

CECILIA DAPAAH

Prof Enoch Antwi Rubbishes \$800,000 Funeral Donation Claim



Professor Enoch Opoku Antwi



Cecilia Abena Dapaah, former Minister for Sanitation

By Laud Nartey

Professor Enoch Opoku Antwi, a Public Policy Analyst and Governance Expert has slammed persons claiming that the large amount of dollars that the former Minister of Sanitation and Water Resources, Cecilia Abena Dapaah kept in her home was a donation from funerals. According to Prof Antwi persons making such a claim should credit Ghanaians with some level of

intelligence because no funeral ceremony can generate that amount. The minister is currently facing accusations of illegally acquired wealth following the alleged theft of funds amounting to US\$1 million, €300,000, and 350,000 Ghana cedis, from her private residence. Even before the dust could settle by way of the Office of Special Prosecutor (OSP) concluding

investigations into the source of the funds, some person have begun attributing the stolen cash to funeral donation. But Prof Antwi rejects such claims. Speaking on Accra based TV3 on Wednesday he said, "What is humane about this? Look at the level of poverty going on in our system and if a minister is sitting on this kind of money, instead of the public condemning it people

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Glimpses Of An Endgame In Ukraine

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Moncada: SMG Hails Cuba's Efforts To Build Just Society Against Imperialism



Miguel Diaz Canel, Cuban President

The Socialist Movement of Ghana (SMG) has praised the Cuban people's resistance against imperialism and their efforts to build a just society. In a statement on the 70th anniversary of

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Coalition Of Ghanaians Without Ghana Card Blasts NIA Over Alleged Selective Registration

...Rejects EC's Insistence On Sole Use Of Ghana Card for 2024

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The INSIGHT

EDITORIAL

THIS IS WORRYING!

Recent happenings in the state of Palestine regarding the annexation of lands and the committal of atrocities by Israeli forces to say the least is highly repugnant.

Never a day passes without one form of violence or assault being perpetuated by Israel against the people of Palestine.

These acts including seizure of Palestinian lands have been carried out with the highest level of impunity, apparently due to the support provided by America.

Across the West Bank and other occupied territories, there have been protests over plans by Israel to annex more of such lands.

Clearly, this show of impunity and disregard for international law is highly condemnable and unacceptable.

There is no denying the fact that the Israeli authorities' constant destruction of Palestinian homes in Occupied West Bank for new Jewish settlement has been done with the full support of the United States, in spite of persistent international condemnation of such lawless and dastardly acts. Apart from the West Bank's Area C, Gaza has also been turned into a huge killing field as Israel has over the years committed acts of genocide with impunity.

Nobody has been spared the atrocities of the Zionist state which has killed women and children, the old and the young, abled and bodied persons and people with disability.

We firmly believe that Israel is emboldened to carry out these atrocities because of the support it receives from the US and its surrogates around the world.

Undoubtedly, what the world expect to see is the easing of tension and an end to the brutalities in Palestine.

Call The Next Witness Or Take The Stand - Court Orders Dr. Opuni

The trial involving former Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), Dr.

Stephen Kwabena Opuni, and two others, accused of causing financial loss of over GH¢271 million to the state, is set to proceed with either Dr. Opuni or his next available witness in the witness box on July 27.

This follows a ruling made by Justice Aboagye Tandoh, the newly assigned judge taking over the case that has been ongoing since 2018, Graphiconline.com.gh reports. Justice Tandoh made the ruling on Wednesday after adopting the record of proceedings based on an order from the Court of Appeal earlier this year.

During the proceedings, Dr. Opuni's lawyer, Samuel Cudjoe, explained that their seventh witness, expected for cross-examination, had traveled to England to attend his son's graduation, making it impossible for them to present the witness.

However, the state, represented by Principal State Attorney Stella Ohene Appiah, argued that Dr. Opuni had indicated his intention to call eight witnesses, including himself.

Therefore, the next available witness should take the stand to prevent further delays.

In his ruling, Justice Tandoh emphasized that the trial had already been ongoing for several years, and each party should have access to the record of proceedings. He directed all parties to apply for the record of proceedings before proceeding with the trial.

"The adoption is the sole duty of the court and they have been duly adopted," Justice Tandoh stated. Regarding the unavailability of the seventh defense witness, the judge



Dr. Stephen Kwabena Opuni

noted that there was no evidence to determine whether the witness would be available in the jurisdiction anytime soon. He advised all parties to prepare their witnesses in advance to ensure an effective and efficient trial.

"Can we, therefore, suspend to await the witness whose availability is uncertain because counsel has not made any contact with him yet, the answer is in the negative." The trial will continue with either Dr. Opuni or the next available witness on Thursday, July 27, 2023.

Further dates for the cross-examination of the seventh defense witness will be given on Monday, July 31, 2023.

