

## Abandoned Aburi Botanical Gardens In Ruins, Develop It – Aburihene Tells Govt As He Marks 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



**Cassiel Ato Forson, Minority Leader**



### HIV/AIDS Still Prevalent, Says Public Health Nurse

**M**onica Sadungu, a Public Health Nurse at Zebilla in the Bawku West District, has said Ghana is not yet free from the Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV) and needs intensive education in the media to remind people to take precautionary measures. She said the country was not out of the woods and emphasised the need for the citizenry to be mindful of the existence of the virus, even though television and radio education on the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) had declined as compared to previous years. "HIV and AIDS are real and still with us. Because there is no public education on television and radio, unlike those days, it

*Cont. on page 2*

# MINORITY

## Rejects EC Justifications On New CI For Voter Registration

**T**he National Democratic Congress (NDC) Minority in Parliament has rejected the justifications given by the Electoral Commission of Ghana (EC) for the new Constitutional

Instrument (CI) seeking to make Ghana card the only identification for voter registration.

Chairperson for the EC, Jean Mensah on Tuesday February 28

2023 told Parliament the new CI is to safeguard the sanctity of the electoral process devoid of foreign interference.

Mrs. Jean Mensah also justified the

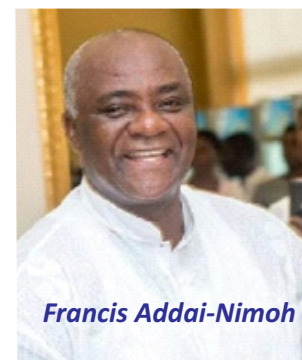
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## Breast Cancer Advocate Warns Patients Against 'Spiritual Concoctions' From Religious Leaders

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## Big Names Don't Win Elections - Francis

## Addai-Nimoh On NPP Flagbearer Race



*Francis Addai-Nimoh*

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# The INSIGHT

## — EDITORIAL

### PROSECUTE THEM!

**T**he call by a section of the public for persons behind government's payroll fraud or 'Ghost Names' to be prosecuted

is a suggestion in the right direction.

The prosecution of these individuals most of whom are public servants has been long overdue. Despite the introduction of electronic payment system, the fraud still goes on, an indication that the crime is being perpetuated by a well-organised criminal network.

Clearly, should the state agencies especially the Office of the Special Prosecutor and the Auditor General up their game by ensuring the prosecution of these criminal gangs and thieves as suggested, instead of the existing arrangement of surcharging them, this nation-wrecking practice will grind to a halt.

There is no denying the fact that the 'soft' handling of these 'thieves' behind the 'ghost names' is what has emboldened them and made their exorcism difficult.

There certainly has to be a shift from surcharging to prosecution. Until that is done, eradicating this canker which only enriches these few individuals in our society will be difficult, if not a mere rhetoric.

With the level of technological advancement, there cannot be any excuse for allowing 'Ghosts' in the government's payroll.

The ghosts have to be hunted out and the only way to do that is to prosecute the individuals behind the 'mystery' of 'ghost names'.

# HIV/AIDS Still Prevalent, Says Public Health Nurse

*from front page*

does not mean we are free. Let's not think that it is all over," she said.

Madam Sadungu said this in a side-line interview with the Ghana News Agency (GNA) at a mentorship programme on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) at Kobore, a community in the Bawku West District. The five-day programme was organised at the instance of the Haven of Love Children's Foundation, a Non-Governmental Christian Organization operating in the area.

The programme, which was organised on separate days in different communities across the district, mentored about 5000 pupils from basic schools on STEM and trained their parents and guardians on various income-generating skills.

Madam Sadungu, who is also a Principal Midwifery Officer, admonished the youth, especially students and pupils in basic and Senior High Schools, to abstain from sex, and concentrate on their studies to become responsible leaders in the future.

"I have observed that when pupils complete Junior High School in this District, they feel they have attained higher heights in education, and begin to indulge in sexual acts. Some of them often attend music jams at late hours. "It is through such programmes that they indulge in unprotected sexual acts with very high risks of contracting Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), unwanted teenage pregnancies and child marriages," she said.

The Public Health Nurse admonished parents and guardians to take a keen interest in the care of their children,

especially their adolescent girls and boys, "They should not leave the care of their children with teachers alone, but also complement the efforts of teachers to groom their children."

Samuel Nana Bekai Djirackor, the Founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Foundation, told the GNA that apart from the mentorship on STEM, the pupils were educated on career guidance, sex education and the effects of early marriage, among others.

He said the Foundation did not advocate faithful use of condoms, "We only preach abstinence because that is our core value as a Foundation. As a Christian-centred organisation, we preach love, Christ, and abstinence.

"The world would be a much better place if everyone abstains. If you abstain, you will not have STDs, so abstinence is the key, and through God who gives self-control, we can abstain," the Founder said.

**Source -- GNA**

## THE INSIGHT

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# MINORITY

## Rejects EC Justifications On New CI For Voter Registration

*from front page*

When questioned about the existence of the same system for Ghana card registration, the EC boss argued that system is more robust.

Addressing the media, Minority Leader, Dr. Cassiel Ato Forson asked the EC to adopt the NIA system following the claim of the chairperson.

