

# NDC ELECTIONS

## What Is happening As EC Finally Pulls Out?



**Dr Kwabena Duffour**



**Jean Mensa, EC Boss**



**Asiedu Nketiah**

With barely two days left for the conduct of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) much anticipated primaries to elect both a presidential candidate and parliamentary aspirants for the December 7 2024 elections, there appears to be conflicting signals as to whether the elections will take place as scheduled. Already, the National Chairman of the NDC, Johnson Asiedu Nketia has said the party's planned parliamentary and presidential elections will come off as planned.

According to him, nothing will stop the elections and asked anybody who has grievances to consult the leadership of the party for rectification.

Johnson Asiedu Nketia gave the assurance after Dr. Kwabena Duffour, one of the main contenders for the flagbearership slot filed an interlocutory injunction against the party's upcoming primaries slated for Saturday, May 13, 2023. The lawsuit specifically named as respondents the General Secretary of the NDC, the Director

of the Elections Directorate, along with fellow flagbearer hopefuls John Dramani Mahama and another contender, Kojo Bonsu.

According to the writ, the defendants have been commanded to enter their appearance within eight days of being served with the legal documents.

The writ added that failure to comply with the order may result in a judgment being passed in their absence without further notice.

*cont. on page 3*

### Joint Business Forum Vows To Fight Passage Of Three New Taxes



**Ken Ofori Atta, Minister of Finance**

The Ghana Joint Business Consultative Forum has reiterated its stance against the introduction of three new taxes introduced by the government. This comes after the members of

*cont. on page 2*

### Central Tongu NDC Parliamentary Seat Threatened

...As NPP's Godwin Casola Makes Inroads



**Godwin Casola page 5**

## Of Sovereign Debts And Colonial Roots: IMF And The Engineering Of A 'Permanent Crisis' In Africa

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# The INSIGHT

## EDITORIAL

### DEAL WITH THIS HEALTH MENACE

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

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

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

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

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### Joint Business Forum Vows To Fight Passage Of Three New Taxes



*The business community want a review on the passage of three new taxes by government from front page*

the Forum, who are made up of key associations within the business community, held a meeting to express their displeasure against the passage of the revenue bills.

Information Minister, [Kojo Oppong-Nkrumah](#) on April 16, 2023, confirmed that the President has signed the three revenue bills into law for implementation.

They are the Excise Duty Amendment Bill 2022; Growth and Sustainability Levy Bill, 2022; Ghana Revenue Authority Bill 2022 and the Income Tax Amendment Bill 2022. But the Ghana Joint Business Consultative Forum in a statement said it remains resolute in its position against these taxes adding that, they are not only obnoxious but also inimical, and counterproductive which will result in the collapse of businesses in the country.

“We are already in a toxic business environment which needs to be fixed, rather than compounding the problems with the introduction of new killer taxes,” the statement said.

It continued, “The forum will not relent until the right things are done to improve the business environment and protect business in Ghana”.

The Forum however said it is hopeful that President [Nana Akufo-Addo](#) will heed to concerns of members within the business community and engage stakeholders towards a review of the new taxes.

This, they believe will help ensure a stable business community can thrive and remain competitive in a conducive environment. Meanwhile, the government insists that the three new taxes form part of efforts to raise GH¢4 billion annually in domestic revenue mobilisation.

They are also crucial to help secure Board Approval for the US\$3 billion [International Monetary Fund](#) (IMF) Programme after a staff-level agreement was reached in December 2022.

## THE INSIGHT

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# NDC ELECTIONS

## What Is happening As EC Finally Pulls Out?



Dr. Kwabena Duffour



Jean Mensa, EC Boss



Asiedu Nketiah



Dr. Kwabena Duffour



NDC flagbearer hopeful, Kojo Bonsu

### from front page

An earlier communique from the camp of Dr. Duffour alleged certain irregularities and concerns regarding the integrity of the upcoming primaries, prompting him to seek legal intervention. The Campaign team of Dr. Kwabena Duffour in their communique want a postponement of the May 13 Presidential Primaries over what they describe as a flawed register.

A petitioned sent to the Electoral Commission and Election Committee of NDC on May 8, 2023 under the signature of Kofi Kukubor, Head of Research and Strategy with the campaign team of Dr. Duffour stated that extensive review of the voters' register or photo album for 220 Constituencies have identified several discrepancies that render the register incomplete or inaccurate.

The campaign team said going into an election with such a register undermines the credibility and integrity of the election and capable

of causing irreparable damage to the flagbearer hopeful, Dr. Kwabena Duffour, therefore demanding the following:

1. Postponement of the May 13th Presidential Primaries.
2. Stakeholders meeting to establish an agreeable roadmap that will guarantee the integrity of the voters register.
3. Clean the register within an agreeable time frame to ensure free and fair election.
4. To save the image of the NDC so that the party can have a credible voice so that the party can speak on national election matters when the need arises. But the National Chairman of NDC, Johnson Asiedu Nketia in responding to the writ said the party's planned parliamentary and presidential elections will come off as scheduled. Speaking on Okay FM earlier about the communique, Mr. Asiedu Nketia explained that he could not fathom why the Duffour campaign team are trying to make things difficult for themselves. They have already been

furnished with voters' register, and the photo album provided to them is an added document that the leadership of the party decided to provide so that they will have a fair idea of the voters.

"There is nothing wrong and no one is rigging the elections for nobody. The leadership of the party will organize a press conference and outline all the processes for the elections. Anybody with peculiar problems should endeavour to be present and have all those bottle necks removed," he said.

"Nonetheless, the party's presidential and parliamentary primaries will definitely come off as planned," he added. Mr. Kojo Bonsu who is also an aspiring presidential candidate for the NDC has also called on the election committee of the party to postpone the presidential primaries.

