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Mahama Slams AkufoAddo/ Bawumia Gov't

...For "Criminal" Economic Mismanagement

President John Mahama has launched a scathing attack on the previous Akufo-Addo/Bawumia administration, ac-

cusing it of "criminally mishandling" Ghana's economy. Speaking at the National Tripartite Committee meeting, Mahama expressed shock

and disbelief at the extent of economic mismanagement he has uncovered.

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Veteran Ghanaian Actor Mawuli Semevo Passes Away at 63

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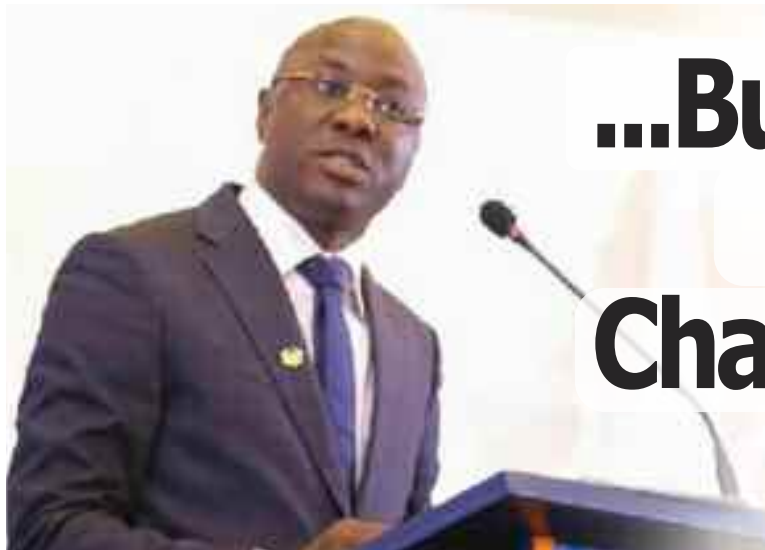
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Davis Ansah Opoku, MP for Mpraeso



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Republic Press

Europe's closest ally is in bed with its worst enemy. Now what?

Europe's leaders and officials have been blindsided by a staggering collapse in American support for Ukraine in the past week. Many still cannot understand why US President Donald Trump has turned so furiously on Ukraine's leader, Volodymyr Zelensky, parroting the vitriolic disinformation usually heard from the Kremlin.

Leaders on the continent weren't part of the Russia-US talks this week. They don't know when the US will present a proposed peace deal to Kyiv, or make good on its threat to turn its back on the conflict. And they don't know what will happen next.

"The way in which this was delivered – blow after blow after blow, within days – that was a real shock" for the continent, said Armida van Rij, a senior research fellow and head of the Europe Programme at London-based think tank Chatham House.

European politicians are working through their grief. A frantic summit in Paris sparked a raft of hawkish new ideas, aimed at framing the contours of an uncertain new reality.

But still, key capitals are adrift in their aims. A peacekeeping force, hiked defense spending and new military aid have all been put forward, but never in chorus. Europe's scattershot intentions formed one half of a stunning split-screen this week; on the other side were the US and Russia, suddenly chummy, tossing Ukrainian demands and territories off the negotiating table.

Trump has mocked Zelensky,



encouraged elections in the war-torn country, and criticized Ukraine for the war that Russia started. Europeans have pushed back -- but angering Trump further risks playing into Putin's hands.

Kevin Lamarque/Reuters

The emergence of a leader might help, some experts say: A figurehead who can corral Europe behind a universal intention, building a bridge between Kyiv and Washington. Britain's Keir Starmer and France's Emmanuel Macron are the most obvious candidates, and both will visit DC next week, trips that have taken on outsized importance.

But Europe is not known for its unity on defense, and every major leader has electoral or economic headaches at home. Plus, there is the thorny issue of when, and how hard, to push back on Trump;

governments know that rupturing that relationship might play into Moscow's hands.

And so, the questions persist. "We do not want to fracture our relationship with America," British defense analyst Nicholas Drummond told CNN. "But what do you do when your closest ally gets into bed with your worst

enemy?"

Boots on the ground

Europe expected Trump to be less interested in Ukraine's fight for sovereignty than the previous Biden administration, but it wasn't primed for a break-up so sudden, unequivocal and bitter.

The sight of a sitting US president blaming an adversary's invasion on its besieged ally was staggering, and drew unified condemnation from European leaders. On an emotional level, as well as a practical one, Europe has been shellshocked.

But it should not have been. For months, Trump and his inner circle had demurred and speculated over the start and hypothetical end of the war in Ukraine, and displayed an indifference to Kyiv's

sovereignty that signaled a jarring shift in policy was coming.

From the moment of Trump's election victory, van Rij said, "European heads of government should have been getting together ... to figure out what the European plan was going to be. But that hasn't really happened." Instead, it waited until now to act with real urgency.

Two futures exist: one with a peace deal, and one without. But either would likely require European leadership; Trump's administration has made clear its priorities lie in the Indo-Pacific and on its own borders.

UK Prime Minister Starmer made the first significant move to jostle European governments behind a common goal, announcing this week a marked shift in policy: Britain would be ready to put boots on the ground to keep an agreed peace in Ukraine.

Western officials said Wednesday that such a force would likely number fewer than 30,000 troops, and would focus on "reassurance," securing key Ukrainian infrastructure and working to instill confidence in the state.

The officials said the effort is being led by Britain and France. Paris first mooted putting boots on the ground last year but was roundly rebuffed by Europe. But Starmer has made clear that an American "backstop" would be key; the officials said such a backstop would likely be focused around air power, and be controlled from a NATO country like Poland or Romania.

Mexico threatens to sue Google over name change of Gulf of Mexico on US maps

Mexico will take Google to court if maps shown to US-based users continue to label the Gulf of Mexico as the Gulf of America across the entire body of water, President Claudia Sheinbaum said Monday, arguing that US President Donald Trump's order to rename it only applies to the part of the continental shelf under US control.

"What Google is doing here is changing the name of the continental shelf of Mexico and Cuba, which has nothing to do with Trump's decree, which applied only to the US continental shelf," Sheinbaum told reporters. "We do not agree with this, and the Foreign Minister has sent a new letter addressing the issue."

Sheinbaum said the renaming is "incorrect," adding that Trump's decree "only changed the name within his own continental shelf, which

extends 22 nautical miles from the US coast—not the entire Gulf."

Last week, Google renamed the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of America for US-based users of Google Maps, citing "a longstanding practice of applying name changes when they have been updated in official government sources." People in Mexico continue to see the body of water listed as the Gulf of Mexico. All other countries see both names.

Sheinbaum first threatened to take Google to court last week, saying a civil suit could be on the table if the tech giant does not correct what she called an "inaccurate designation."

CNN has reached out to Google for comment.

During Monday's press conference, Sheinbaum read out a response from Google to a letter sent by Mexico to the company in January, contesting the tech giant's decision to rename the area.

"As we first announced two weeks ago, and consistent with our product policies, we've begun rolling out changes in Google Maps. We would like to confirm that people using Maps in Mexico will continue to see 'Gulf of Mexico,'" the letter from Google reiterated.

