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Mrs. Harriet Nuamah Agyemang, Senior Programme Officer of SEND GHANA



# OKUDZETO ABLAKWA

## Accuses Akufo-Addo Govt Of Practicing 'Create, Loot And Keep'

Member of Parliament for North Tongu, Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa has accused the Akufo-Addo led ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) of engaging in what he terms "create, loot and keep".

According to the lawmaker Ghanaians are for the first time seeing evidence-based create, loot and keep.

"Under this government we are seeing massive create loot and keep not even create loot and share. This

government, they create loot keep" he said.

Okudzeto Ablakwa who made the accusation in an interview with JoyNews on the sidelines of the just-ended National Delegates Congress of the Opposition NDC again accused



## Stop Attacking Integrity Of Dr Duffuor Now!

NDC Supporters Warn Klottey Korley Vice Chair, Others

## Days After Dutch Govt Apologized For Role In Slavery Which Lasted 250 Years Natives Of Ahanta Demand Return Of The Head Of Badu Bonso II

## Padiki Urges Govt To Allocate Funds To Support Creative Arts Industry



Sharon Dede Padi

The chief executive officer for Padiki Art Gallery, Sharon Dede Padi has urged the government to allocate fund to support the creative arts industry. According to her, the government should pay attention to the creative

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# The INSIGHT

## — EDITORIAL

### THE LOOMING DEBT CRISIS

**D**ata released by the Bank of Ghana recently indicated that Ghana's debt was now over \$40 billion, which is almost double what was bequeathed to this administration.

What is worrying about the country's rising debt level is that no stop-gap measures appears to be put in place to halt the phenomenon. Instead, increasing borrowing appears to be the order of the day which has far-reaching repercussions for the nation in terms of its debt sustainability.

Already, the unbridled government borrowing is giving many financial analysts headache since that appears to be the only leeway or succor in government raising needed capital for infrastructural projects.

Paradoxically, political watchers are worried that the present managers of the economy who in recent past complained about borrowing are themselves doing worse.

Reality of governance, has undoubtedly dawned, and it is important that a new

paradigm shift is charted since the rate of borrowing is not sustainable in the long run.

The attempt by some official spokespersons to score political points using economic indicators which clearly do not make sense and also address the looming debt crisis because of their obvious contradictions and deficiencies is the most worrying.

The time to domesticate the economy to grow and eat what the country needs and quicken the industrial pace to lessen imports is now more than important to the nation's survival.

# GLOBAL NEWS

Presented By SPUTNIK International

## Vladimir Putin Says Almost Entirety Of NATO's Military Potential Being Actively Used Against Russia

By Ilya Tsukanov

**R**ussian officials and some Western media and pundits have characterized the conflict in Ukraine as a proxy war between the West and Russia. The US and its allies have poured tens of billions of dollars' worth of military aid into Ukraine, trained tens of thousands of troops, and provided Kiev with intelligence and strategic level planning support. The military potential of almost all NATO countries is being actively used against Russia, and Moscow must improve its knowledge and understanding of the Western bloc's weapons systems, experience and tactics to improve the fighting potential of the Russian military, President Vladimir Putin has said.

"It's well known that today the military potential and capabilities of almost all major NATO countries are being actively used against Russia," Putin said, speaking at a meeting with senior Russian Defense Ministry officials on Wednesday.

"All the information about NATO forces, the means which are actively used in the course of the special military operation [in Ukraine], to oppose us are well known. You have all this information before you, and it must be thoroughly analyzed, and used in the construction of our armed forces to increase the combat capabilities of the troops, as well as Russia's special services," Putin said.

Putin ordered the MoD and the General Staff to "carefully analyze" the "tremendous combat experience" gained in the course of the military operation in Ukraine, to "systematize it as quickly as possible and include it in programs and planning for the training of personnel, troops as a whole and supplying the forces with necessary equipment."

The president also pointed to the "significant resources" being spent by the United States and its allies on information and psychological warfare against Russia, including the publication of "thousands" of fake news stories in Western print and internet media and television, while covering up war crimes being carried out by the Ukrainian side.

Putin accused Moscow's geopolitical opponents of using "everything that isn't tied down" against Russia, including efforts to brainwash the population of Ukraine and other post-Soviet republics, in the aftermath of the collapse of the USSR in 1991. This process continues today, according to Putin. Russia, he said, had sought to

become a part of the "civilized" world, but soon learned that it was "not expected there."

### Strategic Balance

Russia will continue to build up its conventional military potential while also supporting and modernizing its nuclear triad, Putin said, referring to the latter as the main guarantee of the nation's sovereignty, and the means by which Russia helps preserve "strategic parity and the overall balance of power in the world."

"This year, the level of modern weapons systems within the strategic nuclear forces reached 91 percent. The re-equipment of the Strategic Missile Forces regiments with modern missile systems featuring the Avangard hypersonic warhead is continuing," Putin said. The president assured that the new Sarmat intercontinental ballistic missile will be introduced into service "in the near future."

