

# MAHAMA

## He Says Current Economic Situation Distressing



**Former President John Dramani Mahama**

**F**ormer President John Dramani Mahama has lamented over the country's economic challenges which in his view, get worse as the days go by. In a Twitter post, Mahama indicated that the country's current economic situation is "distressing" and called on the government to, promptly and with eagerness, secure a programme from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to stabilize the economy. "Distressing! Every passing day makes our economic situation worse. Gov't must work with greater alacrity to lock in a programme with the Fund in order to create a more predictable economic outlook," his post read. The NDC flagbearer for the 2020 elections comments come after rating agency, Moody's downgraded Ghana's long-term issuer and senior unsecured debt ratings to CAA2 from CAA1 and placed the ratings on review for downgrade. The CAA2 downgrade reflects Ghana's recent macroeconomic deterioration, further heightening the government's liquidity and debt sustainability difficulties and

*Cont. on page 3*

### Former NPP MP Blasts Ministers, MMDCE's, Party Over Galamsey



**Edward Enin**

**F**ormer NPP Member of Parliament (MP) for Obuasi, Edward Enin, has lashed out at the government for their abysmal fight against the illegal mining menace. According to him, the party does not have any blueprint for the fight against

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### Alarm Blows In Gomoa Fetteh!



*...As Chief Is Sworn Into Akyempim Traditional Council In Bizarre Circumstances*

## Ukraine's Revenge On The West

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# The INSIGHT

## — EDITORIAL

### WASTE MENACE AMID COVID THREAT

**W**ith the ravaging effects of COVID-19 pandemic, sanitation issues have lately been buried albeit the dangers it poses to us all.

Before the Corona virus reared its head, heaps or pile of refuse were seen in the cities and the localities.

Indeed, it does appear that the fight against COVID-19 has relegated to the background, the handling of sanitation or waste in the country which hitherto has been a topic for discussion and a major headache to our government and all others especially in Africa. Certainly, this new fight should not blind us about the dangers of not tackling waste in our country.

Clearly, there is the need for policy makers to change strategy and develop and adopt a more holistic modern approach in the fight against the waste and filth menace and this can be done through the construction of recycling and waste treatment plants in all regions and in future, all districts of the country.

The enforcement of the bye-laws which are also comatosed is important. It is possible and should be done.

## Congo's President Rejects US Call To Halt Oil Bids In Peatlands

By Michael J. Kavanagh



President Felix Tshisekedi

**T**he Democratic Republic of Congo's President Felix Tshisekedi has rejected a request by the US to halt bidding on oil blocks in one of the world's most important carbon sinks. The central African nation has the largest tropical peatlands and is home to most of the Congo Basin, the world's second-biggest tropical rainforest after the Amazon. The basin's peatlands alone contain about 29 billion tons of carbon, equivalent to about three years of worldwide carbon-dioxide emission. In a meeting with US special presidential envoy for climate, John Kerry on Tuesday, Tshisekedi defended his country's right to explore for oil while taking into account its fragile ecosystems, according to Eve Bazaiba, Congo's vice prime minister for environment. That's after Kerry asked Tshisekedi to withdraw six out of 30 oil and gas blocks from an ongoing tender round in their meeting, Bazaiba said. The president said the issue could be discussed further at a working group being created by the two nations to protect the forests and peatlands, according to Bazaiba. The group should start its work by COP27, she said by phone on Wednesday. "It's not about a colonizer who comes to control a colonized. It's about work. It's about investing together, taking into account international

standards while protecting the environment," Bazaiba said. "If there are American companies that want to invest, they can invest as long as they take into account environmental laws."

Kerry was in Congo for preparatory meetings with environment ministers before the COP27 climate talks, which take place in Egypt next month.

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# MAHAMA; He Says Current Economic Situation Distressing

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increasing the risk of default. This follows

the recent downgrade of Ghana's credit rating to 'CC' from 'CCC' by Fitch. Despite Ghana's tightening of monetary policy in response to the global price shock, it said inflation continues to rise from high levels and the currency has been under very significant pressure, adding, "combined, a sharp rise in interest rates, high inflation and a rapidly weakening currency exacerbate the government's debt

challenges".

"Without external support, the government's policy levers to arrest a worsening macroeconomic backdrop and heavier debt burden are extremely limited; the government's small revenue base, largely and increasingly absorbed by interest payments, further intensifies the policy dilemma between competing objectives, including servicing debt while meeting essential social needs. As a result, the risk of an eventual

default has increased", it pointed out.

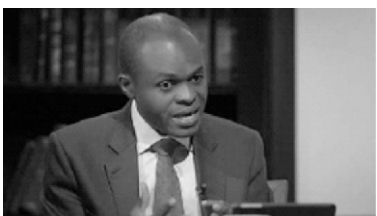
Ghana is at the IMF for US\$3 billion to help the country navigate through the hostile economic crisis it finds itself in as a result of the adverse effects of the deadly coronavirus pandemic and the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

President Akufo-Addo has stated, on occasion, that "we have decided to seek the collaboration of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to repair, in the short run, our public finances, which have taken a severe hit in very recent times as a result, whilst we



**Former President John Dramani Mahama**

## Akufo-Addo Must Resign, He Is Giving Us Too Much Headache – Martin Kpebu



*Renowned legal practitioner, Martin Kpebu*

**R**enowned legal practitioner, Martin Kpebu, has called on President Nana Akufo-Addo to resign for his failure to handle the menace of illegal small-scale mining popularly called *galamsey*. According to him, the president has proven that he does not have the capacity to hold the highest office of the land because he also seems to be unaware of happenings in the country in spite of all the security briefings he receives. He intimated that rather than

taking action on the information he has received on people causing havoc in the country through '*galamsey*', he is rather holding meetings, myjoyonline.com reports.

