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Ghanaian Canadian Law Enforcement Officers Encourage Youth to Join Police Force

By Ebenezer Amankwah & Emmanuel Ayiku, Toronto, ON

The Association of Ghanaian Canadian Law Enforcement Officers (AGCLEO) is urging young people, particularly those in black communities, to consider a career in law enforcement. The association emphasizes the numerous opportunities within the police force, beyond the honor of serving one's community and country.

The appeal was made during a career information session at the Living Word Assembly of God Church in Toronto. The event, organized by AGCLEO, saw the participation of officers from various departments of the Toronto Police Service (31 and 23 Divisions).

The York Regional Police Recruitment Team provided attendees with an overview of the recruitment processes for various roles, including Police Constables, Correctional Officers, Special Constables, Civilian Professionals, and volunteers.

cont'd on pg. 39



Group picture of the Association of Ghanaian Canadian Law Enforcement Officers

The Apostles' Continuation Church Int'l held a culture day for all nationals at church service

By Ebenezer Amankwah & Emmanuel Ayiku, Toronto, ON

See story and pictures on pg. 28



Apostle Anokye Manu (4th left) with the Chiefs and Queens at the event

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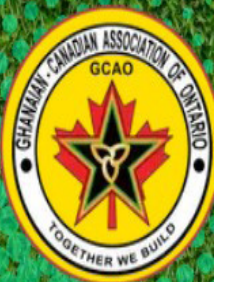


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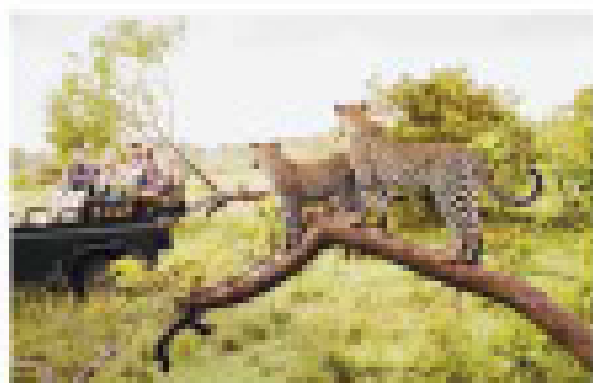
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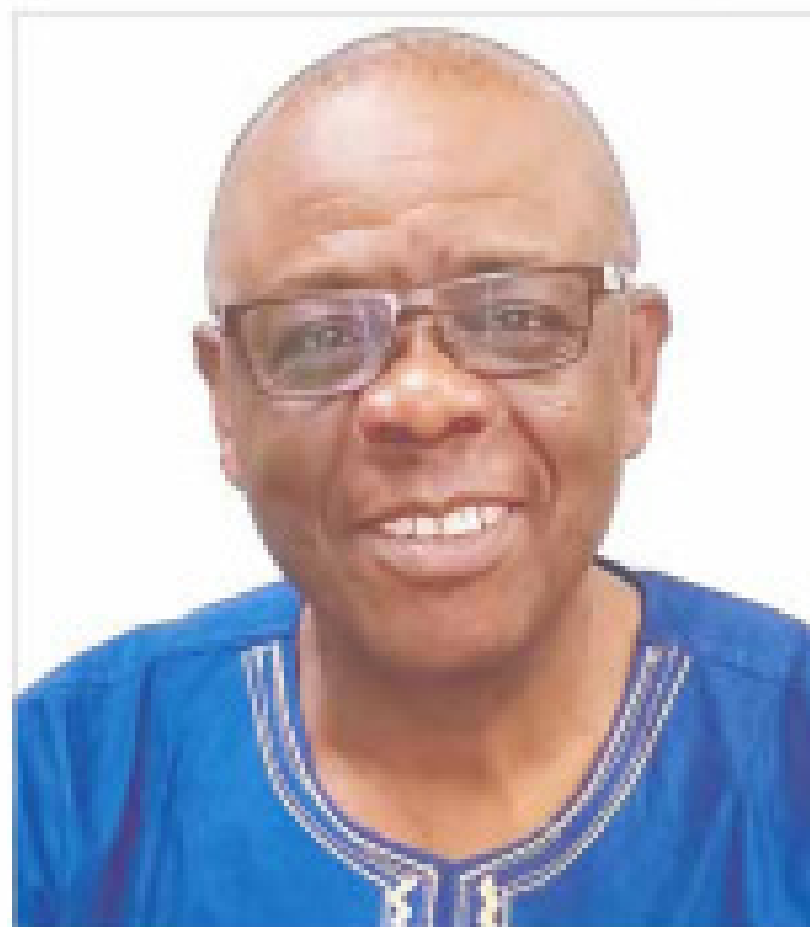
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Statement by the Spokesperson on the abolition of the death penalty

The death penalty is a cruel and inhuman punishment, representing an unacceptable denial of human dignity and integrity

The European Union welcomes the abolition of the death penalty in Ghana. With this historic step, Ghana joins the majority of countries in the world having eliminated the capital punishment.

The death penalty is a cruel and inhuman punishment, representing an unacceptable denial of human

dignity and integrity. No compelling evidence exists to show that it serves as a deterrent to crime, while any miscarriages of justice are irreversible.

The European Union strongly opposes the death penalty in all circumstances and will continue to work for its abolition in the few remaining countries where it is still in force. **APO**

Ghana: President Akufo-Addo Commissions \$6.6 Million Ashaiman and Bankuman Sewerage and Treatment Plants

The plant in Bankuman, with a capacity of one thousand, six hundred metre-cubed per day (1,600m³/day), is to serve some three thousand, one hundred (3,100) households

The President of the Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, on Wednesday, 2nd August 2023, commissioned the ultra-modern Simplified Sewerage Facility and Treatment Plant at Ashaiman, and the rehabilitated and expanded Bankuman Simplified Sewerage Plant.

The two (2) new simplified sewerage networks, comprising some fifty-one kilometres (51kms) of sewer lines, and a new wastewater treatment plant with a capacity of some one thousand, eight hundred metre-cubed per day (1,800m³/day) in Ashaiman, is to serve some four thousand, eight hundred and five (4,805) households in the community.

The plant in Bankuman, with a capacity of one thousand, six hundred metre-cubed per day (1,600m³/day), is to serve some three thousand, one hundred (3,100) households.

noted that the two (2) projects were constructed at a cost of \$6.6 million, and reinforces Government's commitment to offer solutions to the infrastructural gap identified as one of the major challenges plaguing the sanitation and water resources sector.

The President stated that "the projects being commissioned today are examples of the many sanitation projects that have been provided across the country. This magnificent simplified sewerage system, as well as the rehabilitated Bankuman project, will inure to the benefit of the people living within the catchment areas of Ashaiman and Bankuman communities of Greater Accra."

Under the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (GAMA) Sanitation and Water Project, conceived as one of the pro-poor interventions to ensure the policy of "One-House-One-Toilet" is delivered across the Metropolitan Area, he stated that the Project has delivered some 48,641 improved household toilets, which have benefitted some 389,128 people as at December 2020.

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Speaking at the ceremony, held at Ashaiman, President Akufo-Addo

cont'd on pg. 12

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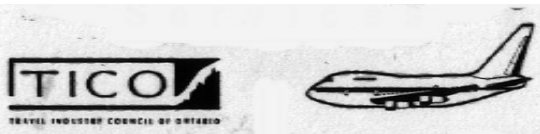
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Articles appearing in various columns of the Ghanaian News are intended to generate civil and informed public discussions. You do not have to agree with opinions expressed by the writers. That should encourage you to write to express your own views. This is the way we generate lively and civil discussions in the community. Rejoinders are not forums for personal insults and we want readers to adhere to these principles.

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage



EDITORIAL

Let's celebrate 20 years of recognizing our Community Achievers

Twenty Three years ago, The Ghanaian News Corporation launched a modest effort to recognize, showcase and celebrate the achievements of members in our communities across Canada who have and continue to excel in various discipline and fields of endeavor. This initiative was borne out of the conviction that many members of our community in Canada have been making tremendous efforts not only to achieve laurels for themselves and their community, but to the development and improvement of the Canadian society as well.

To a very large extent, this innovation has been a great and a splashing success. Over the past twenty three years we have unearthed and showcased an average of twenty-five high-flying achievers in various fields of endeavor from our community every year. That comes close to nearly five hundred persons to date. This year we will be showcasing close to thirty more achievers. These Achievement Awards have proven a number of important points: **First, there are great talents in our community. Secondly, our community members are not just sitting on their talents; they are utilizing them to achieve results. Thirdly, they have proven that our community members are contributing significant efforts to the improvement of the Canadian society. Against the background of all the misinformation, myths and stereotypes that are bandied around about immigrants and immigrant communities, we are delighted to note that this events have achieved the purpose for which they were instituted, showcasing the best and brightest from our community in the larger Canadian context.**

We wish to however comment on a disturbing aspect of these events in our community: **the low involvement and participation of our community members in these awards ceremonies. We have observed over the years that it is the same people who regularly attend these events although the awards recipients may be different every year. We also wish to note the constant presence of a large number of mainstream Canadians: from politicians, public servants to Police Officers at these events. If these high-profile people from mainstream Canadian society recognize the importance of this event and regularly show up to support us, then it is incumbent on us as the community organizing this event to embrace it and turn out in our numbers to support it.**

We also depend on community members to nominate the known achievers in our community who are deserving of these awards. We therefore entreat community members to constantly be on the lookout for those that are achieving laurels in various aspects in our community and nominate them for the awards when the time comes. **We call on community members to turn up to support and applaud our achievers for this year on Saturday, September 9, 2023. They deserve our recognition, our praises and our support. Finally we extend our heartfelt and warm congratulations to all our past award recipients as well as this year recipients. Do not rest on your oars. Keep pushing to make yourself, your community and our nation proud. We are proud of you!**

'The government failed the Refugees' – Mayor of Toronto



Mayor Olivia Chow, Mayor of Toronto

The Mayor of Toronto, Olivia Chow, has conceded that the government has failed in their delayed response to finding a permanent solution to the plight of the asylum seekers.

She revealed that after the incident, it took her a while to get the federal government, province, city, and everyone involved in finding a solution.

Mayor Chow said it is the responsibility of the government of Canada to help the asylum seekers find a new homeland and be treated well.

She, therefore, pleaded with the asylum seekers to erase all the negative experiences they have gone through so far and focus on the good.

The Mayor was speaking after a familiarization visit to see things first-hand at Dominion Church International, which is housing over a hundred asylum seekers.

Mayor Olivia Chow commended Canadians for donating money, clothing, and much more to help even though the government was late.

Mayor Olivia Chow giving her speech The Senior Pastor of Dominion Church International, Reverend Eddie Jjumba, who brought the mayor up to speed on the situation so far said the church is doing its best to assist the asylum seekers.

By this, the church has urged the community through its website to continue to support with food, clothes, toiletries, and others to make their living conditions comfortable.

It can be recalled that over a hundred black African refugees lived and camped on the sidewalk outside the shelter at Richmond and Peter Streets.

Source: Ebenezer Amankwah and Emmanuel Ayiku, Toronto – Ontario

Surge of refugee claimants overwhelming some Ottawa shelters

'We're right at that point where it's going to get bad really quickly,' charity leader says

Ottawa homeless shelters are seeing a surge of asylum seekers showing up at their doors, raising fears that the refugee housing crisis overwhelming Toronto shelters could be spreading to the capital.

Peter Tilley, CEO of the Ottawa Mission, said a record number of migrants have come to the shelter on Waller Street in recent weeks.

Tilley was "floored" when he saw the data. Of 228 new intakes at the shelter since the beginning of June, 87 were newcomers. He said most of those were refugee claimants.

"That would be more than triple, even quadruple, the amount of refugee claimants we would normally have," he said.

"We're already at over capacity dealing with the homeless population of Ottawa," he explained. "So we're certainly struggling to handle this overflow."



Martine Dore, director of programs and services at Cornerstone Housing for Women, has seen a 50 per cent increase in newcomers seeking shelter there over just the past three months. Again, most are refugee claimants. She fears for what will happen if the influx pushes more people onto the streets.

Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow makes amends with police association following public dispute

Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow and the union representing the city's police officers have repaired their rift, both sides say, in an effort to set the tone for the term.

"I think this is an opportunity now to start fresh," Toronto Police Association President Jon Reid told CTV News Toronto after meeting with Chow.

The new mayor invited the union's leadership into her office Monday in an effort to hit reset on a relationship that appeared to get off on the wrong foot.

The most recent dispute began a few weeks ago when the association publicly blasted Chow for failing to directly reach out to officers involved in a series of incidents that resulted in police injuries and the death of a police dog.

"Will Mayor Chow offer any words of condolence or support for our members?" The union tweeted.

"We were a little concerned when we didn't hear anything," Reid said. "That was what kind of what precipitated us raising the flag," Reid said.

Chow maintains she expressed support through conversations with the Chief but will now make those statements more publicly.

"We talked about making sure that the frontline officers feel that they are being supported, appreciated, in all the work that they do," Chow told CTV News Toronto Tuesday.

The difficult dynamic between Chow and the association traces back to her days as a city councillor. In 2000 she was forced to resign from the police board after criticizing the force's handling of a rally that turned violent.

More recently, top-cop-turned-mayoral-candidate Mark Saunders spent much of the campaign slamming Chow's voting record on the file, claiming that if elected she would defund the police.



"Former Chief Saunders did say that, and it was an election, when people say a lot of things," Jon Burnside, Chow's newest appointee to the police services board, said Tuesday. Chow last week declined to sit on the police board herself as mayor.

"As my mom would say, the proof will be in the pudding."

The billion-dollar police budget will indeed be one of Chow's toughest tasks, as she'll likely be asked for increased funding and officers.

Chow said Tuesday she only briefly discussed the budget with Chief Myron Demkiw, with whom she had her first official sit-down Monday.

"We didn't go into it that much because everyone understood that the city has a budget hole of \$1.5 billion. And we are beginning the budget process, so we haven't gone into too much of that detail," she said.

"But I assured everyone that there would be a collaborative approach." CTV News

For now, the union says a mutual agreement to focus on their common vision for a safer city — and not their differences — will result in a more positive relationship.

"Lines are now created between us and the mayor," Reid said. "And those lines are important." CTV News

Class-action lawsuit proposed over Toronto police practice of 'carding'

A proposed class-action lawsuit has been launched over Toronto police's historic use of "carding," alleging the practice of randomly stopping people and collecting their information continues to harm marginalized communities.

The statement of claim filed Monday is on behalf of all Black and Indigenous people who have been stopped by Toronto police or had their information collected without reason since 2011.

It names the Toronto Police Services Board, current police chief Myron Demkiw and former chiefs James Ramer, Mark Saunders and Bill Blair as defendants.

"Carding has caused widespread harm, including damage to the plaintiff's and class members' mental and physical integrity, their privacy and their livelihoods," it reads.

"While the police have a statutory and common law duty to investigate crime, they are not empowered to undertake any and all action in the exercise of that duty."

The lawsuit alleges that the carding practice, officially abandoned years ago, continues to take place and disproportionately impacts Black and Indigenous people despite public opposition, academic research on its harmful effects and public reports that have found it to be discriminatory and ineffective. The allegations in the statement of claim have not been proven in court.

