

NIGER COUP

People's Movements Oppose West-Backed ECOWAS Military Intervention

By Pavan Kulkarni



A map of ECOWAS countries. Niger and the countries supporting it — Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea — amount to nearly 60% of the territory of the bloc. The West African Peoples' Organization said ECOWAS' threat of military intervention was a maneuver by colonial France and Great Britain, under the hegemony of US imperialism. With Mali, Guinea, and Burkina Faso extending support to Niger's new government, any use of force by ECOWAS may hurl the entire sub-region into war

Several left and people's organizations in West Africa have condemned the threat issued by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to militarily intervene with the backing of France and the US to restore the unpopular Mohamed Bazoum to Niger's presidency. The West African Peoples' Organization (WAPO) has "vehemently opposed" the ultimatum by ECOWAS Heads of States on July 30 to "take all measures necessary," including "the use of force," if the ousted president and his government is not restored by Sunday, August 6. This decision of ECOWAS is "a

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Coup In Ghana Na Lie! -- Defence Minister



Dominic Nitiwul, Minister of Defence

The Minister of Defence, Dominic Nitiwul has assured Ghanaians that the Ghana Armed Forces will not stage a coup d'état in the country. The Minister's remarks follow the spate of coup d'états in Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso and recently Niger which has been a matter of concern to many people. Speaking to a journalist while conducting James Cleverly, UK Foreign Affairs, Development and

the Commonwealth Minister around, Dominic Nitiwul assured Ghanaians that the Ghana Armed Forces is beyond a coup. He said the Ghana Army are rather defenders of democracy. "I can assure you the professionalism of the armed forces is par excellence and I am not worried at all. Not at all. I don't worry about a member of any member armed forces taking

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'Kitchen Scandal' Ablakwa Blasts Adom-Otchere For Churning Out Cock-And-Bull Stories Over GHC187 Million Claim



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The Quest Of Chasing Money In Ghana -- Prof. Enoch Opoku Antwi Writes



Prof. Enoch Opoku Antwi

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The INSIGHT

EDITORIAL

THE HIV/AIDS MENACE

The report released recently which showed a rise in HIV among pregnant women should be of utmost concern to all.

Even worrying is the Ghana AIDS Commission's admission that HIV/AIDS is on the ascendancy in the country.

Certainly, all these come against the backdrop of increased awareness and public sensitisation over the years, to get the menace effectively under control.

The government through the Ministry of Health, the Ghana Health Service, The Ghana Aids Commission and several world bodies and stakeholders succeeded to a large extent in creating the awareness of condom use and abstinence. The sudden rise in cases of HIV infections simply means that something is not being done or gone wrong.

It is the view of this paper that stakeholders in the health sector will once again come together to find lasting solutions to the problems giving rise to new infections and nib it in the bud.

Towards this end, it is the opinion of The Insight that new intervention measures would help to address the problem.

It is also the expectation of Ghanaians that past measures which helped in addressing the problem such as condom use, abstinence, among others will be revisited and employed in the fight including the individuals who spearheaded such bold initiatives.

Coup In Ghana Na Lie! -- Defence Minister

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arms to remove the government" he said. "Not at all. They will rather protect the will of the people. They will rather not allow anybody to rig an election. Ghana Armed Forces is beyond that," he added.

Last year in October, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo urged the rank and file of the military to remain "Patriotic and loyal" to Ghana's Republican Constitution in the face of the nation's difficulties. The President said this in a speech he passionately delivered in front of troops during his Kumasi Tour at Idris Barracks in the Ashanti Region. Around that time, the President was so unpopular that he was booed by Adum Kejetia market men and women who were previously his core supporters.

Speaking about the difficulties the country is facing, President Akufo-Addo urged the military to support him to steer the nation out of the present challenges with loyalty. President Akufo-Addo urged the security agency to remain "excellent patriots, excellent ambassadors of the security agencies and excellent citizens of our country", saying he is very proud to serve as their Commander in Chief.

"We are going through a difficult time in the history of our country We are going through a difficult time in our economy. We also going through a difficult time as far as security is concerned" the President told the men and women in uniform. "On the economy, we are all aware of the events that have taken place in the last year which has brought a lot of things under strain. We are making every effort in negotiations that are taking place with foreign partners to put our economy back in a good space. Very soon the difficulties that confront our economy are going to be things of the past.

The President went on: "I want to



Dominic Nitiwul, Minister of Defence

encourage you to continue the good work that you're doing for our country. I encourage you to stand firm in your loyalty to the Republic, your loyalty to the Constitution of our nation so that the orderly, peaceful development of our country which is the only way that can guarantee the future prosperity we are all working for can come about....

"So that these [present] generations of Ghanaians will leave as our legacy, that even when things were difficult in Ghana, we all held together under our Republican institutions and our constitution to find a way to a better future for our nation. I am confident that we can do it and I am counting on you to help me do it." the President concluded.

Source -- mynewsgh.com

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The Quest Of Chasing Money In Ghana – Prof. Enoch Opoku Antwi Writes



OBONSAM TAWA!

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Prof. Enoch Opoku Antwi

It appears that while most developed countries orient their citizens to chase passions and talents, many Ghanaians prefer chasing money. In most advanced countries, they throw ideas at problems. Here, we throw money at problems, not ideas. That is why we do not get the needed results. We seem to believe that money solve all problems. No! Wisdom and understanding of the problem rather do. The shirt you are wearing was the idea first. The car, home, suit, shoe, computer, tablet, bag, television, phone and so forth were the ideas first before the physical product. Think about great philosophers and religious leaders with the largest following on this planet. Did they have money or they shared values and ideas? You be the judge.

