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(((Editorial)))

Abuse of social media worrying

THE world is now described as a global village because of internet. This has become possible through the worldwide web otherwise known as (www), which allows information to be passed on and received almost instantaneously.

FOR instance, people in different countries on different continents are able to communicate with one another through social media platforms such as Skype, Pinterest, Instagram, Foursquare, Tango, WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Call Up, Imo and many other applications and platforms.

THE social media has presented opportunities for people to connect easily with long-lost acquaintances, family members, friends and admirers.

HOWEVER, a section of society has turned the various social platforms into sites of nudity, vulgarity and obscenity where peeved or jilted lovers post pornographic photos of their lovers, with the intent to disgrace them.

OTHERS also use the platforms for Internet fraud, popularly referred to as 'Sakawa', and dupe unsuspecting people.

NONETHELESS, we at Today believe we can make the best use of the social media as other countries are doing. Social media now has become a vehicle for development so we can't afford to let such a golden opportunity pass us.

WE must use the powerful social media platforms that are available to us to develop ourselves and country.

IT is time we, as a people, stopped looking up to the government to provide all our needs, even when we have the power to mobilise forces and resources to provide them.

TODAY believes that Ghana can have many positive things done, and within a short period, if we all learn from how some countries have made good use of the social media.

LET us all use the various social media platforms positively to make our society a better place to live in.

UG directed to comply with 15% fee increment

Story: Yaw TAKYI

The Minister for Education, Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum has directed the Management of the University of Ghana (UG) to comply with the 15 percent increment in tertiary fees. The Education Ministry's directive follows an engagement with all public universities on the tertiary fees brouhaha on Thursday, January 5, 2023.

It could be recalled that the Ghana Tertiary Education Council (GTEC) directed all public tertiary institutions to review fees for the next academic year by a maximum 15 percent increment.

However, some students of the University of Ghana have accused the Management of the school of charging more than the approved fees for the next academic year.

According to the Ministry, its investigations proved that UG is implementing about a 37% increment of fees.

The University said it will engage its Council to deliberate on the 15% increment and how feasible it could be for the school to implement.

"We have also heard from the University of Cape Coast about fees that they have taken in cases where fees were over 15%, they are doing refunds. They want to move within the 15% as mandated by Parliament," Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum told JoyNews after the meeting on Thursday. Three other public universities; the University of Cape Coast, the University of Education, Winneba and the University of Mines and Technology have all complied with the directive on fee charging.



Lands Minister defends Akufo-Addo's Akonta Mining comment

Story: News DESK

Lands and Natural Resources Minister, Samuel Abu Jinapor, has responded to the President's comments on Akonta Mining.

According to him, the President's assertion about the firm was rather an assurance that at the time he was speaking Akonta Mining was not engaged in any unauthorised mining.

On Wednesday, President Akufo-Addo at the 28th National and 16th Biennial Congress of the National Union of Ghana Catholic Diocesan Priests Association in Koforidua cleared the mining firm of any wrongdoing.

According to the President, the firm was not engaged in any illegality presently.

"I want to assure you all that Akonta Mining is not engaged in any form of illegal mining anywhere in Ghana as we speak," he stated.

The firm in question owned by NPP's Ashanti Regional Chairman, Wontumi, is the subject of an ongoing investigation for allegedly operating in the Tano Nimir forest reserve without a lease or license.

This statement has raised eyebrows among some stakeholders including the convener of the Media Coalition Against Illegal Mining who seems disappointed.

But the sector minister, said the comment did not absolve Akonta mining from any culpability and that his outfit is working with the Special Prosecutor on the matter.

"The President was not speaking about the wrongdoing or otherwise of Akonta Mining in the past, the criminality or otherwise of Akonta Mining in the past. He was not commenting on what happened in the past. He was giving an assurance of the state of affairs as of the time he was addressing the conference."

He spoke on the sidelines of a meeting with the Chief of Defence Staff and the Military High Command, Lands Minister, Samuel Abu Jinapor.

The Minister intimated that the President must be rather commended for his efforts in the fight against the canker. Additionally, government has reviewed its strategy to fight illegal mining in the country.

This comes with an assurance of sustaining the momentum to clamp down on persons involved in the destruction of Ghana's water bodies and forests.

Addressing the press after a meeting with the Chief of Defence Staff and the Military High Command, Lands Minister, Samuel Abu Jinapor said the new measures will be rolled out and made public soon.





Nduom Celebrates Edina Bronya

**With family & community*

Story: Reuben SACKKEY

After missing Edina Bronya celebrations the past three years, Dr. Papa Kwesi Nduom went home for this year's celebration. On Thursday, January 5th, 2023, Dr. Nduom, his sisters and members of the extended family gathered at the family house to share food and drinks. The occasion was used to discuss family matters and resolve issues concerning the family. The family prayed for prosperity and good health for its members. Names of those who first settled in Elmina and family members who have died were read and remembered. The family prayed for the restoration of Dr. Nduom's business licenses revoked by government and for the strengthening of the existing ones. A family member who had just returned to Ghana from the USA and his wife were welcomed. A member raised the need to encourage the many young family members to attend future annual family gatherings to promote unity and the welfare of everyone.