Toronto police and the Toronto Police Services Board said they are reviewing the statement of claim, but will not be commenting on the case as the matter is before the courts.

"Any material filed, in due course and in response to this litigation before the court, will be a matter of public record," the board noted.

The lawsuit is led by plaintiff Ayaan Farah, a 38-year-old Somali-Canadian with no criminal record. It says Farah was "sitting in public" in 2011 when she was detained by Toronto police officers who allegedly recorded her personal information without providing a reason.

The statement of claim alleges that interaction led Farah to lose her security clearance in 2014 at Toronto Pearson Airport, where she had worked since 2006. The RCMP had told Transport Canada that when Farah was stopped by Toronto police officers, she had been seen with an unidentified member of the Somali-Canadian community with alleged gang ties and a criminal history.

At the time, Farah told Transport Canada that she did not know who the unnamed individual was and that she

was falsely accused of having ties to gangsters.

Due to her security clearance being revoked and accusations made against her, Farah's employer suspended her without pay or benefits.

"I became very worried about going out in public. I feared that the police would watch me and accuse me of something. I stopped volunteering in my community, because I was so worried that the police might report me again," Farah said in a statement through her lawyer, Solomon McKenzie.

"I felt targeted. The police punished me for being in public, and I missed promotions, raises, and was suspended for my job for no reason."

After seeking a review of Transport Canada's decision to revoke her security clearance, a federal court found the process was unfair and set the decision aside, leading to her reinstatement 21 months later, according to materials contained in the statement of claim.

However, the lawsuit alleges the incident and its consequences led her to become isolated and develop depression, paranoia and hypervigilance in public. It notes she ultimately emigrated to the U.S. to avoid further contact with Toronto police officers.

Farah said she wants to push the case forward to end police use of carding tactics and seek justice for members of her community affected by it.

"I never received an apology for the police behaviour, even though they had a significant impact on my life and career. I want to make sure that nobody ever has to suffer this experience again," she said.

The lawsuit seeks to find that the carding practice violates Charter rights protecting against unreasonable search and seizure, arbitrary detention as well as discrimination and rights of liberty and security.

It also seeks a number of reforms around carding, including wiping collected data from police databases, enhanced training resources on why the practice is unlawful and a public apology to victims of carding.

In a 2019 review of carding practices, Ontario Justice Michael Tulloch, now the province's chief justice, found that random street checks were not effective as a method of crime prevention or reduction, and should be abolished given their detrimental impacts on racialized communities.

The lawsuit is calling for all 129 recommendations in Tulloch's report to be put into effect, alleging only some have been implemented to date.

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The TTC says that transit riders will finally be able to start using credit cards and debit cards to pay for their trips

As of Tuesday, Aug. 15, riders will be able to tap Presto terminals with their credit or debit cards to pay for an adult Presto fare (\$3.30). That includes payment cards loaded onto a smartphone or smartwatch.

People can use the card they tapped with to transfer within the two-hour window without being charged again. However those with a seniors or youth discount will still need to use a Presto card to pay the discounted fare.

The announcement was made at a news conference with members from all levels of government.

“Safe, reliable and convenient transit is vitally important to the success of our vibrant city,” TTC CEO Rick Leary said. “It’s considered in every decision that we make and every discussion that we have. So I look forward to those positive impacts that this new payment option is going to have on the TTC and most importantly, the TTC’s customers.”

Riders have been asking for the ability to pay their fare with a credit or debit card for over a decade, a feature already enjoyed by transit users in cities like New York. City officials first asked for the feature prior to the implementation of the Presto card system by the province in 2009.

In addition to adding convenience for customers, the move could help bolster ridership on the transit system, which has been down since the pandemic, resulting in major revenue losses for the city.

Leary said that there are positive signs that ridership is coming back, even if it looks a bit different.

“While the average weekday boardings stayed at roughly 78 per cent of pre-COVID levels, ridership among less frequent customers — and that’s those that ride the TTC four times a week or less — stands at 118 per cent of pre-COVID levels,” Leary said of the latest ridership data. “And that’s exciting because what that tells us is ridership looks different, but people are returning to the TTC.”

“Now giving customers more convenient options to purchase a single use adult fare will continue to attract more riders to the TTC, into public transit in general in the GTHA.”

Credit and debit payments were recently piloted on GO Transit, the UP Express, and a number of other transit systems in the 905. However officials had said that the TTC, as the largest transit system in the province, would need to go last to ensure as smooth a rollout as possible.

The province rolled out the Presto fare card system in 2009.

Critics have long said that the system can be confusing, especially for visitors to the city, and that it should have allowed people to pay using credit or debit card from the beginning.

The Presto system now has 4.7 million users, according to the province. The price of a Presto card was recently lowered from \$6 to \$4.

More details about the new system can be found on the Presto website. Cp24

PRESTO cards are now \$2 cheaper

The price of a PRESTO card is officially cheaper.

As of Tuesday, PRESTO cards now cost \$4, which is two dollars less than what it was before.

Transit riders can use their PRESTO cards to hop onboard 11 different transit agencies in Ontario, including the TTC, GO Transit and UP Express.

Users must pay a one-time fee in order to get the card, which can be purchased from various transit customer service outlets, fare and ticket vending machines, and Shoppers Drug Mart. “This is one more way Metrolinx is making it easier to take transit,” the agency said in a news release on Aug. 2 announcing the price cut.

While the cost of the card is changing, fees to take transit are not — though Metrolinx notes it is free to transfer to GO Transit from participating transit agencies.

The new PRESTO card prices come months after the Ministry of Transportation announced debit and credit cards could also be used to pay fares across most transit agencies in Ontario — meaning commuters can tap on with their bank cards or smart phones or watches.

While this feature is not available on the TTC, it is available on GO Transit, UP Express, Brampton Transit, Burlington Transit, Durham Region Transit, Hamilton Street Railway, MiWay in Mississauga, Oakville Transit and York Region Transit. CTV News

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Provinces may have to agree to Ottawa’s 2035 clean power target to access funding

The federal government is considering restricting billions of dollars in tax credits and grants for electricity projects to provinces that commit to the 2035 target for an emissions-free electricity grid.

The federal budget already made clear the restriction would be in place for the new refundable 15 per cent clean electricity investment tax credit, which is for investments in non-emitting electricity production, storage and interprovincial transmission.

But there are several other new investment tax credits for hydrogen production, clean technology and carbon capture and storage systems, worth tens of billions over the next 12 years. There is also at least \$3 billion in grants for renewable electricity projects and technology upgrades to make the

grid more efficient, and the federal government has promised to consider helping fund transmission lines inside provinces in certain situations.

A new document released Tuesday by Energy Minister Jonathan Wilkinson and Environment Minister Steven Guilbeault leaves the door opened to making provinces commit to the 2035 non-emitting electricity grid deadline to access those as well, at least for their applications to electricity projects.

“We certainly are considering that,” Wilkinson confirmed to The Canadian Press in an interview.

“But there is obviously consultation that’s going on with respect to the investment tax credits. We want to hear from people. We also want to think about if we’re going to put those

kinds of constraints or strings on those things, how we best do that.”

The option could be the latest political grenade in the federal-provincial relationship when it comes to environmental matters.

The 2035 clean-power target will be enshrined in regulations, and Guilbeault is expected to publish the first draft of those rules as early as this week. They will spell out, for example, a timeline for natural gas power plants to be closed or fitted with carbon-capturing systems.

Committing to a net-zero electricity grid is an easy move for six of the provinces, which are already more than 90 per cent of the way there. They have to make a lot more power but they don’t have to replace most of the power they already produce.

For the other four — Alberta, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick — coal and natural gas still supply between 30 per cent and 85 per cent of their power. That makes a clean grid by 2035 a much steeper challenge — so much so that Alberta and Saskatchewan have simply said they can’t do it.

“We will not attempt the impossible when it comes to power production in our province,” Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe said in May.

“We will not risk plunging our homes, our schools, our hospitals, our special care homes, our businesses into the cold and darkness because of the ideological whims of others.”

Both provinces have said they are instead targeting a non-emitting grid by 2050. That’s the year Canada is also aiming to be net-zero emissions, which means any greenhouse gas emissions that are still produced are captured by nature or technology.

Aiming for net-zero electricity earlier is key because it unlocks the potential to decarbonize many other industries down the road. Electric vehicles, for example, are only non-emitting if the power used to charge their batteries comes from non-emitting sources.

Wilkinson said he’s not trying to draw a line in the sand but said there has to be some connection between the billions of dollars on offer and progress toward Canada’s goals.

“You know, my style is not to have big fights,” he said. “I actually like to listen to what people and provinces have to say and to try to figure out a pathway through which we can accomplish the goals that we all want to achieve.”

He also said the disagreement isn’t about whether to build non-emitting electricity. It’s about how fast to do it.

“The gap that exists between us is not about whether we should have a non-emitting grid, it’s about whether we get there by 2035 or somewhere a little bit later,” he said.

Wilkinson commended Alberta for doing what he said was the most of any province to expand its solar

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FOCUS

Keeping our Kids Safe during the Summer Holidays and getting them ready for the New School Year

By Joe Kingsley Eyiah, OCT, Brookview Middle School, Toronto-Canada

July and August are mostly summer months in North America and most students go on summer break. Those summer months often record violence and high crime among our students out of the classroom. Parents become responsible for the safety of their kids throughout the entire summer vacation period.



Fortunately, there are organized summer programs run by some school boards and other organizations for students that ensure that our kids 'stay out of trouble' during the summer months. However, most summer schools or studies for students close by the end of July. Few other camping programs for kids continue into August. Please get your kids registered in such programs.

Definitely, parents who work during the summer months like the summer programs which ease their worries about kids and can cut down on childcare expenses. Other parents take their vacations from work during the summer months to be with their kids during the summer vacation period.

When kids are left on their own during the summer vacation period most of such kids find 'safety' in the streets. These kids find themselves in the streets and malls mostly in our cities not because they have no houses or homes to return to. Instead, they either suffer neglect by adults in the the homes or suffer lack of family support.

The embattled argument in some traditional circles that some kids have choose to go against their parents' advice and seek safety in the streets is not sufficient to negate the factor that society and many parents have failed to keep their kids safe and therefore inadvertently push them onto the streets.

Also, it is unfortunate that there is very little or no support from the community to individuals, families and our youth/children. Though some Ghanaian community churches are trying to meet such needs by organizing family and children programs/seminars their efforts are not enough. It could be argued in some circles that some of our children exploit the laws of Canada to their own detriment such as lying about their parents to government authorities; and even dropping out of school due to non-inclusive education system in Canada and find themselves roaming the streets eventually, most children are pushed onto the

streets by the negligence of their parents and the community at large.

September will soon be here and we will be sending our kids back to school again. As parents, we must get our kids ready for school. Parents ought to interest themselves in their kids education.

I plead with parents to save some few dollars or cedis on bottles and on fashion to buy the necessary school materials for their kids as

they (students) return or start their studies during the forthcoming new school year. I will fully address the preparation for back-to-school issue in my next write-up.

Let us remind ourselves as parents that we can't take our children past where we are. We must therefore be good and caring examples in both words and deed to our children. We have to keep our kids safe in our community and prepare them physically, socially, emotionally and mentally for the forthcoming new school year.

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Provinces may have to agree to Ottawa's 2035 clean power target to access funding

cont'd from pg. 9

power production. The province is also well ahead of schedule on retiring or converting its coal-fired electricity generators, he noted. The last one will be converted before the end of this year.

Premier Danielle Smith, however, announced last week the province was pausing approvals of new large wind and solar power projects for six months while it addresses concerns about the effect on farmland, scenery, reliability

and eventually, cleaning up the projects at the end of their life.

Wilkinson said he is taking Alberta "at its word" that the pause is just to ensure everything is being done properly in the face of faster-than-expected growth, particularly in solar power.

He also said he thinks there is already a good conversation happening with Alberta, and he is convinced an agreement between the two governments is possible.

The Canadian Press

Housing crisis: Feds stick by immigration plan, rethink international student flows

The alarm bells are becoming bull horns: Canada's housing supply isn't keeping up with the rapid rate of population growth.

Academics, commercial banks and policy thinkers have all been warning the federal government that the pace of population growth, facilitated by immigration, is making the housing crisis worse.

"The primary cause for (the) housing affordability challenge in Canada is our inability to build more housing that is in line with the increase in population," said Murtaza Haider, a professor of data science and real estate management at Toronto Metropolitan University.

A TD report released in late July also warned that "continuing with a high-growth immigration strategy could widen the housing shortfall by about a half-million units within just two years."

But the Liberals are doubling down on their commitment to bring more people into the country, arguing that Canada needs high immigration to support the economy and build the homes it desperately needs.

"Looking at the (immigration) levels that we have recently approved as a cabinet (and) as a government, we can't afford currently to reduce those numbers," Immigration Minister Marc Miller said in an interview with The Canadian Press.

That's because Canada's aging population risks straining public finances, he said, as health-care needs rise and the tax base shrinks.

A report by Statistics Canada published in April 2022 finds the country's working population has never been older, with more than one in five people close to retirement.

At the same time, Canada's fertility rate hit a record low of 1.4 children per woman in 2020.

The TD report, co-authored by the commercial bank's chief economist Beata Caranci, notes that economists are the ones who have been warning of the economic consequences of Canada's aging population.

"A ramp-up in skilled-based immigration offered a solution. Government policies have delivered, but now the question is whether the sudden swing in population has gone too far, too fast," the report said.

The federal government's latest immigration levels plan, released last fall, would see Canada welcome 500,000 immigrants annually by 2025.

In contrast, the immigration target for 2015 was under 300,000.

Although the half-million figure has caught considerable attention, it's not

just higher immigration targets that are driving the surge in population.

Canada is also experiencing a boom in the number of temporary residents who are coming to the country, which includes international students and temporary foreign workers.

In 2022, Canada's population grew by more than one million people, a number that included 607,782 non-permanent residents and 437,180 immigrants.

Miller said in the interview that the federal government is open to reconsidering international student enrolments, particularly amid fraud concerns.

Earlier this year, hundreds of people were suspected of being caught in a fraud scheme that saw immigration agents issue fake acceptance letters to get students into Canada.

"There is fraud across the system that we are going to have to clamp down on," Miller said.

The increased scrutiny of Canada's immigration policies and population growth comes as the country faces a housing affordability crisis caused in large part by a shortage of homes.

Most experts agree that the root causes of this housing shortage are unrelated to immigration. Red tape and anti-development sentiment at the municipal level, for example, can lead to major delays in projects.

Federal tax incentives that helped spur purpose-built rental constructions were rolled back decades ago, leading to a massive shortage in rentals that has slowly built up over time.

Given these existing challenges, experts are concerned strong population growth will add fuel to the fire.

BMO published an analysis in May that estimated that for every one per cent of population growth, housing prices rise by three per cent.

The rebound of the Canadian real estate market this year also shows how immigration is helping to maintain demand for housing, despite decades-high interest rates.