According to him, his team is yet to get the album that will be used for the elections, a move he described as unacceptable. "The issue is that, why have we paid a whopping 5 billion old Cedis to contest in an election and some few individuals are trying to skew the entire process in a particular?", he quizzed. Kojo Bonsu says he wants anomalies with the voter register addressed with immediate effect or the party should postpone the election for at least two weeks.

He also called for an urgent round table discussion to address all anomalies

associated with the organization of the May 13, presidential and parliamentary primaries of the party. He added: "Some persons are engaging in obvious underhand activities and my team will not sit down for any individual to shortchange us in this elections." Meanwhile, amid the back and forth, the Electoral Commission (EC) yesterday announced its decision to pull out from supervising the NDC primaries scheduled for Saturday, May 13, until all legal issues associated with

it are resolved.

According to the EC chairperson, their decision is to prevent the commission from being cited for contempt.

"In order that we are not cited for contempt, the Commission has taken the decision not to supervise the conduct of the Presidential and Parliamentary elections until after the determination of the case by the court," citinewsroom.com quoted Jean Mensa during a meeting held on Wednesday, May 10.

WRIT OF SUMMONS  
(Order 2 rule 34f)

WRIT ISSUED FROM *Accra* 200... SUIT No. *200/0816/2023*

IN THE HIGH/CIRCUIT COURT OF JUSTICE  
GENERAL JURISDICTION

BETWEEN  
DR. KWABENA DUFFOUR  
SUITE 308, AIRPORT RESIDENTIAL AREA  
ACCRA  
Plaintiff

AND  
1. THE GENERAL SECRETARY  
NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS  
29 HALL ST  
GA-07-007  
ADABAKA - ACCRA  
2. THE DIRECTOR  
ELECTIONS DIRECTORATE  
NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS  
29 HALL ST  
GA-07-007  
ADABAKA - ACCRA  
3. MR. JOHN DIBAMANI MARAMA  
CHAIRMAN ACCRA/1 KAKRANAHU ROAD  
GANTUMENTS - ACCRA  
4. MR. KOJO BONSU  
4 WATERMELON ST  
ST JOHN - ACHIMOTA  
ACCRA  
5. THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF GHANA  
GLOP/002  
HEAD OFFICE - REDGE  
ACCRA  
Defendants\*

To  
AN ACTION having been commenced against you by the issue of this writ by the above-named Plaintiff, DR. KWABENA DUFFOUR

YOU ARE HEREBY COMMANDED that within EIGHT DAYS after service of this writ on you inclusive of the day of service you do cause an appearance to be entered for you. THE GENERAL SECRETARY NDC & 4 OTHERS

AND TAKE NOTICE that in default of your so doing, judgment may be given in your absence without further notice to you. THE GENERAL SECRETARY NDC & 4 OTHERS

Dated this *11th* day of *May* 2023

Chief Justice of Ghana

ANIN YEROAH

NB: This writ is to be served within twelve calendar months from the date of issue unless, it is renewed within six calendar months from the date of its renewal.

The defendant may appear hereto by filing a notice of appearance either personally or by a lawyer at Form 5 at the Registry of the Court of issue of the writ at *Accra*. A defendant appearing personally may, if he desire give notice of appearance by post.

\*State name, place of residence or business address of plaintiff (if known (not P.O. Box number).  
\*\*State name, place of residence or business address of defendant (not P.O. Box number).

FORM 1



# INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORT

## Compiled By Peoples Dispatch

### Former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan Arrested

Former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan was arrested in the afternoon of Tuesday, May 9, while he was appearing at the Islamabad High Court (IHC) in relation to hearings in some of the graft cases against him. Pakistan's Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah confirmed that Khan was arrested by Pakistan's anti-corruption body, the National Accountability Bureau, for causing losses to the national treasury, *Dawn* reported. The newspaper described the event of Khan's arrest as "shocking." The Islamabad police confirmed that Khan was arrested in relation to one of the graft cases pending against him. Khan's party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) said the government was "crossing a red line" and has asked its supporters to take to the streets. There are already reports of large-scale demonstrations against Khan's arrest taking place in different parts of the country. Khan's party colleague Fawad Chaudhry was the one to first [tweet about Khans](#)

[arrest](#). He claimed that Khan was taken to an unknown location. Another party colleague Hammad Azhar [claimed](#) that Khan (70) had been manhandled by the police. Following the news of Khan's arrest from the court premises, the IHC issued summons to the city police chief and other officials to appear in court and explain the reasons for his arrest. Khan was [removed from](#) power in April last year after his party lost a no-confidence vote in the parliament. He has alleged that his removal was part of a conspiracy against him by the country's military along with external forces, especially the US. He claimed that the conspiracy was due to his refusal to toe the US line on the war in Ukraine. Ever since his ouster, Khan has been charged in numerous graft cases by the government led by Shehbaz Sharif. He was also attacked and [injured during a march](#) to capital Islamabad

organized by his party. Imran Khan has repeatedly made the [allegations](#) about some officers of the Pakistan army being involved in a plot to assassinate him. Pakistan security forces had earlier tried to arrest him in [March this year](#). However, the attempt was thwarted due to the large presence of PTI supporters outside Khan's residence in Lahore. He and his party have been demanding early national elections, which has been refused by the government. The national elections are due this year. The government has also delayed holding elections to the provincial assemblies of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Finally, the [Pakistan Supreme Court](#) had to intervene last month to ask the government to hold a snap election in Punjab on May 14. PTI and Khan have claimed that the current



**Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan. Imran Khan's party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) said the government was "crossing a red line" and has asked its supporters to take to the streets. There are already reports of demonstrations against Khan's arrest taking place in different parts of the country.**

government led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is scared to hold the elections early as they fear losing. The government's refusal to hold the elections earlier and the

repressive measures taken against the PTI is a sign of its inability to win over popular support, which is strongly in favor of Khan and his PTI at the moment, Professor Junaid Ahmad [told](#) Rania Khalek of *BreakThrough* news last week.

