

# COCOA

## Minority Warns Govt, COCOBOD Over Attempts To Slash 2022 Prices



**Joseph Boahen Aidoo, CEO of COCOBOD**



**Dr. Cassiel Ato Forson**

**T**he Minority Caucus in Ghana's Parliament has warned the government and the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) against any attempt to short-change cocoa farmers in the country by announcing prices that are below GH¢1000 per bag of

cocoa for the 2022 cocoa season. The minority in a statement issued by its Ranking Member on the Finance Committee of Parliament, Dr. Cassiel Ato Forson said even though the 2022 cocoa season has already started the government

has failed to set the price of cocoa. He revealed that the unprecedented delay on the part of COCOBOD is due to the depreciation of the Cedi as it seeks to slash prices.

*Cont. on page 3*

## Strike Looms

**...As UTAG, TEWU, Others Give Govt Ultimatum Against October 13**



**Dr. Yaw osei Adutwum, Minister of Education**

**A**ll four labour unions in Ghana's public tertiary education space have given the government a week's ultimatum to resolve all their concerns regarding the variation of service in the face of the present hostile

*Cont. on page 2*



**Gwollu Paramount Chief Laments Effects Of Slavery On Natives And Sissala**

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## Fascism Returns To Europe's Center Stage

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# The INSIGHT

## EDITORIAL

### DEAL WITH THIS HEALTH MENACE

**T**he revelation that there is upsurge in stroke cases among young people per records at the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital in Kumasi is very deeply worrying.

There is clearly no doubt that non-communicable or lifestyle diseases appear to have fast taken over from communicable which used to be our bane as a country. According to the Neurologist, Dr. Fred Stephen Sarfo those as young as 13 are now developing the condition which one suffers when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or bursts resulting in lack of blood to the brain and thus death of the brain cells.

According to the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital it records between 800 and one thousand cases, each year with more than 300 dying and the rest becoming permanently disabled.

With its high risk factors being hypertension, diabetes, high alcohol intake and lack of exercise among others, there is the need for improved or change in lifestyle including other health measures to adequately deal with the situation. Stress is also another causative or factor and health authorities need to intensify public education to reverse the tide. The revelation that there is upsurge in stroke cases among young people per records at the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital in Kumasi is very deeply worrying.

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# Strike Looms

## ...As UTAG, TEWU, Others Give Govt Ultimatum Against October 13

from front page

Ghana (UTAG), Tertiary Education Workers Union (TEWU), Senior Staff Association of Universities of Ghana (SSA-UoG), and the Ghana Association of University Administration (GAUA) gave the government up to a week to resolve their concerns.

**The strike is scheduled to commence next week**

“Following the Press Conference by UTAG, GAUA, SSA-UoG, and TEWU-GH with FUSSAG in attendance on Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at the University of Professional Studies, Accra, the National Leadership of the four Labour Unions have had a series of engagements between some stakeholders of tertiary education in Ghana, including Vice Chancellors Ghana (VCG).

“Upon further deliberations among the National Leaders, we write to communicate that the intended strike action of all labour unions in the public universities in Ghana takes effect from Thursday, 13 October 2022. This gives the employer and all stakeholders of tertiary education in Ghana one crucial week to reverse the directive that seeks to negatively compromise the Conditions of



**Dr. Yaw osei Adutwum, Minister of Education**

Service of University Workers.

In the statement signed by the leadership of the various unions, members were entreated to stay calm and cooperate with leadership as we navigate this trying moment.

According to the unions, displeased with what they refer to as a “blatant unilateral variation of service in the face of hostile economic conditions.”

## 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 Wesminster Bridge Road, London SE 1- 7XW  
Tel: 0171-6201430  
E-mail: prattc22@aol.com



# COCOA; Minority Warns Govt, COCOBOD Over Attempts To Slash 2022 Prices

from front page

“After all this uncertainty, government should not announce any price below GH¢1000 per bag, or GH¢16,000 per tonne. Ghanaians are all witnesses to the historic depreciation of the Cedi. In 2021, COCOBOD used an exchange rate of GH¢6 to \$1. We wish to remind them that the dollar is now more than 10. Even at the dollar equivalent price, farmers and all stakeholders including LBCs and Haulers should receive higher prices and margins this year,” he said. Dr. Cassiel Ato Forson said the developments in the Cocoa sector are not pleasing to cocoa farmers. “Farmers and stakeholders are running out of patience for COCOBOD. Every year cocoa prices are announced at the opening of the season. 1st October is internationally recognised as the start of the cocoa season worldwide as affirmed by the UN body for cocoa, the International Cocoa Organisation – ICCO. “This year COCOBOD opened the cocoa season without a producer price for cocoa. After wasting scarce resources to organise a cocoa day that, was poorly attended, farmers and stakeholders in the cocoa industry are left in suspense about the price,” Dr. Cassiel Ato Forson said in the statement. The minority berated COCOBOD for its treatment

of cocoa farmers and stakeholders in the cocoa value chain in Ghana stressing that farmers and players in the cocoa sector are becoming very frustrated with the actions and inactions of the government. “After all this uncertainty, government should not announce any price below GH¢1000 per bag, or GH¢16,000 per tonne. Ghanaians are all witnesses to the historic depreciation of the Cedi. In 2021, COCOBOD used an exchange rate of GH¢6 to \$1. We wish to remind them that the dollar is now more than 10. Even at the dollar equivalent price, farmers and all stakeholders including LBCs and Haulers should receive higher prices and margins this year,” it added.

