

# MAHAMA JABS AKUFO-ADDO

## Accuses Him Of Destroying Ghana's Economy



**President Nana Akufo-Addo**



**Former President John Dramani Mahama**

**F**ormer President John Dramani Mahama has fired salvos at President Nana Akufo-Addo accusing him of destroying the stable and vibrant economy he (Mahama) bequeathed to him (Akufo-Addo). According to the former president he should have retired, but due to the

current state of the country, he has been forced to rescind that decision. He stated that he could not stand by and watch President Akufo-Addo destroy the country because the next generation of youth would have no place to live. The aspiring presidential candidate opined that

Ghana needs a change delivered by an experienced leader and not an experiment like what the current leadership has delivered. Mahama said, "I should have retired, but I wouldn't have been able to sleep. Ghana belongs to all of us. I

*Cont. on page 2*



*President Joe Biden*

### The US Funneled Billions Towards Ukraine While Cutting Corners On Health And Education For Struggling Americans

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### SMG Welcomes Proposed Establishment Of Mali-Burkina Faso Federation

**...Says Move Appropriate Against French Imperialist Interests**

**T**he Socialist Movement of Ghana (SMG) has welcomed a proposal for the formation of Mali-Burkina Faso federation brokered by the leaders of the two West African countries. While endorsing the growing partnership between the States of Mali, Guinea, and Burkina Faso, the Socialist Movement of Ghana singled out for commendation the proposed idea of a federation between Mali and Burkina Faso. The statement issued on Tuesday March 14 2023 signed by Nana Yaw Appiah-

*Cont. on page 3*



### Alliance Of Drivers Bare Teeth At Govt

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**...Over Reintroduction Of Road Tolls**

# The INSIGHT

## — EDITORIAL

### TACKLING NON COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

**H**ealth experts have now identified Non Communicable Diseases (NCD) such as diabetes, stroke, hypertension and cancer as the main cause of morbidity and mortality in our public and private hospitals now.

Until recently, communicable diseases such as dysentery, typhoid fever, cholera among many others which are occasioned by untidy environment and lack of personal hygiene have been our bane.

Obviously, the growing cases of morbidity associated with NCDs are clear indications that these lifestyle diseases have become highly ingrained in our daily practices which need to be worked on.

It is regrettable that seeming improvement in general living conditions of some of the people considered part of the so-called growing Middle Class in the Ghanaian society has brought in its wake a deterioration of the health conditions of the majority of the people. It is even alarming especially as the health sector claims it concentrates higher percentage of its national budget to tackling diabetes and hypertension.

According to the Ghana Health Service records hypertension and diabetes, two preventable diseases attributable to lifestyle of the people are due to excessive drinking of alcohol, lack of exercises, and eating non-healthy diets. This means that if the majority of the people could adopt healthy lifestyles such as exercising, drinking lots of water and eating well, there will be improvement in the health of the people and these NCDs could be reduced if not prevented.

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**President Nana Akufo-Addo**



**Former President John Dramani Mahama**

*from front page*

have children and grandchildren, and if the current inept leadership is allowed to continue, it will destroy the future of the next generation.

"That is why I want to return and help Ghanaians overcome their current economic difficulties. I believe the NDC will win the general elections in 2024."

John Dramani Mahama fired the salvoes during a campaign speech in the Bono Region where he also accused the NPP of being full of lies and deception.

According to the former president, after their lies and sweet promises, President Nana Akufo-Addo and his Vice failed to live up to their promises and meet the huge expectations of Ghanaians.

"Ghana is now a poor country. We are bankrupt and the government itself says we cannot pay our debts", he added. John Mahama is in the Bono Region meeting with his party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) delegates to campaign for their votes during the presidential primaries slated for 13th

May 2023.

He told delegates in the Jaman North constituency that despite a series of advice and caution, the government continued to engage in excessive borrowing, coupled with economic mismanagement, which has brought us to where we are, a bankrupt country.

## THE INSIGHT

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# SMG Welcomes Proposed Establishment Of Mali-Burkina Faso Federation

## ...Says Move Appropriate Against French Imperialist Interests

*from front page*

Kubi, for the General Secretary said, "On February 23, 2023, at the end of a joint council of governments meeting held in Ouagadougou between the Burkinabe Prime Minister, Apollinaire Joachimson Kyelem de Tambèla, and the Malian Prime Minister, Choguel Kokalla Maïga, both countries agreed to commence efforts for the formation of a federation between the two states." The move comes at a time when both countries have expelled French military forces as part of efforts to confront their challenges without foreign intrusion. According to the two leaders, the move was necessitated by the shared historical, political, and socio-economic reality of both countries. Both countries had political independence in 1960 but like all postcolonial states in Africa they have been caught in the web of neocolonialism and imperialism. "Although both countries are endowed with enormous natural resources, their citizens live in poverty and misery. Their resources are exploited to serve mainly French imperial interest. In uniting their efforts, they aim to overcome their common problems and improve their economic

