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 Pg. 3

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Season's Greetings



Toronto's Ghanaian Presbyterian Church helps feed the homeless

By Ebenezer Amankwah, Toronto, ON

See story on pg. 39



Elder Mavis Addo, leader of the delegation presenting the items to Reverend Dale Henry, the Spiritual Coordinator of the Evangel Hall

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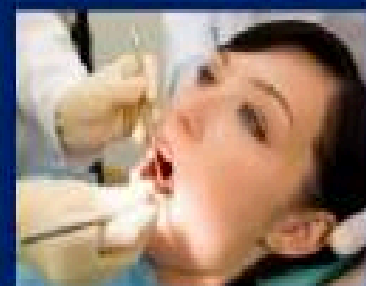
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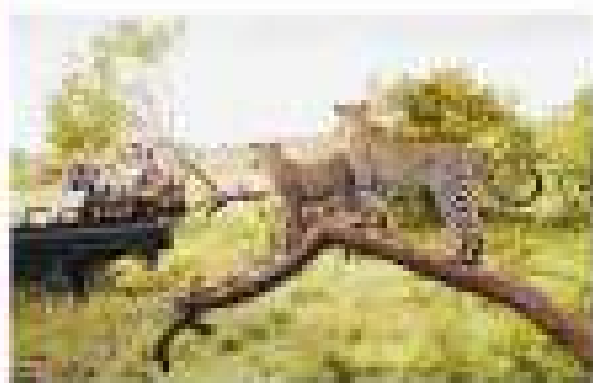
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Ottawa launches \$13B dental-care program with kids and seniors first up for coverage

Applications for seniors aged 87 and over will open later this month before eligibility expands in new year

next year for people who meet a certain income threshold.

Federal Health Minister Mark Holland says a \$13-billion dental-care plan will significantly improve access for millions of Canadians who don't have access to care through workplace insurance plans.

Ottawa will cover kids under 18 and some seniors first before expanding the program to all eligible low- and middle-income Canadians in 2025.

The federal government unveiled its new dental-care plan on Monday — a \$13-billion insurance program that will start covering routine dentistry costs

Applications for seniors aged 87 and over will open later this month. Other age groups will be able to apply in the new year.

The staggered application process is designed to make the rollout as smooth as possible. The government says it expects millions of people to avail themselves of this new component of Canada's social safety net.

X-rays, fillings, root canal treatments and complete and partial removable dentures.

Coverage will be phased in over time, but some eligible participants will start to receive benefits as early as May 2024. Costs incurred before the relevant start date will not be covered.

Families with incomes between \$70,000 and \$79,999 will face a 40 per cent co-pay, and for those in the \$80,000 to \$89,999 income bracket, the co-pay jumps to 60 per cent. The federal plan will cover the rest of the costs incurred.

This insurance-based program replaces the interim program that has been sending cheques directly to families with kids under 12 for the last two years.

Health Minister Mark Holland described the government's plan as "transformative" because it will provide coverage to the nearly nine million Canadians who do not already have access to dental insurance.

To be eligible for the program, a person must have a household income below \$90,000 and no access to an existing private insurance plan. The person must also have filed a tax return so the government can verify income.

Federal Health Minister Mark Holland says a \$13-billion dental-care plan will significantly improve access for millions of Canadians who don't have access to care through workplace insurance plans.

The plan is most generous for families that have household incomes below \$70,000. They face no co-pays to a participating dentist, hygienist or denturist, and Ottawa will pick up the tab for covered services like cleaning, polishing, examinations,

"We know we can have the best health system in the world and today is a monumental step in that direction," Holland said.

cont'd on pg. 7


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EDITORIAL**We are grateful**

The year 2023 is gradually coming to an end, giving way to the year 2024 in a few days' time. As we take stock of the passing year our minds are clouded with the many deaths of both young and old people in our Ghanaian community across Canada this year. Such deaths could not be attributed to gun violence as we saw some few years back among our Ghanaian youth population in Canada.

Death is a natural Phenomenon and as our adult population in our community is growing there is the need for all especially our seniors to take good care of their health as individuals.

Back home in Ghana the year saw growing number of Economic problems with a very gloomy situation, but we hope to count on the government, the political, parties, civil servants and as well as every Ghanaian to join hands in turning the dire situation into joy and prosperous for our motherland in the years to come.

Ghana the heartening "Galamsey" problems which has destroyed most of our rivers was tackled by the the government to save our rivers but the battle is not ended yet .We therefore urge the Government to take priority over the problem in the coming year.

At the Ghanaian News, we are counting the blessings God has poured on our community during the year in spite of the hardships we have had to go through. We are therefore grateful to God for His provisions throughout the year and also, wish to extend our sincere gratitude to all our community members who have continued to support The Ghanaian News in various undertakings to bring improvement to our community here in Canada. We applaud the Ghanaian-Canadian Association of Ontario (GCAO) in the launching of Programs in the community that has sustained most of our community members. We thank all our community members, our well wishers and supporters in mainstream Canadian society for supporting our efforts throughout the year. We are also proud of this year's 30 award recipients honored at our 20th Annual Ghanaian-Canadian Achievement Awards 2023

As we say goodbye to the year 2023 and welcome a new one, 2024, we encourage all our community members to unite their efforts and actively participate in every event in our community that are aimed at making us a better community. Also we are appealing to all our community members to support our community businesses. Let us shun apathy and embrace engagement to move our community forward.

We are grateful to God, our customers, sponsors and well wishers.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

Toronto council approves renaming Yonge-Dundas Square, Dundas subway stations

Toronto's City Council has approved renaming Yonge-Dundas Square to "Sankofa Square," as well as both Dundas subway stations.

Council voted 17-4 in favour of the recommendation to rename Dundas Station and Dundas West Station. On the suggestion to rename Yonge-Dundas Square to Sankofa Square, councillors voted 19-2 in favour.

Sankofa derives from Ghana and refers "to the act of reflecting on and reclaiming teachings from the past which enables us to move forward together" and, in simpler terms, "to go back and get it."

"This new name reflects the City's commitment to taking steps to right wrongs, confront anti-Black racism and build a more inclusive Toronto for all," a city spokesperson wrote in a news release.

Toronto's Yonge-Dundas Square Board will report to City Council on details related to adopting the new name by the end of Q2 2024.

The city confirmed that Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) will get involved with the TTC to rename Dundas Station "TMU Station" and will receive advice from the Recognition Review Community Advisory Committee to rename Dundas West Station.

City councillors also voted to ensure the costs to rename both subway stations won't impact the TTC's budget. A recommendation by City Council that the Library Board rename Jane Dundas Library was also approved in a 19-2 vote.

City Council approved a motion that would see the city undertake a public education campaign, which will launch in 2024 and extend into 2025, that will focus on "acknowledging the impact of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and slavery."

Officials will consider the next steps to rename these assets in 2024.

"The City of Toronto remains committed to confronting anti-Black racism, advancing truth, reconciliation and justice, and building a more inclusive and equitable city," said Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow.

"The City of Toronto is committed to acknowledging the impact of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and slavery while focusing on mitigating costs and impacts on residents and businesses. Adopting the name Sankofa Square recognizes the need to reflect on and reclaim teachings from the past and enables us to move forward together."

Renaming of Dundas Street at forefront of councillors' minds in final 2023 meeting

With City Council facing a \$1.5 billion hole and a \$46.5 billion budget deficit over the next decade, some are questioning if the cost is worth making the change.

The cost to rename the thoroughfare has increased, according to a report to be presented by the city manager. The original price tag was set at \$8.6 million. It is now estimated to be as high as \$12.7 million.

Coun. Chris Moise, chair of the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee, said there are no plans to rename the street immediately, referring to it as "a long-term approach."

City Council initially voted to rename the 23-kilometre east-west route and other city-owned assets bearing the Dundas name due to its namesake's alleged role in delaying the abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

After consultation with academic experts, the city found his actions contributed to the perpetuation of slavery.

Henry Dundas never set foot in Toronto. He was an active British politician from the 1770s to the early 1800s when parliament was debating slavery abolition motions. **CityNews**

**WISHING YOU ALL
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NEW YEAR**

Canada's new dental care plan could impact nearly 9 million Canadians — are you one of them?

In its current form, plan is expected to cost the federal treasury about \$4.4B a year. The federal government unveiled details about its highly anticipated Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP) earlier on Monday.

The CDCP is a \$13-billion insurance program that will start covering most basic dentistry costs next year for uninsured Canadians with a household income under \$90,000.

That's about nine million Canadians, according to the federal government. In its current form, the plan is expected to cost the federal treasury about \$4.4 billion per year.