### Ukraine Conflict Shows Need for New Technologies

Praising the courage of the troops on the front lines in the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, Putin called on his colleagues to honor the memories of soldiers who have lost their lives with a minute of silence. The president stressed that the goals of the military operation will be met, and that the security of all of Russia's territories would be assured.

In connection with the military operation, Putin

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## THE INSIGHT

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# OKUDZETO ABLAKWA

## Accuses Akufo-Addo Govt Of Practicing 'Create, Loot And Keep'



### Okudzeto Ablakwa

from front page

the NPP government under President Akufo-Addo of engaging in reckless borrowing.

Asked whether it is the case

that the NDC engaged in create, loot and share while the NPP is now engaged in create, loot and keep, Mr. Ablakwa said the former is an accusation by NPP against NDC but the latter is evidence-based.

"No... They accused us [of Create Loot and Share] ... No, We didn't engage in this level of recklessness" he replied.

Meanwhile, Okudzeto Ablakwa in a write-up on developments following the passage of the 2023 budget has lashed out at the government on its wasteful expenditures.

This is the write up;

**Okudzeto Ablakw writes... A summary of our 2023 Budget Approval Successes:**

- 1) GHS1.3billion (€116million) Accra International Conference Centre Demolition and Redevelopment plans scuttled;
- 2) Projections to establish new diplomatic missions in Jamaica, Mexico and Trinidad & Tobago shot down;
- 3) GHS80million sleazy allocation to President Akufo-

Addo's Cathedral defeated and expunged from the Appropriation Act;

4) GHS1.4billion mind-boggling request for the infamous Contingency Vote cut drastically to GHS533million;

5) Anti-poor proposal to remove the e-Levy threshold defeated;

6) Scrapping a colossal GHS27.5 million allocation to the wasteful and amorphous Special Development Initiatives Secretariat & the needless Monitoring and Evaluation Secretariat all at the Office of the President.

The 2 Secretariats have therefore been virtually collapsed;

7) Defeated the repugnant tax measure intended to compel drivers, particularly commercial drivers to produce tax clearance certificates as a requirement for renewing

driver's license;

Our only setback:

Objectively and sincerely, despite an unwavering determination of the NDC Parliamentary Caucus to achieve all we set out to accomplish in solidarity with suffering Ghanaians, we lost the crucial VAT vote by a narrow 136-135.

This is the only item on our 8-Point Must-Win-Agenda which we failed to deliver, and for which we are deeply pained. We did our very best but as they say, it's always difficult to win everything. Nevertheless, we live to fight another day. Together, with a high dose of patriotism and unquestionable integrity, we shall construct the Ghana we want.

## SEND GHANA Decries Ghana's 12% Total National Budget For Education

**S**END GHANA, a non-governmental organisation in Ghana has bemoaned the 12% fiscal allocation of the 2023 budget to education as it described the said figure to the sector as below international benchmarks. This assertion was made at a media briefing by the organisation held on Tuesday, December 20, 2022, in Accra.

Addressing members of the organisation and the media, the Senior Programme Officer of SEND GHANA, Mrs. Harriet Nuamah Agyemang expressed concern about what she

says is a decline in the budget allocation for the education sector over the last five years. Stating that the percentage budget for the sector has been at 17.7% for the last five years but has declined to 12% for the year 2023.

Mrs. Nuamah stated that "We have a percentage share of the ministry's (finance ministry) allocation over the five years and you will notice that we have been declining from 17.7% and this year, the government is allocating 12% of the total national budget to

education. This is below international benchmarks of about 15% of the total national budget to education. So, we are not actually doing well and we know all the challenges in the education sector."

However, Mrs. Nuamah acknowledged the Government of Ghana (GOG) as the biggest contributor to Ghana's education sector aside from IGF, oil revenue and funds from GETFund.

"By source, the Ghana government remains the highest contributor to education in this country and contributing this year about GH¢15 billion to education,



Mrs. Harriet Nuamah Agyemang, Senior Programme Officer of SEND GHANA

followed by IGF. The education sector generates its own funds and supports what we receive from our taxes. GoG taxes the

government's transfers to the Ministry of Education. And then, we have our developing partners and then the oil revenue also contributes some funds," she added.



# INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORT

## Compiled By Peoples Dispatch

### Venezuela Rejects US 'BOLIVAR Act' That Penalizes Business With Its Government

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on Saturday, December 17, strongly condemned the approval by the US Senate of a bill known as the '[BOLIVAR Act](#),' for constituting "a violation of economic freedoms and a serious offense to the Venezuelan people."

The bill, titled 'Banning Operations and Leases with the Illegitimate Venezuelan Authoritarian Regime,' was approved by the Senate on December 16. It prohibits US state agencies from doing business and entering into contracts with anyone who has commercial dealings with the government of President Nicolás Maduro. The bill has yet to receive the green light in the US House of Representatives.

