrian soldiers in Tartus on Sunday. The Israeli media reported that the attack in Tartus was allegedly against an Iranian base. The al-Tanf base was the target of a similar attack in October 2021, when drones caused massive damage to it. The base, built in 2016, is located in Syria's Homs province near the

Jordan and Iraq borders. It has a garrison and other facilities that were built without the Syrian government's consent. The US government claims that the base provides training and support to forces fighting against the Islamic State or ISIS.

However, the Syrian government claims that the base is illegal and a violation of international law and Syrian sovereignty. Accusing it of playing a dubious role in the war and looting the country's resources, the Syrian government has been demanding that the international community take action and force the US to withdraw its forces from the country.

Al-Tanf used to train anti-Assad forces

The government of Bashar al-Assad has [accused](#) the US of using the base to train forces fighting against it to prolong the war in the country. In May, the *Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA)* reported that the Maghawir al-Thawra (previously known as the New Syrian Army) was trained by the US forces and given the M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System or HIMARS to fight against the Assad government.

The Syrian government alleges that US forces used the pretext of fighting ISIS to deliberately prolong their stay in the country despite the fact that former US President Donald Trump declared complete victory against ISIS in Syria in 2019. Syria claims that the US is fueling the war by providing constant military support to anti-Assad forces and preventing the unification of the country.

According to some reports, al-Tanf has also been used by Israeli forces to coordinate their attacks inside Syria.

Israel has launched hundreds of airstrikes inside Syria since the beginning of the war in 2012. These attacks have killed hundreds of people, including those who died in Sunday's strike in Tartus. According to a recent [report](#) in *The Wall Street Journal*, all Israeli airstrikes inside Syria are reviewed by the US.

Stealth of Syrian oil resources

Syria has time and again accused the US forces of stealing its natural resources in collaboration with the non-state armed groups fighting against the Assad regime. Al-Tanf is

based near Syria's main oil fields in Deir al-Zour, which is under the control of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).

On Monday, *SANA* [reported](#) that at least 100 tankers of Syrian oil were illegally transferred by US troops to northern Iraq via the illegal border crossing at Mahmoudiya. This was in addition to 89 tankers of oil transferred on Saturday, [footage](#) of which shows a long line of trucks moving towards the Syria-Iraq border.

Prior to the war, [export](#) of oil was one of the main sources of state revenue for Syria. Oil production has been greatly affected by the decade-long war in the country. Both ISIS and the US forces in alliance with local militias have been accused of stealing Syrian oil. According to a government [estimate](#) earlier this month, the country produces around 80,000 barrels of oil every day, out of which 66,000 barrels are stolen by the US-backed forces and sold via Iraq. This amounts to over a billion dollars worth of Syrian oil allegedly smuggled by the US forces so far.



On Monday, SANA reported that at least 100 tankers of Syrian oil were illegally transferred by US troops to northern Iraq via the illegal border crossing at Mahmoudiya. (Photo: SANA). The base in al-Tanf was built by the US during the war against ISIS in 2016 without the consent of the Syrian government. The US is accused of using the base to train anti-Assad forces and steal the country's resources

Given the widespread suffering and impoverishment of millions of Syrian citizens caused by the protracted war and the unilateral sanctions imposed by the EU and the US, the loss of crucial oil revenues is a big setback for Syria.

While justifying the reversal of his decision to withdraw US forces from Syria in October 2020 following the Turkish invasion of the country, Trump had [justified](#) the control of oil resources as the main reason for the presence of US troops in the country.

Students Injured In Demonstration Against Record Fuel Price Hike In Bangladesh



At least [20 activists](#) affiliated with the Progressive Students Alliance were last Sunday injured in a demonstration in the Shahbagh area of Dhaka. The students were protesting against the record fuel price hike announced by the government in Bangladesh. The injured students were taken to the

Dhaka Medical College Hospital for treatment.

Massive protests had erupted a day after the government raised the prices of diesel, kerosene, petrol and octane. Protesters accused the government led by

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of [looting public property](#). According to a statement by the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources, the price of a litre of octane has been raised from Tk 89 to Tk 135, up by 51.7 %. Similarly, the cost of a litre of petrol has been increased from Tk 44 to Tk 130, or by 51.1 %. The prices of diesel and kerosene have been raised by around 42.5%.