**This is the full statement by the minority:**

## **MINORITY STATEMENT ON COCOA**

**1. Farmers and stakeholders are running out of patience for COCOBOD.** Every year cocoa prices are announced at the opening of the season. 1st October is internationally recognised as the start of the cocoa season worldwide as affirmed by the UN body for cocoa, the International Cocoa Organisation -- ICCO.

**2.** This year COCOBOD opened the cocoa season without a producer price for cocoa. After wasting

scarce resources to organise a cocoa day that, was poorly attended, farmers and stakeholders in the cocoa industry are left in suspense about the price.

3. We wish to send a loud and clear message to this government; cocoa farmers are fed up and demand their cocoa price now.

4. After all this uncertainty, government should not announce any price below GHS 1000 per bag, or GHS16,000 per tonne. Ghanaians are all witnesses to the historic depreciation of the Cedi. In 2021, COCOBOD used an exchange rate of GHS 6 to the \$1. We wish to remind them that the dollar is now more than 10. Even at the dollar equivalent price, famers and all stakeholders including LBCs and Haulers should receive higher prices and margins this year.

5. On Friday 30th September 2022, Ivory Coast announced a price of 900 CFA which is equivalent o GHS852 per bag or GHS13,632 per tonne. If this government fails to raise cocoa prices, it could trigger massive smuggling, particularly at a time when we need every single dollar

6. With significant volumes of cocoa purchased in October, the Ivorian price now leading Ghana by a whopping GHS192, Ghana could be losing cocoa to smuggling as a result of the needless delay in announcing the producer price.

7. Considering extreme inflation and hardship in the country, the least this insensitive government can do is to pay cocoa farmers remunerative cocoa prices.



**Joseph Boahen Aidoo, CEO of COCOBOD**



**Dr. Cassiel Ato Forson**

8. In addition, the international price of cocoa has appreciated slightly, above the previous year levels, so this Government should not, in this dire economic situation remain insensitive to the plight of cocoa farmers, stakeholders and Ghanaians in general.

9. We wish to assure our hard-working cocoa farmers, that a future NDC government will not short-change them, and only wait to increase cocoa prices in an election year as we saw in 2020 and which they appear to be planning to repeat.

## **Very late and very little: 2022 syndicated loan**

10. The Syndicated loan was signed on 3rd October 2022, for the first time in 30-years. The Syndicated Loan is typically signed before October so that the draw down is timed to the start of the season. However, this government has added late signing of syndicated loans to its plethora of failures.

11. Parliament approved up to \$1.3 billion syndicated loan. However, COCOBOD could only get \$1.13bn. This is purely due to the lack of confidence in the Ghanaian economy resulting from the generally agreed incompetence and gross mismanagement of the Ghanaian economy.

12. With huge and unprecedented debt overhang at COCOBOD, will the syndicated loan go into purchase of cocoa and related operations? Or will LBCs suffer the same faith of borrowing very expensive loans to buy cocoa from farmers, only for COCOBOD not to pay them, as we have seen since 2017?

13. During the just ended season, COCOBOD took a loan of \$1.3billion to buy 850 tonnes of cocoa. Actual production is about 700,000, the lowest production in more than 10 years. Another unprecedented failure. Yet LBCs complain that COCOBOD is still owing them for cocoa delivered. Where is the money?

14. This Government is collapsing the cocoa sector as it has done to every other sector. They must be reminded that Cocoa is the backbone of the Ghanaian economy. Ghanaians are saying enough of the mismanagement.

15. The NDC Caucus in Parliament demands an urgent intervention from the President on the policy alternatives we have provided in this statement so our suffocating cocoa sector would be salvaged. Dr Cassiel Ato Forson Ranking Member Finance committee



# INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORT

## Compiled By Peoples Dispatch

### British Trade Unions And Leftist Organizations Hold Massive Mobilizations Over Cost Of Living Crisis



Mobilization in Birmingham on October 2.  
(Photo: via People's Assembly Against Austerity)

**M**assive mobilizations were last Saturday and Sunday witnessed in the UK against the Tory (Conservative Party) government for failing to tackle the ongoing cost of living crisis. According to reports, over 100,000 people participated in the protests called by the Enough is Enough campaign across the country. Protests were held in over 50 cities, including London, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, Cardiff, Brighton, and Nottingham. On Sunday, trade

unions and left-wing sections joined a protest demonstration called People's Assembly Against Austerity outside the venue of the Conservative Party conference in Birmingham. The protesters expressed solidarity with postal and rail workers who are on strike against poor pay and work conditions. Cadre of all major trade unions in the country, including the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT), Communication Workers Union (CWU), and Junior Doctors movement, as well as political parties like the Communist Party of Britain (CPB) and the Young Communist League (YCL-Britain) expressed solidarity with the protests and participated in the mobilizations. Working class sections across Europe have been organizing protests demanding concrete

solutions from governments to tackle the cost of living crisis and soaring inflation in food and fuel prices. Due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war and sanctions imposed by the European Union (EU) and the US on Russian energy exports to Europe, energy prices have skyrocketed in European countries. Profiteering by multinational energy producers and suppliers amid this crisis has worsened the situation. The Enough is Enough Campaign in the UK was started by trade unions and community organizations to raise their voice against the cost of living crisis and to defend the rights and dignity of working class sections in the country. The campaign is being supported by unions like the CWU and the RMT, and community organizations

including ACORN UK and the Right to Food campaign, among others. Several left-wing politicians like members of parliament from the Labour Party Zarah Sultana and Ian Byrne have also supported the movement. The campaign has put forth a set of demands to tackle the cost of living crisis, which include: (1) a real pay rise; (2) slashing of energy bills; (3) ending food poverty; (4) provision of decent and affordable homes for all; and (5) taxing the rich. While addressing the protest rally at the King's Cross in London on Saturday, RMT leader Mick Lynch said, "We're going to create a mass movement of working people. We're going to change this country and win for our people."

