



Wednesday, May 08, 2024



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General News

We'll keep protesting until our demands are met - GNAT to gov't

General Secretary of the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), Thomas Musah Tanko has signalled an impending escalation in protests by pre-tertiary teachers by the end of the week.

The catalyst for these demonstrations stems from the government's prolonged failure to fulfill teachers' conditions of service, a longstanding issue spanning nine years.

During an interview on TV3, Mr. Tanko voiced deep-seated frustration regarding what he perceives as the government's indifference to teachers' grievances.

He highlighted a pervasive sense of betrayal among educators since 2009, citing unkept promises and a lack of concrete government support.

"Since 2009, teachers have been deceived, any time you go ask for something they say we are many, and there is a deliberate policy by the government that teachers must be at the center. Where is the evidence?"

"For the past eight years, the only allowance teachers have benefited is GH¢100, even that is professional

development allowance, what about the teachers' welfare? Teachers are in deprived areas and they are suffering.

"What will make the teachers to

stop the agitations is that they must be given what they deserve," Mr Tanko said.

Mr. Tanko emphasized that the key to quelling these protests lies

in addressing teachers' rightful demands and providing them with the support they deserve.

Source: Independent Ghana / Sebastian Akaho-Tay



GNAT members holding a demonstration

The New Force launches 'Save Ghana Fund' ahead of 2024 elections

A novel political movement, The New Force, has unveiled its virtual crowdfunding platform, named the "Save Ghana Fund" ahead of the incoming polls slated for December.

In a video message released on May 6, as part of the launch, the leader of The New Force, Nana Kwame Bediako, called on the people of Ghana to support the movement and its cause.

Mr Bediako urged the nation to break away from the culture of political candidates buying votes, highlighting how this practice undermines the genuine and free choice of voters and distorts the

true aspirations and investments of the people.

"A call to you and to everyone who cares about the future of Ghana: The New Force movement seeks to ensure our commitment to the nation and to each other in the pursuit of equality, empowerment, and equity for all in our society. The campaign is built on three key values: visibility, accessibility, and transparency," he said.

He emphasised that vote-buying tarnishes democracy by perpetuating the mismanagement of the nation's resources and fostering a culture of corruption.

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Nana Kwame Bediako, Leader of The New Force

General News

The New Force launches 'Save Ghana Fund' ahead of 2024 elections

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Nana Kwame Bediako urged the citizens of Ghana to change the narrative by finding redemption in the initiative to identify a genuine leader and then invest in their chosen leader by donating to the movement and its cause.

"The responsibility of the leader is

to serve you," Nana Kwame Bediako candidly tells his audience at the launch of the virtual crowdfunding platform.

"And the responsibility of the citizens is to give the leader the chance and the opportunity to serve the nation. Remember,

the government does not make the people; the people make the government,' the leader urges. 'Let's build a new nation.'

As an independent candidate in the 2024 Republic of Ghana presidential elections, Nana Kwame Bediako is set to go up against the

New Patriotic Party flabgearer, Dr Mahamudu Bawumia, the National Democratic Congress' John Mahama, All Movement Party's John Alan Kyerematen.

Source: The Independent Ghana / Andy Ogbarmey-Tettey

Free SHS needs improvement - Bawumia

The flagbearer of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) has acknowledged the achievements of the government's Free Senior High School (SHS) policy, while also acknowledging the need for further enhancements.

He has restated his commitment to ensuring the sustainability of the policy under his leadership.

Despite encountering challenges, including promises from the National Democratic Congress's flagbearer, John Dramani Mahama, to review it upon assuming power, the Vice President highlighted the

significant success of the Free SHS policy.

In an interview with Africa Watch Magazine, Dr. Bawumia emphasized, "The policy has therefore been a resounding success. That does not mean it is without problems. There is more to be done to improve it.

"I am committed to the Free SHS policy, and I believe it would be safe and sustainable in my hands".

Dr. Bawumia pledged to strengthen the policy by constructing additional infrastructure such as classroom blocks, dormitories, and dining facilities for schools across Ghana.

He also committed to investing in teacher training and professional development to enhance curriculum relevance and alignment with workforce needs.

"My government will build more infrastructure like classroom blocks, dormitories, and dining facilities for the schools. My government will also invest in teacher training and professional development, enhancing curriculum relevance and alignment with workforce needs," he promised.

