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General News

The current EC could destroy Ghana - Nyaho-Tamakloe warns

By Andy Ogbarmey-Tettey

A founding member of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), Dr Nyaho Nyaho-Tamakloe, has issued a stark warning about the potential consequences of the Electoral Commission's (EC) actions, which he believes could destabilize Ghana's democracy.

At an anti-corruption event at the GNAT Hall in Accra on Monday, September 2, Dr. Nyaho-Tamakloe expressed concerns about the EC's conduct ahead of the 2024 general elections.

"I am saying at the moment, the greatest threat to our democracy is the Electoral Commission, and if we are not careful, they will lead this country into destruction, mark my words," he warned.

He described recent actions by the EC as threats to democratic stability and drew on his own experience with coups in Ghana to underline his point.

"I've seen coup d'état in this country, I have been part of coup

d'état in this country, and I know what I'm talking about. I spent almost five years of my life in prison," he added.

Dr. Nyaho-Tamakloe criticized specific actions, such as alleged unauthorized transfers of voters between constituencies, as evidence of mishandling by the EC.

"How on earth can transfers be made from one particular constituency to another without the consent of others? These are facts," he said.

The warning comes as the EC admitted to a significant error in the provisional voters' register for the 2024 elections. Dr. Bossman Asare, the Deputy Chairman of the EC in charge of Corporate Services, explained that a technical glitch led to incorrect data being included in the register.

During a press briefing on September 2, Dr. Asare clarified that the provisional register



Dr. Nyaho Nyaho-Tamakloe, Founding member, NPP

included both a "transfers voters list" and an "absent voters list" for each polling station.

The transfers list was intended for voters moved between stations, while the absent voters list covered those who had either moved their votes or participated in special voting.

A technical issue resulted in all transfers since 2020 being mistakenly included, leading to an inflated number of transferred or absent voters. Dr. Asare assured that the EC has corrected the error

and will provide updated lists to political parties.

This clarification follows allegations from the National Democratic Congress (NDC) in the Ajumako-Enyan-Esiam constituency, which claimed the EC, in collaboration with the NPP, inflated the voter register by over 3,000 names without proper authorization. Galahad Alex Andoh, the NDC's Communications Officer in the constituency, expressed the party's resolve to counter any electoral manipulation.

Nkoranza chiefs ban NDC votes, curse supporters after Mahama's no-show

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

Chiefs in the Nkoranza district of the Bono East Region have issued a strong directive to their people, prohibiting them from voting for the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and its flagbearer, John Dramani Mahama.

This unprecedented move follows what the chiefs describe as a blatant show of disrespect by Mahama towards the traditional authority.

The Nkoranza Traditional Council, led by Nana Dansoabea, expressed their displeasure after Mahama failed to attend a scheduled meeting with the local chiefs on Monday, September 2, 2024.

Mahama was expected to meet with local chiefs, clergy, and Imams in the Bono Region Monday, September 2, 2024.

Despite the chiefs waiting from morning until evening, Mahama

did not appear, nor did he send a message to explain his absence. Instead, he reportedly continued with his rally in the region.

In a widely circulated video, the chiefs and elders expressed their anger, stating, "John Mahama made us wait from morning until evening. His actions are nothing short of disdainful. We were left waiting from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., while he proceeded with his rally, ignoring the Traditional Council. Any voter who supports Mahama will face curses. Anyone who chooses to betray Nana Dansoabea by voting for the NDC and Mahama will be subject to the wrath of the gods."

The chiefs have warned that anyone who defies their directive and votes for the NDC will face severe consequences, including curses from the gods.

The visit was to discuss community



NDC Supporters

concerns and seek their support as part of his tour to the Bono East Region. The NDC's flagbearer is preparing for the highly anticipated general elections on December 7.

As part of his campaign strategy, he plans to tour various regions of the country to present the party's vision for Ghana ahead of Election 2024.

This transformative journey is designed to engage with supporters, inspire hope, and

deliver on commitments made to NDC branch executives.

The Building Ghana Tour offers Mahama an opportunity to connect with Ghanaians from diverse backgrounds, including both supporters and sympathisers of the NDC.

The tour features a range of activities, including courtesy visits to chiefs, town hall meetings, community durbars, and in-depth discussions with various stakeholders.