Applications will first open to eligible seniors aged 87 and older. Applications for other age groups will then be phased in with a staggered approach, with the process opening up to all eligible applicants aged 18 and above sometime in 2025.

According to NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, his party "forced" Ottawa to enact the program as a condition of the confidence-and-supply agreement that could keep the Liberals in power until 2025.

"People are living with pain, people are worried about the cost if they do have to go to the dentist," he told a news conference in Toronto on Monday.

CBC News has been fielding questions about the CDCP since the announcement. Here are some of those questions answered.

Who pays for what under the CDCP?

The CDCP will help cover the cost of various oral health-care services, with the focus on "those deemed medically necessary by an oral health-care professional," an information officer with the general information line for the government of Canada told CBC News.

Services covered under the Canadian Dental Care Plan include:

- Preventive services, including scaling (cleaning), polishing, sealants and fluoride.
- Diagnostic services, including examinations and X-rays.
- Restorative services, including fillings, crowns and dentures.
- Endodontic services, including root canal treatments.
- Prosthodontic services, including complete and partial removable dentures.
- Periodontal services, including deep scaling.
- Oral surgery services, including extractions.

Some of these services will be available in the fall of 2024. Other services such as teeth whitening, implants and mouth guards will not be covered under the plan. **federal government's new dental care program**

CBC's Evan Dyer breaks down what to expect when the government's new dental care program rolls out in 2024, how applications will work, how much coverage people can expect to see and potential stumbling blocks.

Applicants with household incomes below \$70,000 will not have to pay participating dentists, hygienists or denturists — Ottawa will pick up the tab for covered services.

Families with incomes between \$70,000 and \$79,999 will see 60 per cent of service fees covered by the government. The other 40 per cent they will have to cover out of pocket in what's known as a co-pay.

For those in the \$80,000 to \$89,999 income bracket, the co-pay jumps to 60 per cent, with the federal plan covering the rest of the costs.

Who is eligible?

To qualify for the CDCP, applicants must have an annual adjusted family net income under \$90,000 and cannot have access to other dental insurance. All eligible applicants will receive a letter inviting them to apply, according to the government's announcement.

Applicants must be a Canadian resident for tax purposes, and an income tax return from the previous year must have been filed prior to applying for the CDCP.

The information officer said applicants will be reassessed every year to confirm they still meet eligibility requirements, but those reassessment details will be provided at a later date.

cont'd on pg. 18

Ottawa launches \$13B dental-care program with kids and seniors first up for coverage

cont'd from pg. 3

"It's going to make life better for eligible Canadian residents who won't have to choose between paying their bills and getting the help they absolutely need," he said.

Citizens' Services Minister Terry Beech said Canadians do not need to do anything at this stage — the federal government will reach out to eligible people by mail to invite them to apply for the benefit when it's their turn.

The first letters will go out to invite seniors 70 and up to apply for the plan — those seniors will apply over the phone.

Here's when seniors can expect to receive those letters:

- Seniors aged 87 and above starting in December 2023
- Seniors aged 77 to 86 starting in January 2024
- Seniors aged 72 to 76 starting in February 2024
- Seniors aged 70 to 71 starting in March 2024

Then, in May 2024, the application process will switch from the telephone to online as people aged 65 and older become eligible to apply.

People with valid disability tax credit certificates and children under 18 will be able to apply starting in June 2024.

Filling gaps in system

In a background briefing with reporters, senior servants responsible for the program stressed that this federal initiative is meant to "fill the gaps" in the system and not replace existing provincial and territorial programs that already cover some oral health services.

But the federal government has received no assurances from the premiers that they will keep their programs operational once the national program rolls out.

A decision to dismantle those plans would push up the price tag of the dental care plan — in its current form, it is slated to cost the federal treasury about \$4.4 billion a year.

Dedicated call centre for queries

The program will be administered by insurance giant Sun Life and dentists will directly submit claims to that company for reimbursement. If there's a co-pay, insured people will pay that cost out of pocket to the provider.

While the program will be run by a third party, the government said people can still work with Service Canada agents to deal with any issues that arise, including eligibility or coverage disputes. There will be a dedicated call centre to deal with dental services.

The government is hopeful that oral health professionals will enrol in the program and accept the Canadian dental-care insurance plan as payment.

Officials said the government will launch an education campaign to brief dentists and the organizations that represent them in the new year on how they can sign up to provide covered care.

There will be a set "fee schedule" for services — but the costs reimbursed by Ottawa will vary from province to province.

The government said the fees paid are "relatively generous compared to other public plans across the country," which should provide an incentive for providers to participate. **CBC News**

Grocers' code of conduct won't work unless all companies sign on, Metro CEO tells MPs

Committee hearing comes as new research forecasts record profit of \$6B for grocery sector

All major industry players need to sign on to the grocery code of conduct in order for it to be successful, said Metro Inc. president and CEO Eric La Flèche.

La Flèche told MPs Monday at a House of Commons agriculture committee meeting on stabilizing food prices that Metro is willing to sign the code of conduct as it's currently drafted. Last week, executives from Walmart Canada and Loblaw Companies Ltd. told the committee that they can't sign the code in its current form because they're concerned it will raise prices for consumers.

On Thursday, federal Agriculture Minister Lawrence MacAulay and Quebec Agriculture Minister André Lamontagne called on all the major grocers to sign the code.

New research released Monday by the Centre for Future Work found that profits in the Canadian grocery

sector will likely exceed \$6 billion this year, setting a new record. The report by the progressive research institute found that food retailers are now earning more than twice as much profit as they did pre-pandemic.

Citing Statistics Canada data, the report said the net income margin on food and beverage retailing has consistently exceeded three per cent of total revenues since mid-2021 — more than double the average margin between 2015 and 2019.

Canada's Food Price Report predicts that overall food prices will go up in 2024, but some products could get cheaper as many industry challenges have eased.

Prices for many grocery items have continued to rise month after month and, on balance, are 20 per cent above levels reported two years earlier, according to [Statistics Canada data](#).

The data shows retailers took advantage of the pandemic and its

aftermath to increase their profits, the Centre for Future Work's director, economist Jim Stanford, argued in a news release.

"An industry can't double its profits, if it is merely passing on higher expenses," he said.

Big grocers under scrutiny

The major grocers have been under pressure from the government to enact plans that will help stabilize food prices for Canadians. Earlier this fall, the heads of the five biggest grocery companies were summoned by the government to present their plans.

In previous appearances before the committee, the grocers pushed back against the idea they have unduly profited from inflation.

Meanwhile, they have also faced pressure to sign on to a grocery code of conduct that's nearing completion, which proponents say will help level the playing field between suppliers and large retailers.

On Thursday, MacAulay said he and his provincial counterparts, along with federal Industry Minister François-Philippe Champagne, will be meeting to discuss options for both provincial and federal governments if the major grocers don't sign the code.

Loblaw chairman Galen Weston told MPs last week that the company is concerned certain provisions in the code will raise grocery prices for Canadians as it gives too much negotiating power to large multinational manufacturers.

He said the grocer will sign the code, but not in its current form.

Walmart Canada CEO Gonzalo Gebara told MPs the company is "not in a position at this time to commit" to the code. He said the current version includes provisions that "create bureaucracy and cost, cost that will inevitably end up on shelf prices."

The Canadian Press

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Ottawa backs listing Black and LGBTQ workers under Canada’s workplace equity laws: source

Labour minister will present findings of a task force review of the workplace law

The federal government says it supports listing Black and LGBTQ people among groups facing systemic workplace barriers under the Employment Equity Act, CBC News has learned.

The Liberal government is backing the legislative change after a task force report recommended the move.

A source told CBC News earlier on Monday that Ottawa “broadly supports” that recommendation and others from a task force that reviewed the legislation. The government made an initial commitment Monday to modernize the act, the source said.

Labour Minister Seamus O’Regan and the task force chair, McGill University law professor Adelle Blackett, will present the committee’s findings outside the House of Commons foyer on Monday.

The stated purpose of the 1986 Employment Equity Act is to knock down employment barriers marginalized communities face. It identifies four groups that face additional barriers in the workplace: women, Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities and members of visible minorities.

Decades after the law’s passage, it is “startling to see how unrepresentative

some employment remains across Canada,” the report states.**2 months ago****Duration:0:32**

Michaëlle Jean shares her thoughts on why slavery in Canada is often overlooked in new CBC documentary series Black Life: Untold Stories.

The task force recommends that Black workers comprise a separate group under the Employment Equity Act, instead of falling under the label of “visible minority.” Statistics Canada says 1.5 million people in Canada reported being Black in 2021. The Black population accounts for 16 per cent of the racialized population and 4.3 per cent of the overall population.