"Strong population growth from immigration is adding both demand and supply to the economy: newcomers are helping to ease the shortage of workers while also boosting consumer spending and adding to demand for housing," the central bank said after raising rates again in July.

Mike Moffatt, a housing expert and economist, said the federal government doesn't necessarily need to change its immigration targets.

"But it does mean that they're going to have to get very bold on housing," said Moffatt, an assistant professor at

the Ivey Business School at Western University in London, Ont.

For the federal Liberals, the relationship between population growth and housing prices jeopardizes public support for its immigration policies.

David Coletto, the CEO of Abacus Data, said polling shows Canadians are concerned about the impact immigration is having on the housing market.

"There's a belief, anyways, that on the one hand, immigration is needed because we're an aging population, because ... we need people to do certain types of work that we don't have sort of the domestic capacity for," Coletto said.

"They also see the downside, which is putting further pressure on the housing market and pressure on health care."

Miller said the federal government needs to carefully examine reports on housing and population growth, but he also raised concerns that some of the critiques are motivated by bigotry.

"The wave of populist, opportunist sentiment that does at times want to put all of society's woes on the backs of immigrants — I think we need to call that out when we see it," he said.

Immigration is also part of the solution to the housing crunch, Miller added. Construction is one of the industries where the labour shortage is most critical, and Miller argued that the people who are coming in can help build the new homes that are required to alleviate the crisis.

The federal government recently announced changes to the express entry system that would prioritize tradespeople for permanent residency.

Housing Minister Sean Fraser, who held the immigration portfolio before this summer's cabinet shuffle, said the government is aware of the need to better align its housing and immigration policies.

"The things that we were working towards, that I expect will continue to be advanced under Mr. Miller's watch, is the need to better tie our immigration policies to our housing and infrastructure strategies," Fraser said in an interview.

"It certainly does require some deep thinking to figure out how and where we're going to build the homes and grow the communities in a way that will mirror where people are moving to."

The Canadian Press

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IMMIGRATION AND SOCIAL ISSUES

By: James A. Kwaateng, B.A. (Hons), LLB (Hons)

Sponsoring Any Family Member Regardless Of The Age Of The Person

One of the principal objectives of Immigration Canada as indicated in section 3(1)(d) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) is to see that families are reunited in Canada. However, family in this context is somehow narrowly defined.

The list of people who can be sponsored as members of the family class is found in Section 117 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations (IRPR). The most well-known categories in this section include spouses, children and parents. Other lesser-known categories such as orphaned relatives are also mentioned in this section of the Regulation.

There are some uncommon situations where a Canadian citizen or permanent resident may be alone in Canada and may not have any eligible person to be sponsored from outside by him or her. The Immigration Act and Regulations attempt to alleviate the situation of a person who finds himself or herself in such a seemingly permanent state of loneliness by somehow bending the rules to accommodate their situation.

Section 117(1)(h) of the IRPR takes care of such situations. This section indicates that a foreign national, regardless of age, could be considered as a member of the family class with respect to a sponsor if the foreign national is a relative of the sponsor in situations where “the sponsor does not have a spouse, a common-law partner, a conjugal partner, a child, a mother or father, a relative who is a child of that mother or father, a relative who is a child of a child of that mother or father, a mother or father or a relative who is a child of the mother or father of that mother or father (i) who is a Canadian citizen, Indian or permanent resident, or (ii) whose application to enter and remain in Canada as a permanent resident the sponsor may otherwise sponsor”



This section of the Regulations is generally misunderstood. Many people mistakenly interpret this section of IRPR to mean the “last remaining family member”. That is absolutely wrong. This section of the Regulations can be applied only in situations where the sponsor has no spouse, no children, no parents, no siblings, no nieces or nephews, no grandparents, aunts or uncles who are citizens or permanent residents of Canada and the sponsor also has no relative outside of Canada who could be sponsored in the usual way.

The section does not specify or limit who the relative should be. This seems to leave the sponsor with a wide choice embracing all the relatives mentioned in section 117(1)(h). It is also clear from the above that the Regulation in question has practically nothing to do with remaining family members of the sponsor outside of Canada. The Regulation aims to take care of the situation of the sponsor in Canada and not that of a relative abroad. It is not easy to meet the above-described criteria but once a sponsor satisfies the above criteria, the person can sponsor one other relative, regardless of the person’s age.

Meeting the above criteria does not necessarily exempt the sponsor from meeting the basic sponsorship criteria that are found in section 130 of the Regulations. This section of the Regulations, among other things, expects the sponsor to be at least 18 years of age, to be residing in Canada and to file the application in the prescribed way.

Section 133 of the Regulations may also apply to the sponsorship application under section 117(1)(h) of IRPR notwithstanding the fact that such applications are allowed to ameliorate one’s state of loneliness. Low Income Cut-off (LICO) is one of the issues dealt with in section 133 of the Regulations. The sponsor may be required to meet the minimum income level applicable to his or her situation and may also be required to demonstrate the intent and capability to fulfil the sponsorship obligation. However, if the basic criteria are met with LICO as the main

obstacle, the sponsor may request the Immigration to exercise humanitarian and compassionate discretion pursuant to section 25 of the Act to allow the sponsorship.

This type of sponsorship is confusing. In the course of determining one’s eligibility to sponsor under this category, there should be a thorough assessment of the sponsor’s situation. A prospective sponsor should not hesitate to contact immigration law professionals for advice and assistance whenever necessary.

James A. Kwaateng, is an Immigration Law practitioner with offices located at 168A Oakdale Road, Suite 4, Toronto, Ontario. For thorough discussion of your immigration and related social and legal issues, contact him at telephone number (416) 743-2758 for an appointment.

Ghana: President Akufo-Addo Commissions \$6.6 Million Ashaiman and Bankuman Sewerage and Treatment Plants

cont’d from pg. 5

gender sensitive institutional toilet facilities, benefiting some 251,872 schoolchildren has been completed, as at December 2020.

“The GAMA Project has been so successfully executed that additional financing was sought and obtained from the World Bank to extend the intervention to the Greater Kumasi Metropolitan Area. Under the additional financing, a total of one hundred and twenty-nine (129) improved and modern disability-friendly, gender sensitive institutional toilet facilities, as well as thirty thousand (30,000) household toilet facilities are under construction for beneficiary schools and individual households, respectively, in the Greater Kumasi Metropolitan Area,” he said.

The Kumasi Project, President Akufo-Addo said, will also expand and rehabilitate the 29-year-old Asafo sewerage system in Kumasi, provide an additional 12,000 household toilets and 30 institutional toilets in the Greater Kumasi Metropolitan Area.

Component One of the Greater Kumasi Project, he added, will extend potable water, by laying some 120 kilometres of pipelines, and provide 5,000 new service connections; establish a telemetry, and also retool the Ghana Water Company’s metre shop to reduce non-revenue water.

“Ghana has made significant strides towards the attainment of the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals on water and sanitation. Currently, access to basic drinking water services has increased from 79% of the population in 2017 to 87.7% in 2021” he said.

The President continued, “Access to improved toilet facilities, including public toilets, has also increased from 66% to eighty-point-eight percent 80.8% within the same period. The Akufo-Addo Government is investing an amount of some US\$ 1.4 billion in several water and sanitation projects nationwide. Some of these projects have been completed, and others are still ongoing. It is expected that some 5.3 million people will benefit from these interventions when completed.”

Recognising the huge resources required to provide, maintain and sustain sanitation and water infrastructure across the country, President Akufo-Addo told the gathering that Government is in partnership with other key stakeholders and the private sector for support in providing these vital services.

“I urge all of us to help sustain and improve the gains made so far by maintaining healthy environmental sanitation, protecting our water bodies and supporting the Clean Ghana Campaign,” he added.

The Presidency, Republic of Ghana

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What Visitation Should Abusers Have With Their Children?

“The notion or belief that women are using allegations of abuse for a custodial advantage must be abolished as the misogynist dog whistle it is.”

“The notion or belief that women are using allegations of abuse for a custodial advantage must be abolished as the misogynist dog whistle it is. Alienation claims and their progeny as defenses to domestic violence should be discouraged. Family court must find a method of scholarship to study the outcomes of its cases and the impact on children each year after its initial determination especially those involving allegations of domestic violence. Learning about the death of a child on television news should not be the only way to learn of the result of a custody determination.”

State law and the impact of domestic violence in a custody determination

“Approximately half of all state laws make a presumption that it is harmful to the child and not in the best interest of the child to be placed in sole custody or joint legal custody with the perpetrator of domestic violence. In the remaining states, domestic violence is merely one factor in a list of factors that must be considered in custody and visitation decisions.” Daniel G. Saunders Karen Oehme, Child Custody and Visitation Decisions in Domestic Violence Cases: Legal Trends, Risk Factors, and Safety Concerns (Revised 2007).

Model Code

The Model Code of Domestic and Family Violence developed by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges developed the wording, that there is a “rebuttable presumption that it is detrimental to the child and not in the best interest of the child to be placed in sole custody, joint legal custody or joint physical custody with the perpetrator of family violence.”

Effect on Children

Emotional abuse of children by men who batter is even more likely than physical abuse because nearly all of these men’s children are exposed to domestic violence. This exposure to domestic abuse by their fathers often constitutes a severe form of child abuse.

Notwithstanding this body of information about domestic violence and its impact on children, courts have consistently awarded custody to the abuser and failed to heed the warnings of the abused parent, usually the mother. In part this is due to the effective use of an alienation defense by the abuser. In Long Island, New York, the Valva case is indicative of a mother who lost custody of her three children notwithstanding her warnings to the court. 8 year old Thomas was killed after being locked in a cold garage overnight. He died of hypothermia.

United States Department of Justice: Guiding Principles

The Office of Violence against Women (OVW) launched a Family Court Enhancement Project to assist courts and the communities to make sound decisions regarding custody and domestic violence. Court systems in Cook County, Illinois, all three counties in Delaware, Hennepin County, Minnesota, and Multnomah County, Oregon, participated. The sites identified procedures, practices and structures related to custody and parenting time (visitation) to assist in creating techniques and activities to enhance the resilience and well-being of children.

The 16 principles address such issues as the timeliness of getting before the court, issuing temporary orders, prioritizing these cases, making sure courts have the domestic violence history, providing legal representation to victims, making services for victims accessible, making access to information available, providing safe disclosure of domestic violence and parenting time matters, and ensuring that court procedures should be based on evidence-based practices.

Are the 16 Guiding Principles Working in Practice to Protect Children and Women?

There are several problems inherent in the 16 guiding principles. In part the list relies on a prior history of abuse and in many families, there is no history because the abuse has been kept secret. Secondly, the list suggests participation in child custody and parenting time processes which are often using coparenting classes to further abuse the victim and the children.

“Unfortunately, family court and basic custody agreements are ignoring this advice and forcing victims and abusers to “work together” to raise their children and essentially stay together as a “family” despite criminal abuse, all in an effort to be good to kids. This practice is throwing victims back into the world where their abusers are no longer held accountable and their healing comes to a screeching halt.”

The 16 guiding principles do not focus on credibility findings of the complaining witness, usually the mother, nor do they address trauma and its potential impact on the complaining witness. The focus is weighted towards the process of disseminating (#8) or providing information and educating.

Are there actually evidence-based best practices evaluations (#15)? Does any family court do a look back at its own child custody/domestic violence cases to see how the children and the victim fared years later following its child custody determination? Are there family court case longitudinal studies of custody determinations whereby a county looks at its own custody determinations?

cont’d on pg. 18

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Every Dollar Count! Is Income Splitting Another Method of Reducing Your Taxes or Just A Myth?

By: Eddie Twumasi-Smith, (P.Eng, PMP, CPA, MBA)

What is income splitting?

Within Canada's graduated tax system, the more income you earn, the more tax you pay.

Income splitting is the strategy of redistributing income within a family – usually from a spouse in a higher tax bracket to a spouse in a lower tax bracket – to reduce a family's overall tax bill.

In general, income splitting works best when one spouse earns significantly more income than the other, so the tax savings are more significant.

Attribution rules

Income splitting isn't as simple as having the higher-income earner gift investments or investment money to the lower-income earner. The CRA has attribution rules that require individuals to declare income sources, including any income made from investments with savings or capital. As such, any income generated from a gifted investment would be attributed back to the high earner and taxed at a higher rate.

Fortunately, there are some exceptions to these rules. Below I outline four income-splitting strategies you can use to pay less tax as a family and grow your wealth.

As always, it is recommended that you seek advice from a tax specialist before proceeding with any income-splitting strategies.

- Lending investment money to your spouse/partner (Strategy #1)
- Make contributions to a spousal RRSP (Strategy #2)
- Max out your spousal TFSAs (Strategy #3)
- Split pension income (Strategy #4)

Strategy #1: Lend investment money to your spouse/partner

While the attribution rules apply to spousal or partner gifts of investments, they do not apply to loans. The CRA allows spouses to loan each other money for investment or commercial use so long as the minimum interest paid on the loan meets the CRA-prescribed interest rate.

The prescribed rate remains fixed for the term of the loan, so if the investment has an expected return that is higher than the prescribed interest rate, it's a good way to help bring down a family's taxable income.

The current prescribed rate is 4% effective 31st January 2023 and will hold until at least December 31, 2023. At the current rate, an investment would need to have a return of more than 4% to benefit from this strategy.

In terms of repayment, the borrower must pay the interest by March 31 of the following year, otherwise, the CRA will still attribute the loan back to the



higher-income earner and they will be taxed at a higher rate.

As with all income-splitting strategies, this strategy has its benefits and drawbacks.

Advantages

Stable loan terms: The loan is locked in at the CRA-prescribed rate at the time the loan is issued, and interest must be paid by January 31st of each year, so there is no guesswork about the repayment schedule or fear of a rate increase.

A win-win for income shifting:

While the high earner must declare the interest paid to them as income, their total income only increases by the prescribed rate at the time of the loan (currently 4%). Likewise, the lower-income earner must declare any dividends or income generated from the loan, but as long as they receive a higher rate of return than the prescribed rate at the time of the loan (for example, greater than the current 4%), the family still comes out ahead. Plus, income earned is taxed at the lower-income earner's rate.

Deductibles: Any interest payments made can be deducted from the lower-income earner's taxable income.

Disadvantages

Legal requirements: As with any other loan, there needs to be a loan agreement or promissory note drafted to make the loan official and to outline the terms. Seeking legal counsel to do this is highly recommended.

Estate complications: If either spouse passes before the loan is repaid, it can create potential headaches for the executor and next of kin, especially if estate plans do not include contingencies around these scenarios. For example, if the higher-earning spouse passes before the loan is repaid, is the surviving spouse financially able to repay the loan? It is highly recommended that estate plans include provisions for spousal loans.

Accounting complications: This income-splitting strategy requires extra tax reporting steps that may require professional accounting support, which is an additional cost for those who typically prepare their own tax returns.

Record keeping: A detailed record of transactions must be kept in case of a CRA audit. While this isn't a heavy lift, it is still another piece of paperwork you must track in addition to your

current administrative burden as a small business owner.

Costs: From legal advice to estate planning to additional accounting support, there are many costs associated with establishing a spousal loan correctly. These need to be weighed against the potential rate of return to ensure that you're still benefiting financially.