The Venezuelan foreign ministry, through a [statement](#), described the bill as "unfortunate" both in its name and its content, and criticized it as a tool contrary to international law and

engineered by the extremist sectors of US politics.

The ministry denounced the fact that it "[violated] the integrity of the sovereign people of Venezuela as well as that of the US companies themselves, by placing them at risk of being penalized, arbitrarily, unfairly and illegally, when exercising their right to free trade through contracts with the Bolivarian Government."

The Venezuelan government also said that the "abusive" bill once again "[demonstrated] the cruelty of ultra-conservative and coup-mongering sectors in US politics that are relentless in their attempt to overthrow the legitimate government and blow up any possible route to dialogue and constructive relations between the two countries."

The statement slammed the US for disgracing the name of Liberator Simón Bolívar. It noted that the name given to the bill "offends the

Venezuelan people, their history and their Liberator, whose republican values and commitment to the principles of freedom and peace are way above those of a handful of legislators ignorant of his glory."

The Venezuelan government went on to say that "in the face of the Monroeist threat and its war-builder heirs, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela will continue to cultivate and defend the legacy of Liberator Simón Bolívar, carving out its own path of political and social stability, economic recovery and peace diplomacy, for a world free of hegemonism, colonialism, and imperialism."

US Senator Rick Scott, one of the promoters of the bill, stressed that the approval of the bill would be a "big step to weaken" the Maduro government. In this regard, it is worth highlighting that last month, the US Treasury Department [authorized](#) the US oil giant Chevron to begin extracting and commercializing Venezuelan crude for four years. The US government indicated that this was done in a



*#HandsOffVenezuela march in Caracas, Venezuela, in February 2019. Photo: Archives. The 'BOLIVAR Act,' approved by the US Senate last Friday, prohibits US federal agencies from doing business with anyone who has commercial dealing with the Nicolás Maduro government*

gesture of support for the negotiations between the Venezuelan government and the platform of far-right opposition sectors. The US authorities avoided acknowledging that the step was taken amid fuel crises in the US and Europe due to sanctions that have been placed on Russia and Russian-exported fuel.

The bill passed by the Senate provides for exceptions, such as humanitarian aid, disaster relief, and when the Office of Foreign Assets Control issues a valid license

to do business in Venezuela. It also allows the Secretary of State to remove the restriction when it is in the US national interest.

Additionally, the bill establishes that the prohibition will not affect "any business with the legitimately elected government of the National Assembly and its elected successors," an indirect reference to the self-proclaimed President Juan Guaidó and his allies, who are neither elected nor in the government.

### Health Workers In UK Intensify Their Fight For Fair Wages And Dignity

Health workers in the UK have intensified their agitation, demanding a wage hike at par with soaring inflation. On Tuesday, December 20, nurses affiliated with the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) went on strike in NHS hospitals across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Nurses are protesting the Tory government's refusal to further discuss the demands of the nursing community for increased wages and to mitigate the ongoing and acute cost of living crisis. On Thursday, December 15, over 100,000 nurses went on strike, demanding the same.

On Wednesday, December 21, ambulance drivers in England and Wales affiliated with unions Unite and GMB also went on strike, demanding wage hikes and more

staff. The union, Unite, has pointed out that "ambulance staff have seen their wages collapse in value this year, down by £2,400 [2901.36 USD], with NHS pay having fallen by £6,000 [7253.40 USD] since 2010." In certain cases, the military was deployed to take care of ambulance services affected by the strike.

A vicious misinformation campaign to malign the health workers' strike is also taking place in the UK, with the support of mainstream media, which unions and their representatives are pushing back against.

On December 20, NHS staff and campaign groups including 'NHS Workers Say No' and 'NHS Staff Voices' (the latter affiliated with the Keep Our NHS Public campaign) marched in London from University College London Hospital to Downing Street, in solidarity with protesting NHS staff including nurses and ambulance drivers. Junior doctors

affiliated with the British Medical Association are also gearing up for ballots to decide on the course of action regarding demanding pay hikes.

For the past several years, especially under the rule of the Conservative Party, the National Health Service (NHS) in the UK has seen steady underfunding and [bids for privatization](#). The health service was stretched beyond its limit during the COVID-19 pandemic. Grossly underpaid NHS workers are now finding it difficult to make ends meet during the ongoing cost of living crisis.

The Tory government in the UK, currently headed by Rishi Sunak, has refused to accept NHS workers' demands for a hike in wages at par with inflation, which is hovering around 10%. Health workers and unions have rejected the meager 4% rise in wages offered by the government. The nursing union RCN has called for a "5% pay raise over

inflation to make up for a twelve-year drop in their real pay."

On December 20, RCN General Secretary & Chief Executive Pat Cullen warned the UK government that "unless the government [opened] formal pay negotiations within 48 hours" it would "face another wave of strike action."