"People in the US will see 'Gulf of America'. Everyone else will see both names," the letter added.

Sheinbaum said Mexico is now sending a new letter back to Google, which reads "any reference to the 'Gulf of America' initiative on your Google Maps platform must be strictly limited to the marine area under U.S. jurisdiction."

"Any extension beyond that zone exceeds the authority of any national government or private entity. Should that be the case, the Government of Mexico will take the appropriate legal actions as deemed necessary," it added.

Sheinbaum noted that



Mexico would wait for Google's response before moving forward with legal action.

Trump fired the latest tariff shot at China. Is Beijing prepared to make it a trade war?

Editor's Note: Sign up for CNN's Meanwhile in China newsletter which explores what you need to know about the country's rise and how it impacts

the world.

President Donald Trump has finally made good on a campaign promise to raise tariffs on Chinese imports – announcing on Saturday duties of 10% on all Chinese goods coming in the country as part of sweeping trade measures that also targeted Mexico and Canada.

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Mahama Slams Akufo-Addo/Bawumia Gov't For "Criminal" Economic Mismanagement

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"We all knew the economy was in crisis, but some of the things I am uncovering myself have been a criminal mishandling of our economy. Ghana is now a crime scene," Mahama stated. He further questioned the recklessness of the previous administration, saying "How can a government be so reckless? I cannot understand."

Mahama's comments come as the government announces a 10% increase in base pay for public sector workers, effective March 2025. This marks the second pay rise in less than a year, following a 23% increase in 2024 aimed at addressing the rising cost of living.

The National Tripartite Committee, comprising representatives from the government, employers, and organized labor, began negotiations on February 4, 2025, to determine the minimum wage for 2025. The agreed minimum wage will serve as the baseline for wages across various sectors and influence future deliberations on base pay for public sector employees.

...But Amin Adam Challenges Claims



Dr. Mohammed Amin Adam, former Finance Minister, has questioned President John Dramani Mahama's assertion that the previous administration's handling of the economy was "criminally mishandled." Adam's concerns were raised on Face-

book, where he highlighted the inconsistency between Mahama's claims and the significant pay increases awarded to public sector workers in 2023 and 2024.

"How could an economy described as 'criminally mishandled' afford a 30% base pay increase in 2023, followed by 23% from January to June 2024, and 25% from July to December 2024, all while maintaining respectable fiscal deficits?" Adam asked.

Adam also pressed for an explanation on what has

changed between December 2024 and February 2025 that has put the economy in crisis, making it unable to afford an adjustment in the base pay above 10%.

President Mahama's comments, which sparked Adam's response, were made during a National Tripartite Committee meeting. Mahama condemned the former government's management of the economy, stating that Ghana is now a "crime scene" due to the alleged mismanagement.

Adam's criticism comes after he previously expressed confidence in the economy, stating that the New Patriotic Party government was leaving behind a strong economy¹. He emphasized that Ghana's economic fundamentals are stronger than when the NPP took over in 2016.

OPK Warns Against Politicization of Public Service

On World Day for Social Justice, the Davis Ansah Opoku, Member of Parliament for Mpraeso, addressed Parliament to condemn the large-scale dismissal of workers due to political transitions, urging President John Dramani Mahama and the Chief of Staff to put an end to this practice. He emphasised that job security should be based on competence rather than political affiliation.

"Mr Speaker, today is a day for reflection on fairness, equity, and inclusion. But how can we genuinely engage in discussions about social justice when hardworking Ghanaians are losing their jobs overnight—merely due to a change in government? These are young men and women with families to support, responsibilities to uphold, and dreams to

pursue. What are they meant to do now?" he asked.

Hon. Opoku shared his experience of being denied employment at the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) in 2017, despite his qualifications and political allegiance.

"I have lived through this before and know how painful it is. In 2017, despite being a member of the ruling NPP, I was denied access to work at NHIA. I felt powerless. I wondered how I would survive and take care of my family. No Ghanaian should have to experience that," he recounted.

Drawing from this experience, he noted that mass dismissals have been a recurring issue in Ghana's governance and should not be accepted as a norm.

"It was wrong in the past. It is wrong now. And it will remain wrong

tomorrow," he stated firmly.

Hon. Opoku emphasised that public sector employment should not be tied to partisan interests as it undermines national development and weakens public trust in governance.

"We must move beyond this era of 'tit-for-tat' governance, where every new administration feels entitled to clear out workers perceived as belonging to the previous government. Ghana cannot progress if people fear losing their livelihoods after every election cycle. We need a system that values merit, performance, and dedication over political affiliation."

In concluding his submission, Hon. Opoku directly appealed to President Mahama and the Chief of Staff, urging them to reconsider the ongoing dismissals and instead focus on policies

that promote job security and fairness.

"If we truly want to reset Ghana and bridge the gap through social justice, then we must start with ensuring fairness in employment. I appeal to the President and the Chief of Staff—let us do the right thing. Let us give these young men and women the opportunity to work, contribute to our economy, and support their families."

His submission received strong reactions across the House, with many MPs acknowledging the urgent need for bipartisan efforts to protect workers from politically motivated job losses.

As Ghana marks World Day for Social Justice, Hon. Opoku's message is clear: true social justice must begin with protecting every Ghanaian's right to employment, free from political discrimination.

Veteran Ghanaian Actor Mawuli Semevo Passes Away at 63

Renowned Ghanaian actor Mawuli Semevo has sadly passed away on Thursday, February 20, 2025, at the Ridge Hospital in Accra. He was 63 years old.

Semevo had been receiving treatment for severe burns sustained in a fire accident at his home on February 8, 2025. According to reports, he suffered burns covering 44% of his body, including respiratory injuries that

left him struggling to breathe.

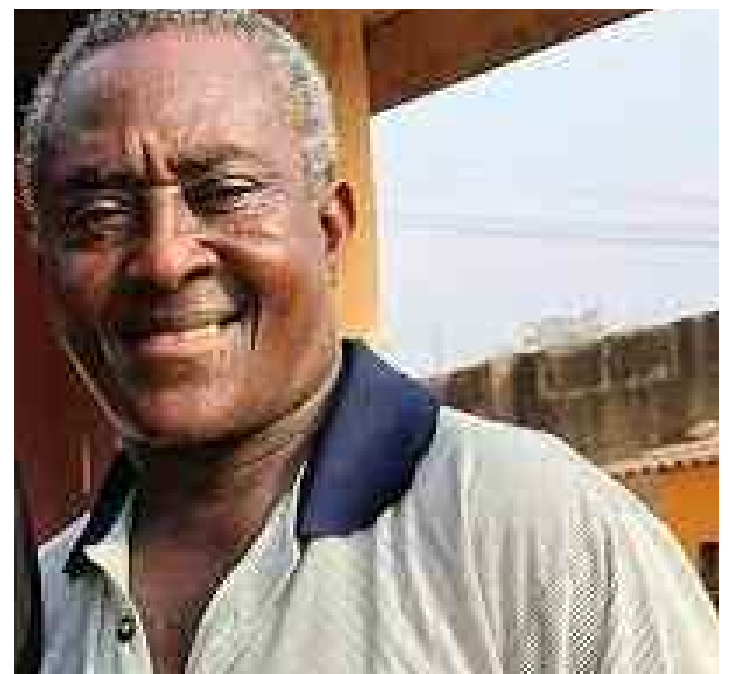
Judith Addison of Beyond Burns International, a non-profit organization supporting burns survivors, had confirmed Semevo's condition in a video report, stating that his life was "hanging in the balance."

