

Alan, Bawumia Birthdays: The Clear Contrasts

By Citizen Ekow Abu Alidu

On Monday 3rd October 2022 the respected Hon. Alan John Kwadwo Kyerematen Celebrated his 67th Birthday in the same week on Friday 7th October 2022 the Vice president of Ghana also celebrated his 59th Birthday. Normally, there

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Education Sector To Undergo Review ...As 2022 National Education Week Commences In Accra

The Deputy Education Minister, Rev. John Ntim-Fordjor has expressed optimism that the 2022 National Education Week which began yesterday in Accra will result in major review of the education sector. The Deputy Minister who spoke on behalf of Dr Yaw Aduwum, the Minister of Education said, "The NEW 2022 has brought together

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Former NPP General Secretary, Kwabena Agyepong

KWABENA AGYEPPONG

He Says Payment Of Ex-gratia Must Be Scrapped

Former General Secretary and flagbearer hopeful of the governing New Patriotic Party (NPP), Kwabena Agyepong, has said there is the urgent need to scrap the payment of ex-gratia every four years

to Article 71 officeholders. According to him the country does not have the financial resources to support such payments. Agyepong contended that persons such as Members of Parliament can

be given "something little" after serving their terms in office but it should not be in the current lump sum even for MPs who return to Parliament.

He listed the Speaker of Parliament,

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In Major Setback For US And EU, OPEC+ Decides To Cut Global Oil Production

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Mr Joseph Kobina Ade-Coker,
Greater Accra Regional Chairman of NDC

Ade Coker Punches Akufo-Addo

... Claims The Govt's Planting For Food
And Jobs Prog. Is Campaign slogan

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The INSIGHT

— EDITORIAL

HANDS OFF OUR FORESTS!

The continued degradation of the country's lands, forests and ecosystem is very worrying.

This is in spite of warning from environmentalists about the dangers associated with continued deterioration of the country's natural reserve due to exploitation of natural resources.

A months ago, some group of professors renewed the warning to government about attempts to allow the Chinese to exploit the Atiwa forests of its bauxite.

The warning was as a result of the fact that most river bodies generate their source of water from the Atiwa Forest reserve. That warning has not been heeded and there are clear indications that the Chinese engineers will soon enter the forest.

There are also some forests which are facing similar such threats.

The World Bank recently cautioned Ghana against the continuous wanton degradation of its land, forest and other natural resources warning that the country risked not achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 15, which is protecting the ecosystem to promote biodiversity.

It is the hope of this paper that somebody somewhere would see wisdom in taking steps to stop the land degradation and reverse the trend by embarking on reforestation to win back degraded lands and forests.

There is clearly the need, in the face of the facts presented, for the government to hands off the Atiwa forest and other natural resource.

GRA Exceeds Target For Tax Revenue Performance For September 2022

According to the Ghana Revenue Authority, domestic revenue grew nominally by 28.6% while customs revenue grew nominally by 29.8%.

This was disclosed at a press briefing by the Authority in Accra last Friday.

The Commissioner-General of the GRA Rev. Dr. Ammishaddai Owusu-Amoah speaking at briefing hinted that tax compliance would soon be the yardstick for land and vehicle registration in the country.

He explained that individuals would be eligible to register their property with the Land Commission and the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA), dependent on their tax compliance.

According to him, a proposal has been tabled and waiting approval from the Finance Ministry and Parliament.

The Commissioner-General disclosed this while answering questions at a media engagement in Accra on Friday, where discussions centered on issues and policies being implemented by the Authority.

He said the Land Commission or DVLA will track applicant's tax compliance, using their Ghana card, which would be a requirement for registration.

This, he urged all and sundry to ensure that they file their annual tax returns to prevent any eventuality or denial.

He informed editors and senior practitioners of the media fraternity that the move is to ensure compliance and hence tax mobilisation in the country.

KmYgAs part of revenue mobilization and enforcement measures, the Commissioner-General added that the Authority has set up a system and stationed officers at the major retail centers to collect data on transactions. He was sure that this would further address under statement of Value Added Tax by enterprises.

"Additionally, GRA is cracking the whip hard on all defaulting businesses this year. Some businesses have been brought before the Tax Courts on charges of failure to pay tax contrary to Section 80 of the Revenue Administration Act 2016 (Act 915) and failure to issue VAT invoices on purchase of goods and services," he stated.

He further indicated that a pilot online programme has been commissioned as part of the move to address public concerns that auction activities by GRA, which are often shrouded in secrecy. According to him, the pilot programme, christened 'Electronic auction (E-Auction)', would take off later part of October with 15 vehicles on auction.icums.gov.gh.

Although the GRA boss is confident that the approach is for the common good of the country, the Association of Auctioneers of Ghana have kicked against the development,

since the automated auction system didn't include them and fears are that it may kicked them out of business.

The Authority expects that the E-Auction will increase revenue, bring about transparency, and harmonisation of the auction system as well as ensure that interested parties interact directly with the Authority and not individuals.

Rev. Dr. Ammishaddai added that revenue from the electronic transfer levy (E-levy) is increasing month on month at about 20 percent.

"We commenced the implementation of this levy in May 2022. Revenue from E-levy as at September 2022 amounted to GHS328.80 million," he stated.

Meanwhile, the government has revised this year's revenue target to E-levy to GH¢611 million. A revised figure of initial GH¢6.9 billion and GH¢4.9 billion.

He pointed out that the Authority has ended a post implementation survey on E-levy, designed to identify challenges, address concerns and seal loopholes in the electronic money transfer system.