"As we sit here, in every part of Ghana, the National Investigations Bureau (NIB) has officers all over. In every district of Ghana, there is a NIB officer. So, as you are walking around, he is also walking in the society and watching.

"So, he knows. Look, the President can't say he is not being briefed about this thing. He is just sleeping on the job...I don't know how many times we have to call on him.

"He just has to resign. This man is giving us too much

headache. He has to check out...he should just resign. That is the best thing. He has shown clearly that he is not competent... we can't fight *galamsey*... every time, he is always reactive...always reactive," Martin Kpebu is quoted to have said on Joy FM's Super Morning Show on Thursday (October 6). The lawyer made these remarks while reacting to some of the utterances President Nana Akufo-Addo made at a meeting with the National House of Chiefs and some Municipal Metropolitan and District Chief Executives (MMDCEs) on '*galamsey*' in Kumasi.

At the meeting, President Nana Akufo-Addo refuted suggestions that his

government is not committed to the fight against illegal small-scale mining - *galamsey*.

According to Akufo-Addo, his government has been committed to the fight against the menace since his first day in office and its determination to curb it even cost his party; the New Patriotic Party (NPP) some votes in the 2020 General Elections.

The president intimated that the votes he and his party lost showed that he really put his presidency on the line to fight '*galamsey*'.

"Since I took office on January 7th, 2017, nearly six years ago, I have made it a central feature of my presidency to lead in the fight

to rid our country of this menace, which we all now call *galamsey*. Indeed, it was an important aspect of my inaugural address that day. It has not been easy; it has not been popular and we have not gotten the immediate results that I was looking for.

"Indeed, in the last election of 2020, my stance on the issue cost my party and I significant losses in the mining communities. It turned out that my statement that I was putting my presidency on the line in the fight against *galamsey* was neither bumbazed nor reckless. It was the simple truth," he said.



# INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORT

## Compiled By Peoples Dispatch

### Dutch Socialists Demand Solutions To Cost Of Living Crisis



**Protest mobilization in Hague. (Photo: via SP) The Socialist Party has demanded a cap on energy prices, an increase in the hourly minimum wage, and taxes on the excess profits made by energy companies**

The Socialist Party (SP) in the Netherlands has intensified its campaign demanding effective measures from the government to tackle the ongoing cost of living crisis. In the House of Representatives, socialist leader Lilian Marijnissen demanded that the government

lower energy prices, increase minimum wages, and tax corporate profits. She said that the energy sector should be in public hands.

The SP had organized a massive demonstration in Hague under the banner: 'Enough is enough! Lower the energy bill and grab the corporate

profits.' Due to widespread protests and public outrage, the Mark Rutte-led center-right government is considering a cap on energy prices. Meanwhile, major energy companies in the Netherlands have announced an increase in tariffs that will come into effect this month.

People across Europe have been reeling under an acute cost of living crisis marked by soaring inflation in food and fuel prices. Due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war and sanctions imposed by the EU and the US on Russian gas exports to Europe, energy prices have skyrocketed in European countries. Profiteering by multinational energy producers and suppliers despite this crisis has worsened the situation, including in the Netherlands. To tackle the soaring inflation, SP

has proposed an emergency [plan](#) to increase people's purchasing power. It includes increasing the hourly minimum wage to 15 euros (USD 14.54) and indexing pensions with inflation. The party has also called for freezing rents, ensuring affordable health care and groceries, and lowering the tax on fuel.

SP stated, "More and more people are struggling to pay the bills. While costs are rising, our wages, benefits and pensions have been lagging behind for years. Groceries, the energy bill, refueling and the rent, it is all becoming more expensive so that more and more people are in trouble." "This while the economy is growing, big companies are making huge profits and the super-rich are only getting richer. This creates greater inequality and more and

more problems for people. That is why we need a contingency plan now; the costs must be reduced!" it added.

Arnout Hoekstra from the SP leadership told *Peoples Dispatch* (PD) that, "last week the government announced a compensation for energy costs for households. But at this moment, it is still quite unsure what it will mean for workers' families, and [it is] unsure how much the energy companies and their shareholders – who make big profits during this energy crisis – have to pay."

Working class sections across Europe have been organizing protests with the demand that their governments tackle the cost of living crisis. They are demanding increased wages, lowering of energy and food bills, and taxes on corporations that are profiteering from the crisis.