We live in a new era. An era where Liberal Democratic order is on the ropes. Global institutions have been weakened (World Trade Organization). Rules based multilateral order to govern trade is broken. World is breaking into "civilizations" (West, Russia, China), that is Kissinger's disequilibrium. Opportunities are being constrained. Markets are closing (Russia) or may close (China, India). Human rights issues may limit cross border investments and trade. Threats of further disruption are increasing (Taiwan, the Baltic States). Gains from trade will be more limited going forward. Lower economic growth, fewer opportunities, higher discount rates on foreign investments, less FDI and less trade. Regionalism may

replace globalism. Supply chains will become more regional. Global supply chains have left the West strategically exposed. More trade diversion, less trade creation. Western Governments investment in strategic industries will increase. On balance, a much more difficult environment for businesses to operate in. Yet, we seem not to be taking notes. Instead, chasing money has given meaning to every enculturation process in Ghana. People are defined by what they own, not the values they exhibit. "This is Mr. Mensah...he owns the blue BMW and the big yellow house close to that church." "That is Maame Esi. She owns that Jeep Wrangler parked over there." Identity creation seems centered on material things one owns. The pearls of wisdom in Proverbs 16:16 is a provocative question: "How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!" It appears most Ghanaians did not get this memo. The memo of choosing wisdom and understanding over gold and silver. I am sure if most Ghanaians are told they could have one thing their heart desires, it would be money. Psychologically, the way we answer such questions reveal something about us. There is no more precious gift for an individual than the wisdom that can apply relevant values to give meaning to knowledge and experience. Lack of understanding leads to most citizens easily tricked by other personalities; deceived by ignorance, and blinded by determination to get money at all cost to an extent that they result into money rituals and scamming

(Yahoo-Yahoo or Sakawa) to get money. Sometimes, their spirit is asleep, busy elsewhere or just entrusted with all their own exquisite rationalizing. **Our education needs value orientation, change in enculturation, and re-institutionalization.** We must infuse the right values in our children's hearts, and that starts with our leaders. Values control behavior. We act on the basis of what we believe really matters, what is right and good. That is why whoever influences the core values in a group is, in fact, the leader. What values do our leaders possess? **How many individuals at the workplace are secure enough to want others to succeed?** How many Ghanaians are comfortable in their own skin and will nurture others to grow? Do we care much what misinformed people say about us, or work hard in keeping our reputation? And, how many leaders have the confidence to be humble? Three things are difficult to touch in most advanced countries: water bodies, tress, and animals. The scenario is different here in Ghana. It is not that we don't know the use of these, but the quest for money confirms our habitual bias. I once heard a guy asking the use of water when he wants to do illegal mining (Galamsay). Mark Twain said, "It isn't what you don't know that gets you in trouble. It's what you know for sure that isn't just so." Since knowing entails understanding, most of our unconscious internal errors and the whirlwind chasing is basically lack of understanding, and the origin is our orientation (home and

schools) as a people. Ghanaians deserve an economy that allows each person to succeed through hard work and creativity and to lead a life of meaning and dignity. Most individuals still believe the free market system is a good opportunity of generating good jobs, a strong sustainable economy, innovation, a healthy environment, and economic opportunity for all. Vibrant private sector businesses must play a vital role in the economy by creating jobs, fostering innovation, and providing essential goods and services. While each of the individual companies serves its own corporate purpose, we must share a fundamental commitment to shareholders and commit to delivering values to customers. Organizations must invest in their employees. This starts with compensating them fairly and providing important benefits. It also includes supporting them through training and education that help develop new skills for a rapidly changing world. In doing so, we foster diversity, inclusion, dignity, and respect. Then, we must support the communities in which we work. Respecting the people in our communities and protecting the environment by embracing sustainable practices across our businesses is wisdom, and we must understand it. Also, we must generate long-term value for shareholders, who provide the capital that allows companies to invest, grow and innovate. Stealing business ideas to open one of your own, or calling

customers on the side to work with you instead of the business you work for is not ethical. Be committed to transparency and ethics. Here, **companies must play a big role in developing communities that they operate in.**

The Dow Jones Sustainability Indices evaluate the world's largest 5,000 publicly traded companies for possible inclusion in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI) or other indices (SPGlobal, 2022). As part of this evaluation, companies participate in corporate sustainability assessments that identify sustainability leaders across all industries. The goal of this assessment is to enable investors to track the performance of companies and integrate sustainability into their portfolios. Companies are evaluated based on a range of financially relevant sustainability criteria covering the economic, environmental, and social dimensions and receive an S&P Global ESG Score between 0-100 and are ranked against other companies in their industry. Same S&P criteria is used in rating the credit worthiness of a country. When will Ghana have its own independent credit rating agency like the S&P to assess our own credit worthiness?

The only way to be wise and gain understanding of daily challenges is to watch the way we think. The brain is about 2 percent of our body weight, but consumes 20 percent of the body calories. That means we are what we think. Is what we are thinking as a people the same as what other audience are thinking about Ghana? If not, then we need to be INTENTIONAL. Intentionality is the driver of presence.

All the communication tips in the world won't make up for your thought patterns. We need to pick up the right intentions and let go of what's in the way. I define having intentional presence as understanding how we want to be perceived and subsequently communicating in a manner so that we will be perceived the way we want. It means aligning our thoughts with our words and actions. And, it requires a keen understanding of leaders true, authentic self, as well as their impact on the people.