"The Prime Minister should ask himself what is motivating nursing staff to stand outside their hospitals for a second day so close to Christmas. They're prepared to sacrifice a day's pay to have their concerns heard. Their determination stems as much from worries over patient safety and the future of the NHS than personal hardship," [Cullen added](#).

While addressing the striking ambulance workers in Coventry on December 21, Sharon Graham, General Secretary of the Unite the

Union, declared, "the UK government has had months to intervene and end this dispute, they chose not to. These strikers are actually trying to save the service."

On December 21, while addressing the House of Commons, MP Jeremy Corbyn [said](#) that "the army should not be used as a battering ram from a government that is refusing to meet workers' representatives, refusing to negotiate, and refusing to invest in our NHS."

The Communist Party of Britain (CPB) and Young Communist League (YCL-Britain) have expressed support and solidarity to the NHS workers and called on workers in other professions to unite in support of the health workers as well.

# Stop Attacking Integrity Of Dr Duffuor Now!

## NDC Supporters Warn Klottey Korley Vice Chair, Others

Thousands of supporters of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) have said that the series of attacks, threats and blame games meted out to the party's Presidential hopeful, Dr. Kwabena Duffuor by some self-seeking elements of the NDC including the Vice Chairman of the party in the Klottey Korley Consistency, Mr. Julius Neequaye Kotey aka Logas are worrying, unfortunate, regrettable and unacceptable. According to the supporters who are predominantly youth, they find it extremely difficult to understand why Mr. Neequaye Kotey would attack the integrity of Dr. Duffuor

because he is contesting the flagbearer-ship position with the former President John Dramani Mahama. The attacks on the personal life of Dr. Duffuor, they stressed, does not augur well for the peace and unity the party needs before and after the internal poll, saying the NDC is now becoming the next alternative for Ghanaians to win political power in the 2024 general election to take the country out of the current economic turmoil. They pointed out that the decision of Dr. Duffuor to contest the flagbearer-ship race with the former President Dramani Mahama is not a crime, saying that NDC is a

social democratic party which is not against the competition of the position within the party. They described the outburst against Dr Duffuor by Vice Chair of the party in the Klottey Korley Consistency of the Greater Accra Region as shameful and disgusting and called on the leadership of the party to immediately call him to order. They educated Mr. Neequaye Kotey that the position of the flagbearer-ship was not reserved for one particular person in the party, saying that the NDC is a political party which is bigger than all of the current personalities who had attained the executive positions of the party. They stressed the need for the chairman Logas to immediately



retract and tender unqualified apology to Dr. Duffuor for wrongly attacking him, since the former Minister of Finance and Economic Planning has not committed any wrong to get such unwarranted attack from chairman Logas.

It would be recalled that Mr Julius Neequaye Kotey aka Logas in media reports stated that Dr. Kwabena Duffuor will lose woefully to former president Mahama in the party's flagbearer race. According to him, Dr. Duffuor will not be elected as the party's flagbearer even if he purchases buses for party offices in the 275 constituencies.

"Dr. Duffuor can do all he can humanly possible but he will lose the flagbearer race. We need him to stop all he is doing and support the John Mahama camp. Even if he donates buses to all the constituencies, we will not vote for Dr. Duffuor. Even if former President Mahama is on his sick bed we will bring him to contest the flagbearer race," he stated.

In an interview with Don Kwabena Prah on Happy 98.9 FM's 'Epa Hoa Daben' political talk show, Chairman Logas said the 2024 general elections will be contested on the records of former President Mahama "and so far as he is alive, he will represent the party as flagbearer. Mahama is ready to be sold but Duffuor will have to be marketed

and we don't have the time for that now." Dr. Duffuor launched the Ahotor project which he says is aimed at strengthening the grass roots of the party to win political power in 2024.

He has donated event rental equipment to constituency offices of the NDC to help constituency executives undertake income-generating activities for the day-to-day running of the party. Chairman Logas criticized Dr. Duffuor for undertaking the Ahotor project without consulting the party's national headquarters. "NDC has structures in place and Dr. Duffuor cannot just go to constituencies without going to consult the national headquarters. The party headquarters knows which party needs what and that can inform which equipment are provided various constituencies." But in a quick rebuttal, the youths in the party found the criticism meted to Dr. Duffuor as outrageous. They argued that the attempts to use individuals including Chairman Logas to malign Dr Duffuor will completely backfire, stressing that Dr Duffuor is an action-oriented person who is conducting clean campaign by way of telling the delegates of what he can do to bring the NDC to power for the 2024 general elections.