“Many Canadians may only recently have learned that slavery existed in Canada,” reads a section of the task force’s report, obtained by CBC News before its release. “The case for a distinct Employment Equity Act category specifically for people of African descent is rooted in part in the legacies of slavery.”

“The history of segregation — in service provision, housing, schooling and employment — is also not well known in Canada.”

The task force cites Census Canada data which shows that Black workers tend to be overqualified for their jobs, work in low-level occupations and earn less money compared to non-racialized Canadians of the third generation or later.

The task force also recommended that LGBTQ workers comprise a new group under the law. One million people in Canada identify as LGBTQ and they account for four per cent of the total population.

A ‘disturbingly recent history’ of persecution

The task force report says LGBTQ workers have endured a “disturbingly recent history” of persecution. They were demoted or forced to resign for engaging in same-sex relationships, says the report.

“The Government of Canada has acknowledged and apologized for the fact that throughout the Cold War Era, from the 1950s through to the early 1990s in Canada, federal government employees faced a systematic campaign literally to purge them from the federal public service,” the report says.

The task force also is proposing replacing the terms “Aboriginal Peoples” and “members of visible minorities” with “Indigenous Peoples” and “racialized people” in the legislation.

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FOCUS

My Christmas Greetings to All My Students

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

As we bid farewell to this year, I am filled with gratitude reflecting on my last year as a teacher at Brookview Middle School at the Jane/Finch area in Toronto

Getting to know the Brookview community has been an incredible journey, and each day, I am amazed by the collective brilliance and passion that defines us. Together, we've achieved remarkable milestones, and our impact resonates not only within our walls but reverberates throughout the multicultural city of the Greater Toronto Area.

The dedication and contributions of each of us have forged a community that is making a difference beyond measure. I am thrilled to be part of this journey with you, and I eagerly anticipate the possibilities that lie ahead.

Our recent school gatherings during end of year festivities stand out as special moments that brought together students, staff, faculty, and friends, and our community wishing tree provided a



unique and heartwarming opportunity for all to share their hopes for the new year.

Christmas is here again! Though we welcome the traditions and sentiments of peace and goodwill towards all that Christmas brings with its season, the love of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, should make us live in peace with all people at all times. Spending money on or showering gifts on the poor only during Christmas is not Christ-like! Whatever the season brings in its trail the biggest lesson therein is that of

GIVING. Please, carefully answer the following questions as we welcome the Yuletide: How important is giving? What does it seek to accomplish among humankind?

It is the lesson of giving as taught in the story of the 'Giving Tree' that we all have to learn. The habit of giving freely without expecting anything in return must be cultivated by all.

Giving brings relief if not directly to you then to someone around you.

Note that giving is not only limited to the Christmas season. Count your blessings and share your blessings all the time!

Thank you for your warmth, commitment, and the inspiring work you do. I wish you all the best this holiday season, and love and peace in 2024 and beyond

Yours truly,
Teacher Eyiah

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Here's a list of policies and cuts the Doug Ford government has reversed

Ontario Premier Doug Ford's government announced plans Wednesday to reverse an earlier move to dissolve the upper-tier municipality of Peel Region, which would have left Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon standing on their own. It is the latest in a long series of policy backtracks for Ford. Here is a partial list of those reversals:

Dissolution of Peel: Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Paul Calandra announced he will introduce legislation to undo a law the government passed in June to dissolve the region in 2025. As part of the same announcement, Calandra said he is revoking some Minister's Zoning Orders and cancelling municipal audits - with the first phase already largely complete - that were started to determine the financial impacts of a provincial law on city coffers.

Official plans: Earlier this fall, Calandra reversed course on changes to some municipal official plans and urban and regional boundary expansions. Many regions and municipalities had spoken out over the changes, saying the extra land wasn't needed to build more housing.

Greenbelt: The largest of the government's policy reversals this year was a backtrack of its decision to open

up parcels of the protected Greenbelt lands for housing development. Ford apologized for removing the lands in the first place, after both the auditor general and integrity commissioner found the process unfairly favoured certain developers. The RCMP is now investigating. Ford's government passed a law earlier this month to cement his reversal and enshrine Greenbelt protections in law.

Notwithstanding clause: The government passed then later repealed a law in 2022 that imposed a contract on education workers and banned them from striking, using the notwithstanding clause to guard against constitutional challenges. The province passed the law in a bid to prevent 55,000 school support workers from the Canadian Union of Public Employees from striking, but they walked off the job anyway and Ford offered to withdraw the legislation if they returned to work.

Licence plates: Ford introduced new, blue licence plates as part of the 2019 budget, but the government quickly scrapped the rollout after a police officer in Kingston noted the plates were barely visible at night. The government is no longer issuing those plates, but as of last year there were still 170,000 in circulation and the province has not yet articulated a plan

to get them off the roads.

Autism: In February of 2019, the government announced a revamp of the Ontario Autism Program. It was framed as a way to clear a massive waiting list for services, but would have given families a relatively small amount of money based on their income, not the needs of their child. It also would have effectively cut off thousands of kids currently in government-funded therapy. After a loud and sustained outcry, the government announced a reversal, saying it was going back to the drawing board on a needs-based program and would double the current budget. That new program is still subject to many issues in 2023.

Public health: Mayors across the province banded together to fight retroactive cuts to public health funding in 2019, and the government ultimately relented. The cuts, in the form of a new cost-sharing arrangement, were to mostly go ahead in 2020, but mid-year cuts that would have taken effect after municipalities had already passed their budgets were cancelled. The cuts were paused due to the onset of the pandemic and it wasn't until 2023 that the government permanently reversed them.

E-learning and class sizes: The

government angered teachers in the spring of 2019 when it announced it was increasing average high school class sizes from 22 to 28, and mandating that students take four online courses to graduate. In the context of difficult negotiations with the education unions, the education minister offered to walk that class size target back to 25, and announced that students would instead be required to take two online courses to graduate.

French university: As part of the government's efforts to balance the books, it announced in 2018 that it was cancelling plans for a French-language university. The move sparked an outcry among Franco-Ontarians and prompted a Progressive Conservative caucus member to quit. Ontario and the federal government later announced they had reached an agreement on jointly funding a French-language university.

Legal aid: The 2019 provincial budget cut that year's funding for Legal Aid Ontario by \$133 million - or 30 per cent - and planned \$31 million in further cuts over the next two years. Eight months later, the government announced it was cancelling those future cuts.

The Canadian Press

A Gargantuan Task! - The Office of the Special Prosecutor Conundrum

By Edmund Agbeko, Toronto, ON



Amy writing mentor, Africanus Owusu-Ansah has done a beautiful dissection of the happenings at the Office of the Special Prosecutor and as usual, he was on point with his brilliant analysis. If the people are led by laws, and uniformity among them is sought by punishments, they will try to escape punishment and have no sense of shame. If they are led by virtue, and uniformity sought among them through the practice of ritual propriety, they will possess a sense of shame and come to you of their own accord.

You may have seen the three wise monkeys by the Chinese Confucius under whom is written, “see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil” or you may give the monkeys Japanese names: Mizaru, Kika-zaru, Iwa-zaru (Not seeing, not hearing, not speaking). Perhaps there was a fourth monkey: Do no evil. And Archer Taylor noticed a “ballade” of 1392 with the motto, “Pour vivre en paix il faut etre aveugle, sourd et muet” (To live in peace one must be blind, deaf and dumb). Surely, Proverbs 17:27 admonishes us, “He that hath knowledge, spareth his words.”

Or you may have watched the film, ‘No one gets out alive’ by Adam Nevill, in which Stephanie, an undocumented immigrant looking for a cheap place to rent comes upon 82 Edgehill Road, Cleveland and gets entrapped by circumstances. You may detest ‘Dracula’ the magnum opus of the Irish author, Bram Stoker, in which Dracula is shown as a vampire who enjoys human blood. And, gee, you may get scared by “Frankenstein” authored by Mary Shelling.

Go back to the basics: the Office of the Special Prosecutor Act, 2017 (Act 959), the name that pops up is Martin Amidu who because on his own he fought corruption, was appointed in January 2018, and the President Nana Addo touted the ‘gargantuan’ man’s anti-corruption fight as the reason for this appointment. Martin Alamisi Amidu v The Attorney-General Waterville Holdings (Woyome) – the high-profile case on corruption.

But in November 2020, Amidu sent a letter of resignation to the President, citing the ‘meddling’ of the President in his investigations that “convinces me beyond every reasonable doubt that you had laboured under the mistaken belief that I could hold the Office of Special Prosecutor as a ‘poodle’, and that I was resigning because of the ‘lack of respect of the independence of my office’. That broke the camel’s back; the reaction from the Presidency in respect to the analysis of the risk of corruption assessment of the Agyapa Royalties Limited transaction.