As I write this piece, trust is a big issue in Ghana, especially for public officials. We are not sure of their actions and motives. Delegation is another uncertain word. To get a simple understanding on this, remember the

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORT

Compiled By Peoples Dispatch

Rights Groups, Activists Urge Singer Christina Aguilera To Cancel Concert In Israel



(Photo: Mondoweiss). Christina Aguilera's concert is set to take place at Live Park in the city of Rishon LeZion which has been built upon several demolished Palestinian villages. Activists have urged her not to cross the international picket line

Palestinians and several human rights activists and groups last Tuesday urged US pop singer Christina Aguilera to cancel her upcoming concert in Israel scheduled on August 10. The concert is set to take place at Live Park in the city of Rishon LeZion which has been

built upon several demolished Palestinian villages including Al-Safiriyya, Sarafand al-Amar, and Bayt Dajan.

Fans of Aguilera and Palestinian activists called on the pop star to show solidarity with Palestinians by not performing in Israel in the

face of the countless human rights violations and war crimes carried out by the Israeli forces and government in the occupied Palestinian territories. Since the concert was first announced, people have been posting and tweeting in large numbers with the hashtag #XtinaDontGo to bring the pop star's attention to the Israeli atrocities and violence against Palestinians. Last week on Friday, a group of activists went to the New York headquarters of the company organizing the concert to hand-deliver a message to Aguilera on behalf of her fans urging her to not perform in Israel.

An online petition has also been started by the Adalah Justice Project asking her to reconsider. The petition, published on the ActionNetwork.org campaign website, expresses

disappointment stating that "Palestinian civil society groups have asked artists around the world to stop performing in apartheid Israel until Palestinians have full equality, freedom and justice. By playing in Israel, you will be crossing an international picket line. Whatever the intentions may be, this performance will be promoted as an endorsement of the Israeli government and a blow to the Palestinian-led freedom movement. It will be seen as tacitly condoning the violence and oppression the Israeli government commits against Palestinians every day. Boycott is a proven peaceful tactic that was famously used by peoples struggling for freedom in the US civil rights movement. In the fight against apartheid South Africa, a cultural boycott by international artists was particularly powerful and played a large role in the freedom struggle."

The petition cites examples of other artists who in the recent past have canceled their performances in Israel in solidarity with Palestinians, including Sam Smith, Bjork, Lana Del Rey, Lorde, Lauryn Hill, Big Thief, Shakira, and Pharrell. The petition has so far garnered over 11,000 signatures online and counting. The petition highlights the recent escalation in violence and human rights abuses by Israeli security forces in the refugee camp in Jenin in the occupied West Bank, which was condemned worldwide including by the UN. A violent raid at the camp last month carried out by more than 1,000 soldiers as well as drone and air strikes led to the killing of at least 12 Palestinians, including five minors. It also destroyed dozens of homes, roads, and other Palestinian property.

Unprecedented Wildfires Across Algeria Kill At Least 34, Thousands Displaced

At least 34 Algerians, including 10 armed forces members, have died in the wildfires raging across Algeria over the past few days. The wildfires, caused by a massive heat wave across the Mediterranean region, have forced large-scale displacement in the north African country, media reports stated last Monday. According to the [Interior Ministry](#), the temperature hit a record 48 degrees Celsius in the last few days and has remained high, leading to over 97 blazes in 16 provinces across Algeria, mostly in the north-east of

the country.

The ministry stated that rescue and fire fighting measures are ongoing in most of these provinces and that thousands of people have been evacuated so far. It reported that at least 15 people have been injured in the wildfires.

Wildfires and high temperatures have become the [norm](#) in Algeria for the last couple of years. In 2021, at least 90 people were killed in such fires, mostly in the north-east. Last year, at least 37 people were killed in the northeastern El-Tarf province bordering Tunisia. This year, high temperatures and wildfires have been

recorded all across the [Mediterranean region](#), with Greece experiencing one of the worst wildfires in its history. Italy is also facing a similar situation. According to reports, neighboring Tunisia recorded temperatures nearing 50 degree Celsius on Monday. It is also witnessing wildfires, forcing the government to [deploy armed forces](#) for rescue and fire dousing exercises. Scientists have warned that the Mediterranean is likely to be a global hotspot for the effects of climate change. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on



(Photo: Xinhua). The UN environment panel has warned that the Mediterranean region is warming faster than the global average and will witness more heatwaves, wildfires, droughts, and other climate-related catastrophes in the coming days

Climate Change (IPCC) [warned](#) that the region is warming faster than the global average and will

see frequent heat waves, wildfire, droughts, and high seas in the coming days.

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maneuver by colonial France and Great Britain, under the hegemony of American imperialism, to resort to armed intervention under the guise of restoring democracy and human rights in Niger,” WAPO said in a statement on Wednesday, August 2. **“To keep the uranium-rich country under the imperialist fold”** Warning that the real purpose is to “keep Niger continually in the imperialist fold,” the group of unions, left parties, and civil society organizations described Bazoum as “servile to the imperialist powers of NATO, particularly France, which for decades has plundered its uranium.” Endowed with ['Africas highest grade of uranium ores in Africa](#), Niger is the world's [seventh largest producer](#) of this nuclear fuel. While Niger itself remains one of the lowest consumers of electricity — with an electrification rate of [only about 17.5%](#) — its uranium has been powering [a third of the lightbulbs](#) in France. The new military rulers of the country have [halted the export of uranium and gold](#) to France, which the junta accused on July 31 of having secured an authorization from the ousted government's foreign minister to militarily intervene to restore Bazoum. Up to 1,500 French troops are already deployed in Niger, [in addition to](#) about 1,100 US troops in two bases, about 300 Italian soldiers, and a smaller contingent from the EU. Amid militant mass demonstrations demanding the removal of the troops and military bases of former colonizer France and its western allies, Bazoum had invited more French troops, ordered out of Mali, into Niger last year. Bazoum's crackdown on the anti-French protest movement, its leaders, and opposition parties further diminished his domestic credibility as a representative of the democratic will of Niger's people. After the head of the presidential guard, Gen. Abdourahmane Tchiani, removed Bazoum from presidency on July 26 in a coup, there have been repeated demonstrations welcoming the military takeover and demanding the removal of all foreign troops from Niger.