General News

Lack of compliance, enforcement fostering galamsey activities – Eco-Conscious activist

By Sebastian Akaho-Tay

An environmental activist, Awula Naa Serwah has raised alarms about the severe impact of illegal mining, or “galamsey,” on Ghana’s water bodies and living conditions.

In an interview with Accra-based Joy News on September 2, Serwah criticised the current approach to managing illegal mining, stating that simply issuing mining licences is insufficient. She stressed that effective action requires rigorous enforcement and adherence to existing regulations.

“The problem is governance. Are we in the Wild West? It’s about compliance and enforcement. We should shift the argument now. It’s not just about illegal mining, it is illegal; they are committing a crime. When people commit a crime, what happens with law and order? It’s only in the Wild West that anyone can do what they like while the authorities stand idly by. When there is a government in place, you cannot do that, and

if you don’t comply, then the law takes its course,” Serwah said.

The issue has come into sharp focus following a report from the Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL). The company has linked the water crisis in Cape Coast, Elmina, and nearby areas to illegal mining. According to GWCL, the Sekyere Hemang Water Treatment Plant is struggling due to reduced raw water availability caused by galamsey activities.

“About sixty percent (60%) of the catchment capacity is silted as a result of illegal mining, compromising the quality of raw water. We are currently recording an average turbidity of 14,000 NTU instead of the 2,000 NTU designed for adequate treatment. Currently, the plant is able to produce only about 7,500 m³/day, a quarter of its installed capacity,” the company reported on August 31, 2024.

The Environmental Protection (Mining in Forest Reserves) Regulations, 2022 (L.I. 2462),

enacted on June 23, 2022, permits mining in forest reserves under certain conditions. This regulation is based on the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1994 (Act 490), which authorises the Minister for the Environment to make relevant regulations.

However, Serwah criticised L.I. 2462 for its provisions allowing mining in protected biodiversity

areas, arguing that it has not been effectively enforced. She is calling for stricter enforcement of environmental regulations and greater compliance to safeguard Ghana’s natural resources.

Eco-Conscious Ghana, led by Serwah, continues to advocate for stronger measures against illegal mining and improved environmental governance.



Galamsey

Otumfuo destools chief for ‘betraying’ Asanteman after 54 years of service

By Andy Ogbarmey-Tettey

The Overlord of the Asante Kingdom, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, has destooled one of his subchiefs, Wiremphehene Nana Opia Mensah II, for violating the esteemed Asante Sacred Oath (Ntamkeseε).

This action was taken on Monday, September 2, 2024, during a session of the Kumasi Traditional Council held at the Manhyia Palace, where Nana Opia Mensah II, who reigned as a chief for 54 years faced reprimand for his blatant disrespect toward sacred traditions.

The decision came after the Kumasi Traditional Council reviewed a detailed report on August 15, 2024, which revealed that the Aduana Clan, to which Nana Opia Mensah II, a nonagenarian, belongs, does not have a legitimate claim to the royal house, as it is the Oyoko Clan

that rightfully holds the throne.

In his judgment, the Asantehene said, “Nana Opia, you knowingly and deceitfully invoked the Great Oath, despite being fully aware that the stool did not rightfully belong to you. You deliberately challenged its ownership, attempting to exploit your long reign to conceal your illegitimacy.

“However, by misusing the Great Oath for personal gain, you have forfeited your claim to the stool. Your actions have left you no choice but to relinquish the throne,” Otumfuo declared.

As part of the symbolic act of his removal from office, Nana Opia Mensah II’s traditional slippers were taken off, signifying his destoolment according to Asanteman custom.

Otumfuo Osei Tutu II has repeatedly demonstrated his

commitment to sanctioning subchiefs who flout his directives to preserve the sanctity of the Asante name by engaging in unworthy acts.

In late August, the Asantehene revoked the titles of three of his subchiefs—Sabronum Gyaasehene Nana Awua Gyau Atuomi, Akyeamehene, and Baamuhene—

for flouting his anti-galamsey directive.

The actions of the Gyaasehene are said to have contributed to the pollution of the River Asuonfou, a major water source in the area, disrupting the daily activities of residents, both domestic and commercial, that are dependent on water.



Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, Asantehene

General News

AI deepfakes threaten Ghana's elections: media takes action to fight misinformation

By Amanda Cartey

The integrity of Ghana's 2024 general elections is under threat from AI-generated deepfakes, which are creating highly realistic but false videos and images. These deepfakes are spreading misinformation and manipulating public opinion, posing serious challenges to both voters and the electoral system.