PPP Observes Edina Bronya

...At KEEA

Story: Yaw Takyi

The Komenda- Edinam- Eguafu- Abirem Progressive People's Party (PPP) executives led by Chairman Dzantor and 2020 Parliamentary candidate John Sterlin have presented quantities of rice to all the zonal the executives of the party. This is to thank them for the efforts put in during the 2020 elections. This was also to coincide with the New Year celebrations particularly Edina Bronya. The party presented gifts to all seven Asaf groups in Elmina and bags of rice to the paramount chiefs in KEEA. In addition, Dr. Papa Kwesi Nduom accompanied the constituency executives to pay a visit to the Kuful and Amoanda communities to wish them a happy new year and thank them for the support they have given the PPP over the years. Dr. Nduom presented bags of Edwumawura Rice made in Worawora, Ghana to support their Edina Bronya celebrations.



International News

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Pope Francis leads Benedict's funeral

Source: BBC

It's a cold, misty morning in Rome as thousands of priests, nuns and other delegates sit in St Peter's Square for the three-hour funeral ceremony.

For the past few days many have told us of their admiration of the Pope Emeritus, Benedict XVI, as a thinker and a theologian as around 200,000 queued to see his body lying in state.

But early this morning as we walked to our position on a roof high above St Peter's Square, it's clear this funeral is not on the same scale as the last papal funeral, of John Paul II, in 2005.

Then more than three million people came to Rome for the funeral, with 500,000 attending the ceremony and hundreds of thousands more watching on screens around the city.

The context now is different. Benedict was not a sitting Pope when he died, unlike his close friend John Paul II.

But Benedict was also not viewed with the same affection as his predecessor. He was a scholar and much admired for his writings. But Benedict lacked charisma and did not have the same rock star appeal of John Paul II and that is reflected in the smaller crowds in attendance here.



Dozens of priests have walked into St Peter's Square to help administer the Communion.

Mourners come up to the barriers to be given bread and wine - which Catholics believe become the actual flesh and blood of Jesus Christ.

While communion is taking place we can bring you more of the Pope's words from his Homily for Benedict XVI.

Pope Francis used Jesus' last words throughout the homily: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit".

He said that worshippers would wish to do the same for Benedict, saying: "Holding fast to the Lord's last words and to the witness of his entire life, we too, as an ecclesial community, want to follow in his steps and to commend our brother into the hands of the Father.

"May those merciful hands find his lamp alight with the oil of the Gospel that he spread and testified to for his entire life."

The Pope said that the crowds had come to entrust Benedict's life to God, and to show undying love.

He finished by saying: "We want to do this with the same wisdom, tenderness and devotion that he bestowed upon us over the years.

"Together, we want to say: "Father, into your hands we commend his spirit". Benedict, faithful friend of the Bridegroom, may your joy be complete as you hear his voice, now and forever."

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BoG to hold first MPC meeting later in Jan. 2023

Story: Business DESK

The Bank of Ghana has announced that it will hold its first Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting for 2023 from Tuesday, January 24, to Friday, January 27 to review developments in the economy. The meeting, which will be the 110th is expected to heavily discuss Ghana's high inflation rate which stands at 50.3 percent, the highest in 27 years. Also, the committee will use the meeting to decide whether to hike the policy rate, maintain it, or reduce it. "The meetings will conclude with a press conference on Monday, January 30, 2023 to announce the decision of the Committee", a short statement from the BoG said. The MPC in October 2022 last increased the Policy Rate by 250 basis point to 24.5%. This is the highest policy rate increase since 2017. The rate hike indicated that it will become more expensive to borrow from banks, a situation that also contributed in pushing cost of living and doing business in the country further up. Addressing the media at the time, the Governor of BoG, Dr Ernest Addison, explained that the committee reached the decision in order to check the rising rate of inflation as the country negotiates with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for an economic programme. "Inflation remains elevated and the balance of risks is on the upside. Although the forecasts are for monthly inflation to continue to slow down, the risks are on the upside, emanating largely from pass-through effects of the currency depreciation, the recent upward adjustment in utility tariffs, and rising inflation expectations", he said. "The Committee remains committed to re-anchoring inflation expectations and returning to a disinflation path," Dr. Addison added.