### Yet Another Mass Shooting In The US Kills Eight People, Including Three Children



**Memorials in honor of the mass shooting victims have gone up in front of Allen Premium Outlets, where the massacre took place (Screenshot via Toluwani Osibamowo on Twitter). Shooter who espoused white supremacist and misogynistic views gunned down several people, killing nine and injuring 7, at a mall in Texas**

33-year-old Mauricio Garcia last Saturday opened fire in a shopping mall in Allen, Texas, killing eight people and injuring seven. Shortly after, Garcia himself was killed by police. Three of the victims Garcia killed were children. Garcia killed three people out of a family of four, leaving behind only [William Cho](#), aged six. Two elementary school-aged children were also killed, Daniela and Sofia Mendoza, leaving behind only their mother, Ilda Mendoza, who is in the hospital in critical condition. The other victims are Christian LaCour, age 23, Aishwarya Thatikonda, 26, and Elio Cumana-Rivas, 32. This marks

another manifestation of a pervasive phenomenon in the United States: mass shootings. This latest shooting is only the second most fatal of 2023, the first being the [Monterey Park shooting](#) in California, in which 11 were killed. So far since the start of 2023, 208 mass shootings (shootings with at least four victims) have taken place, the Allen shooting being the [198th](#). Like [many perpetrators](#) of mass shootings, Garcia espoused white supremacist and misogynistic views. His profile on the social media site OK RU contains a picture of his torso with two enormous Nazi tattoos: a swastika on the chest and SS bolts on the bicep. The caption accompanying a picture of his Nazi tattoos reads "Here's what I think about your diversity you f-cking loser's [sic]." His profile also contains posts praising Hitler, referencing neo-Nazi website The Daily Stormer, and screeds describing his desire to inflict violence against women. The day of the shooting, Garcia was wearing a patch with the letters

"RWDS", which stands for "right-wing death squads". This is a popular phrase amongst the Proud Boys and other white supremacist groups in the United States, and is a tribute to Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet, who assembled death squads to murder and/or disappear leftists. Pinochet's victims number in the thousands. Among white supremacists in the US, especially the Proud Boys, "RWDS" is an abbreviation often accompanied by patches or other items bearing the words "Pinochet did nothing wrong." According to his profile, Garcia was influenced by prominent right-wing media, such as Youtuber Tim Pool and the Twitter account Libs of TikTok. Because of Garcia's Neo-Nazi beliefs, this mass shooting is reigniting a nationwide discussion about the dangers of white supremacy promoted in seemingly non-violent right-wing media. Tucker Carlson, for example, now the fired former host of one of the most-watched news programs in the country, openly discussed the white supremacist ["great](#)

[replacement theory](#)", a theory which inspired mass shooter Peyton Gendron to shoot 13 people, most of whom were Black. And as with all mass shootings in the US, the tragedy has reignited discussions about gun control laws. Mauricio Garcia used an "AR-15 style assault weapon" according to a [statement](#) issued by US President Biden. Restrictions on owning guns, including bans on assault weapons, have been notoriously hard to pass in the US because of the massive influence of the weapons industry on politics. In 2022, the firearms industry was responsible for over USD 80.3 million in total economic activity in the US. One of the chief lobbying groups for the gun industry, the infamous National Rifle Association (NRA), has spent over USD 63 million since 1998 in lobbying politicians to legislate in favor of weapons manufacturers.

This is only a part of the total money spent by all pro-gun groups in lobbying, which is a startling USD 171.9 million since 1998. Pro-gun groups have also spent USD 155.1 million on "outside spending", which refers to spending made independently from political candidates. The year after the US government lifted the assault rifle ban in 2004, Congress moved to pass legislation that absolved the gun industry of all responsibility for crimes committed using their products. This removed a major barrier for the industry, and weapons manufacturers' [profits soared](#). Most people in the US support some form of [increased gun regulations](#). According to a Gallup poll, dissatisfaction with current US gun laws has hit a [23-year high](#).



# Central Tongu NDC Parliamentary Seat Threatened ...As NPP's Godwin Casola Makes Inroads

Information reaching this news outlet indicates that the Central Tongu Constituency branch of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) in the Volta Region is in serious trouble. The NDC, which is the most dominant in the constituency, is on the verge of losing that dominance following the increasing affection for an aspiring parliamentary hopeful for the governing New Patriotic Party (NPP), Mr. Godwin Ayikpa Casola who is widely tipped to win the NPP parliamentary primaries and subsequently to snatch the seat from the NDC in the 2024 general elections. Mr. Godwin Ayikpa Casola who is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Kandillis Properties Ltd and the Founder and Executive Director of Educare Focus Initiative enjoys a high level of goodwill and affection across the constituency from both members of the opposition NDC and the ruling NPP because of his philanthropic

works, selflessness, peace-loving nature and above all his efforts to empower many especially the youth. He holds a Master's Degree in Communications Studies from the University of Ghana (UG), Legon and a bachelor degree in English Language from the University of Cape Coast. The majority of delegates including members and supporters of the NPP in the Central Tongu constituency have thus, called on their fellow delegates to vote for Mr. Ayikpa to become the Parliamentary Candidate for the party come August 2. According to most of the delegates, winning the seat in the general elections in 2024 requires a unifier, a person without any political blemish, one who cares for the general wellbeing of people and with passion to empower the constituents hence the decision of Mr. Ayikpa is the right one at the right time. Speaking to some of these delegates on reasons for the support, they said the NPP especially in the 2020 elections failed to elect the