Furthermore, he underscored the policy's significant impact

on student enrollment in Senior High Schools, particularly in underserved regions. He noted that Ghana has achieved gender parity in SHS education, with increased enrollment not compromising quality.

He concluded by emphasizing the need for ongoing improvements and enhancements to ensure the policy's effectiveness in providing accessible and quality education to all Ghanaian youth.

Source: The Independent Ghana / Phoebe Martekie Doku



Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, flagbearer of the New Patriotic Party (NPP)



General News

Supreme Court to hear anti-LGBTQ+ bill challenge led by Richard Sky and Dr. Amanda Odoi today

Broadcast journalist Richard Dela Sky and researcher Dr. Amanda Odoi are set to present their respective lawsuits against the passage of the LGBTQ+ Bill before the Supreme Court today Wednesday, May 8, 2024.

These legal challenges have halted the bill's progress from parliament to potential presidential assent.

The lawsuits, led by Sky and Odoi, question the constitutionality of Parliament's approval of the LGBTQ+ Bill, which aims to restrict LGBTQ+ activities and advocacy.

President Nana Addo Dankwah Akufo-Addo has refrained from receiving the bill, citing the ongoing legal disputes.

Sky's case specifically targets the "Human Sexual Rights and Family Values Bill," seeking a declaration of its nullity on constitutional grounds.

His claims cite multiple constitutional articles, arguing that the bill infringes upon fundamental

human rights guaranteed by Ghana's Constitution.

Among Sky's requests are an order to declare Parliament's actions unconstitutional and an injunction against enforcing certain provisions of the bill.

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear these cases from May 7 to May 9, 2024, as outlined in its cause list.

President Akufo-Addo has pledged to await the Supreme Court's ruling before making any decisions regarding the contentious LGBTQ+ legislation.

Reliefs sought

Mr. Sky in his writ is seeking four declarations and four orders as follows;

i. A declaration that upon a true and proper interpretation of Article 33(5) of the Constitution of 1992, in light of Article 12(1) (2), 15(1), 17(1) of the 'Human Sexual Rights and Family Values Bill, 2024' by Parliament on 28th

February 2024, Contravened the Constitution and is to that extend null, void and of no effect.

ii. A declaration that the Speaker of Parliament contravened Article 108(a) (11) of the Constitution, in light of Articles 296(a)(b)(c), by admitting and allowing Parliament to proceed upon and pass The Human Sexual Rights and Family Values Bill, 2024 into law as the same imposes a charge upon the Consolidated Fund or other public funds of Ghana.

iii. A declaration that Parliament exceeded its authority under Articles 106(2) and 108(a)(ii) in passing "The Human Sexual Rights and Family Values Bill 2024, as the same imposes a charge upon the Consolidated Fund or other Public funds of Ghana.

iv. A declaration that, upon the true and proper interpretation of Articles 102 and 104(1) of the Constitution, Parliament lacked the requisite quorum to pass "The Human Sexual Rights and Family

Values Bill, 2024."

v. An order restraining the Speaker of Parliament and the Clerk to Parliament from presenting The Human and Sexual Values Bill, 2024 to the President of the Republic for his assent.

vi. An order restraining the President of the Republic from assenting to The Human and Sexual Values Bill, 2024, as such action will directly contravene the Constitutional safeguards of liberties and rights of Ghanaians.

vii. An injunction barring any attempts to enforce the provisions of The Human Sexual Rights and Family Values Bil 2024, particularly those criminalizing same-sex relationships and related advocacy efforts.

vii. Such further orders or directions as to this Honourable Court may seem to meet.

Source: Independent Ghana / Sebastian Akaho-Tay



Supreme Court



General News

We expect to surpass 623,000 target in limited voter registration - EC

The Electoral Commission (EC) is optimistic about exceeding its target of registering 623,000 new voters in the upcoming limited voter registration exercise.

The exercise which began on Tuesday, May 7, and will end on Monday, May 27, 2024, the exercise aims to register individuals who have reached the age of 18 since the last registration onto the national voter roll.

The EC plans to conduct the registration at its district offices and in remote areas facing accessibility challenges.

Jean Mensa, Chairperson of the EC, confirmed that all registration centres have been gazetted, and political parties have been briefed on the exercise.

Furthermore, the gazetted centres and movement plans are available on the commission's website.

"We have gazetted all our

registration centres as well as the movement plans that will be followed by our mobile teams. In fulfilment of regulation 3 of CI 91 as amended, which requires us to provide at least 21 days' notice to the political parties, we have briefed all our political parties of the upcoming registration exercise.