### Conservatives Led By Boyko Borisov Take Lead In Bulgarian Elections

In the snap elections held to the 240-seat Bulgarian National Assembly last Sunday, October 2, the pro-European Union (EU) conservative coalition of the Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria (GERB) and the Union of Democratic Forces (SDS) led by former Prime Minister Boyko Borisov has emerged as the single largest bloc with 67 seats (+8) and 25.33% of the votes. The pro-EU liberal coalition We Continue the Change (PP) led by former Prime Minister Kiril Petkov managed to secure 53 seats (-14) with 20.20% votes. Meanwhile, eurosceptic, nationalist groups like Revival and Bulgarian Rise made significant gains, securing 27 (+14) and 12 (+12) seats, respectively. The populist camp of There Is Such a People (ITN) lost all of its 25 seats from the previous assembly; the center-left Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) ended up with 25 seats (-1); the liberal coalition Democratic Bulgaria won 20 seats (+4); and the Turkish minority-led Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS) managed 36 seats (+2). The elections were held following the

[ouster](#) of the Petkov-led coalition government through a no-confidence vote in the National Assembly in June this year. Petkov's coalition lost its majority when ITN withdrew support to the coalition over disagreements on the lifting of the Bulgarian veto on North Macedonia's accession to the EU. These were the third snap polls to take place in Bulgaria since the inconclusive general elections of April 4, 2021. The GERB-led coalition under Borisov which ruled Bulgaria from 2009 to 2021 was ousted from power in the general elections of April 2021. Under Borisov's rule, racism, xenophobia, corruption, attacks on the press, and organized crime spiked in the country. Anti-corruption [protests](#) started in July 2020 demanding his resignation. The protests ended only in April 2021 when the four-year term of his cabinet ended with the formal resignation of the third Borisov government. Cashing in on the anti-corruption protests against Borisov, ITN, led by Bulgarian television celebrity Slavi Trifonov, [emerged](#) as a major political bloc in the two consecutive elections held after Borisov's ouster – in April

and July 2021. However, it failed to form a stable government as it lacked a simple majority and failed to form post-poll coalitions. In the elections held in November 2021, Petkov came to power. ITN supported the Petkov-led coalition from December 2021 to July 2022. However, its opportunistic maneuvers ultimately led to the fall of the government, perpetuating the political instability prevailing since April 2021 and forcing the country to go for fresh snap polls on October 2. Critics point out that Borisov is now set to return due to the disunity among the populist and liberal sections in the country. On the other hand, the influence and popularity of the center-left Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) is also declining, reportedly due to rifts in the party and its unpopular leadership. The ongoing Russia-Ukraine war has also caused serious ruptures within Bulgarian society, with considerable polarization between pro-EU and pro-Russian sections. In the latest elections, there was a surge in support for eurosceptic, nationalist parties due to sizable sections of Russophiles among the Bulgarian

population.

The ongoing cost of living crisis marked by high prices of fuel and food and the prevailing political instability with back-to-back inconclusive elections has caused severe resentment toward the political parties, especially towards ITN which failed to form a stable government after Borisov's exit. The widespread public disenchantment is visible in the extremely low voter turnout for this election at just 39.40%.

Even though Borisov's conservative coalition has emerged as the single largest bloc, it still needs support from at least two major political blocs to form a stable government. According to several analysts, it is highly unlikely that liberals and socialists will support a Borisov-led government. Borisov may be forced to seek the support of pro-Russian, eurosceptic nationalists, or the Turkish minority-led DPS. If he is unable to do so, Bulgaria may plunge into more political chaos in the midst of an acute cost of living crisis.

Prior to the polls, on September 27, Bulgarian trade union Podkrepa stated, "Bulgaria remains at the bottom of the EU in income, wages and, first and above all, inequality in society. Immigration, especially labor, remains at high levels and undermines the future of the nation. We are in the midst of another election, but most politicians and mainstream political forces still don't see the 'elephant' in the room. They prefer to look for the problem in an under-functional 'democratic' system and 'rule of law', circumventing the proven fact that working democracies and law-based states are social states."

"Today we want our and European politicians to work solutions against the deepening crisis, to protect working people and the weak in society. We have no intention to pay for other people's mistakes, mania, phobias, as well as for anyone's political, ideological and geopolitical obsessions! Not on our backs too!" added the union.



# Alarm Blows In Gomoa Fetteh!

## ...As Chief Is Sworn Into Akyempim Traditional Council In Bizarre Circumstances

Principal kingmakers and accredited elders of Gomoa Fetteh Royal Stool in the Central Region have exposed the Gomoa Fetteh Mankrado, Nana Kwesi Kwansah II popularly known as Kwasi Alhaji and challenged his legality to ascend to the throne of Gomoa Fetteh Royal Mankrado Stool. They rhetorically asked if Kwasi Alhaji claimed to be the legitimate person to ascend the throne, why the ceremony to officially swear him into the folds of chiefs and traditional office holders of Gomoa Akyempim Traditional Council was traditionally and customarily performed in a private house of the Paramount Chief (Omanhene) of Gomoa

Akyempim Traditional Area, Obrifo Ahunako Ahor Ankobia II at Buduatta. The chieftaincy brouhaha was reported by Onua FM on October 6, 2022, when Royal Secretary to the Gomoa Fetteh Stool, Nana Essel, and self-styled Gomoa Fetteh Mankrado (Chief), Kwasi Alhaji who was fingered as the kingpin of chieftaincy issues in Gomoa Fetteh and its surrounding communities took a jab at each other in attempts to legitimize their claims. Nana Essel asserted that "Gomoa is a Fante state, thus Akan and our succession are matrilineal. Therefore, Gomoa Fetteh's customs are founded on the

aforementioned principles and any attempt to deceive the general public, particularly residents, businesses, landowners, and developers in Gomoa Fetteh and its enclaves is criminal and a recipe for the continued hardships of our people for several decades." In a response, Kwasi Alhaji himself refused to speak directly on the matter and assigned his "aide" to comment. Following this development, Nana Manso also known simply as Eric addressed the allegations against the embattled Kwasi Alhaji. "Kwasi Alhaji has been properly nominated and installed as Mankrado of

Gomoa Fetteh. He has advanced to the Gomoa Akyempim Traditional Council which is the Paramountcy to swear allegiance to the Omanhene, Obrifo Ahunako Ahor Ankobia II. We did all this following the Chieftaincy Act," he added.

