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(((Editorial)))

A Decision for the Decades— Weighing the five-year presidential term

GHANA'S 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution has served as the anchor of our national political stability for over three decades. Yet, as our democracy matures, the governance mechanics designed in 1992 face increasing scrutiny.

THE recent announcement by the government accepting the Constitutional Review Committee's recommendation to extend the presidential and parliamentary terms from four to five years has reopened a vital national debate.

THIS proposal touches the very core of our social contract. As citizens and stakeholders in this democracy, we must evaluate whether extending the tenure of elected officials will unlock long-term development or weaken the public's check on power.

PROPOSERS of the five-year term present a compelling practical argument rooted in the daily realities of governance: the four-year cycle in Ghana is, in effect, a two-year operational window.

THE first year of any new administration is predominantly consumed by executive appointments, cabinet vetting, transitional handovers, and policy realignment.

BY the start of the fourth year, the nation inevitably re-enters full election mode. Key political actors pivot from policy execution to campaigning, policy decisions stall, and public spending frequently spikes to accommodate electoral pressure.

THIS leaves government leaders with barely twenty-four months of uninterrupted execution time. For long-term capital investments—such as major infrastructural overhauls, energy sector stabilization, and structural economic reforms—a four-year framework can incentivize short-term political quick fixes rather than sustainable development planning. Aligning parliamentary terms with a five-year mandate similarly offers lawmakers greater capacity to handle complex legislative calendars.

WHILE the structural efficiency of a five-year cycle is attractive, opponents raise legitimate concerns grounded in democratic vigilance.

THE fundamental strength of Ghana's democratic tradition lies in the prompt power of the ballot box. A four-year mandate ensures that any administration that falls short on performance, transparency, or economic management is called to account relatively quickly. Extending the term by an additional year means citizens must wait longer to alter course if a government loses public trust.

FURTHERMORE, extending tenure does not automatically guarantee policy efficiency; without disciplined expenditure controls and fiscal responsibility, an extra year could simply expand the window for administrative inertia.

BECAUSE presidential tenure is an entrenched provision of the 1992 Constitution, any change cannot be implemented by executive fiat or a simple parliamentary vote. It requires a national referendum with a high threshold—at least a 40% turnout of registered voters and a 75% approval vote.

THE question of extending the presidential term must not be treated as a partisan contest between the ruling government and the opposition. It must be approached as a neutral, nation-building decision evaluated on its institutional merits.

TO ensure this debate serves the public interest, three key conditions must be met: Strict Non-retroactivity, comprehensive public education and comprehensive governance reforms.

GHANA has built a reputation as a beacon of democratic resilience in West Africa. Whether we retain the four-year cycle or transition to five, the ultimate decision belongs to the Ghanaian electorate. Let us engage in this constitutional debate with maturity, foresight, and an unyielding commitment to the national interest.

Mahama Appeals For peace

**As late Ya-Na's son
named Regent*

Story: Hamza Mohmmmed

THE Dagbon Kingdom, on Friday, July 31, 2026 entered a new phase in its customary succession process with the enskinment of Kampakuya Naa Yakubu, the eldest son of the late Ya-Na Abukari II, as Regent to administer the affairs of the kingdom pending the selection and enskinment of a new Overlord.

Installed by the kingmakers at the Gbewaa Palace in Yendi, the Regent assumes the traditional responsibility of safeguarding the throne during the transition period in accordance with Dagbon customs and traditions.

Under Dagbon customary law, the title of Kampakuya Naa is reserved for the first son of a deceased Ya-Na, who serves as caretaker of the kingdom until the succession process is completed.

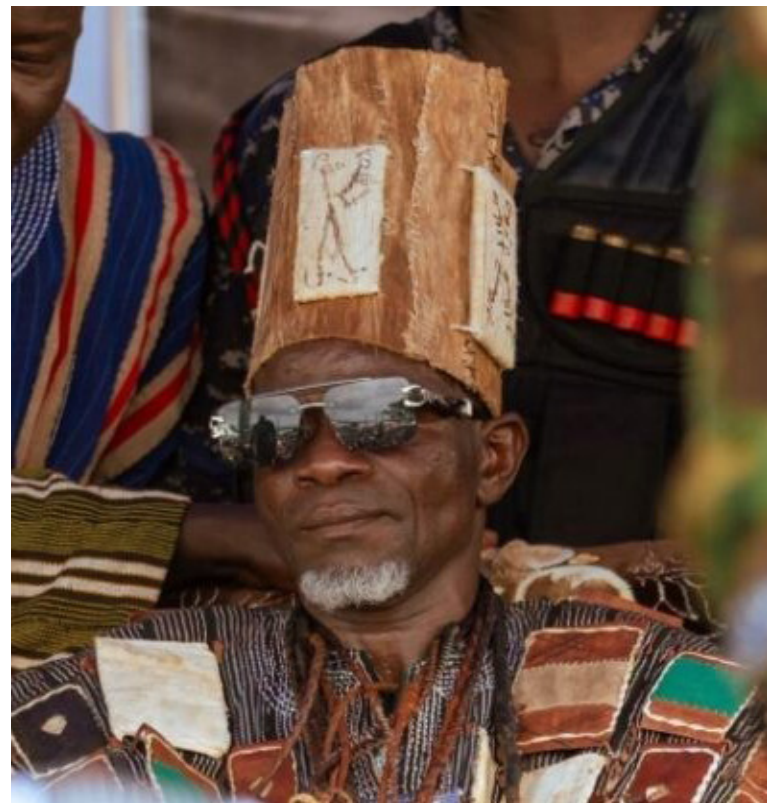
The Regent is expected to work closely with the kingmakers and the Dagbon Traditional Council to supervise the final funeral arrangements for the late monarch, preserve peace and stability, and ensure the smooth administration of the kingdom until a successor is chosen through the established rotational chieftaincy system.

The colourful but solemn ceremony attracted hundreds of mourners, chiefs, opinion leaders and dignitaries from across the country.

Among those present were President John Dramani Mahama; Former Vice President Dr Mahamudu Bawumia; Education Minister Haruna Iddrisu; the National Chief Imam, Sheikh Osman Nuhu Sharubutu; Northern Regional Minister Ali Adolf John; members of the diplomatic corps; traditional rulers; and representatives of various political parties. From the early hours of the day, thousands of residents and visitors thronged the Gbewaa Palace and adjoining streets to witness the historic event, which marked another important milestone in Dagbon's revered succession tradition. The installation combined ancient Dagbon customs with Islamic rites, including the shaving of the Regent's head and special Quran recitations and prayers led by Islamic clerics for the repose of the soul of the late Ya-Na.