Summary

You can lend money to your spouse as long as you follow these rules:

It must be an interest-bearing loan and you need to have a loan agreement or promissory note in place.

The interest needs to match the prescribed rate set by the CRA at the time the loan is made.

The prescribed rate remains fixed for the term of the loan, so if your investment has expected returns higher than the prescribed interest rate, it will be a good way to help bring down your taxable income. Any return is taxed at your spouse's lower rate. Plus, the loan interest expense can be deducted from your spouse.

Your spouse must pay the interest by January 31st of the following year – it cannot simply be added to the value of the loan.

There are costs and complications associated with setting up and maintaining a spousal loan. These need

to be weighed against the benefits to ensure it is the right tax-saving tool for your family.

If you're incorporated and your wife and children are set up as shareholders, you can pay them dividends. However, a word of caution: the Tax On Split Income (TOSI) may apply to payments made to certain shareholders and can create an even larger tax bill. TOSI applies tax at the highest marginal rate, so these plans must be carefully reviewed by a tax specialist before payments are made.

Loaning money to a family trust

Similar to a spousal loan, in this strategy, funds are loaned to the trust from the high-income earner. The dividends can be reinvested and grow the trust. When the beneficiaries of the trust – likely the children and grandchildren – are paid out, they are taxed at the lower marginal rate. If they are students, they pay very little tax.

As with spousal loans, however, this is a more complex strategy that requires additional legal and accounting support to set up and maintain.

In the next month's edition, I would like to shed more light on **strategies # 2,3 &4** on how we can plan and minimize overall tax burden with well thought-out transfer of funds within the family money box.

Any comments or suggestions, please reach me via email at eddiemith77@gmail.com

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Nana Adwoa wins Artiste of the Year at the Maiden OBGMAU Awards

By Joyceline Nataly Cudjoe

A United States based Ghanaian gospel musician, Nana Adwoa has won the artiste of the year at the 2023 Onyame Behwe Ghana Music Awards USA (OBGMAU) which was held on Saturday July 22, 2023 at 589 Winder Highway in Atlanta-Georgia.

She beats a stiff competition from Millicent Yankey, Minister Nii Addo, Maame Ekuia, Herty Winner and Jane Rita for the coveted award with her sensational track "I'm blessed."

Aside her, Maame Ekuia won the vocalist of the year, Millicent Yankey, Video of the year, P. Joy Soloist of the Year while Jane Rita won the Best Performer and Herty Winner won the Personality Award of the year.

Other five musicians including Morris Babyface and Minister Sabina were awarded for over 30 years Contributions to the gospel industry while Dr Frank Ofosu Appiah, the Founder and Senior Pastor of All Nations Church (USA) took home the Life Achievement Award.

Speaking in an interview with the Ghanaian News, Canada, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of OBGMAU, Kwasi Mintah explained that the awards which is in its maiden edition seeks to honour and celebrate talented Ghanaian musicians and industrial stakeholders who are promoting Ghanaian gospel in the outside world.

"It is organised to show our appreciation and honour our gospel musicians for helping reposition the local churches through their music ministries and talent," he said.



A rep receiving the Artiste of the Year Award on behalf of Nana Adwoa

Kwasi Mintah indicated that giving laurels for the deserving musicians would maximise the impact of gospel music and attract investors to the sector in helping project the word of

cont'd on pg. 18

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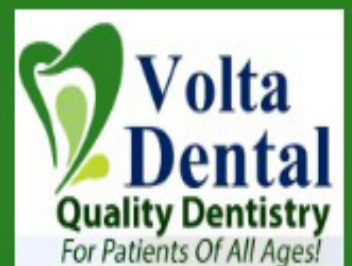
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World likely to breach 1.5C climate threshold by 2027, scientists warn

UN agency says El Niño and human-induced climate breakdown could combine to push temperatures into 'uncharted territory'

The world is almost certain to experience new record temperatures in the next five years, and temperatures are likely to rise by more than 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, scientists have warned.

The breaching of the crucial 1.5C threshold, which scientists have warned could have dire consequences, should be only temporary, according to research from the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO).

However, it would represent a marked acceleration of human impacts on the global climate system, and send the world into "uncharted territory", the UN agency warned.

Countries have pledged, under the 2015 Paris climate agreement, to try to hold global temperatures to no higher than 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, after scientific advice that heating beyond that level would unleash a cascade of increasingly catastrophic and potentially irreversible impacts.

Prof Petteri Taalas, the secretary general of the WMO, said: "This report does not mean that we will permanently exceed the 1.5C specified in the Paris agreement, which refers to long-term warming

over many years. However, WMO is sounding the alarm that we will breach the 1.5C level on a temporary basis with increasing frequency."

Global average surface temperatures have never before breached the 1.5C threshold. The highest average in previous years was 1.28C above pre-industrial levels.

The report, published on Wednesday, found there was a 66% likelihood of exceeding the 1.5C threshold in at least one year between 2023 and 2027.

New record temperatures have been set in many areas around the world in the heat waves of the past year, but those highs may only be the beginning, according to the report, as climate breakdown and the impact of a developing El Niño weather system combine to create heatwaves across the globe.

El Niño is part of an oscillating weather system that develops in the Pacific. For the past three years, the world has been in the opposing phase, known as La Niña, which has had a dampening effect on temperature increases around the world.

As La Niña ends and a new El Niño develops, there is a 98% likelihood that at least one of the next five years will be the hottest on record, the scientists found.

Taalas warned of the effects. "A warming El Niño is expected to develop in the

coming months and this will combine with human-induced climate change to push global temperatures into uncharted territory. This will have far-reaching repercussions for health, food security, water management and the environment," he said. "We need to be prepared."

The Arctic is heating much faster than the rest of the world, and this appears to be having an impact on global weather systems, including the jet stream, which has disrupted weather across the northern hemisphere in recent years.

There is likely to be less rainfall this year in the Amazon, Central America, Australia and Indonesia, the report found. This is particularly bad news for the Amazon, where scientists have grown increasingly concerned that a vicious cycle of heating and deforestation could tip the region from rainforest into savannah-like conditions.

UN warns heat records could be broken as chance of El Niño rises

That could have calamitous consequences for the planet,

which relies on rainforests as massive carbon sinks.

Over the next five years, there is likely to be above-average rainfall in northern Europe, Alaska and northern Siberia, and the Sahel, according to the report.

For each year from 2023 to 2027, the global near-surface temperature is predicted to be between 1.1C and 1.8C above the pre-industrial average, taken from the years 1850 to 1900.

The world has warmed considerably in recent years. In 2015, when the Paris agreement was signed, requiring countries to hold global temperature increases to no more than 2C above pre-industrial levels while "pursuing efforts" to hold them to 1.5C, it was forecast that the chance of temporarily exceeding the 1.5C threshold within the following five years was zero.

This November, governments will meet for the Cop28 UN climate summit, where they will assess progress towards meeting the goals of the

Paris agreement. Known as the "global stocktake", this assessment is likely to show that the world is far off track to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by the 43% this decade that is required to have a good chance of limiting temperature rises to 1.5C.

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The Guardian

Nana Adwoa wins Artiste of the Year at the Maiden OBGMAU Awards

cont'd from pg. 15

God as well as promoting gospel music of Ghana.

He congratulated the winners and urged musicians who were not nominated and those who did not win anything to work harder to win something the following year.

"Sometimes you might be looked down upon or not embraced but don't allow that to bury your God given talent. One day your time will come and you will be celebrated beyond measure," Kwasi Mintah added.

He assured his outfit commitment to expand the categories as time goes on for every talented musician doing the work of God to win something in the years to come.

In order to motivate and help the gospel sector to develop, Kwasi Mintah called on institutions to take critical look at the gospel industry to fund the sector in helping gospel musicians to compete effectively with their circular counterparts.

The award is organised by Onyame Behwe Ghana Welfare Campaign and Challenge Group in Collaboration with Flavor tv USA.

What Visitation Should Abusers Have With Their Children?

cont'd from pg. 13

Professor Joan Meier, PhD, George Washington University Law School, wrote in her 2021, Denial of Family Violence in Court: An Empirical Analysis and Path Forward for Family Law, "First, the law must outlaw the use of alienation theory (or its synonyms) as a reason to discount abuse allegations. Second, state law should explicitly recognize that there will always be indeterminate cases and offer a path forward which does not ignore risk to children. ". Professor Meier previously tracked and reported on Family Court decisions involving claims of alienation and abuse and the results for women.

Nothing has changed

In 1996, the New York state legislature, the last state to adopt such a measure to amend its domestic relation laws to consider domestic violence as a factor in child custody best interest determinations, was concerned that general, non-particularized claims of violence could be raised in order to gain an unfair advantage in a custody/visitation dispute. Hon. Judith J. Gische, Domestic Violence As A Factor In Custody Determinations In New York State, 27 Fordham Urb. L.J. 937 (2000). Justice Gische wrote, "Although the statute mandates courts to consider domestic violence, it is clear that the presence alone will not be outcome determinative."

The New York statute has not been amended and remains the law in the state of New York. The existence of domestic violence in New York is not outcome determinative of a custody determination.

Change must come

The problems with women being believed in court must be addressed head on. State statutes must be amended and rules and or laws enacted to make allegations of abuse and their presentation to a court understood and believed. The notion or belief that women are using allegations of abuse for a custodial advantage must be abolished as the misogynist dog whistle it is. Alienation claims and their progeny as defenses to domestic violence should be discouraged. Family court must find a method of scholarship to study the outcomes of its cases and the impact on children each year after its initial determination especially those involving allegations of domestic violence. Learning about the death of a child on television news should not be the only way to learn of the result of a custody determination.

Reliance on psychological evaluations to change custody must end. Women should not need to commit suicide to end this practice.

Finally, Justice Gische suggested in 2000 that domestic violence must be defined by the legislature so that courts can make appropriate determinations as to custody and visitation (parenting time). States are still considering coercion and control statutes although it has been recognized as domestic violence since 2006 by Dr. Evan Stark, PhD. Forbes

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Canada excluded as China loosens group travel bans

Canada has been left out as China lifted a restrictions on group tours to multiple countries, including the US and the UK.

It suggests a deterioration of relations following Canada's recent accusations that Beijing meddled in its politics.

Chinese officials said Canada was excluded over the foreign interference claims.

It could have a significant impact on Canada's tourism industry.

Chinese tourists were estimated to have injected over C\$1bn (£580m;\$740m) into the Canadian economy annually in years prior to the Covid pandemic.

China's Ministry of Culture and Tourism regulates which countries Chinese tour operators can visit, saying it's done to safeguard citizens travelling abroad.

But it has also been viewed as a political tool to advance China's political agenda overseas.

Last week, China added 78 countries to its list of approved destinations for group tours, excluding Canada while adding other major G20 countries like the US, Germany, Australia, and South Korea.

There are currently 138 countries on the list.

• What to know about the Canada-China meddling row

In a statement, China's embassy in Ottawa said it was concerned that "the Canadian side has repeatedly hyped up the so-called 'Chinese interference'". Beijing is focused on "protecting the safety and legitimate rights of overseas Chinese citizens and wishes they can travel in a safe and friendly environment", the statement said.

• China tourism rebounds above pre-pandemic levels

Diplomatic relations between the two countries deteriorated rapidly earlier this year. It happened amid a series of leaks to Canadian media of reports from domestic intelligence agencies that laid out accusations that China meddled in recent federal elections.

Canada has also accused Beijing of

trying to intimidate Conservative member of parliament Michael Chong and waging a disinformation campaign against him on the popular Chinese messaging app WeChat.

Chinese diplomat Zhao Wei was expelled from Canada in May over some of the allegations. In a tit-for-tat move, China expelled Jennifer Lynn Lalonde, Canada's diplomat in its Shanghai consulate.

The BBC has reached out to Global Affairs Canada for comment on the tourism snub.

Destination Canada, which promotes tourism in the country, told broadcaster CBC that China accounts for the largest source of tourist arrivals from the Asia-Pacific region. It is also its second-largest long-haul market after the UK.

More than 700,000 Chinese tourists travelled to Canada in 2018, according to a 2021 report by the Canada China Business Council, with each visitor spending an average of C\$2,600.

At the time, the business group warned that bilateral tensions made the future of Chinese tourism to Canada "uncertain", noting that "comments made by Chinese officials alluded to the contingency of Chinese tourism on positive relations".

Group tours from China to Canada were first approved in 2010, and it boosted air travel and tourism between the two countries.

In 2018, bilateral relations suffered a set back when Huawei executive Meng Wanzhou was detained in Canada at the request of the US.

Two Canadians were arrested in China not long after, in a move viewed by Canada and its allies as "hostage diplomacy".

The number of tourists to Canada from China fell in 2019, according to the Canada China Business Council.

Ms Meng and both men were released in 2021, after the Huawei executive came to a deal with US prosecutors. China began easing pandemic travel restrictions for both visitors and its citizens early this year. BBC

Canadians will need a permit to enter Europe

Canadians eyeing a trip to certain European countries next year will need to obtain a permit first.

Starting in 2024, Canadian travellers seeking a short-term visit to 30 countries including France, Switzerland, Spain and Greece must apply to the European Travel Information and Authorisation System.

The permit costs 7 euros, or about \$10.25, and can be obtained on the ETIAS website or mobile app.

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Starting in 2024, Canadian travellers seeking a short-term visit to 30 countries including France, Switzerland, Spain and Greece must apply to the European Travel Information and Authorisation System.

The permit costs 7 euros, or about \$10.25, and can be obtained on the ETIAS website or mobile app.

It allows travellers to visit for up to 90 days within any 180 days and is valid for three years, or until the passport

used in the application expires.

In addition to Canada, the new rules will apply to nearly 60 countries including the United States, Mexico, United Kingdom, Australia and Japan.

Travellers younger than 18 and older than 70 years are exempt from payment, as are family members of EU citizens or non-EU nationals who can move freely in the European Union.

The official website of the European Union urges would-be visitors to apply for authorization well in advance of a planned trip, and before booking a plane ticket or hotel.

Canadian travellers to most of Europe are currently exempt from needing a visa and only require a valid passport for short stays.

European countries requiring ETIAS also include Belgium, Croatia, Finland, Germany, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia.

This report by The Canadian Press was first published on July 26, 2023.

Source: thestar.com

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Taxpayers are spending hours on hold with the CRA despite repeated promises of faster service

Canada's taxpayers' ombudsman says he's going to probe long wait times for CRA services

The federal government has earmarked hundreds of millions of dollars to improve customer service at the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) — but people who regularly deal with the country's tax collector say it hasn't had much of an effect, with telephone wait times sometimes clocking in at more than two hours.

The union that represents CRA employees said the federal government's decision to lay off approximately 1,800 employees in May and June has only made the situation at the agency's call centres worse.

There's been a spike in the number of irate callers lashing out at agents after experiencing long periods on hold, the union told CBC News.

As part of an effort to improve its service, the CRA has a feature on its website that tells taxpayers how long they can expect to wait to get through to an agent.