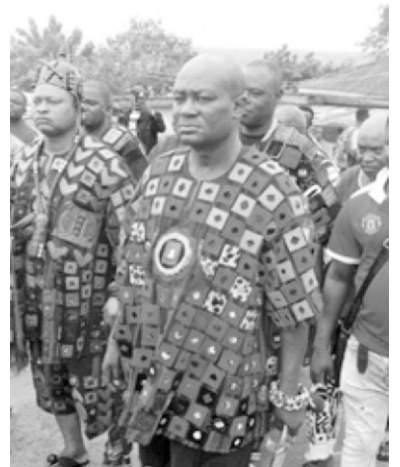
To bring transparency to the matter, he noted that 'we followed up with the Gomoa Akyempim Traditional Council in Gomoa Assin.

He noted that "To our dismay, the Palace was closed as a result of an ongoing destoolment of the Omanhene himself, which is pending at the Central Regional House of Chiefs and led by the Omanhemaa, Obaatanpa Ama Eduwa I, Principal Ebusuapanyin of the Asona Royal Family in Buduatta as well as Elders and Divisional Chiefs in the traditional area.

After interacting with some residents, it was exposed that before the customary rites performed by the Kingmakers of the Gomoa Akyempim Traditional Area to destool the Omanhene, Obrifo Ahunako Ahor Ankobia II, he had abandoned the Akyempim Palace which is the seat of the traditional government.

This paper further contacted the Guantuahen, Nana Osuan Asare who doubles as the Chief of Gomoa Abonyin and revered member of the Traditional Council to ascertain all the claims made by both parties.

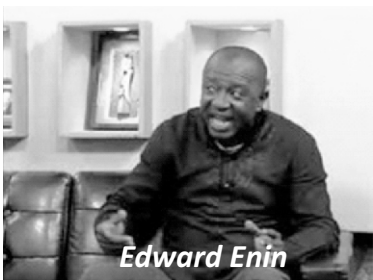
He added "Swearing in ceremonies are sacred and



always performed at Akyempim which is the traditional capital (Ahenkro) of the traditional area. He said "The council, therefore, notifies all members who are partakers in such sacred ceremonies, particularly our Omanhemaa.

This paper contacted Obaatanpa Ama Eduwa I to find out if she was aware of such a ceremony and unfortunately she is not aware of any such event. Rather, she reminded this paper that there were allegations of the Omanhene swearing in a de facto group of people who are well known for various misdeeds in the Fetteh enclaves and shared videos of the Omanhene swearing one Kwasi Alhaji and Kofi Baah in his private residence at Buduatta with the help of some of his followers." Nana Guantuahen added that the incident is part of the reasons why the Omanhene has been traditionally removed and a destoolment petition of over 10 charges has been leveled against him at the Central Regional House of Chiefs in Cape Coast.

## Former NPP MP Blasts Ministers, MMDCE's, Party Over Galamsey



Edward Enin

from front page

illegal mining and that the menace of land and water destruction will continue unabated if the President continues to look unconcern. Speaking on Okay FM, he noted that about 99 percent of government officials including MMDCEs are all involved in illegal mining activity and are causing heavy destruction to forest reserves and water bodies. Most of the MMDCEs in the mining communities are themselves involved in the Galamsey operations and contributing to the

destruction of the lands and water bodies. "In my opinion, that first Inter-Ministerial Committee set up was wrong . . . Prof Kwabena Frimpong Boateng's son was involved in the business in Obuasi . . . some Ministers on the committee had no business there because they didn't know how the Galamsey business operated," he said, adding that, "Ghanaians know what I'm talking about . . . about 99% of MMDCEs in areas where Galamsey is done are all involved in Galamsey . . ." he lamented. "I've gone round and taken videos of their activities . . . when I give it to my party people they don't do anything about it and now I will release those videos . . . I've told the regional Minister, Simon Osei Mensah and Duker (Deputy Lands Minister) and send them videos but I've seen that I'm just doing a foolish job," he said. He said what the NPP government is doing and saying about the menace is laughable.

"They are just joking," he added. He said he was very happy the Birim river has overflowed and displaced the indigenes. " . . . It is good, for me I'm really happy, very very happy . . . that is where the President hails from and if this thing is going on with your DCE's involved, Ministers are involved, people at the Jubilee are involved and nobody is being sacked, nobody is being punished this will be the results and I wish the river flow affects some of their family members," he angrily blasted party officials. "Those in charge they don't know 'foko', they don't know the operations, they don't know 'foko' . . . it is so sad," he said, adding that, "President Akufo-Addo should sit up". He added that the largest opposition NDC is not an alternative to fight this menace when they come to power, hence the NPP have to straighten their party and fight this canker to save Ghana.

# Ukraine's Revenge On The West

By M. K. Bhadrakumar

The Russian Duma's ratification of the annexation of four regions of Ukraine (Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics, as well as the Kherson and Zaporozhye Regions) and the adoption of the relevant laws thereof creates a new dynamic and will take time to create a new balance of forces on the ground.