Traditional drumming, cultural performances and the appearance of chiefs adorned in colourful regalia underscored the rich heritage of the Dagbon Kingdom and the enduring significance of the Ya-Na as the custodian of its history and traditions.

Addressing the gathering, President Mahama paid glowing tribute to the late Ya-Na Abukari II, describing him as a statesman whose reign restored harmony and advanced development within the kingdom.



He said the late Overlord inherited a divided kingdom but devoted his reign to fostering reconciliation and strengthening unity among the people of Dagbon.

"He was very passionate about agriculture, health, road infrastructure, education, youth development and many others," President Mahama said.

The President urged the people of Dagbon to preserve the peace painstakingly built over the years and assured the newly installed Regent of government's support as he steers the kingdom through the transition.

He expressed confidence that the values of peace, tolerance and unity championed by the late Ya-Na would continue to guide the kingdom.

Former Vice-President Dr Mahamudu Bawumia also honoured the memory of the late Ya-Na, describing him as a father figure whose leadership helped consolidate lasting peace in Dagbon.

He appealed to all stakeholders to ensure that the selection of the next Ya-Na strictly follows the established customary arrangements and strengthens the peace agreement that has sustained stability in the kingdom.

In a speech delivered on his behalf by the Paramount Chief of the Zangbalung Traditional Area, Naa Dr Jacob Yakubu Mahama, the Regent pledged to safeguard the peace achieved under his father's reign and faithfully uphold the rotational succession agreement between the Abudu and Andani royal gates.

"My father demonstrated this wisdom when he enskinned more Abudu chiefs than Andani chiefs during his reign, choosing the peace of the kingdom

over gate advantage," he said.

He assured the gathering that the established succession arrangement would be respected when the time comes to install a new Ya-Na.

The Regent further pledged to continue key development initiatives championed by the late Overlord, including the construction of the Gbewaa Palace, implementation of the Dagbon 10-Year Development Plan, advancement of the University for Development Studies (UDS) Yendi Campus project, and partnerships in agriculture and energy development.

Ya-Na Abukari II was laid to rest at Katini, the royal mausoleum of Dagbon, last Monday in accordance with the kingdom's customs and traditions.

The revered traditional ruler died in South Africa on July 12, 2026, while receiving medical treatment. His remains were flown to Yendi for burial after the requisite traditional rites had been performed.

The third-day and seventh-day Islamic prayers (Adua) have since been observed, paving the way for the customary installation of the Kampakuya Naa and the commencement of the next phase of Dagbon's succession process, which will culminate in the enskinment of a new Ya-Na.



Rice, Chicken Drive Ghana's GHS36.5BN In 2025

Story: Reuben Sackey

Ghana spent more than GH¢36.5 billion importing food products in 2025, with cereal grains, frozen chicken and animal products accounting for a significant share of the

The latest Annual International Merchandise Trade Statistics Report by the Ghana Statistical Service puts the value of food imports at GH¢36.46billion, highlighting continued dependence on foreign supplies to meet demand for key food commodities. Processed cereal grains were Ghana's largest food import, valued at GH¢2.94 billion and accounting for 8.1 percent of total food imports. Frozen chicken ranked second at GH¢2.84 billion, followed by animal guts, bladders and stomachs, which were imported at a cost of GH¢2.72 billion. Rice featured twice among the country's top food imports.



Semi-milled or wholly milled rice was valued at GH¢2.39 billion, while broken rice accounted for another GH¢1.19 billion.

Other major food imports included sugar, frozen fish, palm oil, mangoes and shea nuts.

The four leading food imports, processed cereal grains, frozen chicken, animal products and rice collectively accounted for 30% of Ghana's food import bill.

The figures underline the scale of Ghana's food import dependence even as the country continues to expand agricultural production and promote import substitution.

On the export side, the report pointed to growing opportunities in value-added agriculture and agro-processing, with processed cocoa products, cashew nuts, tuna and shea-based products emerging as important contributors to Ghana's food export profile.

The contrast between Ghana's food imports and exports highlights both the opportunities and challenges facing the agricultural sector.

While Ghana continues to earn from cocoa, cashew and other export products, the country remains heavily reliant on foreign markets for staples and protein products consumed locally.

The report identified stronger domestic production, agro-processing and value addition as critical to reducing food import dependence and improving the resilience of Ghana's agricultural economy.

EPA Urges Styrofoam Ban

**After plastics found in human placenta*

Story: Victoria Beeko-Danso

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) says emerging scientific evidence showing the presence of plastic particles in the human body underscores the need for Ghana's planned ban on single-use polystyrene (styrofoam) food containers from January 1, 2027.

Speaking during the eighth edition of the Loud and Green X Spaces, the EPA's Director of Human Settlement, Hope Smith Lomotey, said the decision to phase out styrofoam was driven not only by environmental concerns but also by growing evidence of its potential impact on human health.

"We have conducted a number of researches. We have even discovered plastic in some women's placenta, which is becoming alarming," he said.

Mr Lomotey explained that the proposed ban

forms part of the implementation of Ghana's National Plastic Management Policy, launched in 2020, and is aimed at reducing plastic pollution while protecting public health.

He warned that styrofoam containers could release harmful chemicals when used to serve hot, oily or acidic foods.

"Where hot food are poured in some of these containers, people are exposed to the chemicals. Oily foods also are poured into them, releasing these toxins. Acidic foods are poured into it," he stated.

Beyond potential health risks, Mr Lomotey said styrofoam continued to contribute significantly to environmental degradation because of its lightweight nature, which allows it to be easily blown into drains, rivers and other waterways. "Some of these products are very light, so any air that blows them finds them in the environment. Whenever it rains, they are carried into the drains and some of the drains get choked, which also contributes in causing some of the flooding that we experience," he explained. He noted that unlike organic waste, "styrofoam does not readily decompose, remaining in the environment for centuries".

"Some can even stay for about 500 years to decompose because they are not biodegradable," he said.

Mr Lomotey also warned that plastic pollution extends beyond land-based ecosystems, affecting aquatic life and eventually returning to humans through the food chain.

"Some aquatic animals like the fishes also

consume some of this, and they remain in their system, come back to us in the food chain. We consume it and it's still in our system," he added.

According to the EPA, these combined environmental and public health concerns have made it necessary for Ghana to transition away from single-use styrofoam packaging.

Ahead of the January 1, 2027 implementation date, the Authority says it will continue nationwide public education campaigns and stakeholder engagements to prepare manufacturers, importers, retailers and consumers for the transition to environmentally friendly alternatives.

While acknowledging that the ban alone will not eliminate flooding, the EPA maintains that reducing the use of styrofoam will help cut plastic pollution, ease pressure on drainage systems and contribute to improved public health.