"It is worth mentioning that, month-on-month basis we continue to see a 20% improvement in collection of the levy. It is therefore our expectation that, this will continue and improve domestic revenue generation to support government expenditure," he added.

The implementation of the Electronic Tax Compliance Certificate (E-TCC) and Electronic Invoicing (E-invoicing) were equally to ensure tax compliance.

For instance the E-voicing hope to address forgery, overstatement of invoice of VAT input or output, high cost of tax audit, lack of data for effective compliance as well as carding of invoice.

On tax mobilisation, he said "it has been a fairly good third quarter for GRA. In terms of revenue, we have been able to make some gains due to our collective resolve to achieve our target. He noted that at the end of the third quarter, Total tax revenue of GH¢51,580.17 million was collected for the period as against a target of GH¢52,046.78 million.

THE INSIGHT

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KWABENA AGYEPPONG

He Says Payment Of Ex-gratia Must Be Scrapped

from front page

Alban Bagbin together with Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu (Majority Leader and Suame MP) and Kobina Tahir Hammond (Adansi Asokwa MP) as people who have benefited greatly from payment of ex-gratia over the years due to their long stay in the legislature.

In an interview with Accra-based Joy News, Mr. Agyepong said such payment were not right on any moral standing stressing that it should halt with immediate effect.

“Ex-gratia should be like a parachute payment. When you have served your country like a Member of Parliament...it's a difficult assignment. I would say it is like marriage. When you elevate a lady to certain level as a

wife and you want to leave, that's why they let you pay alimony. “You have to support her. You cannot allow her just to drop because you are leaving. That's not right. It is not fair. You make somebody an honorable Member of Parliament, he served when he is going home, something little. Maybe he can take the car away,” the former NPP General Secretary said on October 6. “...not after every four years. I never understood that. If you are coming back it cannot be ex-gratia. I see the Speaker and the likes of Kyei Mensah, they must have benefited a lot. My good friend KT Hammond...that is not right. It cannot be right on any moral standing. We should stop it immediately. We don't have

the money as a country,” he added.

Former President Mahama while speaking to a gathering of NDC lawyers pledged to implement recommendations of the Constitutional Review Committee as well as review ex-gratia payments in the next NDC administration

“The next NDC government must commit to the implementation of the review of the 1992 Constitution, which was begun by President John Evans Atta Mills of blessed memory. This review should among others aim at reforming the judiciary and tackle head-on issues on ex-gratia payments and other matters of Article 71 emoluments” Mahama said. Bono Regional Chairman of the NPP, Kwame Baffoe, popularly



Former NPP General Secretary, Kwabena Agyepong

known as Abronye DC however, said Mahama benefited from ex-gratia payment to the tune of GH¢14 million in 2013 – a claim the office of the former president has denied. Abronye DC also said Mahama cannot scrap the payment of ex-gratia because he “loves ex-

gratia more than his wife Lordina”.

The NPP in press conference also said the promise by Mahama was mere political rhetoric aimed at swaying voters.

Alan, Bawumia Birthdays: The Clear Contrasts



Mr. Alan Kyerematen.



Vice President Dr. Mahamoudou Bawumia

from front page

shouldn't have been a need to compare but these two gentlemen are undoubtedly the front-runners for the NPP Presidential primaries and therefore we need to fish out the differences which stood out at both celebrations. Below is a list of the pointers:

1. Both Gentlemen were born on Monday (Monday, October 3, 1955) and (Monday 7th October 1963)
2. Whereas Alan's Birthday happened on his day of birth Bawumia's own did

not. This will happen again in 2025 after Alan is sworn into office as President (The beauty of it) but not so for Bawumia. This suggests that the sands of time agree with the assertion that 'Aduro Alan So'

3. The Vice President's Birthday was widely attended by Ministers and government appointees whiles Alan Kyerematen's Birthday was attended massively by the party grassroots.
4. The Vice President financed his campaign and cut one cake, but Alan's party was organized by supporters and had more cakes than can be counted with several parties

across the country.

5. The Vice President chose the Birthday Celebration over Ghana's economy (even as Chairman of the Economy Management Team), he had a lot of time at his disposal to be celebrating on a working day which possibly made him miss the Friday *Ṣalāt al-Jumu'ah* prayers, Alan Kyerematen sacrificed personal joy to go to work on Monday and serve the country all day. He chose Ghana over his birthday, a clear indication of his commitment to sacrifice for the country's benefit.

6. Alan Kyerematen showed that he is a UNIFIER, by sending a birthday message to the Vice President. He did the same for the Vice President's wife (Hajia Samira Bawumia on 20th August) but neither the veep nor his wife could reciprocate the gesture. A sign that some say shows the maturity of Mr. Kyerematen.

7. Both Bawumia and Vladimir Putin were born on 7th October. (Putin is the main cause of the Russian-Ukraine war, a war which has been blamed widely for affecting Ghana's economy perhaps more than the

combined effect of COVID-19 and the Ebola outbreak. The only known global Icon who also celebrates his birthday on 3rd October with Alan Kyerematen is Zlatan Ibrahimović (One of the Greatest Football Strikers of All Time).

8. In the corner of birthday wishes, most of the open wishes we heard online and read on social media in line with the Vice President's birthday; were by government appointees. Mr. Kyerematen however received an avalanche of birthday wishes from the party grassroots, market women, taxi & trotro drivers, and other regular citizens who could not hold their joy to witnessing another birthday of one of Africa's finest gentlemen.