potential", the statement noted. The SMG also traced the historical antecedents to such a move saying, the "SMG recognizes that historically there have been many efforts by progressive national liberation leaders within the region such as Modibo Keita, Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah, and Ahmed Sekou Toure, who have resisted the balkanization of the African continent and pushed for a human-centered and an all-African approach to planning, production, and distribution of our resources and in solving African problems". "These efforts have been thwarted by Western imperial powers and their internal lackeys since they stand to lose in a united Africa development program. This recent development provides all progressive forces and Pan Africanists renewed hope for the possible future of a United Africa. Mali and Burkina Faso have been plagued by attacks from jihadists' insurgencies". "The deteriorating situation within the Sahel region has been occasioned mainly by the inability of successive post independent governments to resolve the material needs of the people and the consequent decline of control by these dysfunctional neocolonial governments in protecting civilians in their fragmented territories", the statement further added.

This is the full text of the SMG statement;

### STATEMENT ON THE PROPOSED FEDERATION OF BURKINA FASO AND MALI

The Socialist Movement of Ghana (SMG) welcomes and endorses the growing partnership between the States of Mali, Guinea, and Burkina Faso. We particularly commend the proposed idea of a federation between Mali and Burkina Faso. On February 23, 2023, at the end of a joint council of governments meeting held in Ouagadougou between the Burkinabe Prime Minister, Apollinaire Joachimson Kyelem de Tambèla, and the Malian Prime Minister, Choguel Kokalla Maïga, both countries agreed to commence efforts for the formation of a federation between the two states. Both countries have expelled French military forces as part of efforts to confront their challenges without foreign intrusion. According to the two leaders, this move was necessitated by the shared historical, political, and socio-economic reality of both countries. Both countries had political independence in 1960 but like all postcolonial states in Africa they have been caught in the web of neocolonialism and imperialism. Although both countries are endowed with

enormous natural resources, their citizens live in poverty and misery. Their resources are exploited to serve mainly French imperial interest. In uniting their efforts, they aim to overcome their common problems and improve their economic potential. The SMG recognizes that historically there have been many efforts by progressive national liberation leaders within the region such as Modibo Keita, Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah, and Ahmed Sekou Toure, who have resisted the balkanization of the African continent and pushed for a human-centered and an all-African approach to planning, production, and distribution of our resources and in solving African problems. These efforts have been thwarted by Western imperial powers and their internal lackeys since they stand to lose in a united Africa development program. This recent development provides all progressive forces and Pan Africanists renewed hope for the possible future of a United Africa. Mali and Burkina Faso have been plagued by attacks from jihadists' insurgencies. The deteriorating situation within the Sahel region has been occasioned mainly by the inability of successive post independent governments to resolve the material needs of the people and the consequent decline of control by these dysfunctional neocolonial

governments in protecting civilians in their fragmented territories.

This crisis has led to the displacement of thousands of people and its ripple effect has been felt by almost every West African state. This has created huge migration crises as many Burkinabe run to Ghana and other so-called relatively stable countries. Currently, many communities in Northern Ghana are living in extreme fear of possible attacks by Islamic jihadists. We commend the effort of these two countries for conceiving the solution to their challenges within the Pan African context and beyond their national boundaries. As Nkrumah noted: "Unless Africa is politically united under an All-African Union Government, there can be no solution to our political and economic problems." Based on this conviction, we salute the actions of these two states for the thought and practice towards the formation of a federation. We hope that this unity project will promote the needs and aspirations of the masses and working people in both countries. Africa must be free and United under the banner of scientific socialism!

Signed  
Nana Yaw Appiah-Kubi  
for General Secretary.



# INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORT

## Compiled By Peoples Dispatch

### Leftist Parties Intensify Campaign To Maintain Swiss Neutrality



Leftists campaign for cantonal elections. (Photo: via Communist Party of Switzerland). The Communist Party and the Swiss Party of Labor (PST-POP) have made neutrality a key plank of their campaign in the upcoming elections. The political leadership of the country is being accused of compromising the policy of neutrality under the influence of NATO and EU

Leftist parties in Switzerland, which includes the Communist Party and the Swiss Party of Labor (PST-POP), have intensified their campaign demanding that the official Swiss policy of neutrality in international conflicts be maintained. Both parties have prioritized this demand in their manifestos for the upcoming April cantonal elections and the federal elections in October. Earlier this month, the

Communist Party organized ground-level campaigns in the neighborhoods of Bellinzona, Locarno, Mendrisio, and Lugano, in the Ticino canton, and collected signatures for its neutrality initiative.

The policy of neutrality in international conflicts has been one of the pillars of Swiss foreign policy. Switzerland currently remains outside of military blocs like NATO. However, leftist sections within the country have been protesting the government's covert support for NATO and EU towards escalating the ongoing war in Ukraine.