preferred candidate for the constituency leading to the defeat. They revealed that the NPP was highly optimistic of winning the Central parliamentary seat but lost due to lack of understanding of the grassroots and dynamics of the constituency by the candidate. However, Mr Ayikpa had worked with the party at the constituency for years and understood the grassroots and the dynamics of the constituency. They said, over the years he had contributed to the party and individual lives in the constituency hence believe he has the capacity and ability to win the seat for the NPP in the 2024 general election. One of the vociferous delegates said what the party needs to win the seat is a candidate who is humble, generous, selfless and appeals to floating voters and loved by majority of both members of NDC and NPP parties and Mr Ayikpa Godwin Casola is the only one who ticks all these boxes! "Winning the seat in the next elections is critical and dear to the heart of the constituency and we

cannot afford to give it away," they noted. They urged their fellow delegates to consider the interest of the party and vote for a winnable candidate in the person of Mr. Ayikpa. With him, unity is assured because he is known for his good works and his contributions to the party so far in the constituency have been great. Speaking in an interview with this journalist, Mr Ayikpa disclosed that he is coming to unite the party, galvanise the youth to vote massively for the NPP in the coming elections and use his connections to provide opportunities for the youth especially. According to him, empirical evidence on the ground suggested the party needed to present a new candidate with his quality to enable the party to snatch the parliamentary seat from the NDC in the upcoming election. Through his business experiences, Mr. Ayikpa expressed the hope to partner a number of international organisations to help transform the area for the benefit of the people as well as put the youth into apprenticeship and offer



them start-up capital to enable them to set up their businesses. He mentioned that he would come up with innovative ideas and interventions that would have direct impact on the lives of the constituents. He said he was in the race as a strong force who could unify the divided front of the party to win the parliamentary seat and consolidate the victory in future elections. Mr Ayikpa maintained that when given the nod he would work to tackle the poor state of roads in the area by lobbying for immediate government intervention to enable motorists and particularly farmers to cart their goods to market centres.

## Kwesi Pratt Jr. Exposes Western Governments As Being Neo-Colonialists



Kwesi Pratt Jr is a veteran journalist

Veteran journalist Kwesi Pratt Jr. has stated that attempts by Western countries to support Africa are rather ways of neo-colonizing the continent. He explained that every support that has come from these countries for development has been conditioned in a way that pins the continent down further than countries like China do for it. Speaking in a video clip of an interview with CGTN shared on Twitter, the veteran journalist explained that the situation with China's presence in Africa is that

there is a hysteria around what it is doing. He was responding to assertions that Africa was being invaded by China with a plan to take over the continent. He explained that these moves are fueled by Western governments, as there is no history of a Chinese government ever overthrowing an African government. "We have to understand that we are discussing this within the context of an anti-China hysteria, which is deliberately fuelled by Western governments, Western intelligence agencies, and the media. It's a vigorous anti-China hysteria; that's the backdrop. "What is the reality? I don't know

any time in our history that the Chinese government overthrew an African government. I don't know of any instance in our history where Chinese assistance to Africa or any other country has been dependent on the people's choice of a type of government and so on," he said. Kwesi Pratt Jr. further stated that it is clear that the support that comes from China, unlike from other Western countries, is without conditionalities. He, however, said that using the example of railway line construction in Ghana, it is clear that they are done with the intention of taking out the country's wealth. He described this as how the Western world is neo-colonizing the continent. "That's the difference. The West pretends to be giving us aid, but it's always conditioned on many things. In Ghana, you find that all the railway lines start from areas of concentration of wealth, where we have bauxite, where we have timber, where we have diamond, where we have gold, and so on. They start from there, and where do they end up? They end up in the ports. "So, the whole development orientation is to take out wealth; that's the whole development orientation. The railway lines tell this story adequately," he explained.

## 34 Forest Reserves Under Threat To Illegal Mining - Forestry Commission



Chief Executive Officer of the Commission, John M. Allotey

Data from the Forestry Commission of Ghana has shown that thirty-four (34) of the country's forest reserves are under threat to illegal mining, locally-known as galamsey. The Chief Executive Officer of the Commission, John M. Allotey, made this known at a press briefing on the State of Ghana's Forest Reserves, at the Ministry of Information. According to him, the total forest cover gazetted to serve as reserves and habitats of wildlife is gradually shrinking as a result of illegal mining activities. "Seven out of the sixteen regions have been experiencing some form of illegal mining. Out of this, thirty-four reserves have been affected. These are areas where you have significant illegal mining. The total area that has been mapped is about 4, 722 hectares of forest lands have been impacted. But then this is only the surface. Some of these impact results in very deep holes and they excavate a lot of materials that will also impact on the forest," he said. In his submission, John Allotey explained that forest areas such as Tano Nimir, Bonsa River, and Apamprama Forest Reserves, in the Western North, Western and the Ashanti Regions, have been heavily

impacted by the menace. He further added that as a Commission they try their best to flash out illegal miners in some of the forest reserves, but there are some areas being mined with rented armed guards who end up fighting them back. "We have three forest reserves that have been classified as the most difficult areas, these places are having active illegal mining happening and they have rented security and they are in the Bekwai forest district," he added. The Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, Samuel Abu Jinapor, indicated that the government remains resolute in fighting the illegal mining menace in the country. **This is a list of some forest regions impacted by galamsey activities;** Nkwawie Forest Region (Jimira, Tano Offin South, Offin Shelterbelt, Asenanyo) Bekwai Forest Region (Oda River, Denyau, Bomsointwe Range, Apamprama, Subin Shelterbelt, Supuma) Mankranso Forest Region (Desiri) Asankregua Forest Region (Tonton, Fure River, Totua) Tarkwa Forest Region (Nueng South, Bonsa River) Takoradi (Subri River) Bibiani (Ahwianso East, Upper Wassaw, Afao Hills) Enchi (Tano Anwhia, Tano Nimire)