Semevo's passing has sent shockwaves through Ghana's entertainment industry, where he was

celebrated for his exceptional acting talent on stage and screen.

His notable film credits include "Harvest at 17," "A Stab in the Dark," "Escape of Love," "Like Cotton Twines," and "The Good Old Days: The Love of AA."

Tributes are pouring in from fellow actors, including Ken Fiati and Edinam Atasti, who had earlier confirmed Semevo's condition. The Ghanaian film community will deeply miss this talented actor, and his legacy will continue to inspire future generations.



Republic Press

Galamsay fight: We'll name, shame and expose all illegal miners – Lands Minister

by Sheila Satori Mensa

The Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, Amarh Kofi Buah, has reaffirmed the government's commitment to tackling illegal mining, popularly known as galamsey, by exposing those responsible for destroying the country's water bodies and forests.

Speaking on the issue, the minister stressed that the fight against galamsey requires collective action and should not be politicised.

He called on Members of Parliament (MPs) to take leadership roles in their respective constituencies, emphasizing that the issue is not about political affiliations but about



protecting the future of the nation.

"As if on a daily basis, these bad actors are becoming more emboldened, making it seem as though we are

helpless as a country. But we believe there are solutions," he stated.

"President Mahama has demonstrated the political will to tackle this menace, but we can only succeed with the collective effort of all Ghanaians."

The minister announced plans to hold a national conference in the coming week to engage MPs and other stakeholders in

finding lasting solutions to illegal mining.

He underscored the importance of media involvement, urging journalists to focus on investigative reporting rather than sensationalism.

"This is not about shielding anyone. Whether NPP or NDC, anyone destroying our water bodies and forests is a bad person and must be exposed. We are committed to naming, shaming, and bringing these individuals to justice," Buah declared.

Illegal mining has long been a major environmental and economic challenge in Ghana, with rivers and forests suffering severe degradation.

The government's renewed commitment to fighting galamsey is expected to bring stricter enforcement of environmental laws, especially on water bodies and forests.

Government approves 10% salary increase for public sector workers



The government has approved a 10% salary increase, effective January 1, 2025, for public sector workers.

The decision follows negotiations between President John Dramani Mahama and labour unions, who had been pushing for a substantial pay raise.

According to government sources, the pay adjustment comes after weeks of discussions, during which labour unions initially demanded a 35% increment to address rising living costs.

However, following direct intervention by President Mahama, union leaders agreed to the 10% raise, bringing a conclusion to the prolonged negotiations.

"The government recognizes the economic challenges faced by workers, and we are committed to

ensuring fair compensation while maintaining fiscal discipline," President Mahama stated during the announcement.

The wage adjustment is expected to provide relief to thousands of public sector employees who have expressed concerns over inflation and the increasing cost of living.

The Ministry of Finance has assured that the new salaries will reflect in workers' paychecks starting this month.

Despite the resolution, some union members remain cautious, emphasizing the need for continuous dialogue on improving wages and working conditions.

Meanwhile, economic analysts believe the move will have broader implications on government expenditure and national budget planning.

GlennSamm spreads love to inmates with annual charity initiative

Ghanaian walking artiste, brand and cultural advocate Samuel Glenn Semakor, popularly known as GlennSamm, once again demonstrated his commitment to giving back to society with his annual charity event, "GlennSamm-Friends #LoveBehindBars Edition".

Held on February 15th, the initiative aimed to provide meals and show kindness to individuals detained in police stations across Accra, in celebration of the month of love.

The event saw GlennSamm and his team visit several police stations, including Ashaiman, East Legon, Airport, Cantonments, Nima, Osu, Kaneshie, and Teshie. The goal was to offer support and encouragement to inmates, many of whom often feel forgotten by society. GlennSamm's initiative provided 500 balls of kenkey with fish and water to those behind bars, ensuring they had a decent meal and a reminder that they are not alone.

Speaking about his motivation for the project, GlennSamm shared a personal experience that inspired him to give back. "When I was arrested and locked behind bars for the first 48 hours, my family didn't know where I was. I didn't know how I was going to feed myself. That experience stayed with me, and I promised myself that once I was free, I would find a way to support others in similar situations," he explained.

GlennSamm emphasized the importance of showing compassion to inmates, regardless of their circumstances. "You don't need to commit a crime before you are arrested. Life can be unpredictable, and anyone can find themselves in such a situation. We should all find ways to lend a helping hand. You don't have to be rich to make a difference. I challenge everyone to make an effort to support someone in need," he urged.

The "Love Behind Bars" initiative

was made possible through the collaboration of GlennSamm's friends, associates, Overseas Logistics and culinary partners, including Emyries Kitchen and the Ghafa Foundation. Their collective efforts ensured the success of the project, which not only provided nourishment but also spread positivity and hope to those often overlooked by society.





Republic Press

Man hailed as world's first imam to say he was gay is shot dead in South Africa

A man hailed as the world's first imam to say he was gay was shot dead in South Africa on Saturday, local police said, in what rights groups fear could be a hate crime.

Eastern Cape provincial police said in a statement it was investigating the death of Muhsin Hendricks, 58, in Bethelsdorp stating that the motive behind the killing was unclear.

The statement said that at around 10 a.m. Saturday, "Hendricks and a driver was inside a gold-colored VW TRoc in Haley Place, Extension 24, Bethelsdorp when a silver-colored Hilux double cab stopped in front and blocked them from driving off."

It added that: "Two unknown suspects with covered faces got out of the vehicle and started firing multiple shots at the vehicle. Thereafter they fled the scene, and the driver noticed that Hendricks who was seated at the back of the vehicle was shot and killed."

A video, captured by a security camera, purporting to show the shooting incident has been shared widely on social media. CNN has not independently verified the video, and police said they could not confirm the video as an

investigation is underway.

Shootings are common in South Africa where murder rates – already among the highest in the world – are at a 20-year high.

Fears of hate crime

Hendricks was the "first imam in the world to come out as gay" in 1996, according to a statement from the advocacy group the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA World) on Saturday.

"The ILGA World family is in deep shock at the news of the murder of Muhsin Hendricks, and calls on authorities to thoroughly investigate what we fear may be a hate crime," Julia Ehr, executive director at ILGA World, said in the statement.

South Africa's Department of Justice and Constitutional Development said it was "saddened" by Hendrick's murder and pledged to "track and monitor that justice is dispensed" if his death is indeed confirmed as a hate crime.