“ECOWAS' adventurism has already split the sub-region”

Following similar coups in Mali, Guinea, and Burkina Faso over the last three years, the military governments which took power have consolidated popular support by ordering the French troops and their allied western forces out of their countries. These countries, which are suspended and sanctioned members of the ECOWAS, have pledged their support to Niger. “The transitional governments of Burkina Faso and Mali... warn that any military intervention against Niger is tantamount to a declaration of war against Burkina Faso and Mali,” read their joint-statement on July 31. Should ECOWAS go on to execute its threat, Burkina Faso and Mali will take “self-defense measures in support of the forces, armies and people of Niger.” Reaffirming “its solidarity to the Nigerian population,” Guinea also refused to support the ECOWAS sanctions and or its military intervention. Niger and Mali, along with Burkina Faso and Guinea, amount to nearly 60% of the land-area of ECOWAS, with the remaining 11 member countries adding up to about 40%.

“ECOWAS' adventurism has already split the sub-region and could overnight escalate the political crisis in Niger to an existential crisis for the entire sub-region,” said Kwesi Pratt, General Secretary of the Socialist Movement of Ghana (SMG), in a statement on August 2. The SMG added the warning that a sub-regional war will destroy “millions of lives and hamper production of goods and services with severe ramifications for the entire continent.”

Questioning the moral standing of the ECOWAS leaders to invade Niger, the statement added, “Our leaders have not.. raised concern about the squalor, lack of basic amenities, or exposure of children to deadly radiation that the French capital imposes on the inhabitants of uranium mining towns. Our leaders have not

protested the numbers of innocent citizens killed by US and French troops in their so-called counter-insurgency operations. Rather our leaders have forced through laws granting US troops full immunity for crimes committed on our soils — essentially ceding our sovereignty to foreign militaries.”

At a time when ECOWAS is unable “to manage even domestic insurgencies,” the sub-regional bloc “can only contemplate a Niger expedition because “NATO” will resource and run it,” the statement said. ECOWAS' role in this invasion, the statement argued, will only be to provide African cannon-fodder to die in what is effectively “just another US or French invasion of a struggling Third World country” — dressed up as an intervention by its West African neighbors to defend democracy in the region.

“Military intervention will invite greater domestic unrest for ECOWAS governments”

Esther Yiadom, a Ghana-based journalist and a member of WAPO, argued that the vast majority of the people of the ECOWAS countries do not support their government's decision to intervene in Niger. “Most of the governments in the ECOWAS sub-region are already unpopular among the citizens of their own countries, because they are seen as puppets of imperialist powers,” she told *Peoples Dispatch*.

“For a country like Ghana to use its resources to destabilize Niger, while people in our own country are already struggling...! Taxes, unemployment, prices of basic goods and services are all rising. People are struggling to make ends meet. There are demonstrations and protests day in and day out in ECOWAS countries. I don't know why governments of any of these

countries would want to intervene in Niger in such circumstances, if not for the fact that they are mere puppets of imperialist powers.”

WAPO warns the war cannot be financed “without imposing further hardship on citizens through taxation and deprivation.”

In Nigeria — whose presidency the current ECOWAS chair Bola Tinubu assumed earlier this year after an election marred by allegations of widespread voter-suppression — labor unions protested against the worsening economic conditions across the country on August 2.

“If we make a mistake of involving military in Niger, we may end up inviting more internal problems to ourselves,” [warned](#) Adamu Garba, a chieftain of Tinubu's own ruling All Progressives Congress (APC). “The West, under France and the U.S, have perfectly set a trap for ECOWAS to go into a total war in the region. Any mistake of

military intervention in Niger means we are done with.

President Tinubu must be courageous enough to resist French and U.S pressure on ECOWAS to wage any military action against Niger,” he urged. There is also internal resistance in Benin, whose president Patrice Talon, on being dispatched by ECOWAS after meeting Tinubu to assess the situation in Niger, told the media in its capital Niamey, “All means will be used, if necessary, to restore constitutional order in Niger.” “The Communist Party of Benin formally warns Patrice Talon against participating in any aggression against the fraternal people of Niger and other peoples of the sub-region,” read the party's statement. “The African peoples and those of our sub-region are engaged in a fight to the death against the imperialist powers, and in particular against FrançAfrique.”

Five Bombshells In A-G's Advice On Cecilia Dapaah's Missing Money Case



Godfred Dame

Office of the Attorney-General and Ministry of Justice has issued a legal advice to the police on the theft case involving former sanitation minister, Cecilia Abena Dapaah. Police after the first hearing of the case on July 20, wrote to the A-G's office seeking advice on how to proceed with the case. In a nine-page advice available to GhanaWeb, Deputy A-G Alfred Tuah-Yeboah recounted the sequence of events leading to the theft of monies as reported by the former minister and her husband, Daniel Osei Kuffuor - the complainants. The advice analyzed the docket as prepared by the police and the

charges proferred against the five accused persons.

It called generally for further investigations into the issue of the amount of monies discovered. A decoupling of and in some instances total dropping of some charges brought against some of the accused. In the case of one accused person, the A-G asked that all charges brought against him be dismissed.