"This took place on Thursday 7th March during our IPAC meeting, and we shared with the parties the various centres nationwide as well as the movement plan.

"I would like to mention that the gazetted centres, our registration centres as well as our movement plan have been posted on our website. By informing the political parties as required by law, parties are now able to plan and prepare their agents to observe the voter registration exercise nationwide."

"...We are confident that the arrangements we have deployed will help bring the registration activities closer to the doorstep of

the citizenry. In 2023 we targeted approximately 700,000 new registrants, and we far exceeded that by registering 910,000 new registrants. We have no doubt that with these arrangements in

place, we will exceed our target of 623,000 new registrants this time around," she stated.

Source: The Independent Ghana / Phoebe Martekie Doku



Jean Mensa, Chairperson of the EC

SHS, SHTS students given 4 days leave to engage in limited voter registration exercise

The Ghana Education Service has authorised Senior High School students aged 18 and above to participate in the forthcoming limited voter registration exercise, allowing them a four-day leave.

Set to commence on Tuesday, May 7, 2024, and conclude on Monday, May 27, 2024, the exercise will take place at Electoral Commission district offices and remote electoral areas nationwide.

A statement by acting Director of Schools and Instruction Division, Mr Prince C. Agyemang-Duah, indicated "The students have been granted four days off from campus, effective, Tuesday, May 7, 2024, to Friday, May 10, 2024, to partake in the exercise in line with the constitutional right of all Ghanaian citizens to exercise their franchise".

Meanwhile, tension emerged among supporters of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and National Democratic Congress (NDC) in Awutu Senya West over the ongoing voter registration exercise.

According to reports, a queue is formed for applicants to facilitate a smooth process. However, purportedly, some NPP executives attempted to prioritize the registration of their supporters, asserting they arrived early.

In response, the NDC opposed this action, sparking heated exchanges between the two factions.

Subsequently, police officers deployed to the registration centre intervened, successfully restoring order.

Source: The Independent Ghana / Phoebe Martekie Doku



Senior High School students aged 18 and above to participate in the forthcoming limited voter registration exercise



General News

Toothpaste now a preferred aphrodisiac among Ghanaian women; medics warn associated dangers

A concerning trend has emerged in Ghana, where some women are resorting to using white toothpaste as both an aphrodisiac and a vaginal tightening agent, despite medical experts' warnings about the associated risks.

This practice has become popular among vendors of aphrodisiacs and waist beads in the Accra Central Market.

They promote the application of white toothpaste to the vagina, advising people to wash it off shortly before sexual activity to purportedly enhance the sexual experience.

Waist bead vendor Obaa Aku confidently explained that white toothpaste was a better option

than lemons as a cleanser for the armpit, beneath the breast, ears, thighs and the anal region.

She believed that many women do not wash the anal area properly, and applying toothpaste and washing it after five minutes would help them feel clean.

Another vendor, Sister Ataa, said she was 52 years old but still enjoyed having sex. So, she was always on the lookout for new ways to spice up her sex life and found the toothpaste sensation pleasurable.

In response to this trend, Dr. Promise E. Sefogah, an obstetrician-gynaecologist at the Shape Healthcare Specialist Medical Centre in Accra, expressed concern about the use of white

toothpaste as an aphrodisiac and vagina tightener.

He warned that such practices could increase the risk of infertility and cause vaginal infections by disrupting the natural balance of the vaginal area.

Dr. Sefogah confirmed that while the sensation from toothpaste is not new to Ghanaian women, it has been an age-old practice observed in other parts of the world as well.

"This practice has been an old practice even in other parts of the world, despite the dangers associated with the practice. Some recent research stated that about 30 percent of women were using toothpaste to douche and so this is not only new in Accra," he added.

Dr. Sefogah emphasised the potential risks and adverse effects of using toothpaste and other items, citing possible irritation, disturbance in the acidic base balance of the vagina and the development of infections that could lead to infertility and ectopic pregnancy.

However, some vendors of toothpaste said they were not aware of the practice, stating that all they knew was that toothpaste was used to clean teeth and enrich dental hygiene. Those who knew of it mentioned a particular brand of toothpaste as one of the main products used for douching.

Source: *The Independent Ghana* / Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo



Toothpaste



General News

Tenants' Union fights govt-private sector partnership in Saglemi Housing project

The National Tenants' Union of Ghana is gearing up for legal action and a series of protests to oppose the involvement of the private sector in finalizing the Saglemi Housing Project.