"We are quite sure many of you followed and reported on events in the Chamber last night, which showcased our opposition to an attempt by the Jean Mensah-led Electoral Commission to introduce a Constitutional Instrument before Parliament. The said C.I, the Public Elections (Registration of Voters) Instrument, 2022, seeks to make the Ghana Card the sole document for the registration of voters onto Ghana's electoral roll. "What Article 42 of the 1992 Constitution requires, is evidence of citizenship and not evidence or proof of identification. Any evidence of citizenship should therefore qualify a person to be registered. That is why under the current C.I 91 as amended by C.I 126, Ghanaian Passports and guarantor system are allowed as evidence of citizenship," Mr. Forson stated.

He continued: "Clearly, the proposed C.I which makes the Ghana Card the sole requirement for voter registration serves as a restraint on citizen's right to register and exercise their franchise in elections. It is

important to remind the Electoral Commission headed by Madam Jean Mensah that the Commission is enjoined by the constitution to advance the right to vote and not introduce any law that seeks to curtail same." Chairman for Subsidiary Legislation Committee, Dr. Dominic Ayine argued there is no need for a new CI since the existing one used for the 2020 registration is still very potent. Bawku Central MP Mahama Ayariga berated majority leader Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu for arguing nobody can stop government business such as the laying of the CI from taking place. He questioned why EC business has become government business. Bolgatanga Central MP Isaac Adongo asked the EC to first wait for the NIA to issue cards to every qualified Ghanaian before tabling the idea of a new CI. This is the full text of their statement:

### **PRESS BRIEFING ON THE MINORITY'S OPPOSITION TO THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION'S PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL INSTRUMENT (C.I) FOR VOTER REGISTRATION**

Good morning, our friends from the media. The NDC Minority in Parliament is pleased to welcome you to this very urgent press engagement. We are quite sure many of you followed and reported on events in the Chamber last night, which showcased our opposition to an attempt by the Jean Mensah-led Electoral Commission to introduce a Constitutional Instrument before Parliament. The said C.I, the **Public Elections (Registration of Voters) Instrument, 2022**, seeks to make the Ghana Card the sole document for the registration of voters onto Ghana's electoral roll.

Many of you may not be aware of the reasons for our opposition to this proposed C.I. It is against this backdrop that we have assembled you here in what we consider as a national emergency, to state our reasons for our stated opposition to the proposed C.I.

### **1. The Ghana Card and Registration of Voters**

Article 42 of the 1992 Constitution guarantees the right to vote by stating that:

**"Every citizen of Ghana of eighteen years or above and of sound mind has the right to vote and is entitled to be registered as a voter for the purposes of public elections and referenda."**

Distinguished friends from the media, what the Electoral Commission's proposed C.I seeks to do however is to restrict the realization of this right of Ghanaians, as Regulation 1 (3) of the proposed C.I states:

**"A person who applies for registration as a voter shall provide as evidence of identification the National Identification Card issued by the National Identification"**

What Article 42 of the 1992 Constitution requires, is evidence of citizenship and not evidence or proof of identification. Any evidence of citizenship should therefore qualify a person to be registered. That is why under the current C.I 91 as amended by C.I 126, Ghanaian Passports and guarantor system are allowed as evidence of citizenship. Clearly, the proposed C.I which makes the Ghana Card the sole requirement for voter registration serves as a restraint on citizen's right to register and exercise their franchise in elections.

It is important to remind the Electoral Commission headed by Madam Jean Mensah that the Commission is enjoined by the constitution to advance the right to vote and not introduce any



**Cassiel Ato Forson, Minority Leader**

law that seeks to curtail same. Indeed, under Article 45(e) of the Constitution, the Electoral Commission is to: **"undertake programmes for the expansion of the registration of voters"**. Instead, the EC rather seeks to undertake a programme for the restriction of the registration of voters. **Authority"**. Ladies and gentlemen, the National Identification Authority (NIA), which is responsible for the issuance of the Ghana Card has admitted that there is a backlog of millions of Ghanaians who are yet to be issued the Ghana Card. The NIA has admitted that about 3.5 million Cards have been locked up in bonded warehouses due to its indebtedness of about GHS 1.5 billion (\$117m) to the private partner of the NIA, which has contracted loans from banks to undertake the printing of these cards.

Speaking on Newsfile on Joy FM last Saturday, 25th February, 2023, the Executive Director of the NIA, Prof. Kenneth Agyemang Attafua said:

**"Since about August of last year, we have experienced financial constraints in the system and it created a situation where even though we have 3.5 million stock of cards in a bonded warehouse, we are unable to access the cards because of financial difficulty"**.

He proceeded to say that: **"currently, about 2.5 million cards are yet to be printed"**.

Ladies and Gentlemen, these are not the words of the Minority. It is also a fact, that the registration process for the Ghana Card has been characterized by several difficulties, including logistical constraints.

The National Identification authority has further admitted that the issuance of the Ghana Card is a continuing process and therefore cannot be completed at any point in time. Therefore, making the Ghana Card the sole requirement for voter registration cannot be accepted as it will deny millions of Ghanaians their right to register and vote.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Chairperson of the Electoral Commission herself, Mrs. Jean Mensa, in the Daily Graphic of Tuesday, September 13, 2022, front page, is reported to have admonished the National Identification Authority (NIA) to "make Ghana Card acquisition process faster", This is a clear admission that there are problems with the issuance of the Ghana Card which the Electoral Commission wants to use as the sole proof of citizenship.