Ghana to request debt relief via G20 Common Framework

Ghana is set to request a debt relief via the G20 Common Framework programme, despite only poor nations are eligible for it. According to Reuters, the country has sought reassurances that the negotiations can be expedited before proceeding. It said Ghana had reached out to the Paris Club of creditor countries in December 2022 to ask for assurances that the Common Framework process, set up by the Group of 20 leading economies in 2020 in response to COVID-19, could be expedited. If the assurances are favourable, the government would quickly sign onto the Common Framework, Reuters source revealed on condition of anonymity. A Paris Club official told Reuters that the group had received a letter from Ghana's government, but declined to give further detail. Another source with knowledge of Ghana's debt restructuring said it was hard to see any other outcome for Ghana than signing up to the Common Framework as they have left themselves no other options. A third source, Reuters said, who is familiar with the thinking of the IMF, said Ghana going through the Common Framework programme was under discussion and the most probable outcome, as well as the

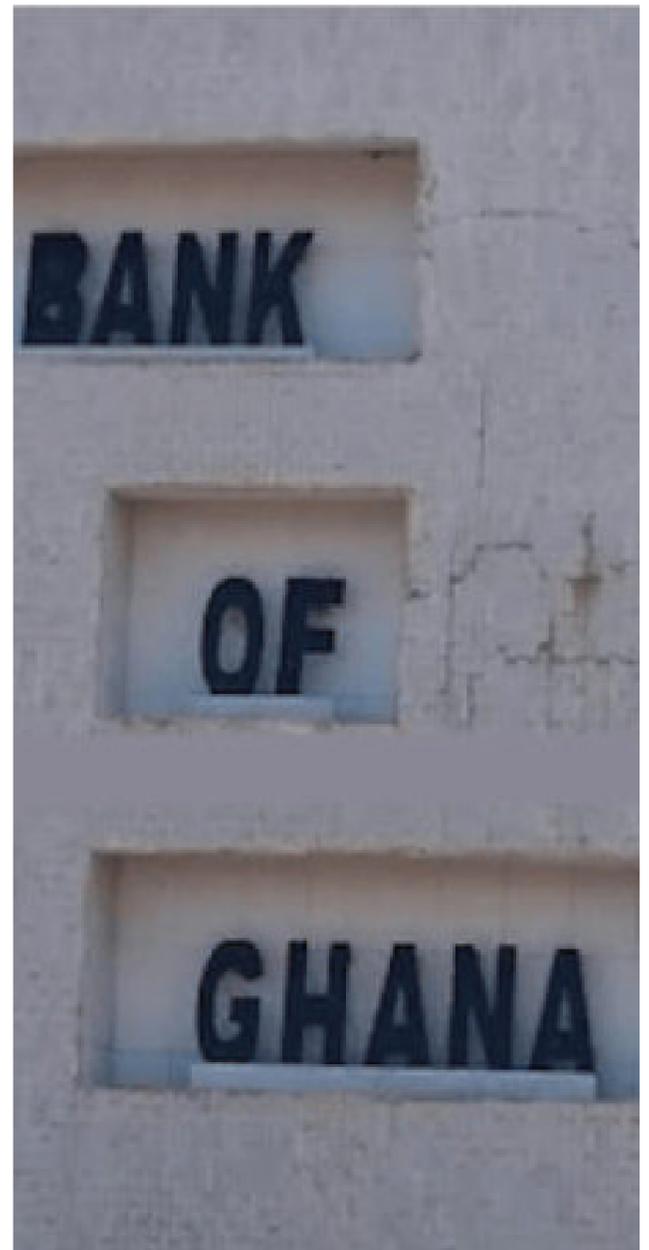
preferred option for the Paris Club. Only poorer nations are eligible to request a Common Framework programme. This then lead to an official creditor committee convened and negotiations supported by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. On the other hand, a country aiming to restructure its debt can also do so by negotiating individually with each creditor. The Common Framework, designed to allow for speedy debt reworks, has been widely criticised for its glacial progress. Chad, Ethiopia and Zambia signed up in early 2021. While Chad secured a deal with creditors in November, Zambia is still locked in talks. Ethiopia's progress was held up by civil war. Ghana's public debt hits ₵467.4bn in September 2022. Ghana's public debt stock hit ₵467.4 billion (\$47.7 billion) in September 2022, of which about \$4 billion was bilateral. \$1.9 billion was held by Paris Club countries and \$1.7 billion by China. President Akufo-Addo in July 2022 directed the Finance Minister, Ken Ofori-Atta, to begin formal engagements with the IMF for a Fund-support. A statement signed by the Information Minister, Kojo Oppong Nkrumah, and dated July 1, 2022

Interest rates surge

The Bank of Ghana also said short-term interest rates on the money market have reflected recent developments, while medium-term to long-term rates have remained relatively behind the yield curve. For example, while the discount rate on the 91-day instrument has increased to 29.7% in September 2022 from 12.5% in September 2021, the coupon rates on the 7-year, 10-year, 15-year, and 20-year have remained unchanged at 18.1%, 19.8%, 20.0% and 20.2% respectively. The interbank market weighted average rate has increased to 22.05% in September 2022 from 12.61% in September 2021, consistent with the rise in the policy rate. Average lending rates of banks have also adjusted upwards to 29.81 per cent in September 2022 from 20.20 per cent recorded in the corresponding period of 2021. Policy rate gone up by 9.5% since March 2022. Since the Bank of Ghana first increased the policy rate in March 2022, the interest

Policy rate has gone up by 9.5%.