Five new discoveries gleaned from the document are reproduced below:

- The case of theft was first reported at Tesano in October 2022 but there is no record of arrest at the station
- Cecilia Dapaah, however, formally reported the case in July 2023; 10 months after first arrest
- Cecilia Dapaah did not mention who owned two sets of missing monies — US\$200,000 and 300,000 euros
- The two former house helps are denying that they stole US\$800,000
- Cecilia Dapaah says 300,000 cedis stolen was donations from mother's funeral

Protesters Break Through Police Barricade To Storm Shai Osudoku District Assembly Over Deplorable Roads



Demonstrators lament over the deplorable Shai Osudoku District roads

Thousands of aggrieved residents from Kordiabe, Ayikuma, Agomeda, Asebi and Dodowa on Wednesday poured onto the streets of the Shai Osudoku District in the Greater Accra Region to rehash an earlier protest staged on June 20, 2023 to drum home the need for government to fix their terrible road network. The protesters from several communities for the second time in over a month poured onto the streets to register their anger against the situation that continues to adversely impact their socio-economic activities. The residents, who came out in their numbers, clad in red and black to portray their bitterness about the situation, danced, sang, and displayed placards to back their demand. The angry protesters wielded the placards to convey their messages to the government, some of which read, “enough is enough,” “use our rocks to construct our roads,” “the dust is killing us,” “Shai deserves proper roads,” “we breath dust,” “fix our roads before you go, Nana Addo,” etc. Most roads were blocked during the course of the about five-hour demonstration that was scheduled to end at a designated venue which is some 300 meters from the Assembly where a police barricade was positioned. Per this arrangement, only the leaders were arranged to go beyond that point to meet with the DCE, Fred Ofei in the assembly to present their petition to him. Chaos, however broke out when the agitating demonstrators insisted on accompanying the organisers to the assembly grounds to hand over their petition to the District Chief Executive. In ensuing exchanges, the demonstrators broke through the police barricade into the walls of the Assembly where they accompanied the organisers to hand over their petition to the Chief of the Assembly. An attempt by Fred Ofei to address

the crowd was however met with boos, jeers and throwing of sachet water, forcing him to abruptly end his speech before being whisked away and was then taken back into his office. Justice Adu Ahiakwa was one of the organisers of Wednesday's protests and according to him, the latest demonstration was occasioned by authorities' failure to act on the June 20 march to drum home the need to fix the deplorable roads in the affected communities. “Last month we had a demonstration...and there's no response from the DCE so today too we decided to do another demonstration. Our concern is about the roads, the whole Shai District, the roads are not potholes but manholes so we want them to fix it and we need asphalt,” he demanded strongly. The situation, he said affected access to health centers where patients referred from the affected communities to the Dodowa government hospital for further medical attention risked losing their lives along the bumpy stretch.

Aside from this, he expressed concern over the lack of investment drive in the area owing to the situation and wondered why residents would continue to grapple with bad roads in a district that is home to several quarries. A demonstrator and driver who gave his name as Amos complained bitterly about the effects the situation was having on his transport business. Aside from the costly regular maintenances, he also suffers financial losses due to the situation. “I'm tired of complaining, nobody appears to be listening, I spend a lot on maintenance, all the profit goes into maintaining the car due to the nature of the roads”, he said. Another, a 38-year-old trader from Doryumu also said, “This road will forever remind me of the ordeal my sister went through to have her baby at the Dodowa hospital. The bumpy nature nearly caused a miscarriage, would somebody ever listen to us?” Meanwhile, the District Chief

Executive (DCE) for Shai Osudoku, Fred Ofei speaking to the press after the demonstration, admitted that most roads in the district were in a very bad shape. As much as he said the assembly was not in a position to construct the roads, he said he would continue to prompt the appropriate authorities to act accordingly. The DCE noted: “Shai Osudoku is facing a lot of challenges on roads, not that of the Doryumu Stretch alone, but

Dodowa to Afienya is there, Asutuare Junction to Asutuare through to Tokpo, all are bad. The Assembly is not sleeping on it as the Assembly cannot construct a kilometer of a road.” He continued: “When you go the ministry of highways, they always tell you, and I have a list of contractors on our roads but it's left with funding which we're pushing the central government hard to make sure it gets funding for the contractors to resume [works] on our various roads”.

The impact of the roads, the DCE added also posed a security threat to the area as the police equally complained about its effects on effective policing and their efforts to apprehend criminals. He, however urged the people to remain patient as the President and the government aren't sleeping on the issue but they are neck-deep in raising funds to address the road infrastructural challenges in the Shai Osudoku District.

Houthis Say Youtube's Ban On Its Channels In Yemen Is Part Of West-Imposed Media Blockade



(Photo: SABA). Over a dozen YouTube channels with hundreds of thousands followers belonging to different groups in Houthi-run areas of Yemen were blocked on Monday. Ansar Allah called the ban arbitrary and an act of “intellectual terrorism

YouTube closed dozens of channels on its platform belonging to various groups in Yemen on Monday. The groups affected by the ban include the Houthi militia, the Ansar Allah band, its artistic and documentary production units, along with the Revolutionary Media Center (RMC) based in Sana'a, [al-Masirah reported](#). The military in Sana'a [claimed](#) that the channels that were closed had over 500,000 subscribers with over 7,000 videos and millions of views. It also [accused](#) Twitter and Facebook of having shut the pages belonging to the organization. Ansar Allah, the movement representing the Houthis, issued a statement calling the ban arbitrary and an act of “intellectual terrorism.” It alleged that YouTube is seeking to “harness the media assets of the countries of aggression to serve their colonial project.”