Here was a man in whom the president had expressed belief in his integrity, competence, courage, independence of character and public spiritedness. The President said, “I, thus, have the honour to submit to Parliament when it reconvenes, the name of Martin Alamisi Burnes Kaiser Amidu, for its approval for appointment as Special Prosecutor. It is my hope and expectation that the praiseworthy speed and dispatch with which Parliament acted on my nominees for ministerial appointment last year, will characterise its handling of this nomination to enable Mr. Amidu, as soon as possible, enter into office to begin the important work that awaits him.”

Then, Amidu in a 27-page rebuttal to allegations which were leveled against him by the Presidency following his resignation as Special Prosecutor charged, “I resigned my position as the Special Prosecutor because of the traumatic experience I suffered from the reaction of the President who breached his Presidential oath by unlawfully obstructing me from taking any further steps on the Agyapa Royalties Transactions from October 20, 2020 to November 1, 2020.

“When I met the President on October 23, 2020, I received the shock of my life when he demanded that I take no further action on the Agyapa transaction anti-corruption assessment report. That was when it was divinely revealed to me that the President whom I trusted so much for integrity only looked like the innocent flower of anti-corruption but he was really the mother corruption serpent under the innocent looking flower.”

Then, Kissi Agyebeng stepped into the shoes of Martin Amidu. Kwame Tetteh, our law lecturer had taught us that when one’s case is thrown out by the trial court, he could go on appeal, to the Court of Appeal, then to the Supreme Court, and even at the Supreme Court, one could apply for a review. Rule eight of the Court of Appeal Rules states (1) Any appeal to the court shall be by way of rehearing, and shall be brought by a notice referred to in these rules as ‘the notice of appeal’.

But Kissi Agyebeng may have had good reason for resorting to a press conference. He was upbeat about the ‘dismissive’ attitude of some judges. “Indeed, I have had several calls from well-meaning lawyers admonishing me that they have heard talk that our friends who have been elevated to the Bench and presiding over cases in court do not take very kindly to criticism... and that if the office persists in the media releases, the judges will gang up against the office and throw out all our cases,” he stated.

Four cases featured in the press conference: Charles Bissie, former presidential staffer; Cecilia Dapaah, former Sanitation Minister; Col. Kwadwo Damoah, former Commissioner of Customs Division of the Ghana Revenue Authority; and the late Kwadwo Owusu-Afriyie a.k.a. Sir John.

For Charles Bissie, the court’s grant of injunction against his arrest meant suspects could now run to court to

cont’d on pg. 12

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IMMIGRATION AND SOCIAL ISSUES

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

Some Effective Obstacles to Acquisition of Canadian Citizenship

Canadian citizenship is obtained either by birth or by naturalization pursuant to the Citizenship Act. However, there are a few exceptions one of which is an application for “Proof of Citizenship” which is available for a person born outside Canada at a time, at least, one of the parents was a citizen of Canada. That is citizenship by descent.



To apply for citizenship, the applicant must be 18 years old. However, applications can be submitted for children under 18 years by their parent, adoptive parent or legal guardian when the child is a permanent resident and one parent or the adoptive parent is a Canadian citizen or is applying to become a citizen at the same time.

To qualify for citizenship application, the applicant must not be under review for immigration or fraud reasons; must not be under a removal order; and must have fulfilled any condition related to his or her permanent resident status. It should however be noted that one does not necessarily need a valid permanent resident card to apply for citizenship.

There is a requirement that citizenship applicants between the age of 18 and 54 years must be able to communicate in either English or French. The applicant needs to meet the Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) Level 4 or higher. Citizenship Canada however accepts various certificates, diplomas and tests as proof of one’s language skills. Also, applicants between the ages of 18 and 54 must have adequate knowledge of

Canada. For that matter applicants will be required to answer questions related to the rights and responsibilities of Canadians and Canada’s history, geography, economy, government, laws and symbols.

An adult applicant must be physically present in Canada for at least 1095 days (3 years) and are also required to file taxes in Canada for at least 3 years during the five years immediately preceding the date of the application. In the course of calculating the days, the time an applicant spent as a non-permanent resident could be counted. Each day the applicant spends as a temporary resident or protected person can count as a half-day towards physical presence up to a maximum of 365 days. The time spent outside Canada by a crown servant or a family member of a crown servant can also be included.

Criminality is an obstacle to acquisition of citizenship. Any person who has been convicted of an indictable offence in Canada or an offence under the Citizenship Act, or who has been convicted of an offence outside Canada that is equivalent to an indictable offence in Canada during the four years immediately preceding the application, is prohibited from applying for Canadian citizenship.

Applicants on parole or on probation or serving a term of imprisonment in Canada or outside Canada are ineligible to apply for citizenship. Persons charged with, on trial for, or involved in an appeal for an offence under the Citizenship Act, or an indictable offence in or outside Canada are also ineligible to apply for citizenship. Also on the excluded list are persons being investigated for, charged with, on trial for, or involved in an appeal for or have been convicted of, a war crime or a crime against humanity.

Persons who have been convicted of terrorism, high treason, treason, or spying offences while they were permanent residents or those who have served as members of an armed force of a country or organized armed group and that country or group engaged in armed conflict with Canada while they were permanent residents, are barred from applying for citizenship. Also on the list of prohibitions are persons who have had their citizenship applications refused for misrepresentation in the past five years and those who have had

their citizenship revoked because of fraud in the past ten years.

A permanent resident who is a minor (under the age of 18) and has a Canadian parent or a parent who is applying for citizenship at the same time, is excluded from the residency requirement and income tax filings. That privilege is not given to a permanent resident who is a minor but does not have a Canadian parent or a parent who is applying for citizenship at the same time. Notwithstanding the above differential treatment of the two categories of minor, all minors are not supposed to meet language and knowledge requirements for citizenship and all minors 14 years and above are required to take the Oath of Citizenship and sign their application forms.

The requirements above are not exhaustive. The foregoing is just an overview of the current requirements for citizenship application. The criteria for Canadian citizenship are changing very fast. Applicants are therefore advised to seek proper advice regarding their eligibility before completing and submitting their applications for Canadian citizenship.

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

A Gargantuan Task! - The Office of the Special Prosecutor Conundrum

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avoid arrest. The refusal of the court to confirm the seizure of Cecilia Dapaah’s property had the capability to scuttle the OSP’s investigation, and had the potential of ‘erecting a barrier preventing the OSP from investigating the matter’.

In the Damoah case, the OSP stated that the decision by the court to prohibit the OSP from further investigating the Customs officials indicated that the court had granted the person’s immunity from investigations and prosecution, and this position was alien to the laws of Ghana.

In Sir John’s case, the OSP said it was unfortunate the court did not grant the freezing order on Sir John’s property because he had died. His argument was that that could pave the way for persons to amass wealth corruptly and pass some corruptly-acquired property to some persons.

Meanwhile, the OSP, by the Office of Prosecutor Act 2017 (Act 959) has a wide mandate to investigate and prosecute cases of alleged corruption under the Public Procurement Act 2003 Act 663, and also other corruption-

related offences implicating public officers, political office holders and their accomplices under the Criminal Offences Act 1960 (Act 29). Besides, the office is mandated to trace, recover and manage the proceeds of corruption. Section 2 of the Act states: The object of the office is to (a) investigate and prosecute specific cases of alleged or suspected corruption and corruption-related offences (b) recover the proceeds of corruption and corruption-related offences, and (c) take steps to prevent corruption.

The OSP intimates, “... it seems to us that the flagship public agency created by law to fight corruption should receive better regard, and consideration by the courts and not the developing trend of dismissiveness and regression without regard to its governing enactments, and certainly not the reaction of non-existent hurdles in its work and operations.”

The song: “Akwanoma, mede me bere abo afodee, meye dee metumi, me mmere so a na meko” was well-chosen. Fighting corruption in a corruption-infested country like Ghana? A gargantuan task!

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Integrity of immigration system at risk as international student numbers balloon, minister says

Marc Miller says Canada will host around 900,000 international students this year



Immigration Minister Marc Miller says the concern around the skyrocketing number of international students entering Canada is not just about housing, but Canadians' confidence in the "integrity" of the immigration system itself.

Canada is on track to host around 900,000 international students this year, Miller said in an interview that aired Saturday on CBC's *The House*. That's more than at any point in Canada's history and roughly triple the number of students who entered the country a decade ago.

ballooned in the past couple of years."

Miller's 900,000 figure represents the total number of student visas in Canada, a number that has increased because Canada has welcomed more international students in recent years.

That rapidly increasing number of international students gained increased attention this week when the country's new housing minister, Sean Fraser, floated the idea of a possible cap on the number of students Canada brings in.