As we speak, millions of eligible Ghanaian voters do not have the Ghana Card and therefore stand the risk of being completely disenfranchised. This group of Ghanaians can be placed into three (3) groups:

*cont. on pages 6&7*



# INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORT

## Compiled By Peoples Dispatch

### Anger Grows Over Anti-Asylum Measures After Shipwreck Kills 62 Off Italian Coast



Rescue operations continue after at least 62 asylum seekers died in a shipwreck near Italy's Calabria region on February 26, 2023. (Photo: @RescueMed/Twitter). Dozens are still missing after a boat believed to be carrying up to 200 asylum seekers sank near the region of Calabria on February 26. As the death toll rose on Monday, NGOs slammed Europe's harsh anti-asylum policies for endangering people who were already vulnerable

At least 62 people have been killed after a boat carrying asylum seekers sank off the coast of Italy's southern region of Calabria last Sunday, February 26. Survivor testimonies indicate that between 150 and 200 people were on board the wooden sailboat, which set sail from the Turkish city of

Izmir on the Aegean coast around February 24. At least 14 children were killed in the shipwreck. A provincial government official told *Reuters* that 81 people had survived, of whom 20 had been hospitalized. Interior Minister Matteo Piantedosi stated that 20-30 people might be missing,

as search operations continued overnight on Sunday, with divers recovering the asylum seekers' belongings, including backpacks and clothes. The death toll is expected to cross 100.

The boat reportedly sank after it crashed against rocks amid bad weather as it was trying to reach Crotona. The bodies of the dead were found at a beach near the Steccato di Cutro resort on Calabria's eastern coast.

Some of those who were on board have been identified as hailing from countries such as Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Somalia, and Syria. Italian authorities have arrested three people on charges of migrant trafficking. Meanwhile, NGOs and advocacy groups have been

highlighting the underlying state policies that have led to the deaths of hundreds of asylum seekers each year. According to the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) Missing Migrants Project, at least 220 people have died or gone missing along the central Mediterranean route this year already. Data shows that over 20,000 people have [died or gone missing](#) in the area since 2014, making it the deadliest asylum route in the world.

"Once again we find ourselves mourning the unjust death of those who seek a better future fleeing wars and poverty," said Filippo Ungaro, the director of communication at Save the Children Italy, "while politics, in Italy and Europe, thinks it can solve it [the crisis] with walls and restrictions on NGOs." On February 24, the Italian parliament approved into law a decree issued by the government of far-right Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni that placed heavy restrictions on rescue work at sea.

Under these rules, refugee and search and rescue organizations, who often spend days conducting multiple rescue operations, would now have to request access to a port and sail to it "without delay" after one rescue operation has been completed. This would effectively bar them from helping any other boats in distress.

The decree had been criticized by the UN and rights groups, who have [warned](#) that it would amount to a major violation of international and European Union law and asylum

principles.

Governments such as those in Italy and the UK have tried to justify their harsh anti-asylum measures by presenting them as a crackdown on "people smuggling" or trafficking.

However, migrant rights activists argue that such rhetoric seeks to obscure the reasons why asylum seekers are forced to resort to perilous journeys in the first place, especially as these countries continue to ignore calls for the expansion of safe routes of asylum.

In addition to making rescue work more difficult, Italy has also [continued](#) to provide funding and other forms of assistance to the Libyan Coast Guard to carry out the interception and detention of asylum seekers, despite evidences of severe forms of abuse, including torture and murder. Italy is not alone. The European Union's border agency, Frontex, has also been found to be complicit in these abuses, even as member states [continue](#) to push for more severe forms of border controls and surveillance on the continent.

"The Crotona tragedy is the result of precise political choices that prevent legal and safe routes for people to enter Europe," aid organization Emergency said in a [statement](#) on February 26. "The latest facts demonstrate that it is necessary for Italy and Europe to organize a search and rescue mission, to reform the access, asylum, and reception system, and to open legal entry routes for those who seek a better life."

### Police Shoot And Abduct Communist Party Of Swaziland Member Mvuselelo Mkhabela

The Communist Party of Swaziland (CPS) has reported that the police force of Africa's last absolute monarchy has shot and ensured disappearance of one of their members, Mvuselelo Mkhabela, age 21. "Comrade Mvuselelo was badly shot at and dragged to the police van helplessly and his whereabouts and condition is unknown and the armed to teeth police force continued its attacks to the protesting community," CPS [tweeted](#). Reportedly this abduction happened at around 13:00h (local time) on February 28.

This latest act of violence by the Swaziland police force comes amid an uptick in police repression of recent protests against the ["farical" parliamentary elections](#). CPS claims that the elections are a farce because the parliament itself is under the control of the monarchy, so the electoral process constitutes "a tool

used by the absolute monarchy to sanctify King Mswati's decision." Mvuselelo himself was arrested and tortured earlier this month for protesting these elections, which are set to occur this August. Shortly after his arrest, Mvuselelo told *Peoples Dispatch*, "Often, when [police] invade communities, there is no one to defend the family or the individual from the wrath of the regime. This cannot go on." Mvuselelo was abducted today in one such police invasion.