In a press release signed by its secretary-general, Frederick Opoku, the Union argues that such involvement will jeopardise efforts to provide affordable housing for those unable to afford current market rates.

"By privatizing the project, the government undermines any hope of providing genuinely affordable housing for those unable to afford market rate.

We implore the Akuffo-Addo-led administration to reconsider its decision to hand over the 1,506 housing units to a private entity. Instead, we advocate for future governments to explore alternative strategies that prioritize the public good and taxpayers'

interest, especially, considering the \$200,000,000 initially secured by the NDC government for the project's inception," the Union wrote in its statement.

Expressing their discontent, the Union urged the government to reconsider its decision. They warned that if their plea is disregarded, they would organize nationwide protests, adopting a 'one region, one demo' approach to amplify their dissatisfaction.

The Ministry of Works and Housing officially solicited private proposals for the completion and operationalisation of the project on April 17, 2024. The deadline for proposal submission and evaluation is set from July 9 to 15, 2024.

Works and Housing Minister-designate, Kojo Opong-Nkrumah, has emphasised a reluctance by government to allocate additional funds, hence the push for private sector collaboration.

He highlighted the government's commitment to transparency, citing a detailed policy that mandates open bidding processes and proactive disclosure of information under the Right to Information Act.

The Saglemi Housing Project has been shadowed by corruption allegations, leading to the trial of

former Works and Housing Minister, Collins Dauda.

Despite investments exceeding \$200 million, issues like vandalism and theft of project materials have persisted.

Source: The Independent Ghana / Andy Ogbarmey-Tetty



Saglemi Housing Project

NPP plotting to transfer Ghana's natural gas resources to a private company - Minority

Minority in Parliament have alleged that there's a plan underway to transfer control of Ghana's natural gas reserves to a private entity.

According to the Minority Spokesperson on Mines and Energy, John Jinapor, the original deal involved a foreign company, but to dodge the need for parliamentary approval, a local entity has been established in Ghana to proceed with the agreement.

The minister made the disclosure during a media engagement on May 7, 2024.

"We in the minority wish to send a caution and let me make it clear that we are aware that that unimpeachable information indicates that some high-ranking officials in government are pressuring the Chief Executive of the Ghana Gas Company to sign

some of these dubious-contracts.

Jinapor criticised the lack of transparency surrounding the contract, labelling it as corrupt. He highlights concerns that the government is attempting to evade parliamentary scrutiny by resorting to such tactics.

He explains that whilst one of the factions in government is "supporting Intel Logistics Bureau, another faction is supporting Genser for the same resources."

"This has the potential to lead to serious judgement debt against the state," he cautioned.

Describing the contract as "illegitimate, illegal, opaque, and clandestine," the Yapei Kusawgu lawmaker likened it to an existing agreement he deems a "rip-off," where "Genser is paying US\$1.70

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John Jinapor, Minority Spokesperson on Mines and Energy



General News

NPP plotting to transfer Ghana's natural gas resources to a private company - Minority

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for gas that should be sold around US\$6.00."

The former Deputy Minister of Energy further alleged that some high-ranking government officials are exerting pressure on the Chief

Executive of Ghana Gas to approve certain contracts.

He sent a word of caution to the government and the companies involved to advise themselves, since the next NDC administration

will not countenance any such arrangements.

"Let me make it clear without equivocation that the next John Mahama administration will not be bound by illegal contracts. In as much as we respect the sanctity

of contracts, we will not honour illegitimate, illegal, opaque, clandestine contracts that go against the Republic of Ghana," he cautioned

Source: *The Independent Ghana* / Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo

Gov't engaging multinationals exiting Ghana - Deputy Trade Minister

Deputy Minister for Trade and Industry, Michael Okyere Baafi, has stated that the government is actively engaging firms exiting the country to address their immediate concerns.

In recent months, several prominent multinational companies have announced their decision to suspend operations in the country, citing various reasons. The most recent example is French Bank Société Générale, which has ended

its 20-year presence in Ghana.

During engaging the media on Tuesday, May 7, Mr Otchere Baafi expressed optimism about the ongoing engagements with these multinational firms.

"We have started engaging some of them and I can tell you that the engagement has been good. But the long and short of the matter is that these issues or concerns are things that are not going to be permanent."