Massimiliano Arif Ay from the leadership of the Communist Party told *Peoples Dispatch* on March 13, "The issue of neutrality is particularly important to us: it is a guarantee

not only of mediation in the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, but also of security and sovereignty to prevent the Atlanticist circles of the bourgeoisie from pushing further for a strong Swiss rapprochement to NATO." Regarding the upcoming cantonal elections, he said, "In the Italian-speaking canton of Ticino in Switzerland, general elections will be held on April 2. The Communist Party has submitted a list with the Swiss [Party of Labor] (PST-POP) under the proportional system. The Communist Party's goal is to maintain its current two seats. The campaign is based on three key words: neutrality, labor rights, and public service against privatization (understood as re-nationalization of, for example,

postal services)." "The worrying fact is the Russophobic and bellicose turn of the Greens and Social Democrats. The Swiss Socialist Party together with the Trotskyists, after years of chattering about the need to abolish the army and non-violence, would now suddenly even like to export Swiss arms to the Ukrainian army," he added. Meanwhile, PST-POP has called to "stop delivery of equipment, weapons and ammunition to the Ukrainian army and demanded the Swiss government to commit to Swiss diplomacy and negotiations." It also supported the peace demonstration held in Zurich in the last week of February. Alexander Enline from the leadership of PST-POP told

*Peoples Dispatch* on March 13, "The party is currently preparing for the elections in the two chambers of [the] Swiss national parliament, which will take place in October. The national conference of our party that will take place on April 22 will discuss and adopt our program for these elections. We will launch a campaign for price control against the current inflation, against the dismantlement of social security and for its enforcement, for the extension of the rights of the working class, and for an ecological policy based on social justice. We are also opposed to the alignment of Switzerland with the NATO and US imperialist agenda," and support "a policy of peace in Ukraine instead of an escalation of war, and against re-exportation of Swiss weapons. We support Swiss neutrality on that measure."

### NUMSA Marches To US Embassy In Pretoria To Demand Freedom For Mumia Abu-Jamal

Members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) and the Socialist Revolutionary Workers Party (SRWP) last Friday, March 10, marched to the US embassy in Pretoria to demand freedom for revolutionary, militant journalist, and political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. Friday's action was organized as part of an ongoing month-long global solidarity campaign, involving a host of organizations, including the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10, for his release. 68-year-old Abu-Jamal has been incarcerated for over 40 years, after being convicted for the killing of a police officer, Daniel Faulkner, in the city of Philadelphia in 1981. A former Black Panther, Abu-Jamal had been violently targeted and surveilled by state forces since he was a young teenager. His trial and

subsequent sentencing in 1982 were marked by severe official misconduct, corruption, and blatant racism, with the original presiding trial Judge Albert Sabo declaring in the first week of Abu-Jamal's trial that he was going to "help them fry the [racist slur]". Abu-Jamal has since been incarcerated under inhumane conditions, including severe medical neglect. "The struggle for the civil rights movement in the 1960s captured the imagination of the world. Figures like Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Junior, and Malcolm X became global icons— they fought and died for human justice," NUMSA National Spokesperson Phakamile Hlubi-Majola said in a speech outside the US embassy. "One would have thought that today the brutal system of oppression would have withered away and the struggle

for humanity and justice would prevail...To our disappointment as peace loving South Africans, a Black man in America is always guilty in the eyes of the police." NUMSA added that officials from the embassy had refused to come out to receive a letter from the union, following which some of its members were escorted inside by "heavy police personnel." After Abu-Jamal had already spent some 36 years in prison, in 2018, six boxes of evidence "discovered" in the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office revealed how the prosecution had bribed witnesses, including the main witness, Robert Chobert, who had claimed to have seen Abu-Jamal shoot Faulkner. There were also notes written by the prosecutor, Joseph McGill, tracking the race of prospective jurors in an attempt to

exclude Black people from the jury. The issue of a race-based jury selection had been raised by Abu-Jamal's defense in a 1995 Post-Conviction Relief Application, which was dismissed by Judge Sabo. Following the discovery of the six boxes of withheld evidence, Abu-Jamal's defense filed a petition for a new trial. However, on October 26, 2022, Judge Lucretia Clemons of the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas issued a notice of intent to dismiss the petition without a hearing. Finally on December 16, Judge Clemons ordered the prosecution to turn over all evidence and documents in the case, up to 200 boxes in total, to Abu-Jamal's defense, while issuing a stay on her "intent to dismiss" notice.



(Members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa march to the US Embassy in Pretoria to demand freedom for US political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. (Photo: NUMSA). The protest is part of a global campaign for Mumia Abu-Jamal's release. He is days away from a court ruling to decide if he will be granted a new trial after the discovery of previously withheld evidence

Judge Clemons stated that she would make a final ruling on the petition for a new trial within 60–90 days. With the deadline set to expire on March 16, organizations including the ILWU Local 10 and NUMSA have ramped up their efforts to demand Abu-Jamal's freedom. "All power: to the people! All power: to the working class!" NUMSA members chanted during Friday's protest.



# Alliance Of Drivers Bare Teeth At Govt

## ...Over Reintroduction Of Road Tolls



The Alliance of Drivers has raised concerns about government's re-introduction of road tolls. This comes on the back of proposed road toll rates for the re-introduction of road tolls this year. Referring to a press conference they had in the past at Kasoa, in a statement issued on Tuesday, 14 March 2023, requesting that government scraps road tolls, the Alliance of Drivers, highlighted some of the key issues touched on, for suggesting scrapping of the road tolls, including the "dust and dirt on the roads, unnecessary congestion and traffic, high cost of fuel as a result of delay in traffic among others." According to the group, the

belief has been that the issues raised during their press conference also "influenced" government's decision to scrap road tolls and "it has been better since."