Communists in Swaziland have been involved in a struggle against the monarchy for decades. In recent months, the regime led by King Mswati III has intensified attacks against pro-democracy activists, including the [assassination](#) of human rights lawyer Thulani Maseko, [threats](#) against union leader Sticks Nkambule, [torture](#) of union leader Mbhekeni



Mvuselelo himself was arrested and tortured earlier this month for protesting these elections, which are set to occur this August. Mvuselelo was reportedly shot and dragged into a police van. His current whereabouts are unknown. Mvuselelo was tortured earlier this month for protesting elections

Dlamini, and more. "Mvuselelo's consciousness and commitment to the just course of the people of Swaziland fighting for democracy in the face of a militarized system of oppression presided by Mswati and his political elites remains unwavering," CPS wrote in a [tweet](#).



# Big Names Don't Win Elections - Francis Addai-Nimoh On NPP Flagbearer Race

**F**rancis Addai-Nimoh has shot down claims that big names in politics give people an advantage over their peers in any political race.

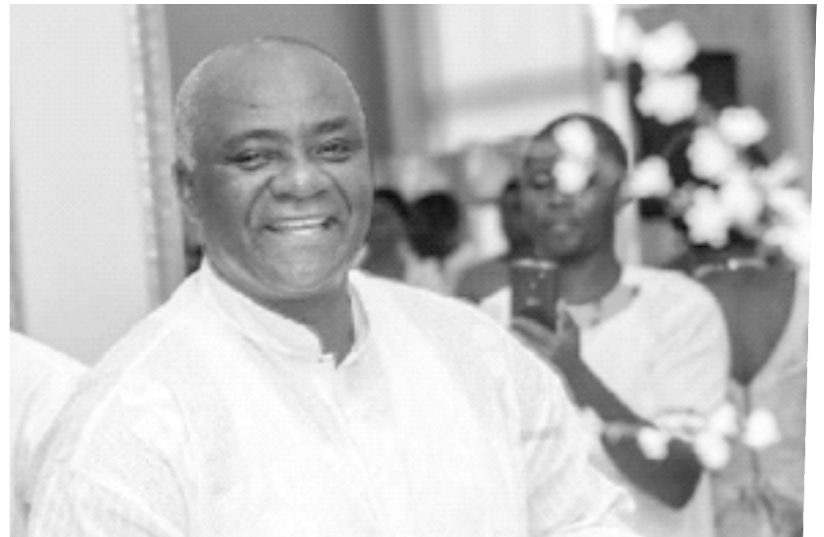
According to the flagbearer-hopeful of the ruling [New Patriotic Party](#) (NPP), although it appears some of the personalities who have also indicated their intentions to run for the vacant role in the party are 'bigger' than him, that is not what will win them the elections.

He explained that it takes such attributes as character and endearment to be able to win the hearts of the

delegates of the party. "Big names do not win elections. Elections are won by your character, by your good self – endearing yourself to the electorates, articulating your vision and they having the acceptability for you that you could be, and you are qualified to be their leader; not necessarily any name as such," he explained. Speaking with GhanaWeb TV's Etsey Atisu in an interview on Election Desk, Francis Addai-Nimoh recalled how, for instance, he outperformed many more experienced names in the party during the 2014 presidential primaries of the

NPP.

He said that because of the confidence the delegates have in him, he came out third in that race, even though he was regarded as the underdog in the race. "Similarly, in 2014, when the seven contestants, and I was one of them, I was seen to be the underdog; I was seen to be someone unknown in the political environment of our country. The other six contestants had all worked under J. A. Kufuor's administration either as ministers of state, or deputy ministers of state, and Addai-Nimoh had not been in that position before.



"But when we went through that process in 2014, I came in third, which was an enviable position that I secured for myself, and that shows the potential that the NPP delegates found in me and

then encouraged me to make progress with this ambition," he added.

The former Member of Parliament for Mampong also shared some other reasons why he is vying for the flagbearer position of the NPP again.

# Abandoned Aburi Botanical Gardens In Ruins, Develop It – Aburihene Tells Govt As He Marks 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



**T**he Adontenhene of the Akuapem Traditional Area and Aburihene, Otoobour Djan Kwasi II, has urged the government to take steps to develop the abandoned Aburi Botanical gardens which he says is in a sordid state currently. Otoobour Djan Kwasi II on Tuesday February 28, 2023 celebrated the 35th anniversary thanksgiving service of his installation, with the call on the Ghanaians to develop the Botanical Gardens and also called on Ghanaians to strive to preserve the country's cultural heritage for future generations. As part of the celebration, the Paramount Chief of Aburi donated

GH¢ 35,000 to support social center at Aburi. Addressing a colourful event at Aburi to mark the occasion, Otoobour Kwasi II thanked the almighty God for protecting the residents in the various communities within the Akuapem Traditional Area and wished long life for everyone in the area.

## Aburi Botanical Gardens

The Chief spoke extensively on how he wants the government to develop Aburi Botanical Gardens and reiterated the need for the privatisation of the Botanical Gardens to invite investment to the tourist facility. He said private investment could revitalise the Gardens and enhance its tourism potential to improve business in the area. Otoobour Kwasi II said the Gardens had lost its value and pride in recent years due to neglect by the government, lack of maintenance, and bureaucracy in its management.