THE INSIGHT

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CECILIA DAPAAH

Prof Enoch Antwi Rubbishes \$800,000 Funeral Donation Claim



PROFESSOR ENOCH UPOKU ANTIWI

from front page



Cecilia Abena Dapaah, former Minister for Sanitation

are rather saying it is a donation from funerals. We have done a lot of funerals in this country, funerals do not generate that kind of money.

"So anybody saying that, I don't know what he thinks about Ghanaians. That is a big insult."

He had earlier said that whether in a private or public enterprise, a person cannot keep such an amount of money at home.

He believed that keeping such an amount of money at home put the lives of the person's family members who live in the same house in danger.

"Whether private or public you cannot keep it at home," he said on the Key Points on TV3 last Saturday, July 22.

He added "You put your entire household in danger. If the money is not legitimate that is when people will keep it in the house and we need to investigate the source of the money."

Madam Abena Dapaah tendered her resignation on Saturday, July 22, barely 24 hours after the public discourse of her stolen cash. In her resignation, Madam Abena Dapaah assured of her availability and cooperation with all state agencies to look into her matter, which she

concedes has become a "hindrance" to the government at this "crucial" time.

"I have no doubt that at the end of the processes it will be established that I have conducted myself with integrity during my period in public service and I will be fully exonerated from all the allegations," she further stated in her resignation letter.

She was however arrested by the Office of the Special Prosecutor on Monday, July 25 in connection with the money in her house. Meanwhile, Kwabena Owusu Sekyere, the Ahafo Regional Chairman of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), has discouraged party members from defending the embattled former Minister of Sanitation and Water Resources, Cecilia Abena Dapaah.

According to him the minister who is currently facing accusations of illegally acquired wealth following the alleged theft of funds amounting to US\$1 million, €300,000, and 350,000 Ghana cedis, from her private residence should carry her own cross.

Speaking in an interview on Wontumi TV on Tuesday, he emphasized that the actions of the former minister was unacceptable, and it was crucial for party members not to come to her defense.

He stressed that attempting to defend such actions in a political context would only result in making fools of themselves and could potentially damage the party's reputation.

He further expressed appreciation to President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo over what he referred to as swift action in response to the situation. He maintained that the

president had indeed dismissed Cecilia Abena Dapaah from her ministerial position.

"You see when issues of political nature come up and you as a politician you try to defend the issue to the extreme, if you don't take care, you that you are defending the issue you will look like a fool. You will look like a fool."

On whether the minister resigned or was sacked, he alleged: "The president sacked her or she resigned? They sacked her. You see, he doesn't tolerate certain things as a leader, for me, I know that the woman was sacked by the president

because it has to do with two things; one, your own government is always admonishing everyone having dollars to put it in the bank because of the Cedi's instability to boost the economy.

"So, why will a whole sector minister have such money in her home? There are certain behaviors it is like a pregnancy no matter what it will definitely come out.

"Now her disgrace has affected all of us as NPP, what my sister did, she didn't do well, so no party member should try and defend her because it is wrong, and that is why the president has sacked her."

Presidential Staffer Identified As Victim Of High-Value Robbery Of US\$114K, £800

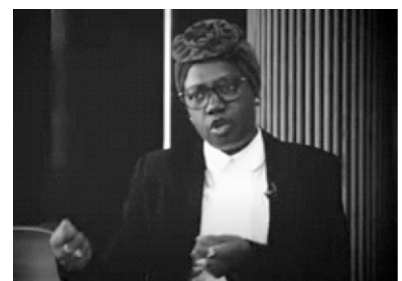
The identity of the victim involved in a high-value robbery has been revealed as Hamida Nuhu, an assistant secretary (legal and administration) in the Office of the President.

The incident took place at her Premier Place home in the Airport Residential area of Accra, where she was reportedly held at gunpoint and robbed of significant sums of money.

The robbery involved the theft of US\$114,500, £800, GH¢50,000, and €3,000 from a trunk located inside her lawyer's closet. Additionally, during the incident, Lawyer Hamida Nuhu was held at gunpoint and robbed of an additional GH¢2,000.00, US\$800, and

various pieces of jewelry. In connection with the robbery, eight individuals have been apprehended and presented before an Accra Circuit Court. The accused persons, including Richmond Tetteh (alias Metiti), Mawuli Helets (aka Mosquito), David Kokvina, Joseph Nii Amu Offei (alias Gaza, aka Hero), Malik Alhassan (alias Goliath @ Ababe), Dennis Adu Ninson (alias NAM1), Mustapha Mumuni (alias Starboy), and Zuberu Mustapha (alias One Corner), are facing charges of conspiracy to commit a crime and robbery.

During the trial, it was revealed that before the robbery, two of the accused, Mustapha



Lawyer Hamida Nuhu, assistant secretary (legal and administration) in the Office of the President

Mumuni and Zuberu Mustapha, allegedly gave a substance, suspected to be cocaine, to another accused, Malik Alhassan, to enhance his energy levels for the robbery.

As the trial continues, some of the accused have been granted bail while others remain in police custody.