The group is therefore questioning the "sudden reintroduction of road tolls and a marginal increase in the fares [tolls] as well."

The group wants government to explain to its members "the reason for this sudden diversion as the recent economic hardship is not even favourable for paying road toll."

It noted that if government fails to heed its call to scrap road tolls, it will urge its members to halt operations.

"If the above suggestions are not adhered to by the government, we will urge all drivers and transport operators to put on hold all transport business. "We believe it can be done and be done well if proper consultation is done on these key, decisions as the negative

impact it's having on the ordinary Ghanaian is unbearable," it projected. It urged: "Let's all have the country at heart and work together to raise the name of this country high."

### Road tolls will be reintroduced in the country this year

Finance Minister Ken Ofori-Atta in a letter to the Minister for Roads and Highways proposed charges for the road tolls for confirmation by the latter. The Finance Minister had said: "The fiscal policy measures to underpin the 2023 Budget for consideration and approval by Parliament include the reintroduction of tolls on selected public roads and highways with a renewed focus on leveraging technology in the collection to address the inefficiencies characterised by the previous toll collection regime."

### Roads Ministry disclaims new road toll rates

However, the Ministry of Roads has denied knowledge of any letter sent to the finance ministry for its input for an upward adjustment in road toll fees. In a letter dated Friday, March 10, Mr Ofori-Atta gave his Ministry's inputs regarding proposals on the fees and charges tabled for approval by the Roads Ministry. Per what has been sighted by the media, there is a composite average increase rate of 88.05 percent across board. According to Nasir Yartey who is Public Relations Officer for the Roads Ministry, the said letter is not authorized and the roads Ministry has no knowledge of it. Speaking on Accra based Happy Fm the PRO said. "The said letter is a leaked document, we can't speak to it, and we at the roads ministry don't know anything about it."

When Deputy Minister of Finance, Dr. John Kumah was contacted on the said letter, he indicated that it's a leaked document.

The road tolls were cancelled in 2022 after Mr Ofori-Atta read that year's budget in Parliament, introducing the Electronic Transaction Levy to rake in more revenue from a larger section of the public.

However, after revenue shortfalls from the e-Levy, the Minister announced a reintroduction of tolls in the 2023 budget read on Thursday, November 24, 2022.

"The fiscal policy measures to underpin the 2023 Budget for consideration and approval by Parliament include the reintroduction of tolls on selected public roads and highways with a renewed focus on leveraging technology in the collection to address the inefficiencies characterized by the previous toll collection regime," the Finance Minister stated in Parliament.

## Western Togoland Invasion Was A Hoax, Ploy To Deploy Army – Claims Col. Festus Aboagye

A retired military man, Colonel Festus Aboagye, has described the arrest and subsequent prosecution of alleged secessionists along Ghana's eastern borders as a hoax and a ploy to deploy the military to parts of the Volta Region. A group known as the Homeland Study Group Foundation (HSGF) was accused by government of undertaking violent steps to achieve the aim of a country to be called Western Togoland. Their violent activities including the burning of some public facilities resulted in the deployment of the army into parts of the Volta Region to quell the rising violence in 2020. Speaking on Accra-based Citi

FM, Col. Aboagye (Rtd.) said the whole episode amounted to a hoax and a ploy to deploy the army to the region.

"This hoax about Western Togoland, terrorists invading Ghana was a ploy. In the process, the Ghana Armed Forces were deployed and casualties occurred. People were arrested, and we saw them in the media.

"As of now, can any journalist tell us where those arrested persons are? What has been the outcome of that event?" he asked.

The group at the time wanted the Volta, Oti, and parts of the Upper East Region to become part of the so-called autonomous country.

A number of them were arrested and later charged with treason felony,

conspiracy to commit crime amongst others.

### Background

The Homeland Study Group Foundation claims that Western Togoland was an independent state before it was forced to join Ghana after the 1956 plebiscite. Per their demands, Volta and Oti regions, parts of Northern Region, North East region and Upper East Region was to become part of a new Western Togoland state.

In 2019, the group declared independence twice but some 81 members of the group were arrested after assembling for protest over the arrest their leaders.

National executive for the Homeland Study Group Foundation, Emmanuel Agbavor, told the BBC last year that the



Signage of the Western Togoland activists

people of the Volta Region have been suppressed for a very long time.

The territory of Western Togoland was first colonised by Germany in 1884 and incorporated into the Togoland colony. After Germany's defeat during the First World War, the colony of Togoland was divided between France and Britain as protectorates.

The western part of Togoland became part of Britain's Gold Coast colony, which became independent in 1957 to form modern-day Ghana.

Togo gained independence from France in 1960.