There are currently more than 807,000 international students who have study permits in Canada across all levels of education. That's up from about 300,000 in 2013.

Fraser framed a cap on international students as "one of the options that we ought to consider" during a cabinet retreat earlier this week in Prince Edward Island.

Miller said there were a number of "illegitimate actors" who were trying to exploit the system, which was eventually having a negative effect on people trying to come to Canada for legitimate reasons. Miller referred to one high-profile instance last month of an international student found sleeping under a bridge.

Miller, who took over from Fraser at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, told guest host Evan Dyer that the rising number of students was a concern for housing, though he says it is important not to overstate that challenge.

He said he would not get involved with "naming and shaming," but said his focus was on some private colleges. Work would need to be done to tighten up the system, he said, to make sure institutions actually had space and suitable housing for people who are being admitted. Miller also said closer collaboration with provinces was key to solving the problem.

The House 15:40 Government floats cap on international students to tackle housing crisis

Cap opposed by major universities

Guest host Evan Dyer speaks to international students and experts about the government's suggestion that a surge in international students is in part to blame for Canada's housing crunch, then discusses so-called bad actors in Canada's higher education system with Immigration Minister Marc Miller.

In a statement to *The House*, the National Association of Career Colleges said "regulated career colleges provide efficient, high-quality, industry-driven training for domestic and international students to produce the skilled workers Canada most desperately needs." That includes workers in the construction trades that build housing, they said.

"It is an ecosystem in Canada that is very lucrative and it's come with some perverse effects: some fraud in the system, some people taking advantage of what is seen as a backdoor entry into Canada, but also pressure in a number of areas — one of those is housing," he said.

Philip Landon, interim president and CEO at Universities Canada, also pushed back on the idea of a cap, seeking to position major universities as part of the solution to the problem.

But Miller shied away from committing to the idea of a hard cap on the number of students entering Canada.

"Just putting a hard cap, which got a lot of public play over the last few days, is not the only solution to this," he said.

"I think we can say that the housing situation is a crisis for Canadians broadly," Landon said in a separate interview with *The House*. "I do not think that the blaming newcomers or international students ... is the right way to go."

"Core to this is actually trying to figure out what the problem is we're trying to solve for. It isn't entirely housing, it's more appropriately the integrity of the system that has mushroomed,

cont'd on pg. 43

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Every Dollar Counts!, Filing Your Taxes and CRA Audit- Why and How? Part I

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

The Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) Mission is to “Administer tax, benefits, and related programs, and ensure compliance on behalf of governments across Canada, thereby contributing to the ongoing economic and social well-being of Canadians”. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency.html>)



After filing our annual taxes, year after year, once in a while we are called upon or receive letters of inquiries from the CRA, requesting proof or evidence to validate the details or documents we made during our annual tax filing. This process is a control mechanism put in place by the CRA to check for deviations and errors and implement corrections. As the Canadian income tax system is a self-assessment regime, taxpayers assess their tax liability by filing a return with the CRA by filing deadline. CRA's assessment of the returns are based on the return filed and information obtained from employers and other sources of income and investments of the individual's filings.

The self assessment tax filing process is prone to miscreant tendencies, abuse, misuse, misstatement, misappropriation and mismanagement. So, with these risks, the CRA has implemented controls and checks to ensure, some of these risks and potential frauds are minimized, correct these errors or totally eliminated.

So, the question is, what are some of the key triggers that alert the CRA to investigate and audit taxpayers and re-assess their annual tax filings?

Listed here are some of the triggers or alerts that prompts the CRA to pick on individuals for re-assessments or tax audits. Once an individual is selected for a tax audit, it is not a fun task and many times may lead to further liabilities and in some cases thousands of dollars in payments back to the government. It is therefore advisable that we follow standard tax filing methods and avoid quick fixes, fast moves to cheat or work arounds that may end up being audited. It is key to support our claims with legitimate documentations to prevent any further actions that may end up at a cost to an individual in the end.

Triggers for CRA Tax Audits

1. In some cases, a taxpayer is randomly selected for an audit. It's like winning the worst lottery in the world, and there's nothing you can do to change that. The odds of being targeted for a random audit are dependent on a variety of risk

factors, such as income source type (i.e., self employed), where you are located, types of expenses you carry and so on. Inconsistent pieces of a taxpayer's profile may trigger a review of these risk factors. The more risk factors a taxpayer has, the greater the odds of being audited.

2. Another possible trigger that may lead to a CRA audit can be due to large charitable donations.

If *charitable contributions* are suspiciously large and do not seem to be possible or likely within the confines of a taxpayer's income, such donations or contributions are very likely to be examined. Further, if charitable contributions are made to organizations suspected of being involved in a tax scheme, there is a very high chance that a taxpayer will be audited. Taxpayers that get audited for charitable contributions, must be able to present the official charitable receipt. This is one of the very few circumstances according to law where a taxpayer has to present an actual receipt upon request.

3. **Vehicle Expenses**- Are often arbitrarily determined. When preparing tax returns, often times taxpayers and their accountants pick a reasonable number for vehicle expenses based on an estimate of the percentage of the vehicle usage used for business purposes. Few taxpayers actually keep a log of every trip. This means that few taxpayers can prove to

the CRA auditor with absolute certainty, the relative use of the vehicle between personal and business purposes. This makes tax auditors happy. It makes it easy for them to deny vehicle expenses, and this increases the size of their reassessments.

4. **Employees Expenses**- Issued on a T2200, declaration of conditions of employment, a form signed by employer for employees, for which expenses employees are entitled to deduct certain employment expenses from their income. Perhaps the employee has to pay for their own vehicle to travel to sales calls, or perhaps they have to maintain a home office. As long as the employer requires that the employee pays these expenses in respect of their job, they likely can be deducted from income. Therefore, when some employment expenses are claimed while employer does not provide supporting document to attach to these claims, it raises the red flag for CRA audits to dig deeper into expenses. Further review of CRA Guide T4044, Employment Expenses, or the following archived interpretation bulletins: IT352R2 – Employee's Expenses, Including Work Space in Home Expenses, and IT522R – Vehicle, Travel and Sales Expenses of Employees may help provide insights to what is permissible or not.
5. **Child-Care Costs** - The CRA regularly conducts mini-audits to ensure that parents who claim childcare expenses maintain proper documentation. Since many parents claim childcare expenses which would otherwise be ineligible, this area is under careful scrutiny by the CRA.

6. **Real Estate Transaction & Rental Income** - There is so much opportunity to earn money in real estate, so the CRA pays careful attention to real estate transactions. The CRA frequently audits HST rebates, pre-sale condo flips, new home construction, principal residence exemptions, and many other real estate transactions. If a taxpayer is involved in many purchase and sale transactions, they can expect to eventually encounter a tax audit. Rental income and related expenses for rental properties are prone to deep dive audits, because there are lots of subjective assumptions and expenses that relatively may not be supported with valid documents.

7. **Finally, Informant Tips**. Many taxpayers are audited because of informant tips. If the tip relates to offshore tax evasion, the informant may earn a reward. Moral of the story; taxpayers who are cheating the system should not count on staying away forever from CRA's radar, “one day for the thief and another day for the master” and they should similarly be careful about who has incriminating evidence which could be reported to the CRA.

In my next edition on CRA Audit, Why and How? Part II, I shall list some of the steps and approach to adopt when an individual is selected for CRA re-assessment or audit. Let try to avoid these and save every dollar we can, for every dollar counts!

A Word To The Wise is Right Here!

For any views or comments, I can be reached via email: eddiessmith77@gmail.com

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Ethiopia Airlines has banned ‘Ghana Must Go’ luggage on its Nigeria flights

It says the sackbags are a nuisance to its conveyor belt system.

A letter signed by Henok Gizachew, the airline’s Manager of Airport Services, addressed to the Regional Manager of the Federal Airports Authority Of Nigeria (FAAN), dated 24 November 2023, said: “The use of Ghana-Must-Go as a means of packing baggage has cost the airlines huge loss and also damaging the conveyor belt system, not only on our flight but also on other foreign airlines, hence the prohibition”.

The airline said the only condition under which it would allow users of the bag to continue to use them to package their luggage is when they are well packed in cartons of a hardcover of rectangular size.

The letter said: “Please be informed that effective November 25, 2023, the usage of Ghana-Must-Go to travel on our flight is hereby prohibited.” **classfmonline**



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Christiana Nuamah appoints to the City of Brampton Heritage Board



Mrs. Nuamah at her first board meeting at the City Council Chambers at the Brampton City Hall.

Mrs Christiana Nuamah president of Ga-Dangbe Association Mrs. has been appointed to the City of Brampton Heritage Board.