International News

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Current Ebola outbreak worst ever in DR Congo- WHO

The Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo is the biggest in the country's history, the World Health Organization (WHO) has said.

As of 30 July, there were 3,605 confirmed cases including 1,587 deaths - a fatality rate of 44%.

The current outbreak is caused by the Bundibugyo strain of the virus. It was declared on 15 May 2026 and surpasses the previous biggest outbreak between 2018 and 2020, which had nearly 3,500 recorded cases of whom almost 2,300 died. There is currently no approved vaccine or treatment for the Bundibugyo strain, but vaccines are being developed in the UK and Singapore.

Ebola, which spreads through contact with bodily fluids, has killed 15,000 people across Africa over the last 50 years. The WHO said in a statement posted on X that the outbreak was "intensifying, with sustained transmission and continued increases in reported cases and deaths".

It added that during the past week, the outbreak reached its highest weekly total with 567 cases and 296 deaths. It warned these figures underscored "the exceptional pace of transmission". "Factors like insecurity, population displacement, and cross-border movement continue to hamper response efforts and increase the risk of further spread," it said.

The centre of the outbreak is the Ituri province in the northeast of the country, which borders South Sudan and Uganda. But it has also spread to other parts of the country, including the North and South Kivu provinces, where large areas are controlled by the Rwanda-backed M23 armed group.



"The convergence of insecurity, population displacement and mobility, and cross-border movements complicate response operations and increase the risk of further geographical spread," the WHO said.

During the current outbreak, 20 cases have also been reported in Uganda along with one in France.

Two cases diagnosed in DR Congo were later treated in Germany.

On 30 July, the WHO announced that the "most promising" vaccine would be developed in Singapore, while the trial of a separate jab has begun in the UK.

Some criticism of the situation has involved concerns over the Schengen Area - an agreement which eliminates border checks and now encompasses more than 450 million people and 29 countries in Europe. In addition to Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni suspending Italy's Schengen agreement with Spain for a month, Finland, France and Portugal have all said they were either looking at, or considering, border checks.

Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen urged the EU to "consider all options, including a suspension of Schengen co-operation".

Von der Leyen said the images from Ceuta were "unacceptable". Writing on social media, she said: "We cannot allow anyone to come to our Union without abiding by our rules."

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz demanded that Morocco "take back illegal migrants immediately", while on Saturday, UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham said he had spoken to Sánchez and the UK was "providing what help we can".

Morocco witnessed several Gen Z anti-government

protests last year, with young people demanding better opportunities and improvements to public services.

Together with Melilla, Ceuta forms the European Union's only land borders with Africa. Migrants can enter the enclave by swimming several kilometres.

While the surge of migrants this year is extraordinary, Ceuta has long been a focal point for migrants attempting to reach Europe. During the summer months, there is often a big push to reach Ceuta, typically organised over social media.

In 2021, about 8,000 people entered Ceuta over a matter of days, exacerbating Spain's diplomatic tensions with Morocco.

Spain has a relatively friendly approach to immigration. In April, the government approved plans to give legal status to 500,000 undocumented migrants, allowing them to be formally integrated into the workforce.

EU calls emergency meeting to discuss Ceuta migrant crossings

The European Union will hold emergency talks on Tuesday to discuss the migration crisis in Ceuta after tense exchanges between Spain and other member states.

Twenty-two member states issued a joint letter calling for co-ordinated action and the strengthening of the EU's external borders, after some 60,000 migrants entered the Spanish enclave from Morocco.

Spain condemned "selfish, polarising and unlawful" reaction to the crisis after Italy suspended the EU's border-free Schengen arrangement with Spain - a move backed by Finland and Denmark.

Officials say almost all those who reached Ceuta on 30 July have returned, while deaths from the surge in crossings had risen to at least 67.

The EU members' letter addresses concerns around "hybrid threats to create the perception that illegal entry into the European Union is possible," adding that the perception "would encourage further attempts, undermine confidence in our common migration policy and have repercussions for all Member States".

Leaders of the Netherlands, Finland and Belgium are among 22 signatures on the letter, addressed to EU President Antonio Costa, president of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen and Taoiseach Michael Martin, as Ireland currently holds the presidency of the Council of the European Union. In a separate letter to von der Leyen, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez said he had "serious concerns" about some European governments.

He said the Spanish government had fully restored control over the border and prevented any "unauthorised onward movement towards continental Europe" in less than 48 hours. While most had shown "support and solidarity", Sánchez said other European governments had chosen to attack Spain, "driven by prejudice, fake news, ignorance, or political interest", and pointed out that Ceuta was not part of the Schengen area.

On Friday, Sánchez accused migrant traffickers of exploiting a decision recently made by the country's supreme court which constrained the government's right to immediately deport people who had arrived by sea.

The country's Interior Minister, Fernando Grande-Marlaska, said in a news conference on Saturday that the situation had almost returned to normal and the country was working on inflatable barrier to prevent illegal migration via the water. "Almost all of [the migrants] have already left Ceuta," he said adding that businesses there had now reopened.



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Commerce boss decries budget's failure to address night economy

Story: Kukua Snead-Michaels

Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mark Badu-Aboagye, has criticised the 2026 Mid-Year Budget Review for failing to provide a clear roadmap for implementing the government's flagship 24-Hour Economy policy.

Speaking with the media, he described the omission as a major disappointment and warned that Ghana risked missing a critical development opportunity if the policy was not backed by concrete action. "Let me start with my disappointment with the Mid-Year Budget review. I will take you from the perspective of the 24 Hour economy. For me, it is the major development blueprint that we have in this country, and if you miss it, we are doomed in the next years ahead of us", he said. According to him, every national budget should be aligned with the 24-Hour Economy agenda because of its importance to the country's economic transformation. "So I'm expecting that every budget, be it a Mid-year or a major budget, should be aligned to the 24-Hour Economy, and there should be strong policy statements on the 24-Hour Economy. I didn't see or hear much about that", he said.

While praising the policy itself, Badu-Aboagye said the real challenge lied in execution.

"The policy is good, eloquently presented by the 24 Economy Secretariat. But the core issue is implementation", he indicated.

He argued that although the government repeatedly describes the programme as private-sector-led, businesses cannot drive industrialisation without the right conditions.

"But you need to create the environment for the private sector. That is what we are not seeing."

He pointed to financing costs as a major obstacle, saying current interest rates remain too high for businesses seeking to invest in manufacturing.

"We've seen interest rates coming down, but for somebody who wants to go into industrialisation, 16.5% interest is still on the higher side.

"The policy rate of 14% is still on the high side. We talk about cost of electricity and all those things. So we need to create that environment for the private sector", he said. He also questioned expectations that businesses would willingly borrow at commercial rates to establish factories.