The case is set to reconvene on July 31, 2023.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORT

Compiled By Peoples Dispatch

Russia-Africa Summit May Discuss Corridor To Transport Grain And Fertilizers

The two-day Russia-Africa summit has started in the Russian city of St. Petersburg. On Thursday, July 27 at least 49 countries confirmed their participation, along with the heads of major regional organizations such as the African Union (AU), TASS [reported](#).

Russia said that at least 17 African heads of state would take part in the summit which was inaugurated by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

There are a parallel Russia-Africa Economic and Humanitarian Forum meeting that have been attended by business heads, civil society members, academics, and others. The summit is organized with the motto "for peace, security and development" and is expected to pitch for a new world order with "multipolarity and equality of all independent states," Putin aide Yuri Ushakov [told the press](#) on Tuesday.

In a welcome message to summit participants on Wednesday, Putin

said that Russia supports Africa which is "asserting itself more and more confidently as one of the poles of the emerging multipolar world" and the aspiration of African countries "to secure socioeconomic stability and advancement" for themselves.

"We remain committed to assisting our African partners in every possible way to help them strengthen their national and cultural sovereignty, to play a more active role in resolving regional and global challenges," he added.

Russia [claimed](#) that the high participation of African countries in the summit despite Western pressure on individual countries shows their growing assertiveness, defiance, and desire to maintain their independence.

The first Russia-Africa summit was organized in Sochi in October 2019.

Africa's food sovereignty is the central agenda

Most of the African countries, which are heavily dependent on the import of fertilizers and food grains from Russia, are facing a severe food crisis due to rising prices. While disruptions in global supply chains due to [COVID-19](#) is considered a significant factor, the rising prices are also the result of the war in Ukraine and the sanctions imposed by the West on Russia.

The summit is set to discuss ways to ensure the [food sovereignty](#) of African countries and will try to finalize the establishment of a new grain deal fitting their needs, *Sputnik* reported. The summit will also discuss establishing a corridor between Russia and Africa for the supply of Russian grain and fertilizers.

Russia is facing [criticism](#) from the West after it announced the termination of the grain deal signed with Ukraine in July last year. The deal, mediated by the UN and



(Photo: Vladimir Smirnov/TASS). At least 49 African countries are taking part in the Russia-Africa summit that began in St. Petersburg on July 27. The food sovereignty of African countries is likely to be high on the agenda and the summit will try to finalize the establishment of a new grain deal fitting their needs

Turkey, allowed Ukrainian grain to leave through the Black Sea in an effort to bring global food prices under control and protect the interests of the African countries. Russia withdrew from the deal earlier this month claiming that none of its conditions were met by the West. Russia also [questioned](#) the motive behind the deal, claiming that only 3% of all grain exported under it went to poorer countries in Africa and elsewhere while the rest went to rich and middle income countries in Europe and Asia.

The summit will also focus on ways to address issues like poverty,

modernization of the workforce, and climate change. Russia has proposed a 3-year action plan on these and other priority areas. The summit will also finalize agreements on counter-terrorism, non-deployment of weapons in space, and international security. In the run-up to the summit, Putin met with Ethiopian and Egyptian leaders, as well as the newly appointed head of the BRICS New Development Bank, Dilma Rousseff, in St. Petersburg on Wednesday

Doctors Without Borders Call Israel's Forceful Eviction Of Palestinians From Masafer Yatta A War Crime



Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), or Doctors without Borders, on Wednesday termed as a war crime the continued attempts of the Israeli occupation to forcefully displace hundreds of Palestinian residents from Masafer Yatta in the southern occupied West Bank. It asked the international community to intervene to prevent this.

Israeli occupation forces, who want to build a firing range for military training in the area, have been using various oppressive measures to displace the 1,100 Palestinians living in over a dozen villages in the

area for decades now.

Speaking at a press conference in Jordan's capital Amman, MSF head of mission in Palestine, David Cantero Perez, said that "about 1,100 residents of Masafer Yatta live in danger of forced displacement, which constitutes a violation of international humanitarian law that Israel must respect, and constitutes a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and thus becomes a war crime," Palestinian *Wafa* news agency [reported](#).

Enass Abu Khalaf, head of communication at MSF for the MENA region, emphasized that the amount of pressure applied by the Israeli occupation to force the Palestinians to leave the area has had a lasting impact on their

physical and mental health.

"Palestinians living in Masafer Yatta and its vicinity face great challenges, such as living in constant fear of displacement, the demolition of their homes, deprivation of water, restriction on their movements, and facing settler violence," Khalaf said. Perez also noted that "the residents of Masafer Yatta are subjected to all forms of violence. Soldiers enter villages at night, enforce curfews and other movement restrictions, conduct military training near living areas, confiscate vehicles, and demolish homes" in order to make life unbearable for Palestinians.

A large number of Palestinian

were already displaced from the area in 1999, but those remaining filed a case in the Israeli judiciary which revoked the evictions.

However, Israeli forces started demolishing schools, health centers, and other civilian infrastructure in the area following a [May 2022 ruling](#) of the Israeli Supreme Court which dismissed the legal petition filed by the Palestinian residents and cleared the way for Israeli attempts to build a firing range.