As per reports, students were taking out a peaceful rally when the police tried to stop those using batons, injuring several protesters. "Police authorities had been threatening us ever since we started demonstrating against the fuel price hike," General Secretary of the Chhatra Federation,

Saikot Arif, said.

The record fuel price hike will severely hit middle and lower income families in the country, according to experts. The hike will also hugely impact businesses and exports. Reports also indicate that the government is set to increase water, electricity and gas prices shortly.

Talking about the implications of the fuel price hike, Badrul Imam, retired professor of Dhaka University's geology department, told *Prothom Alo* that prices were increased in the middle of night unilaterally, without talking to the stakeholders.

"Hundreds of thousands of farmers

depend on diesel for irrigation. A rise in irrigation costs will be a big blow to agriculture and farmers. Price of fuel oil has never seen such a jump in the history of Bangladesh," Imam [argued](#). People are suffering due to high inflation amidst a deepening financial crisis and a pandemic. The latest hike in fuel prices has come as a shock that will put an additional burden on millions of lower class households. The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics recorded food inflation to be 8.19% in July and 7.5 % in June. Meanwhile, wage growth had declined to a seven-year low of 6.06% in the last fiscal year.

Morocco's Hidden Repression

...Shrinking Space for Dissent, Independent Journalism

Toward the end of his reign, Morocco's King Hassan II eased his iron-fisted grip on the country, releasing long-serving political prisoners and allowing more space for dissent. Upon Hassan II's death in 1999, he was succeeded by his son, King Mohammed VI, who maintained a cautious pace of reform, burnishing Morocco's reputation as an exception in a region rife with repressive governments. In 2012, Hillary Clinton, then US secretary of state, hailed Morocco as "a leader and model" in the Middle East.

The Arab Spring uprisings of 2011 prompted a course reversal. Although major street protests in Morocco never threatened to topple the regime, authorities soon began to stall and even reverse the reforms.

Morocco's Playbook to Crush Dissent

A decade later, Morocco is relatively stable and free of political violence, but it is no longer an exception to the region's repressive norm. Yet Moroccan authorities continue to zealously promote the kingdom's image as a "model" and champion of human rights.

A centerpiece of this strategy, which Human Rights Watch has documented in a new report, is what we term a playbook to crush dissent: an ensemble of measures devised to subtly silence prominent critical journalists, dissidents, and human rights activists who either refused to soften their tone or go into exile. Scurrilous stories appear in pro-government media against critics and sometimes their relatives. They may be subject to physical or digital surveillance, and anonymous threats.

Ultimately, some face criminal investigations leading to convictions and imprisonment after unfair trials. Some are accused of crimes relating to private consensual conduct, such as nonmarital sex or abortion. Others are accused of serious crimes such as espionage, embezzlement, and even rape or sexual assault. Because people aren't being imprisoned for speech offenses, Moroccan authorities can claim that free expression is alive and well. As for character assassination on pro-government websites, Moroccan authorities might argue it is just part of the media landscape. Yes, serious crimes should be properly investigated, and no one should be above the law. But in Morocco, the chances of a fair trial are remote if the



Moroccan journalist Hajar Raissouni after leaving prison in Sale near the capital Rabat on October 16, 2019. © 2019 Fadel Senna/AFP via Getty Images

defendant is a dissident. And while scandal-mongering media exist in many countries, in Morocco, there is no independent press to counter it. This crackdown on the regime's critics may be indirect, but Morocco's allies and the UN should not shy away from

denouncing it for what it is: state-sponsored repression that shouldn't exist in a country that wishes to be seen as rights-respecting. Eric Goldstein is the Deputy Director, Middle East and North Africa Division

Cedi Now Classified Worst Performing Currency In The World ...After Sri Lanka's Rupee - Bloomberg Survey