Meanwhile, the external environment is also phenomenally transforming. The deepening energy crisis in Europe following the sabotage of the Nord Stream gas pipelines becomes a serious contradiction.

Thus, a complex situation presents itself against the backdrop of a massive Russian military build-up around Ukraine in the Kharkov region and in the southern Black Sea region with long convoys of armor reportedly heading toward Crimea from Russia.

The Duma's unanimous ratification of the accession of four regions to Russia on Monday was to be expected; the relevant legislation was duly ratified on Tuesday by the Federation Council (the upper house of the parliament), and President Putin [signed them into law](#). The annexed Ukrainian regions have become part of Russia.

The Duma approved the government's proposals on the establishment of the new regions' borders. The relevant treaties outline that the borders adjacent to the territory of a foreign country will be Russia's new state border. Plainly put, the old boundaries of the Soviet era are being restored in those regions. The determination of the boundaries has security implications. In the Donbass, there are vast areas that still remain under the control of the Ukrainian forces.

Liman city in Donetsk Republic was captured by the Ukrainian forces only three days ago. The Ukrainian incursions into Kherson continue. Heavy fighting is reported. Evidently, much unfinished business remains for Moscow.

The Zaporozhye Region (which also happens to be an important littoral

region on the Azov Sea and forms a part of what Russians historically call "Novorossiya"), is another priority where the capital city of the oblast itself is not yet under Russian control.

In the emergent situation, Ukraine President Zelensky formally applied for Ukraine's NATO membership on an expeditious basis, but within hours, the alliance poured cold water on it explaining that any decision will require support from all 30 member states, signaling, in effect, that there isn't going to be any direct NATO intervention in Ukraine.

However, the [White House readout](#) on President Biden's call with Zelensky on Monday mentioned a new \$625 million security assistance package by Washington that includes additional weapons and equipment, including HIMARS, artillery systems and ammunition, and armored vehicles. Biden "pledged to continue supporting Ukraine as it defends itself from Russian aggression for as long as it takes."

Later, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that "Recent developments... only strengthens our resolve." He added, "The capabilities we are delivering are carefully calibrated to make the most difference on the battlefield and strengthen Ukraine's hand at the negotiating table when the time is right."

The Russian military command will probably have to reset the parameters of the special military operations since its forces will henceforth be safeguarding the country's territorial integrity and sovereignty. What form its takes remains to be seen. So far, the actual Russian deployment has been less than 100,000 troops. Certainly, the induction of 300,000 troops with previous military experience will impact the overall military balance to Russia's advantage. Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu has said that another 70,000 men have also volunteered, which will put the total strength of the additional forces at around 370,000. Now, that is a huge increase.

Therefore, it is entirely conceivable that the old pattern of "grinding" the Ukrainian forces may change and the objective will be to end the war decisively.

The US decision to set up a command center outside Ukraine (in Germany) seems to anticipate Russian attacks on command centers in Kiev and elsewhere with much bigger use of airpower.

A point of no return is fast approaching from where Russia will have no alternative but to push for a regime change in Kiev and pave the way for an altogether new Ukrainian leadership that shakes off the Anglo-American grip and is willing to negotiate to end the war.

The attention in Europe is turning more and more towards the economic crisis with looming double-digit inflation and recession. The growing public discontent is turning into protests in many European countries already. The crisis can only deepen once winter sets in.

Conceivably, the shift in the popular mood may prompt the European governments to concentrate on their domestic issues. The most ardent votary of open-ended war with Russia is Britain, but Prime Minister Liz Truss is fighting for political survival and the Conservatives have forfeited their mandate to rule.

In Germany, the center-right Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union opposition bloc in the Bundestag stalled a motion urging the government to "immediately" allow the export of German battle tanks and infantry fighting vehicles to Ukraine. *Politico* reported that "A vote on weapons deliveries in the Bundestag would have risked revealing fatal cracks in the government unity and could even have led to a defeat of (Chancellor Olaf) Scholz in parliament."

The German government also faces mounting pressure from the Eastern European allies. The *Foreign Policy* magazine in Washington wrote last week, "In the eyes of Berlin's NATO allies in Eastern Europe, particularly



Russian Duma ratified the accession of four Ukrainian territories into the Federation, Moscow, October 3, 2022. Three main power centers within the Eurozone (Germany, France and Italy) and Britain are entering a period of deep crisis. Their capacity or level of interest to fight Russia in Ukraine is getting severely limited

the countries that border Russia, Germany, the economic and political power center of Europe, isn't doing nearly enough. And the longer it delays, the more it risks a long-term diplomatic fracture with those allies in the East."

In this fluid situation, the sabotage of the Nord Stream gas pipeline dovetails into the energy crisis in Europe and threatens European countries with "de-industrialization." For Germany, in particular, the country's economic model is riveted on the availability of abundant gas supplies from Russia at cheap prices supplied through pipelines. Clearly, the sabotage of the Nord Stream has monumental implications.

Europe needs energy security in the short and medium term without also wrecking climate targets. It means heightened geopolitical sensitivity. On Monday, Russian energy giant Gazprom proposed to European gas customers that part of the damaged Nord Stream network could still transport fuel – but only on the newly constructed Nord Stream 2.