In its statement, the Revolutionary Media Center in Sana'a, which runs some of the channels affected by the ban, asked for its immediate revocation, saying that the bans “came without any violation of the terms and standards of publication.” Claiming that the aim was to “obscure the national voice against the US, British, Saudi and Emirati aggression and its allies,” the RMC said that the move amounted to a “media war” against the people in Yemen as it “causes the international media to lose important Yemeni sources that used to communicate the truth to the world.” The statement also accused YouTube of exacerbating the “media blockade imposed on the Yemeni people, forgetting the human right to obtain

information, not blocking it.” Yemen's Houthis have been fighting against Western-backed military aggression and the blockade led by Saudi Arabia since 2016. The Houthis have used their limited presence on the internet to present their narrative of the conflict, which was predominantly portrayed as a “proxy war” between Saudi Arabia and Iran by the dominant international media. Attacks on Houthi-led Yemeni news channels were carried out by the US government as well, which seized the website domain of the *al-Masirah* TV channel in June 2021, accusing it of spreading “misinformation” and posing a “threat to national security.” *Al-Masirah* and other Yemeni channels have questioned the West's support to the Saudi-led aggression in Yemen, calling the war an imperial project. YouTube was previously accused of violating the freedom of speech and expression by scuttling alternative narratives when it decided to [shut down channels](#) related to Russian broadcasters *RT* and *Sputnik* in February last year following sanctions imposed by the US and its European allies on Russian media days after the war started in Ukraine.

The Quest Of Chasing Money In Ghana – Prof. Enoch Opoku Antwi Writes

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highest form of delegating is to lay the leadership mantle on key people for particular goals and then follow their lead. We all need change of thoughts and understanding. Yet, change often wounds people, and the leader who champions those changes has a unique reason to stay close to those wounded. Leaders heal in building a community. It is a common understanding that we will not last forever, and needs our replacements. Succession Planning then comes into the frame. As soon as the vision is clear, leaders

must begin succession planning and selection, just as all great leaders before our time did. Leaders must give hope to the people. Give them something to hang on to. Even though we have the promise of a grand finale, we need hope along the way. As long as we have hope, there is a future. Because leadership is for the future, leaders are hope dealers. It is not anyone who is told “God bless you” on a daily basis. We need the people to bless us based on our work. We need their blessings to show us that we really matter to them. Once in a while, our leaders fear is

pure panic or demoralizing dread. But for most leaders, fear is not immobilizing terror; it is nagging anxiety, wondering if things will work out the way it seems they should. It is basically fear of failure. This leads to weariness. Education and experience may empower a leader, but human limits are real, and the weariness of leadership must be respected in honest humility. Further, our plans must be wise. Wise planning needs courage to act. Courage means leaders accepting unlimited liability for the overall good of the country. In doing so, leaders must accept responsibility for certain decisions that require not

only wisdom but courage. Marketing is paramount here. Leaders market the country, and they must choose a good reputation over great riches (Prov. 22:1, NIV). We must listen to the words of the people's spirit. Most spirits are wailing. Can we budget to invest in the future of our youth? Integrity is the glue that binds wisdom and understanding. Integrity is being what I claim to be and doing what I promise to do. A great leader must demonstrate personal integrity and seek a future of excellence for the

people, and compassion for each citizen. All these do not entail just money, but passion, talents, and ideation. Leadership is inherently about effecting change in order to obtain desired future condition that would not otherwise happen. Our leaders can do more to harness the passion and talents of the citizens. Posterity is watching. Until we do these, Obonsam (The Devil) will continue to smoke his Tawa (Pipe).

'Kitchen Scandal' Ablakwa Blasts Adom-Otchere For Churning Out Cock-And-Bull Stories Over GHC187 Million Claim

Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa, the North Tongu Member of Parliament has given a stern critique at news reporter and host of Metro TV's Good Evening Ghana programme, Paul Adom-Otchere. Ablakwa has described Adom-Otchere's presentations as cock-and-bull stories that Ghanaians have so far had enough of. The TV show host had lashed out at the lawmaker on the August 1 edition of his show in respect of Ablakwa's publication of a 187 million Ghana cedi transaction he describes as the 'kitchen scandal.' In the publication, he alleged that cousin of president Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, Gabby Asare Otchere-Darko was seeking to enforce payment of the said sum even though the current government has varied the contract in respect of which Gabby is seeking the said payment. In a post dated August 2, 2023, the lawmaker wrote: "My attention has also been drawn to claims by Paul Adom Otchere that my publication of the Attorney-General's pro-Gabby legal opinion harms the state and enhances the chances of West Blue in any future litigation. "It's both strange and pathetic that Paul isn't worried about the lopsided AG's opinion which failed to receive input from the Ministry of Finance and



Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa, MP for North Tongu

the Ghana Revenue Authority but is only worried that I put same in the public domain. "Ghanaians have really had enough of Paul's cock-and-bull stories — so Paul actually expects Ghanaians to believe that Gabby didn't know about the AG's legal opinion but for my publication?" he quizzed. Ablakwa also announced that he had "successfully raised the GHS187.3 million “Kitchen Scandal” on the floor for formal parliamentary notification and further legislative action." **This is Ablakwa's full post:** Today, I successfully raised the GHS187.3million “Kitchen Scandal” on the floor for formal parliamentary notification and further legislative action. My attention has also been drawn to claims by Paul Adom Otchere that my publication of the Attorney-General's pro-Gabby legal opinion harms the state and enhances the chances of West Blue in any future litigation. It's both strange and pathetic that

Paul isn't worried about the lopsided AG's opinion which failed to receive input from the Ministry of Finance and the Ghana Revenue Authority but is only worried that I put same in the public domain. In any case, if the people Paul speaks for are proud of their behind the scenes actions why are they disturbed and embarrassed by the public disclosure of their actions and opinions? Ghanaians have really had enough of Paul's cock-and-bull stories — so Paul actually expects Ghanaians to believe that Gabby didn't know about the AG's legal opinion but for my publication? Had Paul had read the documents I put out, he would have observed how Gabby's law firm could state categorically in their 3rd May, 2023 letter to the Board Chair of GRA that they know that the Attorney-General hasn't received the written arguments of GRA and the MoF after their 1st November, 2022 meeting. If Gabby can know on authority what letters the Attorney-General hasn't received on this matter, how can any reasonable person believe that Gabby didn't know about the AG's opinion long before my publications? Discerning Ghanaians deserve some respect. For God and Country.