He said the late former President Ft. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings took interest in the Aburi Botanical Gardens and when he came to the area those days he always took interest to sit at the garden. The chief argued that the Aburi Botanical Gardens currently under the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development is making the facility lose its natural status, and proposed that it is time for the government to put the Aburi garden under the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture.

He pointed out that they didn't support the idea of the government to put the garden under the local government, saying that the constitutional mandates of the local government are fast different from the Aburi garden facility. He argued that can the local government come to cut the flowers to use for any tourism initiative no." Mincing no words, Otoobour Djan Kwasi II blamed the former Minister for Local

Government and Rural Development, Alhaji Collins Dauda for the bad nature of the facility.

According to the chief, during the former President John Dramani Mahama regime some potential local investors who accompanied a Ghanaian business magnate, founder and chief executive officer of McDan Group of Companies, Executive Chairman of the Joupung Group of Companies, Dr Joseph Siaw Agyepong and Samuel Afari Dartey, the Founder, CEO, and owner of Aqua Safari Resort and Safari Valley Resort took interest to develop the garden but that did not materialise.

He said they wanted to enter into a joint partnership agreement with these Ghanaian business moguls to develop the garden to its good shape and that they left with the cabinet for approval and that instead of Mr Dauda to push the documents to the cabinet to sign the agreement, he

made flimsy excuses to them. "When we went to Alhaji Collins Dauda, he told them that there are going to conduct the national election and that they should wait for the election to be conducted before he pushes the documents to the cabinet to sign and approve the agreement.

"So Aburi garden should be taken by these strategic local investors if Mr Daudu should have helped by that time but the garden development project is not coming on again," the chief disclosed. He said the Deputy Local Government and Rural Development who doubles as Member of Parliament for Akwapim South Constituency, Mr Osei Bonsu Amoa is in-charge of the area but he has been doing well to ensure the development of the facility. He entreated the journalists to find out from their MP what he is doing to fix the old age problem of Aburi garden.

## Breast Cancer Advocate Warns Patients Against 'Spiritual Concoctions' From Religious Leaders

**B**reast cancer patients have been advised to beware of “spiritual concoctions” offered to them by religious leaders when seeking treatments. According to a medical expert, concoctions have no place in providing a solution to the increasing number of breast cancer cases in Ghana. The president of Breast Cancer International (BCI), Dr. Mrs. Beatrice Wiafe Addai, who gave the advice, urged breast cancer patients to resort to medical treatment when diagnosed with the disease.

Dr. Mrs. Beatrice Wiafe Addai, who is also the CEO of Peace and Love Hospitals (PLHs) in Kumasi and Accra, bemoaned a current trend in the country where some pastors have resorted to concoctions for curing breast cancer.

She noted that “breast cancer is not caused by spiritual agents and cannot

be treated spiritually, so the reliance on concoctions and other traditional herbs cannot treat the disease”. She stated that most of the late presentations of breast cancer cases could be traced to the reliance on these unscientific approaches adapted by the pastors to “siphon” members of their money.

Dr. Mrs. Beatrice Wiafe Addai was speaking to members of Great Glory Ministry International at Tanoso Anwiankwanta in the Kwadaso municipality in the Ashanti region, on Sunday, February 26, 2023.

The event marked the conclusion of the church's 21-day Prayer and Fasting program, which included free breast cancer education and screening exercises.

It was part of the Delta Airline-sponsored 'Kick Breast Cancer Out' campaigns, in collaboration with BCI and PLH.

“Church pastors and prophets are deceiving their members into

believing that their prepared concoctions can cure ailments like breast cancer and other non-communicable diseases, a trend that needs an urgent halt,” she said.

“These leaders are just making money out of the concoctions sales to the venerable members because they (leaders) know the actions prove futile, and when it gets out of hand they refer the members to the hospitals,” Dr Wiafe Addai bemoaned.

Dr. Beatrice Wiafe Addai posited that, as a result of these unscientific methods, some women are dying prematurely, because these women could have been saved if they had presented them earlier for proper treatments. “I have always maintained that the best solution in the treatment of breast cancer is its early detection through medical screening and prompt actions. Presentation of late-stage cases makes treatment difficult,” she added.



*President of Breast Cancer International (BCI), Dr. Mrs. Beatrice Wiafe Addai*

The founder and leader of Great Glory Ministry International, Prophet Collins Kwame Kesseh, in his remarks appealed to his fellow clergy to advise their members to seek medical assistance when they fall sick.

“Though I believe in prophetic healings and prayers, some diseases like breast cancer should be treated by medical experts but giving members concoctions which we know

have no place in curing disease is very unfortunate,” he implored pastors and prophets.

Advising members on breast cancer, Prophet Collins Kwame Kesseh told the women to adapt to frequent clinical breast cancer screening to know their statuses.

## Bola Ahmed Tinubu: 10 Key Points About The Lagos 'Landlord' Set To Lead Nigeria



*Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Nigeria's president-elect*

**A**siwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, the presidential candidate of Nigeria's ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), has been declared the winner of the 2023 presidential election. The announcement of March 1, 2023 by Mahmood Yakubu, chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), meant the one-time Lagos State governor has achieved a long-held dream of leading from the center, Abuja. Tinubu is however a divisive character in Nigerian politics, partly for his style of leadership, 'ownership of Lagos politically and in terms of business interests, as well as allegations of drug pushing and corruption.