Hendricks founded the Al-Ghurbaah Foundation in Cape Town, where he served as executive director. The human rights organization provides support to "Queer Muslims helping them to reconcile Islam with their Sexual orientation and Gender Identity,"



according to the Al-Ghurbaah Foundation's website.

The Muslim Judicial Council of South Africa (MJC) "unequivocally" condemned the "shocking killing" in a statement Sunday.

"It has been alleged that the killing may have been motivated by hatred towards Muhsin Hendricks due to his views on same-sex relationships. While the MJC has consistently maintained that Muhsin's position is incompatible with Islamic teachings, we unequivocally condemn his murder and any acts of violence targeting members of the

LGBTQ community or any other community," the MJC said.

The imam was the subject of the 2022 documentary "The Radical" which followed Hendricks establishing a mosque for LGBTQ+ Muslims in Cape Town, South Africa, amid death threats. "The need to be authentic was greater than the fear to die," Hendricks says in the film.

Fighting in Africa's mineral-rich DRC killed over 3,000 in less than 2 weeks. Here's how your phone plays a part

How your phone may be fueling deadly fighting in Congo

A rampaging rebel group has claimed the capture of another mining town in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a little over a week after it took control of the region's largest city Goma.

Clashes between the rebel coalition Alliance Fleuve Congo (AFC) and Congolese forces have left more than 3,000 people dead in less than two weeks, according to DRC's government.

The AFC, of which the M23 armed group – which claims to defend the interest of minority Rwandophone communities – is a key member, took over resource-rich Nyabibwe last week after Goma, the provincial capital of North Kivu, fell on January 27.

It comes less than a year after the rebels seized Rubaya, a mining hub also in the country's east, which harbors one of the world's largest deposits of coltan, a valuable mineral used in the production of smartphones.

Here's what you need to know.

Is my phone fueling the conflict?

For decades, DRC, a Central African nation of more than 100 million people, has grappled with bloody militia violence, including ethnic and resource-driven armed rebellion by M23 and dozens of other armed groups.

Roughly the size of Western Europe, the war-riven country is endowed with vast mineral wealth, including the world's largest reserves of cobalt and coltan – both critical to the production of electronics. Cobalt is used to produce batteries that power cell phones and electric vehicles, while coltan is refined into tantalum, which has a variety of applications in phones and other devices.

However, according to the World Bank "most people in DRC have not benefited from this wealth," and the country ranks among the five poorest nations in the world.



Much of DRC's mineral wealth is split between its government and armed groups who control swathes of the resource-rich east.

"Access to natural resources is at the heart of this conflict," Jean Pierre Okenda, an analyst specializing in extractive industries governance, told CNN about the M23-led takeover of territories in the east.

"It's not a coincidence that the zones occupied by the rebels are mining areas," Okenda said, adding that global demand for cobalt and coltan has fueled the crisis.

"It takes money to wage war. Access to mining sites finances the war," he added.

Why do the rebels want the minerals?

M23 fighters stand nearby as an estimated 2400 Congolese (FARDC) soldiers surrender en masse to the rebel group at the Stade de l'Unité on January 30, 2025 in Goma, DRC.

Daniel Buuma/Getty Images

Victor Tesongo, a spokesperson for the AFC-M23

rebel alliance, told CNN that the group was in control of the coltan-rich Rubaya and Nyabibwe mines, but stopped short of saying how much money it has derived from them or what it has been spent on.

But a top United Nations official has an idea.

Bintou Keita, the UN Secretary General's Special Representative to the DRC, told the Security Council in a September briefing that coltan trade from Rubaya's mines is estimated to supply over 15 percent of global tantalum production and generates an estimated \$300,000 in revenue a month for M23.

M23 denied these claims, insisting its presence in Rubaya was "solely humanitarian."

Much of the international community, including the Congolese government, has accused neighboring Rwanda of backing M23 and aiding the plunder of DRC minerals.

UN experts believe that an estimated 3,000 to 4,000 Rwandan soldiers are supervising and supporting M23 fighters in eastern DRC, outnumbering the rebel group's forces in the country. A December report by the UN Group of Experts on the DRC revealed that "at least 150 tons of coltan were fraudulently exported to Rwanda and mixed with Rwandan production."

DRC Communications Minister Patrick Muyaya told CNN last week that "Rwanda's mineral exports surged after its forces took control of key mining zones in DRC."

Rwanda is one of the world's top suppliers of coltan and has surpassed DRC's export of the mineral in recent years.

Rwandan President Paul Kagame told CNN last week that his country gets coltan from its mines and said that he didn't know whether Rwandan troops were in DRC.

Republic Press

PYF threatens legal action over mass public sector job revocations

The Progressive Youth Front (PYF) has strongly condemned the ongoing revocation of public sector appointments under the National Democratic Congress (NDC) government, describing the move as illegal and insensitive.

In a statement released on Wednesday, the youth advocacy group accused President John Mahama's administration of violating its campaign promises by terminating the appointments of thousands of public sector employees.

According to the PYF, these dismissals directly contradict the NDC's commitment to reducing unemployment and promoting a 24-hour economy.

"The decision to revoke appointments in key public sector institutions will put over 12,000 Ghanaian youth out of work, bringing untold hardships to them, their families, and dependents," the statement read.

The group further alleged that the mass terminations are politically motivated and undermine the economic security of many young professionals who secured their jobs through due process.

The PYF has vowed to challenge the government's decision through legal action, urging affected individuals to join in seeking redress.

Additionally, the group has called on civil society organizations, labour unions, and the media to speak out against what it describes as an



unconstitutional attack on Ghana's workforce.

"We will not relent until fairness and justice prevail," the statement concluded, as the PYF urged President

Mahama to reconsider the decision and prioritize youth employment rather than exacerbate joblessness.

The government has yet to respond to these allegations.

Korle Bu trains Specialist Nurses in Plastic Surgery and Burns

The Korle Bu Teaching Hospital's National Reconstructive Plastic Surgery and Burns Centre (NRPS & BC), in collaboration with Resurge and Canniesburn Glasgow Hospital, UK, conducted a one-week Postgraduate Diploma training for nurses in burns and plastic surgery.

The course director, Mr. Stuart Watson, led participants through online sessions from Glasgow.

The participants were also trained by Dr. Opoku Ware Ampomah, the co-course director and the director of NRPS & BC.

The course was designed to train nurses in specialized care for patients with burn injuries and those requiring reconstructive or plastic surgery.

Each day began with interactive lectures from experienced surgeons, burn specialists, and senior nurses covering critical topics such as wound management, skin grafting, infection control,



surgical procedures, rehabilitation, pain management techniques, emergency care for burn patients, and psychological support for patients and families.

This training aimed to equip nurses with the requisite skills to provide high-quality patient care in hospitals, trauma centers, ICUs, and

specialized burn units.

The course was also designed to enhance participants' expertise in critical care and patient recovery.

Participants were divided into groups for effective training, case studies, and presentations.