Palestinians and human rights groups have called the Israeli assaults in Masafer Yatta ethnic cleansing and part of its agenda to expropriate the occupied

West Bank.

MSF has published [reports](#) detailing the mental and physical health issues that Palestinians in Masafer Yatta are experiencing due to the Israeli tactics and has called for an immediate halt to all attempts to displace them. Israeli occupation has used similar methods to displace a large number of Palestinians from their lands and homes in different parts of the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem. The confiscated Palestinian lands have been used to build illegal settlements or other structures, in complete violation of international laws related to occupation.

Moncada: SMG Hails Cuba's Efforts To Build Just Society Against Imperialism

from front page

the Moncada attack, the SMG called for the immediate lifting of illegitimate sanctions on Cuba whilst proclaiming its commitment to revolutionary internationalism. We support Cuba's example as it serves as a beacon for the path to a just and democratic society.

This is the full statement by the SMG;

The Socialist Movement of Ghana (SMG) has praised the Cuban people's resistance against imperialism and their efforts to build a just society. In a statement on the 70th anniversary of the Moncada attack, the SMG called for the immediate lifting of illegitimate sanctions on Cuba whilst proclaiming its commitment to revolutionary internationalism. We support Cuba's example as it serves as a beacon for the path to a just and democratic society.

This is the full statement by the SMG;

SOCIALIST MOVEMENT OF GHANA (SMG)

26-07-2023

STATEMENT ON THE SEVENTY-ANNIVERSARY OF THE MONCADA ATTACK

The Moncada barracks in Santiago de Cuba came under attack on July 26, 1953, by a group of 136 men and women commanded by Fidel Castro. This attack would change the direction and destiny of the Cuban people and the world. They were inspired by a desire to establish a just, humane, and dignified society and repudiated Fulgencio Batista's decadent neo-colonial rule.

Despite failing in its immediate goal, the attack precipitated a chain of events that culminated in the creation of the 26 July Movement (M-26), a vanguard devoted to mobilizing the Cuban people around a revolutionary program and clear about its revolutionary goal. This will result in the triumph of the Cuban revolution. The M-26 fought against American colonial dominance over Cuba and lost one battle but won the war for self-determination and liberation from oppression.

On this historic day, the

Socialist Movement of Ghana (SMG) joins forces with all anti-imperialist movements and forces committed to advancing human dignity to pay tribute to the unwavering Cuban Revolution. The M-26 occasion's symbolism provides us with guidance for our own efforts to transform Ghana and the world qualitatively. It teaches us the value of putting the masses at the centre of any societal transformation. It motivates and encourages us in our fight against the comprador and neocolonial elements in our society, whose sole goal is to enable the ongoing exploitation of our people and natural resources by foreign capital.

We recognize the immense significance of the Cuban Revolution, which is rooted in the values of international solidarity and an anti-capitalist mode of organizing the necessities of humanity such as food, cloth, shelter, and healthcare. The United



Miguel Diaz Canel, Cuban President

States of America and its allies have tried to isolate Cuba for more than 60 years through an economic blockade, but they have been unsuccessful. Cuban doctors and medical professionals have selflessly travelled to some of the most disadvantaged regions in the world, providing healthcare to those in need. As a result of Cuba's commitment to education, thousands of students from around the world have received training that will enable them to contribute to their national development. Cuba has over the years given vital help to other countries resisting oppression and imperialism,

providing medical care, educational opportunities, and military assistance. The SMG salutes the Cuban people's resistance against imperialism and their efforts to build a just society. On the 70th anniversary of the Moncada attack, the SMG calls for the immediate lifting of illegitimate sanctions on Cuba and proclaims its commitment to revolutionary internationalism. We support Cuba's example as it serves as a beacon for the path to a just and democratic society. Viva la Revolución Cubana! Signed
Nana Yaw Appiah-Kubi, Head, International Relations

The Government Must Not Collapse NIB And Sell It! – Omane Boamah

Fellow Ghanaians, The government must not collapse NIB and sell it!

Inform the Bank of Ghana and the NPP government to leave the National Investment Bank alone!

Hands off!

The Governor of the Bank of Ghana, Dr. Addison has been making pronouncements that are not well thought through. His (similar) unguided and reckless comments in the past led to a run on many of the banks the Akufo-Addo/Bawumia NPP government collapsed in their first term.

Per the origins of banking in

theory and in history, no bank can survive a bank run where numerous customers withdraw their money with high velocity because they think the bank may fail... But, Governor Addison is back in the ring in 2023 with similar anti-savings and anti-business punches. This time, the National Investment Bank is his target. Does he seek to instigate panic withdrawals again and a total run on NIB? Is he considering the new and additional job losses and investments?

Sit up Bank of Ghana! Rise up and fight for your



survival NIB workers, including your trades union! Ghanaians, let's stand up and save NIB!