**We produce 10 top facts about the man known as the landlord of Lagos:**

1. His full name is Bola Ahmed Adekunle Tinubu. He holds the titles of the Asiwaju of Lagos and the Jagaban of Borgu Kingdom.
2. His known date of birth is 29th March 1952, which makes him 70 years, a figure that has widely been disputed.
3. Even though he has become more famed for his influence in Lagos (Nigeria's commercial hub) and his time as its governor, his birthplace is Osun State, southwest of Nigeria. He is a Yoruba by ethnicity
4. Tinubu had his education in Nigeria's Ibadan before he continued to college in Chicago and onwards to the Chicago State University for his undergraduate studies. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting in 1979.
5. He worked for a number of accounting firms in the States before he moved to Nigeria in

1983. Bola Tinubu joined Mobil Oil Nigeria, and soon after, he was appointed as the company's executive.

6. He joined politics in 1992 with the Social Democratic Party (SDP) on whose ticket he became Lagos West Senator.

7. Tinubu joined pro-democracy groups after the 'electoral coup' of 1993 (when the military annulled the election of Moshood Abiola) and fled to exile in 1994 fearing the then Sani Abacha regime.

8. He came back to Nigeria in 1998 after the death of Sani Abacha. In January 1999, he vied for the position of Governor of Lagos State on the AD ticket. He was elected governor of the state. He left the Lagos State government house in 2007 but has since influenced who becomes Lagos governor. The last three governors after he left have all admitted publicly to

being his prodigies. Tinubu's influence has also extended across the southwest region and his political alliances have also seen him make very loyal friends in the Muslim dominated north.

9. He became national leader of the ruling APC after its formation in 2014 before the party won elections in 2015 with outgoing Muhammadu Buhari as its flagbearer. He run on a Muslim-Muslim ticket, i.e. he picked a Muslim as his vice (Kashim Shettima from Borno State) contrary to the religious balancing of tickets by the major parties.

10. He is married to Oluremi Tinubu, a Reverend Minister and has four children – Folashade Tinubu-Ojo, Oluwaseyi Tinubu, Abibat Tinubu, and the late Jide Tinubu.

**Tinubu beats two main contenders**

Tinubu was in the race along with the main opposition People's Democratic Party's

(PDP) Atiku Abubakar and Peter Obi of the Labour Party (LP). In terms of the hard figures, APC polled 8,805,655 valid votes as against the PDP's 6,984,520 and LP's 6,098,588. The New Nigerian Peoples Party (NNPP) got 1,496,687 valid votes while the fourteen other aspirants together got the remaining 666,298. Nigeria's peculiar means of determining president means that the winner must get at least 25% of votes in two thirds of the 36 states plus the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja. Tinubu had at least 25% of votes in 29 states, Atiku had 25% of votes in 21 states, Obi had 25% of votes in 16 states while Rabi'u Kwankwaso of NNPP passed the threshold in only one state. Tinubu is expected to be handed his certificate later today at the Abuja International Conference Center where INEC had used as the collation center for the presidential elections.



# Peace Deal Between Ethiopian Government And TPLF Holds Despite Delays In Implementation; US Escalates Attempts To Scapegoat Eritrea

By Pavan Kulkarni

On Friday, February 3, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed held the first face-to-face meeting with a delegation from the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) since the beginning of the civil war in the country—to take stock of the progress made in implementing the peace deal signed on November 2, 2022.

The Prime Minister has [reportedly](#) decided to increase flights to and banking services in the region, which were only restored in the war-torn northernmost state of Tigray following the peace deal. The TPLF had agreed to full disarmament as part of the deal signed in South Africa capital Pretoria.

Redwan Hussien, national security advisor to the Prime Minister, [said](#) that as per Ahmed's decision, the “National Bank [of Ethiopia] has begun sending 5 billion Birr to Mekele to be dispensed starting Monday. It's a multifold increment from hitherto 20 million.” He further added that Ethiopian Airlines has increased the number of flights to Tigray's capital Mekelle from three to four.

Delegates from the government and the TPLF reportedly discussed the progress made so far, and acknowledged failures in the timely implementation of the deal.

The peace agreement had brought to an end to the two-year-long civil war that began after the TPLF attacked a federal army base in Mekelle on November 3, 2020. The war expanded to neighboring states in the subsequent year when the TPLF invaded Afar and Amhara.

About 600,000 lives were reportedly lost in northern Ethiopia as a result of the civil war, which concluded with the signing of a peace deal only after the TPLF's forces had been beaten back and encircled in Mekelle. The peace agreement “stopped an average of 1,000 deaths per day,” Olusegun Obasanjo, the African Union (AU) envoy to the Horn of Africa, who had led the peace negotiations, [told](#) the *Financial Times*.

## TPLF's disarmament delayed

However, implementation of key aspects of the agreement have fallen well behind schedule. The [agreement](#) had set the “the disarmament of the heavy armaments of the TPLF combatants as a matter of priority,” to be completed within 15 days of its signing. However, it was only on January 11 that the TPLF began to

hand over its heavy weaponry.

The agreement included a provision to extend the 15-day deadline, if endorsed by senior commanders on both sides. However, it stipulated that “the overall disarmament of the TPLF combatants, including light weapons,” had to be completed “within 30 days from the signing of this Agreement,” that is, by December 2, 2022.