Family Health Hospital Re-Opens Dialysis Unit

The Family Health Hospital located at Teshie in the Ledzokuku municipality of the Greater Accra region has re-opened its Renal Dialysis Unit. The newly refurbished unit has been upgraded with six ultra-modern dialyzers to provide optimum haemodialysis for clients in a relaxing and comfortable environment. Located within the premises of the Family Health University College (FHUC) the unit has modern essential life support equipment, which includes monitor defibrillators for managing emergencies. It also has a dedicated dialysis water purification plant. In an address, Dr. Rebecca Acquah-Arhin the Medical Coordinator of Family Health Hospital said that the Hospital has embarked on massive upgrading and expansion projects to meet world-class standards. She emphasized the hospital's commitment to delivering comprehensive healthcare services to clients. She also expressed concerns about the insufficient dialysis treatment facilities in the country, hence the decision of the Founders of FHUC to invest in the Unit. Prof. Enyonam Kwawukume, Founder and President of FHUC tasked the staff to deliver excellent professional services to all clients at the Renal Dialysis Unit and at the entire Family Health Hospital. He reminded them to be empathetic at all times, whilst maintaining high ethical standards. He added that the vision to have a Dialysis Unit at the Hospital had always been one of his key desires. He reiterated the Hospital's commitment to providing comparatively affordable treatment for all patients with kidney-related problems who require such services. The upgraded unit received glowing reviews from clients. The clients



complained about financial challenges associated with their treatment elsewhere; they however expressed their gratitude to the Management for the affordable fee offered to them at such a modern facility at the Family Health Hospital. Kidney dialysis is the process of removing excess water and toxins from the blood of people whose kidneys are unable to perform these functions adequately due to kidney disease or complications arising from other medical conditions. Unfortunately, kidney disease is on the rise, so more and more people require dialysis services. The public is entreated to learn more about kidney health and take the necessary precautions for prevention. With years of experience in running the Dialysis Unit, and with expertly trained health professionals and technicians, clients can be assured of the best possible service. Dialysis is a minimally invasive process that lasts for a few hours per session. Clients can usually go home on the same day after the procedure. Management by dialysis is only done upon instruction by medical doctors. The FHH Dialysis Unit is open to the general public. The ceremony was attended by faculty and staff of the Family Health Medical School, the Family Health School of Nursing and Midwifery and the Family Health Hospital.

Full Text Of Mid-Year Fiscal Policy Review Of The 2023 Budget Statement And Economic Policy Of The Government Of Ghana As Presented By Finance Minister Ken Ofori-Atta

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considerably from 1,671,777 beneficiaries in 2016 to 3,801,491 beneficiaries by June 2023. The feeding grants cost per meal, per child, per day increased from GH¢1.00 to GH¢1.20 for the 2023 academic year. We have also settled all arrears owed to caterers under the programme for the second and third terms of the 2022 academic year; and the first term of 2023.

iii. The Capitation Grant contributed to increased enrolment in public basic schools from 6,048,897 pupils for the 2021/2022 academic year to 6,114,302 pupils for the 2022/2023 academic year.

iv. Under the Free Senior High School (Free SHS)/Technical and Vocational Education and Training (Free TVET) programmes, a total of 447,396 first-year students enrolled during the 2022/2023 academic year to bring the total number of Free SHS/TVET beneficiaries to 1,318,035 students. Government continued with the construction of 9 state-of-the-art TVET centres to offer modern facilities and equipment, enable effective skills training and empower young people with the relevant skills required for employment and entrepreneurship.

v. Under our Complementary Education for underprivileged groups, including outof-school children, Government commenced the implementation of Cycle 8 of the Complementary Basic Education Programme (CBEP) in February 2023, with a total enrolment of 5,000 learners as at end June 2023.

GROWING THE ECONOMY

150. Mr. Speaker, the PC-PEG Government is implementing with the support of the IMFECF facility requires strong fiscal consolidation. This will enable us quickly reestablish macroeconomic stability and debt sustainability. These are necessary pre conditions for high long-term economic growth, job creation and rapid transformation.

151. A key pillar of the PC-PEG is the focus on inclusive growth. Our renewed push for growth is informed by the usual experience that fiscal consolidation tends to have negative impact on growth. For the medium term, we are targeting revised economic growth rates of 1.5% for 2023; 2.8% (2024); and 4.7% (2025).

152. Mr. Speaker, we need to be deliberate and strategic in our actions

if we are to exceed our pre-CoVID-19 strong economic growth which averaged 7%, compared to 4.5% and 2.6% in Lower Middle-Income Countries (LMIC) and Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), respectively.

153. With the economy showing signs of stabilisation, Government intends to pursue a Growth Agenda that is fully aligned with the 2028 timeline for returning to a path to debt sustainability.

Funding the Growth Agenda

154. Mr. Speaker, given the limited fiscal space as well as our determination not to accumulate new arrears, our growth agenda will be mainly financed from domestic and external private sector investments as well as a rationalisation of ongoing programmes. The approach is to prioritise existing programme that are critical for growth and can be implemented to deliver quick results without huge demands on the available budgetary resources.

Objective of the Growth Strategy

155. Ultimately, we will aggressively encourage the private sector, under the ‘Ghana Mutual Prosperity Dialogue Framework’ to promote shared growth anchored on job creation, food security, exports and import substitution.