9. On Alan's birthday, there was a massive celebration in Tamale, where Pro-Alan Groups in Tamale donated to an orphanage and also organized a big party. This was replicated at Asante Akyem with a clean-up exercise and a party after that. The Vice President's party however took place at his residence, a small beautiful party that was

attended by ministers and government appointees as stated earlier. He also spent some time with cured lepers as part of the celebration.

10. Our Vice President could not hide his joy but gave citizens a buga dance as part of the celebration. Alan Kyerematen, however, could not dance but was busy at work because he believes fixing Ghana's economic challenges is more important than parties, music, and dance.

Whereas some may say this comparison means nothing, discussions on social media suggest that these pointers serve as a guide to delegates when anointing a candidate who will lead the NPP party to victory and break the eight. Fellow Ghanaians, which of these two gentlemen would die for the good of the country as against the one who will fiddle even as 'Rome burns'?

Source -- Citizen Ekow Abu Alidu (Baobab Media Gh)



INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORT

Compiled By Peoples Dispatch

In Major Setback For US And EU, OPEC+ Decides To Cut Global Oil Production



In a major setback to the US, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and Russia and some other oil producers, jointly known as OPEC+, last Wednesday decided to cut their production by two million barrels per day starting from November. The decision was announced in a [press release](#) issued after the conclusion of its 33rd ministerial meeting at the OPEC secretariat in Vienna. The press release cited the “uncertainty that surrounds the global economic and oil market outlooks” as the reason to reduce production. OPEC+ includes the world's major oil producers – both OPEC

members such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, UAE, Angola, and Venezuela, among others, and non-members such as Russia. The cut announced on Wednesday is equivalent to 2% of daily global supply and almost double than earlier [speculation](#) about a production cut of one million barrels per day. It is also the biggest cut in oil production since April 2020 when OPEC+ was forced to make huge reductions in production due to demand constraints caused by COVID-19 lockdowns. The decision is a blow to the West as G7 countries had earlier [decided](#) to put a price cap on Russian oil and gas imports. **Increasing troubles for EU and US** The OPEC+ decision is expected to hold the recent fall in global oil prices. Global oil prices [dropped](#) from above USD 120 per barrel in June to [USD 90 per barrel](#) in September. Prices of petroleum

increased globally this year due to post-COVID-19 recovery and particularly after the EU and US imposed sanctions on Russia – the [‘worlds largest exporter’](#) – following the start of the war in Ukraine. The OPEC+ decision may create further troubles for EU members as they are struggling to get enough supplies after deciding to shut down Russian oil imports. Attempts to diversify supply sources have not worked as per expectations so far, primarily after the US [refused to lift](#) sanctions on Iran and to revive the Iran nuclear deal. Another major producer, Venezuela, is [practically out of the global oil market](#) due to US sanctions. In the US, with the upcoming midterm elections, any possible rise in fuel prices is considered to be harmful for the Democrats' prospects in the face of stiff challenge from the Republicans. In order to avoid

such a situation, President Joe Biden visited Saudi Arabia in July to persuade it to increase oil production to ease prices at home. Reacting to the OPEC+ decision, the White House announced in a [statement](#) jointly issued by National Security Advisor Jack Sullivan and National Energy Commission (NEC) director Brian Deese that the government will release a further 10 million barrels from its strategic reserve next month to “protect American consumers and promote energy security.” The statement said “the president is disappointed by the shortsighted decision” and intended to “consult with Congress on additional tools and authorities to reduce OPEC's control over energy prices.” “It is clear that OPEC+ is aligning with Russia with today's

announcement,” said White House press secretary Karine Jean Pierre, *Middle East Eye* reported. The announcement to release fresh stock from the US strategic reserves has raised concerns about the policy's sustainability. According to [reports](#), the reserve has already reached its lowest in several decades due to repeated releases in the last few months to avoid domestic price rise. Suhail al-Mazroui, UAE's minister of energy, refuted the US claims of playing politics and asserted that the OPEC+ decision to reduce production is a technical one, and an attempt to address concerns of global recession, *Al-Jazeera* reported. Saudi Arabia also [refuted](#) the US accusations of belligerence.

Hazara Women Protest Attacks On Students In Kabul

Following a suicide attack that killed at least 43 civilians – mostly students – and injured 83 others in Kabul's Dasht-e-Barchi, scores of women chanting “Stop Killing Hazaras” and “Stop Hazara Genocide” have demonstrated against the repeated atrocities committed against the ethnic minority community. Women dressed in black headscarves shouted slogans criticizing the authorities for failing to protect their rights and ensure their security. The protesters marched past a hospital in Dasht-e-Barchi where several injured victims are being treated. According to Khadim Hussain Karimi, former editor of *Etilaatroz*, the government responded by [firing in the air and arresting](#)

[protesters](#). Two improvised explosive devices were detonated on September 30 inside an education center in western Kabul, in a predominantly Hazara-majority region. “Students were preparing for an exam when a suicide bomber struck at this educational center,” [Al Jazeera](#) quoted police spokesman Khalid Zadran as having said. There were reportedly nearly 600 students at the center when the attack was carried out. [UNICEF Afghanistan](#) [condemned the attack](#), saying that “violence in or around education establishments is never acceptable. Such places must be havens of peace

where children can learn, be with friends, and feel safe as they build skills for their futures. Children and adolescents are not, and must never be, the target of violence.” While no militant outfit has so far taken responsibility for the attack, similar attacks in the Dasht-e-Barchi neighborhood have been attributed to Afghan ISIL affiliates in the past. [Two similar explosions](#) took place in April, both targeting education centers (Abdul Rahim Shaheed High School and Mumtaz Education Center) killing at least six people and injuring 20 others. In May 2021,

explosions near a girls' school in the Dasht-e-Barchi neighborhood left 85 dead. Educational institutions – especially those for women – have been at the center of contention in Afghanistan following a [ban imposed by the Taliban](#) on secondary education for girls. International rights organization [Save the Children](#) has said that “almost 80% of girls have been denied their right to education in provinces in Afghanistan where secondary schools have remained closed for girls.” The situation in Afghanistan continues to remain dire following US sanctions and their seizure of Afghan central