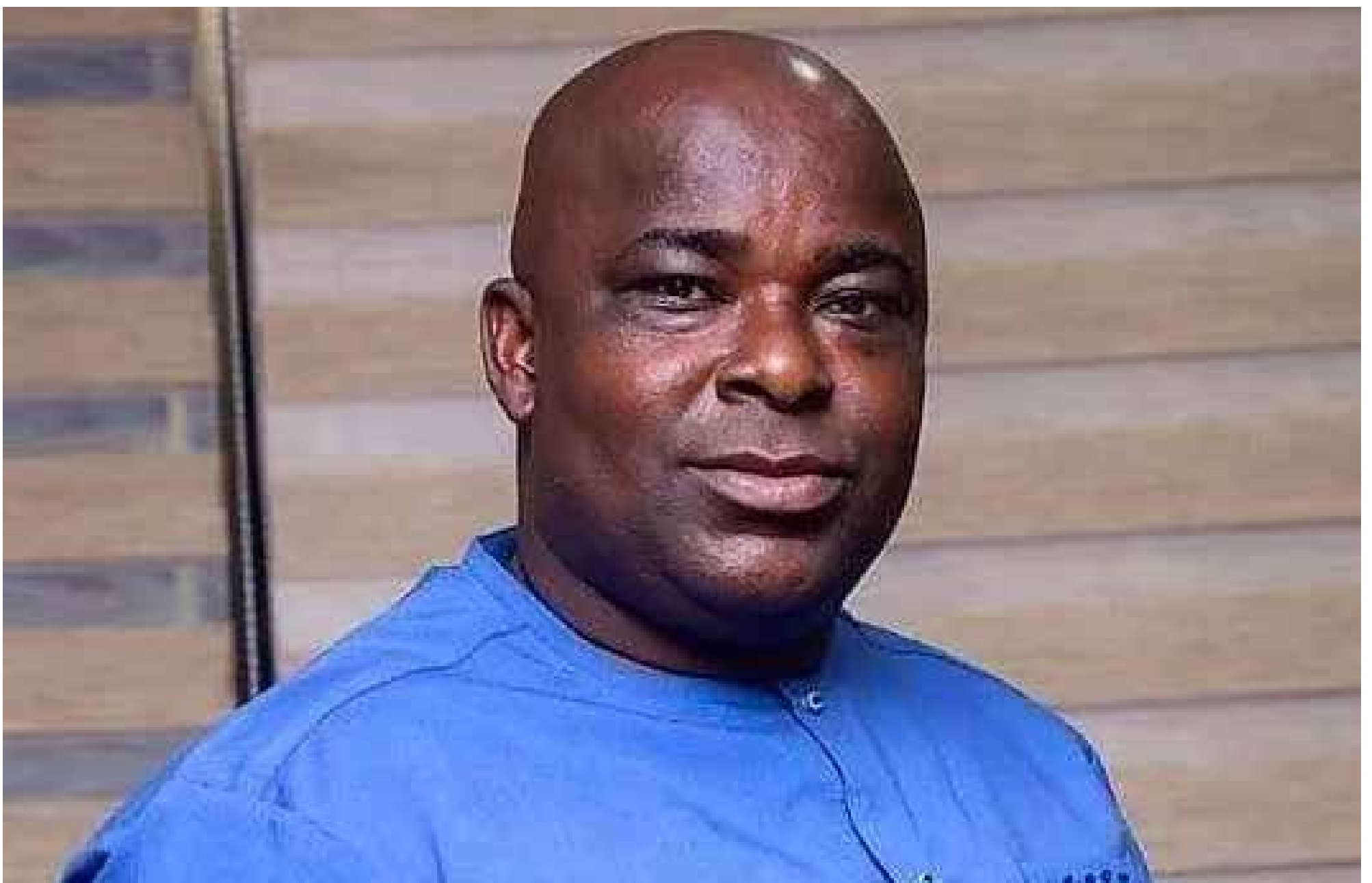
"These are things that we are going through in the shortest possible time and we are so sure that we will bounce back and the whole economy will change. So, we have given them assurance in that area."

"And also try as much as possible to address some of their immediate challenges in the area of competition; one or two of them raised issues about competition," Otchere Baafi said.