"If you want them to say private sector, just

as we've done for the previous development policies, the 1D1F, and we think that people will just get our private sector and just go and borrow at 35 per cent and go and set up a factory that will not make any profit for them. They won't do that." He warned that without addressing these constraints, government risked repeating the implementation failures of previous initiatives.

Badu-Aboagye further argued that funding a secretariat alone was not enough to demonstrate progress.

"There is not enough in setting up a secretariat and saying that I have given them GH¢101 million to run the secretariat and have an office. What is on the ground for us to see is what we are looking out for", he stated.

He maintained that industrialisation must remain the foundation of the 24-Hour Economy, insisting that exports and job creation cannot be achieved without it. "For policy, as I said, industrialisation, export, and then job piece. If you miss the first one, which is the fundamental, that is the industrialisation, you can't get the second one, can't get the third one. "So industrialisation is key. Whatever we need as the private sector to be able to kickstart this industrialisation, I think they should make it happen", he added.



Ghana's local vehicle policy accelerates market trust for Chinese auto brands — Zonda Tec CEO

Story: Business Desk

The Chief Executive Officer of Zonda Tec Ghana, Yang Yang, has credited Ghana's vehicle assembly policy with boosting consumer confidence in Chinese automobile brands, as more buyers embrace locally assembled vehicles.

To her, the combination of government support for local assembly and growing public acceptance has contributed to increased demand for the company's vehicles, which are now assembled domestically for the Ghanaian market.

Speaking on an Accra-based FM station on Friday, July 31, Madam Yang said assembling vehicles in Ghana had encouraged consumers to view the products differently, increasing patronage.

"In 2023, 2024, there was an auto policy. So we got some leverage. And then we assembled the vehicles in Ghana," she said.

She added that local assembly had strengthened consumer confidence because many Ghanaians now see the vehicles as locally produced.

Zonda Tec currently assembles GWM and Chery vehicles in Ghana, having expanded into the automotive sector in 2022.

Madam Yang said the company entered the market after conducting two years of research, which found that between 80 and 85 per cent of vehicles on Ghana's roads were home-used imports.

She said her own experience with used vehicles reinforced her decision to focus on new vehicles.

"When I started my business, I also bought home-used vehicles. Within that one year, it was really like hell to me. So I made this to myself. If I'm capable of doing the auto business, I will start a new business," she said.

The Zonda Tec CEO acknowledged that convincing Ghanaians to embrace Chinese brands was initially challenging, given the dominance of Japanese, German and Korean vehicles in the local market.

"When I started, for the first year, it didn't move fast. But I didn't give up," she said, explaining that the company allowed some customers to test its vehicles before making payment, a strategy she said helped build confidence and attract new buyers through referrals.





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Local news

Court Seeks CJ Warrant

**To sit in vacation after Tamakloe case stall*

Story: Yaw Takyi

The Court of Appeal says it will seek approval from the Chief Justice to sit during the legal vacation period to determine the Attorney-General's urgent application for a stay of execution in the case involving former MASLOC Chief Executive Officer, Sedina Tamakloe Attionu.

The application, filed on Thursday, July 30, 2026, seeks to suspend the effect of the Court of Appeal's decision that acquitted and discharged the former MASLOC CEO, Madam Tamakloe Attionu, pending the determination of the state's appeal at the Supreme Court.

The move comes as the court's regular sitting schedule enters the legal vacation period, which begins on August 1 and ends on September 30.

Under the relevant court rules, including Order 79 Rule 4 of the High Court Civil Procedure Rules, C.I. 47, courts generally observe a vacation period during which regular hearings are limited.

However, the Chief Justice has the authority to allow courts to sit during this period where circumstances require.

Order 79 Rule 1 of C.I. 47 provides that, subject to the Courts Act, the Chief Justice may appoint any day, including days during vacation, for the hearing of matters.

This authority is usually exercised through a special fiat, allowing courts to deal with urgent cases despite the legal vacation.

The Attorney-General's stay application was filed by Principal State Attorney Hilda W. Craig on behalf of the state and is supported by an affidavit sworn by Assistant State Attorney Andrew Owusu-Agyemang. The state argues that the Court of Appeal's judgment resulted in what it describes as a "substantial miscarriage of justice" due to alleged errors of law and fact.

The Attorney-General maintains that the intended appeal raises substantial legal issues with a likelihood of success and argues that without a stay, the Supreme Court appeal could be

rendered ineffective if the acquittal remains in force. The urgency of the application is linked to the timing of the Court of Appeal's ruling, which was delivered on July 30, a day before the commencement of the legal vacation.

If the stay of execution is granted, the effect of the Court of Appeal's decision would be temporarily suspended until the Supreme Court determines the state's appeal.

The development follows the unanimous decision of a three-member panel of the Court of Appeal to overturn Madam Tamakloe Attionu's conviction and 10-year prison sentence.

The panel, made up of Justices Emmanuel Ankamah, Emmanuel Senyo Amedahe and Samuel Obeng-Diawuo, held that the prosecution failed to prove its case beyond reasonable doubt and faulted aspects of the trial court's handling of the matter. Madam Tamakloe Attionu had been convicted in absentia by the High Court in April 2024 on charges including causing financial loss to the state, stealing, money laundering and unauthorised commitment resulting in financial obligation for government.

The ruling has triggered debate among legal practitioners and political actors, with the Attorney-General indicating that the state will challenge the decision at the Supreme Court.

The New Patriotic Party (NPP) had also criticised the acquittal and said it would pursue available legal avenues over the matter.



War on school chaos...

**MoE, chiefs, & church forge historic pact to tackle wave of indiscipline*

Story: Atta Kwaku Boadi

In a decisive move to salvage the moral fabric of the country's education system, the Ministry of Education has unveiled a comprehensive national action plan to combat growing violence, drug abuse, and insubordination in schools.

The bold strategy was announced during the official closing of the two-day National Conference on Stemming the Growing Indiscipline in Schools in an Emerging World, held at the Eusbett Hotel in Sunyani.

Addressing traditional leaders, clergy, heads of security, and education heads, Deputy Minister for Education, Dr. Clement Abas Apaak, declared that the era of talk was over, signaling a shift toward immediate, nationwide action.

The conference—an initiative of Education Minister Haruna Iddrisu under the government's broader Reset Agenda—brought together a wide array of stakeholders to confront what leaders described as a 'shared national failure'.

Over the two-day summit, delegates laid bare the primary drivers behind the breakdown of order in learning institutions:

Students highlighted peer pressure, substance abuse, and the destructive influence of social media.

Security Agencies warned of a worrying rise in drug-related and violent incidents within school walls.