Court Grants Suspended Nigerian Governor Emefiele N20m Bail

A Federal High Court sitting in Lagos, Southwest Nigeria has granted bail to Godwin Emefiele, suspended governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), in the sum of N20 million.

[Gatekeepers News](#) reports that the presiding judge, Nicholas Oweibo In a ruling said the



Godwin Emefiele

charges against Emefiele are bailable.

The bail was granted with one surety.

Earlier, Emefiele pleaded not guilty to the two-count charge bordering on alleged illegal possession of firearms preferred against him. This is a developing story.....

Moncada: The Dawn Of The Cuban Revolution

By Jose Ernesto Novaez Guerrero

July 26, 2023 marked the 70 years since the attack on the Moncada and Carlos Manuel de Céspedes barracks in eastern Cuba. The attack on Moncada is of fundamental importance in the history of Cuba. This is not only because of the military importance of the fortress — the second biggest after Columbia in Havana — but also because of the bloody repression carried out by the tyrannical regime, which took dozens of valuable lives from a generation that with its blood would change the destiny of the island. As a small tribute, it would be fitting to recall why the attack on Moncada was a turning point for the country. A generation arrived at Moncada that had matured physically and politically in the universe of the neocolonial pseudo-republic that prevailed in Cuba from 1902 to 1959. A political universe tainted by corruption, American interference, coups d'état and political caudillismo, intermingled, of course, with elements of the worst gangsterism, which ended not infrequently in violent shootouts in the streets of several cities of the country. This was a generation that had grown up in what Cuban revolutionary writer Rubén Martínez de Villena rightly called a “Yankee factory”. Their political mentors had been, in part, those who carried out the Revolution of 1930 against Gerardo Machado and had to deal with the betrayal of the government of the 100 days, the lonely death of the revolutionary Antonio Guiteras in El Morrillo, the rise of Batista from an obscure sergeant stenographer to the

“hard man” of US policy in Cuba and the threat, which Ambassador Enoch Crowder and his successors liked so much, of the gunboats as a permanent reminder of the political submission of the island.

It was a generation that was born and grew up during the governments of the Authentic Cuban Revolutionary Party, which capitalized on the figure of Ramón Grau San Martín and the popularity of his government of 100 days due to Guiteras' policies, but went on to plunge the country into a pit of corruption and violence.

This was a generation that was educated, for the most part, in public schools lacking fundamental resources, but with teachers who instilled in them a deep Martían (of José Martí) feeling of love for the homeland. That insurgent and anti-imperialist Martí who was saved by the best of the Cuban nation against the utilitarian, domestic, and comfortable image of Martí that the pseudo-republican governments tried to present. As they were taking their first steps in politics, those young people saw how Eduardo Chibás, leader of the Orthodox Party, whose slogan was “Shame against money” and embodied the yearning for redemption of an entire people, committed suicide on air after a heated address on the radio. They also saw how the obscure sergeant stenographer, already a general and former president, executed his third coup d'état in March 1952, setting a sad record in the country's history.

This political experience is what fed these young people. But they were not romantics, they were revolutionaries. They had a program of action, which would later go down in



Commemoration of July 26. Photo: Juvenel Balán. On the 70th anniversary of the attack on Moncada, Cuban intellectual José Ernesto Novaez Guerrero reflects on its historical significance.

history under the name of the Moncada Program, which contained the main political and social demands for change. Moncada is fundamental because it expressed the revolutionary radicalization of a generation, because it provided a clear minimum program, because it raised the figure of its leader Fidel Castro to a higher level, because it questioned the status quo not from discourse, but from action. Moncada marked the beginning of a new phase of revolutionary struggle that six years later would become the definitive triumph of an army of poorly armed guerrillas against a modern army, contravening all established dogmas and demonstrating that one's will also plays a role in history. An example being the story of the famous reunion in Cinco Palmas, after the catastrophe of Alegria de Pio, when a few survivors with only 7 rifles

looked each other in the face. They faced an army of 80,000 soldiers with tanks, airplanes, and warships. And Fidel, excited, exclaimed: “Now we have won the war! Revolutions are daughters of objective circumstances, but also of a powerful exercise of individual and collective will.”

The triumph of January '59, with the almost immediate execution of the program of social justice and sovereignty endowed Moncada with its full meaning. In a very short time, the backbone of domination over Cuba was broken. The foundation of the large estates and landholdings were destroyed and the people became the main protagonists of their history. The Revolution of the humble, by the humble and for the humble became flesh, bodies in the streets, a multitude determined to give their lives.

Moncada was the dawn of this offensive. 70 years later, the Cuban people are still masters of their fate, making mistakes and achieving successes, paying the price of standing up to imperialism. With Moncada, a different Cuba was born. One capable of leaping above its stature, a Cuba that renounces the neocolonial fate that had been assigned to it and that can take its solidarity to all continents. A country driven by the dream that Fidel summarized in a phrase of Martí: We will conquer all justice!