The CPB has said, "across Britain – enthusiasm and solidarity are growing. The case for change is growing. The numbers taking action are growing. We need more citizens taking action to block the ruling class's offensive." Member of parliament from the Labour Party Jeremy Corbyn [stated](#) in support of the protests on Saturday, "Up and down the country, workers and communities are fighting back against greed, inequality and exploitation. As wages fall while profits soar, our message is clear. We are not here to manage. We are not here to broker. We are here to win."

### Palestinians Rise Up In Anger Against Killing Of Four People By Israel In Jenin Raid

**A** general strike was observed last Thursday by residents of Jenin in the occupied West Bank to mourn the killing of four Palestinians in an Israeli military raid on a refugee camp in the city on Wednesday.

Israeli occupation forces raided the refugee camp on Wednesday morning, killing four Palestinians and wounding at least 44 others, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry. Israeli forces stormed the camp in dozens of vehicles, surrounded the home of Fathi Hazem and began firing anti-tank missiles. They also fired live ammunition at people protesting the raid.

Several of those injured were in a critical condition and admitted to local hospitals.

The Palestinians killed in the Israeli raid have been identified as

Abdelrahmani Hazem (27), Mohammad Al Wanaa (30), Ahmed Nathmi Alawneh (26), and Mohammad Abu Nas'eh. Later in the day, thousands of Palestinians took part in the funeral procession of those killed in Jenin. As news of the killings spread, Palestinians in different parts of the occupied territories, including Hebron and Ramallah, took out protests demanding freedom for Palestine and justice for the victims of Israeli occupation. Israel has regularly carried out raids in Jenin and other Palestinian localities in the recent past, supposedly to arrest suspects involved in attacks on Israeli citizens. At least 36 Palestinians, including *Al-Jazeera* journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, have been

[killed](#) in Jenin alone in such raids since the beginning of the year. The total number of Palestinians [killed](#) in Israeli raids this year is more than 150.

In a statement following the killings, Israeli security forces claimed that they went to Jenin to arrest Abd al-Rahman Hazem, brother of Raad Hazem, who was allegedly responsible for an attack in Tel Aviv in April, *Times of Israel* reported.

Tor Wennesland, UN special coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, briefed the UN Security Council on Wednesday about the deteriorating situation in the West Bank and increasing Israeli violations of Palestinian rights. He called for immediate steps to end the occupation. "The absence of a meaningful peace process to end the Israeli occupation and resolve the



conflict is fueling a dangerous deterioration across the occupied Palestinian territories, in the West Bank, and driving the perception that the conflict is unresolvable," Wennesland [said](#). He alleged that Israel has continued to violate relevant UN resolutions and meted out unnecessary violence against Palestinians without any repercussions. Reacting to the killings in Jenin,

Palestinian Authority presidential spokesperson Nabil Abu Rudeineh [demanded](#) action against such Israeli acts that cross "all red lines," saying that mere condemnation is not enough. He said that Israel has no regard for Palestinian lives and behaves like a "rouge state" by violating international laws and norms.



# Gwollu Paramount Chief Laments Effects Of Slavery On Natives And Sissala

**K**uoro Buktie Limann IV, the Paramount Chief of the Gwollu Traditional Area has indicated that slavery affected the growth in the Sissala area and thereby derail development. He said over 250, 000 people within the Sissala area alone were captured during the slavery, which to some extent derailed development. He told the GNA in Gwollu that Europe had meted out the worst forms of atrocities to Africa saying, "No amount of compensation will be able to soothe our suffering." Kuoro Limann IV also expressed worry about how tourists during Emancipation Day events are limited to only Forts and Castles in the Coastal areas to the neglect of roots of the slavery. "The slaves were captured from the north and sent to the Coast to be shipped. Tourists visit places of "No return but they don't visit where the slaves were captured," he said. He said tourism on slavery would

be incomplete if attention was not equally given to the roots of slavery and that slave camps in the north will be extinct if attention is not paid. The Ghana News Agency (GNA) visited the area to acquaint itself with the development challenges and tourism potential and to see how the place could be developed more. The chief said Gwollu as a slave route "emptied the Sissala area as a conservative figure of more than 250,000 people were sent away as chattel slaves and that's why it left the villages empty". "From here to Navrongo and back to Hamile, there were few people. You will see vast and deserted places because they took the strong people away, it is now that we have started populating the area." The Paramount Chief said now that tourism was being

promoted, the diaspora people must be allowed to trace their route through to where they were taken away from and argued that Cape Coast, Anomabo, and Elmina were all exit points to Europe and the Americans. He explained that allowing Europeans, Americans, and others to visit tourist sites in the north would increase the revenue base of all the towns and communities that were affected by the slave trade as the country sought to promote tourism.