"Indiscipline is not one problem with one cause, but a shared national failure that only a shared national response can correct," Dr. Apaak stated, emphasizing that identifying the crisis was only the first step.

Rather than relying on government mandates alone, the conference produced a unanimous Communiqué establishing a national framework for reform. Key pillars of the new plan include:

harmonized national code of conduct, new social contract, empowering educators, strengthening governance for headteachers and pairing proportionate sanctions with incentives for good behavior.

Reflecting on the government's vision, Dr. Apaak reminded attendees that academic success without sound moral character was insufficient for national growth.

"Education without values cannot transform a nation; character matters every bit as much as competence," he asserted. "The conversation ends today. The work begins tomorrow."

He urged all delegates—from traditional rulers like Nana Chairman, Odeefour Ogyeamansan Boahen Korkor II, to faith leaders including Right Rev. Dr. Abraham N.O. Kwakye—to act as ambassadors of positive discipline in their respective communities.

With the formal closure of the conference, the Ministry expressed optimism that this unified pact will restore Ghanaian schools as safe, respectful, and high-achieving environments for all learners.



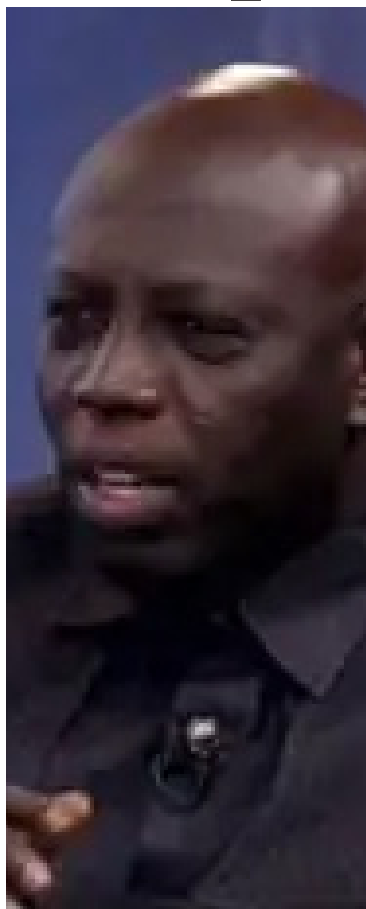
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IERPP boss rejects five-year presidential term proposal

Story: Victoria Beeko-Danso



Executive Director of the Institute of Economic Research (IERPP), Prof. Issac Boadi, has rejected proposals to extend Ghana's presidential term from four to five years, arguing that the move would weaken democratic accountability and leave the country vulnerable to prolonged periods of poor governance.

His comments come after Attorney-General Dr Dominic Ayine announced that the government had accepted the Constitutional Review Committee's recommendation to extend the tenure of the President and Members of Parliament from four years to five.

According to the Attorney-General, the recommendation is intended to give governments more time to effectively implement their policies and development programmes, as the current four-year constitutional cycle is considered too short.

Speaking on an Accra-based FM station on Friday, July 31, 2026, Prof. Boadi said he had no objection to the proposed age limit for presidential candidates, stressing that leadership ability should not be judged solely by age.

"If you look at the age limit, you can have someone who is grown and able to reason well. You can also have a young person who is very sharp and capable. So I don't have an issue with the age bracket," he said. However, he made it clear that he did not support the proposal to extend the presidential term from four to five years.

"My issue is the five-year term," he stated. Prof. Boadi challenged the argument that a five-year mandate would allow governments more time to govern effectively after spending months appointing officials and preparing for the next election.

He argued that Ghana's political cycle did not provide governments with the uninterrupted time often cited by proponents of the proposal because political activities begin almost immediately after general elections.

"The argument is that governments spend about six months appointing officials and another year preparing for elections, leaving only about two years for active administration. But in Ghana, right after elections, politics starts again. Election issues begin almost immediately," he said.

He also questioned whether the proposed amendment would require a national referendum, noting that entrenched provisions of the Constitution must be approved by voters before they can be amended.

Although the Attorney-General had indicated that an implementation committee would classify the proposals based on the constitutional processes required for their implementation, Prof. Boadi said legal experts would have to determine whether the proposed extension of the presidential term falls under entrenched provisions.

"My understanding is that the proposals have been grouped into categories, including those that require a referendum. The lawyers will have to confirm whether this proposal is one of them," he said.

Prof. Boadi further argued that extending the presidential term could have serious consequences if Ghanaians elected a government that failed to perform or was tainted by corruption.

"I don't understand this whole discussion. Imagine getting a president who is not performing, or a corrupt president, or someone sleeping on the job, and the country has to wait five years before voting again. We would be finished," he cautioned.

He maintained that extending the presidential tenure was not the solution to Ghana's governance challenges, insisting that stronger accountability mechanisms, rather than longer terms in office, should be the focus of constitutional reforms.

Barker-Vormawor criticises weak investigations in corruption cases

Story: Kukua Snead-Michaels



Constitutional lawyer and activist Oliver Barker-Vormawor has expressed deep concern over what he describes as serious shortcomings in Ghana's investigation and prosecution of white-collar crime, warning that weak investigative practices risk undermining efforts to hold public officials accountable.

Speaking on the handling of high-profile corruption cases, Barker-Vormawor argued that investigators and prosecutors often fail to build sufficiently robust cases before filing criminal charges.

Drawing comparisons with the United Kingdom, where he had legal experience, he explained that investigative authorities there work closely with prosecutors, who thoroughly review evidence before deciding whether a case has met the threshold for criminal charges.

According to him, Ghana's approach frequently falls short of that standard. Using the controversial MASLOC "Obatanpa" case as an example, Barker-Vormawor questioned the quality of the evidence presented in court.

He noted that investigators failed to establish critical details surrounding an alleged investment transaction, including whether a formal contract existed, the agreed interest terms, and how the funds were disbursed.

He further criticised investigators for failing to call key witnesses, including a secretary who allegedly handed over an important letter related to the transaction, and for not producing documentary evidence such as bank records to confirm the withdrawal and payment of the money in question.

"There was also no evidence of consistent communication between Sedina and the individuals involved," he said, stressing that while he was not claiming the money was never paid, the investigative record did not sufficiently establish guilt beyond reasonable doubt.

Barker-Vormawor also referred to findings by the Court of Appeal, which questioned evidence relating to payments made to beneficiaries.

He noted that although an audit had reportedly been conducted by Baffour Awuah & Associates, the auditors were not called to testify, while investigators also failed to verify whether the purported beneficiaries had actually received the funds.

"I just don't understand the laxity with which you put a case together and then present it to the court," he remarked.