Western Togoland is a member of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO). Four million people live in the region. In terms of language and culture, Western Togoland, especially the Volta region, has more in common with Togo. Locals in the region say they feel underrepresented by Ghanaian authorities.

# The US Funneled Billions Towards Ukraine While Cutting Corners On Health And Education For Struggling Americans

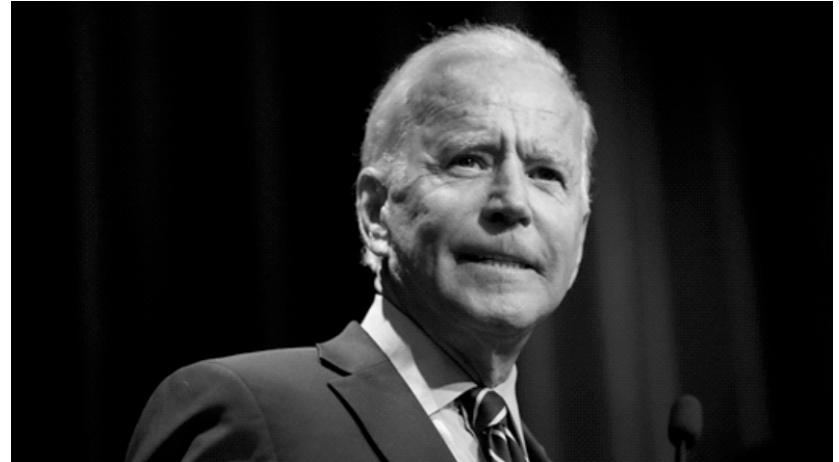
February 24 marked the one-year anniversary of the Russia–Ukraine war, and in the past year, the US Congress has approved \$113 billion in aid to Ukraine. Meanwhile, working people in the US are in dire economic straits, and desperately need relief from their government. When US President Joe Biden delivered his State of the Union Address in early February, over 160 million people—almost half of the nation's population—reported having trouble paying weekly expenses. The cost of living had jumped by 8% while wages had only increased by 4% in the past year. Yet, throughout the war in Ukraine, Biden cut funding at home where it was needed most, while tens of billions were diverted to lengthen the proxy war abroad. **The people need healthcare, not war** In June of last year, Biden reaffirmed his decision to enact the highest Medicare premium hikes in US history, from USD \$148.50 to USD

\$170.10. Medicare is the government health insurance program for those people in the US aged 65 and older. This price hike was made as the Biden administration announced an 8.5% hike in payments to private insurance companies who participate in Medicare Advantage, a program which diverts Medicare money to private insurers. Biden's payout to private insurers comes after Biden himself raked in \$47 million from healthcare executives during his 2020 campaign for president. Instead of subsidizing healthcare costs for the people of the US, Biden subsidized private health insurance companies. In September 2022, Biden announced a modest decrease in premiums, yet they still remain at \$165 for 2023. The US Congress has also failed to adequately fund COVID-19 vaccines, tests and treatments, putting the country's pandemic response in jeopardy this winter. COVID-19 has devastated the population of the US, undoing 26 years of

progress on life expectancy by decreasing the average lifespan to 76.1 years in 2021.

## Biden's failure on student loans

Biden's student debt cancellation program, which he announced on August 24, 2022 and was swiftly shut down by Republicans, is headed to the Supreme Court. However, even before the program was formally announced, which would have forgiven up to USD\$20,000 in federal student loans for certain people who qualified, Biden was aiming low. In April of 2022, months before Biden announced his forgiveness program, the president declared that he was not looking at canceling USD\$50,000 in federal student loans, and he was looking at how to cut off eligibility for those who made above a certain income. But Republicans are now also challenging Biden's very limited student loan proposal



*In June of last year, President Joe Biden reaffirmed his decision to enact the highest Medicare premium hikes in US history, from USD \$148.50 to USD \$170.10 (Photo: Gage Skidmore). Biden hiked Medicare premiums and failed to take meaningful action on student loan forgiveness while funneling billions towards war abroad*

in terms of cost. Biden's plan would “to deprive the Nation of nearly half a trillion dollars,” Republican senators write, filing briefs with the Supreme Court in an effort to influence the Court's decision. Meanwhile, all but four Senate Republicans voted in favor of the most recent USD \$858 billion defense budget. Last year, the federal Education Department took cancer patient Heather Smart to court after Smart filed for bankruptcy when her

diagnosis left her unable to work due to aggressive, expensive treatments. While the Biden Administration has since changed bankruptcy rules to make it easier to discharge student loans in bankruptcy, Smart's battle with the government over USD \$95,000 in student loans is astonishing when compared to the amount spent on war abroad.