# Of Sovereign Debts And Colonial Roots: IMF And The Engineering Of A 'Permanent Crisis' In Africa

By Tanupriya Singh

As the Spring Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank began on April 10, questions emerged as to whether progress would finally be made to address the severe debt crisis that has engulfed large parts of the Global South. Ultimately, and perhaps unsurprisingly, the meetings ended [without](#) offering any real solutions to alleviate this distress, despite the IMF and World Bank's own stark [warnings](#) of the fallout. The scale of the crisis is [staggering](#). Research from Debt Justice [shows](#) that external debt payments for lower income countries are set to reach the highest levels in 25 years in 2023. A new dossier published by the Tricontinental Institute for Social Research interrogates the historical role of International Financial Institutions (IFIs), including the IMF, in perpetuating a "permanent debt crisis" in the Global South. It does so by grounding its understanding of the crisis in the revolutionary call for a 'United Front Against Debt' issued in 1987 by Burkina Faso President Thomas Sankara, recognizing debt for what it is—neocolonialism. In its *World Economic Outlook* report in January, the IMF warned that "the combination of high debt levels from the pandemic, lower growth, and higher borrowing costs exacerbates the vulnerabilities of these [poorer countries] economies, especially those with significant near-term dollar financing needs." When it comes to responding to this crisis, however, the Fund regurgitates the age-old, failed policies of austerity, albeit with new names. **The 'silent revolution' and the dawning of structural adjustment** According to the founding Articles of Agreement of the IMF, which were adopted with little inclusion or input from the then colonized countries, its purpose was to prevent "any short-term

problems from becoming long term-crises." This was all in service of certain 'primary objectives' of economic policy, which included "the expansion and balanced growth of international trade," the promotion of high levels of employment and real income, and the "development of productive resources." The way in which the Fund would provide financing changed dramatically after 1982, the year Mexico [announced](#) that it would default on its US\$80 billion sovereign debt. As the product of a 'silent revolution', the IMF introduced the Structural Adjustment Facility (1986) and the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (1987), making financing conditional on economic reforms. A "singular recipe was put on the table," the dossier states, to "privatize the economy, including the state sector, commodify areas of human life that had up to that point been in the public domain, terminate any government deficit financing, and dissolve any barriers on foreign capital investment and trade." Tested in Bolivia, Chile, and Peru in the 1950s, this approach would be applied en masse to countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, at a time when they were trying to advance a New International Economic Order (NIEO) to replace an existing international system built on colonialism and capitalism. The product of the Fund's 'silent revolution', which its own chief economist likened to "financial colonialism," pushes poorer countries into a spiral of indebtedness and poverty—a lack of capital, much of it due to colonial theft, leads countries into short-term balance of payments debt, and then, at the direction of the IMF, they cut public spending on critical services to prioritize debt payments to rich bondholders. This is accompanied by the export of "cheapened" raw materials, the sale of public assets, and the borrowing of more money just to repay debts, all while the IMF severely undermines the ability of poorer countries to implement effective monetary and

fiscal policies. Spending on debt repayments consistently outpaces spending on public services including health and education—something which [did not change](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic. **Who is to blame, who profits?** Who must be held responsible for this crisis? A cursory glance at much of the coverage of debt across countries in Africa sees repeated mentions of "debt-trap diplomacy," with the principal perpetrator identified as China. Not only is the characterization of Chinese lending as a "trap" false, it obscures the reality of the present crisis—namely, as the dossier emphasizes, that the debt crisis on the continent has been mainly created by private creditors, a majority of whom are based out of rich countries like the US and the UK, through Eurobonds (or the issuance of bonds in US dollars and Euros). For instance, shortly after Zambia obtained its first sovereign credit rating in 2011, it issued two Eurobonds in 2012 and 2014. Within three years, Zambia's external debt soared by 300%. Between 2010 and 2020, the stock of Eurobond debt of countries in 'sub-Saharan' Africa had shot up by 322%, far exceeding debts incurred from multilateral and bilateral (other countries) sources. Africa's total Eurobond debt in 2020 stood at US\$135 billion. This in turn also exposes the failures of existing mechanisms to address the debt crisis, including the G20's Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) and the Common Framework for Debt Treatments. The DSSI expired in 2021 with little success, given that it only applied to official multilateral and bilateral creditors. The Common Framework is plagued by similar problems, including an emphasis on official credit, all of which works against providing urgent debt relief, or even restructuring. While countries have been forced to make brutal cuts to public spending, private lenders have [stood](#) to make up to 250% in profits. **Building emancipatory alternatives for the Third World**



(Photo: International Monetary Fund). A dossier by the Tricontinental Institute for Social Research examines the role of the IMF and other institutions in perpetuating a "permanent debt crisis" in Africa and, broadly, the Global South, outlining ways to free countries from this neocolonial trap