Despite his criticisms, Barker-Vormawor said the state's efforts to recover public funds ought not to end with unsuccessful criminal prosecutions. He suggested that authorities could pursue civil proceedings against individuals involved, where the burden of proof was lower, to recover money for the state.

He argued that such an approach would better reflect the objectives of Operation Recover All Loot (ORAL), whose stated aim is to recover allegedly misappropriated state resources.

Barker-Vormawor further recounted an experience from a meeting on an ongoing investigation, which he said exposed deeper institutional weaknesses.

He described how an investigator relied solely on a suspect's statement that he was outside the country on a particular date without independently verifying the claim through available immigration or airport records.

"You have access to the airports," he said, questioning why investigators often stop at taking caution state-

ments instead of gathering corroborative evidence.

He maintained that many white-collar crime prosecutions in Ghana were built almost entirely on witness statements without the comprehensive documentary and forensic investigations required to sustain convictions.

Barker-Vormawor said "Ghana faces a significant capacity challenge in investigating and prosecuting complex financial crimes, urging authorities to strengthen investigative standards rather than reducing such cases to political debates".

According to him, addressing these structural weaknesses was essential if the country's anti-corruption drive was to achieve meaningful and lasting results.

Technology

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AI-driven scams reach crisis level

— Fraud investigator warns

Story: News Desk

A certified fraud examiner and professional investigator, Ransford Nana Addo Junior, has warned that Artificial Intelligence (AI) is changing the face of online fraud, with some scams now being carried out by automated systems rather than human criminals.

Speaking on an Accra-based FM station on Friday, July 31, 2026, he said advances in AI had made fraudsters more sophisticated and their operations more difficult to detect.

“It has gotten to the point where AI has added value to the job of scammers, and now scams are being automated. So, the person who is scamming you may not even be a human being, may be an AI,” he said.

According to him, AI-powered systems were now capable of engaging victims in real-time conversations, making online scams more convincing than ever before.

“They’ve been groomed. Machine learning has taught them how to respond to every message. They chat with you,” he explained. Ransford Nana Addo Junior said it was important for the public to understand that modern fraud was no longer random but a well-organised criminal enterprise.

“I just want us to lay the foundation that scammers are not uneducated people or people who do not have an idea of what they are doing. They go through proper training, they go through grooming,” he said.

He noted that fraudsters acquire skills similar to those taught to certified forensic examiners and law enforcement investigators.

“They learn the sort of things that we learn as certified forensic examiners and police investigators,” he added.

The fraud investigator said scams had existed throughout history because some people would always seek to exploit others for financial gain.

“From the days of Adam and Eve, scams have been with us, and they will continue to be with us because human beings would like to take advantage of other people,” he said.

He explained that fraudsters often manipulate emotions such as greed, urgency and the desire to make quick money before victims eventually realise they have been deceived. He listed several common forms of fraud, including romance scams, money mule scams, investment scams, lottery scams, Ponzi and pyramid schemes, recruitment scams and online shopping scams.

While online scams continue to dominate public attention, he said that they are only one part of a much wider fraud ecosystem. “We have failed to understand that fraud and scams have become a profession for people who also go through apprenticeship. They train,” he said.

Drawing on his investigative experience, he recalled an operation carried out with the police at Teshie Nungua Estate, where investigators uncovered the structured operations of a scam syndicate.

“We arrested a guy in Teshie Nungua Estate, and when we rounded them up with the

police, we saw that they have an organogram. They go through interviews, they have a pay structure, and these are people who are recruited to scam,” he revealed.

According to him, members of these criminal groups work in organised teams, sitting behind computers to identify potential victims, create fake websites, run deceptive online advertisements and groom targets before stealing their money.

“They are scouting for targets, they prepare the grounds, they groom them, they enter into designing fake websites, and then they do adverts. They have targets to meet at the end of the day,” he said.

He also traced the evolution of fraud over the past four decades.

According to him, fraud in the 1980s was largely opportunistic, with criminals taking advantage of unsuspecting victims during face-to-face interactions.

“But immediately we entered the 2000s, when the internet and computers entered the sub-Saharan African region, and we had internet cafés, fraud moved that way. Scams moved from opportunistic to what you call planned,” he explained.

He said the spread of internet access transformed fraud into organised, cross-border criminal activity, with anonymity becoming one of the greatest tools available to scammers.

“It got organised. It got cross-border because the internet gives you a wide reach. Limitless anonymity is a godfather of scams because you don’t know who you are talking to,” he said.

He also warned that the increasing popularity of online shopping had created fresh opportunities for criminals to exploit consumers. He said fraudsters take advantage of people’s preference for convenience by positioning themselves between legitimate retailers and customers.

“Customers and consumers like convenience and the criminals love it. Because you don’t want to walk to that shop to go and pick an item. You want to place a call so that the item is brought to you,” he said.

“The convenience that you seek, they will come between you and a retail shop and take money from you. The retail shop doesn’t get the money, the customer doesn’t get the goods, the criminal is happy.”

The fraud examiner further suggested that the true scale of online fraud was much larger than official figures indicate because many victims choose not to report their experiences.

“From my experience, when one person reports, and somebody is arrested, then you see 10 other people come to say, ‘They did the same thing to me,’ he said.



NCA extends application deadline for 5G spectrum licence

Story: Bismark Owusu



The National Communications Authority (NCA) has extended the deadline for applications for key spectrum licences that will support the rollout and expansion of fifth-generation (5G) mobile broadband services in Ghana, while issuing a comprehensive set of clarifications and amendments to guide prospective applicants through the licensing process.

In a press release issued on Friday, July 31, 2026, the NCA announced that it had published a Consolidated Response addressing questions submitted by prospective applicants regarding the Request for Applications (RFA) for spectrum licences in the 700 MHz, 2.3 GHz and 3 GHz mid-band frequencies.

The document forms part of the NCA’s efforts to ensure transparency and fairness in the licensing process by providing uniform responses to concerns raised by potential bidders ahead of the application deadline. According to the NCA, the Consolidated Response addresses written queries submitted by interested parties, as well as issues raised during the Pre-Application Briefing held on July 27.

Beyond responding to applicants’ questions, the document also introduced amendments, corrections and clarifications to the original Request for Applications following the Authority’s review of the licensing process.

The NCA urged all prospective applicants to study the Consolidated Response alongside the original Request for Applications to ensure they are fully informed of the revised requirements, procedural changes and updated timetable before submitting their bids. One of the most significant changes announced by the Authority was the extension of the application deadline.

The submission deadline has been moved from Thursday, August 6, to Thursday, August 27 at 5:00 p.m., providing applicants with an additional three weeks to prepare and submit their proposals. The NCA said the extension had also resulted in adjustments to subsequent milestones contained in the original Request for Applications timetable.