The Ghana cedi has now been classified as the worst performing currency in the world after Sri Lanka's Rupee, a recent currency performance ranking by Bloomberg has shown. The survey by the international news organisation showed the Cedi came in the last but one place among other 150 currencies in the world in terms of performance since the start of 2022. Bloomberg said the results came after it tracked the performance of 150 currencies in the world. Since the start of this year, the Ghana cedi has suffered persistent depreciation against major trading

currencies, especially the US dollar. The fall in the currency is due to demand for forex as it overtook supplies during a period when high debts and low investor confidence have made it impossible for Ghana to access the international capital market for borrowing. As of July, this year, the cedi lost its value by more than 20 percent. The local currency is now trading above GH¢10.00 to one US dollar on the exchange rate market. Meanwhile, the Bank of Ghana has given the assurance that it is implementing measures aimed at addressing the fall



of the cedi against major trading currencies. In a note, the central bank said it was increasing foreign currency (FX) supplies to banks in the short term in order to help meet growing FX demands for external payments. The BoG explained the move was due to rising demand for hard currencies by non-resident investors leaving the country.

Producer Price Inflation Rate For July Hits 41.2%



Producer Price Inflation (PPI) for July this year recorded 41.5 percent, Ghana Statistical Service has reported. The year-on-year producer inflation for all industries was 41.2 percent in July 2022. The monthly change rate was 1.9 percent. The manufacturing sub-sector recorded the highest year-on-year producer price inflation rate of 57.4 percent, followed by the mining and quarrying sub-sector with 23.9 percent. The utility sub-sector recorded the lowest year-on-year producer inflation rate of 1.3 percent.

In a press release, it said, The Producer Price Inflation rate for July 2022 was 41.2 percent. This rate indicates that between July 2021 and July 2022 (year-on-year), the PPI increased by 41.2 percent. This rate represents a 2.5 percentage points increase in producer inflation relative to the rate recorded in June 2022 (38.7%). "The month-on-month change in the producer price index between June 2022 and July 2022 was 1.9 percent," it added. Producer Price Index (PPI) measures the average change over time in the prices received by domestic producers for the production of their goods and services.

Cocobod Trial: Agongo, Agricult Didn't Cause Financial Loss; Bring Back Lithovit Fertiliser – Farmer

Businessman Seidu Agongo and his company, Agricult, did not cause any financial loss to the state by supplying the Ghana Cocoa Board (Cocobod) with Lithovit Liquid Fertiliser, a cocoa farmer who benefitted from the agrochemical, has told Justice Clemence Honyenuga's court.

According to Mr Thomas Amo Amankwaa, the fertiliser was a “great saviour” to cocoa farmers and must be brought back.

He was the second farmer to have sung the praises of the agrochemical at the centre of the trial in which Mr Agongo and his company are being prosecuted along with former Cocobod CEO Dr Stephen Opuni for causing the state to lose GHS271 million.

Mr Thomas Amo Amankwaa, who is from Berekum in the Bono Region, took the stand as the third defence witness for Dr Opuni.

While under cross-examination by Mr Nutifafa Nutsukpui, counsel for Mr Seidu Agongo and Agricult Ghana Limited (the 2nd and 3rd accused persons), Mr Amankwaa told the court on Friday, 27 May 2022: “I am not here for anything but to plead with the government to bring back Lithovit liquid fertiliser because it was good for cocoa farmers”.

Mr Amankwaa disagreed with claims by the state that the fertiliser was “useless” and a waste of money, arguing: “It is not true Cocobod wasted money buying Lithovit liquid fertiliser”.

“As I have said earlier, cocoa farming is a business for [us], the farmers. That's is why I, Amankwaa, have four farms and I am testifying with one”, he averred.

“Lithovit was a saviour for farmers in the seasons 2015/16”, he insisted, stressing: “Lithovit was a great saviour for

farmers like myself and others who used it in the year 2016/17.”

He noted: “Lithovit fertiliser helped me a lot and I bought my car and I made more money as can be seen in my passbook and I was able to buy a saloon [car]; that is a Toyota Corolla.”

Contrary to claims by the state that Mr Agongo and Agricult sold a useless product to Cocobod, thus, causing financial loss to the state, Mr Amankwaa said: “My Lord, they have not caused financial loss to Ghana, as we, the farmers, know, because the Lithovit liquid fertiliser we, [the] farmers, used, gave us a lot of yield on our cocoa farms, which we have never seen before”.

“The COCOBOD (CHED) officials that supplied us with Lithovit are aware that it [Lithovit liquid] was very good”, he added.