But a CBC News analysis of actual wait times found that people usually end up waiting much longer than the website's estimate. A relatively simple task — like changing a name or adjusting a person's marital status — can take up a significant part of a taxpayer's day.

The CRA website recently suggested the wait time for a lunch-hour call to the agency to discuss a personal tax matter would be approximately eight minutes.

But when CBC News placed a call to CRA during the midday period, an automated message said the estimated wait time was "more than two hours."

Unlike some other call centres run by banks, telecommunications companies and airlines, the CRA does not always offer a "call back" option. Taxpayers have to wait on hold as classical music plays on a loop.

Another recent call to the CRA produced a similar result. The estimated wait time for a weekday late-morning call was listed as 11 minutes on the website. Once on the phone, the caller was told it would be an hour and a half before they could speak to an agent.

'It doesn't make sense'

Subsequent test calls by CBC News at different times of the day over the course of a week revealed more discrepancies between the wait times listed on the CRA's website and those callers face in reality.

Based on the CBC's results, François Boileau, Canada's taxpayers' ombudsperson — an independent officer who investigates CRA service-related complaints — said Tuesday his office will probe the agency's wait-time claims.

"It's not acceptable that you have two different answers whether you type online or whether you call. It doesn't make sense. It's something we've tried ourselves. We've noticed it's different and we'll look into it," he told CBC News.

He said unreasonable wait times are among the main sources of complaints to his office.

"It creates a whole lot of frustration, anger and resentment for Canadians and I can't blame them," Boileau said.

The hours-long wait times are a regular feature of Kelowna, B.C. accountant Ed Mierzewski's workday.

He said a recent call on behalf of a business client — his firm, Cleardale Accounting, works with farmers and small businesses — took more than two hours and 45 minutes.

It's much easier to do routine transactions online — but he often has to go through the CRA call centre first to get the proper authorization to work online on his clients' behalf.

Mierzewski said that once he gets through to an agent, he's sometimes punted to another one who has more specialized training on business account matters — a chain of events that only slows the process down further.

In the 2022 fall economic statement, Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland allocated \$400 million to the CRA to improve customer service.

Freeland's document said the money was to "support call centre operations in the face of projected call volumes that are expected to remain above pre-pandemic levels."

'Banging my head against a wall'

The money was meant to support the CRA's service standard of answering 65 per cent of calls within 15 minutes or less of a caller opting to speak with an agent.

Mierzewski said he's never had a call answered that quickly.

"Most of the time there's these really long wait times. And now some of the agents are taking calls on a cell phone — I've had a significant number of call drops," Mierzewski said.

"I'm left banging my head against a wall. They're not running their operation properly, at all.

"They're causing a lot of problems for me and my clients. Are they overloaded? Do they just not know what they're doing? It's absolutely not a smooth process and I don't know why, at the supervisory level, this type of thing is tolerated."

Mierzewski said the CRA may be trying to do too much.

The agency has its usual tax collecting responsibilities but it's also been saddled with administering other government programs like the new Canada Dental Benefit, various COVID-19 initiatives, the carbon tax rebate (the climate action incentive payment) and GST/HST rebates for low-income Canadians.

He said he believes the solution isn't to hire more workers but to reduce the workload by doing fewer audits.

Marc Brière, president of the Union of Taxation Employees, said the wait times are "unacceptable."

"It shouldn't take that long to get through to an agent of the CRA, that's for sure," he said. "Close to 1,800 people were let go in May and June. We condemn that decision — I think it was a mistake."

The CRA has started to rehire about 160 people, Brière said.

"If people are waiting two hours on the line — that's not enough people. They will need to hire more people. I don't understand why they let go of so many people only to rehire them a month later," he said.

Brière said the CRA can handle everything the government wants it to do if there are enough people on staff.

"When you let go of close to 1,800 people, here's what happens. It's a domino effect and I'm not surprised," he said.

"My message to the government is, do what you're supposed to do with the \$400 million you put in the budget and diminish the wait times for taxpayers. Taxpayers will be more satisfied and obviously our members will take less heat on the lines from frustrated people."

In a media statement, a spokesperson for the CRA said the agency is "dedicated to providing quality and timely service to Canadians, including in our phone contact centres."

cont'd on pg. 34

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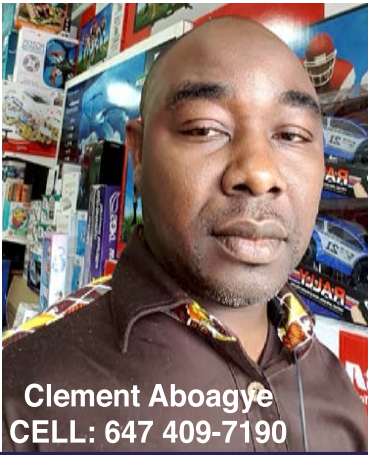
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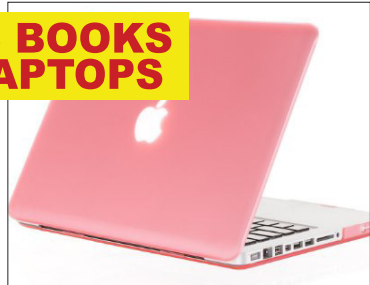
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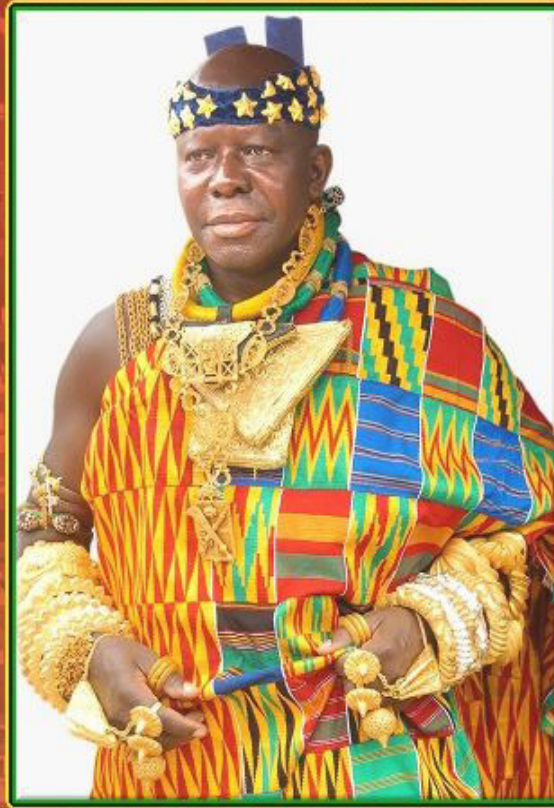
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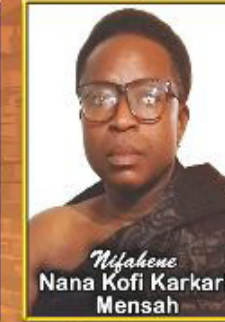
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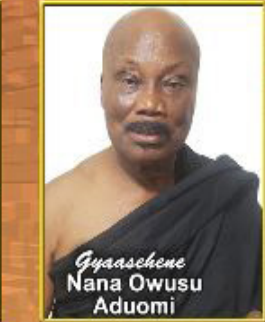
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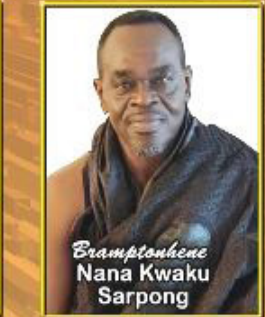
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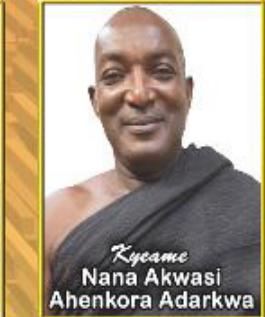
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The Apostles' Continuation has held a culture day for all nationals making up the membership of the church

By Emmanuel Ayiku, Toronto, ON

The celebration afforded members of the church the opportunity to educate each other on their cultures and also foster unity amongst them after the unity of being Christians. Members from Ghana, Jamaica, Nigeria and Uganda all took turns to give brief history of their nation and cultures.



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Thomas Yeboah, Church Secretary



Apostle Anokye Manu and other Pastors



Apostle Anokye Manu & wife and a church member



Women's Leaders and the church secretary



Children ministering in song



Representative of the nations giving brief history of their culture



Some of the Children



Representative of Chiefs and Queens giving history of their culture



Some of the Pastors



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Praises Time

The Apostles' Continuation Church BBQ in pictures on Saturday, August 12th 2023

Photos by Ghanaian News



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Some breast cancer patients may not need radiation, new Canadian research suggests

Breast cancer survivor says radiation treatment is painful, has lingering impacts

Older women with early, low-risk breast cancer may not need to receive radiation treatment, according to a new research finding that experts say could spare patients from some harmful side effects.

In Canada, [breast cancer is the second most common type of cancer](#), with one in eight women likely diagnosed with the disease in their lifetime. Typically women with early stage, low-risk breast cancer will have surgery, followed by several weeks of radiation and then a few years of hormone therapy, to ensure the cancer doesn't come back.

But a [new study published in The New England Journal of Medicine](#) suggests that patients who meet certain criteria might be able to skip the radiation part of the treatment, something cancer researchers, radiation experts and breast cancer patients say is reassuring.

The study tracked women 55 years and older with low-risk, stage 1 breast cancer, and found they could be effectively treated with just surgery to remove the lump and hormone therapy.

“Now that we can identify women, who don't require radiation, at least in a significant number, it's going to allow them to avoid the inconvenience and side effects of [radiation] treatment,” said Tim Whelan, lead author on the study and an oncology professor at Hamilton's McMaster University.

Some of those short-term side effects of radiation treatment include fatigue and skin irritation, according to Whelan. Meanwhile, he says long-term effects can involve distortion of the breast or breast pain and swelling.

Research shows [radiation can also damage nearby organs](#), like the lungs or heart, in breast cancer patients.

Women must meet specific criteria

The study — a collaboration between researchers from McMaster University, Hamilton Health Sciences, BC Cancer and the University of British Columbia — monitored 500 women with luminal A breast cancer across the country.

Luminal A breast cancer is [one of the four major cancer subtypes](#) and the tumours are considered to be slow growing. Research shows that often, people diagnosed with this type of cancer have the best prognosis — they have a higher chance of survival and a lower chance of the cancer coming back.

In the study, the cancer had not spread to the patients' lymph nodes or other parts of their bodies, and their tumours were two centimetres or smaller.

The tumours were also considered to be either grade 1 or 2, which means the cancer cells didn't look especially abnormal.

Those in the study also all had less than 13.25 per cent of a protein called Ki67, which is associated with cell growth. People with Ki67 levels [greater than 15 per cent usually have a higher likelihood of recurrence](#).

Results also showed that 2.7 per cent of the study's participants had breast cancer recur in the same

breast, in the lymph nodes or spread to another part of the body.

Whelan, also a Canada Research Chair in breast cancer, says if women fit the above criteria, then it's clear that their risk of recurrence is low, so there isn't “really any advantage” to having radiation treatment.

According to Whelan, about 60 per cent of women with breast cancer have luminal A, though he says his findings will apply to about 15 per cent of those women, as they also need to meet all of the additional criteria.

Dr. Martin Yaffe, a professor and senior scientist at Sunnybrook Research Institute in Toronto, said the findings are “really good news.”

“It's an example of what we call precision medicine, and that is getting away from the one-size-fits-all approach to treating cancer,” said Yaffe, who specializes in breast cancer research. ago

A U.S. medical task force is recommending routine mammogram screening for breast cancer should start at 40 not 50, especially in people in high-risk categories.

Radiation ‘not uniform’ treatment

According to Ohio-based radiation expert Dr. Corey Speers, the findings are significant as they suggest that the “benefit of radiation is not uniform for all patients.”

In the past, Speers says there's been research looking at certain features, like a woman's age or the size of the tumour, but this is one of the first studies to look at the biology of the cancer.

“We have long known we over treat some women with breast cancer,” said Speers, who is the vice chair of radiation oncology at Cleveland's University Hospitals Seidman Cancer Center.

While he says this study is an important addition to the field, Speers notes that it's still unclear whether the radiation is working, and if it is, how much of an effect it's having.

He says that they still don't know if radiation provides these low-risk patients with an “additional benefit” because the study did not have a control group of women who met the criteria and still got radiation.

“This test tells us that they're at low risk if they don't get radiation treatment, it doesn't tell us whether [their risk] can be further reduced yet.”

Speers says it would be beneficial when discussing treatment plans to be able to tell patients about the level of risk they have of the cancer recurring and what, if any, benefit they would get from radiation treatment.

“I think that would be reassuring to patients,” he said.

Treatments take ‘quite a toll’

For Waterloo resident Karin McNabb, who was diagnosed with stage 1 breast cancer last year, the study's results are “fantastic.”

The 57-year-old says she had a 1.8 cm tumour and underwent surgery to remove the lump, followed by 16 rounds of radiation.

“You don't feel the effects of radiation until a week later,” she said. “So by the time you're three and a half, four weeks in, it is quite painful.”

McNabb recalls that during radiation treatment her breast was “rock hard” and her skin became blistered and raw.

While the short-term side effects have subsided and McNabb is considered cancer free, she says she still experiences mental fog and feels “scattered” on occasion — something she attributes to the radiation.

But she says whether women receive radiation or not will likely depend on the advice of their doctors.

“There are many, many women who go through treatments and, because they're shell-shocked, they don't have an opportunity to really analyze or think, because things happen so quickly,” said McNabb, noting that's why the studies are important.

“Because, as a patient and a breast cancer survivor, you rely on your oncologist to make those decisions and present the facts to you.”

Whelan's findings were initially discussed in June last year at the American Society of Clinical Oncology Annual Meeting in Chicago, but have now been peer-reviewed and published in full.

He says the group recently received more funding from the Canadian Cancer Society, so they plan to continue to follow-up with the women in the study and assess what their risk of cancer recurrence is at the 10 year mark. **CBC NEWS**

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Taxpayers are spending hours on hold with the CRA despite repeated promises of faster service

cont'd from pg. 24

“However, service demands do fluctuate, and at times callers experience higher than normal wait times,” the spokesperson said.

The spokesperson said the CRA has extended call centre hours from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., is introducing online self-service options to CRA’s My Account and is “continually updating and simplifying our website so that Canadians can find answers to their tax questions independently.”

The spokesperson also pointed to an online chat feature that will provide an alternative to calling the CRA for some non-personal inquiries.

But that chat service is down right now and is not expected to return to service until August 21.

As for the layoffs, the spokesperson said the CRA “hired a significant number of temporary contact centre agents” during the pandemic to administer special programs such as supports for businesses.

“As these temporary programs have ended for the most part, the CRA

reduced in May and June 2023 the complement of fixed-term employees in its contact centres,” the spokesperson said.

“When service needs increase, the CRA does its best to rehire experienced, previously trained contact centre service representatives.”

Boileau said it’s clear the status quo cannot stand.

“When you call, you expect some level of customer service and the right answers,” he said.

He said a callback feature, while costly to implement, might be the solution.