Countries across the Global South are in the midst of fiscal crises. While the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent global supply chain disruptions over the past year have exacerbated these conditions, they are "fundamentally a result of an unsustainable build-up of sovereign debt in the last decade, fuelled by cheap credit from Western economies and encouraged by international financial institutions," argues the Collective on African Political Economy (CAPE). As desperate countries continue to turn to the IMF, claims that the institution has in any way reformed away from austerity do not hold up to scrutiny. Even when the IMF claims to be protecting populations through what it calls 'Social Spending Floors', [analysis](#) shows that for every \$1 that governments were told to keep for social spending, the IMF directed them to cut \$4 from the state budgets. How is it that countries approach the IMF time and again and nothing changes? "The reason is that IMF assistance has never confronted the structural factors that have continued to consign many countries to the ranks of the poor," CAPE emphasizes. "The IMF, as the archetypical Northern institution, is duty bound to maintain and entrench this status quo," the development of the North at the cost of the underdevelopment of the South, as articulated by revolutionary thinkers such as Walter Rodney. Blaming economic crises on government corruption and mismanagement in the Global South—which may not be entirely

untrue—also tends to be rooted in colonial tropes that open up poorer countries to forms of intervention not seen in the Global North, where such problems are similarly prevalent. Meanwhile, the "IMF conditionality rarely confronts the fact that state capacity and autonomy have been eroded in Africa largely as a result of the tax dodging practices of transnational corporations," CAPE highlights. All of this points to the urgent need to develop alternative, "emancipatory" frameworks and institutions for the Third World. Some crucial immediate steps have been presented in '[A Plan to Save the Planet](#)', including the invalidation of historical debts, the seizure of assets held in illicit tax havens, the building of progressive tax codes including taxes on wealth and inheritance, reforming domestic banking structures, and curbing speculative financial activity. At the international level, this involves measures to prevent capital flight, a robust wealth tax collection system, pro-labor distribution policies, and the prevention of dollarization, which as CAPE has highlighted, acts as a "strong lever of IMF conditionality." Building alternatives also includes investments and financing from institutions that do not impose structural adjustment, local currency central bank swap arrangements, ceilings on interest rates charged by commercial and multilateral lenders, and advancing regional trade and reconciliation mechanisms.



## On World Press Freedom Day, Progressives Draw Attention To Assange And Other Journalists Under Attack

On Wednesday, May 3, progressive groups marked World Press Freedom Day by drawing attention to the continued hounding of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange. In a panel discussion held by the Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research, in collaboration with the International Peoples' Assembly and Peoples Dispatch, senior independent journalists spoke on why Assange continues to be punished and imprisoned for his reporting. The panel discussed the topic *"Telling The Truth Is a Crime: Why Julian Assange and Other Brave Journalists under Attack"* and consisted of Indian civil rights activist and journalist Teesta Setalvad and senior journalist Prabir Purkayastha. Teesta Setalvad is renowned for her more than two-decade long struggle to secure justice for the victims of the 2002 sectarian violence in Gujarat and for founding and leading Sabrang, an independent progressive platform known for its work against the Hindu right-wing in India. Purkayastha, on the other hand, has worked for decades not only as an independent journalist but also as a prominent figure in India's people's science movement, peace and anti-imperialist movements, and also for founding the progressive online

media platform *NewsClick* in 2009, being one of the earliest spaces for digital journalism in India. In her opening remarks, while paying her tribute to Julian Assange and his continued struggle, Setalvad noted that "whatever we can do is (raise) our voices to ensure not just his release from incarceration, but the stigmatization of the journalism he represented ... we need to raise our voice against that." She pointed out that press freedom should not merely be seen as just an abstract notion but needs to be viewed in the context of structural, socio-economic and political crises that are prevalent in today's world. Setalvad talked about how instead of focusing on various rankings about press freedom, there is need to talk about how capitalism is affecting journalism and journalists everywhere. "Our world of journalism in India took a huge hit, when you saw this huge structural change take place (referring to the neoliberal onslaught in the 1990s), which impacted ownership of the media, which impacted security of individual journalists and collectives of journalists working in the media, and through that attack has actually affected the quality of journalism itself." "And unless we are able to see this connection, I think we will just be talking about rankings," she added. Speaking about the effects of growing monopolies in the media, which has continued

in the digital age as well, Prabir Purkayastha pointed out that "Julian Assange was one of the first persons to think that in this age how are you able to get information and disseminate to a much large body, even for a small organization... even things that states do not want to go public." Talking about how Wikileaks has made large troves of data on war crimes and the US diplomatic cables easily accessible to everyone, Purkayastha stated that "Julian has done something which nobody thought was possible: to create an information base deep down inside the states." He further noted that Assange's work also allowed us "to realize that deep strikes of this kind are possible. Because of the centralization of information ... also allows for a huge information infrastructure that the states are creating open to deep strikes of the kind that Chelsea Manning did or which was done later on by Snowden." Purkayastha said that despite the massive and pervasive intelligence capabilities of the state, it is increasingly easier today to disclose state secrets. He lauded Assange's political vision to perceive this and also his technological acumen to set up WikiLeaks, a platform that continues to be difficult for states to shut down. He claimed that it was tragic for several journalists and mainstream media organizations everywhere to have spent a good part of the past 11 years

of Assange's persecution disowning him, and expressed hope that things will change for the better. "I hope the media, particularly those organizations like *The Guardian* and *New York Times*, who benefited from his journalism and later abandoned him saying he's not a journalist, would at least now show the courage," Purkayastha said. "And the journalist community at large will accept that this has been one of the biggest travesties of justice that we have Julian Assange who has been condemned ... of not being a journalist, therefore he does not deserve freedom of speech." Talking about the state of whistleblowers, journalists, and civil rights activists in India, Setalvad emphasized the difficulty in instituting any meaningful or comprehensive legal framework to protect them. She argued that while Assange's case displays a brazen use of the entire state apparatus against one person, smaller instances of attack on individual journalists and activists are far more prevalent, both from state and non-state actors. "What are we asking for?" Setalvad said. "We are asking for certain protection, and that protection can only come if there's a consensus, and that consensus can only come if ... movements start taking interests in some of these issues." The World Press Freedom Day began as a global effort to commemorate the historic Windhoek Declaration, passed by a group of African journalists on May 3, 1991 in Windhoek, Namibia. The declaration was the first of its kind