“But the TPLF are still hoarding light weapons,” historian and former Ethiopian ambassador Mohamed Hassan told *Peoples Dispatch*. Last Sunday, January 29, when Tigrayan protesters took to streets in Mekelle to demonstrate against the TPLF's continued hold on political power, “well-armed groups of TPLF surrounded the city and took over key areas to stop the demonstration,” he said.

Acknowledging that there was a discussion in the meeting on February 3 over “back-logged works,” TPLF delegate Wondimu Asaminew [told](#) the *Ethiopian News Agency (ENA)*, “we have agreed to quickly reach the goal of [the peace agreement].”

Admitting that “there is much work to be done,” Peace Minister Binalf Andualem added, “by protecting and strengthening the work done [thus far], both sides should work on the delayed issues quickly.” He also said that “there is a determination and desire on all sides that this peace agreement should never be reversed.”

In the meantime, the US, which had backed the TPLF in its war against the federal government, has been escalating its efforts to place Eritrea at the center of this conflict. Eritrea had sent troops to assist the federal Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) in defeating the TPLF, which, soon after starting the war against the Ethiopian federal government, had also fired rockets into Eritrea. **Eritrea and Ethiopia's common interest in protecting their peace deal from TPLF**

Eritrea and Ethiopia had a common stake in defeating the TPLF. The TPLF had in 2018 opposed the peace deal between the two countries, for which Prime Minister Ahmed was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019. The decades-long conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia began under the TPLF's US-backed authoritarian rule of Ethiopia (1990-2018), until it was overthrown by mass pro-democracy protests, against the backdrop of

which Ahmed became Prime Minister.

Soon after taking charge, Ahmed undertook a slew of political reforms, including the release of political prisoners incarcerated by the TPLF, welcoming back political exiles, and lifting the bans on free press and on opposition political parties that had been instituted under the TPLF's rule.

He also ended the war with Eritrea, and followed up the 2018 peace-deal with a Tripartite Agreement for peace and cooperation between Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia in 2019. Threatened by the prospect of unity between the countries of the geopolitically crucial Horn of Africa, the Biden administration, which was waiting to take the White House in late 2020, instigated the TPLF to start this war in an attempt to unravel the progress made, maintains Hassan. Throughout the war, the US, the UK, and the EU, as well as the Western media, portrayed the Ethiopian federal government, and Eritrea—which had come to its assistance—as the aggressors. Forced conscription of Tigrayan children and youth into the war as cannon fodder for human wave attacks, massacres and gang-rapes in Amhara and Afar, burning of villages, looting of hospitals and food stores, and other atrocities by the TPLF were largely ignored or understated.

This attempt to paint the Ethiopian federal government as the aggressor appears to have halted after the peace agreement, which was signed only when the TPLF was said to be on the verge of a total military defeat. However, the US continues to train its guns on Eritrea, denying the widely reported withdrawal of its troops. 10 days after the Pretoria agreement, the [joint declaration](#) by senior commanders issued in Kenyan capital Nairobi on November 12, 2022, stated: “Disarmament of [TPLF's] heavy weapons will be done concurrently with the withdrawal of foreign and non-ENDF forces from the region.”

On November 15, the [US State Department threatened more sanctions](#) if Eritrean troops and the militias of Amhara and Afar, which had fought alongside the ENDF, did not accordingly withdraw from Tigray.

While the [TPLF began to hand over its heavy weapons only on January 11, 2023](#), well over a month after its full disarmament—including of light weapons—should have been completed as per the agreement, the [withdrawal of Eritrean troops had already begun by December](#)



On November 7, 2022, Redwan Hussien Rameto (2nd L), representative of the Ethiopian government, and Getachew Reda (2nd R), representative of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), signed a peace agreement in Pretoria, South Africa. Photo: Alet Pretorius/Xinhua. Attempts by US and other Western countries to sow discord between Ethiopia and Eritrea “will not be successful because the majority of the Ethiopian people are grateful for the Eritrean army's help in defeating the TPLF,” former Ethiopian diplomat Mohamed Hassan told *Peoples Dispatch*

30, 2022.

On January 15, AU envoy Olusegun Obasanjo [confirmed](#) that Eritrean troops had already withdrawn to the border. Large-scale withdrawal back into Eritrea was [widely reported](#) on January 20. In a phone call with Prime Minister Ahmed, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken also “welcomed” the “significant progress to date on implementation of the November 2 Cessation of Hostilities Agreement” including “the ongoing withdrawal of Eritrean troops from northern Ethiopia,” according to a [statement by his own spokespeople](#).

Nevertheless, only days later, Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, US Representative to the UN, said at a [press briefing](#) in Nairobi on January 28 that the Eritrean troops “have moved back to the border and that they've been asked to leave Ethiopia.”

While implying that the Eritrean troops remained in Ethiopia against the wishes of the Ethiopian government, “she did not provide any evidence or source for this assessment,” *Reuters* [reported](#). Later that same day, TPLF's spokesperson Getachew Reda repeated her claim, saying that “thousands” of Eritrean troops were still present in the country.

Denying this claim, Major General Teshome Gemechu, ENDF's Director-General of International Relations and Military Cooperation, stated that “There is no other security force in the Tigray region except the

FDRE [Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia] Defense Forces.”