(Photo: Ariana News/Twitter) Following a blast in a predominantly Hazara majority area, which killed 43 and injured 82, women from the ethnic minority community demonstrated against the attacks and demanded the “end of this genocide”

bank assets. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) in Afghanistan, at least 24 million in the country require humanitarian assistance to survive, while 25 million people live in poverty and 19 million face major food insecurity.

Ade Coker Punches Akufo-Addo

... Claims The Govt's Planting For Food And Jobs Prog. Is Campaign slogan



The Greater Accra Regional Chairman of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Joseph Kobina Ade-Coker, has descended heavily on President Nana Akufo-Addo and described his performance as very appalling especially in the areas of job creation for the teeming youth and food security. Expressing disappointment in Akufo-Addo's administration, Mr Coker noted that President

Akufo-Addo claimed to have launched the Planting for Food and Jobs programme with the aim of creating jobs, as well as to end the disgraceful spectacle of Ghana importing food stuffs from neighbouring countries but this initiative has turned out to be unproductive and deceptive. According to Mr Coker, there are clear evidence that the Planting for Food and Jobs programme was a campaign electioneering slogan adopted by Mr Akufo-Addo and his New Patriotic Party (NPP) just to induce and persuade the electorate to vote for them to win political power. He pointed out that it was clear that the Akufo-Addo led NPP government has failed

Ghanaians woefully, saying that the millions of young people nationwide remain unemployed because of the bad economic policies of the current government. He added that there are increased prices of transport fares currently in Ghana under the leadership of President Akufo-Addo than any successive President before in Ghana. Speaking in an interview on XYZ Television, Mr Coker stated that President Akufo-Addo superintending the deterioration of Ghana's economy irrespective of the excessive borrowing by his administration. "It is a high time for Ghanaians to continue to remember former President John Dramani

Mahama in their prayers because President Dramani Mahama is the only President who never borrowed too much from the international community but did a lot to bring social and infrastructure development projects and programmes to the door steps of Ghanaians," Mr Coker stressed. He maintained that President Akufo-Addo when in opposition bragged and made juicy promises to save the country from ditch and economic doldrums' yet he has failed woefully in all sectors.

Mr Coker indicated that President Akufo-Addo and the New Patriotic Party in the 2016 general elections made those striking promises just to induce and cajole the electorate and termed the promises as false hope.

According to him, there is a massive rise in the food prices in Ghana under the current administration despite the claim being made by President Akufo-Addo of implementing its government's Planting for Food and Jobs programme. The NDC top shot pointed out that the poverty level of many Ghanaians had increased drastically under President Akufo-Addo, adding that there are abundant numbers of yams in the Northern Region because Ghanaians do not have money have to purchase them. "It doesn't mean that because of Planting for Food and Jobs programme that is why there were more yams in the Northern Region but it was clear that the people in this country do not have money to buy the yams, preventing the

farmers from getting market for their products, Mr Coker maintained.

He pointed out that President Akufo-Addo has failed Ghanaians to achieve his vision to modernize agriculture, improve production efficiency, achieve food security, and profitability for farmers, all aimed at significantly increasing agricultural productivity.

He stated that President Akufo-Addo's posture and comments were promising to have made him a wonderful president who would leave a legacy yet there is nothing to show after being in office for almost six years.

According to Mr Coker, he doesn't remember a lot of things that have impacted the economy, indeed the economy today is not the best, there are more unemployed youth and the youth on the street are still there.

The NDC kingpin expressed concern over high food stuffs rate and the fact that the government is making empty promises in investing in agriculture projects.

He stressed that Nana Addo's regime has clearly shown that the problems and challenges in Ghana are in excess and deeper than what we think it is.

Mr Coker, therefore, indicated that Ghana needs a visionary leader like former President John Dramani Mahama who believes in principles that hinge on transformation and development for the people and that is what NDC stands for.

MASLOC Trains Staff On Nationwide Digitalization Roll Out

By Florence Anim

As part of the nationwide digitalization roll out at the Accra digital center, the Micro Credit and Small Loans Center (MASLOC) has started a two-day training exercise for its workforce. The two-day training session, is intended to familiarize employees with a new software that will resource the institutions credit and other aligned departments to efficiently process, disburse and recover approved loans to clients with features that will allow software application to provide optimal efficiency for loan processing. The complete implementation of the different phases of the software will allow Masloc eliminate its manual processes and align its system on an improved platform, compatible to new and complex modern banking systems used globally. In an age of technological advancement and with

institutions migrating to advanced secure digital platforms, the new Loan Management Software (LMS) training will not only equip and improve service delivery to our clients through a secure database, but will also complement our efforts to promote all categories of customers to patronize services through simple and personalized solutions such as mobile applications, USSD short codes, etc. Additionally, the goal is to equip our key users to use the software while we coordinate the full of implementation of the system to the benefit our customers. The training is for participants from our credit, IT, finance and audit departments as well as sector managers, regional and district credit managers, credit officers and regional accountants. Masloc's digital infrastructure would be leveraged by MSMEs, cooperatives, business associations and individuals to automate, innovate, build