The Central Bank increased the policy rate by 2.5% on March 25, 2022, to 17%, and subsequently increased it on May 23, 2022, to 19%. It again adjusted it upwards by 300 basis points to 22% in August 2022.



indicated that there had already been a conversation between the IMF boss, Kristalina Georgieva and President Akufo-Addo, conveying the government's decision to engage the Fund. The IMF-support programme will inject \$3 billion into the country's economy as balance of payment support. Ghana must restructure its debt to get the final approval to access the IMF fund. In December 2022, Finance Minister, Ken Ofori-Atta launched a domestic debt exchange and later said it would default on nearly all of its \$28.4 billion of external debts.





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Local news

National Chief Imam replies Owusu Bempah

Story: Kwabena Akyeana

Office of the National Chief Imam has taken a strong exception to an allegation by the Head Pastor of the Glorious Word Power Ministries International that Sheikh Ousman Nuhu Sharubutu seeks spiritual protection from him.

It said, Rev Isaac Owusu Bempah's claims were untrue and should be dismissed completely by all well-meaning Ghanaians.

In a press release on Wednesday, January 4, 2023 the office said the Chief Imam did not seek spiritual protection from "charlatans on the pulpit."

It thus asked the Inspector-General of Police (IGP) and the Christian community to advise Reverend Owusu Bempah from making further controversial and false prophecies about his Eminence, Shiekh Osman Nuhu Sharabutu.

"We wish to state that all the claims of Rev. Isaac Owusu Bempah contain no iota of truth, but represent the figment of his own imagination.

"Undoubtedly, His Eminence is a champion of interfaith harmony and peaceful co-existence. But he does not seek protection and prosperity from charlatans on the pulpit."

"Conclusively, we stand – at all times – for interfaith solidarity and national unity, as we contribute our quota to the building of a prosperous democratic state of diverse religious communities.

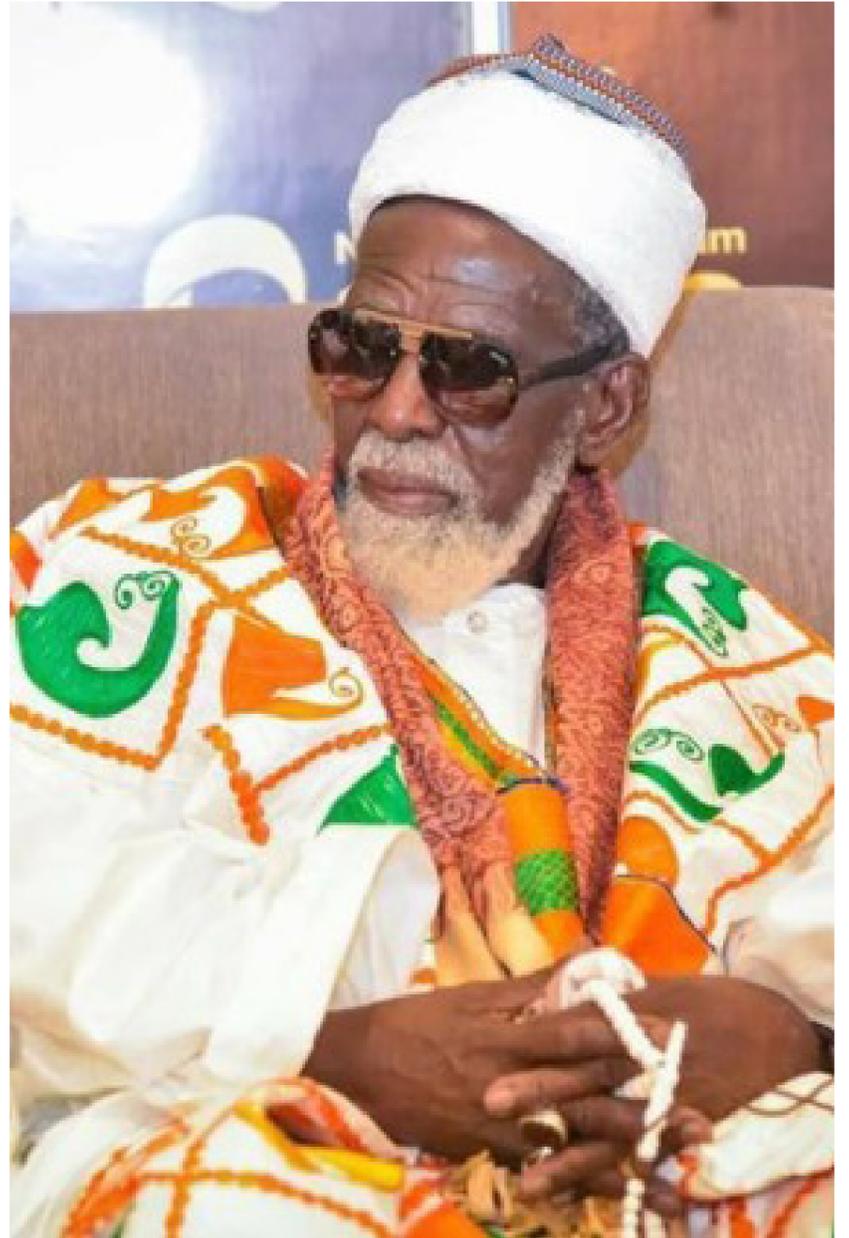
Rev Owusu Bempah is alleged to have claimed that the National Chief Imam seeks spiritual protection from him. The said allegation was said to have been made on Saturday, December 31, 2022, during his church's watch night service.