The witness said during the 2017/2018 crop season when he was told by Cocobod's CHED office that the fertiliser had been seized at the head office in Accra, he went to the open market to see if he could get some but to no avail.

“My Lord, I roamed everywhere but I could not get some to buy. If you come to Berekum, the people call me 'The Cocoa Consultant', so, I went to the COCOBOD CHED officials with about 100 cocoa farmers with the intention of embarking on [a] demonstration to plead with the government to bring back Lithovit liquid fertiliser because it gives us good yield in our cocoa farms”, he told the court.

“The Cocobod officials told me this will not have any

effect, so, we should rather go to the radio stations”, he recalled.

He said he personally went to Akonoba FM in Sunyani, as well as Chris FM, Ahenfo FM and Shallom FM, all in Berekum, to appeal to the government to bring back Lithovit liquid fertiliser because “it gave us good yield on our cocoa farms.”

Mr Amankwaa is not the first farmer to sing the praises of Lithovit liquid fertiliser. On Monday, 17 May 2022, Mr Samuel Torbi, the second defence witness for Dr Stephen Opuni, told the same court that lithovit liquid fertiliser was the “farmer's messiah” since it gave them plentiful yield.

The Assin Fosu farmer in the Central Region, who said he was born into cocoa farming but has been doing it commercially for 17 years, told the court that he first used lithovit in the 2015/2016 crop season.

He said Cocobod directly introduced and distributed lithovit fertiliser to the farmers and not Agricult Company Limited, the third accused in the case.

Mr Torbi told the court that he and other farmers were trained on lithovit by CHED under Cocobod in Assin Fosu and not Agricult who they “don't know”.

He said he harvested the “highest” yield in the 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 crop seasons all due to the use of lithovit liquid fertiliser. After those two crop seasons, he said he has not harvested yields close that quantum again.

In his view, lithovit fertiliser was what made the difference in yield in the 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 crop seasons and not any other factors.

He said lithovit liquid fertiliser



Justice Clemence Honyenuga

“widens” the leaves of the trees, gives them a “pure green” look and makes the flowers “very strong” so that they do not fall off when using the mist blower to spray fertiliser on them as the other fertilisers do.

“That makes the lithovit liquid fertiliser different from other fertilisers and makes cocoa grow very well. That was why we, the farmers, were happy with the lithovit liquid fertiliser”, he told the court.

As the chairman of the cocoa farmers' cooperative in Assin Fosu for 12 years, he said, “when I used it, it made me happy and I did not get any negative effects about it”. He also said “nobody complained to me but rather the happiness I had was the same happiness they [other farmers] also had and they said that it is now that they have believed that if they say that cocoa farming is a business, lithovit liquid fertiliser has made them realise that.”

He also denied claims that farmers drank the fertiliser in place of water.

“No my Lord, because the training they took us through means any agrochemicals we spray on our cocoa, when it enters our bodies, it will give us problems and, so, when we are spraying any insecticides or liquid fertiliser, we put on gloves, we also wear nose masks, we wear spectacles and we put on overalls and

wellington boots and, so, if anyone tells you that you can drink lithovit liquid fertiliser when you are thirsty then that person is not a farmer and no farmer will say such a thing.”

“My Lord, that will not be true because even a junior officer at the CHED office at the district will not say that let alone an officer at the head office”, he stressed.

He said all the farmers in his cooperative were happy with the lithovit fertiliser. “My Lord, when we meet the only effects they talk about is lithovit liquid fertiliser makes cocoa grow very well and brings about more yield so all our farmers are crying whether we could get the lithovit liquid fertiliser for them”.

Asked what he made of claims that the fertiliser was of no value, he said: “Farmers will never forgive that person because Lithovit liquid fertiliser is a farmers' messiah and I also don't believe that any staff from COCOBOD will come out and say such a thing”. Asked if there will be any justification to condemn the company or the person who brought the fertiliser, Mr Torbi said: “No, my Lord because we need it”.

Source:

ghanasoccernet.com

South Africa Is On A Knife Edge As Xenophobia Escalates

Richard Pithouse

Xenophobia is a global crisis, but in South Africa, it takes a particularly violent form. The day-to-day accumulation of insult and harassment from within the state and society periodically mutates into open-street violence in which people are beaten, hacked and burned to death. If there is a useful point of global comparison, it may be with the communal riots that rip Indian cities apart from time to time.