José Ernesto Novaez Guerrero is a writer, journalist, and researcher from Santa Clara, Cuba. He coordinates the Cuban chapter of the Network of Intellectuals and Artists in Defense of Humanity and he works with several publications inside and outside the island.

Glimpses Of An Endgame In Ukraine

By M. K. Bhadrakumar

The problem with the war in Ukraine is that it has been all smoke and mirrors. The Russian objectives of “demilitarization” and “de-Nazification” of Ukraine wore a surreal look. The Western narrative that the war is between Russia and Ukraine, where central issue is the Westphalian principle of national sovereignty, wore thin progressively leaving a void.

There is a realization today that the war is actually between Russia and NATO and that Ukraine had ceased to be a sovereign country since 2014 when the CIA and sister Western agencies — Germany, the UK, France, Sweden, etc.— installed a puppet regime in Kiev. The fog of war is lifting and the battle lines are becoming visible. At an authoritative level, a candid discussion is beginning as regards the endgame.

Certainly, Russian President Vladimir Putin's video conference with the permanent members of the Security Council in Moscow last Friday and his meeting with Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko in St. Petersburg on Sunday were defining moments. The two transcripts stand back-to-back and need to be read together. There is no question that the two events were carefully choreographed by the Kremlin officials and intended to convey multiple messages. Russia exudes confidence that it has achieved dominance on the battle front — having thrashed the Ukrainian military and Kiev's “counteroffensive” moving into the rear view mirror. But Moscow anticipates that the Biden administration may be having an even bigger war plan in mind. At the Security Council meeting, Putin “de-classified” the intelligence reports reaching Moscow from various sources indicative of moves to insert into Western Ukraine a Polish expeditionary force. Putin called it “a well-organized, equipped regular military unit to be used for operations” in Western Ukraine “for the subsequent occupation of these territories.”



Russian President Vladimir Putin (R) met Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko, St. Petersburg, July 23, 2023. President Vladimir Putin's video conference with the permanent members of the Security Council in Moscow last Friday and his meeting with Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko in St. Petersburg on Sunday provide glimpses into Russia's perspective at this point of time

Indeed, there is a long history of Polish revanchism. Putin, himself a keen student of history, talked at some length about it. He sounded stoical that if the Kiev authorities were to acquiesce with this Polish-American plan, “as traitors usually do, that's their business. We will not interfere.”

But, Putin added, “Belarus is part of the Union State, and launching an aggression against Belarus would mean launching an aggression against the Russian Federation. We will respond to that with all the resources available to us.” Putin warned that what is afoot “is an extremely dangerous game, and the authors of such plans should think about the consequences.”

On Sunday, at the meeting with Putin in St. Petersburg, Lukashenko picked up the thread of discussion. He briefed Putin about new Polish deployments close to Belarus border — just 40 km from Brest — and other preparations under way — the opening of a repair shop for Leopard tanks in Poland, activation of an airfield in Rzeszow on Ukrainian border (about 100 km from Lvov) for use of Americans transferring weaponry, mercenaries, etc.

Lukashenko said: “This is unacceptable to us. The alienation of western Ukraine, the dismemberment of Ukraine and the transfer of its lands to Poland are unacceptable. Should people in Western Ukraine ask us then we will provide support to them. I ask you [Putin] to discuss and think

about this issue. Naturally, I would like you to support us in this regard. If the need for such support arises, if Western Ukraine asks us for help, then we will provide assistance and support to people in western Ukraine. If this happens, we will support them in every possible way.” Lukashenko continued, “I am asking you to discuss this issue and think it through. Obviously, I would like you to support us in this regard. With this support, and if western Ukraine asks for this help, we will definitely provide assistance and support to the western population of Ukraine.” As could be expected, Putin didn't respond — at least, not publicly. Lukashenko characterized the Polish intervention as tantamount to the dismemberment of Ukraine and its “piece meal” absorption into NATO. Lukashenko was upfront: “This is supported by the Americans.” Interestingly, he also sought the [deployment of Wagner fighters](#) to counter the threat to Belarus. The bottom line is that Putin and Lukashenko held such a discussion publicly at all. Clearly, both spoke on the basis of intelligence inputs. They anticipate an inflection point ahead. It is one thing that the Russian people are well aware that their country is de facto fighting NATO in Ukraine. But it is an entirely different matter that the war may dramatically escalate to a war with Poland, a NATO army that the US regards as its most important partner in continental Europe. By dwelling at some length on Polish revanchism, which has a controversial record in modern

European history, Putin probably calculated that in Europe, including in Poland, there could be resistance to the machinations that might drag NATO into a continental war with Russia. Equally, Poland must be dithering too. According to *Politico*, Poland's military is about 150,000 strong, out of which 30,000 belong to a new territorial defense force who are “weekend soldiers who undergo 16 days of training followed up by refresher courses.”