He emphasized that slaves were gathered from Southern Burkina Faso through Gwollu and other towns right up to Salaga slave Market. He said the slave route from Paga, Gwollu through to Salaga slave market must not be forgotten and erased in history because of a lack of interest and



**Kuoro Buktie Limann IV**

access roads to those areas. He said the people of Gwollu built an anti-slavery wall against the raiders whom he mentioned as Samori and Babatu Zato, a place he said had been left unattended. The anti-slave walls were built of mud that had holes in them where the locals hid and pointed their bows and arrows at the enemy each time they came to attack, and this eventually protected them from the raiders. The Gwollu Kuoro mentioned the Gwollu mystery bone setting

center, the anti-slavery defense wall, the slave route, and the local viagra centre as some tourist attractions worth visiting. The rest are the tomb of Dr. Hilla Limann and the crocodile pond of Gwollu, which if properly taken care of could generate revenue for development. Kuoro Limann IV, appealed to the government to consider constructing roads linking to tourist sites in the region to boost tourism and for investors to relocate to the area.

**Source -- GNA**

## NCA, AG Dragged To Court Over Directives On SIM Re-Registration



**N**ine persons have dragged the National Communication Authority (NCA) to the High Court over its directives on sim card reregistration. The NCA had given an ultimatum to mobile phone subscribers to re-register their phone numbers or risked having the numbers blocked by telecommunication companies. The Authority gave 30 September 2022 as the deadline for people to re-register their sim numbers with a valid Ghana Card issued by the National Identification Authority (NIA). The NIA, however, had indicated that it would be very difficult for it to issue Ghana Cards to all persons by the September 30, 2022, deadline. The nine persons filed an

application for judicial review of the Mobile Phone Sim Card re-registration directives describing (the directives) as punitive. Joined in the suit is the Attorney General. The applicants are praying the court for an order of interlocutory injunction restraining their agent, workmen, contractors' sub-contractors, and associates deriving authority through the NCA from imposing any punitive measure/ sanctions, including deactivating, restricting, churning, and or in any way or limiting them from using the mobile phone sims and network services until the final determination of the case. According to the applicants, NCA acted beyond its jurisdiction when it issued the punitive directives requiring them to re-register their mobile phone sim with the Ghana Card as the only identity document on or before September 30. In a writ filed on September 26, this year, the nine applicants who are customers of MTN, Airteltigo, and Vodafone, said they had applied for Ghana cards between 2020 through 2022 but have yet to receive them. The applicants held that since the

year 2008 when Act 750 was enacted, the NIA had not been able to register all Ghanaians and other persons entitled to be registered as mandated by law at any point in time. According to the applicants, its registration process continued to be fraught with technical, human, and funding challenges. The registration process has been conducted in phases across the country, the applicants held. They opined that the process of registering and obtaining a Ghana Card was entirely out of their power and control and the same entirely rested on the process and mechanisms put in place by the NIA. The hearing has been fixed for October 6, 2022. The applicants are Belynda Odey Hammond, Jennifer Elorm Dziku, Charity Mansah Afua N. Ackotia, Nsor Sabasi, Josphehine Annor Prempeh, Vida Delacy Kemovor, Regina Elikplim Dagadu, Irene Ayariga and Tracy Ashong. **Source -- GNA**

## Cedi Appreciation: Ofori-Atta Must Be Dreaming, Says Prof. Steve Hanke

**P**rofessor of Applied Economics at the Johns Hopkins University, Steve Hanke, has asserted that Finance Minister [Ken Ofori-Atta](#) has lost touch with reality when it comes to how the Cedi is fairing. In a Twitter post on September 29, he said Ofori-Atta was 'dreaming' to think that measures being implemented by the [Bank of Ghana](#) to ensure the Cedi regains its value were 'paying off'. "#Ghana's Finance Minister [Ken Ofori-Atta](#) says the [Bank of Ghana](#)'s efforts to contain #cedi depreciation are 'paying off.' SPOILER ALERT: Ofori-Atta must be dreaming. Since Jan. 2020, the cedi has depreciated ~40% against the USD," Prof Hanke tweeted. The economist who runs a project called 'Troubled Currencies' has consistently written off the local currency as the 'central bank junk currency' insisting that the only way to curb it depreciation was the installation of a currency board. The Cedi has in recent times been experiencing a free fall against major trading currencies such as the US dollar. At a point, some forex bureaus sold a dollar at GH¢10. The [Bank of Ghana](#) through its frequent hiking of the monetary policy rate has been trying to curb the situation. The Finance Minister at a briefing on September 28 outlined other measures such as a Special

Foreign exchange auction for bulk distribution companies and a Gold Purchase Programme which the central bank was implementing to stabilize the fall of the Cedi. "As part of measures to shore up our reserves, improve exchange rate stability and address some of the funding needs, the Ministry successfully worked on a US\$750 million Afreximbank loan facility which was received in August 2022," he explained. "The traditional Cocoa Syndication Loan, expected in the last quarter of 2022 which will promote the cocoa sector, will further help us build our FX reserves and provide a strong buffer for the cedi in the last quarter of the year," [Ken Ofori-Atta](#) added. As at July this year, for instance, the cedi lost its value by more than 20 percent to the US dollar. In addition, recent economic downgrades by international rating agencies such as Fitch and Standards & Poors' has also impacted the investor community at large, while Ghana awaits an [International Monetary Fund](#), IMF, support programme which is expected to be accessible in 2023. [#Ghana](#)'s Finance Minister [Ken Ofori-Atta](#) says the [Bank of Ghana](#)'s efforts to contain [#cedi](#) depreciation are "paying off." SPOILER ALERT: Ofori-Atta must be dreaming. Since Jan. 2020, the cedi has depreciated ~40% against the USD. <https://t.co/QK93tOONpj> — Steve Hanke (@steve\_hanke) September 29, 2022



# Fascism Returns To Europe's Center Stage

By M. K. Bhadrakumar

The [stunning victory](#) of a far-right coalition in Italy's parliamentary election last Sunday is largely seen from the distinct prospect of Giorgia Meloni becoming the country's next prime minister, whose hardline views on immigration and the preservation of the "Christian family" are rooted in the Italian Social Movement (MSI), a party founded after World War II by the nostalgic former members of Benito Mussolini's fascist dictatorship.