It would be recalled that in January 2019, the self-styled pastor thanked the National Chief Imam for his swift action to forestall peace when his church was vandalised recently by some Zongo youths.

Rev. Isaac Owusu Bempah said he considered Sheikh Usman Nuru Sharubutu as his father for the love shown him after a prophecy during his December 31, 2018, church service suggesting the respected Islamic leader will die in 2019.

Irate youth, armed with machetes, stormed Rev. Owusu Bempah's property after he prophesied that some key leaders in Ghana including the National Chief Imam would die in 2019.

Speaking at a meeting at the Chief Imam's Fadama residence in Accra, he said that but for the centenarian's timely intervention, the issue would have taken another twist which could lead to harm and destruction.



Akufo-Addo appeals to clergy to pray for Ghana

The President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo is calling on the clergy to continue praying for Ghana and its leaders in the face of the economic challenges the country is faced with.

Mr. Akufo-Addo says a divine intervention will help the country come out of its current predicaments. He reiterated his commitment to seeing a prosperous Ghana, where justice and peace are embraced. There was a downturn in the value of the cedi, with prices of goods and services as well as fuel soaring during the last quarter of 2022.

The Government of Ghana launched the Domestic Debt Exchange Programme on December 5, 2022, which affects Government of Ghana bonds listed on the Ghana Fixed Income Market (GFIM).

The President made the call when he addressed the 28th National and 16th Biennial Congress of the National Union of Ghana Catholic Diocesan Priests Association in Koforidua, in the Eastern region.

"I will continue to ask you to pray for our nation so that we can surmount the current economic challenges we faced together. As the President of Ghana, I'm determined to see a prosperous Ghana, where justice and peace embrace [each other]. But the common good is safeguarding and promoting the nation," the President stated.



Local news

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Education Minister to hold meeting with GTEC, NUGS,

**Over fee increment today*

The Minister of Education, Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum is scheduled to meet the management of some public universities, the Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) and the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS) today, Thursday, January 5, 2023, over agitations against increment of fees.

The meeting comes on the back of accusations by the student body that the public universities had increased their fees by more than the 15% threshold approved by Parliament.

The management of UG has however justified its decision to increase fees.

Speaking ahead of the meeting, the President of the National Union of Ghana Students, Dennis Appiah Larbi-Ampofo, said "as a union, we will explore every protection against administrative abuses by state institutions in the Constitution".

The Public Relations Officer of the Education Ministry, Kwasi Kwarteng, has however said he's hopeful that a consensus would be arrived at the meeting. "The Minister for Education, Dr. Yaw Adutwum, has once again intervened and has invited the universities in question. We have the University of Ghana (UG), University of Cape Coast (UCC), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) and some other public universities. So

we have extended invitation to them, hopefully, we will meet them together with GTEC this Thursday [January 5, 2023]. The entire aim is to be able to find a lasting solution or resolve this issue," the Public Relations Officer of the Education Ministry," said in a Citi News interview.



ECG monitors installed prepaid meters in Kroboland

The Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) will today, Thursday, January 5, 2023, embark on an exercise to monitor its installed prepaid meters in the Krobo enclave.

According to the ECG, even though the exercise has become necessary after picking up indications of the use of illegal meters by some residents, the routine monitoring will also help the company fix malfunctioning equipment in both Lower Manya and Yilo Krobo Municipalities to improve service delivery.

The Public Relations Officer of the ECG in the Tema Region, Sakyiwaa Mensah told Citi News that the law will deal with persons found culpable after the monitoring.

"The Krobo office of ECG will this morning conduct monitoring of some areas which have the prepaid meters installed. We have received an indication that there are some illegal meters that have been used to replace some of the prepaid meters that the ECG recently gave to customers in some of the areas.

"The monitoring is also part of routine ECG operational activities where every once in a while, we monitor our systems and meters to ensure that they are working and functioning well, so such monitoring activities are part of our normal and usual procedures," Sakyiwaa Mensah said.