# Thousands Of Women March For A Better Future Across Pakistan

Thousands of women took part in 'Aurat Marches' (Women's Marches) across Pakistan's major cities on the occasion of International Women's Day last Wednesday, March 8. “*Riyasat jawaab do; bhook ka hisaab do*” (We want answers from the state; we want accountability over hunger) was one of the key slogans raised by the demonstrators. The organizers stressed at a press conference in Islamabad that they are also seeking the repeal of the sedition and criminal defamation laws that are being used to silence dissent and target marginalized communities. This was among the main objectives of the 2023 march. Protesters said that the authorities should instead establish a “Trust and Reconciliation Commission” to hold

state institutions accountable and prioritize the safety of marginalized communities. Several rallies were carried out across the country with demonstrators sloganeering for better healthcare and better living wages for women. The *Aurat March* also called for environmental rights, better working conditions, and attention to issues such as the “invisible exploitation of trans-communities, the reproductive labor of women, and education.” First organized in Karachi six years ago, the *Aurat March* has been deemed a watershed moment in the triggering of nationwide discussions on gender, violence,

and patriarchy in Pakistan. However, organizers in 2021 and 2020 faced huge backlash from religious groups, who accused participants of using 'provocative' slogans and 'indecent' messaging. Several leftist groups including the Mazdoor Kisan Party, Awami Workers' Party, Progressive Students Collective, and Progressive Students' Foundation supported the annual march. “We reject the rhetoric of the liberal propertied classes who wage culture wars while refusing to name capitalist patriarchy as the real source of gender oppression. The brutal conditionalities of the IMF and our own ruling class have devastated the lives of working class women across Pakistan,” the Awami Workers' Party stated in its solidarity

## statement.

A number of slogans raised at the march also highlighted the ongoing economic and security crises in the country, and demanded that the state say no to the International Monetary Fund's austerity policies and anti-poor measures that only benefit global capitalists. As per the Global Gender Gap Report released by the World Economic Forum in July 2022, Pakistan ranked 145 out of 146 countries in terms of gender parity. In South Asia, it fared only better than Afghanistan in its gender gap rankings, with the smallest share of women holding senior, managerial, and legislative roles. While raising the issues faced by women in the country—from

abortion rights to challenges faced by rape survivors, child and sexual abuse survivors, honor killings, and transgender rights—the demonstrators demanded that the state invest in public services and roll back budget cuts targeting the welfare and education systems. “We speak of socialist feminism. We speak of democracy. We speak of anti-enforced disappearances. We speak of equality and access to public spaces for women. These are the reasons why the state will always have a problem with us,” one of the organizers, Imaan Zainab, was quoted as saying by *Al Jazeera*.



# Police Service Exposes Ghana Armed Forces In Killing Of Sheriff Imoro?

For many people who have been critically following the happenings with regard to the killing of a young soldier at Taifa-Ashaiman in the Greater Accra Region on March 4, 2023, there is the begging issue of the roles the two top security apparatus' in the country played.

Having been awoken by the news of the shocking killing of the young Sherriff Imoro at Ashaiman – the community he grew up in, it was an even more disturbing news when days after, there was video evidence flooding the internet of how scores of uniformed soldiers ransacked parts of Ashaiman to brutalise residents.

The visuals, which quickly went viral on social media, showed the inhumane treatments that several of the residents suffered, with little evidence of due diligence having been followed by the military men.

## Soldiers brutalise Ashaiman residents:

Several reports that followed showed that the 'hot-blooded' soldiers had no mercy for anyone they saw, some going as far as breaking down doors just to be able to, as it was imagined, retaliate the death of one of their own. After the Ghana Army was called out by Ghanaians, the military command issued a press statement.

The statement, expected to have given clarity and brought the issues in question into better perspective, rather turned out to be what many have described as a mere show of power by the military, without any remorse whatsoever for the damage and injuries they caused.

While confirming that their men had been actually sanctioned to go into Ashaiman on that operation, the military statement said that it was only a "swoop" in search of killers of Sherriff Imoro, and not to brutalise residents of the township.

"GAF wishes to state categorically that the military operation, which was sanctioned

by the Military High Command, was NOT to avenge the killing of the soldier but rather to fish out the perpetrators of the heinous crime," the statement said. Without an apology, the statement added that what the soldiers went there to do was "an intelligence-led operation conducted on suspected hideouts of criminals and crime-prone areas in the general area." It was an explanation that many should have just taken as it was but what the statement, signed by Brigadier-General Eric Aggrey-Quarshie, Director General, Public Relations of the GAF, subsequently added kind of defeated their earlier own words. The fact that they indeed apprehended suspects but through an intelligence-led operation which had to involve violence.

"Following the operations at Ashaiman-Taifa and Tulaku, the military personnel picked up about 184 suspects aged between 21 and 47 years old and have since handed them over to the Military Police and subsequently to be sent to the [Ghana Police Service](#) for screening and for further action.

## What the [Ghana Police Service](#) found out and communicated to the public:

Having been an issue of internal crime, and as is its expectation, the [Ghana Police Service](#) issued a statement dated Sunday, March 12, 2023, that unpacked all the details related to the crime.

In the first place, the police said that it had arrested some six suspects believed to be connected with the murder of Sherriff Imoro, although all the arrests were not done on the same day and in the same locations.

"The [Ghana Police Service](#), after a week of sustained intelligence-led operation, has arrested six persons at different dates and various locations within Ashaiman and its environs for their suspected involvement in

the murder of Imoro Sherriff, a soldier," the statement said. Also describing their exercise as intelligence-led, the [Ghana Police Service](#) showed results in relation to the case in question, having made a total of six arrests.