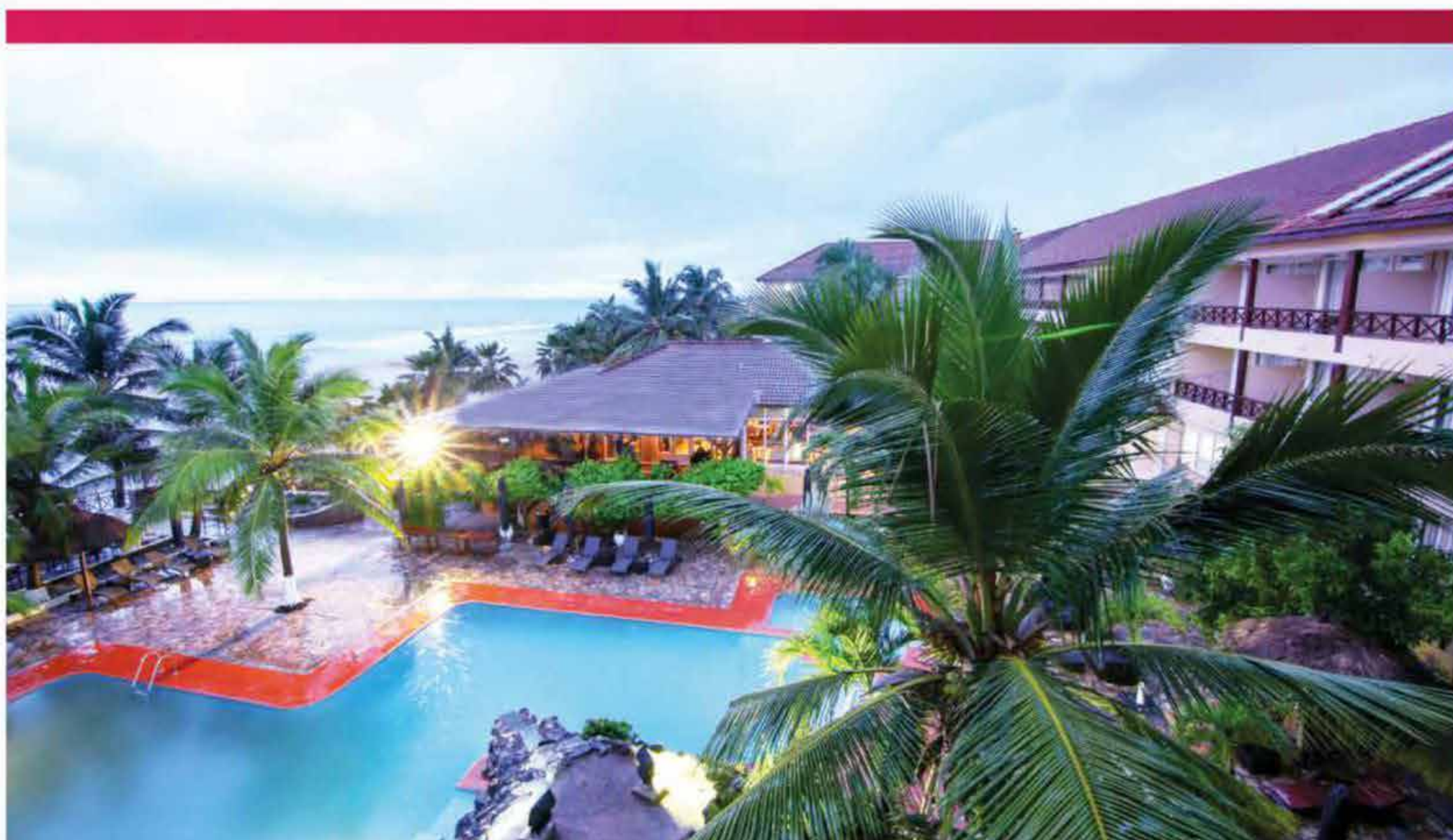
Other well-known brands, including Glovo, Nivea, Jumia Foods, Unilever Ghana's Lipton Tea, Dark and Lovely, BET 365, Game, and BIC, have also chosen to withdraw from the Ghanaian market.

This has raised concerns about potential impacts on job creation and broader economic growth issues.

Source: *The Independent Ghana*



Michael Okyere Baafi, Deputy Minister for Trade and Industry



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Business

Telecel Cash payment option now available on Google Play in Ghana

Telecel Mobile Financial Services Ltd, the company behind Telecel Cash, has partnered with Cellulant, a prominent technology firm, to introduce Telecel Cash as a convenient payment solution for Google Play users in Ghana.