Boileau first recommended this option in his 2020-21 annual report, but the CRA has been slow to implement it because of financial concerns, he said.

“What is the cost of not doing it right now? What is the cost for all those Canadians who are waiting? Not everyone has the time or energy or the battery power to wait for two, three, four, five hours.” **CBC News**



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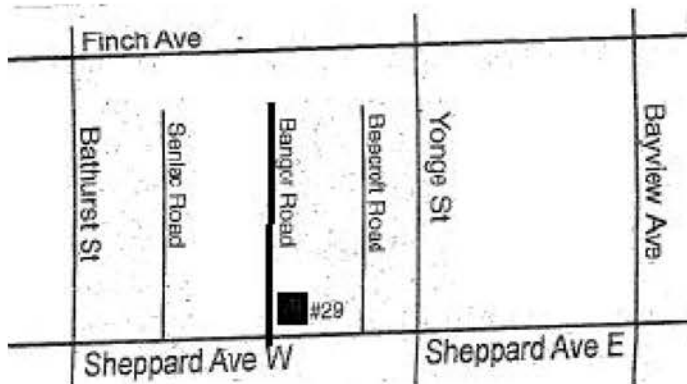
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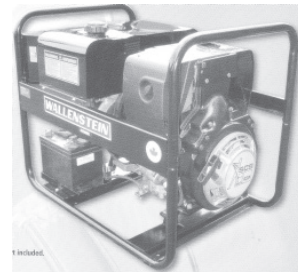
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Surge of refugee claimants overwhelming some Ottawa shelters

cont'd from pg. 6

"I saw the stories about Toronto and it broke my heart, and it made me very anxious about what we're going to be facing here as we move forward," said Dore, who added her shelter is already chronically full.

"It's just one more pressure on a system that's already severely overtaxed."

'I was afraid'

Canada had processed nearly 60,000 applications from asylum seekers as of June, the highest mid-year count going back to at least 2015.

Thousands have shown up at Toronto's emergency shelters. The number of asylum seekers there rose from 530 per night in September 2021 to 2,800 this May, and led to dozens camping out in front of an intake office downtown.

City of Ottawa data shows that the number of newcomers in the emergency shelter system for single adults has almost doubled in just six months, from 121 in January to 222 in July. Newcomers in family shelters were down slightly over the same period.

The data does not break down how many of those newcomers are refugee claimants coming to seek asylum. They face special challenges, since they arrive with no work permit and lack the level of federal support afforded to sponsored refugees.

Tilley said most of the claimants coming to the Mission are from Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda and Nigeria.

Femi Biobaku was among them. He came by air at the early stages of the current influx to Ottawa, after fleeing from Nigeria last year.

Biobaku said he lived as a "hunted person" back home and had no choice but to leave. But the month he spent in an eight-man dorm at the Mission re-traumatized him.

A case worker at the Mission referred him to Matthew House, a transitional housing program that provides specialized supports for refugee claimants. Tilley said that's the best place for people like Biobaku to get the services they need.

Biobaku said Matthew House saved his life.

"In maybe 28 days I spent (at the Mission), I did not sleep. But the first time I entered Matthew House, I slept like I was in my house, my home," he said.

Without that referral to Matthew House, he doubts he could have endured.

"I would have committed suicide, because I don't know what my life would have been like out there," said Biobaku. "I was afraid."

But now Matthew House is so overwhelmed that it turned down about 100 calls last month for lack of space, most of them from shelters.

"There's no place to move them into. There's just no housing," Tilley said. "We're throwing up our arms as we try and reach out to the federal government and immigration to acquire services to move these people on. But that's where the bottleneck is."

Dore has seen the same dearth of options.

"Every resource is jammed right up," she said.

Some refugees 'sleeping rough'

Matthew House has expanded its operations rapidly to keep up with demand, going from eight to 92 beds dedicated to asylum seekers in just three years. But even that pace can't keep up, executive director Allan Reesor-McDowell said.

"We are getting calls every day, and we have to turn people away. The trend is just more and more people coming," he said.

"If there's no space, they just end up staying in the shelter system, or some of them end up sleeping rough, on the streets."

There are currently 135 people living unsheltered on Ottawa streets, according to the city, though there is no recent data on how many are refugee claimants. The city said it responded to 190 encampments within Ottawa this year, providing outreach services before, in some cases, dismantling the encampments.

Tilley said there was a "mini-encampment" of five to eight people right next to the Mission last week. Police broke it up on Tuesday, but it was back again by Wednesday night.

"It's an ongoing theme at a level that we've never seen before," he said.

Tilley sees housing affordability as a central piece in the puzzle. Competition for rental housing is so fierce, that landlords have their choice of tenants. And when landlords get choosy, refugee claimants with no credit history are likely to be the last on their list, according to Reesor-McDowell.

"Even though, legally, they're not supposed to, landlords will pick someone over a newcomer who doesn't have a long time in Canada," he said. "It makes it very challenging."

Where it once took about three months to find someone living at Matthew House permanent housing, it now takes six.

"Half the number of people in a year can come through our program," Reesor-McDowell said.

If nothing changes, he sees the Toronto scenario as a possible future for Ottawa.

"There's a very high risk of something like that playing out in Ottawa and all over the country, because once you reach sort of a tipping point ... it doesn't take that many more people to take a real strain," he said.

"We're kind of there, we're right at that point where it's going to get bad really quickly."

How to prevent a crisis

Tilley worries that if refugee claimants wind up staying at the Mission, they might get stuck.

"They're very vulnerable and of course they, these new Canadians, are at risk of all of the factors that we see that contribute to people remaining homeless or on the streets," he said.

While the Mission provides a wide range of services from mental health supports to hospice care, Matthew House is better equipped to support refugee claimants through the legal hurdles and cultural adjustment they face after arriving in Canada to seek asylum.

Reesor-McDowell said the first step is to connect them with a lawyer, get them on Ontario Works support payments and then get a work permit. Then they can find a job, which makes housing much easier to find and maintain.

Biobaku, for instance, is now employed at Matthew House's furniture program. In the shelter, those early, crucial steps might not happen as quickly.


"People get stuck in limbo, and then more people come ... and you get a homelessness crisis," Reesor-McDowell said.

Though the problem looks daunting, he doesn't think it's very hard to prevent that crisis. He said his program could easily scale up, opening more and more homes and helping refugees quickly transition to housing at a fraction

cont'd on pg. 46

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Ghanaian Canadian Law Enforcement Officers Encourage Youth to Join Police Force

cont'd from pg. 1

Staff Sergeant Don Yirenkyi, President of AGCLEO and Officer in charge of York Regional Police Intimate Partner Violence Unit (Domestic Violence), acknowledged that while the journey to becoming a police officer can be challenging at times, aspirants should remain persistent.

Among those present were Freddy Yeboah (Board member of AGCLEO and Regional Incident Manager at the Ministry of Solicitor General), Corporal Richard Amoatey (Board member of AGCLEO and a member of the RCMP), Constable Mark Affum (Board member of AGCLEO and a member of RCMP), Constable Eric Boateng (Board member and a member of Peel Regional Police), Constable Leo Addo



Groups of the Officers and the participants



Pastor Prince Donkor

(Toronto Police) and Special Constable Emmanuel Gambah (Toronto Housing Corporation).

The York Police team included Sergeant Pozzobon, Special Constable Maz Wahid (Supervisor - Talent Acquisition), Special Constable Chris Bianchi, and Auxiliary member Jashan Chaudry. The Toronto Police team included Constable Ingram and Constable Kumar.

Formed in 2020, AGCLEO currently boasts 56 members. Its primary objectives include bridging the gap between law enforcement and the Ghanaian/racialized community, assisting the Ghanaian community in Ontario with law and security concerns through collaborative partnerships and community events.

In addition to providing support, counseling, and professional advice to its members, AGCLEO is committed to promoting law enforcement as a viable career choice for members of the black community.



Officers interacting with some of the participants



M.C.



Officers interacting with some of the participants



Officers interacting with some of the participants



Some of the Officers with Michaela

The Ga Adangbe Association in Toronto have celebrated their annual Homowo Festival in style at the Malton Park.

By Ebenezer Amankwah & Emmanuel Ayiku, Toronto, ON

Homowo which literally means “hooting at anger” is celebrated by the Ga in Ghana.

The Chief of the Ga Adangbe’s in Toronto performed the rites as custom demanded and climaxed it by sprinkling “kpekpele”, a popular dish used specifically for this festival.

The Deputy Consul General of the Ghana Consulate in Toronto, Mrs. Joyce Asamoah-Koranteng who graced the occasion said she is overwhelmed with joy to be part of the celebration.

She said celebrations such as this not only serves as a reminder of one’s roots but also goes a long way



Mrs. Joyce Asamoah-Koranteng, Deputy Consul-General



to educate the younger generation in the diaspora.

There were lots to eat and drink

Kings and Queens of the Ga Dangbe



Some Elders of Ga Dangbe Assoc.

Some Elders of the Ga Dangbe



Some members of Ga Dangbe



Toronto Ga Mantse pouring libation



Some Elders



Cross section of invited guests



Victoria Lampety, M.C.



Pouring of libation



Cross section of invited guests

Ghana Association of Red Deer, AB Picnic/Potluck at Kin Kanyon Park, Red Deer on July 29, 2023.



Some community members



Group picture of some Ghanaian Community members in Red Deer, Alberta

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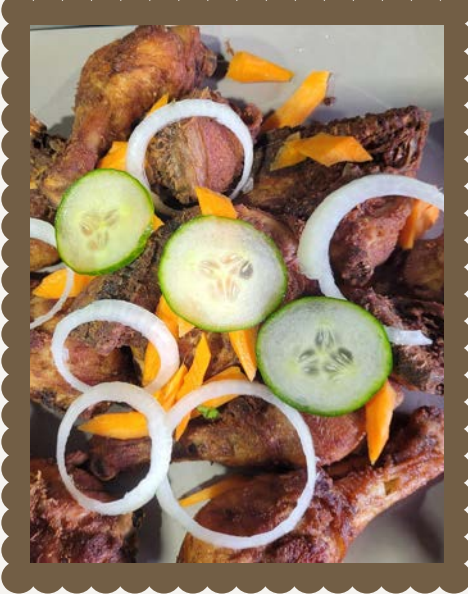
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Ghanaian Women's Prayer conference Ontario group donate items to Refugees

By Staff Reporter, Toronto, ON

Members of the Ghanaian Women's Fasting & Prayer Conference group Ontario have donated relief items to asylum seekers at the Dominion Church Int'l 2256 Sheppard Ave. W. in North York, Ontario.

The items include packs of water, toiletries, Towels, Blankets, and others.

This presentation is in response to a call made by some prominent individuals and groups in the Black community to help black African refugees who were living and camping on the sidewalk outside the shelter at Richmond and Peter Streets <https://ghanaiannews.ca/african-refugees-in-canada-deserve-better-treatment-black-community-leaders/>

After the call, most people have thronged the site to lend a hand with Dominion Church Int'l also helping with accommodation and feeding.

This issue has galvanized the black community that it can come together, lead and be part of the solution.



Some of the Women presenting the items to the church representative



Items donated

Initiation of New members & installation of New Executives of Christian Mothers and Fathers Association of St. Andrews Roman Catholic Church, Etobicoke on Saturday August 12, 2023 Officiating minister was Fr. Alex Osei





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Akwaboah Thrills Fans At GHANAFEST in Toronto

By Edmund Agbeko, Toronto, ON

This year's edition of Ghanafest, which is an annual Arts & Culture Festival that is celebrated every year to bring to residents of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), the rich Ghanaian culture came off on August 6th at the Earl Bales Park in North York. The Festival which has come to symbolize the unity of the Ghanaian community in appreciation of the beautiful culture of the West African nation across Canada also showcased the celebration of the rich, vibrant and colourful arts and culture of Ghana.

In a Ghanaian News Newspaper interview with Prince Darkey who is the event Co-ordinator, he said: "Ghanafest aims to bring Ghana's multicultural community together through the presentation of the rich Ghanaian and black heritage. We do our best to highlight both contemporary and traditional Ghanaian foods, language, entrepreneurship, and a broad spectrum of arts exhibitions. As you can see, Ghanafest is a social, educational, cultural

cont'd on pg.49



Mrs Joyce Asamoah-Koranteng presenting certificate to the organisers



Organisers and some participants



Akwaboah on stage



Vendor



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Hon. Ahmed Hussien, Minister of International Development of Canada being presented with Ghanafest T-Shirt by Organiser



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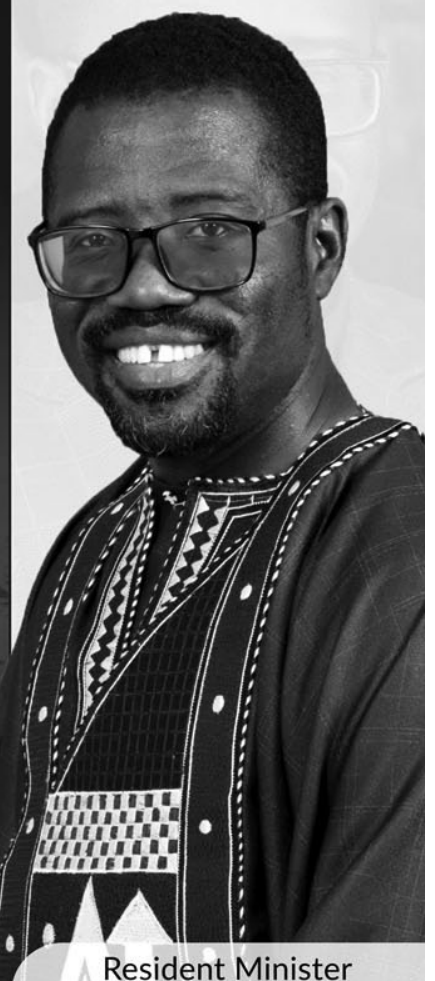
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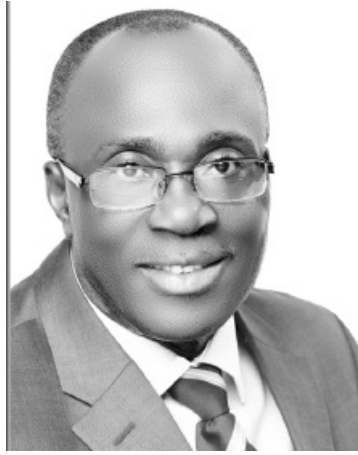
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Bringing the Gospel to our Community *By Rev. Isaac De-Graft Takyi*

THE CHRISTIAN IN 2023: FAITH MAKES REACH POSSIBLE

Faith means placing complete reliance on Jesus Christ and His work to reconcile us with God. It involves trusting in who Jesus is and what He has accomplished for our salvation.
—[Dr. Michelle Corral](#).



THE TEXT

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. ² This is what the ancients were commended for. ³ By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. ⁴ By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead. ⁵ By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death: "He could not be found, because God had taken him away."^(a) For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. ⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. *Hebrews 11:1-6 NIV.*

INTRODUCTION

This article will look at the text, some key definitions of the terms, the source of faith, some explanation on the text and some questions to answer by way of application.