Representatives from about 17 health facilities

across West Africa took part in the course, including Korle Bu Teaching Hospital, Tema General Hospital, Greater Accra Regional Hospital, UGMC, 37 Military Hospital, LEKMA, Cocoa Clinic, Nyaho Clinic, Ho Government Hospital, Kumasi South Hospital, Tamale Teaching Hospital, Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital, Cape Coast Teaching Hospital, Winneba Trauma Hospital, Koforidua Hospital, Upper West Regional Hospital, and Manhyia Hospital, as well as participants from Connaught Teaching Hospital in Sierra Leone.

As the final certificates were handed out, there was a mix of excitement and a sense of responsibility, as these nurses were now equipped to return to their respective hospitals.

Participants from Sierra Leone expressed their joy and confirmed the great impact the course had on their careers—not just as caregivers, but as specialists in healing wounds, restoring hope, and changing lives.

Another participant from Ho Government Hospital also expressed his gratitude, stating that this marked the beginning of a deeper commitment to saving patients.

About 25 faculty members facilitated the training course, benefiting 73 students in the second and third cohorts of graduation.

The special guest of honor for the occasion, Mrs. Perpetual Ofori-Ampofo, President of the Ghana Registered Nurses and Midwives Association, chaired the function and urged all participants to utilize the skills they had acquired.

In his closing remarks, the Director of the Reconstructive Plastic Surgery and Burns Centre encouraged the participants and advised them to strive to become great ambassadors in their healthcare facilities.

Dr. Ampomah added that every patient under their care should receive treatment with compassion and expertise, with the ultimate goal of giving them a second chance at life.

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Government partners with Diotin Technologies to combat Water Pollution

In a bold move to combat the alarming levels of water pollution caused by illegal mining, the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Science, and Technology, has initiated talks with Diotin Technologies, a global leader in advanced chemical solutions.

The engagement, led by Hon. Emmanuel Armah-Kofi Buah, Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, and Hon. Murtala Mohammed, Minister for Environment, Science, and Technology, aims to explore a potential partnership as part of the government's Blue Water Initiative. The initiative seeks to restore heavily polluted water bodies and ensure long-term environmental sustainability.

Oliver Edwards, Managing

Director of Diotin UAE, presented the company's cutting-edge chemical treatment solutions, which utilize advanced oxidation and biocide water treatment processes. These methods, he explained, have the capability to purify contaminated water within 90 days, making it safe for both human consumption and aquatic ecosystems.

"Our technology is designed to deliver comprehensive water purification, transforming polluted water sources into safe and sustainable resources," Edwards stated.

If adopted, the partnership is expected to play a crucial role in reversing environmental degradation and safeguarding water resources for future generations. Hon. Buah expressed strong support for the initiative, emphasizing the need for collaboration between government agencies, local communities, and key



stakeholders to ensure successful implementation.

"This collaboration marks a pivotal moment in our commitment to protecting natural resources and securing a sustainable future," Hon. Buah remarked.

The government's engagement with Diotin Technologies signals a proactive step in addressing Ghana's water pollution crisis, with hopes that this initiative will lead to tangible improvements in water quality across the country.

Dr. Bawumia calls on President Mahama to reverse 'Unfair Dismissals'



Former Vice President Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia has voiced deep concerns over recent developments in the country, calling on President John Mahama to uphold democratic principles and ensure fairness in governance.

In a strongly worded statement, Dr. Bawumia criticized what he described as politically motivated dismissals of government employees, particularly those who were hired during the previous administration.

He argued that the actions contradict President Mahama's campaign promise to create jobs and improve livelihoods.

"It is ironic that a party which campaigned on the wings of jobs for all Ghanaians is arbitrarily dismissing the same Ghanaians, rendering them jobless," he said.

Dr. Bawumia also condemned reports of planned terminations of security personnel, nurses, and teachers allegedly based on their appointments under the

previous government.

He urged the administration to prioritize national development over political considerations.

Beyond employment concerns, the former Vice President raised alarms over increasing insecurity in the country, citing attacks on journalists, military raids on the homes of former government officials, and mob violence against state institutions.

"This is rather reminiscent of a military takeover and not a peaceful democratic transition," he remarked, calling for immediate action to protect democratic institutions and citizens.

Dr. Bawumia emphasized that the 2024 elections, which brought President Mahama back to power, were a mandate for progress, not political retribution.

He urged the government to focus on uniting the country rather than deepening divisions.

"I call on His Excellency President Mahama to be a president for all Ghanaians by putting a stop to these developments, reversing the unfair dismissals, and protecting all our citizens," he stated.

Concluding his message, Dr. Bawumia reaffirmed the need to uphold Ghana's democracy and constitutional values.

"We must advance our democracy. We must protect our state institutions. We must uphold our Constitution. Ghana can do better. Ghana must do better."

His statement comes at a time of heightened political tensions, with many Ghanaians closely watching how the government will respond to these concerns.

My vision is to provide free transport for students in remote communities – Kumawu MP

The Member of Parliament for Kumawu in the Ashanti Region, Hon. Ernest Yaw Anim, has announced plans to procure tricycles, commonly known as 'pragya,' to transport students from remote communities within the constituency to and from school.

According to the MP, this initiative is aimed at reducing absenteeism and encouraging parents to enroll their children in school at an early age.

He made this known during the 2025 Kumawu MP Teachers' Awards ceremony, held under the theme "Motivating the Teacher; The Tool for Educational

Transformation."

As part of efforts to recognize and reward outstanding teachers, the event saw the Overall Best Teacher receiving a refrigerator, while a teacher serving in one of the most remote communities was awarded a motorbike.

Hon. Anim also assured constituents of his commitment to fixing dilapidated roads in rural areas to improve transportation and make movement easier for residents.

Meanwhile, Kumawu Kyidomhene, Oheneba Kwasi Agyekumhene, urged teachers to enforce discipline by discouraging students from playing video games and loitering late at night.

The Kumawu District

Education Director, Mr. Kwame Oduro Owusu, encouraged teachers who were not awarded this year to continue working hard for future recognition.

Speaking at the event, the Overall Best Teacher, Paulina Afia Ago, appealed to authorities to post more teachers to the district to improve the quality of education.



Republic Press

National Economic Dialogue scheduled for March 3-4 in Accra

The Government of Ghana, under the leadership of President John Dramani Mahama, has announced the National Economic Dialogue, set to take place on March 3rd and 4th, 2025, at the Accra International Conference Centre.

The event aims to provide a platform for stakeholders to address pressing economic challenges and develop actionable strategies for sustainable economic growth. President Mahama will deliver the keynote address under the theme, "Resetting Ghana: Building the Economy We Want Together."

This dialogue marks a significant step in fulfilling the President's commitment to fostering inclusive discussions on Ghana's economic future.

It will bring together representatives from the private sector, academia, public policy institutions, and civil society organizations to collaborate on

key policy reforms.

Participants will engage in thematic discussions on critical areas, including:

Achieving sustainable macroeconomic stability

Promoting economic transformation

Advancing infrastructure development

Implementing structural reforms

Ensuring private sector-led growth

Restoring good governance and combating corruption

The outcomes of the forum are expected to lay the groundwork for economic revitalization, enhancing business opportunities and improving living conditions nationwide. By establishing clear commitments and milestones, the dialogue seeks to reset the economy for long-term resilience and transformative growth.