The revised schedule is included in the newly published Consolidated Response.

The extension is expected to provide prospective applicants with sufficient time to review the clarifications, incorporate any necessary adjustments into their submissions and ensure compliance with the updated requirements.

The National Communications Authority is Ghana’s statutory regulator for the electronic communications sector.

Established in 1996 and operating under the National Communications Authority Act, 2008 (Act 769), it is responsible for licensing and regulating communications services and ensuring the orderly development of the country’s telecommunications industry.

Opinion

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Parliament owes this child more than an apology

By: Obaa Yaa Frimpong

During a school civic-education visit to the Parliament of Ghana, Yakubu Mohammed, MP for Ahafo Ano South East, singled out one primary school pupil among her visiting classmates.

He asked her name, told her she was beautiful, and declared that when she grew up he would marry her — announcing to the group that she was now “his wife.”

The moment was filmed and spread nationally. Following days of public backlash from journalists, a gender activist, and a human rights advocate, Mr. Mohammed apologized, admitting the remarks were inappropriate and had caused distress to the child, her family, and the public.

That apology is not the end of this. It is the minimum, and treating it as sufficient lets an institution off the hook for something bigger than one man's bad joke.

Why “Sorry” Is Not Accountability

An apology is a private act of contrition. It does nothing to establish that Parliament — the institution that invited this child onto its premises for civic education — takes its duty of care toward children seriously.

A child was placed, by design of an official program, in front of a sitting lawmaker who used his position to make her the object of a marriage joke in front of her peers. That is an institutional failure, not just a personal one, and it demands an institutional response:

1. Referral to Parliament's Privileges Committee. Conduct unbecoming a Member — particularly conduct directed at a child during an official parliamentary program — should trigger the same disciplinary machinery Parliament uses for other breaches of decorum. An apology offered to the press is not a substitute for a formal ethics finding.

2. A public, recorded reprimand from the Speaker's office. Leadership needs to state, on the record, that this conduct violates the standards expected of Members, not leave it to individual activists and commentators to carry that message alone.

3. A safeguarding review of parliamentary school-excursion programs. If children can be brought onto the floor or into proximity with individual MPs without a chaperoning or conduct protocol, that gap needs to close immediately — with clear rules on what MPs may and may not say to visiting minors, and a reporting channel for teachers and parents if something like this happens again.

4. Mandatory child-safeguarding training for MPs and parliamentary staff who interact with school visits. This should not be optional or symbolic; it should be a standing condition of participating in outreach programs involving minors.

5. Direct, private support for the child and her family — including access to counselling — offered by Parliament itself, not left to the family to seek out on their own after being thrust into a national news story without their consent.

A press apology addresses the MP's public image. It does not address what the child experienced: being made, without warning or consent, the punchline of an adult's joke about marriage, in a room full of her classmates, by a person whose position was supposed to make her safer, not more exposed.

Naming the Harm Precisely

This is not really a story about one embarrassing comment. It is a story about what happens when a position of institutional trust is used to plant an idea in a child's mind that she is old enough to be evaluated as a future wife.

Ghana has spent years running public campaigns against child marriage; a lawmaker joking that a nine-year-old “is now his wife,” inside the very building where laws against child marriage are made, is not a harmless slip — it is the same script campaigns have been trying to dismantle, delivered from a position of authority a child cannot push back against.

Commentators have already said as much: a gender activist has called the remarks reflective of a “low moral standard” and demanded Parliament sanction the MP directly; a human rights advocate has criticized the comments for reducing a girl to her appearance rather than her potential.

Those are not overreactions. They are the correct scale of response to a lawmaker sexualizing a child inside a national institution.

What This Article Is Asking For

Not outrage for its own sake, and not a personal character verdict on Mr. Mohammed.

A concrete institutional response:

- A formal ethics referral and outcome, made public.

- A binding safeguarding protocol for all future school visits to Parliament.

- Mandatory training, not just a press statement.

- Real support offered to the child and her family, on Parliament's initiative — not contingent on them asking for it.

An apology closes a news cycle. It does not protect the next child who walks through those doors.



ENTERTAINMENT

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DJ Switch rebukes MP

**Over viral child remark*

Story: Entertainment Desk

US-based Ghanaian disc jockey DJ Switch has criticised Ahafo Ano South East Member of Parliament (MP) Yakubu Mohammed over comments he made to a school-girl during an educational visit to Parliament, describing the remarks as inappropriate and calling for greater accountability in the protection of children.

The comments, captured in a video that has since gone viral on social media, were made while the MP interacted with a group of pupils visiting Parliament.

In the video, Mr Mohammed complimented one of the girls before saying:

"You are very beautiful; when you grow up, I will marry you, so she is my wife. In the future, she will also be an MP."

The remarks drew laughter from some of those present.

Reacting to the incident, 18-year-old DJ Switch, known in real life as Erica Armah Bra-Bulu Tandoh, said she was "genuinely disgusted" by the MP's comments, arguing that children should never be the subject of romantic remarks by adults.

"I am genuinely disgusted. A grown man, a Member of Parliament, someone entrusted with leadership, looked at a little girl, a child, and said, 'You're very beautiful. When you grow up, I'll marry you.' She rejected suggestions that the comments should be dismissed as harmless humour.

"That's not funny. That's not charming. That is not African humour. That is completely inappropriate. 'The fact that some people are laughing is exactly the problem. We have become so desensitised to adults making romantic comments about children that we have convinced ourselves that it's a joke.'"

According to the young media personality, children should never be portrayed as future romantic partners for adults, even in jest.

"Children are not the punchlines for such jokes.

They're not your future spouses. Children are not objects for adults to be making romantic or flirtatious comments about. They're children."

Anticipating arguments that the MP's remarks were harmless, she questioned why marriage would be introduced into a conversation with a child.

"I know somebody will say, he didn't mean it like that. It was just a joke." But why is marriage, even as a joke, the first thing that comes into the mind of an adult when speaking to a little girl?

"Why are we so comfortable putting children in imaginary romantic relationships with adults? Why is that acceptable?"

DJ Switch stressed that her concerns were not about political correctness but about protecting children and preserving their innocence.

"This isn't about political correctness. It's about protecting children and respecting their innocence."

She argued that the issue extends beyond men, noting that women also make comments that normalise inappropriate attitudes towards children.

"I've heard adults tell little boys that they will have girlfriends lined up. I've heard adults reserve children for someone's son or daughter. I've literally heard families joke about babies dating each other.' According to her, such comments have become so



commonplace that many people no longer recognise the potential harm they can cause.

"We've normalised language that places children into adult relationships before they're even old enough to understand what those relationships mean. Enough is enough."