THE DEFINITIONS

1. General:

Faith is a strong belief or confidence in something that is not directly observable or provable. It involves trust, reliance, and a firm conviction in the truth or reliability of a person, idea, or concept, often transcending mere evidence or tangible proof.

"**Makes**" is the third person singular form of the verb "make." It means to cause something to happen, to create or bring about a particular

situation or outcome. It implies the ability to influence or produce a result, often through action, effort, or transformation.

"**Reach**" has several meanings, but in this context, it refers to the attainment or realization of a goal, destination, or potential. It signifies the ability to extend or stretch out, often overcoming obstacles or limitations, to achieve a desired objective or to make something within one's grasp.

"**Possible**" refers to something that can be done, achieved, or realized within the realm of feasibility or likelihood. It indicates that an event, outcome, or action is within the bounds of what is achievable, given the circumstances, resources, or capabilities. It implies that there is potential for something to happen or be accomplished, although it doesn't guarantee certainty. The concept of possibility involves the idea that with effort, conditions, or the right approach, a particular result can be attained.

2. Biblical Perspective

Faith: In a biblical context, faith is more than belief; it's a complete trust and confidence in God, His promises, and His character. Hebrews 11:1 describes faith as "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Faith involves surrendering to God's will, relying on His grace, and placing our trust in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.

Makes: The concept of "makes" aligns with God's power to bring things

into existence. It refers to the creative and transformative work of God. For example, God "makes" all things new (Revelation 21:5), demonstrating His ability to bring about change and redemption in our lives.

Reach: The biblical concept of "reach" often signifies spiritual progress or attainment. It implies striving toward a higher spiritual goal, seeking to grow in our relationship with God, and extending God's love to others. It's exemplified in passages like Philippians 3:14, where the Apostle Paul speaks of pressing forward toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Winning Souls: Winning souls, also known as evangelism, is the act of sharing the Gospel message with others and leading them to a saving faith in Jesus Christ. This concept is rooted in the Great Commission given by Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20, where believers are instructed to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Winning souls involves sharing the good news of salvation, making disciples, and leading people into a personal relationship with Christ.

Possible: The concept of "possible" in a biblical perspective is deeply

tied to the understanding of God's omnipotence, His sovereign will, and the limits of human understanding. It carries important implications for faith, trust, and the recognition of God's authority over all things.

God's Omnipotence: The Bible repeatedly affirms God's unlimited power. In Luke 1:37, the angel declares to Mary, "For nothing will be impossible with God." This verse underscores that God's ability surpasses human limitations. What may seem impossible to us is within God's realm of capability. This perspective encourages us to have faith in God's ability to accomplish what might seem beyond our reach.

Faith and Trust: A biblical understanding of "possible" calls us to trust in God's wisdom and providence, even when circumstances appear difficult or insurmountable. In Mark 10:27, Jesus states, "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God." This highlights the importance of faith in recognizing that God can work miracles, provide solutions, and bring about outcomes that transcend human understanding.

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Surge of refugee claimants overwhelming some Ottawa shelters

cont'd from pg. 38

of the cost of keeping them in a shelter.

"If we can divert those people from the shelter system — and it's cheaper and better outcomes — there's not going to be a homeless crisis in Ottawa," he said. "We can avoid what we're seeing in Toronto."

But while the city has been a strong partner, he said the federal government is missing in action. It doesn't provide a dollar to Matthew House, he said.

In a statement, the federal department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada said housing and services for asylum seekers are "generally a provincial and municipal responsibility." However, it said it is still helping to ensure asylum seekers are housed.

It pointed to the Interim Housing Assistance Program that aims to address "extraordinary interim housing pressures resulting from the increased numbers of

asylum claimants." It said the City of Ottawa has received more than \$26 million under the program between 2017 and 2022, and the program is now being extended.

The department also provides temporary accommodations and services to asylum claimants that entered Canada through Roxham Road, an irregular crossing in Quebec. That includes 115 rooms in one Ottawa hotel.

Reesor-McDowell said governments need to stop wrangling over jurisdiction and quickly invest money in programs that work.

"I'd love for all levels of government to work together on this, create some avenues for organizations like ours, because if we open a house a month that's ten less people on the streets or in the shelters," he said.

"I don't see why we can't just keep doing that until we've met that demand."

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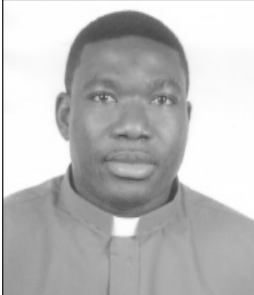
The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. Amen.
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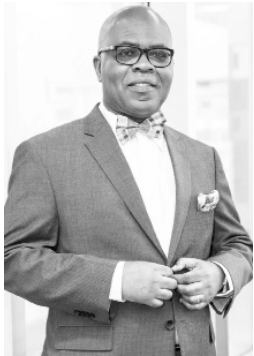
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The CHRISTIAN in 2023: Faith Makes Reach Possible

cont'd from pg. 45

God's Sovereign Will: While the Bible acknowledges God's limitless power, it also emphasizes that His will guides all things. Matthew 19:26 teaches, "With God, all things are possible." However, it's essential to note that God's possibilities align with His divine purpose. What may be possible within God's will may differ from our desires, but we can trust that His plan is perfect.

Human Humility: Recognizing God's sovereignty and His ability to make all things possible encourages humility in humans. We are reminded of our dependence on God and our need to align our desires and actions with His will. James 4:10 says, "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you." This humility involves acknowledging that our understanding is limited, and we trust in God's greater knowledge and capabilities.

THE SOURCE OF FAITH

Faith begins with God's gracious initiative. He reveals Himself and His truth, drawing people to Himself through the work of the Holy Spirit. Faith is a gift from God, not a human invention. How does faith begin with God? The Bible reveals this truth in many ways.

Faith as a gift from God: The Bible teaches that faith is a gift from God. It is not something that humans can generate on their own. Ephesians 2:8-9 is a central verse that emphasizes this point: "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

Faith is God's initiative: Faith begins with God's initiative in revealing Himself to humanity. Throughout the Bible, we see instances of God reaching out to people, disclosing His nature, character, and plan for salvation.

Faith is from The Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit plays a crucial role in initiating and enabling faith. He convicts people of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8), leading them to recognize their need for a Savior.

Faith is a response to God's call: While God initiates faith, humans are responsible for responding to His call. Faith involves a personal decision to trust and believe in God. In Mark 1:15, Jesus proclaimed, "The kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." Repentance and belief are responses to God's call, showing that faith involves a conscious choice to follow Him.

However, while God takes the first step, individuals must respond to His call and choose to place their trust in Him. As we seek to understand and grow in our faith, it is essential to recognize that God's grace is the foundation on which our faith stands.

THE EXPLANATION

Today, we delve into the powerful words of Hebrews 11:1-6, where we uncover the significance of faith in our lives, explore stories of those who dared to step to the edge and encourage you to be a person of faith.

Hebrews 11:1 opens a window into the realm of faith: "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see." These words resonate not only in the sacred texts but also in the corridors of our hearts. Just as standing on the edge of the Grand Canyon beckons us to trust the descriptions of others, faith beckons us to trust in something beyond the visible.

Throughout history, faith has propelled individuals to overcome doubt, venture into uncharted territories, and embrace a deeper relationship with God. The stories of Abel, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham—mentioned in Hebrews 11—paint vivid portraits of faith in action.

Consider Abel, offering his sacrifice with a heart full of trust. Imagine him standing before the altar, choosing to present the best of what he had. This act was more than just an offering; it was a declaration of his belief in God's goodness. Like Abel, our actions are a canvas upon which we display our faith. Our sacrifices, big or small, are our way of saying, "I trust in God's plan."

Enoch's footsteps echo down the corridors of time, reminding us that faith is not merely an intellectual exercise but a relational journey. Enoch walked with God, cultivating a closeness that transcended the visible world. Just as a canyon's depth can only be appreciated by stepping into it, a vibrant relationship with God requires us to step into the realm of faith, where trust bridges the gap between the seen and the unseen.

Noah's obedience in building the ark is a testament to faith's tenacity in the face of skepticism. Imagine the whispers of doubt that must have surrounded him. Yet, he forged ahead, driven by faith in God's command. Similarly, we often encounter doubt and skepticism, but faith empowers us to press on, knowing that God's plans are greater than any obstacle.

And then there's Abraham, the father of faith. He left the familiar behind, embracing the promise of an unseen inheritance. His journey was not a blind stumble, but a deliberate step of trust, guided by God's voice. Abraham's story encourages us to release our grip on the familiar and embrace the adventure of faith, knowing that God's promises are our true inheritance.

Just as standing at the edge of the Grand Canyon requires a leap of trust, so does a life of faith. Hebrews 11 reminds us that faith is not a mere concept; it's a dynamic force that propels us into the realm of the unknown. It is confidence amid uncertainty and assurance in the unseen.

To help you apply your faith to make reach possible do answer the following questions reflectively:

THE QUESTIONS

1. How does the definition of faith in Hebrews 11:1 impact your understanding of belief and trust in God's promises? How can this understanding deepen your relationship with God?

2. Think about a time when you faced a situation where you needed to step out in faith, trusting in something you couldn't see or fully understand. How did that experience shape your faith? What did you learn from it?

3. Consider the examples of Noah, Abraham, and Moses mentioned in Hebrews 11:7, 11:17-19, and 11:24-29, respectively. How did their faith influence their actions? How can their stories inspire you to take bold steps in your own faith journey?

4. Hebrews 11:6 emphasizes that "without faith, it is impossible to

please God." Reflect on what it means to please God through faith. How can you cultivate a faith that deeply pleases God in your daily life, relationships, and service to others?

5. The concept of faith in Hebrews 11 is often associated with taking risks and reaching beyond the ordinary. How comfortable are you with stepping out of your comfort zone in response to your faith? What might be holding you back, and how can you overcome those barriers to embrace a faith-filled life?

Akwaboah Thrills Fans At GHANAFEST

cont'd from pg. 43

and business networking platform for community cohesion and development through Arts and Culture."

This year's event is undoubtedly the biggest and most explosive one as patrons were entertained by Akwaboah Jnr, whose electrific stage performance was a delight to watch. The 'Obiaa' hitmaker who recently announced the death of his father Kwadwo Akwaboah said: "I am very happy to join Ghanaians in Canada to celebrate Ghanafest especially in moments where African music and culture is celebrated everywhere in the world now. I really enjoyed my performance and I was happy to meet other artists here too but the reaction from the people here was super amazing. Congratulations to the organizers for bringing me here to be part of this event."

Dr. Nadia Adongo Fynn who is the Deputy Director of the Diaspora Affairs Office, at the Office of the President in Ghana in her speech,

commended Ghanaians in Canada for their commitment to contribute their quota to the development of Ghana. She urged the Ghanaian-Canadian community to continue to build on their gains and prayed that such efforts would be extended to other parts of Ghana. I am excited that there are Ghanians here who are doing a good job in the community, and through them, we can develop these links to help our people back home in Ghana."

Minister of International Development of Canada Ahmed Hussen on his part acknowledge the great contributions of Ghanaians in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), and said "Everyone is saying the Ghanians in Canada are good citizens, they are contributing to the economic progress and they have good relationships all over the place, which makes me very proud!" The GTA has a higher concentration of Ghanaian immigrants in Canada, and Minister Ahmed Hussen said he was thrilled to learn about their positive impact within the community.

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Lifestyle

This column is devoted to answering your questions on health and discussions of diseases which are common among the African Canadians.

New COVID-19 variant EG.5 is in Ontario

Here's what that means for you

A new COVID-19 variant that's become the dominant strain in the United States has made its way to Ontario, according to public health officials.

In a report released last month, Public Health Ontario (PHO) said cases of EG.5 – a descendant of the Omicron variant – represented 5.2 per cent of all reported and genetically sequenced infections between July 2 and July 8.

With a weekly growth rate of 1.90 per cent, PHO said cases of EG.5 (or Eris as it's being referred to by some) were expected to represent 35 per cent of all infections by August 2, the latest date in which data is available.

So what does the emergence of another COVID-19 variant mean to you? CTV News Toronto spoke with Dr. Fahad Razak, an internal medicine physician and former scientific director of Ontario's COVID-19 Science Advisory Table, for some answers.

WHERE DID EG.5.1 COME FROM?

Much like variants that have come before EG.5, Razak said a new version of the virus is not unexpected three-and-a-half years into the pandemic.

"We've seen versions of the virus continue to mutate, and the ones that are able to evade your immune system become the most common version circulating, which makes sense, because those are the ones that can spread between people," Razak explained.

In the U.S., the Center for Disease Control and Prevention said EG.5 accounted for roughly 17.3 per cent — or one in six — of new COVID-19 cases in the past two weeks. Meanwhile, in the United Kingdom, approximately 14.6 per cent — or one in seven — of all COVID-19 cases are EG.5.

Data from the UK Health Security Agency show EG.5 was first "raised as a signal in monitoring...due to increasing reports internationally, particularly in Asia" on July 3 and declared a variant on July 31 due to "continued growth internationally."

"Based on the rise we've seen in the U.K. and the U.S., plus the trajectory here in Canada, it'll probably be the

main version of the virus very shortly here as well," Razak said.

CAN EG.5 CAUSE MORE SEVERE ILLNESS?

As it stands, there's no evidence to suggest EG.5 can cause more severe illness than previous versions of the virus.

"We're going to keep a close eye on this, but there's nothing to suggest that this has any particular properties that are worrying. It's just continued evolution of the virus, not unexpected," Razak said.

WHAT IS WASTEWATER DATA TELLING US?

Wastewater data in the Greater Toronto Area and Ontario appears to show that while viral activity is still very low, aside from an increase in March and April, it has been trending upwards over the last month.

"We're seeing the rise of our wastewater signal here in Ontario for the first time in about nine months. So it's been declining since December. The same thing with the number of tests that are coming back positive. And so it suggests we're starting to see a little bit of a rise here towards the end of the summer," Razak said.

Adding to the apparent uptick in infections, Razak noted, are the unique aspects of this summer's weather, which has included extreme heat and varying degrees of air quality.

"All of this is as expected. And we may be also feeling a little bit of the acceleration of that effect, because of the unusually warm weather and high levels of air pollution which have made people be more indoors than they otherwise would be this time of year," he said.

Based on what happened in previous years of the COVID-19 pandemic, there will likely be a rise in cases as the cooler weather approaches. According to Razak, however, this fall will be different in fighting the spread of infection and keeping Ontario's health-care system standing due to advancements in immunization.

"As we expect, this fall and winter are going to see the combined effect of the three viruses (COVID-19, RSV, and influenza) once again. And

the good news is that we will have a vaccine available for all three for the first time for susceptible adults," he said.

Last week, Health Canada approved the first RSV vaccine for adults age 60 and over, with a "limited" rollout during this fall's respiratory virus season.

Meanwhile, the newest iteration of the COVID-19 vaccine boosters is targeted at a version of the virus which is "pretty close" to EG.5 and should give adequate protection against illness and further spread, Razak said.

"So really an exciting time for scientific development and to give people a sense that we are progressively putting on more and more protections in place. You just have to go in and get what's

available."

WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

Much like the advice public health officials have issued since the start of the pandemic, masking, staying home if sick, and good ventilation and air quality in indoor spaces remain the best defence against COVID-19.

"I think it's the common sense approaches we talked about, which at this stage of the pandemic I think are really important for us to try and adopt and use as much as possible," Razak said.

"Because, clearly at this phase, we're not going to have a huge overwhelming response like we did earlier in the pandemic, and the virus itself doesn't suggest that we necessarily need it." CTV News



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Popular weight-loss drugs like Ozempic may raise risk of complications under anesthesia

Patients who take blockbuster drugs like Wegovy or Ozempic for weight loss may face life-threatening complications if they need surgery or other procedures that require empty stomachs for anesthesia. This summer's guidance to halt the medication for up to a week may not go far enough, either.

Some anesthesiologists in the U.S. and Canada say they've seen growing numbers of patients on the weight-loss drugs who inhaled food and liquid into their lungs while sedated because their stomachs were still full — even after following standard instructions to stop eating for six to eight hours in advance.

The drugs can slow digestion so much that it puts patients at increased risk for the problem, called pulmonary aspiration, which can cause dangerous lung damage, infections and even death, said Dr. Ion Hobai, an anesthesiologist at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston.

“This is such a serious sort of potential complication that everybody who takes this drug should know about it,” said Hobai, who was among the first to flag the issue.

Nearly 6 million prescriptions for the class of drugs that include Wegovy and Ozempic were written between January and May in the U.S. for people who don't have diabetes, according to Komodo Health, a health care technology company. The drugs induce weight loss by mimicking the actions of hormones, found primarily in the gut, that kick in after people eat. They also target signals between the gut and the brain that control appetite and feelings of fullness, and by slowing how fast the stomach empties.

In June, the American Society of Anesthesiologists issued guidance advising patients to skip daily weight-loss medications on the day of surgery and hold off on weekly injections for a week before any sedation procedures. Dr. Michael Champeau, the group's president, said the action was based on anecdotal reports of problems — including aspiration — from around the country.

It's not clear how many patients taking the anti-obesity drugs may be affected by the issue. But because the consequences can be so dire, Hobai and a group of colleagues decided to speak out. Writing in the Canadian Journal of Anesthesia, they called for the drug to be stopped for even longer — about three weeks before sedation.

That accounts for how long semaglutide, the active medication in Wegovy, remains in the body, said Dr. Philip Jones, a Mayo Clinic anesthesiologist who is also deputy editor-in-chief of the journal.

“When 90% of it is gone, which is after three weeks, hopefully everything should go back to normal,” Jones said.

Champeau and Jones both acknowledged there's not enough evidence to say for certain how long semaglutide should be held to make anesthesia safe. Many patients won't see providers far enough in advance to stop the drug three weeks before procedures, Champeau noted.

Aspiration occurs in one of every 2,000 to 3,000 operations that require sedation, and almost half of patients who aspirate during surgery develop a related lung injury. But case reports show recent patients on semaglutide had problems even when they stopped food as long as 20 hours before their procedures.

“There's nothing that says if you fast twice as long, it will be OK,” Champeau said.

Among the several reports detailing potentially serious problems was one of Hobai's patients, a 42-year-old man in Boston who recently began taking Wegovy, had to be intubated and suffered respiratory failure that put him in intensive care. He aspirated food that remained in his stomach despite fasting for 18 hours.

In Chapel Hill, North Carolina, a 31-year-old woman on a low dose of Ozempic had fasted for 10 hours before a routine endoscopy prior to bariatric

surgery last fall. The procedure had to be stopped because solid food remained in her stomach and she was at high risk for aspiration, the report said.

Since then, doctors have seen dozens of similar cases as use of the weight-loss medication has grown, said Dr. Elisa Lund, an anesthesiologist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine. “It has exponentially increased,” she said.

Hobai is completing a retrospective study of almost 200 patients taking semaglutide. While it'll be published later this year, the work so far appears to confirm a small study from Brazil, he said. In that study, about a quarter of patients taking semaglutide had residual food in their stomachs during procedures requiring sedation — even after stopping the drug for 10 days.

The American Society of Anesthesiologists advises doctors who are in doubt to treat patients who haven't paused the drug as if they have full stomachs, which can mean using different types of sedation protocols or delaying procedures, if possible. Jones

added that research is urgently needed to update guidelines for doctors and patients.

Novo Nordisk, which makes Ozempic, Wegovy and similar drugs, said the firm's clinical trial and post-marketing safety data did not show that the medications led to aspiration. But the drugmaker noted that the medications are known to cause delayed emptying of the stomach and that the labels warn of possible gastrointestinal side effects.

Stopping the medications for three weeks can cause problems, too. Patients with diabetes will need another way to control their blood sugar and those seeking to lose weight may regain some, Hobai said.

Hobai suggests that people using Wegovy and similar drugs tell their doctors before sedation and discuss the risks and benefits.

“If you're taking this drug and you need an operation, you will need to have some extra precautions,” he said.

The Associated Press

Kids overdosing is a public health emergency, Canadian pediatricians say

A new survey says an alarming number of kids age 12 and older have been treated for drug overdoses in Canada.

The Canadian Paediatric Surveillance Program says stimulants are the most commonly reported cause of severe or life-threatening overdoses, followed by sedatives and opioids.

The report says drug overdoses are a public health emergency.

It says fatal overdoses are the leading cause of death in children and teens between 10 and 18 years old in Western Canada.

But also says the problem exists across

the country, with pediatric specialists in all 10 provinces reporting treating overdoses.

B.C. Children's Hospital pediatrician Dr. Matthew Carwana says the issue is even more concerning because the survey didn't capture kids and teens who may have overdosed but didn't seek pediatric care.

In a release Carwana says there's a great need for prevention and intervention strategies for children and youth in the ongoing overdose crisis.

The study included survey responses from more than 1,000 pediatricians across Canada.

The Canadian Press

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Ghana defender Mohammed Salisu eager to get started at AS Monaco

Black Stars defender, Mohammed Salisu has revealed his readiness to begin his career with French Ligue 1 giants AS Monaco.

The 24-year-old missed the opening game against Clermont Foot as he continues his integration into the team.

During his presentation to the press, Salisu disclosed he is working hard to make the team for the next game against Strasbourg.

“We have a really good young squad. I have to focus on the journey but I am working very hard in the gym and in training to be ready and to be back,” he said.

“I often play on the left side and I am comfortable in the



Mohammed Salisu

middle as well. I don't mind playing both.”

Salisu joined the French giants from Southampton in the summer transfer window.

The former Real Valladolid centre-back is expected to play a pivotal role in Monaco's campaign this season.

Ghana government urged to ban sports betting rather than taxing

Dr Cassiel Ato Forson, the Ranking Member on Parliament's Committee on Finance, has strongly advocated for the Ghana government to take the bold step of banning sports betting instead of taxing it.

The government has introduced a 10% tax on sports betting, leading to criticism.

Dr Forson, who is also a leading member of the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC), expressed his concerns, asserting that the prevalence of sports betting is detrimental to the Ghanaian youth, and thus calls for a restriction on the activity rather than introducing taxes to the gaming industry.

In an interview with Joy News, Dr Ato Forson conveyed his thoughts, stating, “Ghana today, we are complaining that this gambling is destroying our youth. I have read a number of articles on this. I would have thought the government will come out with a policy to restrict gambling and to even ban it.”

He emphasised that the responsibility of governing

a nation extends beyond financial considerations and should encompass safeguarding the well-being of society.

Notably, the government's 2021 Budget, as presented to Parliament, revealed a substantial annual revenue loss of more than GHS 300 million due to unaccounted for funds in the gaming industry.

In response, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Interior have been tasked with collaborating to oversee the gaming sector and collaborate with stakeholders to develop a comprehensive policy for enhanced revenue generation from this source.

Dr Ato Forson's proposal suggests a different route for the government to consider – leveraging the Tax Exemption Bill as an alternative to taxing both individuals and businesses.

He remarked, “Exemption Bill alone can rake in 2.5% of GDP. Instead of the government of Ghana going back to push that Exemption Bill; they have decided to tax us because that is easy.”

GFA General Secretary affirms commitment to fairness in upcoming elections

Prosper Harrison Addo, the General Secretary of the Ghana Football Association (GFA), has reassured the football community of the association's unwavering commitment to conducting fair and transparent elections.

The GFA recently unveiled a comprehensive roadmap for the upcoming elections, a move aimed at selecting key officials, including a president, to lead the association for the next four years.

The roadmap outlines that the GFA Presidential position and the Executive Council

positions are slated to be contested on Wednesday, September 27, 2023. Additionally, the election for the Regional Football Association (RFA) positions is scheduled to occur on Friday, September 29, 2023.

In a candid conversation with Citi Sports, Harrison Addo affirmed that the roadmap has received the endorsement of FIFA, the global governing body for football. He emphasized the GFA's steadfast commitment to adhering to the stipulated timetable and ensuring a transparent and equitable

electoral process.

Harrison Addo remarked, “This roadmap that you see out there, FIFA is okay with it. So, we are very compliant and will follow the timetable to ensure that everything is fair.”

Addressing concerns of potential hindrances to the electoral processes, the GFA General Secretary expressed optimism that the association would proactively mitigate any obstacles to uphold the integrity of the elections. “I don't think anything will be done to hinder any of the processes,” he affirmed.

Hungarian Embassy denies Ghanaian athletes visas for World Athletics Championships

The Hungarian Embassy in Accra has refused visas to Ghanaian athletes Sarfo Ansah and Rose Yeboah ahead of the World Athletics Championships in Budapest.

According to a report by Joy Sports, some officials of Team Ghana, including the newly-elected president of the Ghana Athletics Association, Bawa Fuseini, have also been denied visas.

This means Ghana will be missing some of its best athletes when the World Athletics Championships take place from August 19 to August 27, 2023.

Expectations were high for Rose Yeboah, who recently set a new national record of 1.94m on her way to winning gold at the World University Games in China.

She is also currently the African Champion in women's high jump, but she will not be



Ghanaian athletes Sarfo Ansah and Rose Yeboah

able to feature at the upcoming Championships in Budapest due to her visa denial.

Meanwhile, Sarfo Ansah was also set to join Ghana's 4x100m relay team after replacing Benjamin Azamati, who pulled out of the competition due to an injury.

Last week, Azamati withdrew from the upcoming Championships, citing a groin injury which had been exacerbated by his travelling

between continents and still actively partaking in competitions.

A statement from the 25-year-old said it was best to withdraw due to his inability to recover in time and based on medical advice.

Meanwhile, the rest of Ghana's contingent has been camping in France and is expected to touch down in Hungary on Friday for the Championships.

EMMANUEL AYAMGAW

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GROUNDBREAKING African-Canadian Animated Series “The Mansa Family Show” Captivates Global Audiences

By Joe Kingsley Ayiah, Toronto

In a groundbreaking moment for representation in the animation industry, the highly anticipated African-Canadian animated series, “The Mansa Family Show,” has taken the fans by storm. Created by the talented visionary Gabe Odartei and his video and animation production company MAKU PRODUCTIONS, the show has quickly gained popularity, drawing audiences from diverse backgrounds who are captivated by its unique storytelling and celebration of African culture.

Through its clever storytelling and lighthearted humor, The Mansa Family Show tackles relevant social issues and stereotypes with a comedic twist. It skillfully employs satire to highlight the quirks, idiosyncrasies, and contradictions within Canadian culture and society. The show cleverly

creating the series, Odartei said, “Growing up, I never saw animated shows that truly represented my background and the diverse community around me. I wanted to change that and create a show that not only African-Canadians but people from all walks of life could connect with and enjoy. It’s essential to showcase the beauty of diversity and embrace our cultural roots through storytelling.”

The animation style of “The Mansa Family Show” is visually stunning, combining traditional animation techniques with modern advancements, resulting in a feast for the eyes. The attention to detail in capturing the essence of African culture, from the characters’ attire to the vibrant landscapes, has garnered praise from both critics and audiences alike.



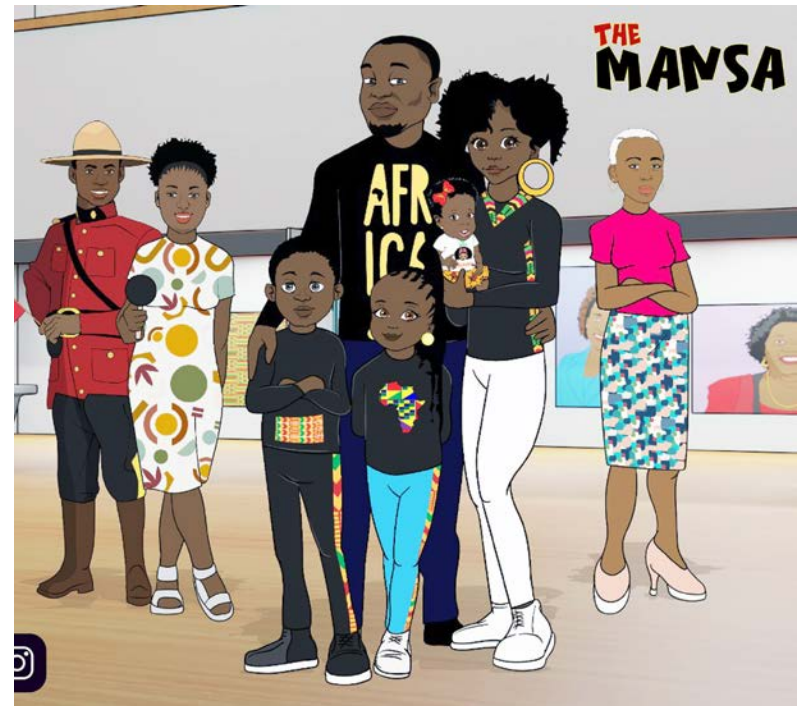
mocks various aspects of Canadian life, including politics, multiculturalism, everyday interactions, and even Canadian icons and traditions.

Gabe Odartei is the mastermind behind this exceptional production. He is also a community leader who has worked on several notable projects in the past. However, “The Mansa Family Show” holds a special place in his heart as it reflects his personal experiences and draws inspiration from his own multicultural background.

Speaking about his motivation for

Since its release in 2021, Gabe and the show writer MK Bonsu, along with their team of experienced as well as some ‘up and coming’ voice actors have managed to create 7 pilot episodes which are available for viewing on YouTube and other streaming platforms such as AukissTV

As the series gains momentum, fans eagerly anticipate more episodes, where the Mansa family’s adventures and life lessons will continue to unfold. Furthermore, discussions are underway regarding potential



collaborations and expansions of the show’s universe through merchandise and spin-off projects.

“The Mansa Family Show“ has truly marked a significant milestone in the Canadian animation industry, paving the way for authentic storytelling and representation of diverse cultures.

Gabe Odartei’s passion for storytelling and commitment to promoting cultural understanding through animation is a testament to the power of art in uniting people from all corners of the world. With this trailblazing series, the animation landscape has been forever changed for the better, promising a more inclusive and exciting future for the industry.

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