Supporters of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange outside the Central Criminal Court, in London, Britain, January 4, 2021, when Assange was first declared unfit for extradition. (Photo: Henry Nicholls/Reuters). In a Press Freedom Day panel discussion, progressive journalists sought to highlight the ongoing persecution of the WikiLeaks founder and the many ways in which journalists are under attack the world over

and was followed by similar declarations made in Alma-Ata, Sana'a, and Santiago, outlining the principles of press freedoms in various regions. While commemorations of Press Freedom Day are often only limited to discourses on state interference in the media, the Windhoek Declaration also spoke about the press being independent of "economic control" and advocated for a pluralistic press sans monopolies and unionization of journalists with due legal and political recognition. The panel chose to highlight Assange as he continues to remain imprisoned without charge in a high-security prison in Belmarsh, UK, awaiting a final verdict on his extradition to the US. If extradited, Assange will face multiple charges of espionage and computer hacking. The charges carry a combined maximum prison sentence of 175 years. Assange is the first journalist or publisher to be prosecuted under the infamous Espionage Act.

Source -- [Peoples Dispatch](#)

## More US Activists Face Harassment From Authorities Upon Return From Cuba



Members of the NNOC May Day Brigade. Photo: NNOC. Days after members of a youth delegation were detained when returning to the US from Cuba, another batch of activists who were also on the island as part of the May Day Brigade, faced similar harassment

Several members of the US-based National Network on Cuba (NNOC) who had participated in the May Day Brigade, were last Sunday detained and harassed by

US Customs and Border Patrol upon arrival to the United States from Cuba. The NNOC released a [public statement](#) on the evening of May 7, emphasizing that "In face of persecution, we reaffirm our right to travel to Cuba. Solidarity is not a crime – the US blockade is!" They added that several of the people who were detained by CBP also had their electronics seized and some were even threatened with jail time. The harassment of their brigade

members comes just days after over a dozen members of the International Peoples' Assembly delegation to Cuba [were similarly detained and questioned](#) at the Miami International Airport and the Newark Liberty International Airport. Other organizations that traveled to Cuba for the May Day activities such as LA US Hands Off Cuba, faced similar treatment by border officials. NNOC in its statement called this "an onslaught against Cuba solidarity activism." Shaquille

Fontenot, NNOC Co-Chair, told *Peoples Dispatch*, "It's jarring to be immediately subjected to violence as soon as you step foot in a country that claims to support personal freedoms. Despite being subjected to increased state violence and repression, we continue to stand unwaveringly in support of the Cuban people, and we stand in everlasting solidarity with those who are fighting against the criminal US economic blockade." The solidarity group highlighted that despite harassment from

authorities and threat of jail time, their trip was "completely licensed and legal." They affirmed that the attitude of US government officials "is a reminder of why our work is so important. United together, we'll never back down! Join us in calling on Biden to LIFT the Blockade, take Cuba OFF the list of "State Sponsors of Terrorism," and give Guantánamo BACK to Cuba."

## 19 NDC Candidates Going Unopposed Whose Win Is Guaranteed In NDC Primaries

**A**s the opposition National Democratic Congress gears up for its May 13, 2023, presidential and parliamentary primaries, some candidates have little to nothing to stress about in terms of competition. These are candidates whose win is most certainly guaranteed as they are either running unopposed, there are however expected to be declared winners in lieu of being sole aspirants.

**GhanaWeb lists some candidates with a guaranteed possibility of emerging winners in Saturday's contest:**

### Haruna Iddrisu

Former Minority Leader of the current parliament of Ghana, Haruna Iddrisu is set for a sixth consecutive term in parliament having joined the contest for the NDC's parliamentary ticket for the Tamale South Constituency ahead of the 2024 general election. With a rich history and political influence acquired as a result of his long years in the NDC and parliament, Haruna is expected to shake off competition from his only contender, Bawa Abdul Fatawu on Saturday. For the MP who has spent almost 19 years in parliament, he is one of only few incumbent MPs whose win is guaranteed beyond their party's parliamentary primaries.

### Clement Apaak

Dr Clement Apaak is currently in his second term as Member of Parliament for Builsa South in the Upper East Region. His contesting the NDC primaries with no opposition.

### Lydia Lamisi Akanvariba

Lydia Akanvariba is one of few female candidates guaranteed a win the NDC's upcoming primaries. She is a first-time MP representing the people of Tempene in the Upper East Region and is running unopposed.

### Isaac Adongo

Incumbent MP for Bolgatanga Central, Isaac Adongo has no opponent in Saturday's primaries.

He is MP for a second term and is seeking a third term to represent the constituency.

### Murtala Mohammed Ibrahim

Ibrahim Murtala Mohammed is seeking a third term as MP for Tamale Central after making a come back to the house in 2020 having lost the seat after his first term.

He is unopposed in the upcoming primaries.

### Alhassan Sayibu Suhuyini

Tamale North MP, Alhassan Sayibu Suhuyini goes into Saturday's internal party polls as unopposed.

He is currently serving his second consecutive term as MP for the area.

### Daniel Nsala Wakpal

Daniel Wakpal is the incumbent MP for Kpandai Constituency.

The first term MP is seeking to extend his stay in parliament and is guaranteed the NDC's parliamentary ticket going into the contest unopposed.

### Gizella Akushika Tetteh-Agbotui

She will have to worry about the 2024 election because she is contesting the NDC's upcoming primaries unopposed.

She first won the Awutu West Constituency seat in 2020 and is seeking a second term.

### Cassiel Ato Forson

Former Deputy Minister for Finance, Dr Cassiel Ato Forson is currently a major force in the NDC.

The current minority leader is in his fourth term and is running unopposed in the primaries for the NDC ticket in the Ejumako Enyan Esiam Constituency.