Few months ago, the Brampton City Council, passed a resolution appointing Mrs. Nuamah as a Member to the Brampton Heritage Board, in Ontario, Canada.

Congratulations to you Madam President! The Ghanaian Community is very proud of you. We are moving forward **Brampton City Hall**

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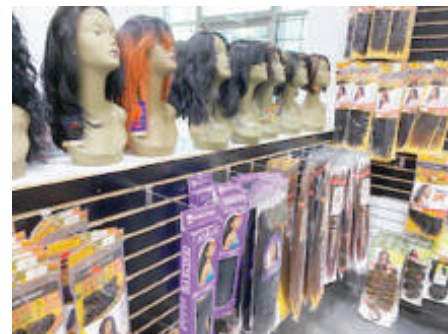
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Deal to lower Visa, Mastercard processing fees will come up short for many retailers, critics say

Agreement caps interchange fees at 0.95% — but only for eligible businesses

The federal government says it has hammered out the final details with Visa and Mastercard to lower credit card transaction fees for merchants, but small business advocates say the deal doesn't go nearly far enough.

The deal concerns what is called an interchange fee, also known as a "swipe fee," which sets aside a percentage of every sale for credit card companies and banks that issue the cards.

Until very recently, the fee could range from fractions of a per cent to more than two per cent for some premium cards.

And it's not just an issue for small retailers either: Visa and Walmart waged a high-profile fight over the fees in 2017, which saw the world's largest retailer briefly stop allowing Visa cards at any of its Canadian stores before the two sides struck a secret deal to settle the matter.

Walmart managed to cut a deal because it had the leverage to do so, but small businesses have long maintained the fee takes money out of their pockets — and those of their customers.

Canada has some of the world's highest interchange fees in the world. When they're imposed across hundreds of millions of transactions every year, "it is billions and billions of dollars that is collected from merchants across Canada every year," said Dan Kelly, CEO of the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses (CFIB). **charge crecard transaction fees1 year agoDuration2:08**

Prior to the deal announced this week, the average interchange on a Visa card in Canada was 1.4 per cent. As per the terms of the new agreement, the annual weighted average fee for in-store transactions will be reduced to 0.95 per cent, while the same fee for online transactions will be reduced by 10 basis points.

"For small companies, they're going to see a specific reduction oriented at them," Kelly said. "This has been a long time coming and we've been lobbying hard to make it happen."

The agreement will also give small businesses free access to online fraud and cybersecurity resources.

Small businesses with a Visa sales volume below \$300,000 a year will qualify, as will those with a Mastercard

sales volume under \$175,000 a year. The country's big banks have "agreed to protect Canadians' reward points," as per the government's announcement.

Not far enough

Earlier this year, the Convenience Industry Council of Canada (CICC), which represents more than 23,000 convenience stores and gas stations across the country, said the then-proposed deal won't do much to help its members because of those revenue caps.

The threshold "effectively excludes any of our members from realizing any reductions," the group told Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland when she announced in May that talks were underway toward a fee reduction deal.

Businesses that qualify will save a maximum of \$1,080 annually — "a very small sum that will make a limited difference for both local businesses and consumers who are looking for lower prices," the CICC said.

"Instead, this decision caters to the banks and credit card companies who continue to report record profits on the backs of our local businesses."

- **Telus scraps 1.5% credit card surcharge on customer bills**

Sara Jameson, a small business owner in Toronto, agrees that the deal as announced won't do much, especially since a huge number of small businesses who need the most help won't qualify.

Instead of qualifying based on the number of transactions with each card processor, Jameson said the rules should echo what the government says constitute a small business — that is, any business with between \$30,000 and \$5 million worth of total sales and fewer than 100 employees.

"This looks good for the government and it looks good for the corporations," said the owner of Sweetpea's floral design shop. "It looks great in a headline, but it's actually not going to do us any good.

"Some of us are paying upward of several thousand a month in these transaction fees. We have to pass that along to our customers.... That then puts us [at a] higher price than the big corporations [so] we have to really appeal to our buyers to support us as opposed to getting it elsewhere," she said.

cont;d on pg. 38

Zahara: South African music icon dies aged 36

Award-winning South African Afro-pop singer Bulelwa Mkutukana, popularly known as Zahara, has died, the country's culture minister has said.

She had been in hospital, reportedly with liver complications, and the government had been assisting the family "for some time", Culture Minister Zizi Kodwa said.

The songstress won fame in 2011 with her album *Loliwe*, loved across Africa.

In 2019, Zahara opened up about her battle with alcohol addiction.

"Zahara and her guitar made an incredible and lasting impact in South African music," Mr Kodwa posted on X, formerly Twitter.

Last month, the family confirmed the musician had been admitted to

hospital and called on South Africans to keep her in their prayers.

She passed away on Monday night in a Johannesburg hospital at the age of 36, the public broadcaster, SABC, reports.

In a statement posted on Zahara's Instagram account, her family said: "She was a pure light, and an even purer heart, in this world. A beacon of hope, a gift, and a blessing to us and countless people around the world."

Fans have been grieving and sharing fond memories of her on social media.

"She left us with such beautiful music," one X user posted.

Zahara, who released five albums, won dozens of awards both local and international. In 2020, she was named in the BBC's 100 Women list.



Bulelwa Mkutukana, popularly known as Zahara

The songwriter also used her platform to speak out about violence against women in South Africa, something she revealed had happened to her.

In an interview with a local radio last year, Zahara said her music was not for recognition but to bring comfort to broken souls that need healing. **BBC News**



Canada's new dental care plan could impact nearly 9 million Canadians — are you one of them?

cont'd from pg. 7

Applicants who have access to dental benefits through a program offered by a province, territory or the federal government can still apply for the CDCP if they meet all eligibility criteria, they said.

Is the cut-off income before or after taxes?

Applicants must have an adjusted family net income of \$90,000 or less to qualify for the CDCP. This is not the family net income, which is the sum of line 23600 on your tax return, line 23600 on your partner's tax return and any world income not reported in a tax return to the Canada Revenue Agency.

To find your adjusted family net income, the [government of Canada's website](#) says to subtract any income from universal child care benefits (UCCB) and registered disability savings plans (RDSP) from your family's net income. These amounts can be found on lines 11700 and 12500 on your and your partner's tax returns.

Next, add any repaid UCCB and RDSP amounts to that total — these are found on lines 21300 and 23200 on your and your partner's tax returns.

This final amount is your adjusted family net income. This total will determine whether you meet the \$90,000 threshold and how much co-pay you will have to cover if you qualify.

Can I use CDCP with my employer's plan?

Canadians who have access to dental insurance are not eligible to apply for the CDCP. According to [the government of Canada's website](#), this includes individuals who:

- Have dental insurance through their employer or a family member's employer benefits, including health and wellness accounts.
- Have dental insurance through their pension from a previous employer or a family member's pension benefits.
- Have dental insurance purchased by themselves, by a family member or through a group plan from an insurance or benefits company.

In early 2024, oral health providers, including dentists, denturists and dental hygienists, will be able to enrol [on a voluntary basis as a participating CDCP provider](#) directly with insurance company Sun Life, which is administering the program.

Can I use my current dentist, denturist or dental hygienist?

If enrolled, oral health providers will directly submit claims to Sun Life for reimbursement; and if there's a co-pay, those using CDCP will pay the cost out of pocket to the provider.

In his Monday announcement, Singh said they worked hard to ensure the CDCP would be supported by all oral health professionals and opened up applications to all providers.

"So people should be able to use this to go to their local dentist, the one they've been going to before," he said.

Dr. Brandon Doucet, Coalition for Dental Care founder, tells BC Today host Michelle Eliot the health of some Canadians has deteriorated because their oral health has been neglected.

But federal Health Minister Mark Holland acknowledged the government "still has work to do" to guarantee the country's dentists will provide services to publicly insured clients.

"The core success of this plan is making sure oral health professionals are signing up," he said. "I'm extraordinarily optimistic there is going to be very strong uptake."

If I'm eligible, when can I apply?

Applications for the CDCP will be open this month, initially over the phone. Only eligible seniors aged 87 and older can apply at first. Applications for other age groups will be phased in with a staggered approach.

Starting in January 2024, seniors aged 77 to 86 can apply, followed by seniors aged 72 to 76 in February, and seniors aged 70 to 71 in March.

Seniors aged 65 to 69 can start applying in May 2024 — the same month the application process switches from telephone to online.

People with valid disability tax credit certificates and children under 18 will be able to apply starting in June 2024. Eligible low- and middle-income Canadians between the ages of 18 and 65 can start applying in 2025. **CBC**

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Digitization has helped us in dealing with corruption, lawlessness, tax evasion, and identity fraud – Veep

Vice President Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia has maintained that the government’s digitalization agenda has had a positive impact on the Ghanaian economy.