Meloni insists that she isn't a fascist herself, yet her party's flag includes the symbol of the old pro-Fascist party – the tricolour flame. Two of Mussolini's descendants, his granddaughter Rachele and his great-grandson Caio Giulio Cesare, have run under the banner of the party Meloni leads, Brothers of Italy. Meloni insists she isn't a fascist herself, but her take on Mussolini is: "Everything he did, he did for Italy."

All this makes the meteoric rise of this politician with a working class background a combustible mix at a juncture when the future of European politics itself seems dark and uncertain, reeling under the economic crisis. Leon Trotsky's famous passage on the rise of fascism helps understand what is happening. He wrote: "The fascist movement in Italy was a spontaneous movement of large masses, with new leaders from the rank and file. It is a plebian movement in origin, directed and financed by big capitalist powers. It issued forth from the petty bourgeoisie, the slum proletariat, and even to a certain extent from the proletarian masses; Mussolini, a former socialist, is a "self-made" man arising from this movement." The three pillars of Meloni's politics are zero-tolerance for illegal immigration, extreme social conservatism and, until recently, belligerent Euro-skepticism. *Guardian* newspaper wrote: "From Italy to Sweden, Hungary to France, the far right is once again a force to be reckoned with. Its hostility towards immigrants encourages xenophobes everywhere, including in India." In European politics, Italy

traditionally played the role of an eager junior partner to the heavyweights that drive decision-making, France and Germany. That is almost certain to change under Meloni. The "known unknown" is as to which route she goes down – a populist such as Hungary's Viktor Orban, intent on exerting ever more control; a pugilist such as Poland's Mateusz Morawiecki; or, a more familiar conservative voice such as Liz Truss? Or, even something entirely different?

Any whichever way she goes, it matters like hell, because Italy is one of the world's most wealthy and influential nations – a G7 member and the third biggest economy in the European Union (EU), and a NATO power. That is why the outcome of Sunday's vote was watched nervously in European capitals and on financial markets. Simply put, the Brothers of Italy does not inspire confidence that Rome will reclaim its role as a steady European partner – although the manifesto of the incoming center-right coalition sought to reassure EU neighbors and NATO partners.

Indeed, Meloni may have to temper – initially, at least – as Italy is the largest beneficiary of [NextGenerationEU funds](#) and its economic difficulties are best handled with the EU's helping hand. That said, there is an important distinction to be made when Meloni's coalition speaks of "national interest."

Traditionally, Italian leaders pursued national interest by being friends with countries with similar values and interests. Thus, pro-Europeanism and Atlanticism became unquestioned tenets of Italian policy.

But when Meloni uses the term "national interest," it has an altogether different connotation linked to the fascist idea of an ethnic

concept of nationhood, of glorifying the Roman Empire – somewhat similar to what is happening in India or Turkey today.

It will come as no surprise if Meloni puts the European Commission bureaucrats in their place and clips the EU's wings. She candidly said recently, "What will happen is that the gravy train will come to an end." It is not only that she thinks Brussels is useless, but is also hostile. Citing the EU's attempts to punish Poland and Hungary for democratic backsliding, she said, "We are facing the most powerful and violent attack against governments of sovereign nations opposing the dictatorship of politically correct ideology." Significantly, Meloni is not alone on this path. Apart from closeness to Hungary's nationalist leader Viktor Orban, she also happens to be the president of the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), a pan-European umbrella party that includes Poland's ruling Law and Justice Party as well as increasingly influential parties in countries like Spain and Sweden. Meloni may have the means to tip the balance in the European Parliament in 2024 and influence the allocation of top jobs, including whether to give European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, another term.

Suffice to say, Italy may not anymore be a docile camp follower of France and Germany, but Meloni may have a gang of her own with conservative, authoritarian figures. It will almost certainly mean the weakening of ties with the likes of Presidents Joe Biden and Emmanuel Macron. Meloni's approach to the US veers toward the Trumpian Right

The million dollar question is where the new Italian government is going stand



**Photo: Giorgia Meloni/Twitter. In European politics, Italy traditionally played the role of an eager junior partner to the heavyweights that drive decision-making, France and Germany. That is almost certain to change under Giorgia Meloni**

on the Ukraine question. Brothers of Italy has been a critic of Russia's military intervention in Ukraine. But its coalition partner the Lega party retains strong links to Moscow, and Meloni will heavily rely on its support. Lega's leader Matteo Salvini has called for a rethink of EU sanctions against Russia. Salvini draws his voter support heavily from business owners, who have expressed fears that Italy's economy could be too heavily hit by repercussions from Western sanctions against Russia. Besides, Meloni will also have to reckon with another of her coalition partners, former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who is still the showman of Italian politics and a close friend of President Putin. Berlusconi's support to the right-wing coalition is indispensable to ensure it has a majority of seats, and as such the controversial ex-premier could still exert significant influence. Meloni's party has no experience in government, so she will need full support from Berlusconi and Salvini. Suffice to say, in this new matrix, at the very least, Italy's support for Ukraine could weaken. What often goes unnoticed is that Moscow has historically had extensive personal

relationships with Italian politicians. It goes back to the 1960s when Italy was home to the largest communist party in Europe. Like in Germany, governments of all stripes in Rome continued to promote economic and energy ties with Russia. From such a perspective, the shift in Italian politics is tectonic, coinciding with the transformation of the war in Ukraine from a slow burning grind to a full-fledged war. It comes amidst stirrings that the EU itself may be going through a profound rethink, as foreign policy chief Josep Borrell's [latest remarks](#) with accent on "diplomatic efforts" would suggest.