The state has tended to stand down while a neighborhood is roiled with xenophobic violence. When it does move in, after the destruction, removal of people from their homes and killing have stopped, it usually arrives to arrest migrants rather than the perpetrators of the attacks. It is overwhelmingly impoverished and working-class African and Asian migrants who must face this pincer movement from the mob and the police.

The severity of the situation in South Africa first came to global attention in May 2008 when xenophobic violence, sometimes intersecting with ethnic sentiment, took 62 lives. At the time, the country was ruled by Thabo Mbeki, a man with deep and genuine Pan-African commitments. But by the end of 2007, Jacob Zuma's path to the presidency was clear, and the ethnic chauvinism he had introduced into the public sphere was rampant. The limited social support offered by the state was

increasingly understood to be tied to identities such as ethnicity, nationality and claims to be part of long-established communities. By the time that Zuma took the presidency in May 2009, it was common for party officials in his home province of KwaZulu-Natal to tell impoverished people that they had not received houses, or other entitlements, because of an "influx" of "foreigners" or people "from other provinces"—a euphemism for ethnic identity. There were cases where people, seeking the approval of political authority, began to "clean" their communities themselves.

Now, almost 15 years since the 2008 attacks, the situation is much worse. Most South Africans have lived in a state of permanent crisis since the colonial capture of land, cattle, and autonomy. But for most young people, that permanent crisis no longer takes the form of the ruthless exploitation of labor under racial capitalism. Last year, youth unemployment hit 77.4 percent, the highest out of all G20 countries. As Achille Mbembe, the Cameroonian philosopher who writes from Johannesburg, argued in 2011, the intersection of race and capitalism has rendered people as "waste." The pain of young lives lived in permanent suspension is often turned inward. There is a massive heroin epidemic, depression and anxiety are pervasive, and rates of violence, much of it gendered, are terrifying. In this crisis of sustained social abandonment, there are attempts, sometimes extraordinarily courageous, to build forms of politics

around the affirmation of human dignity. They have often met serious repression, including assassination. But unsurprisingly, there are also attempts to build forms of popular politics around xenophobia, some of them with fascistic elements. Young people, mostly men, are summoned to the authority of a demagogic leader, given a rudimentary uniform in the form of a T-shirt and the opportunity to exercise some power in the name of "cleaning" society. Perversity is dressed up as virtue.

At the same time, all the major political parties, including the ruling African National Congress (ANC), have moved sharply to the right and have become increasingly xenophobic. In government, the ANC has always run a highly exclusionary migration regime and is now moving to end the permits, established more than 10 years ago, that gave around 178,000 Zimbabweans the right to live, work and study in South Africa. Its rhetoric has also moved sharply to the right. The party's spokesperson, Pule Mabe, recently declared "open season on all illegal foreign nationals," adding, "we can no longer guarantee their safety." The party's policy conference in early August proposed "a well-coordinated strategy for tracking down illegal foreigners." That strategy explicitly included the recommendation that "ANC branches must take the lead in this regard."

Many analysts take the view that the ANC, which has already lost control of many of South Africa's major cities, will not be able to win the next national election in 2024. As the party faces the prospect of losing power for the first time since the end of apartheid, the temptation to scapegoat migrants for its failures is escalating. Alarming, the new parties taking the political space opened by the rapid decline in



Members and supporters of a coalition of organizations under the banner of Kopanang Africa march against xenophobia in Johannesburg in March 2022. Photo: Gopolang Ledwaba With no national force with the vision and power to offer an emancipatory alternative to politics that turns neighbors against each other, the country is on a knife edge.

support for the ANC are more or less uniformly forms of authoritarian populism centrally organized around xenophobia.

Former business mogul turned politician Herman Mashaba's ActionSA party, which is making rapid electoral advances, mixes hardcore neoliberalism with xenophobia. In 2018, Mashaba staged a "citizen's arrest" of a migrant and then tweeted, "We are [not] going to sit back and allow people like you to bring us Ebolas in the name of small business. Health of our people first. Our health facilities are already stretched to the limit." This conflation of a vulnerable minority with disease evokes the horrors of historical forms of fascist mobilization.