A Gazprom statement in its Telegram account said that one of the three lines of the Nord Stream 2 remains unaffected and the gas giant has lowered the pressure to inspect the link for damage and potential leaks. Nord Stream 2 has a shipment capacity of 55 billion cubic meters per year, which means its line B could deliver as much as 27.5 billion

cubic meters per year to Germany across the Baltic Sea. However, the Nord Stream 2 requires EU approval, which is problematic given the tensions between Brussels and Moscow.

The ascendancy of the Atlanticists in the echelons of power in Berlin and their nexus with the EU bureaucrats in Brussels has so far worked splendidly for Washington. But the ground beneath the feet is shifting, as the dramatic turn in Italy's politics shows. In France, President Macron is immobilized, lacking a parliamentary majority to legislate, and is being worn down by serial crises. What all this means is that the three main power centers within the Eurozone (Germany, France and Italy) and Britain are entering a period of deep crisis. Their capacity or level of interest to fight Russia in Ukraine is getting severely limited.

Looking back at the 2014 coup in Kiev and the West's rupture with Russia, a new geopolitical landscape is forming in Europe. The [European Political Community summit](#) which began at the Prague Castle today, serves to highlight that this is a Kafkaesque moment – one last hurrah for European integration. This must be Ukraine's revenge on Europe for staging the 2014 coup, which cut the umbilical cord binding it with Russia.

**MK Bhadrakumar** is a former diplomat. He was India's ambassador to Uzbekistan and Turkey. The views are personal.



# NDC Lashes Akufo-Addo Govt Over Galamsey ...Calls For Prosecution Of Appointees, Party Members, Others

their lawyers. He was also heard in the audio giving instructions to someone to bring in Chinese miners to engage in galamsey in exchange for cash. This strong evidence has been available to President Akufo-Addo and people at the forefront of the galamsey fight, yet they have failed to crack the whip. President Akufo-Addo's comment on this matter during his engagement with MMDCEs and some Chiefs in Kumasi yesterday shows clearly that he hasn't repented from shielding his officials who are engaged in illegal mining and proves what walking contradiction he is, as he continues to skirt around this very important issue. Having admitted yesterday that he was aware of reports of the galamsey activities of his DCE for Bosome Freho, Yaw Danso, President Akufo-Addo's claim that his errant DCE has lost his mother and would be invited to Accra for questioning at a later date, clearly betrays the President's lack of genuine commitment to punish his own appointees who are behind this illicit business. The Ghanaian people are simply tired of the President's cocktail of empty and useless rhetorics on this subject of galamsey. We are saying to him today, that it is either we begin to see action on his part or he should simply spare us his empty talk.

#### 4. Compromised Operation Vanguard, Operation Galamstop and Operation Halt after \$3 Million spent on Drones.

Ladies and gentlemen of the press, at the heart of President Akufo-Addo's failed fight against illegal mining has been a huge expenditure on various military and sometimes joint security operations. From Operation Vanguard to Operation Halt and Galamstop, several millions of Ghana Cedis have been expended on procuring logistics, feeding security personnel and ostensibly reclaiming lands in the name of fighting illegal mining. Despite the huge public funds that have been committed to the fight over the years, government has turned a blind eye on various reports of bribe-taking and

extortion by security personnel embedded in these task forces. Instead of combating illegal mining, security personnel have been caught on camera time and again guarding galamsey sites and protecting illegal Chinese miners in areas such as Tontokrom and Bopotenten in the Amansie areas of the Ashanti Region.

One such instance as revealed by a JoyNews report involved a Company known as Heritage Imperial deep in the Manso forest enclave of the Ashanti Region. The report revealed that military men belonging to the Ghana Armed Forces, assisted by members of the NPP vigilante group, Delta Force, were actively offering protection to a galamsey site.

These evidence have been available to the President Akufo-Addo and the powers that be, yet no action was taken to rid the task force of such criminally-minded officers. No wonder the fight has been a futile one and the various task forces have been a complete waste of taxpayers money.

Ladies and gentlemen, the former Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, Hon. John Peter Amewu, under whose leadership the galamsey fight began made an observation that members of the Operation Vanguard Team had been compromised by illegal miners. His statements were corroborated by then Eastern Regional Minister, Hon. Eric Daffour.

Aside these happenings in the early years of the Akufo-Addo/Bawumia government, which have been indelibly inscribed in the womb of time, we also do recall that some chiefs in the Amansie area in the Ashanti Region had cause to accuse then head of the Forestry Commission, the late Kwadwo Owusu Afriyie, aka Sir John and other high-ranking government officials of fronting illegal mining activities in that area.

Also, as recent as 27th April, 2022, the Deputy Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, who also doubles as the MP for Tarkwa Nsuem, George Mireku Duker was accused of his involvement in a dispute between two illegal small scale mining gangs, the Okobeng

gang on one hand and the Mireku Duker side on the other hand. The leader of the group alleged to be affiliated with the MP died on the spot from a gunshot, while the leader of the Okobeng gang sustained deep cutlass wounds on the head and ears and was rushed to the Korle-Bu teaching hospital. The Deputy Minister and MP for Tarkwa was never sanctioned by President Akufo-Addo for allowing illegal mining activities in his backyard let alone actively encouraging and associating with same. Today, the Pataaho forest in Dompim, the hometown of Mireku Duker who doubles as a Chief in the area has become the hotbed of illegal mining, while he, who is supposed to be championing this government's so-called fight against "Galamsey" looks on unconcerned.