On January 26, 2024, Nana Kwame Bediako, leader of the New Force Movement, known as Cheddar, shared a 24-second video on X. The video, altered with AI, depicted two contrasting versions of himself and suggested severe consequences if he was unjustly removed from the presidential race.

He reacted strongly, stating, "Eii Ghana ay3 hu oo! Artificial intelligence manipulation has the

power to ignite our tense political climate and inflame the public. The authorities should step in as this could happen to anyone, endangering relationships and reputations. Let us join forces to stop these incessant attacks. #TheNewForce, the voice of the people."

In another case, a deepfake video falsely accused Nana Akua Owusu Afriyie, Ghana's Deputy Ambassador to China, of embezzlement and visa fraud. The video, which appeared to be from an unknown foreign TV channel, claimed she was involved in fraudulent activities, including making false promises regarding visas and mining rights.

Fact-Check Ghana investigated and debunked the claims, confirming that the video was a deepfake. The

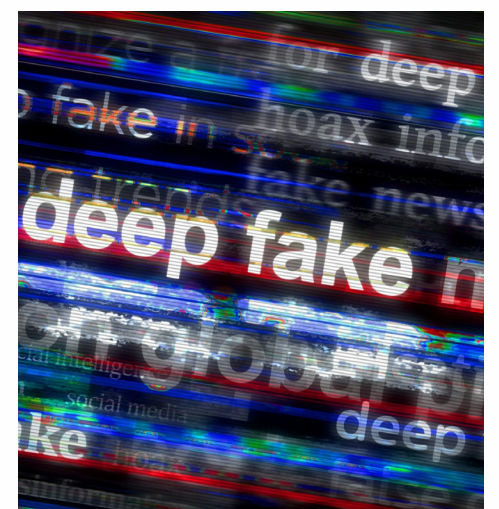
absurd claim that she promised Chinese citizens visas, despite their own visa-free status, was entirely baseless.

Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, the NPP flagbearer and current Vice President, was also targeted by a deepfake video. This video, intended as a joke, showed him singing a Chinese song in a suit behind a podium. It was later identified as a fabricated creation.

Journalists from JoyNews and CitiNews have also fallen victim to deepfake scams, where their images were manipulated to falsely endorse products. This has misled the public and eroded trust in the media.

In response, media outlets like JoyNews and CitiNews are implementing QR code technology

to combat misinformation. By scanning a QR code, the public can verify the authenticity of the content and trace its origin, helping to distinguish between real and fabricated information. This measure aims to restore trust and counter the spread of disinformation effectively.



File Photo

Illegal miners storm northern Ashanti mines: millions in gold stolen, gunshot injuries reported

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

Heavily armed thugs have attacked the Konongo Odumase Concession of Northern Ashanti Mines Co. Ltd. in the Ashanti Region, causing serious injuries and stealing gold ore worth millions of dollars.

The raid occurred on Monday, September 2, 2024, at the company's mining site in Konongo Odumase, within the Asante Akim Central Municipality.

The attackers, wielding firearms, machetes, clubs, bows, arrows, and other weapons, inflicted significant damage to the company's property, including three vehicles and various mining installations.

In a press release, the company expressed alarm over the persistent assaults by armed illegal miners, noting that this attack is part of a troubling trend rather than an isolated incident.

Despite ongoing efforts to address these threats with local

security authorities, including the Municipal Security Council, the company's attempts have yet to achieve results.

"Management of the mine has held several meetings with the Municipal Security Council headed by the MCE for Asante Akyim Central; the latest of which concerned another attack that the mine suffered less than three months ago," the statement said.

"Northern Ashanti Mines finds these recurrent attacks inimical to the quest of the government to promote a sustainable legal and properly regulated mining industry where investors are offered a favorable environment to contribute to the growth of the nation," it added.

The company is concerned that the stolen gold could potentially fund terrorist activities in the region, which already faces significant security threats. They highlighted the risk of instability in the run-up to Ghana's upcoming elections.

"We are fully aware of the threats of terrorism in the sub-region and the tendency of such radical elements to hide behind community thugs to raid mines to finance their onslaught and cause further instability in an already volatile region where Ghana faces significant threat," the statement warned.

"It is also crucial to note that allowing such disturbing clashes to happen within an electioneering year where the peace, security and stability of the nation is a

prime concern; can have dire consequences especially for miscreants looking for the slight flickers of tension to exploit," it continued.