Drawing from her own experience, DJ Switch revealed that she has been subjected to inappropriate comments since childhood, with some adults openly counting down to when she would become "ripe."

"I have adults in my comment section counting down to the day I become ripe, as if my childhood was just a waiting room for their attraction."

"You can't confidently tell me that's admiration."

That's disturbing."

She described such behaviour as predatory, adding: "Let's call a spade a spade. That's paedophilic. We have to stop excusing this behaviour just because someone smiled while saying it."

DJ Switch also questioned what action Parliament would take in response to the MP's remarks and criticised what she described as weak enforcement against inappropriate online comments directed at children.

"So to the Parliament of the Republic of Ghana, I ask: what accountability exists when one of your own has publicly made such inappropriate remarks towards a child?"

She further questioned the response of state institutions to similar incidents online.

"What accountability exists when adults continuously leave sexualising and predatory comments under

Meanwhile, the Ghanaian MP has since apologised for the comments.

DJ Switch won TV3's Talented Kidz competition in 2017 at age 9. She went on to become the youngest person to win the Ghana DJ Awards in 2018, and she's recognised internationally for her talent and performances.

Creatives Soirée sparks new alliances across Ghana's creative industry



Ghana's creative ecosystem witnessed a successful convergence of filmmakers, producers, actors, writers, entrepreneurs, investors and brand leaders at the maiden edition of Creatives Soirée, an exclusive networking event designed to foster collaboration and unlock new opportunities within the country's creative economy. Held at The Savannah, Cantonments, the event created an intimate setting where industry professionals engaged in meaningful conversations, exchanged ideas and explored partnerships aimed at advancing Ghana's creative sector.

Hosted by three creative entrepreneurs; Dorina Amina Abubakar, Tamara Jonah and Mariam K. A-Buahin, the evening brought together professionals from film, television, media, fashion, branding, hospitality and entrepreneurship, reflecting the growing importance of cross-sector collaboration in Africa's creative industries. Unlike traditional networking events, Creatives Soirée focused on building genuine relationships that can translate into projects, investments and long-term partnerships. Guests participated in engaging conversations on storytelling, content creation, creative entrepreneurship, brand development and the future of Ghana's creative economy.

Dorina Amina Abubakar, a producer, programmer and creative industries strategist, shared insights from her work in developing sustainable creative ecosystems across Africa through international partnerships, expanded market access and innovative approaches to content creation.

Tamara Jonah, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of The Lionheart Group, highlighted the importance of creating culturally grounded experiences that position African creativity on the global stage.

Mariam K. A-Buahin, an Executive Advisor, Brand, Marketing and Digital Finance Strategist, underscored the role of strategic branding, innovation and collaboration in driving sustainable growth across the creative industry. Participants described the event as a timely initiative that filled an important gap in Ghana's creative landscape by creating a platform where emerging and established professionals could connect beyond formal conferences and industry awards, opening doors to new collaborations and business opportunities. & Industrial

Joseph Paul Amoah finishes seventh in Commonwealth Games 200m final

Ghanaian sprinter Joseph Paul Amoah finished seventh in the men's 200m final, bringing Ghana's hopes of a sprint medal to an end at the ongoing 2026 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

Amoah, who won silver in the same event at the previous Commonwealth Games, crossed the finish line in 20.47 seconds as he was unable to challenge for a place on the podium.

South Africa's Sinesipho Dambile claimed the gold medal in a championship-leading time of 19.96 seconds, finishing ahead of Nigeria's Udodi Chudi Onwuzurike, who took silver, and Jamaica's Christopher Taylor, who completed the podium with bronze.

With the conclusion of the men's 200m, Ghana's campaign on the track will now focus on the remaining relay events and other athletics disciplines as the Commonwealth Games continue in Glasgow.



We've 'lost confidence' in Fifa leadership-Uefa

Uefa says it has lost confidence in Gianni Infantino's Fifa leadership as the fallout from the scrapped controversial investment plan intensifies.

On Saturday, Infantino said Fifa would no longer proceed with the proposal to sell stakes in the governing body's competitions to private investors.

Uefa - which governs European football - had earlier voted to boycott World Cups if the plans went ahead, and other governing bodies also voiced their opposition. In a lengthy statement on Saturday, Uefa said it welcomed the decision to withdraw the plan, describing it as "a victory for the whole game".

It also accused Infantino of failing to deliver on promises, quoting a speech he gave when campaigning to become Fifa president in 2016.

"The current Fifa leadership has not only lost Uefa's confidence but also that of many other members of the football family," the statement read.

"When Gianni Infantino asked for the trust and the votes of Fifa's member associations to elect him as their president in 2016, he said: 'Of course we have to be transparent.'"

"He told the assembled stakeholders: 'The money of Fifa is your money. It's not the money of the Fifa president. You are the national associations and the money of Fifa has to serve for the development of football and not for anything else.'"

"On both these promises, he has failed to deliver. The shab-

by, back room, opaque deal he hatched and tried to force through were anything but transparent." Earlier in the week, two other major confederations and senior figures close to Infantino spoke out against the plans.

"This is a victory for the whole game. But it must not be the end of the story," Uefa's statement continued.

"The proposal has gone. The task of rebuilding trust in Fifa has only just begun."

The proposal - first reported in the media on Tuesday - was met with widespread criticism, with Uefa voting on Thursday to boycott World Cups if the plans went ahead.

European football's governing body said the World Cup "cannot be treated as an investment product".

Two other major confederations then spoke out against the plans.

Concacaf, which governs football in North and Central America and the Caribbean - and hosted this summer's World Cup - said its members "rejected" the proposal, with sources saying the vast majority of associations from the region are losing, or have lost, faith in Infantino.

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) said it stood in "solidarity" with Uefa and Concacaf,



while UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham said Infantino was "the wrong man" to lead Fifa.

On Friday, Fifa's chief operating officer Kevin Lamour said the governing body's own administration had been "deceived" about the project.

Carlos Cordeiro - Infantino's senior adviser on global strategy and governance - resigned over the matter, saying the proposal was "a bad deal for football" and would "mortgage football's future".

Mudryk free to play after doping ban case resolved



Chelsea winger Mykhailo Mudryk is available to return to playing immediately after resolving his doping case with the Football Association.

The Ukraine international, 25, has not played a competitive match since November 2024, having been provisionally suspended after returning an "adverse finding" for banned substance meldonium.

He was subsequently given the maximum four-year ban by the FA but appealed against the decision to Cas.

The FA said anti-doping disciplinary proceedings have now been resolved with Mudryk and he can return to competition "with immediate effect" after he accepted breaking anti-doping rules and agreed to a suspension equal to the time already served.