This collaboration allows Telecel Cash customers to effortlessly purchase apps and services directly from Google Play, enriching their digital experience.

This initiative forms part of a broader strategy to broaden payment options and enhance transaction convenience for Google Play users, particularly in areas where traditional credit card usage is limited.

Through the integration of Telecel Cash, Telecel Ghana and Cellulant aim to offer a seamless, secure, and user-friendly payment method tailored to the specific needs of the Ghanaian market.

Richard Gesimba, Vice President of the Cellulant Checkout Business Unit, underscored the importance of the partnership.

“Our partnership with Telecel Ghana aims to innovate and deliver payment solutions that address the evolving needs of African consumers. This integration makes it easier for them to access a world of apps and content on Google Play without traditional banking facilities.” He noted.

Philip Amoateng, Director for Telecel Cash, emphasized the benefits for customers. “The inclusion of Telecel Cash as a payment option on Google Play significantly enhances our service offerings. It offers our customers a straightforward and secure way to enjoy all the features and capabilities that Google Play has to offer. We are committed to enhancing our customers’ digital experiences and ensuring they can access global digital content with ease.”, he added.

Google Play, a digital distribution service operated and developed by Google, is the official app store for the Android operating system. It allows users to browse and download applications developed with the Android software development kit and published through Google.

The availability of Telecel Cash as a payment method on Google Play is expected to boost the platform’s

usage in Ghana, where mobile money has become a dominant force in financial transactions.

This also demonstrates Telecel Ghana’s commitment to enhancing customer experience and expanding digital accessibility.

Source: The Independent Ghana / Amanda Cartey



Telecel cash

BoG debunks fake reports on introducing 1% cybersecurity levy

The Bank of Ghana (BoG) has rebutted rumours circulating on social media alleging its intention to implement a one percent cybersecurity levy, purportedly in response to increased cyber threats.

The central bank clarified that these reports are unfounded and urged the public to disregard them.

In the meantime, Dr. Ernest Addison, the Governor of the Bank of Ghana, emphasized the institution’s readiness to take stern action against entities found in violation of regulations.

Asserting its regulatory role, Dr. Addison stated that the Bank of Ghana is dedicated to maintaining a vigilant approach in overseeing all financial institutions operating in Ghana.

Despite this commitment, Dr. Addison noted persistent breaches by banks, which undermine efforts to uphold the safety and integrity of the banking system.

These breaches encompass various forms of financial misconduct, such as money laundering, fraud, terrorist financing, corruption, market manipulation, insider dealings, and cybercrime.

“As the regulator, the Bank of Ghana is fully committed to remain vigilant in its oversight operations of all financial institutions in Ghana. Notwithstanding this, Banks have continued to breach guidelines that have been set to ensure that our banking system remains safe and sound and free from all facets of financial crime including money laundering, fraud, terrorist financing, corruption, market manipulation, insider dealings and cybercrime,” he said.

“Let me note that, to protect depositors, while ensuring the stability and soundness of the banking system, the Bank of Ghana will continue to be vigilant to ensure that banks comply with regulatory requirements and guidelines to build trust and confidence in our financial

institutions,” he said at an event for name change Galla Dinner for FBN Bank, in Accra on Thursday, May 2.

He added that the operations and services within the banking sector are swiftly changing, propelled by advancements in financial technology.

According to him, the rise of fintech companies in the financial landscape,

along with their introduction of creative financial products and services, has revitalized the integration and spread of technology across all aspects of banking operations. This, in turn, has bolstered efforts towards achieving financial inclusion goals.

Source: The Independent Ghana



Dr. Ernest Addison, the Governor of the Bank of Ghana



International

Putin sworn in for another term as Russian president

Vladimir Putin was sworn in for his fifth term as Russia's leader Tuesday, renewing his dominance over the country in a glittering Kremlin ceremony as his army advances in Ukraine at the height of Moscow's worst confrontation with the West since the Soviet era.

Putin, 71, extended his rule in an effectively uncontested election in March, having crushed any political opposition and launched the invasion of Ukraine that set Russia on its path to unprecedented global isolation and domestic repression.

Having tightened his quarter-century grip on power, Putin placed his hand atop the Russian Constitution at Tuesday's ceremony and vowed to serve the Russian people.

"We are a united and great people and together we will overcome all obstacles, realize all our plans. Together we will win!" he said, after being sworn in before a grand hall filled with dignitaries.