## Padiki Urges Govt To Allocate Funds To Support Creative Arts Industry

She also said the equipment and other tools needed to carry out their operation like brush and paints are very expensive, many people have the desire to enter into the arts industry but the means to help them operate is the challenge and for this reason the government should intervene and support them financially. The chief executive officer therefore appealed to parents to pay close attention to their children to discover their talent to enable the parents nurture their children to bring out the best in them in a way of creating employment for the youth. Commenting on President's ambition for Ghanaians to patronize locally manufactured goods and services or Ghana made goods, Madam Sharon

suggested that in order to achieve that goal the president should organise exhibition fairs for Artists to showcase their artwork publicly to create awareness for both local and foreign investors and those who love art work. HRM Dr. Ambassador Jude Chukudi Ihenetu, Chief of Igbo community in Ghana who was the special guest of honour unveiled the Padiki Poetry Book REFLEXIONS which talks about the genesis of painting, Passion and the understanding of Arts. He therefore charged government and Ghanaian's to support Padiki God given talents in order to exhibit her works beyond the borders of the world. Kofi Atta Kakra Kusi, who is the Deputy Head of Corporate Affairs at Ghana Tourism Authority who spoke on



behalf of the Deputy minister of Tourism and Creative Arts Hon Okraku Mantey comended madam Sharon Padiki for believing in the Eat Ghana, Feel Ghana and Wear Ghana agenda. He Pledge on behalf of Ghana Tourism Authority to support Padiki Arts Gallery to attain the needed recognition to the benefit of Ghanaians. The lunched was graced by Ambassador Mama Africa, Fredman Nii Obour chairman of Nmati Abonase family of La, Former MP, UN for Migration and other love Ones.

# Days After Dutch Govt Apologized For Role In Slavery Which Lasted 250 Years Natives Of Ahanta Demand Return Of The Head Of Badu Bonso II



Badu Bonso XV, the Overlord of Ahanta Traditional Area

**A**s the Dutch government is issuing apologies for their role in slavery which lasted for 250 years, we the natives of Ahanta in Ghana demand justice for Badu Bonso II and all Ahantas who were massacred upon instructions of Williams I of Netherlands in 1838.

We demand that the head of Badu Bonso II be properly restituted and Ahanta be restored and repatriated for all the atrocities that the Dutch committed against us during their invasion of Ahanta in colonial times. We demand that everything that was taken from us through unjustified means be returned to us. We demand that Dutch government takes full responsibility to reconstruct Ahanta after burning our towns and villages leading to displacement of multitudes of Ahanta in 1838.

For us, it is not about apologies at all, but much more of a situation of doing

what is morally right by the Dutch government to ensure that we are given back whatever they took from us through foul means. Apologies will never be enough, and we will continue to ask the Dutch government to blot it colonial sins by ensuring that we are fully compensated for all the atrocities they committed against us.

On Monday, 19th December 2022, the Dutch government formally issued apology for their role in slavery. In the presence of invited audience at the National Archive in Hague, in the Netherlands, the Dutch Prime Minister, Mark Rutte read a 20 minute speech to formally to formally apologize for the role they played in slavery which lasted for 250 years. Less is said by atrocities committed by the Europeans, particularly the Dutch against Ahantas of

Ghana but now that the Dutch government has openly issued apology for the role they played in slavery, it is time to bring Badu Bonso II home for him to take a rest with our ancestors. It is time the Dutch pacify their own sins by ensuring that the head of Badu Bonso II reaches Ahanta as soon as possible. The Dutch like other European explorers found themselves in Ahanta in the later part of the fourteenth century, and in 1565, they signed the Butre Treaty with Ahanta chiefs and made Ahanta a Dutch protectorate. They quickly dislodged the Portuguese from Ahanta and established themselves as an European powerhouse in Ahanta.

In the years after the signing of the Butre Treaty, the Dutch were going to be involved in gold mining in Ahanta and be engaged in all sort of trading activities and, at one point in time sought to seize all Ahanta lands from the natives but were fiercely resisted by Ahanta chiefs and the natives.

Soon the trade turned into the buying and selling of humans and for the next 213 years or more, the Dutch were going to be actively involved in the buying and selling of humans in Ahanta. Then Badu Bonso II assumed the reigns of Ahanta as the king, and in no sooner than later, he was going to be involved in altercations with the Dutch because he felt the Dutch have interfered in the affairs of Ahanta for far too long and, it was time a stop be put to it.

Badu Bonso II was going to ban the sale of guns and gun powder in Ahanta and that became detrimental to the economic interests and fortunes of the Dutch in the Gold Coast. Then the Dutch

started to use some of the Ahanta chiefs who have benefited from the nefarious activities of the Dutch to instigate against Badu Bonso II.

The chief of Sekondi defied the instructions of Badu Bonso II and was secretly selling guns and gunpowder to other tribes who were then using it to raid Ahanta towns and villages. That got Badu Bonso II infuriated and wanted to execute the chief of Sekondi for defying his orders but he took refuge with the Dutch.