Again, Poland's military might doesn't translate into political influence in Europe because the centrist forces that dominate the EU distrust Warsaw, which is controlled by the nationalist Law and Justice Party whose disregard for democratic norms and the rule of law has damaged Poland's reputation across the bloc. Above all, Poland has reason to be worried about the reliability of Washington. Going forward, Polish leadership's concern, paradoxically, will be that Donald Trump may not return as president in 2024. Despite the cooperation with the Pentagon over the Ukraine war, Poland's current leadership remains distrustful of President Joe Biden — much like Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban.

On balance, therefore, it stands to reason that the saber-rattling by Lukashenko and Putin's lesson on European history can be taken as more of a forewarning to the West with a view to modulating an endgame in Ukraine that is optimal for Russian interests. A dismemberment of Ukraine or an uncontrollable expansion of the war beyond its borders will not be in the Russian interests. But the Kremlin leadership will factor in the contingency that Washington's follies stemming out of its desperate need to save face from a humiliating defeat in the proxy war, may leave no choice to the Russian

forces but to cross the Dnieper and advance all the way to Poland's border to prevent an occupation of Western Ukraine by the so-called Lublin Triangle, a regional alliance with virulent anti-Russian orientation comprising Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine, formed in July 2020 and promoted by Washington.

Putin's back-to-back meetings in Moscow and St. Petersburg throw light on the Russian thinking as to three key elements of the endgame in Ukraine. First, Russia has no intentions of territorial conquest of Western Ukraine but will insist on having a say on how the new boundaries of the country and the future regime will look and act like, which means that an anti-Russian state will not be allowed.

Second, the Biden administration's plan to snatch victory out of the jaws of defeat in the war is a non-starter, as Russia will not hesitate to counter any continued attempt by the US and NATO to use Ukrainian territory as a springboard to wage a renewed proxy war, which means that Ukraine's “piece meal” absorption into NATO will remain a fantasy. Third, most important, the battle-hardened Russian army backed by a powerful defense industry and a robust economy will not hesitate to confront NATO member countries bordering Ukraine if they trespass on Russia's core interests, which means that Russia's core interests will not be held hostage to Article 5 of the NATO Charter.

MK Bhadrakumar is a former diplomat. He was India's ambassador to Uzbekistan and Turkey. The views are personal.

Coalition Of Ghanaians Without Ghana Card Blasts NIA Over Alleged Selective Registration

...Rejects EC's Insistence On Sole Use Of Ghana Card

The Coalition of Ghanaians without Ghana Card (CGWiGC) has lashed out at the National Identification Authority (NIA) over what it claims is the authority's selective registration process at its offices. The group at a press conference in Accra yesterday also slammed the Electoral Commission over its insistence to make the Ghana Card the sole proof of identity for the registration exercise ahead of the 2024 polls. This is their full statement;

PRESS CONFERENCE ADDRESSED BY THE CONVENER OF COALITION OF GHANAISANS WITHOUT GHANA CARD (CGWiGC), RICHARD KASU ON NIA'S SELECTIVE REGISTRATION OF GHANA CARD AT ACCRA INTERNATIONAL PRESS CENTER ON THURSDAY, 27TH JULY, 2023.

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen of the Press!

Let me welcome you on behalf of the Coalition of Ghanaians without Ghana Card (CGWiGC) and to also thank you most sincerely for coming on such a short notice.

Before we speak to the substantive issues, we wish to provide brief background information on the Coalition. The Coalition of Ghanaians without Ghana Card (CGWiGC) is an interventionist national advocacy group consisting of Ghanaian citizens, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Public Interest Groups, Students, Human Rights Advocates, and Academics among other identifiable groups with about 12,000 members and still counting. The Coalition is being used as a special purpose vehicle to advocate for Ghanaians without Ghana Card to get registered for the card and use same for the purposes for which the card has come into being.

Our VISION is a Ghana where there is justice, peace and respect for fundamental human rights as enshrined in the supreme constitution of the Republic and the MISSION is promoting participatory governance to addressing inequality, politics of exclusion, human right abuses, and electoral violence.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Press, this press briefing has been necessitated by two key issues including the NIA's selective registration of Ghana Card and the Electoral Commission's (EC) insistence on the use of Ghana Card as the sole source document for voter registration in Ghana.

To proceed, it is critically important to

provide undeniable facts on the ECOWAS Card otherwise known as Ghana Card including some statistics on its registration.

ECOWAS National Biometric Identity Card:

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in recognizing the need to facilitate free movement, and to restrict irregular border crossing in order to addressing security challenges, ECOWAS Member States at its Heads of State and Authority Meeting in Abuja, Nigeria in 2014 adopted the development of ECOWAS National Biometric Identity Card to be used as a travel document within the region. Ladies and Gentlemen of the Press, it is therefore important to clear the misinformation on the minds of many Ghanaians regarding the Ghana card. For the records, the ECOWAS Card being issued to Ghanaians is an ECOWAS Identity Card for purposes of travelling and could not be mistaken for a Ghana National ID Card. The hard fact is our beloved nation Ghana, Do not have any Ghana Card. What we have is an ECOWAS travel card.