Italian elections in the past have often triggered similar trends elsewhere in Europe. Mussolini's rise in 1920s came ahead of the Nazis in Germany. In a dramatic shift, right-wing nationalists just won in Sweden. The risk to Europe may well not be Giorgia Meloni herself, but how her influence spreads. As a veteran German commentator put it, this is also where "the biggest danger lies — that the EU tries to push her around or isolate her, and that she will resist, with the Italian electorate on her side."

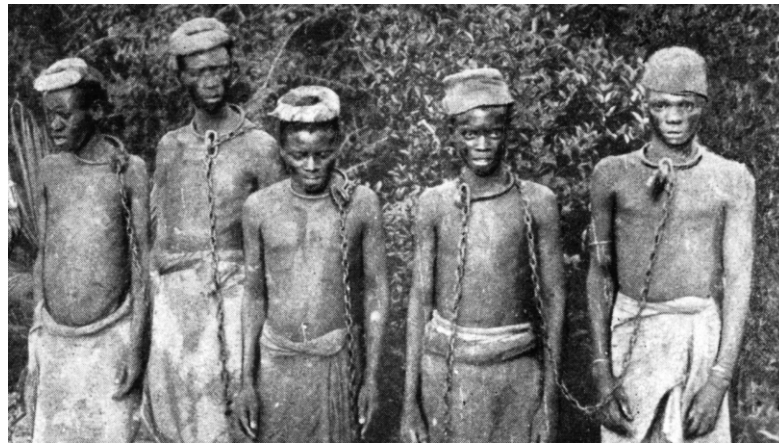
**MK Bhadrakumar** is a former diplomat. He was India's ambassador to Uzbekistan and Turkey. The views are personal.



# Advisory Group On Legacies Of Enslavement Final Report

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correspondence demonstrates not only his gradualism and elitism, but also his evolution from an advocate for reparations to the victims of enslavement to an acceptance of compensation as a politically expedient solution. Future research should further interrogate the legacies of Clarkson, Wilberforce, Peckard, and the broader Cambridge abolitionist movement in light of the 1834 compensation act, racial ideology, the colonisation of Africa, and the evolving idea of Britain's civilising mission. Historians have now demonstrated that there was a line of inheritance from abolitionist civilisational discourse to the partition of Africa for liberal imperial ends of 'rescuing' its people. One clear and highly legible snapshot in time is provided by the records of the 1834 slave compensation. A few important Cambridge graduates were simultaneously renowned abolitionists and also recipients of compensation for major plantations and hundreds of enslaved people. During his time as Governor of Jamaica, Jesus College alumnus Howe Peter Browne, 2nd Marquess of Sligo, was celebrated as the 'emancipator of the slaves.' A plantation heir himself, he drew the ire of the planters when he summarily emancipated his own slaves from 'apprenticeship' and helped to establish the first free Jamaican town called Sligoville. Renowned for his benevolence and his role in emancipation, he received a massive compensation of over £5,500 in 1834 for 286 enslaved people on two large Jamaican plantations. Henry William Coulthurst graduated from St John's College as second wrangler in mathematics and earned many degrees before becoming a Fellow at Sidney Sussex College and pursuing a long career in the church. He was a prominent supporter of his close Cambridge associates and abolitionists Wilberforce, Clarkson, and Isaac Milner. And yet he was at Cambridge precisely because he came from a major West Indies sugar dynasty. His father was the owner of plantations including the Bakers Plantation of Barbados, and Henry William Coulthurst's



brother Conrade made an unsuccessful claim for 143 enslaved labourers in 1834. After enslavement ended in the British Caribbean, former enslavers and abolitionists were active in continuing discussion at Cambridge concerning slavery in the United States. Edward Strutt Abdy was a leading Cambridge abolitionist. Free African Americans who studied at the University, including Alexander Crummell, were active in the campaign. However, the evidence shows that Cambridge was an important bastion for pro-Confederate thought during and after the American Civil War, thereby providing continued support for slavery. For instance, John George Witt, a King's Fellow, was an associate editor for *The Index*, the Confederacy's main propaganda paper in Britain. After the war, Witt invited Jefferson Davis, the former President of the Confederate States, to tour Cambridge (although the offer does not seem to have been taken up) and Witt continued to associate with exiled Confederates. He invited Colin J McRae and George Eustis, Jr, both Confederate agents in Europe, to a College dinner and he helped Judah Benjamin, the Confederate Secretary of State, get a position as a Queen's Counsel. (He later served as one of the executors of Benjamin's will.) Contemporary reports of debates in the Cambridge Union Society suggest that many Cambridge students were vehement supporters of the Confederacy.

## 4.2.6 — Role in intellectual work underpinning of racism

Throughout the period under discussion individuals at Cambridge were writing about race, and presenting ideas that were used to justify the enslavement and colonisation of

other people. Our research has not focused on this in depth, but it is potentially very significant and deserves further research. Intellectual and scientific justifications for racism, including those developed at Cambridge, have long played a significant role in underpinning and supporting everyday assumptions of racial inequality and particularly of Black inferiority.