The dispute between the chief of Sekondi and Badu Bonso II escalated as the Dutch got involved and it consequently led to the first and second Dutch -Ahanta wars which were fought in 1837 and 1838. In the second Dutch -Ahanta war of 1838, William I who was then the king of Netherlands dispatched mercenaries under the command of Gen. Jan Verveer to Ahanta to ensure that Badu Bonso II is put to check.

In May 1838, the ships carrying Dutch mercenaries and Gen. Jan Verveer arrived in Elmina and mobilized forces from Sekondi, Shama, Axim and other neighbouring tribes and launched attack

on Badu Bonso II and Ahanta. From Takoradi to Cape Three Points, the Dutch burned all Ahanta towns and villages, and left them in ruins. Badu Bonso II himself was captured and hanged to death after which they removed his head and placed it in a formahyde jar and took it to the Netherlands. Some of his royals were also hanged at Elmina and others were placed on board a ship to the Dutch Indies and, in 1871 after some 213 years of signing the Butre Treaty, the Dutch sold all their trade possessions in Ahanta to the English and left for good. The head of Badu Bonso II was going to get lost at Hague until it was found in 1997 at the Leiden University Medical Center by Arthur Japin, a Dutch author some 170 years later. In 2009, after 170 years of taking Bad Bonso II's head to the Netherlands, the Dutch government shamefully, and in a very undignified manner together with the government of Ghana and Ahanta chiefs brought the head of Badu Bonso II to Ghana but failed make sure that it reached Ahanta where he was killed and his head taken to the Netherlands.

Since 2009, the head of Badu Bonso II has remained in Accra making the whole restitution process incomplete and flawed. So for us the natives of Ahanta in Ghana, it is not time for apologies but rather we expect that the Dutch government does the needful to ensure that the head of Badu Bonso II is properly restituted with full reparations and repatriations. For us it is not time for apologies yet. In fact, the apologies are cases of adding more salts to injuries and that really hurt. Time to bring the head of Badu Bonso II home. We demand it.

Apologies will never be enough.

# International Union Of Left Publishers (IULP) Condemns Indonesia's Criminalization Of Marxism

By International Union of Left Publishers

A group of left publishers from across the world has condemned the new Indonesian criminal code which specifically outlaws Marxism in the country.

The group in a statement said it is deeply concerning that the current government of Indonesia would reject rich heritage in favour of a dictatorship's falsified version of history.

On 6 December 2022, the Indonesian parliament passed a new criminal code. There is much to debate about this code, including the violations of the rights to equality before the law and equal protection as well as the right to privacy and the right to freedom of speech and association. One aspect of the law that has received little concern is the section of the law that specifically outlaws Marxism with a ten-year sentence for being associated with

organizations with a Marxist tendency and a four-year sentence for spreading Marxism. It is unfortunate that Marxism-phobia, a legacy of the worst period of the Soeharto dictatorship (1965-1998), is upheld by a government that is the beneficiary of the people's movement that overthrew that dictatorship.

Marxism has deep roots in Indonesia's fight against colonialism, having inspired the leading figures in the freedom struggle. Dr. Mohammed Hatta, Indonesia's first vice president, translated parts of Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* into Bahasa Indonesian. Soewardi – creator of Indonesia's National Education – translated the lyrics of *The Internationale*, the anthem of the Paris Commune and of international communism. Can one imagine Indonesian freedom without the thought and work of Tan Malaka, an early communist, and can one

imagine the early years of the Indonesian republic without the thinking of the first President Sukarno, whose philosophy melded Marxism, Nationalism, and Islam. It is deeply concerning that the current government of Indonesia would reject this rich heritage in favor of the dictatorship's falsified version of history. This new criminal code turns its back on Indonesia's history in order to discipline the people of Indonesia today. It will be used to suffocate the civil society organisations and labor organisations, as well as independent publishers and scholars.

We, the International Union of Left Publishers, appeal to the Indonesian government to revise this code and uphold the fundamental rights enshrined in the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (1976), of which Indonesia became a signatory in 2006.

**The International Union of**



A group of left publishers from across the world published this statement to condemn the new Indonesian criminal code which specifically outlaws Marxism

## Left Publishers includes:

1804 Books (USA)  
Batalla de Ideas (Argentina)  
Chintha Publishers (India)  
El Colectivo (Argentina)  
EPO (België)  
Estrella Roja (Venezuela)  
Expressão Popular (Brazil)  
IDEA (Romania)  
Instituto Simón Bolívar (Venezuela)  
International Strategy Center (South Korea)  
Kriya Madhyama (India)  
LeftWord Books (India)

Liberation Media (USA)  
Mangroven Verlag (Germany)  
Manifest Libres (Catalonia)  
Marjin Kiri (Indonesia)  
Naked Punch (Pakistan)  
National Book Agency (India)  
Red Star Press (Italy)  
Vaam Prakashan (India)  
Vadell Hermanos Editores (Venezuela)  
Yordam Kitap (Turkey)  
Založba /\*cf. (Slovenia)

# GCAA Commended For Aviation Records

By Florence Anim

The Ministry of Transport has commended the Ghana Civil Aviation Authority for maintaining the country's enviable aviation record.