Vice President Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia

Speaking at the 20th Ghana Club 100 Awards, he claimed the government’s digitalization agenda is tackling corruption in government services.

He said services like passport acquisition and port clearance have been positively impacted through digitization by reducing human intervention through the Ghana Card identity system.

He further assured the private sector of the government’s commitment to creating an enabling environment for businesses to thrive.

He stated that the private sector plays a crucial role in economic development.

The presidential candidate of the NPP went on to say that to help address corruption, lawlessness, tax evasion, and identity fraud, the government embarked on a comprehensive formalization process, heavily relying on digitalization.

“You look at an economy in the informal sense which turned to be undisciplined, the society is undisciplined because the economy is informal and there are no consequences for bad actions, you have a society where corruption prevails, you have lawlessness, you have a tax dodging society, you have an unbanked society, you have a loan repayment dodging society, identity fraud, people assuming identities of others, lack of address systems, age cheating, fake insurance, fake birth certificates, fake passports, no functional address systems, ghost workers on government payrolls.

that we really inherited made it very difficult for the economy to transform to its potential. That is why we set out to formalize the economy to make sure that the economy works in a transparent system. That area of formalization of the economy we realized heavily on digitalization of the economy to formalize the economy.

“This is why we have been moving sturdily and we have made a lot of progress in this particular area. Of course, the anchor for the digitalization programme has been the Ghana Card that we issued. Today, we have enrolled over a 17million people on the Ghana Card, today we have linked all bank accounts to the Ghana Card, and linked all SIM cards to the Ghana Card, TIN is your Ghana Card number, NHIS number is your Ghana Card number, today we have linked the Ghana Card to the Controller and Accountant General Department payroll. Today we are increasing this formalization of the economy as a result of digitalisation, we are digitalizing all government services through Ghana.gov.gh and so on.

“All these bring transparency and that helps businesses, it makes the system clearer, it reduces corruption because you can get services without actually going to meet anybody who will demand a bribe.”

“These ills of the informal economy By: Rainbowradioonline.com/Ghana

The state still owns 30% shares in Vodafone Ghana

The Minister for Communication and Digitalization, Ursula Owusu, has revealed that the government has not sold its 30% stake in Vodafone Ghana.



The Minister for Communication and Digitalization, Ursula Owusu

The minister’s revelation follows a question posed by the member of Parliament for the South Dayi constituency, Rockson Nelson Defeamekpor, who sought to know whether the government had plans to sell its shares in Vodafone Ghana.

Answering the question, Ursula Owusu stated categorically that the government of Ghana has no plans of selling its 30% shareholding in Ghana Telecommunications Company Limited.

She added that Vodafone Ghana transferred its 70% stake in the company to the Telecel Group in February 2023.

Meanwhile, former Minority Leader Haruna Idrisu indicated that he was not satisfied with the answer provided by the minister.

He stated that the minister should have provided the house with the amount or value of the 70% sold to Telecel.

The former minister for Communication, Haruna Idrisu, added that Vodafone Ghana cannot sell its 70% shares without valuing all the 100%.

He lamented that it is impossible and surprising that the minister doesn’t know how much the 70% shares cost.

He therefore insisted that the minister provide the shareholder agreement to Parliament for proper scrutiny. Rainbowradioonline.com/Ghana

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Federal government unveils what it calls a ‘strict’ oil and gas cap to curb emissions

Framework meant to reduce emissions while letting production increase 12% above 2019 levels

The Liberal government’s framework to cap emissions from the oil and gas sector proposes to cap 2030 emissions at 35 to 38 per cent below 2019 levels in order to reach the government’s goal of reducing emissions in the sector to net zero by 2050.

The Liberal government announced its regulatory framework for capping emissions in the oil and gas sector Thursday — a national cap-and-trade system that it says will set emissions limits without restricting production.

“Oil and gas is the largest emitting sector in Canada. And unlike almost every other sector of our economy, pollution from the oil and gas sector is still going up,” Environment Minister Steve Guilbeault said Thursday.

“We owe it to Canadians, and to the rest of the world, to address these emissions as we owe it to our workers and businesses to ensure Canada’s well-earned reputation for energy innovation remains our strong suit for the 21st century.”

The framework proposes to cap 2030 emissions at 35 to 38 per cent below 2019 levels to reach the government’s goal of reducing carbon emissions in the sector to net zero by 2050. The oil and gas sector is responsible for 28 per cent of Canada’s emissions.

The government said it is publishing the framework now to give the industry and others time to provide input on the forthcoming draft regulations, which it says it will publish in mid-2024.

The sub-sectors of the oil and gas sector that will be affected by the framework include liquefied natural gas producers, conventional and offshore oil producers, oil sands producers and natural gas processors.

The cap would apply to upstream emissions from oil and gas development in Canada. Emissions from refineries are not covered under the cap — they fall under the clean fuel regulations. **4 days ago** **Duration: 2:07**

The federal government has revealed how it will set an upper limit on greenhouse gas emissions through a cap-and-trade system for the country’s biggest emitter, the oil and gas industry.

“We looked at whether or not it would make sense to apply the cap to the refiners as well and the conclusion was that it did not lead to further emissions reductions than the ones we are already getting from the clean fuel standard,” Guilbeault said.

Under the framework, oil and gas facilities will be given an allowance for each tonne of carbon they emit, with fewer allowances being given out over time.

To comply with the framework, facilities either have to reduce their emissions or buy allowances from other facilities that have reduced their emissions.

The government says the cap-and-trade system it plans to implement will only result in emissions reductions of about 20 to 23 per cent below 2019 emission levels, and should allow industry to increase production 12 per cent above 2019 levels.

To get to the stated goal of reducing emissions 35 to 38 per cent below 2019 levels, the sector will be allowed to use offset credits or pay into a decarbonization fund that will invest in future greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

The government says the framework has been designed to work with other emissions-reduction policies, including methane regulations and carbon pricing. That means emissions reductions in the oil and gas sector will count toward the sector’s obligations under multiple government policies.

The Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) said in a media statement that adding emissions cap regulations to existing carbon pricing and methane policies creates a layer of complexity that could hamper investments in clean energy projects.

CAPP also said the “unintended consequences” of the framework “could result in significant curtailments — making this draft framework effectively a cap on production.”

“CAPP believes the proposed policy risks triggering unforeseen socioeconomic consequences, not the least of which is likely to be higher energy prices for Canadians,” the statement said.

Targets are more modest than expected

The limits are not as aggressive as the original 2030 target of reducing emissions in the sector by 42 per cent below 2019 levels. One source told CBC News that the government set less ambitious targets in order to avoid legal and constitutional fights with provinces.

Last week, Guilbeault said two recent court decisions forcing Ottawa to tread more carefully on climate policy affecting provinces pushed the federal government to reconsider its emissions cap plan.

The first was a Supreme Court decision that said a federal law governing environmental impact assessments stepped into provincial jurisdiction by applying to some projects that should have been outside of Ottawa’s control.

The second was a Federal Court decision that struck down Environment Canada’s designation of all plastic manufactured items as “toxic.” The court said the category of plastic manufactured items was too broad for a single designation. The decision also touched on federal-provincial distribution of powers.

Energy and Natural Resources Minister Jonathan Wilkinson said that in drafting the framework, the federal government set the 2026-2030 timeline for implementation and the 35 to 38 per cent target by taking into account what is technically achievable.

“If you’re asking to be done something that simply can’t be done, then what you’re going to do is shut down production and simply send it to other countries,” Wilkinson said.

“It’s important that you found this on what actually can be done and not simply on what you might like to see done.”

Saskatchewan, Alberta blast the plan

Alberta Premier Danielle Smith issued a statement Thursday calling the framework an “intentional attack by the federal government on the economy of Alberta and the financial well-being of millions of Albertans and Canadians.”

Smith said Alberta owns its resources and, under the Constitution, has exclusive jurisdiction to develop and manage them.

“Justin Trudeau and his eco-extremist Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, Steven Guilbeault, are risking hundreds of billions of investments in Alberta’s and Canada’s economy,” she said.

Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe said the emissions reductions contained in the framework will burden the oil and gas sector “with more red tape and regulations.”

“These new federal policies will have serious economic impacts on Canadians and limit our sustainable Canadian energy products from providing heat and electricity to the world,” he said in a media statement.