In the 1670s Dr Thomas Townes, the son of a Barbadian enslaver and a Christ's alumnus was an early advocate of an innatist idea of racial difference, which ascribed differences between white and Black persons to biology rather than to environmental factors. His 'scientific' work, drawn to the attention of the Royal Society by Martin Lister, one-time Fellow of St John's College, marks the start of a long line of Cambridge thought that was used to justify racism and slavery. Similar attitudes had been expressed early in the 17th century by the poet and scholar John Donne, a Cambridge Doctor of Divinity, who saw the purpose of the colonies as places where white vagrants, Native Americans, Black servants, and other 'undesirable' people would work for the benefit of a white elite.

Such attitudes were closely tied to Christian missionary activity, for instance through the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG), which later became the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, and with which many in Cambridge were actively engaged. The Governor of the Leeward Islands, Christopher Codrington, bequeathed his Barbadian

plantations to the SPG, and Cambridge Fellows, such as Thomas Tenison, the Archbishop of Canterbury, served on the committee that ran these estates. In their sermons, Cambridge Fellows tried to convince enslavers that Christian conversion would not render enslaved people free, and some argued that Christianity could serve the interests of the plantation system by rendering African-descended people more amenable to enslavement, more willing to defend their masters against Native American attacks, and less likely to rebel against American slave societies.

Nevertheless, these intellectual approaches raise an important question: to what extent were Cambridge students instructed in race and slavery throughout the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries? This is difficult to answer for the earlier period, given the diffuse nature of education at early modern Cambridge, but one can say for certain that Cambridge academics tried to instruct their charges in American history and the nature of slave societies, particularly after lectures became more systematised in the 19th century. For example, Charles Kingsley, Regius Professor of History at the University from 1860-69 (and a descendant of Caribbean enslavers), gave a lecture series on the history of the United States. The notes from this course do not survive. Still, we know from a journalist who observed these lectures that Kingsley believed the Confederacy had a moral right to secede, that guilt for the Civil War rested on the abolitionists, and that the Confederate States were committed to emancipation. Slavery and the natural rights of enslaved persons sparked debate within Cambridge. Thomas Rutherforth, who became the Regius Professor of Divinity in 1745, published his *Institutes of Natural Law* (1754) in which he developed a theory of the inequality between human beings and thereby sought to justify enslavement. Even after the demise of slavery, racist

discourses continued to be developed in Cambridge. In the late-19th century this took in debates about Darwinism. And in the 20th century this was connected, for instance, to a rigid conception of race within eugenics. Our research has not explored these areas in depth, and they deserve further future research.

## 4.2.7 — Celebrating and memorialising those involved in slavery and racial ideology

As noted above, key institutions within Cambridge like the Fitzwilliam Museum memorialise those linked to slavery. However, the contemporary unfamiliarity with Cambridge's broader engagement with slavery, and a lack of focus on individuals, has led to the continued memorialisation of others whose roles in its history should now be open to debate. Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger, Member of Parliament for the University of Cambridge, is one such figure who is commemorated with a statue. He is celebrated as a statesman whilst his key roles stalling the anti-slave trade campaign and in Britain's campaign to conquer and restore slavery in Saint-Domingue during the Haitian Revolution are ignored. There are further examples of College benefactors, some of whose wealth derived from slavery and who are memorialised in a variety of forms. For instance at Gonville & Caius College, Bartholomew Wortley's benefaction is commemorated by a statue. There are also examples in University institutions, including Adam Sedgwick who is celebrated for his pioneering work in geology with a museum named after him. Sedgwick was the beneficiary of compensation money in 1837 via a legacy from Ann Sill, whose family had owned the Providence Plantation in Jamaica since at least 1774. Other instances of institutional memorialisation include the Zoology (Balfour and Newton) Library, linked to a family fortune derived from Caribbean slave plantations

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(see above) and in the broader context, both the Haddon and Seeley libraries that are named after scholars whose work is perceived by some to be entwined with racist ideologies. A working group to articulate principles and guide decisions on renaming is being established.

## 5 — Recommendations

### 5.1 — Introduction

This project is not only about the past. Recognising that the past is a potent force in the contemporary world, our recommendations are intended to lead towards new courses of action for the University community now and in the future. It is important that the University publicly acknowledges its historical links to the exploitation of enslaved people and commits itself to future actions in the light of this.

This raises the question of reparative justice, which has been the subject of discussion in events organised by the researchers. Persuasive voices have called for financial reparations to be paid by institutions like Cambridge. If accepted, these raise questions of how much, to whom, and in what form. As noted above, even the first of these questions raises issues that are very difficult to assess let alone quantify. Equally, financial compensation cannot fully address present-day legacies such as racism. It is important that there is open discussion of this across the University, but for the present, we take the view that it would be more constructive to think instead about how the University might deploy substantial and meaningful resources – intellectual, social and financial – to make a difference to the communities affected by the legacies of enslavement. If such institutional and intellectual actions are to be meaningful, they must be developed through dialogue with those communities that continue to be disadvantaged

by the legacies of enslavement today, including those within Cambridge, within the UK, and beyond. In doing this, the University may wish to take into account of [the statement by the CARICOM Reparations Commission](#).