That, it said was as the result of the application of the International Civil Aviation Organisation's standards which caused the country to maintain one of the highest aviation safety and security standards globally.

Mr Kwaku Ofori Asiamah, Minister of Transport, said this in a speech read on his behalf by Mr Hassan Tampuli, Deputy Transport Minister, at a ceremony in Accra to re-launch the Aviation Safety Inspectors Association of Ghana (AVSIAG). The Association, inaugurated on 4th August 2013 is an umbrella body of retired and active Aviation Safety

Inspectors.

Members of the Association include Airworthiness Inspectors, Flight Operations Inspectors, Security Inspectors, Personnel Licensing Inspectors, Aerodrome Inspectors and Air Navigation Services Inspectors. Mr Asiamah said one of the practical steps, towards achieving safe, secure, efficient, and environmentally sustainable operations was regulated and standardised practice.

He said the country was found to be conforming to the international standards in various international audits, "and it thus comes as no surprise that Ghana is now a member of the ICAO Council." The Minister said the country was awarded the 'ICAO Council President Certificate'

for obtaining Africa's highest score in Aviation Safety Oversight after scoring an Effective Implementation (EI) rate of 89.89 per cent after the completion of ICAO Coordinated Validation Mission (ICVM) on April 3, 2019.

It had another award for security in recognition of its high commitment to the ICAO's standards and protocols on security at the Airport and Ghana's Airspace.

Mr Asiamah noted that the laurels and achievements were partly due to the safety and security oversight systems put in place by Government as well as the empowerment of Aviation Safety Inspectors to ensure the implementation of the standards in the country. Aviation Safety Inspectors work to ensure aircraft safety through certification, surveillance, and enforcement

of standards.

The Ministry of Transport, he said, continuously places great emphasis on inspectors' development and training to equip them to take on the task of safety and security oversight responsibilities.

Mr Charles Kraikue, Director General, GCAA, stated that the aviation sector was resilient and was experiencing tremendous levels of new technology and innovation coupled with exciting, opportunities and challenges. He said the Authority had acknowledged the benefits of Safety Management System (SMS) in reducing safety risks for commercial aviation, hence, it was working to expand SMS requirements to airport operators and aviation service providers.

The Director General said it had

collected a significant amount of safety data from proactive initiatives like SMS, fatigue risk management, safety reporting programmes among others. "The more we collect, analyse and share safety data, and discuss safety issues openly and transparently between stakeholders throughout the industry, the better we can achieve a more predictive aviation safety system," he said. Mr Peter Akwetey, President, AVSIAG, called for collaboration in the industry as each member played their parts. "Let us pledge to uphold the highest safety standards as we work together to maintain or improve on Ghana's safety record. Let us soar safely, together."

Mr Akwetey assured that the Association would continue to support the Government's vision of making Ghana an Aviation Hub in the Sub-Region.

# THE REIGN OF THE 'AVENGER'

By K. Adamant

The Danquah sect of the Busia/Danquah tradition has found it impossible to 'forgive' us Ghanaians for the vicious yet deserving overthrow of its progenitor and torch bearer, William Akuffo-Addo. And it appears that the sword of vengeance has been nurtured and borne over the years by Ghana's current President, H.E Nana Akufo-Addo. Every Ghanaian who is familiar with our nation's past can't help but get struck with an awful feeling of déjà vu as events unfold under this regime. Have we been here before?

Like the proverbial ostrich, we failed to notice rather obvious signs, and the clarion calls of oracles warning us about the ineptitude and unsavory temperaments of the then-candidate Akufo-Addo. Perhaps a tribal statement had to be made at every cost. The aboriginals had to affirm their birthright; that none except their kind deserve the right to rule. Now we all have an uneasy wait to endure, while we keep hope that debris from what would remain of the state would suffice to rebuild it. Things are indeed falling apart.

The present state of affairs of the nation gives indications of a monarchy rather than a representative democracy. The latter of which Ghanaians approve of, which same the 1992 constitution upholds. The demeanor of the president of the Republic is akin to that of a vicious king; an emperor who has eventually had the better of an unyielding adversary after a long and fierce battle. 'King' as he supposedly sees himself, H.E. Akufo-Addo considers it only customary to usurp the sovereign rights of citizens as custodians of political power.

Excepting for an instance of retribution and purposeful effort, one would find it impossible to understand

what Ghanaians now witness as the worst economic suffering of the fourth republic. As the Russia-Ukraine war and the COVID-19 cover gradually breaks down, the government's ineptitude and perhaps insensitivity become rather more noticeable. Are we simply suffering the aftermath of voting into office the most incapable hands to ever manage affairs of the state, or indeed we are observing a state-capture conspiracy unfold before our very eyes?