For further inquiries, stakeholders can reach out via NED2025@mofep.gov.gh.



Contractor pleads not guilty to defrauding by false pretense

April 14, 2025.

Background of the Case

Justice Nana Mensah is accused of defrauding Mohammed Adamu Nettey, a plumber residing in New Gbawe, out of GH¢105,000.

According to the prosecution, Chief Inspector Christopher Wonder told the court that, the complainant's employer, who resides in the United Kingdom, contracted the accused in August 2024 to construct a swimming pool at a guest

house in New Gbawe for an agreed sum of GH¢140,000.

After inspecting the site, the accused received an initial payment of GH¢105,000 to begin construction.

However, after partially completing the project, the accused allegedly abandoned the site for two months. The complainant's employer subsequently requested a refund of part of the payment, but the accused failed to comply.

Following a formal complaint to the police on October 3, 2024, Justice Nana Mensah was arrested and granted bail.

However, he failed to report as instructed, leading to a forfeiture of his bond. His surety later produced him to the police, after which he was charged and arraigned before the court.

The prosecution is expected to present its case when the court reconvenes in April.



Justice Nana Mensah, a swimming pool contractor, has pleaded not guilty to charges of defrauding by false pretense at the Dansoman Circuit Court.

Presided over by Her Honour Halimah El-Alawa Abdul-Basit, the court granted the accused bail in the sum of GH¢120,000 with three sureties, two of whom must be public servants earning at least GH¢2,000, while one must be justified.

Additionally, the accused is required to deposit his Ghana Card at the court registry and report to the police every two weeks until further notice.

The prosecution has been directed to file disclosures and witness statements for the case management conference (CMC).

The case has been adjourned to

ECOWAS Court Participates In The 3rd Annual East African Court Of Justice Judicial Conference



A delegation from the ECOWAS Court of Justice, led by its President, Justice Ricardo Cláudio Monteiro Gonçalves, has participated in the 3rd Annual East African Court of Justice (EACJ) Judicial Conference, in Kigali, Rwanda.

The two-day conference, was on the theme: "Justice, Ethics, and Enforcement of Decisions: A Judicial Pathway for Regional Development."

The conference brought together judges, legal experts, policymakers, and regional leaders to deliberate on the role of judicial institutions in advancing justice, economic integration, and governance within regional communities.

Discussions were focused on enhancing judicial ethics, strengthening enforcement mechanisms, and fostering

regional legal cooperation.

Accompanying Justice Gonçalves of the ECOWAS Court are Justice Sengu Mohamed Koroma, the Court's Vice President, Justice Dupe Atoki, and Mr. Sowe Gaye, a Registrar of the Court.

Their participation underscored the ECOWAS Court's commitment to fostering regional judicial collaboration and advancing the rule of law across Africa.

The delegation engaged in critical discussions on judgment enforcement, cross-border legal cooperation, and best practices for enhancing the effectiveness of regional courts.

This involvement highlighted the Court's dedication to delivering justice, promoting legal integration within the ECOWAS region, and strengthening ties with other judicial institutions on the continent.

What Is The Importance Of Wearing Your Wedding Ring?



Wedding bands serve as a status symbol in society, signalling to others your commitment to someone through the law, religion, or both.

The truth is that rings speak for themselves; since it is obvious to everyone, you don't need to express your availability. Some people choose not to wear their rings, forcing others to guess—almost always wrongly—about any potential romantic ties you may have.

Reasons Why it's Important to Wear Your Wedding Ring?

Commitment

Wedding bands serve as a reminder of your devotion to your spouse. Since the middle ages, when the groom would give the bride and her family an expensive ring to demonstrate his dedication to the marriage and that he would never walk away from this bond, wedding rings have served as symbols of devotion. Having the ring on you at all times demonstrates that you are upfront about being in a committed relationship and that you are not afraid to flaunt it. The ring represents your commitment to your partner. The fact that your spouse can see the ring on your finger every day might serve as a constant reminder to them of how much they mean to you and that you have chosen to spend the rest of your life with them.

Attachment

An additional indication of devotion, love, and affection is wearing a wedding ring. Wearing your wedding ring conveys that you are committed to your spouse and that they have a vital meaning in your life, even though marriage is not always seen as the result of love in some situations or countries around the world.

Additionally, the ring can serve as a memory by inspiring you to think back on all the happy experiences you have had with your spouse in the past, especially when you miss them the most. The ring symbolises not only holy matrimony but also carries happy memories of the times you and your spouse have spent together.

Respect

Your wedding band may prompt you to reflect on the choices you make with your spouse in mind. With your wedding ring on your finger, you have an additional obligation to consider your partner's respect. You need to realise that you are no longer single and that your actions may also impact a loved one.

As a result, you should consider your options carefully before making judgments and consider whether you are courteous to your partner. Respect is essential in all relationships, including marriage. Maintaining your relationship or marriage while keeping your partner in mind is a subdued method to show them how important they are to you.

Infidelity

Wearing your wedding band constantly will help you avoid or filter out any unwanted attention, which is a major benefit. For example, many married couples feel suspicious of one another even if they may not confess it, and infidelity is one of the main causes of marriages ending in divorce. Such unintended repercussions can be avoided by wearing your wedding band. In addition, anyone you might interact with on a daily basis will know that you are in a serious relationship.

According to another theory, feeling emotionally disconnected from your partner or unappreciated or hated is one of the most frequent causes of adultery. Since every married relationship experiences ups and downs, it is impossible to escape these emotions. However, you can still contribute by honouring your spouse wearing your wedding band daily. Doing so will demonstrate your above-discussed attachment to, commitment to, and respect for your spouse.

Children

The fifth reason to wear your wedding band is that it gives your kids the idea that their parents' marriage is strong and sets a good example for them. When your kids reach an age where they can understand marriage and healthy relationships, letting them see you wear your wedding band every day can help them realise its value and why both their mother and father choose to continue wearing their bands.

In other words, by studying the example you and your partner have established, your future children will be more likely to have a positive view of marriage.

FAQs About Wedding

Should You Wear A Ring On Your Wedding Day?Collapse

When a ring is on, persons of good character choose to maintain their distance from the situation. They will behave trustworthily and respectfully towards you and your spouse, being mindful not to cross any boundaries. It not only sends the message to other people that your marriage is important, but it also removes temptation from your life.

Wearing A Wedding Ring Is More Important Than You May Think

A Showcase Of Commitment And Availability

People can infer a lot about your degree of availability and commitment to your marriage from whether or not you are wearing a wedding band.

Even though it's small, the fact that you're wearing your wedding band shows others that you're devoted to your marriage and that it's significant to you.

It is much more crucial to your spouse that you demonstrate your dedication to them even while the two of you are apart. This increases trust within the partnership and eliminates misunderstandings from outsiders.

Shows Responsibility To Your Partner
A wedding is a multifaceted act of interpersonal connection. However, there is an agreement that your spouse will be considered when the wedding vows are exchanged in all your endeavours.