She added that, "this morning's exercise won't be different because we are going to check and ensure that the meters are working well enough and also if there happen to be any fake meters, some of which we have picked information on, they will be removed and the customers who are using the fake meters will have to go through the legal processes".



GRNMA welcomes suspension of NSS boss in Ashanti region

The General Secretary of Ghana Registered Nurses and Midwives Association (GRNMA), David Tenkoreng-Twum says the Association is pleased with the punishment meted out to the Ashanti Regional Director of the National Service Scheme (NSS), Alex Opoku-Mensah.

VOICE

Mr Opoku-Mensah has been suspended for two months without pay for verbally abusing a nurse at the Manhyia Government Hospital.

According to Mr David Tenkoreng-Twum, though GRNMA demanded a total dismissal, they are reconsidering the demand because he was remorseful.

Mr David Tenkoreng-Twum made this remark in an interview with the media on Wednesday. His comments were in response to a question by the host about whether GRNMA was willing to give the Ashanti NSS boss a second chance.

It would be recalled that the Ashanti Regional NSS boss, Alex Opoku-Mensah is said to have verbally abused a nurse at the Manhyia Government Hospital who had a misunderstanding with his daughter (a house officer).

The nurse had called the house officer to suggest a change in prescription because what the latter had prescribed was unavailable at the pharmacy. According to the Medical Superintendent, Dr Hussein, the house officer is said to have taken offence at how the nurse spoke with her, and so protested.

Dr. Hussein said the house officer happened to have been in the company of her father when she spoke with the nurse on the phone. As such, Mr. Opoku-Mensah was infuriated by the turn of events and followed his daughter to the hospital.

Although the NSS boss has apologized for his utterances, the Management of the National Service Scheme in a statement issued on Thursday suspended him for verbally abusing the nurse.

The embattled Ashanti Regional boss has been directed to apologize to the NSS for bringing its name into disrepute through his action.



OPINION

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Ezra's Sonnet: Revisiting The Cathedral Controversy

By: Magnus Naabi RexDanquah

When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the exiles were building a temple for the Lord, the God of Israel, they came to Zerubbabel and to the heads of the families and said, "Let us help you build because, like you, we seek your God and have been sacrificing to him since the time of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here." But Zerubbabel, Joshua and the rest of the heads of the families of Israel answered, "You have no part with us in building a temple to our God. We alone will build it for the Lord, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia, commanded us." Then the peoples around them set out to discourage the people of Judah and make them afraid to go on building. They bribed officials to work against them and frustrate their plans during the entire reign of Cyrus king of Persia and down to the reign of Darius king of Persia. Ezra 4:1-5 NIV.

.....do you know that some very good, people-friendly policies of various governments of the nation couldn't see the light of day because others who might have owed their allegiances to other authorities or nations, betrayed us by leaking these great policies to those who might suffer through loss of businesses that they might suffer if the policies are implemented....in the instances of foreign governments, we are betrayed by our own kith and kin who are puppets of these governments...and they in turn virtually 'blackmail' their agents in government to make sure that those policies never see the light of day...?do you know that sometimes the good plans you have, ready for implementation never see the light of day because others who just hate your guts.....who just don't want to see you succeed at anything will scheme and make sure you fail....they don't even care paying money to occultists and fetishists and spiritualists to consult various altars to ensure you fail...?

....do you know that sometimes those very, very close to you are spoken to, to be your agent provocateur to provide all sounds of pessimism to put you off track and lay foundation for you to doubt yourself and give up...these close people could be your wife or husband or child or children or other relations...?

....such are the challenges we face and responsible for derailing our dreams and purposes and destinies....and in turn, taking us off our very essence of the reasons why we are here on earth..?

.....they employ all kinds of skirmishes....

....WHEN THE ENEMIES OF JUDAH AND BENJAMIN HEARD THAT THE EXILES WERE BUILDING A TEMPLE FOR THE LORD, THE GOD OF ISRAEL, THEY CAME TO ZERUBBABEL AND TO THE HEADS OF THE FAMILIES AND SAID, "LET US HELP YOU BUILD BECAUSE, LIKE YOU, WE SEEK YOUR GOD AND HAVE BEEN SACRIFICING TO HIM SINCE THE TIME OF ESARHADDON KING OF ASSYRIA, WHO BROUGHT US HERE"....

....using deceit and lying tongues to get involved and when they were rebuffed....:

...."YOU HAVE NO PART WITH US IN BUILDING A TEMPLE TO OUR GOD. WE ALONE WILL BUILD IT FOR THE LORD, THE GOD OF ISRAEL, AS KING CYRUS, THE KING OF PERSIA, COMMANDED US".... then the people showed their true colours....as they set out to discourage the people of Judah and make them afraid to go on building....

....DOES IT SOUND FAMILIAR....