The management has identified two illegal mining leaders suspected of orchestrating the attacks and is calling on government ministries and traditional authorities to take action and restore security. They have reaffirmed their commitment to working with state agencies to protect their staff and maintain the integrity of their operations.



File Photo



General News

Extreme speech could spark violent extremism during Dec elections - Security analyst warns

By Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo

Security Analyst, George Doyen Dosu has urged political parties and government officials to exercise caution in their choice of words and language during national engagements to avert a national catastrophe.

His warning comes in response to provocative statements from members of the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) and retaliatory remarks from the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC).

Ashanti Regional Chairman of the NPP Bernard Boasiako, commonly known as Chairman Wontumi, during the official unveiling of Dr Matthew Opoku Prempeh (NAPO) as the running mate of the party's flagbearer Dr Mahamudu Bawumia at Jubilee Park in Kumasi in July of this year, boasted that the NPP had "one million ways" to retain power.

Adding to the controversy, the Minister of Food and Agriculture, Bryan Acheampong, who doubles as the Member of Parliament for

Abetifi, declared at a unity walk organised by the NPP on Saturday, April 8, 2023, in Mpraeso, Eastern Region, that the NPP would "never hand over power to the NDC" and would "do whatever it takes to win the elections."

These remarks have drawn sharp reactions from the NDC, with some members accusing the NPP of "beating war drums" and escalating political tensions in the gear-up to the 2024 polls.

Dosu, who is also the Executive Director of the Doyen Institute of Intelligence and Investigations, told The Independent Ghana that such extreme speech could radicalise segments of the public and lead to the formation of vigilante groups willing to use violence for political ends..

"Extreme speech can radicalise certain elements of the public, resulting in the formation of extremist groups willing to use violence to advance their political goals. This could lead to the development of militias



George Doyen, Security Analyst

or vigilante groups, increased use of political thuggery, and an increased risk of targeted assassinations, kidnappings, or sabotage," Dosu said.

He warned that such rhetoric could erode public trust in democratic institutions, including the Electoral Commission (EC).

"Statements signalling a refusal to hand over power or the threat of violence to 'defend democracy' can erode the confidence and authority of major democratic institutions including the Electoral Commission, the judiciary, and law enforcement authorities. This loss

of trust can lead to widespread doubt about election results, fuelling conspiracy theories and protests, and potentially leading to a constitutional crisis if the conclusion is widely questioned," he added.

Ghana, a symbol of democracy in West Africa with a history of peaceful power transitions since 1992, faces a crucial test as it prepares for the December elections. Past elections have seen tensions and incidents of violence, highlighting the need for vigilance and commitment to democratic principles.

Make water bodies a security zone to protect them against galamsey - GWCL

By Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo

Managing Director of the Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL), Dr. Clifford Braimah, has called for the designation of water bodies as protected zones akin to national security areas, to combat illegal mining activities known as galamsey.

Speaking at a media event on the documentary 'Poisoned Rivers,' Dr. Braimah proposed deploying security forces to safeguard these vital resources from environmental threats.

He highlighted the need for a coordinated effort between the Water Resources Commission and the Ghana Armed Forces.

"I think that like other countries, water bodies are national security zones. If the Water Resources Commission, though working in it, they are civilians but it's under the Ministry of Defence, we can

test the resilience of our military and see if that problem wouldn't be resolved. As of now, once in a while, we bring them in, but that is a flash, then it goes off," Dr. Braimah said.

Dr. Braimah questioned the effectiveness of current measures, suggesting that if the military cannot prevent water pollution, it raises concerns about their capability to handle other security threats.

"But if we make it their responsibility and they cannot stop our water bodies from being polluted, how can they guarantee citizens that when there is an invasion of foreign forces, they would be able to stop them?" he added.

The GWCL has expressed deep concern over illegal mining activities impacting the Pra River, resulting in significant service

disruptions. Water shortages have been particularly severe in the Central Region, affecting areas such as Cape Coast and Elmina.

Dr. Braimah also criticised political responses to the issue, arguing for a more direct approach to solving the problem rather than relying on political promises.

"So, I think we have reached a stage where we need to be blunt about it. We need to be truthful

and confront it head-on. If we leave it in the hands of politicians, Mr. A will say, 'When I come, I will bring them back,' while Mr. B will say, 'When I come, I will make sure they do not do it,' and it becomes a game," he remarked.