Like the vanquished, amidst deplorable living and working conditions, Ghanaians are gagged, repressed, and ridiculed. The president and his crew nonetheless flaunt opulence as though in a bid to exact anguish. The woes of the average Ghanaian deepen by the day as opinion leaders—the clergy, and the media remain tight-lipped and indifferent. For a share of the loot and the prospect to be excused from the scourge of slavery, the people's voices have stooped and have become minions of the oppressor.

The ruling NPP appears to have been leveraged and is now tossed out by the avenger. It is indeed an awkward awakening, especially for NPP fanatics, to now discover that they have been hoodwinked by an uncharitable mafia clique and that they have no stake in the spoils from 'the battle'. Key stakeholders of the NPP now look on helplessly while pirates run their beloved party down a bottomless ditch. Of course, Ghanaians would always have these times of untold hardship in mind whenever we go to the polls-granted that the NPP would survive these dark days.

The leading opposition party, NDC, although retaining a

formidable presence in the legislature, is nothing more than a toothless barking dog. The aphorism that 'the ruling party would always have its way' had not made much sense up until lately. The several incidents of blatant collusion which transpired during the 2020 general election present sufficient reasons for well-meaning NDC members to be wary of their party's chances in the forthcoming 2024 elections.

After failing to fully realize its diabolical agenda against the good people of Ghana in its first term of office, the regime required a crucial second term to solidify its gains and execute an orchestrated exit strategy. Nothing would prevent the regime's drive in this regard, not even the sovereign will of the people for a change. It seems that the opposition only has to cross its fingers while it counts on the magnanimity of the incumbent regime for a free and transparent election come December 2024. Alternatively, many in the opposition have joined in on the regime's transgressions against citizens to keep body and soul together.

Talks of corruption in these days of serfdom tend to be misleading, as they downplay the gravity of our predicament. Is it mistakable judging by the president's conduct that he considers himself a conqueror, not a custodian, and hence possesses unbridled rights over the nation's resources? This regime has long overstepped the national corruption threshold. Over the years, Ghanaian politicians have left no stone unturned in their bid to conceal their corrupt deeds, an act which now occurs openly, and with impunity. By any stretch, the scope of wealth-

grabbing that prevails under this administration renders all indexes for corruption meaningless.

Private property and businesses have scarcely eluded the regime's gluttony. The shady policy by the administration to "clean up" the financial sector appears to have prevailed to cripple and obliterate potential competitors in the regime's quest for economic dominance. Businesses now thrive on the regime's friendship. Accordingly, all businesses of notable mention have collapsed, with a peculiar exception of those businesses owned by the regime and its associates. Regime-backed cartels in the insurance and banking sectors especially have been considerably menacing, considering their scope of influence vis-a-vis a near-collapse state economy. Also, ordinary citizens have seen their earnings sapped away by back-breaking tariffs (an aggregate of 25%) coupled with galloping inflationary rates (unclassified). As though that wasn't enough, the regime's debauchery has reached incredible volumes lately as it launches a crusade against citizens' savings and investments. For the first time in the history of our beloved nation, the banking industry is not a haven for personal savings and investments as unlawful bond 'cuts' by the government have become the new normal.

Given the foregoing, every Ghanaian is now driven by the singular object of avoiding starvation. In this scramble for survival, no one appears to give a hoot about how their actions affect others. In a typical dog-eat-dog fashion, every Ghanaian would not hesitate to take advantage of their fellow citizens; through overpricing, hoarding, and racketeering. Have we Ghanaians lost sight of the actual adversary and thus draw spears at one another, or the enemy is just insurmountable? Your guess is as good as mine. Our hypocrisy has taken us down this path of self-destruction.

We have not only failed ourselves as a people, by looking on unconcerned while self-seeking reprobates run down our hard-earned democracy and our gains, but we have also been negligent in our obligations to posterity. No doubt, posterity's judgment of us would not differ by any stretch from the slurs we now cast on past generations. What degree of arm-twisting and deterioration should be enough to provoke our vexation as a people and to shake us back to wakefulness? As much as I agree with Dr. Kwame Nkrumah that, "Ghanaians are not timid people... they may take time to organize and act...", I think the time Ghanaians acted is long overdue.

With all democratic and conventional avenues for protest shut off by this regime, we citizens are left with no option but to explore unorthodox pathways in asserting our sovereign rights and to defend what is left of democracy—a feat we must embark in earnest. As pointed out already, we not only owe this to ourselves, but it behooves us as a people to preserve the existing democratic dispensation for posterity, if not enrich it. It is about time we said enough of this aristocratic and class-run democracy, and strive to establish a truly democratic system that would offer equal and accessible opportunities for all.

May I serve a reminder at this juncture: that we remain the offspring of our ancestors; progeny of the gallant men and women who defied British imperialism and led a daring crusade to emancipate the entire African continent from colonial oppression. God Bless Our Homeland Ghana.

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