....they bribed officials to work against them and frustrate their plans during the entire reign of Cyrus king of Persia and down to the reign of Darius king of Persia....thus for years they frustrated all plans to rebuild the Temple of the Lord....sabotage of all kinds....unfortunately that's what has been happening to us as a People and as a Nation....

....funnily, that's what we do to ourselves as one party loses elections...they seek to undermine and sabotage the new party in power through all kinds of subtleties....



as if whatever plans and projects the new government are pursuing are for Nigerians or Ivoirians in their respective countries and not GHANAIANS IN OUR OWN COUNTRY....what kind of people are we....such shameful acts....remember in the days of yore...when one team of people who wanted to take over the administration of football clubs at that time like Accra Hearts of Oak F/C...or Kumasi Asante Kotoko F/C....Brong Ahafo (BA) United F/C....Standfast F/C.... chose to PAY LOSING BONUSES to the players, bonuses which were over and above their winning bonuses to induce them to deliberately lose football matches....just so that the then administrators and management would be ridiculed...compromised...be seen as incompetent...incapable of delivering victories to the teeming supporters of the club in question and get the supporters agitated and demonstrate to get the administrations in question sacked and be replaced by those who were paying the losing bonuses...what evil....

....as they say the person who slaughters another with a knife in his sleep, is afraid himself to sleep...that's what we have been doing to ourselves as a people and as a nation....how sad....

...but worse still...that's why we aren't progressing as a people but rather going round in circles....repeating same mistakes....mirroring same wrongs, inimical policies of increases in fuel prices...immediately after winning elections and sworn into offices...forgetting all the campaign promises and what we said of the losing, past governments....only to find ourselves repeating same...now under different terminologies as well as justifications to confuse us the people....

....can you imagine the number and different kinds of people...FRIENDS AND ENEMIES alike...who are, as I write this, PAYING LOSING BONUSES to ensure that you fail at everything you set mind and heart and hands to accomplish to glorify the Lord our God...your own rebuilding of His Temple....

....it's funny but during the last days of Ghana's hosting of the African Cup of Nations (CAN 2008) like during all our participations in such tournaments...stories were rife that some political parties were praying that the Black Stars, our national team does not win the tournament...otherwise the then ruling party will be difficult to beat at the elections scheduled for same year....so all sorts of fetishists had been consulted to ensure the team was eliminated before they could reach the finals....weird if you ask me...not for a moment believing these stories to be TRUE though...but such is life and its realities...believe it or not....have lived my fair share of this life to know and appreciate LIFE and its mysteries....

....WICKEDNESS is as part of life as day and night....

after all...sons kill fathers...fathers kill sons...husbands kill wives...wives kill husbands...brothers kill brothers...otherwise how can anyone explain what happened between CAIN and ABEL from same mother and father....such sibling rivalry and envies and petty jealousies are still with us today...as enemies...as they were in the very beginning... or better still how on earth can you explain Rebecca's love for one son, Jacob against his twin brother, Esau for a father's blessing for his first son....?

....these enemies whose sole plan and plot is to make sure that we never rebuild our fathers' houses...or pursue the right policies and programmes that will make lives more bearable...these perceived enemies who don't want to see us progress...in our personal lives but rather always play second fiddle to them...remain their subjects and house helps and servants not only for our lives but perpetually to include our children and children's children to

CONTINUE TO SERVE THEM AND THEIR CHILDREN AND CHILDREN'S CHILDREN...

....mind you it isn't always the foreigners who take over our father's house and nation...but most times those very close to us...who have 'EYES'...mean spiritual eyes to see our future greatness as well as bright destinies and futures of unparalleled elevations...those very close to us like those we share our alleged secrets and private plans with....colleagues in offices and in the churches we discuss our plans for new projects with...and are able to hide their envies and petty jealousies...listen and plot our downfall at close quarters...

....invariably they are the very last people that we would ever suspect....they will pay bribes to others so they sabotage our plans for elevation....SUCH WICKEDNESS....of highest order....no wonder, we are told to always be as WISE AS A SERPENT....in all the things we do or intend to do...our plans for our future...like rebuilding the Lord's Temple in Jerusalem....because man is fundamentally and primarily EVIL....and so pretentious....come close as if a friend and then plot our downfall...so be wise and discerning as the serpent... the Biblical references and or justifications as who ought to build Ghana's Cathedral - state or people is a subject for another day but honestly hypocrites are many of us, especially those who should know better as leaders of the people...



R. Kelly silenced Aaliyah & her family with NDA

**After marriage annulment*

R. Kelly silenced Aaliyah and her family through a non-disclosure agreement (NDA), following his marriage and subsequent annulment to the then-15-year-old singer.

The new allegations were made in the final installment of Lifetime's "Surviving R. Kelly," which aired on Jan. 2 and Jan. 3.