The United States and many other

Western countries boycotted the inauguration, which came just a day after Putin's latest round of nuclear saber-rattling.

Russian state TV broadcast the hourlong ceremony live, accompanied by enthusiastic commentary, showing Putin walking out of his office in the Kremlin as he got into a car for a short drive to the ceremony as snow fell on Moscow.

He then walked the red carpet of the Kremlin's historic halls to the applause of hundreds of guests, made up of Cabinet ministers, parliamentarians and celebrities, including American actor Steven Seagal, who has supported Putin for years. Asked by NBC News for his impression of the event, Seagal replied: "the best."

The Russian leader stopped to shake a few hands before he took to the stage to renew his oath to the Russian people.

"I want to bow to our heroes, participants in the special military operation, everyone who is fighting

for the motherland," Putin said, using the Kremlin's term for his war in Ukraine.

As he vowed that Russians alone will determine the fate of the country, Putin — in power as either president or prime minister since 2000 — also said that Moscow was open to dialogue with Western governments, as long as they changed their approach.

"The choice is theirs: Do they intend to continue trying to restrain the development of Russia, continue the policy of aggression, continuous pressure on our country for years, or look for a path to cooperation and peace," he added. Putin has framed his invasion of Ukraine as part of an existential conflict with the West, which he blames for trying to subdue Russia's might.

Some of Putin's high-profile apparatchiks, including the heads of the Ukrainian regions that Russia annexed in 2022, mingled with the press after the event to extol the virtues of the Russian leader and his speech.

"This is the first time for us, so there is a special trepidation and excitement," said Denis Pushilin, head of Russian-installed authorities in the partially occupied eastern region of Donetsk.

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov, Putin's loyal ally and ardent war supporter, also made an appearance after widespread speculation about his ill health.

The inauguration is usually attended by dozens of foreign dignitaries, but the Kremlin has been engaged in a growing clash with the U.S. and European powers over the war in Ukraine.

Putin appeared to send a message to his foes the day before the inauguration, ordering drills simulating the use of tactical nuclear weapons. The Russian Defense Ministry said Monday that the drills, which will test the readiness of nonstrategic nuclear forces to perform combat missions, was a response to "provocative statements and threats by certain

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Vladimir Putin, President of Russia



International

Putin sworn in for another term as Russian president

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Western officials against the Russian Federation.”

It appears to be a rebuke of French President Emmanuel Macron, who has spoken several times in recent months about the possibility of sending Western troops to Ukraine. British Foreign Secretary David Cameron also riled up the Kremlin last week when he told Reuters that

Kyiv had the right to use British-supplied weapons to strike targets inside Russia.

The Russian leader has few remaining enemies to combat at home, but it's expected he will carry out a government reshuffle after the ceremony.

All eyes will be on any changes in the positions of the prime minister,

currently occupied by loyal technocrat Mikhail Mishustin, and defense minister, held by long-time ally Sergei Shoigu. The latter was hit by a recent corruption scandal involving one of his deputies and allies.

Analysts will also be watching closely for possible successors jockeying for position, though

there's no sign Putin intends to relinquish power.

He will soon match Soviet leader Josef Stalin as the country's longest-serving modern ruler. Putin is eligible to run for another six-year term after his current tenure expires in 2030, when he will be 77.

Source: NBC News

Nigeria to charge levy on domestic transfers to fund cybersecurity

Nigeria's central bank plans to charge a levy on domestic money transfers to help fund cybersecurity, it said.

In a circular published late on Monday, the central bank told all banks and mobile money operators to charge 0.5% of the value of electronic transfers as a cybersecurity levy, starting in two weeks.

The bank said the funds will be managed by the country's security adviser's office and that non-compliance will attract a charge of 2% of the institution's annual turnover.

The new levy follows a clampdown on cryptocurrency, which officials have blamed for Nigeria's currency weakness. The naira has hit record lows due to dollar shortages as

crypto transactions in the country have flourished.

In March, Nigeria charged Binance, the world's largest crypto exchange and two of its executives, facing separate trials on tax evasion and money laundering, which the company is challenging.

Binance head of financial crime compliance, Tigran Gambaryan,

a U.S. citizen, is being held in detention in Nigeria.

Last month, commercial banks introduced a 2% processing fee for cash deposits from 500,000 naira and above for individuals and a 3% processing fee for corporate transactions from three million naira and above.

Source: Reuters



Former U.S. president Donald Trump awaits the start of proceedings at Manhattan criminal court

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