Thomas-Greenfield's statement, aimed at sowing discord between Ethiopia and Eritrea, “is absolutely false,” Simon Tesfamariam, Eritrean activist and director of the New Africa Institute, told *Peoples Dispatch*. “There are agreements between the two countries extending to military cooperation. There is this desire to portray that the relation between Ethiopia and Eritrea is headed in a sour direction. But this is untrue. The cooperation between the two countries has only strengthened,” he added.

Hassan, who is also an adviser to the president of Ethiopia's Somali regional state, concurs. “In fact, when the Eritrean troops were leaving, people in the northern part of Tigray, who were fearing a return of the TPLF, were pleading with them to stay,” he said. “But the Eritrean forces left, and the area is in control of federal troops.” The attempts by the US and other Western countries to provoke tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea “will not be successful because the majority of the Ethiopian people are grateful for the Eritrean army's help in defeating the TPLF,” he said. While the US was hoping to disrupt the strengthening of relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea by instigating the TPLF into waging this war, it has only resulted in solidifying their relations further, Hassan argued.

## Chereponi Violence: 600 People Displaced As Police Arrest 10 Suspects

Some 10 suspects have been arrested by the police at Chereponi in the North-East Region over their involvement in a communal clash at Wenchike, a community in the area.

According to myjoyonline.com, the clash, which happened last week, occurred as a result of a chieftaincy disagreement between two Chokosi factions in the area.

In the process, four people were killed and over 25 houses were

burned down.

The report also said that the violence led to the destruction of some motorbikes and other property in the community.

After the clashes, the National Disaster Management Organization reported that there were over 600 people who had been displaced, even as schools remained closed.

The community is also said to have since been deserted.

The report also indicated



that the 10 suspects had been remanded for two weeks, expected to reappear in court thereafter.

According to the District Chief Executive, Hajia Zuweiratu Nashiru, the law will be applied to ensure that those found guilty are dealt with in accordance with the laws.

## GAF Commits 1,250 Troops To Combat Terrorism

The Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) is expected to commit about 1,250 troops to

Operation ENHANCED

KOUDANLGOU, a Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF).

This was disclosed during a brief when the German Ambassador to Ghana, Daniel Krull visited the MNJTF headquarters co-located with the Headquarters of Northern Command in Tamale.

Operation ENHANCED

KOUDANLGOU would involve countries namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote D'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Togo; and would seek to incapacitate Terrorist Armed Groups (TAG) and organized crime groups operating along the borders of the aforementioned countries.

The Commander of the Joint Task Force, Major General (Maj Gen) Michael Amoah-Ayisi stated that the participating countries were



using this period to coordinate and prepare adequately to ensure smooth operations.

He added that measures were being implemented to enhance interoperability among participating countries.

The General Officer Commanding Northern Command, Brigadier General (Brig Gen) Matthew Essien commended the German Government for its immense support in the areas of training and logistics especially with regards to intelligence and surveillance/reconnaissance equipment.

Source: [classfmonline.com](http://classfmonline.com)

## AFRICAN MIGRANTS UNDERGO 5-DAY RESIDENTIAL GERMAN SPARKASSENSTIFTUNG DSIK BUSINESS TRAINING IN GHANA

German Sparkassensitiftung DSIK has organised 5-Day Residential Business Training Session for 20 African Migrants at the Ghana Credit Unions Association Centre (CUtraC), Kasoa in the Central Region of the Republic of Ghana. Participants composed of African Return Migrants, Migrant Workers, Migrant Entrepreneurs and Students.

The Training which was executed by German Sparkassensitiftung DSIK for International Co-operation started from

6th and ended 10th February, 2023.

The project which is funded by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and implemented by the German Sparkassenstiftung Western Africa aims at supporting Return Migrants and Potential Migrants to build themselves a livelihood from their own business. To that end, Business Training and Business Coaching sessions are offered to these target group.

The German Sparkassenstiftung for International Cooperation (DSIK) is the development-policy arm of the Sparkassen Finance Group. In West Africa, DSIK implements projects in priority areas designed to foster financial inclusion i.e., Capacity Development, Financial Literacy, MSME Finance, and Institution Building. The German Sparkassenstiftung has been supporting financial institutions in developing and emerging countries by offering needs-oriented financial services. German Sparkassenstiftung

pursues the objective to enhance the professionalism of its partner institutions, thus enabling them to offer their customers a permanent access to financial products. The Facilitators for Business Training 55@CUTrac Session of the German Sparkassensitiftung DSIK Business Training, Madam Doreen Addae and Mr. Danso Boamah Richard respectively taught the Trainees in both theory and practice on two main topics. In his welcome message for Trainees on the Day One, the Business Training Programme Officer of German Sparkassensitiftung DSIK, Mr. Benjamin Adomako urged Trainees to seriously take the

opportunity to offered them for the training to improve their livelihood. Mr. Justice Baako Ntarmah, the General Secretary and Head of Education International Relations of the Migrant Labour General Workers' Union International (MLGWUI) in his closing intervention urged Migrant Trainees to apply knowledge acquired into practice and avail themselves for follow-up training programmes to ensure well equipped for the business market. The Trainees received Certificate of Participation and support.