capacity and access credit at competitive interest rates. The training follows the announcement, of support from the African Development Bank (AfDB) through the Ministry of Finance to boost MASLOC's determination to establish a strong digital infrastructure to support its operations. Participants are expected to leave the program with new knowledge and skills in line with Masloc CEO, Hajia Abibata Shanni Mahama Zackariah, strategic vision to automate all MASLOC operations to create a paperless loan application, loan repayment and efficient recovery system. Madam Zackariah added that, participants are anticipated to go away this system with new data and expertise, and strategic imaginative and prescient to automate all MASLOC operations to create a paperless mortgage utility, mortgage reimbursement and environment friendly restoration system.

Education Sector To Undergo Review ...As 2022 National Education Week Commences In Accra

from front page

stakeholders in the sector to re-assess the education system through the lens of its policies and key interventions for effective service delivery and national transformation. This year's NEW seeks to achieve the following objectives: Review the sector performance over the past medium-term, Review the implementation of policies and key programmes in the sector, Engage and inform stakeholders of emerging policy practices for effective service delivery, Deliberate on how the sector can use evidence-based policies and programmes to improve learning outcomes and management of education, and; Make recommendations on best practices and new approaches to be adopted by the Ministry. Towards that goal, he hoped that the deliberations will result in the needed reforms. This is the full text of his statement;

WELCOME STATEMENT BY THE HON. REV. JOHN NTIM- FORDJOR (MP), DEPUTY MINISTER FOR EDUCATION ON THE OCCASION OF THE 2022 NATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK UNDER THE THEME: RE- ASSESSING EDUCATIONAL POLICIES FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY AND NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION ON 10TH OCTOBER, 2022 AT THE ACCRA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE

**His Excellency Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, Vice President of The Republic of Ghana
Nana Otuo Siriboe, Chairman of the Council of State
Hon. Deputy Minister of Education
Hon. Members of Parliament here present
Hon. Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executive here present
Directors of Agencies in the Education Sector
Director of the Ministry of Education
Regional Directors of Education
Traditional Authorities
The Media
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen
Good morning!**

The National Education Week is an annual event of the Ministry of Education. This forum is of great importance to the Government of Ghana (GoG), Development Partners (DPs), the NGO community, Civil Society and key stakeholders as it presents an opportunity.

The President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo states his vision for national development in the Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies (CPESDP, 2017-2024) as "...to develop an optimistic, self-confident, and prosperous nation, through the creative exploitation of our human and natural resource and operating within a democratic, open and fair society in which mutual trust and economic opportunities exist for all".

The education sector therefore has the responsibility of contributing to the desired national transformation by recognising the strengths and weaknesses of the current system and prescribing strategies to address the challenges in order to give every Ghanaian child the opportunity to succeed and contribute to national development. For this to be successful, strategic policies must be developed and re-assessed periodically for effective service delivery.

As the theme of the 2022 National Education Week suggests, ***Re-Assessing Educational Policies For Effective Service Delivery And National Transformation.***

We as stakeholders within the sector need to delve deeper into the various Government policies, programmes and projects within the sector in order to help shape them to achieve the expected outcome.

NANA CHAIRMAN

The 2022 NEW is witnessing the participation of approximately 300 officials drawn from the Ministry of Education, officials from our Agencies, GES regional directors, Regional planning officers and selected district directors, district planning officers, heads of schools and representatives from other Ministries, Development Partners, Academia, Teacher Unions, NGOs, CSOs and the Private sector. In addition these, several others are joining via our online outlets including zoom and Facebook live.

YOUR EXCELLENCY

The NEW 2022 brought together these stakeholders in the sector to re-assess the education system through the lens of its policies and key interventions for effective service delivery and national transformation. This year's NEW seeks to achieve the following objectives:

Review the sector performance over the past medium-term,
Review the implementation of

policies and key programmes in the sector

Engage and inform stakeholders of emerging policy practices for effective service delivery,
Deliberate on how the sector can use evidence-based policies and programmes to improve learning outcomes and management of education, and;
Make recommendations on best practices and new approaches to be adopted by the Ministry.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

The NEW 2022 will be a 5-day event with activities set for each day. The daily programme will be as follows:

Day 1: Annual review of the Education Sector/Exhibition

The day will start with the annual sector review presented by the Ministry and some selected Agencies to highlight progress made over the past year, identify gaps and recommend strategies for these gaps.

There will also be statements made by our Development Partners and NGOs represented by GNECC on the state of education. There will also be a statement by the chairman and guest speaker around the theme. The Ministry will also present the status of the 2021 Aide Memoire and highlights of the Education Sector Medium Term Development Plan (ESMTDP) 2022-2025 to stakeholders.

In addition, the Ministry will showcase some initiatives undertaken through an exhibition. The exhibition will give participants the opportunity to interact with officers of the Ministry and Agencies on these initiatives to broaden their knowledge. The exhibition will also make room for stakeholders (private sector, NGOs, etc.) to showcase what they are doing within the education space regarding the NEW 2022 theme. The exhibition will run throughout the period of the NEW 2022.