Public speech from the state, government and most political parties routinely conflates documented and undocumented migrants as "illegal foreigners," "illegal foreigners" with criminals, and, in recent days, following a horrific gang rape on the outskirts of a decaying mining town, rapists. When the police come under pressure to respond to concern about criminality, they frequently arrest migrants, often including people with papers rather

than perpetrators of actual crimes.

The mass-based organizations of the left, with political identities rooted, to a significant extent, in the factory, the mine or the land occupation have often opposed the turn to xenophobia, and it is common for migrants to hold positions of leadership in these kinds of organizations. But while they can provide nodes of refuge, they lack the power to effectively oppose the rapidly worsening situation at the national level. With no national force with the vision and power to offer an emancipatory alternative to the poisonous politics, sometimes with fascist elements, that turns neighbors against each other, the country is on a knife edge.

Richard Pithouse is an academic and journalist in South Africa. He is the coordinator of the Johannesburg, South Africa, office of Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research; the director of the Forge, a cultural space; and the editor-at-large of Inkani Books.

This article was produced by Globetrotter.

Over 900,000 Brazilians Sign Letter In Defense Of Democracy



By Brasil de Fato

On Thursday August 11, tens of thousands of Brazilians took to the streets in defense of free elections and against political violence and to launch the “Letter to Brazilians in defense of the Democratic State of Law”. The actions organized by the “Out Bolsonaro” campaign, a coalition of diverse people's movements, trade unions, and civil society organizations, have estimated that actions were organized in at least 49 cities, including almost all the capitals of the country. The official launch of the [letter](#), which has over 925,000 signatures, took place at 10am at the Law School of University of São Paulo in Largo São Francisco, São Paulo. “Since Bolsonaro took office, we have been organizing in the [Out Bolsonaro] campaign to organize actions in defense of democracy, to raise the issues of vaccines, to denounce hunger, unemployment. And now, we are back in the streets against the escalation of authoritarianism, with the threat of [Bolsonaro] not respecting the elections, that is, not respecting the popular sovereignty of the vote. [He even] announced to the world in that meeting with the ambassadors that the electronic ballot box is not safe,” said Raimundo Bonfim, coordinator of the Central of Popular Movements (CMP) and one of the organizers of the campaign, which includes the Popular Brazil Front and the People Without Fear Front, in addition to dozens of other entities.

Understanding the context

The “Letter to Brazilians in defense of the Democratic Rule of Law” was prepared by a group of former students of the Law Faculty at University of São Paulo and makes reference to the 45th anniversary of the “Letter to Brazilians”, from 1977, when a movement led by professor Goffredo da Silva Telles Junior denounced the illegitimacy of the military government. In a video circulating on social networks, several personalities confirmed that they will be participating in acts at law schools across the country where the letter will be read. These include: Arnaldo Antunes, Douglas Belchior, Walter Casagrande, Alexandre Frota, Preta Rara, Father Julio Lancellotti, Astrid Fontenelle, Marina Person, Alessandra Negrini, Sabrina Fidalgo, and André Abujamra. By the morning of Thursday August 11, the letter had over 925,000 signatures, including those of eight presidential candidates: Lula, Ciro Gomes, Simone Tebet, Felipe D'Ávila, Soraya Thronicke, Sofia Manzano, Leonardo Pércles, and Eymael. Current president and candidate for re-election Jair Bolsonaro did not sign the document and criticized the initiative. The letter gained more political weight in Brazil when names of the national financial elite declared their signatures. People like bankers Roberto Setubal and Pedro Moreira Salles, co-chairmen of the board of directors of Itaú Unibanco, Candido Bracher, former Chief Executive Officer of Itaú, and Fabio Barbosa, CEO of Natura, joined the initiative.

In addition, on Wednesday a group of 42 artists published a video reading the letter. Among them are Chico Buarque, Fernanda Montenegro, Caetano Veloso, Anitta, Milton Nascimento, Djavan, Dira Paes and Wagner Moura.