The docuseries centred on R. Kelly's 2022 federal trial where the NDA was brought up in the courtroom as evidence. The late Aaliyah was Jane Doe #1 in the trial.

"Surviving R. Kelly" utilizes Aaliyah's story to spotlight her as a victim of R. Kelly, after years of the media and music industry scandalizing her marriage to the now-convicted singer in the 90's.

Aaliyah's debut album in 1994 was titled "Age Ain't Nothing but a Number" and was recorded when she was 14 years old. R. Kelly — who was Aaliyah's mentor and was first introduced to her by her uncle, music executive and manager Barry Hankerson — was a lead songwriter and producer of the album. At the time the album was released, rumours circulated that there was a relationship between the 15-year-old Aaliyah and the 27-year-old R. Kelly. The pair secretly married in August 1994. Aaliyah was 15 at the time, but the marriage certificate falsified her age as 18. The marriage was annulled by Aaliyah's parents in Feb. 1995.

In "Surviving R. Kelly," on-camera interviews with individuals from R. Kelly's camp who were in the room when the duo wed express their regret over the marriage. Individuals who were close to both R. Kelly and Aaliyah share new details about the legal agreement that was allegedly forged between R. Kelly and Aaliyah's family.

Members of Aaliyah's family declined to comment to producers of "Surviving R. Kelly," per a statement that aired as part of the Lifetime docuseries.

A childhood friend of R. Kelly and his former security, Gem Pratt, appears in "Surviving R. Kelly" and claims that Aaliyah's father was furious over the marriage and forced the annulment.

Pratt alleges that Aaliyah's family had a contractual arrangement with R. Kelly that stated they wouldn't press charges against him for the illegal marriage after it was annulled; in turn, R. Kelly sold the rights to his first three albums to Aaliyah's family, giving them a financial incentive. "Her dad didn't want her anywhere near him," Pratt says in the docuseries.

Various on-camera guests in "Surviving R. Kelly" described the marriage as a way to get R. Kelly to avoid jail time for statutory rape of a minor.

The final episodes of "Surviving R. Kelly" dedicate time to covering the enablers in R. Kelly's camp, who turned a blind eye to his abuse over three decades and helped the convicted musician make arrangements to see his victims, including booking flights for underage girls to cross state lines for private meetings.

One prosecutor who appeared as a legal expert in the docuseries described R. Kelly as "running a criminal enterprise." Another expert said "everyone had a financial incentive to look the other way."

"He couldn't do this by himself. It's impossible... It's clear as day there were enablers," said R. Kelly's former security guard, Pratt. He later said, "This was not a one-man operation. Most people in that camp knew that a lot of these girls were underage. They had to."

The NDA was brought up in R. Kelly's New York trial in 2022, but did not receive widespread coverage. The use of NDAs has become a hot-button issue in sexual harassment cases, particularly in the workplace, highlighting an imbalance of power

with the perpetrator or corporations silencing victims through forced legal documents.

Prior to R. Kelly's trial, journalist Jim DeRogatis — the reporter who first broke news of R. Kelly's sexual abuse more than two decades ago — uncovered the NDA that R. Kelly used against Aaliyah. A few years ago, DeRogatis spoke about the documents that were leaked to him, stating in an interview that the annulment and Aaliyah's legal claim against R. Kelly had been sealed.

"It's a harrowing document," he said. A non-disclosure agreement on both her part and Kelly's, vowing not to pursue further legal claims for physical abuse. So, it wasn't just an underage sexual relationship, he hit her, allegedly, according to that court document."

Speaking to Variety about the final instalment of "Surviving R. Kelly," executive producer Jesse Daniels said that the producing team was careful not to exploit Aaliyah in the docuseries, and hoped to highlight the abuse she tragically endured by R. Kelly when she was a teenager.

"We have had a lot of conversations about how to tell Aaliyah's story every time because we really want to be respectful of her legacy. But what she went through, we can't turn our backs on," said Daniels.



Let's celebrate Cindy Thompson-Kelvyn Boy



Popular Afrobeats singer Kelvyn Brown, better known as Kelvyn Boy has called on Ghanaians to celebrate legendary Ghanaian Gospel songstress, Cindy Thompson before she dies.

Cindy Thompson, now Cindy Quainoo is a veteran Ghanaian gospel musician who shot to fame with her song "Awurade Kasa".

The song was subsequently used for political gain by the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) in 2000. She is well-known for monster hit albums such as Cindy's Messiah, Nkunimdea, Jesus Wo Nkoa, Onokwafo Nyame, Calvary Nyannkopon

In a recent interview, Cindy Thompson vowed to sue anyone who dares to sample her songs. "I won't do all the all-nights and write a song for someone to use it". She said

However, eulogizing the singer on Twitter which was sighted by Ghanaweekend.com, Kelvyn Boy said "Cindy Thompson!! That Woman should be celebrated if she's still alive! Wild Gospel Discography".