In doing so, the police also indicated how they had kept the victim's family and the military informed along the way.

"Judging from the contents of the backpack, the police suspected the victim could be a soldier, and in line with Police standard operating procedure for handling institution-based victims, the Military was accordingly notified of the incident and some military personnel came to identify the deceased to Police as Imoro Sherriff, a soldier.

"The body of the deceased was thereafter conveyed to a hospital for preservation and autopsy," the statement added.

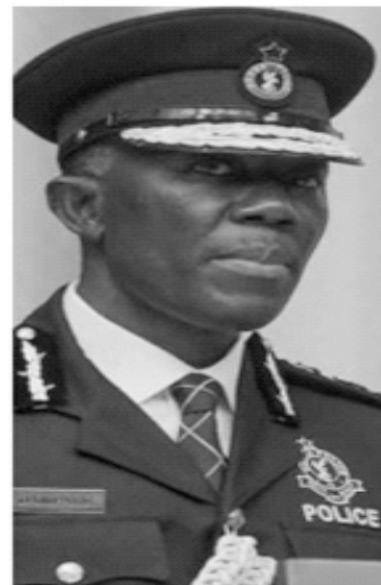
## Play of powers in the Internal and external security of the country:

The first question that needs answers is, what kind of intelligence-led operations did the military conduct that had to involve violence, when the police had prior to their operation, conducted a similar operation, albeit without any violence, but using tactics through which they subsequently arrested some 6 suspects.

And was a military operation actually part of their core mandate?

Remember that the police had informed the military of what it had gathered from its initial investigations when it retrieved Sherriff Imoro's body on the morning of March 4, 2023.

The military further conducted their supposed intelligence-led 'swoop' on Tuesday, March



IGP COP Dr George Akuffo Dampare (left) and CDS Vice Admiral Seth Amoama

7, 2023, days after the [Ghana Police Service](#) had procedurally informed the former.

And then there is the question about the roles of both the military and the police in such matters: should the Ghana Armed Forces have been so involved in internal security matters like that when the police – those mandated with that duty, were there?

While there is a policing unit of the Ghana Armed Forces, known as the Military Police, the core functions of the military remain "To formulate and implement National Defence Policies relating to peacekeeping, internal and external security and the total defence of the nation.

"Defend the territorial integrity of Ghana by Land, Sea and Air. logistics and resources to enable them function efficiently."

## Background:

The police explained that the death of the young soldier, Sherriff Imoro, happened after he came to Accra from his base in Sunyani, to attend a work-related course.

This detail was corroborated by the military statement.

The police statement of March 12 also stated that Sherriff was attacked on the dawn of March 4 after leaving the home of a female friend he had gone to visit the night before.

They confirmed that two assailants first attacked him purposely to dispossess him of his iPhone but the soldier resisted, leading to a scuffle and subsequent stabbing on the arm of Sheriff.

"Investigations further revealed that on 3rd March 2023, the deceased had visited a female friend at Ashaiman Newtown at about 10:30 pm and left the place in the middle of the night at about 01:30 am, on the 4th March 2023.

"Further investigation has established that suspects Samuel Tetteh and Abubakar Sadick at about 1:45 am on 4th March 2023 attacked the deceased at Taifa Ashiaman in an attempt to rob him of his phone and a backpack.

"The deceased, however, resisted and struggled with the suspects. During the struggle, suspect Samuel Tetteh pulled out a knife and stabbed the deceased in the arm, snatched his phone and bolted leaving the deceased with the knife stuck in his arm," the statement added.

What happened in Ashaiman in the last week has resurrected the conversations on whether or not the military should be engaged in internal security matters as this instance was, and at what points the police should be allowed to operate within their jurisdiction.

Ultimately, the Ghana Armed Forces has been exposed by the police over what they did in Ashaiman, although it (military) has refused to apologise for it.



# Museveni, Ramaphosa Root For Pan-African Solutions To 'Local' Issues

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni last week visited South Africa on President Cyril Ramaphosa's invitation, ostensibly to build "strong political and economic relations".

The two heads of state held discussions encompassing political, economic, regional, continental and international issues.

But it was clear from the outset that pan-Africanism was at the top of the agenda, in terms of the context of the visit, which featured a business forum of entrepreneurs from both states.

The visit, and the business forum, were designed to push trade relations — as well as diplomatic ties towards a more cohesive African continental trade and geo-political alignment — under the pan-Africanist rubric, the latter referenced several times by both leaders.

Trade relations between the two countries "continue to grow from strength to strength," said the South African presidency in a statement on the visit, but which also acknowledged that "there is an imbalance in South Africa's favour".

Uganda is South Africa's 15th largest trading partner on the continent and second most important partner in East Africa, after Kenya.

Currently, Uganda's exports to South Africa include cotton, gold, fish fillets, tobacco, coffee and fresh flowers.

Museveni, who referred to his ban on non-beneficiated raw commodities, spoke specifically about key commodities, including uranium and lithium, as likely exports, presumably to South Africa.