It is also important to note that per our constitutional arrangements and best practices, it is Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration mandated by law to issue travel certificates and not National Identification Authority (NIA).

Statistics on Ghana Card by NIA:

From available information on the official website of the National Identification Authority (NIA), the following statistics gives a vivid account of data on Ghana Card as at 3RD MARCH, 2023;

Citizens Enrollment:

Total New Registrations: **17,385,548**

Total Cards Printed: **16,753,909**

Total Cards Issued: **16,111,846**

Non-Citizens Enrollment:

Total New Registrations: **170,176**

Card Replacement:

Total Number Of Cards Replaced: **244,331**

NIA's selective registration of Ghana Card:

Friends of the Press, the Coalition has become aware of ongoing premium registration of Ghana Card at various regional offices of the

National Identification Authority (NIA).

Our research revealed that, in a press release signed by one Dr. Abudu Abdul-Ganiyu Ag. Head, Corporate Affairs, the National Identification Authority (NIA) announced for the information of the general public that effective Monday, 19th December 2022; it will offer premium registration services at its Ashanti, Eastern, and Western Regional offices. According to him, these centers will operate in addition to the premium centers at the NIA Head Office and Calbank Head Office in Accra.

The said release indicated that the premium registration centers will offer the following feebased registration services:

1. First-time registration and issuance of a Ghana Card-Ghc 280;
2. Replacement of lost, missing, or damaged cards-Ghc 110;
3. Update of a personal record that requires the printing of a new card- Ghc 110.

We consider the commercialization of the Ghana card acquisition selective and a tool of marginalizing majority of Ghanaians from its national use and benefits thereof.

In fact, what is more worrying is that Ghanaians who even make efforts to move to regional offices of NIA seeking to register are unable to register with several excuses from officials including network challenges and lack of printing cards among other flimsy excuses.

The questions which obviously must be answered by the NIA are;

1. What becomes of the poor Ghanaian who does not have money to register for the card?
2. What becomes of the people leaving in the hitherlands and do not have access to regional capitals for the registration exercise?

EC's entrenched position to make



Ghana Card sole document for voter registration:

The Coalition, having thoroughly interrogated the issues and reforms being contemplated by the EC including its insistence on the use of Ghana Card as sole document for voter registration, would like to reiterate its displeasure against the unpopular position by the EC. We have taken note of the ongoing efforts by the Electoral Commission (EC) of Ghana to review the existing Constitutional Instrument (CI) particularly portions pertaining to registration of voters. As you may recall, Parliament on Friday, 31st March 2023, has by unanimous decision, rejected the Electoral Commission's (EC) Constitutional Instrument (CI), that sought to make the Ghana card sole registration document for voting.

Comparative Analysis Of 2020 Registered Voters Against Ghana Card Issued As At March, 2023:

Ladies and Gentlemen of Press, let us do some basic comparative analysis here;

The total number of registered voters in 2020 stood at **17,027,941** (<https://ec.gov.gh/>, Wikipedia, 2020 Ghanaian general election).

The total number of Ghana Cards issued by the NIA as at March, 2023 is **16,753,909** (<https://nia.gov.gh/>).

Assuming without admitting that the 2020 registered voter population of **17,027,941** is to be reregistered onto a new voter register using **ONLY** Ghana card as a source document, (17,027,941/16,753,909) a whopping **274,032** representing (1.6%) of potential voters shall be denied registration to participate in the elections for no fault of theirs.

As a coalition, championing participatory governance, we cannot sit unconcerned for any qualified

single Ghanaian to be disenfranchised in any public elections. Ghana and for that matter Ghanaians must resist the oppressors rule to administer injustice by using a so called ECOWAS Card as the sole sourced document for registration of voters.

Never again should any state institution be used directly or indirectly to exclude citizens from their fundamental rights including the right to vote as guaranteed under the 1992 supreme constitution of the Republic of Ghana. Friends of the Press, in line with the above, the Coalition of Ghanaians without Ghana Card is calling for the following reviews on behalf of the Ghanaian people;

1. That having taken cognizance of the numerous challenges regarding the acquisition of the Ghana Card, it must not be made as the sole source document for the voter registration card;
2. That the premium registration exercise ongoing by the NIA at a commercial value of Ghs280 should be stopped immediately due to the already burdened harsh economic challenges faced by Ghanaians;
3. That Government, NIA should make provisions to enable Ghanaians access Ghana card registration through a nationwide mass registration at various district levels and further decentralized the registration to electoral areas if possible;
4. That all-inclusive stakeholder discussions by NIA to make its services more progressive, accessible and affordable to all Ghanaians at all times;
5. That the 'Ghana Card' is not wholly Ghanaian but appropriately called the ECOWAS Card hence cannot be adopted as the national identity card of Ghanaians;

That the 'Ghana Card' is not wholly Ghanaian but appropriately called the ECOWAS Card hence cannot be adopted as the national identity card of Ghanaians;

Thank you for coming!

Long live Ghana!!

Long Live the Coalition!!!