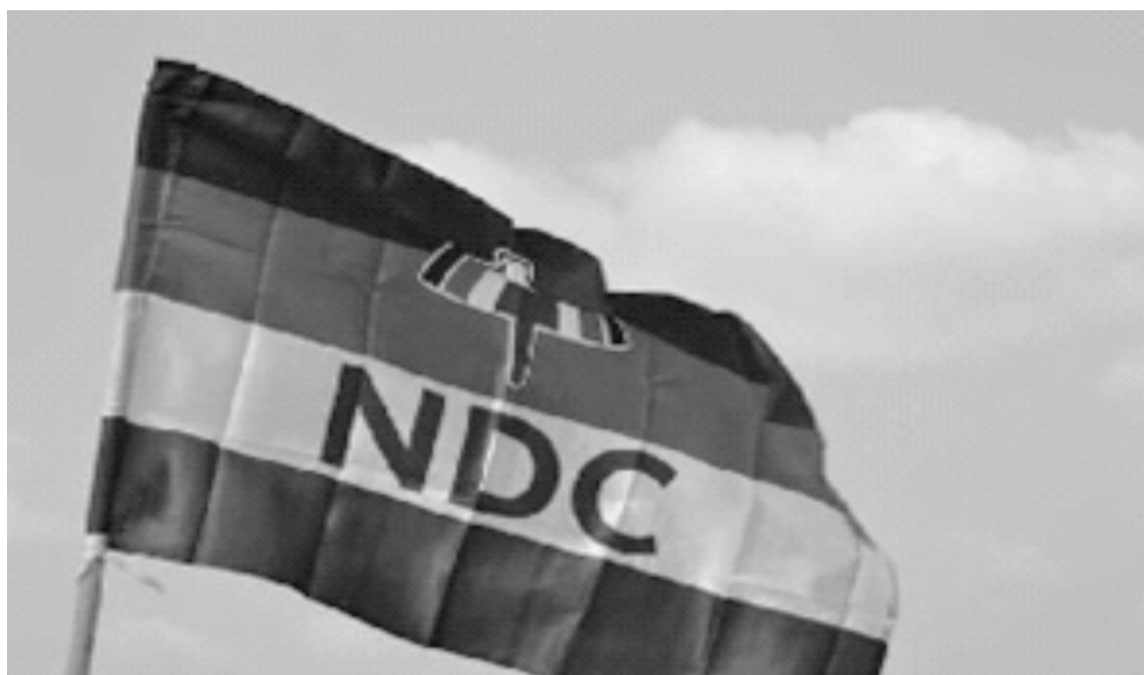
### Daniel Ohene Darko

Daniel Ohene Darko is the incumbent MP for Denkyira West Constituency.

The first term MP is contesting the NDC primaries unopposed.

### Emilia Ankomah

Former Municipal Chief



*The NDC goes to the polls on May 13, 2023*

Executive for Denkyira East, Emilia Ankomah is once again making an attempt at entering parliament having previously failed on more than one occasion.

The former MCE was the NDC's parliamentary candidate for Upper Denkyira East in 2016 and 2020 and will go in the party's race unopposed.

### Nurien Shaibu Migyimah

Shaibu Nurien is getting a free pass to contest the 2024 parliamentary election on the ticket of the NDC in one of the constituencies held by the ruling New Patriotic Party. The Assin Central seat has been under the belt of Kennedy Ohene Agyapong, who is now moving on to contest for the NPP's presidential primaries, for five consecutive parliamentary terms.

### Emmanuel Armah Kofi-Buah

Member of Parliament for Ellembelle Constituency, Emmanuel Armah Kofi Buah is going into the NDC's primaries unopposed.

The current deputy minority leader is doing his fourth term in parliament and is hoping to extend it to a fifth.

### Robert Wisdom Cudjoe

Robert Wisdom Cudjoe is a first term Member of Parliament for Prestea Huni Valley Constituency.

He gets a free pass in the upcoming NDC contest with no opponent to contend with.

### Isaac Adjei Mensah

Isaac Adjei Mensah has been elected MP for Wassa East Constituency three consecutive times on the ticket of the NDC.

He will be unopposed on Saturday.

### Eric Afful

Eric Afful has been in parliament on the NDC's ticket since 2012 and is seeking to extend his stay in 2024.

He will be running unopposed for the NDC's Amenfi West parliamentary ticket.

### Dr Emmanuel Okumi

### Andoh

**Dr Emmanuel Okumi Andoh run for the Ahanta West parliamentary seat on the ticket of the NDC in 2020.**

He is making another attempt again after suffering a defeat in the 2020 general election. His bid to become the NDC parliamentary candidate is without contest.

### [Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa](#)

[Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa](#) was one of the youngest people to enter the parliament of Ghana in 2012.

After three consecutive terms, the now matured MP is going into the 2023 parliamentary primaries of the NDC in the North Tongu Constituency unopposed.

### Charles Agbeve

Charles Agbeve is a second-term MP for Agotime-Ziope Constituency in the Volta Region

He is likely to achieve his third term in parliament with his bid to represent the NDC receiving no contest.

### Ashanti Region

In the Ashanti Region which, a stronghold of the ruling New Patriotic Party, a number of candidates will be running unopposed in Saturday's parliamentary primaries.

Their constituencies are mostly safe seats of the NPP thereby limiting their chances in the general elections.

The candidates going unopposed are Samuel Aboagye who will run for the Obuasi East Constituency, Joseph Azumah for Akrofuom and Samuel Prempeh Jnr for Bekwai.

The rest are Kwasi Amankwah who will contest the Kumawu by-election, Shamudeen Mohammed Kamil for Old Tafo and Hamzah Swallah in Manhyia North.

**Source -- GhanaWeb**