The leaders said they spoke "extensively" to ensure that conflict on the continent is addressed so that Africans in strife-riven regions could return to peaceful coexistence.

"The eastern DRC was covered, as was Ethiopia and the efforts that we all have made to bring about the cessation of hostilities. We have also looked at the peace process in other parts of our continent and continue to pledge our solidarity with Western Sahara, that are still struggling to get to a peaceful situation," Ramaphosa said.

Inadequate African representation  
The lack of adequate African representation on international fora was also raised, with Ramaphosa bemoaning the fact that there was still no permanent representation for Africa on the UN Security Council.

President Ramaphosa expressed his appreciation to the people of Uganda for their contribution to South Africa's freedom during the struggle against colonialism and apartheid.

President Museveni played along, beginning his public remarks by saying that "neoliberalism" had failed, and talking of South Africa's ruling African National Congress, founded in 1912, as the first of the continent's anti-colonial liberation movements, one which the Ugandan leader said he had joined in the late 1960s.

Answering a local journalist's question, Ramaphosa said his administration and there ANC were "fiercely pan-African," referencing South Africa's troop and aid deployments on the continent.

Human rights  
"We are very proud to have a pan-Africanist like President Museveni visiting," said Ramaphosa.

In answer to a question about human rights in Uganda, President Museveni spoke of "terrorists killing unarmed villagers," reflecting badly on Uganda, but adding that Uganda had its own human rights protections.

Diplomatic views included observations that President Museveni's association with pan-Africanism in general, and the ANC, in particular, as the foremost proponent of freedom for Africans.

For the South African leader, who recently also met with his Kenyan counterpart, the mission of bringing Africans into a broad coalition for improved trade and political cohesion on the global stage was, said presidential advisors, the logical extension of Ramaphosa's wider ambitions for the continent.

World economy player  
Ramaphosa has pushed policies domestically and in inter-state fora to help Africa become a major player in the world economy, with the aim of exporting finished goods and not merely raw commodities, and on the international political stage, where its 'non-aligned' status could be brought to bear, for the benefit of the whole continent.

Currently, Uganda's exports to South Africa include cotton, gold, fish fillets, tobacco, coffee and fresh flowers.

Museveni, who referred to his ban on non-beneficiated raw commodities, spoke specifically about key commodities including uranium and lithium, as likely exports, presumably to South Africa.

Both leaders spoke of possibilities explored such as electric vehicles and the lithium-ion batteries used in them, indicating a line of possible direct future trade development and co-operation which eliminates the need for raw material beneficiation outside of the continent, as is now the standard for most of Africa's key commodities which are exported globally.

Total trade between the two countries in 2021 reached \$114.5 million, with South Africa's imports from Uganda amounting to \$14.8 million, while South African exports to Uganda recorded about \$99 million.



President Cyril Ramaphosa (r) & President Yoweri Museveni PHOTO | GUILLEM SARTORIO | AFP

Museveni made it clear that he was thinking along strategic lines, referencing lithium specifically, as well as uranium, as likely commodities to be traded directly with South Africa, without "third party" involvement.

According to the World Bank's latest statistics, the total value of exports from Uganda is annually \$4.149 billion, while the country's imports are valued at \$8.251 billion.

Ramaphosa's invitation to Museveni was seen, at the trade relations level, as a move towards rectifying that backwards step — as well as an effort to form a more cohesive African position towards the world's major trading blocs.

Global crises  
The presidential get-together also had another component: dealing with global crises such as the war in Ukraine, and escalating conflicts in Africa, including in eastern Congo and the western Sahara.

South Africa is among African countries leaning towards Moscow in pushing for a "negotiated settlement" to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, something that Kyiv has ruled out "until all Russians are off all Ukrainian soil," including annexed Crimea and other Ukrainian territories in the east of that country.

Both improved trade and more cohesive Afro-centric geopolitics found their way into the comments and prepared remarks of both leaders, before and after their face-to-face discussions, and subsequently in their addresses to business leaders.

"This state visit has reinforced

the firm political and economic relations between our two countries," said Ramaphosa in his formal remarks. "By deepening these relations, we aim to better the lives of our people and continue the struggle to overcome poverty, unemployment and inequality."

Trade imbalance  
Ramaphosa acknowledged the current challenges relating to trade and investment, including a significant trade imbalance. However, he said steady progress had been made towards resolving some of those challenges.

Several memoranda were signed, dealing with industrial development co-operation between South Africa, the Uganda Development Corporation and Uganda Development Bank Limited as well as in areas of tourism, transport, information and communication technologies, prisons, women, youth and persons with disabilities.

"We have noted significant progress in the implementation of agreements that the two countries have had in the past," said Ramaphosa.

The various MoUs signed were a "testament to our growing relations," he added.

Ramaphosa emphasised that he was keen on encouraging mutual investment between the two countries, with relevant mutual protections for investors, and with South Africa remaining enthusiastic about Uganda's banking, retail and telecommunications sectors.

**Source:** [theeastafrican.co.ke](http://theeastafrican.co.ke)