Your finger ring will constantly remind you, and your decisions will impact others as we advance.

This will serve as a reminder to think about your spouse and how your decisions will affect them whenever you have to select between two or more options.

Symbolises Respect Toward Your Partner

In a marriage, respect is crucial. Often, it's not in what we say but rather in the little things we do every day.

Marriage is an ongoing partnership. Therefore respect is always expressed in numerous little and subtle ways. One of the most basic but meaningful displays of respect for another person in the ring.

You will honour your spouse's preferences and priorities by wearing your ring while they aren't around if they want you to wear it, which is essential to them.

Defends From Infidelity

Your wedding band is a clear indication that you are married and fully dedicated to your partner and that you do not want anybody else to try to approach you intimately.

People looking for love have a reliable line of defence when they wear rings. When wearing a ring, most people won't bother you since they will see you care about your marriage and are loyal to your partner.

Some individuals who do not support marriage may make an effort to convince you not to wear your wedding band, but if you are sincere with your spouse, you will wear it with pride and not only to protect yourself from unnecessary temptation.

Gives Children A Secure Impression Of Marriage

Wearing your wedding band constantly will show your kids that your marriage is important if you're a parent and want to instil in them the value of marriage.

Children will work harder to forge dependable and lovely relationships in the future if parents demonstrate to them that marriage can be a joyful experience. In

addition, giving kids a realistic view of what a married couple looks like in both public and private will help them in the long run.

Even while a happy marriage is much more than a wedding band, the ring itself symbolises it. It will allow kids to ask questions about the marriage that it symbolises.

Reasons To Not Wear A Wedding Ring Are Never Good For Marriage.

Of course, some people are prohibited from wearing rings by their line of work or cannot wear them at all. For example, they might have a metal allergy.

However, the remaining justifications for not donning a ring might be personal preferences or arguments against marriage. When you are truly committed to your partner and take them into account in all that you do, there is no drawback to wearing your wedding band.

Wearing your ring is one of the safest and simplest methods to accomplish it if you are willing to go above and beyond for your marriage's stability, your relationship, and your partner's trust.

Do you believe a lasting and secure marriage depends on wearing a wedding ring? What do you think about this issue, and if you are married, what is your personal preference? See what your married friends think by passing this along!

What Do Wedding Rings Represent?

The Importance Of The Circle

Since a circle has neither the starting point nor the ending point, it might be seen as a symbol of infinity. It never ends, lives forever, and is perfect in every way. In many cultures, wedding bands are worn on the fourth finger of the left hand. Historically, it was believed that the vein in this finger led directly to the wearer's heart, hence the association between the finger and the cardiovascular system. However, in certain European countries, the right hand is the preferred location for the wedding band.

Wedding rings have been worn since the time of the ancient Egyptians when they were crafted from plants found along the Nile. Later, the custom of giving the bride a ring as part of a marriage ceremony spread from the Jews to the Christians. As a result, the bride and groom expect to get a wedding ring on their special day.

Cynthia Erivo to play Jesus in Hollywood Bowl's Production of 'Jesus Christ Superstar'

Hollywood star, Cynthia Erivo is set to play Jesus in a Hollywood Bowl Production of Jesus Christ Superstar.

Fresh off portraying Elphaba in Wicked, the Oscar-nominated actress and Tony Award winner is set to play Jesus in the Hollywood Bowl's upcoming production of Jesus Christ Superstar.

The highly anticipated staging will run for three nights, from Friday, August 1, to Sunday, August 3, 2025, at the iconic Los Angeles amphitheatre.

This casting marks a groundbreaking moment for the legendary rock opera, as Erivo becomes one of the few women to take on the role of Jesus in a major production.

Known for her powerful vocals and commanding stage presence, she is expected to bring a fresh perspective to the character, adding new layers to the



timeless narrative.

Originally released as a concept album before making its Broadway

debut in 1971, Jesus Christ Superstar is a rock-infused retelling of the final days of Jesus Christ, as seen through the eyes of his betrayer, Judas Iscariot.

The musical delves into the emotional and political turmoil surrounding Jesus, his followers, and the Roman Empire, exploring themes of faith, betrayal, and destiny.

The Hollywood Bowl production will stay true to the rock opera's electrifying roots, featuring Andrew Lloyd Webber's legendary score and Tim Rice's iconic lyrics.

Trujillo will helm the production, with musical direction and conducting by fellow Tony winner Stephen Oremus. The show is cast by The Telsey Office and produced in association with Neil Meron and Robert Greenblatt.

Audiences can expect to hear the musical's most beloved songs, including Superstar, Gethsemane, and I Don't Know How to Love Him, all performed with a contemporary edge and a star-studded ensemble yet to be announced.

With Erivo leading the charge, Jesus Christ Superstar at the Hollywood Bowl is shaping up to be one of the most talked-about theatrical events of the year. Whether you're a longtime fan of the musical or discovering it for the first time, this fresh take on the classic promises an unforgettable experience.

Tony Award-winning choreographer and director Sergio

Portable arraigned for assaulting government officials



by the magistrate's court in Ogun state of Nigeria.

He is wanted for the offenses of conspiracy, serious assault, going armed, conduct likely to cause a breach of public peace, and attempted murder by recruiting armed thugs who conspired and attacked officials of against the Ministry of Physical Planning and urban Development, Ota zonal office. The offenses were committed at Oke-Osa, Tigbo ilu, Ota Ogun state on the 5th of February.

However, after he was declared wanted, his fans began to urge him to surrender to the police before matters escalated further, but he pleaded with the government and declared himself insane.

I fear government. I am a federal government liability. Then

I'm a madman; I have medications that I usually take. You can confirm from Aro Hospital. I have a card that certifies me as one of their patients. I am from Abeokuta and they are taking care of me there. I am not a thief, I help people around me without even looking at their background.

His insanity plea was quickly turned down by law enforcement and he was urged to leave his hiding place.

After he surrendered, the news was confirmed by the Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer, SP Benjamin Hundeyin, "Portable just turned himself in at the SCID Yaba. We have contacted the Ogun State Police Command to come pick him up," he stated. He was then transferred to Ogun State.

A day after turning himself in to the police, Nigerian singer Portable has been arraigned at the Isabo magistrate court in Abeokuta, Ogun for his part in assaulting officers of the Ministry of Physical Planning and Urban Development.

The highly controversial singer was declared wanted by the Ogun State police on February 18, 2025, after he and nine of his associates allegedly obstructed the officials. Before that, Portable had been hiding for a week while his associates were arraigned at given a ₦5million each.

The police force released the official wanted poster across social media, stating that the arrest warrant had been issued against him

"I have a personal problem with Okraku-Mantey" – Nana Aba Anamoah



In a recent discussion on United Showbiz, media personality Nana Aba Anamoah lashed out at former deputy minister of Tourism, Arts, and Culture, Mark Okraku-Mantey, for performing abysmally in his political position.

His comment triggered reactions from the panelists, including the broadcaster, who chastised the former Deputy Minister of Tourism, Arts, and Culture. She accused him of failing to address crucial issues in the entertainment industry during his tenure in office.