In our [initial report we made a series of specific recommendations. Since then, a number of actions and initiatives have been initiated within the collegiate University, some in response to our suggestions, others as a result of independent initiatives. We have noted and acknowledged these in the following discussion.](#)

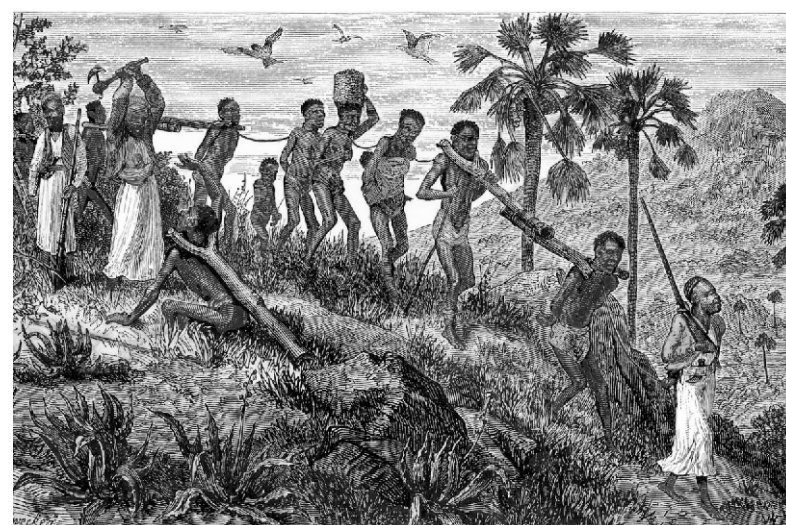
We have organised our recommendations around four themes. Each one will require investment as well as institutional support from the University. Therefore, to bring all these efforts to fruition, we recommend the establishment of a permanent **Cambridge Legacies of Enslavement Research Centre** (the naming of which should be the subject for discussion) that would take the lead in consolidating and building on the diverse efforts already underway across the collegiate University and take forward this ambitious agenda. In support of this, we also recommend that the University, with the assistance of its Development and Alumni Relations team, works towards the creation of a **Legacies of Enslavement Fund**, mobilising existing funds and developing a fundraising campaign to enable the realisation of our recommendations.

As we noted in our initial report, these efforts should draw upon the experience at other universities, where a wide set of changes, large and small, have been instituted. Cambridge should extend its relations with universities in those parts of the world beyond the UK where the legacies of enslavement are most present. In developing such links, it is important that the relationships allow agency to those within the partner universities.

### 5.2 — Theme 1: Research and institution-building

Critical research and knowledge production must be a central part of Cambridge's long-term

response to its links with enslavement and its legacies. Indeed, the archival research by the postdoctoral researchers and others has shown how much more there is to be done, both in primary historical research and in broader interdisciplinary studies. The groundswell of interest across the collegiate University in research around these issues, and in particular the involvement of Cambridge and other British institutions, could best be sustained and developed through the establishment of a **Cambridge Legacies of Enslavement Research Centre**. This should include the provision of funding for visiting professorships and studentships for scholars from the African diaspora to work on their projects on slavery. Its remit must be sufficiently broad to encompass Black British histories and contemporary Black studies in ways that encourage studies of post-emancipation societies from the 19th century until the present and embrace a history of African-descended people that is not limited to slavery but that explores Black history more widely. It should also extend beyond the present research to address other modes of coerced labour in imperial history through to the present. There are various models for such a research centre at other UK universities; but the shape of the research centre should be informed by a series of discussions led by a steering committee with representation from student, academic staff, university leadership, and stakeholders beyond the University in coordination with University leadership. The research centre should nurture and develop a series of **research projects** carried out by Cambridge academic staff, postdoctoral researchers, and students; it should promote the extension and exploration of the research opened up by this inquiry and other similar inquiries across the collegiate



University. For instance, one of the key aspects of the research has been gaining a better understanding of the significance of South Sea instruments in collegiate Cambridge through the 18th century. This is work that has much broader implications for knowledge of those who benefited financially from the slave trade, and presents a number of avenues for expanded research programmes.

It is important that the scope of research is not limited to consideration of the Atlantic slave trade alone. This group strongly encourages the exploration of broader historical contexts, more recent histories and contemporary case studies in order to explore the links between the past and present. In this context, the University (in particular the History Faculty and Selwyn College) has been working closely with Professor David Dabydeen and the Ameena Gafoor Institute to secure funding for research into indentureship and its legacies. A launch event was held at the House of Lords in October 2021, which led to coverage of the initiative in *Asian Voice*. There are plans for a visiting scholars programme to enable researchers to use Cambridge's archive materials on indentureship. This offers a potential model for the kind of sustained and sustainable financing for such a programme of visiting researchers from appropriate institutions in the Global South, which would be necessary to render our vision of the centre a reality. Together with research projects, such a centre would also undertake a major programme of public-facing **events, workshops,**

**conferences, and artistic initiatives.** As we noted in our initial report, events should be supported with two objectives. First, to provide spaces and opportunities for students and staff to explore, challenge, and debate courses of action that can follow from the inquiry. Second, to provide a means by which people from communities from beyond the University that have been damaged by enslavement and its legacies can have their voices heard within the University setting. Such events have already been launched at Cambridge, including the 'Slavery and its Afterlives' seminar series, and plans are underway for an international conference on reparations and enslavement. Our museums have also made significant headway in this direction. In 2022-24, the University of Cambridge's Museums consortium (UCM) will facilitate conversations around the legacies of empire and enslavement through an interdisciplinary public programme. This will include a landmark exhibition at the Fitzwilliam Museum in 2023 on the links between Cambridge, Cambridgeshire and Atlantic slavery. The exhibition will explore the ways racist ideology was, and continues to be, reinforced and challenged by works of art and other visual and material culture. The UCM programme draws on a long-term commitment to researching and sharing the complex histories of the University's collections, including its museums, libraries and archives, relationship-building with communities both in Cambridgeshire and around the world, and widening audience access, engagement and participation. The work is guided

to be cont.