Dr. Braimah's comments underscore the urgent need for a strategic approach to protecting Ghana's water resources from the ongoing threat of galamsey.



File Photo

General News

We have nothing to hide - EC to critics of electoral processes

By Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo

The Electoral Commission (EC) has strongly rejected accusations of attempting to manipulate election results through errors in the voter registration process.

Dr. Bossman Asare, Deputy Chairperson of the EC, urged the public to ignore allegations that the Commission is skewing the voter register to benefit a particular political party.

His remarks come amid growing concerns from political parties, civil society organisations, and the public.

Dr. Asare emphasised the Commission's commitment to transparency and openness in its electoral processes.

He stated, "On his part, the electoral processes put in place by the Commission is open to the general public and any interested

party citizen can with no efforts obtain relevant info on all aspects of the electoral process." He reassured the public that the EC "has nothing to hide."

He also addressed misconceptions regarding the role of the EC Chairperson in maintaining peace and ensuring election outcomes.

"The suggestion that the peace and the outcome of the election are hinged on the chairperson of the EC is completely untrue," Dr. Asare said.

The former president and NDC flagbearer, John Mahama, along with other NDC leaders such as Asiedu Nketia, Haruna Iddrisu, and Ofori Ampofo, have consistently accused the EC of intending to rig the elections in favour of the NPP. They have urged the Commission to avoid any actions that could be

perceived as unfair.

In response, the EC has reiterated its commitment to conducting free and fair elections, stressing that all electoral processes are subject to scrutiny and oversight. The

Commission has also announced plans to enhance transparency by increasing public access to electoral information and engaging with stakeholders to address concerns.



Dr. Bossman Asare, Deputy Chairperson of the EC

O'Reilly SHS student fatally stabs colleague over 'richest dad' argument; deceased's family demands justice

By Amanda Cratey

A fatal altercation at O'Reilly Senior High School in Accra has resulted in the death of final-year student Edward Borketey Sackey following a heated argument over whose father was wealthier.

The confrontation between Edward, a general arts student, and his colleague, one Godwin escalated into violence, leading to Edward being fatally stabbed. The incident reportedly occurred after a morning exam, and despite the severity of the altercation, teachers did not intervene.

Edward's classmates transported him to the hospital in a taxi, but he died from his injuries shortly after arrival.

Edward's father, who has not been named publicly, expressed his grief and frustration over the lack of response from both the school and authorities.

"I was at work when my niece called me that my son, Edward, was engaged in a fight with someone.

She told me to come quickly because the teachers were not doing anything about it. I quickly left what I was doing and set off to the school. She later called me to say that Edward had been stabbed and was bleeding profusely," he said.

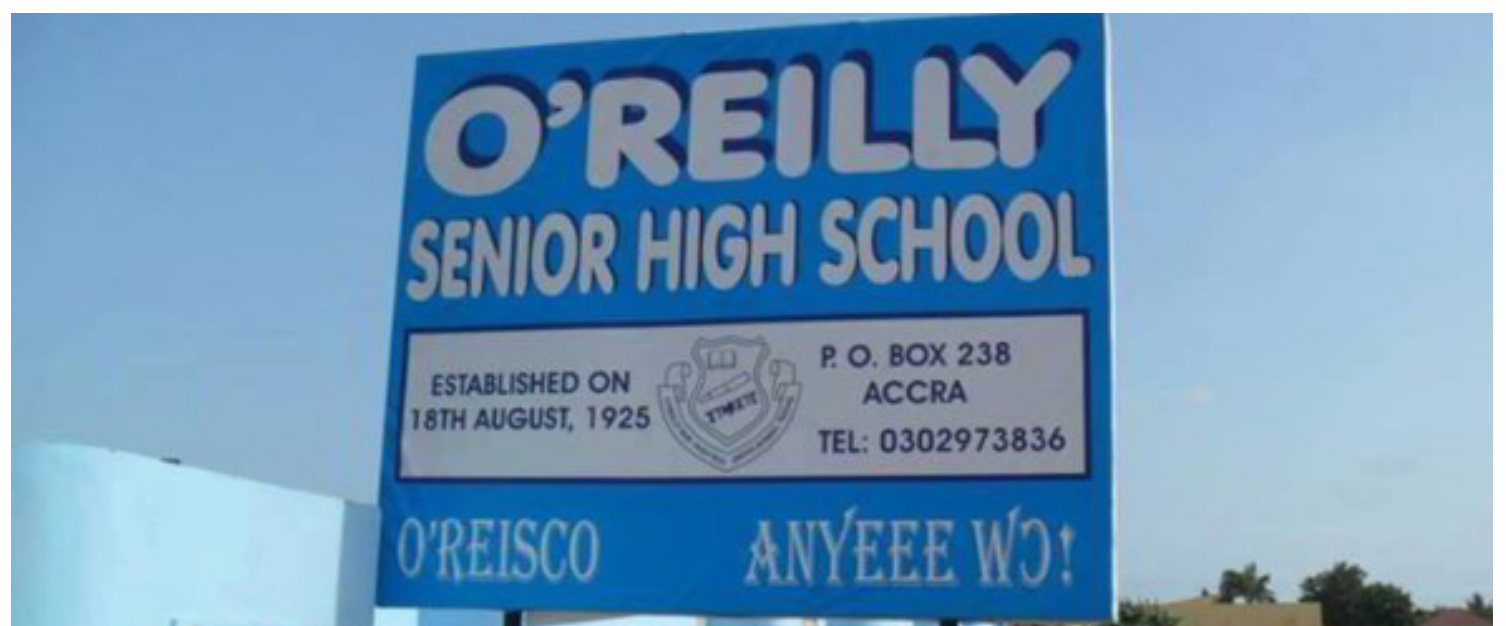
He continued, "I still asked her if the school authorities were not available, to which she responded that they were unconcerned. I