Friends from the media, all the cases we have outlined point to an indisputable fact that the so-called fight against illegal mining under President Akufo-Addo has long been a wobbly, compromised one that is bound to fail. President Akufo-Addo has taken no interest in investigating these reports and bringing the named errant appointees to book. The only reasonable explanation for this strange reluctance of President Akufo-Addo to act on these cases of official complicity in "galamsey" is that President Akufo-Addo is himself complicit and benefits from the illicit "galamsey" trade of his appointees.

We all recall how under the leadership of Prof. Frimpong Boateng as Environment Minister, about \$3 million of taxpayers money was spent on procuring drones for the use of these taskforces. Can the President tell the nation the whereabouts of these drones and what use they have been put to?

5. Chairman Wontumi and activities of his Akonta Mining Limited in the Tano Nimiri Forest Reserve Distinguished friends from the media, we are pretty sure you have followed recent events

pertaining to the illegal mining activities of a company belonging to Bernard Antwi Bosiako, aka Chairman Wontumi, who is the Ashanti Regional Chairman of the ruling New Patriotic Party. The said Company, known as Akonta Mining Limited, is reported to have been engaging in extensive illegal mining activities in the Tano Nimiri Forest Reserve located at Samreboi in the Western Region, without any mining lease, mineral right, and/or permit to undertake any mining operations in the Tano Nimiri Forest Reserve. This fact has been confirmed by the Minerals Commission and the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, yet Wontumi is still walking free.

As earlier revealed, Chairman Wontumi is one of the biggest and leading galamsey kingpins in this Akufo-Addo/Bawumia government, whose galamsey footprints have left vast devastation in various forest reserves in Ashanti, Eastern, Western and Western North Regions among others. Emboldened by the nonchalance and lukewarm posturing of the President, NPP bandits and thugs who now work for Chairman Wontumi had the effrontery to engage in an open armed combat with the anti-Galamsey task force of the Okyehene at Asaman Tamfoe in the Eastern Region two weeks ago. This is how brazen Wontumi has become in his indiscriminate "galamsey" activities and destruction of the environment under the watch President Akufo-Addo and Vice President, Alhaji Bawumia.

As a leading figure within the NPP, we can understand why President Akufo-Addo has refused to crack the whip on Wontumi's destruction of the environment, because this conduct ties perfectly into the grand agenda of "Party Hia Sika", which aims at mobilizing money for the New Patriotic Party through illegal mining activities.

#### 6. The Aisha Huang Debacle

Ladies and gentlemen of the press, the final nail in the coffin of Akufo-Addo's failed galamsey fight must certainly be the ignominious Aisha Huang debacle. The Aisha Huang debacle, as putrefying as it is, undoubtedly sums up the Akufo-Addo/Bawumia government's fight against galamsey, which has been one of hypocrisy, double standards and complicity. We are sure, that you are all aware of how the Chinese woman, Aisha Huang, who was arrested in May 2017, and charged for undertaking illegal mining in Ghana and allegedly deported from the country in December 2018, 'miraculously' reemerged in Ghana.

Aisha Huang, who gained extreme notoriety for her galamsey activities and was tagged as the "Galamsey Queen", is said to have been in Ghana all this while and was back to her illicit galamsey business until she was recently arrested after one of her partners reported her to the Police.

Indeed, many, including us in the NDC casted doubt over whether or not she was deported from the country in the first place when she was first arrested in 2017. As fate will have it, the chickens came home to roost when in a recent interview with Stone City FM in the Volta Region, on Monday, 12th September, 2022, truth mistakenly fell out of President Akufo-Addo's mouth. In response to a question on the re-arrest of Aisha Huang, the President said: "I'm not sure whether she was in fact deported or whether she fled the country the first time, and has now come back".

Much as the above statement from President Akufo-Addo was tragic, it revealed the inner truth and naked underbelly of the so-called fight against galamsey which has been nothing but lip service, half-hearted effort and complicity.

Having been arraigned before court once again and charged, it remains to be seen whether the Akufo-Addo/Bawumia government will finally clothe itself in some glory, by

# NDC Lashes Akufo-Addo Govt Over Galamsey ...Calls For Prosecution Of Appointees, Party Members, Others

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prosecuting the notorious Aisha Huang to serve as a deterrent to others. But judging from events in times past, we are not in the least hopeful for any positive outcome. Only time will tell.

## CONCLUSION

Ladies and Gentlemen of the media, as we have amply demonstrated, the so-called fight against galamsey by the Akufo-Addo/Bawumia/NPP government is a scam and has been a lost battle from day one. This is because, there has never been any genuine commitment or political will on the part of the President to combat the menace. History has shown that any time a leader sets out to fight a certain crime in society, be it illegal mining, corruption, drug trafficking or any other vice, there is bound to be resistance from dark forces, including those who benefit directly from those crimes. However, what distinguishes leaders who succeed from those who fail is the genuine political will not only to bring sunshine on those crimes, but to severely punish the culprits in order to serve as

a deterrent to like-minded persons who may contemplate those crimes. President Akufo-Addo has proven to be a leader who has specialized in talk without backing same with deeds. Today, our beloved country stands at a cross-road of unprecedented economic mess and unprecedented environmental degradation under the watch of President Akufo-Addo and Alhaji Bawumia. Instead of accepting responsibility for his failed "Galamsey" fight, President Akufo-Addo aided by his Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, Samuel Abu Jinapor have resorted to shifting the blame to the Chieftaincy institution. This latest attempt by the Akufo-Addo government to blame the failed "Galamsey" fight on Chiefs and community leaders is shameful to say the least and must be condemned in no uncertain terms. It is about time President Akufo-Addo understood the important duties of the high office he currently occupies. He is the President of the Republic