156. Towards this objective, Government expects to finalise a Growth Strategy in August, 2023.

157. Mr. Speaker, the key elements of the Growth Strategy include:

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i. accelerating scaling-up and aggregation in Agriculture and value-addition for key staples such as rice, poultry, maize, soya, tomatoes;

ii. supporting Industrial Parks and Economic zones that promote innovation and positive spillovers, and efficiency for key sectors such as the automotive, pharmaceutical, technology, textile and garment industries;

iii. promoting tourism to attract international and domestic tourist to boost incomes and create jobs;

iv. deepening the digitalisation of Public Services to promote efficiency in service delivery and protecting the public purse;

v. expanding housing delivery programmes to improve access to jobs and accommodation; and

vi. deepening financial intermediation programmes to enhance inclusion and entrepreneurship.

CONCLUSION

158. Mr. Speaker, in preparing this 2023 Mid-Year Budget, we have held extensive engagements with Cabinet and also with diverse stakeholders including; Organised Labour, Employer Associations, Association of Ghana Industries, Ghana Union of Traders Association, Peasant Farmers Association, Civil Society Organisations, Chamber of Mines, Think-Tanks, African Leadership Institute for West Africa, the Academia, Faith Based Organisations, the investor community, the Council of State, National Development Planning Commission, Chief Directors and PPME Directorates of MDAs, and Chief Executives of all Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies, and many others.

159. In all these meetings, stakeholders provided insights into issues such as widening the tax net, SOE Governance, expenditure controls, optimising extractive industry contributions, providing increased and targeted support to agriculture and industry, revamping ports operations and duties, as well as growing and changing the structure of the economy.

160. Mr. Speaker, the feedback has been illuminating and well received. The Faith-Based Organisation, for example, agreed to form a Committee to educate their congregation on their responsibility to pay taxes. We will continue to engage to find mutually acceptable solutions as we prepare the 2024 Budget Statement in November, 2023.

161. Mr. Speaker, last Friday, I had the singular privilege to be invited to participate in the Joint Caucus Meeting of Parliament. Indeed, the meeting effectively reflected the theme of the 2023 ‘Nkabom’ Budget. It was a pleasant and intimate experience. I appreciated the opportunity to engage and receive valuable feedback from the Hon. Members. I want to thank the leadership of the House for the opportunity and the shared urgency to transform our economy.

162. Mr. Speaker, I will be the first to admit that it has been an extremely difficult year for our country and our citizens.

163. Whilst most countries are still going through difficulties due to what is happening globally, our economic crisis also

emanates from fundamental and systemic weaknesses that we must boldly confront.

164. These include:

i. Our low revenue to GDP ratio;

ii. Our high demand and dependence on imports, including food products that can easily be produced here;

iii. Our inefficient power management;

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iv. Lack of robust expenditure and commitment control systems to secure us efficient public service delivery;

v. The numerous statutory funds with expenditure and economic governance issues; and

vi. Weak SOE governance.

165. Mr. Speaker, what I have outlined today begins a strong effort on the part of Government to address these issues. Most of the structural reforms we proposed in the PC-PEG, with which we secured an IMF programme, are geared towards addressing these fundamental issues.

166. In the next 15-months, there will be renewed efforts to undertake the necessary reforms and implement very critical measures.

167. Mr. Speaker, I want to, once again, acknowledge the sacrifices that our people have made, especially in the roll-out of the DDEP. Government sincerely appreciates all these sacrifices. We are a resilient people but we must be resolute if we are to get our Community across the Jordan.

168. On our part, we will ensure that we implement:

i. Systems to enhance revenue collection through compliance measures to bring public finances back to a sustainable path while growing the real sector of the economy, especially agriculture;

ii. Implement the necessary structural reforms to strengthen expenditure commitment control, avoid arrears accumulation and protect the public purse;

iii. Strengthen SOE governance;

iv. Review Statutory Funds and ensure improved alignment with key priorities;

v. Address the energy sector challenges; and

vi. Implement the Accelerated Community Roads Improvement Phase II to expand motorability and improved roads nationwide.

169. Mr. Speaker, while concluding the 2023 Budget Statement in November, 2022 in this House, I emphasised that our unity – “Nkabom” - will be vital in

confronting the daunting challenges facing our economy.

170. Mr. Speaker, today, I have provided updates to demonstrate that we have delivered on these critical areas. We thank “fellow Ghanaians” and partners for their invaluable support and sacrifices. Our economy is showing signs of stabilisation. And we are deeply grateful for the abiding grace of God, which has been more than sufficient to enable us turn the corner.

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171. By being hopeful, speaking the same language of productivity, growth and working closely together, we are securing our own collective success.

172. Mr. Speaker, the implementation of on-going fiscal adjustments and sustained investments in our people have contributed immensely to the stabilisation we are seeing in the economy. Exchange rate has stabilized, inflation has softened, and interest rates have declined since December, 2022, and private investments have been announced due to increased investor confidence in our economy.

173. Ordinarily, Mr. Speaker, these positive trends should ease the burden on our pockets. As a Finance Minister and a family man myself, I will continue to work hard to build and sustain a favourable macroeconomic environment, and remain confident that the prices of goods and services would reflect the trend for all of us - for our families and enterprises.

174. Mr. Speaker, we must all work together – Regulators, Market Federations and Unions and the individual citizen – and play our part to ensure consumers are treated fairly to complete the turnaround.

175. This Mid-Year Fiscal Policy Review has outlined the strategy for re-aligning our Programme to sustain our progress to stability. We have not asked for additional funding. We have not asked for new tax measures. We have committed to stay within appropriation and be even more efficient in mobilising resources and managing expenditure.

176. Mr. Speaker, we have indicated that we are focused on:

i. Structural reforms to address systemic weaknesses and strengthen resilience in key areas including revenue mobilisation, expenditure management, commitment control and arrears clearance, debt management, financial stability as well as energy and cocoa sector SOEs reformation.

to be cont.