was rushing to the school when my niece called me once again to tell me that Edward had been rushed to the hospital by some of his colleagues. Again, no teacher said anything. I finally got to the hospital only to be told my son is dead."

The grieving father added, "It has been almost 48 hours, and I haven't heard anything from the school authorities, the police, or

the family of the boy who took the life of my son. I want justice for Edward, and the person responsible for his death to face the consequences!"

The school has yet to release an official statement on the incident, leaving Edward's family and the public in suspense. Meanwhile, the Police Service has apprehended the suspect in the murder case.



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Business

Minority slams alleged \$350m tax exemption plan for government-linked businesses

By Amanda Cartey

The Minority in Parliament has strongly opposed the government's plan to grant \$350 million in tax exemptions to certain businesses.

Minority leader, Dr. Cassiel Ato Forson, argues that the current economic difficulties in Ghana make these exemptions unjustifiable.

Speaking at an emergency parliamentary session on September 3 at the Accra International Conference Centre, Dr. Forson declared, "We will not accept a giveaway of \$350 million to crony businesses in a very opaque and non-transparent manner. Right Honourable Speaker, giving away a tax exemption of \$350 million is not an urgent issue that should warrant a recall."

Dr. Forson highlighted the severe economic challenges faced by Ghanaians, saying, "Ghana's economy is bleeding, the cost of

living continues to be high, and Ghanaians simply cannot make ends meet. These are the bread-and-butter issues that should concern any serious government, not the giveaway of much-needed tax revenues."

The Majority in Parliament had requested the \$350 million tax waiver for 42 companies involved in the government's One District One Factory (1D1F) initiative. Despite objections from the Minority about potential corruption and misuse of funds, Majority Leader Afenyo-Markin defended the proposal.

In his debate on the State of the Nation Address on March 11, 2024, Afenyo-Markin argued that the tax exemptions are designed to spur economic growth rather than deplete state resources.

"Tax exemptions are used to attract investments, but the NDC is looking at them with a very

myopic view. Let me explain that when a government introduces tax exemptions, it aims to drive economic growth, and in effect, these tax exemptions become tax credits. It is not for free, so the NDC should not mislead Ghanaians," Afenyo-Markin stated.

The Ministry of Finance began seeking about \$335 million in

tax exemptions for 42 companies under the 1D1F initiative in 2021. The Exemptions Act, 2022 (Act 1083), introduced by former Finance Minister Ken Ofori-Atta, supports this process. Among the companies, Sentuo Oil Refinery Limited has requested the largest exemption amounting to \$164,633,012.00.



Dr. Cassiel Ato Forson, Minority Leader

Alan Kyerematen reveals plan to support youth in mining and legalise their activities

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

The leader of the Movement for Change and a presidential aspirant for the 2024 general elections, Alan Kyerematen, has announced a plan to create legal private firms for young people engaged in illegal mining, known locally as "galamsey."