Day 2: Evidence Day/Summit

Evidence Day will provide the platform to disseminate research findings, discuss innovative and best practices on what works, and to draw out lessons for evidence informed policy and education planning. Research papers, linked to this year's NEW theme, will be presented across the sub-sectors of education from early grade to tertiary level. This will help provide policy makers and sector practitioners with evidence to inform



Dr Yaw Adutwum, Minister of Education

the technical group discussions.

Day 3: Regional Directors Presentation

All Sixteen (16) Regional Directors of Education will present the status of education performance in their region and share identified gaps and strategies for discussions. There will be a question and answers (Q&A) session after the presentations are made by the Regional Directors.

Day 4: Technical Group Discussions

Taking the learnings from the previous day's discussions, the presented evidence and best practices will be discussed, aiming at addressing the identified gaps in effective policy/programme delivery. The discussions will be formed around sub-themes for each relevant education level. Each sub-theme will have individual terms of reference with specific expected outputs, which will then inform the way forward for each area of the NEW 2022.

Sub-themes/technical discussions:

To ensure the relevance of NEW 2022, the discussions will be structured around all the six education sub-sectors of the ESP (2018-30). The review, evidence and technical discussions will be held at six different education levels (Basic, Secondary, TVET, Inclusive and Special Education, Complementary Education, and Tertiary) through the assessment of key government education policies and interventions. In addition, there will be technical discussions to assess policies and interventions aimed at improving

education management systems and structures across the various levels. Seven (7) technical groups, comprising Basic, Secondary, TVET, Inclusive and Special Education, Tertiary, Complementary Education, and Management will be formed to focus on assessing targeted policies and interventions designed to improve educational outcomes. There will be group presentations from the various technical groupings on the various sub-themes in a plenary session.

Day 5: Business Meeting

The Business meeting will focus on discussing the various recommendations made by the technical groups in a plenary session format. The recommendations will be assessed and aligned with the priorities of the Ministry. An Aide Memoire will be jointly developed for assessment in the ensuing year.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

I would like to seek for your full commitment and support in the assessment of the various policies, programmes and projects to enable the sector improve upon the implementation processes. I can assure you that your inputs will be much appreciated and will serve as a guide to the sector.

On this note, I wish to warmly welcome you to the 2022 National Education Week and entreat you fraternize and enjoy the program to its conclusion.

Thank you.

What Explains The Difference Between The Polls And Election Results In Brazil?

By Brasil de Fato

The various voter intention polls for the Brazilian presidential election indicated different results than what actually happened in the elections on Sunday, October 2. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Lula) of the Workers' Party (PT) won 48.4% of the votes and Jair Bolsonaro of the Liberal Party (PL), won 43.2%. Simone Tebet of the Democratic Brazil Movement (MDB) had 4.2% and Ciro Gomes of the Democratic Labor Party (PDT), 3%. The other candidates together did not even reach 2%. However, Datafolha research released only hours before the presidential race predicted Lula obtaining 50% of the vote, indicating the possibility of a victory in the first round. One of the factors that may explain the difference is the fact that a significant portion of the voters make their decision on the day of the election. According to a Datafolha survey conducted shortly before the 2018 presidential election, 12% of voters reached their decision on election day. These choices are left out of the polls. But in this year's elections, researchers say that another factor explains the difference. João Feres Júnior, a political scientist at the Institute of Social and Political Studies at the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ) and coordinator of the Manchetômetro (a website that monitors press coverage for economics and politics), explains, "The difference was only in Bolsonaro's voting intention. In Lula's voting intention, the surveys got it right within and close to the margin of error." "I think that the only possible answer, although it is a hypothesis, is that Bolsonaro's voters are averse to polls, that is, they avoid answering polls or, when they do, they report false information." The problem, says Feres Júnior, was "capturing the preference for Bolsonaro." To explain this difference, some analysts have been using the theory of the "embarrassed vote." The thesis of the German political scientist Noelle-Neumann, in the book *Spiral of Silence*, is the

following: the perception that there is an advantage for a certain candidate leads voters to actually vote for that candidate, without this vote being revealed in the polls. According to Márcio Moretto, coordinator of the Digital Political Debate Monitor at the University of São Paulo (USP), "the cases studied by the German researcher were votes in which, although they were very tight, there was a very clear trend in the perception of the electorate about who would win the election. In these cases, the vote went to the 'favorite; well above the margin of error of the polls." "Notice, the polls got it wrong not because people lied or omitted to answer them, but because one of the camps was embarrassed to publicly defend their vote and that had an impact in the last hour." But by this thesis, the result obtained by former President Lula should have been higher than what pollsters predicted. The reality, however, is that there would have been a "minimal effort to take people to the streets at times when it might make sense" on the part of the PT campaign, according to Moretto, and an "overly cautious posture by Lula in the debates," which was put aside only in the last debate, on TV Globo. "The bet was on a strategy of 'winning by standing still,'" says the researcher. The strategy, however, "left room for Bolsonaro to occupy the streets and networks with the rhetoric that he was the real favorite." "Inspired by Neumann's work, Bolsonaro's entire campaign on the networks was to discredit the polling institutes and convince people to trust what they see on the streets and networks. The strategy worked. Bolsonaro gave a message to his base at the beginning of the year: 'I don't believe in polls'. His base didn't answer any more polls and his name shrank in the polls," says Moretto.