Responses to Bolsonaro's attacks

The letter is considered a response to what many call threats of a coup by Bolsonaro. “Groundless attacks unaccompanied by evidence question the fairness of the electoral process and the democratic rule of law so hard won by Brazilian society. Threats to other powers and sectors of civil society and the incitement to violence and the breakdown of the constitutional order are intolerable,” reads an excerpt from the document.

The text was released eight days after Bolsonaro's meeting with foreign ambassadors, in which he repeated accusations that have already been refuted about fraud in the elections.

Fraud attempts

According to the G1 website, the server that hosts the letter had already suffered, from the launch until the afternoon of Wednesday, almost 20,000 attempted intrusions. The attorney general of the Public Ministry of Accounts of São Paulo, Thiago Pinheiro Lima, one of the creators of the movement, said that on August 10, a hacker tried to bring down the site by creating a bot that attempted 8 million simultaneous accesses on the site “Estado de Direito”.

According to Lima, they already expected the attacks and security mechanisms were implemented and have been able to prevent unauthorized accesses to the system.

This is the full letter:

Letter to Brazilians in defense of the Democratic Rule of Law
In August 1977, amidst the celebrations of the sesquicentennial of the foundation of the Law Schools in Brazil, professor Goffredo da Silva Telles Junior, master of all of us, in the free territory of Largo de São Francisco, read the Letter to Brazilians, in which he denounced the illegitimacy of the then military government and the state of exception in which we lived. It also called for the re-establishment of the rule of law and the convening of a National Constituent Assembly. The seed planted bore fruit. Brazil overcame the military dictatorship. The National Constituent Assembly rescued the legitimacy of our institutions, reestablishing the democratic rule of law with the prevalence of respect for fundamental rights.

We have the powers of the Republic, the Executive, the Legislative and the Judiciary, all independent, autonomous and committed to respecting and ensuring compliance with the greater covenant, the Federal Constitution.

Under the mantle of the Federal Constitution of 1988, which is about to complete its 34th anniversary, we went through free and periodic elections, in which the political debate on projects for the country has always been democratic, with the final decision being left to popular sovereignty.

Goffredo's lesson is embodied in our Constitution “All power emanates from the people, who exercise it through their elected representatives or directly, under the terms of this Constitution”.

Our elections with the electronic counting process have served as an example in the world. We had several alternations of power which respected the results of the polls and led to a republican transition of government. Electronic voting machines, as well as the Electoral Justice, proved to be safe and reliable.

Our democracy has grown and matured, but much remains to be done. We live in a country of profound social inequalities, with deficits in essential public services, such as health, education, housing and public safety. We have a long way to go in developing our economic potential in a sustainable way. The State is inefficient in the face of its numerous challenges. Demands for greater respect and equality of conditions in terms of race, gender and sexual orientation are still far from being fully met.

In the coming days, in the midst of these challenges, we will have the beginning of the electoral campaign to renew the mandates of state and federal legislatures and executives. At this moment, we should have the apex of democracy with the dispute between the various political projects aimed at convincing the electorate of the best proposal for the direction of the country in the coming years.

Instead of a civic celebration, we are going through a moment of immense danger to democratic normality, of risk to the institutions of the Republic and of insinuations of contempt for the results of the elections.

Groundless attacks unaccompanied by evidence question the fairness of the electoral process and the democratic rule of law so hard won by Brazilian society. Threats to other powers and sectors of civil society and the incitement to violence and the breakdown of the constitutional order are intolerable.

We have recently witnessed authoritarian rants that have jeopardized secular American democracy. There, attempts to destabilize democracy and the people's confidence in the fairness of the elections were unsuccessful. Here, they won't be either.

Our civic conscience is much greater than the opponents of democracy imagine. We know how to put aside minor differences in favor of something much bigger, the defense of the democratic order.

Imbued with the civic spirit that underpinned the 1977 Letter to Brazilians and gathered in the same free territory of Largo de São Francisco, regardless of the electoral or partisan preference of each one, we call on Brazilians to be alert in the defense of democracy and respect for the election result.

In today's Brazil there is no more room for authoritarian setbacks.

Dictatorship and torture belong to the past. The solution to the immense challenges facing Brazilian society necessarily involves respect for the results of the elections.

In civic vigil against attempts at ruptures, we cry out in unison: Democratic Rule of Law Always!!!!

Original article in Portuguese on [Brasil de Fato](#).