During a recent campaign tour, Kyerematen highlighted the urgent need for a new strategy to address the galamsey issue, which has severely affected many communities across Ghana.

He explained that, much like in regions where agriculture or fishing dominates, mining is a vital livelihood for many locals in mining areas.

Kyerematen proposed that the government establish "a new business model to create a legitimate framework" for young people to participate in mining legally. He vowed that his administration would organise

and mobilise these individuals into legal entities, ensuring they follow proper regulations.

"Under my presidency, we will organise and mobilise them, and the government will support them to have legal private entities," Kyerematen stated.

He also mentioned that these entities would be licensed and given financial support to acquire the necessary machinery, enabling them to operate in accordance with environmental standards.

The impact of galamsey on Ghana's environment is significant, with rivers like the Bonsa and the Pra suffering from severe pollution caused by harmful chemicals used by illegal miners. Forest reserves such as Tano Nimir and the Draw River have also been heavily affected.

Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL) has reported major disruptions in water services to

Cape Coast, Elmina, and nearby areas due to this pollution.

Current government measures,

including deploying security forces and making arrests, have not yet effectively resolved the problem.



Alan Kyerematen, Leader for Movement for Change



International

More than 100 killed in failed DR Congo jailbreak

An attempt by inmates to break out of a high-security prison in the capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kinshasa, has led to the deaths of 129 people, the authorities say.

Interior Minister Jacquemain Shabani said that 24 prisoners had died of bullet wounds after warning shots were fired in the early hours of Monday morning. Most of the others died from suffocation as a result of a crush during the breakout at Makala Prison.

Despite reports of mass casualties emerging on Monday, the government had initially said that only two people had died.

Seven years ago, at least 4,000 inmates escaped from the same prison - the country's largest.

On Monday, people living near the prison spoke about hearing gunshots but attempts by journalists to reach the site were thwarted by police officers who had blocked access to the area.

"There were gunshots from 01:00

or 02:00 in the morning, and until around 05:00," Daddi Soso, who lives close to the prison, told the AFP news agency.

"There were deaths and there are people who fled," he said, adding that the security forces were taking bodies away.

Graphic videos being shared from inside the prison on Monday, but not verified by the BBC, showed lifeless bodies on the floor as well as people shouting for help amid a crush.

Mr Shabani posted a video on X, formerly Twitter, around 24 hours after the attempted breakout, acknowledging the extent of the incident and the death toll.

He added that almost 60 others were severely injured and had been taken to hospital.

"This is also an opportunity to commend all the security services, the national police, and the army, who responded quickly and were able to contain the situation, preventing the escape," he said.

"It should be noted that there

were indeed damages, including loss of life, injuries and especially material damage at the central prison.

"Unfortunately, the administration and registry offices caught fire. These are urgent situations that we are currently addressing."

Rights groups have called for an international investigation into what happened.

Footage from the aftermath of the attempted breakout appears to show a huge hole in a brick wall, charred buildings, firemen working at the site and an office with papers strewn across the floor.

Makala Prison, dating from the 1950s, has a capacity of 1,500 prisoners, but more than 14,000 inmates were being held there, AFP reports.

In 2020, the BBC spoke to a prison official who described how people were dying there because of the poor conditions - including food shortages and a lack of hygiene.

At the time it was estimated that only 6% of the prisoners were actually serving sentences - the rest were stuck in DR Congo's legal system where cases can drag on for years.

The justice minister has promised to intensify efforts to decongest prisons across the country.



Broken prison wall

Nigeria orders arrest of British citizen linked to protests

A Nigerian court on Tuesday issued an arrest warrant for a British national and two Nigerians the police want to charge with treason and inciting the army following last month's inflation protests.

Already on Monday, Nigeria charged 10 people with treason and conspiring to incite the military to mutiny. All of the accused denied the charges that are also linked to the protests.

A judge issued the warrant against Andrew Martin Wynne, a Briton and two locals, Lucky Elis Obiyari and Abdullahi Musa.

In an affidavit before the court, police accused them of "being the masterminds and coordinators of the recent attempt to destabilise Nigeria and cause the overthrow of

the present democratically elected government."

The three could not be immediately reached for comment. Police said they fled Nigeria to avoid arrest but

will seek the help of Interpol.

Government critics said levelling treason charges against protesters was harsh and accused President Bola Tinubu's administration

of seeking to quash dissent as Nigerians grapple with the worst economic hardship in a generation.



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