Ciro Gomes' performance

Some political scientists also point to the migration of votes from Gomes to Jair Bolsonaro in the first round, due to the former's attacks on Lula and the Workers' Party, in an attempt to win the votes of Bolsonaristas. "On September 28, we showed that Lula had 51%, and Bolsonaro

36%. Tebet 5%, and Ciro, 7%. On the 1st [of October], we released another poll showing Lula falling, with 49%, and Bolsonaro rising with 38%. That is, the last minute trend was already close," explains the director of Quaest Consultoria, Felipe Nunes, in an interview with *Universo Online (UOL)*. "Lula ended up with 48%, within the margin of error, but Bolsonaro appeared with 43%. This means that his share rose by five points. Where does this vote come from? There were approximately three points from Ciro that went away, not to Lula, but to Bolsonaro. The posture that Ciro adopted in the final stretch of the campaign was a determining factor in the kind of impression he made to the voter," said Nunes. Mayra Goulart, professor of Political Science at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) and the Graduate Program in Social Sciences (PPGCS) at the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRRJ), shares this opinion. "Bolsonaro, as a far-right candidate, tends to have a final stretch of the campaign that involves fake news, aggressiveness towards his opponent. This makes the undecided votes on the right end up [for] him. In this sense, the vote of Ciro Gomes went to Bolsonaro," she said in an interview for *Jornal Brasil Atual*. But according to Júnior, there is no proof of this. "It's pure guesswork, because in the same polls, when they asked Ciro voters who they would vote for in a second round between Lula and Bolsonaro, the majority went for Lula. [This was the case for voters of] both Ciro and Simone Tebet, he says, adding that this proves that it is not true that the votes that shifted from Ciro went to Bolsonaro.

The poll results

The results diverge from the Brasmatrix Institute survey, released on Friday, September 30 before the election. In the spontaneous survey, when the names of the candidates are not presented to the interviewees,



Incumbent Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro performed much better than anticipated by opinion polls. Experts weigh in on why the polls failed to gauge the extent of support for him. Bolsonaro has always told his supporters not to believe in research institutes. The consequence was a distancing of this electorate from the instruments that capture the surveys - Ricardo Stuckert and Agência Brasil

Bolsonaro had 44.3% of voting intentions against 27.6% for Lula. Gomes had 3.8% and Tebet, 3.2%. They also diverge from the survey released by the Veritá Institute in the last week before the election. In the spontaneous survey, Bolsonaro appears with 47.3%; Lula with 44.7%, Gomes with 3.4% and Tebet with 3.1%. A survey by the Brazil Balance Institute, released on September 28, showed Bolsonaro with 46%, against Lula's 41%. Gomes and Tebet had 5% and 4%, respectively, also in a spontaneous survey. The three polls were widely publicized by the Bolsonaro networks as they placed him in the lead. But it wasn't only these surveys that showed different numbers from what actually happened. In an Ipec (formerly Ibope) survey, released one day before the election, Lula had 51% of the valid votes and Bolsonaro had 37%. Gomes and Tebet were tied with 5%. On Datafolha's poll, Lula had 50% of the valid votes, against 36% for Bolsonaro. Tebet had 6% and Gomes scored 5%. In Quaest's survey, Lula had 49% of the vote, followed by Bolsonaro (38%), Gomes (6%) and Tebet (5%). Similarly, in a Paraná Pesquisas poll on the Friday before the election, Lula had 43.9%, Bolsonaro appeared with 37.3%, Tebet had 5.8% and Gomes scored 4.9%.

Bolsonaro's takeoff

According to Mayra Goulart, the nationwide results, even if they had some difference from the surveys, are within the variation of the polls. "The

statewide results erred quite a bit, but reduced samples have a greater chance of error, because they make a national prediction of something regional," she says. In São Paulo's election for Senate, all polls were showing Márcio França (PSB), from former president Lula's coalition, ahead of Marcos Pontes (PL), a Bolsonaro ally. On the Saturday before the election, the Bolsonaro candidate had 31% of voting intentions against 43% for França, according to the Ipec survey. By the end of the day, however, Marcos Pontes was elected senator with 49.91% of the vote. França came next, with a performance of 35.9%. In the election for the São Paulo state government, former mayor Fernando Haddad (PT) led the voting intentions with 39%, while Tarcísio de Freitas (Republicans) was projected to get 31%, according to Datafolha data also released on Saturday. With 100% of the polls counted by the Regional Electoral Court (TRE), however, Tarcísio had 42.3% of the vote and Haddad had 35.7%. The same pro-Bolsonaro sentiment, which was not captured by the polls, reinforced his agenda in the National Congress. President Jair Bolsonaro's party, the PL, managed to elect the largest bench in the House of Representatives and the Senate. In total, 99 congressmen were elected, an increase of 23 congressmen from the current legislature. In the Senate, eight senators were elected, bringing the total to 13.

This article was translated and adapted by an article written by Caroline Oliveira and originally published on [Brasil de Fato](#).

“Democracy Is Our Word”: The Historic Exchange Between Venezuela, Cuba, And US Working People Held In New York

By Natalia Marques

“We refuse to be told who our friends are,” opened People's Forum co-executive director Manolo de los Santos at an [event](#) titled “[Peoples Summit: Democracy Beyond US Empire](#).” Convened by the International Peoples' Assembly (IPA), organizers, intellectuals, diplomats, and working people gathered on the night of September 24 at the Riverside Church in Harlem, only a few miles from where the UN General Assembly (UNGA) was convening in Midtown Manhattan, to hear from Carlos Faria, Foreign Minister of Venezuela, and Bruno Rodriguez, Foreign Minister of Cuba.