Following Nana Aba Anamoah's response, she faced criticism from people asking whether she has a personal problem with the former Deputy Minister.

Speaking on Joy Prime's Changes show, the broadcaster retorted she has a personal issue with him because the former minister's source of income and living are from her taxes as a citizen. Therefore, she must be concerned about his performance.

"Yes, I have a personal problem with him because if my taxes are used to pay your salary, it's personal. If my taxes are used to fuel your

tank, it's personal," she told Roselyn Felli on Wednesday, February 19, 2025.

Asked whether she's friends with Mark Okraku-Mantey, she said, "he's an acquaintance," stating that she would confidently tell him the same thing she said on the show.

Explaining why she ranted on the former Deputy Minister of Tourism, Arts, and Culture, Nana Aba Anamoah reiterated that his comment was unnecessary because he is in no position to decide for a media station on how to produce their show, thus deserving the response she gave on United Showbiz.

According to her, the rants came as a result of her disappointment in the performance of the former minister, considering the fact that he has been a media practitioner and was expected to support the industry better than his predecessors.

"I felt his comments were unnecessary. He's been in the media before and doesn't decide for any channel how they should approach their show. That wasn't the main thrust; it was my disappointment in him because I thought that for someone who was coming from this industry, I expected better from him for the creatives. I expected an improvement to move them from A to C."

Unfortunately, she said that Mark Okraku-Mantey failed to deliver, as the fortunes of most creatives continue to dwindle and worsen day by day.

"So, my rant was born out of my disappointment in him," she added.

Despite the backlash she has faced following her response, she remains firm in her opinion. The broadcaster maintains her claim that Mark Okraku-Mantey has disappointed the creative arts industry.

Arne Slot sweating on touchline ban length after accepting FA charge

Liverpool manager Arne Slot is sweating on the length of a touchline ban that will be imposed by the FA following his red card in the recent fiery-tempered Merseyside derby.

Slot was shown red by referee Michael Oliver after the final whistle of the 1-1 draw at Goodison Park, as was assistant coach Sipke Hulshoff. It came as Curtis Jones reacted to Abdoulaye Doucoure's post-match celebrations, which saw both players also sent off, sparking a wider brawl.

Reports on Thursday afternoon confirmed that Slot has accepted an FA charge over his conduct. Now, the matter will be considered by an independent regulatory commission to determine how long the Dutchman will be banished to the stands for. The Premier League initially the

jumped the gun by announcing a two-match ban, only to subsequently delete the update.

Since the red card at Goodison, Slot has remained on the touchline for subsequent Liverpool games against Wolverhampton Wanderers and Aston Villa, with no room to breathe in the schedule but requiring time for him to respond to the charge and the necessary protocols be set up.

Some Reds fans on social media have already cried an anti-Liverpool conspiracy that there would be just enough of a delay in the process to ensure Slot would have to sit in the stands for more challenging fixtures against Manchester City and Newcastle United, rather than Wolves and Villa.

Slot has already served a one-game touchline ban so far this season, sitting out the Carabao Cup quarter-final against Southampton in

December. That sanction was for an accumulation of yellow cards for his conduct in the technical area during the first half of the season. With that ban already under his belt, Slot could be more harshly punished in this instance as a repeat offender.

Liverpool moved eight points clear of Arsenal in the Premier League title race on Wednesday night, but it was an opportunity missed because they have now played a game more than the Gunners and were unable to claim the victory that would have made the gap a statement ten points.

Having also dropped points in the derby, Liverpool face Arsenal being able to cut into their lead and potentially reduce it to a much more palatable five points when the Carabao Cup final is played next month, by which time both sides could have also dropped more points.



Jude Bellingham names Real Madrid's most talented player



contribution of the "very underrated" Rodrygo.

"For me he is the most talented and gifted player on the team," Bellingham told CBS Sports. "The things Rodrygo does with the ball. The tricks. I ask myself 'how does he do it?' My ankles would buckle."

Rodrygo joined Madrid in 2019, his arrival pre-arranged when he was just 17 in a similar vein to Vinicius' transfer from Flamengo. He enjoyed a breakout campaign in 2021/22 as the club completed a rare La Liga and Champions League double.

Although typically a winger, he spent most of last season in a central role, which he admitted he wasn't keen on, for the benefit of the team. Rodrygo was also expected to be the fall guy who would make way for Mbappe's arrival this season, but he has remained as important as ever.

"Rodrygo is the one who sacrifices the most. He doesn't complain, he just does it," Bellingham said.

Like Vinicius, Rodrygo has been linked with the ambitious Saudi Pro League, with Al Hilal credited with interest as a replacement for Neymar, who has returned to first club Santos. But, earlier this month, he publicly stated his intention to "stay for many years" in Madrid.

Arsenal facing potential Champions League showdown with familiar face



Feyenoord, and things are about to turn full circle for Van Persie as The Athletic report that he is set to imminently be named as the club's new manager.

Van Persie is currently in charge of Heerenveen – his first managerial post – and has only been in the role for nine months. However, with Feyenoord opting to sack Danish manager Brian Priske less than a year after losing Slot to Liverpool, it appears he's on the cusp of taking on one

of the biggest Eredivisie jobs going.

An unlikely reunion with Arsenal could be a matter of weeks away as Feyenoord are one of two opponents that the Gunners could be drawn against in Friday's Champions League last 16 draw.

The other side who could come up against Mikel Arteta's side are Feyenoord's bitter rivals, PSV Eindhoven, who overcame Juventus in their two-legged Champions League knockout round play-off tie after a 4-3 aggregate win following extra-time.

Another highlight of Van Persie's Arsenal career was when he was named PFA Players' Player of the Year in 2011/12 after winning the Premier League Golden Boot in his final season – his 30 goals a feat that matched Thierry Henry's career-best output during the Invincibles season of 2003/04.

Jude Bellingham has named the player he believes to be Real Madrid's "most talented", but it's not superstar duo Vinicius Junior or Kylian Mbappe.

Even with a defensive injury crisis this season, Madrid's side remains full of stars, with the majority of the attention lavished on Vinicius, Mbappe and Bellingham, who has developed a penchant for scoring winning goals in the dying moments of games.

There is, however, another member of Madrid's forward line who dazzles on a regular. And during post-match media duties following the 3-1 win over Manchester City in the second leg of their Champions League knockout round play-off tie, Bellingham acknowledged the

Arsenal's potential Champions League last 16 clash with Dutch side Feyenoord is set to receive an added flavour of spice – with former striker Robin van Persie poised to take over the job Liverpool's Arne Slot surrendered last summer.

Van Persie spent eight years at the Emirates Stadium between 2004 and 2012, scoring 96 goals in 194 Premier League appearances, and was part of the Arsenal side that finished runners-up to Barcelona in the 2006 Champions League final.

The elegant Dutchman, who possessed a wand of a left foot and was known for the spectacular, left in controversial circumstances to join Manchester United and immediately won the Premier League title at Old Trafford, before winding down his career in his native Netherlands.

The 41-year-old actually ended his career where it started, at Dutch giants

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