and the Commander-in-Chief of the Ghana Armed forces. As President, he has authority and control over the security services and coercive powers of State. The mineral resources of the country are vested in him in trust for the people. And therefore he has the ultimate responsibility to ensure compliance with the mineral and mining laws of the country and the prosecution of those who breach same. More importantly, only he has powers to hire and fire appointees of his who engage in illegal mining. No attempt to shift or share the blame for his failed "Galamsey" fight will wash. Mr. President, leaders are elected to solve problems, but you have only come to create more problems for the country only to turn around to massage the problems with flowery speeches and empty promises. Ghanaians are tired of your flowery speeches and useless rhetorics. Your so-called fight against galamsey has been a spectacular failure, and the only way to salvage it is for you to man up and finally begin to crack the whip on your errant appointees and NPP functionaries who are neck-deep in the "galamsey"

business.

Mr. President, we demand the following urgent, concrete actions from you if you want Ghanaians to take you seriously:

1. We demand the immediate prosecution of all government functionaries and NPP officials who have engaged themselves in illegal mining (galamsey) activities such as Charles Bissie, Chairman Wontumi, Andy Owusu, Ekow Awusi, Prof. Frimpom Boateng among others. This will be the first step to redemption and serve as a deterrent to other people within your government and party. You need to send a clear signal to Ghanaians that anyone caught in "galamsey" will be dealt with without fear or favour, regardless of party colours.
2. We demand that all the so-called illegal mining companies like the Akonta Mining Limited which belongs to Chairman Wontumi and Heritage Imperial Mining Company which belongs to Mr. Donald Enstuah, a known financier of the NPP who have invaded forest reserves without any mining leases or permits, must be closed down and prosecuted. The assets of these companies must be confiscated and their owners surcharged with costs of the destruction of those forest reserves.
3. We demand that all security

personnel complicit in illegal mining activities should be made to face internal investigations and discharged from the various services to serve as deterrent to others.

Mr. President, until you undertake the above actions faithfully, your so-called renewed fight against "galamsey" will remain a mirage. And you will be remembered by posterity as the President who promoted illegal mining by his appointees, party functionaries and their foreign collaborators and supervised the worst destruction of our environment. Before I conclude, let me make the point that the NDC is not against mining in principle. What we are against is illegal mining, particularly mining in water bodies and irresponsible mining that destroys the environment without any reclamation. What we are vehemently against is hypocrisy of government officials, who after destroying the businesses of legal small miners, have turned around and engaged in the menace with brazen impunity.

Thank you for your attention ladies and gentlemen of the media and may God bless our homeland Ghana.

Signed,  
**SAMMY GYAMFI ESQ.**  
**NATIONAL**  
**COMMUNICATION OFFICER**  
**NDC**

## Ugandan President Fires Son From Military Role After 'Capture Nairobi' Tweet



Latest in series of provocative tweets leads to removal of Lt Gen Muhoozi Kainerugaba as Infantry Commander

The Ugandan President, Yoweri Museveni, has fired his son as commander of the country's infantry forces after the son tweeted an unprovoked threat to capture the capital of neighbouring Kenya, drawing widespread concern in East Africa.

Lt Gen Muhoozi Kainerugaba, labelled "the tweeting general" of Uganda, in recent months had sparked anger

among some Ugandans who see his frequent tweets as provocative and sometimes dangerous. He has tweeted in support of the Tigray rebels fighting Ethiopian federal troops, and voiced support for violent rebels fighting in eastern Congo. He said all Africans supported Russia in its war in Ukraine. Bizarrely, he recently said he was offering 100 long-horned cattle – apparently as bride price – for Italy's incoming female prime minister. Some of Kainerugaba's supporters say his tweets are attempts at humour and should not be taken seriously. But many others see a bigger problem. As an army officer, he

is constitutionally barred from engaging in partisan politics and some Ugandans point out that any other soldier tweeting like Kainerugaba would be court martialled. "It wouldn't take us, my army and me, two weeks to capture Nairobi," he tweeted last Monday. That threat to seize the capital of Kenya went too far for his father, an authoritarian leader who has held power since 1986. The Kenyan president, William Ruto, who took power last month, is friendly with Museveni, whom he described as the region's "father" during his inauguration. Kainerugaba's tweets

exasperated many Kenyans, and the foreign minister tweeted on Tuesday that he had a meeting with the Ugandan ambassador. Uganda's foreign ministry dismissed Kainerugaba's tweets in a statement that spoke of a "harmonious relationship that we value". Kainerugaba, the pillar of his father's personal security apparatus, has been the de facto head of Uganda's military, with his allies strategically deployed in command positions across the security services, according to observers. Although he was sacked from his post as head of Uganda's infantry forces, Kainerugaba was still promoted to a five-

star general and will remain a military adviser to his father, according to a statement issued by the military on Tuesday. He was replaced as infantry commander by Lt Gen Kayanja Muhanga. Many Ugandans believe Kainerugaba is being groomed to replace Museveni as president, allegations the president has long denied. Kainerugaba's associates describe him as a dedicated military officer who often eschews ostentatious displays of power and wealth. He attended military schools in the US and Britain before taking charge of a presidential guard unit that has since been expanded into an elite group of special forces.