The event, which was a follow-up to the [Peoples Summit for Democracy](#) in Los Angeles in June, sought to bring voices of socialist countries [directly into dialogue](#) with US working people on the question of people's democracy. The ministers were joined by historian and journalist Vijay Prashad, People's Forum co-executive director Claudia de la Cruz, and socialist NYC Council member Kristin Richardson Jordan who also offered reflections on the reality of democracy in the United States.

The venue, Riverside Church, has historically been the site of speeches by leaders of poor and working class people, such as Fidel Castro, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel. In 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave a historic speech against the Vietnam War at Riverside. The broader area, Harlem, is a historic site of Black class struggle, bearing witness to the artistic and political movement of the Harlem Renaissance and

home to figures such as Malcolm X and Paul Robeson.

The “finger-wagging” of colonialism

On September 21, US President Joe Biden gave his remarks to the UNGA. “Now, it's no secret that in the contest between democracy and autocracy, the United States — and I, as President — champion a vision for our world that is grounded in the values of democracy,” Biden stated, also touting the US's stated mission to “defend and strengthen democracy at home and around the world.”

But with the self-praise came the denunciations of formerly colonized or invaded nations. “Despite our efforts to begin serious and sustained diplomacy, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to blatantly violate UN sanctions,” said Biden at one moment. Biden also claimed, “fundamental freedoms are at risk in every part of our world, from the violations...in Xinjiang detailed in recent reports.” Both China and North Korea are under some form of attack by the United States, either through [US military operations](#) or [devastating sanctions](#).

At Riverside Church on September 24, Vijay Prashad condemned “those incredible habits of colonialism,” referring to leaders of Western nations such as Liz Truss, Emmanuel Macron, and Joe Biden. “They can't talk to us without wagging their finger,” he said. “Who gave them the right to claim the word democracy? Democracy is our word.” “What democracy?” Vijay continued. “The democracy of money. Buying elections.

Bribing politicians. That's this democracy. How can you claim to be a democracy when you have people who are hungry in your country?” Biden also aimed barbs specifically as socialist Venezuela at the UNGA. “In Venezuela, where years of the political oppression have driven more than 6 million people from that country, we urge a Venezuelan-led dialogue and a return to free and fair elections,” he said.

“They accuse us, speaking for Venezuela, of being a nondemocratic country, where there is a dictatorship,” Carlos Faria, foreign minister of Venezuela, said during his speech at the People's Summit event on September 24. “What dictatorship would allow 29 elections in 22 years?”

Working class solidarity

Attendees of the event highlighted the importance of bringing people in the US into discussions which openly question US narratives around Cuba and Venezuela. “The majority of working class people don't have antagonistic relationships with countries like Cuba or Venezuela,” Andira Alves, activist with the Party for Socialism and Liberation, told *Peoples Dispatch*. “[The US does] it in our names, and our money. It sanctions oppressed nations.” Kristin Richardson Jordan, who represents New York City Council District 9 in Harlem, spoke to *Peoples Dispatch* about the importance of solidarity. “What I would like to see is this being connected with larger movements where the people in my community get connected to working people in Venezuela, Cuba, and what can we do to bridge the gap,” she said. “Because at the end



Some of the speakers at People's Summit: Democracy Beyond US Empire (From left to right: Kristin Richardson Jordan, Claudia de la Cruz, Carlos Faria, Bruno Rodriguez, Vijay Prashad) (Photo: People's Summit). Diplomats from Global South nations including Cuba and Venezuela, organizers, and working people gathered in Harlem on September 25, to challenge imperialism

of the day, we're under this white supremacist capitalism system together.” In his address at the event, Cuban foreign minister Bruno Rodriguez reiterated Cuba's stance of solidarity with other nations, including Puerto Rico, Palestine, and Haiti. Claudia de la Cruz, speaking to *Peoples Dispatch*, elaborated on what exactly the socialist projects of Venezuela and Cuba can teach people in the US: “One of the things that the United States has done and has done very well is sell us the lie that we don't have the power to organize and that we don't have the power to win...Cuba and Venezuela are prime examples of what is possible when people organize.”

Towards a people's democracy

Speaking in front of the crowd of attendees, Councilwoman Kristin Richardson Jordan, a socialist activist elected to office in 2021, said, “This country, due to capitalism, imperialism, and white supremacy, oppresses its own people...I'm on the inside, and I have not been proven wrong. It is not democratic.” Speakers reiterated the idea that the US, despite how the US government touts itself, is not a democracy. Claudia de la Cruz told attendees, “Democracy in the US is a bourgeois democracy. It is not a people's democracy. It is a

democracy that has been violently imposed on the working class.”

“It is a democracy that tells us that if we want to exist as a working class, we need to fight.” Claudia described how the Supreme Court recently [took away federal abortion rights](#) in the US, which feminist activists [fought for half a century ago](#). “The Supreme Court, historically an instrument of the ruling class, has decided to roll back on very very basic rights that have been earned. They have been earned, bled for.”

Meanwhile, on September 25, Cuba voted in the [world's most progressive Family Code](#), which enshrines into law the right of same-sex marriage and adoption, equal distribution of domestic work, and the right to a family life free from violence. Same-sex marriage has yet to be enshrined into law in the US, only upheld through a Supreme Court case, thus marriage rights also risk a similar fate as abortion. “This is where we live, by observing, accompanying, amplifying revolutionary developments in Venezuela and Cuba,” Vijay Prashad told the crowd. “Are we going to the people and saying, look at [the imperialists], they are so terrible, no! That's not going to lift anybody up. We go to the people and say, this is what we want to do.” “We want to build. We want to build with love. We want socialism.”