Moe said he remains opposed to an oil and gas

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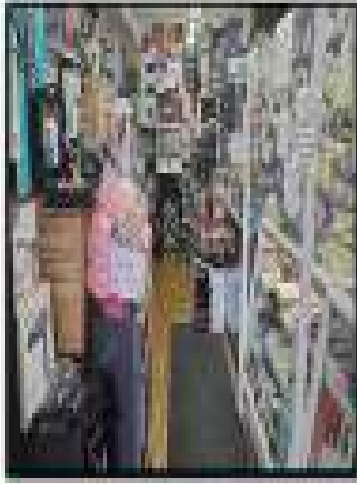
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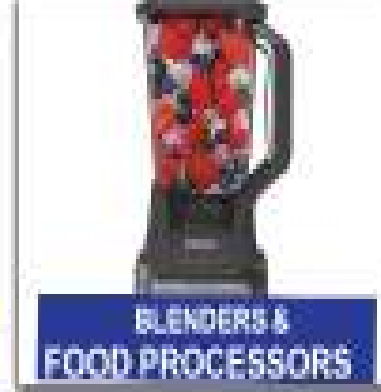
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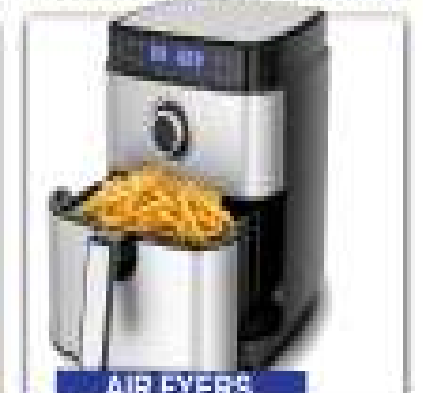
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Goldstar Air, Toronto Airport agrees on Incentive Packages

Wholly owned Ghanaian airline Goldstar Air (Wings of Ghana) and Greater Toronto Canada Airports Authority (GTAA), which operates ten airports, eight heliports, and one water aerodrome, have agreed on incentive packages for the Toronto-Accra route.

These aviation facilities are situated within and around Toronto and its neighbouring cities, serving airline passengers, regional air travel, and commercial cargo transportation. Toronto Pearson International Airport (YYZ), located mainly in Mississauga, is the busiest airport in Canada and hosts international travel with various airlines.

Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport (YTZ) on the Toronto Islands is a regional airport, providing regular services to United States destinations. John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport (YHM) in Hamilton is a base for low-cost carriers that fly domestic and transatlantic routes. Pearson, Bishop, and Hamilton combined to place Toronto twenty-third (23rd) on the World's Best Cities list for 2024, inching one spot higher than where it ranked last year.

Special appreciation from the Chief Executive Officer Eric Bannerman and the management of Goldstar Air to the highest office of the Greater Toronto Airports Authority, the Chief Executive Officer, the Board of Directors, and the entire Air Service Development team for your ambitious sustainability policies and first-of-its-kind incentive packages from your authority to our airline.

The Greater Toronto Airports Authority unleashes incentive packages to provide Goldstar Air with marketing funds to support awareness campaigns for the airline, which will be adding new capacity to



tourism, diplomatic, socioeconomic bonds, and economic tools for the two countries and will connect other African and North American cities. Goldstar Air is looking forward to satisfying the demands of our passengers, since they will want to go to their final destinations in an easy, concise, and well-structured way, not having to arrive at complicated airports, pick up suitcases, check in again, miss the flight, and all those other things that happen.

Providing connectivity is fundamental to helping improve the customer experience when flying with us around the world; therefore, Goldstar Air is collaborating with other airlines to launch an airline alliance called Afrik Allianz to expand routes, share

Toronto Pearson return to approximately 70% of 2019 volumes, with that number being closer to 90% over the last few months.

In 2022, Toronto Pearson welcomed seven new airlines and launched over 30 new routes. Nearly all commercial airline partners serving Toronto Pearson in 2019 have returned, with many increasing their presence. This emphasizes the importance of the Toronto and Canadian markets to our airline and the role they will play in our success.

Toronto is one of the most diverse regions in the world, with over 50% of the population identifying as being foreign-born. It is also the fourth-largest city in North America. The Toronto region is home to 6.5 million people, and the population is projected to grow by 10% by 2032.

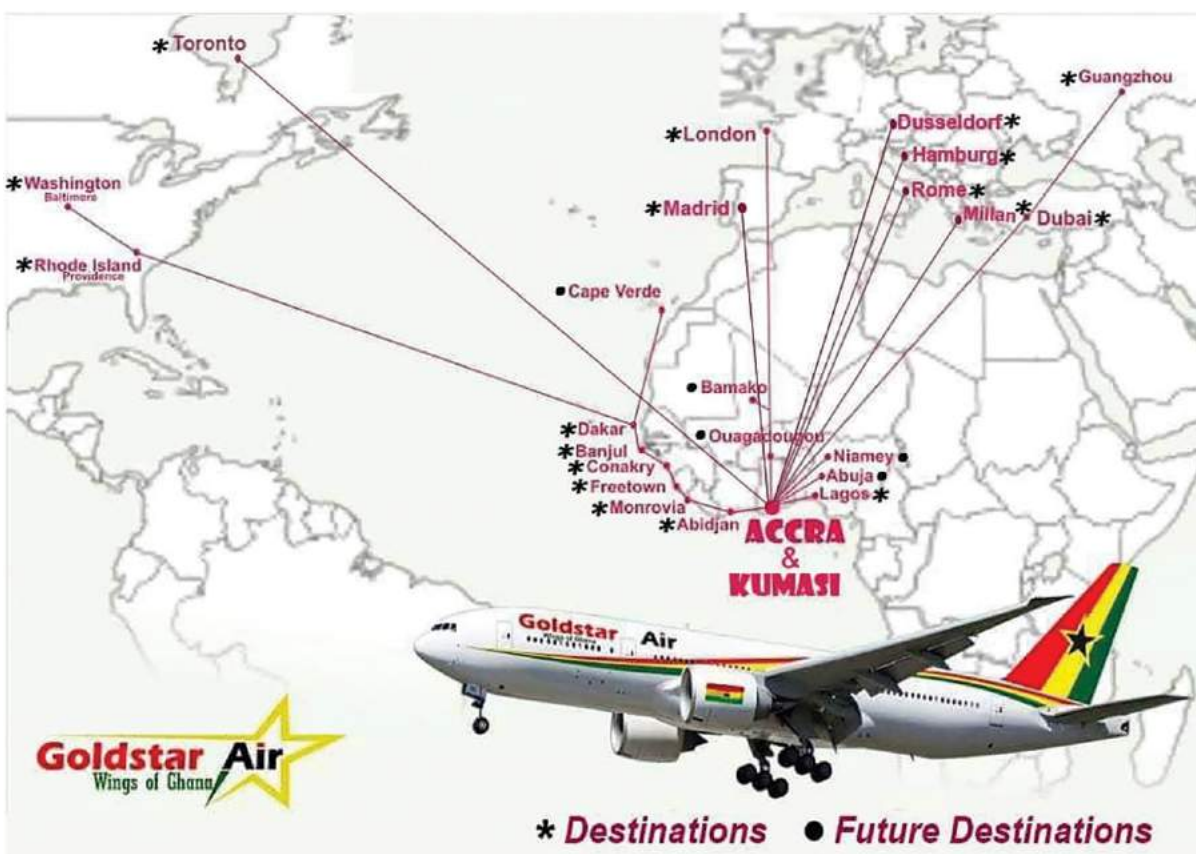
Toronto is also the largest contributor to the Canadian economy, home to 38% of Canada's business headquarters, 20% of Canada's GDP, and 50% of Ontario's GDP. It is the 2nd largest financial centre in North America, the largest technology hub in Canada, and the 3rd largest in North America. 25% of Canada's population is within 160 km of Toronto, and it is home to a large Ghanaian diaspora.

With direct flights to only Cairo and Addis Ababa in Africa, Western Africa is completely unserved from Toronto. Africa is a region that has been identified as being severely underserved and one where the Goldstar Air and Greater Toronto Airports Authority believe significant opportunity for growth exists, as Toronto represents 62% of the total Canadian market.

In 2022, Toronto ranked as the third-largest market for travel to and from Accra in North America, following New York and Washington.

This positioning renders Toronto Pearson International Airport as the most substantial untapped market on the continent. Accra is a year-round market from Toronto with a seasonal profile that is similar to what is experienced in served markets in New York and Washington.

The Toronto Pearson International Airport market reacts quickly when new services are launched, and while stimulation can vary depending on the market, Accra is a strong candidate for significant stimulation,



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These include print media, digital/social media, terminal advertising, travel/trade, and inaugural event activities, among other promotional activities, and will work closely with national, provincial, and city tourism organizations to promote these new Air Services in Toronto and it will be part of our 24-hour service from Kumasi and Kotoka International Airport terminal Two, as well as our One Hundred Thousand direct and indirect jobs initiative.

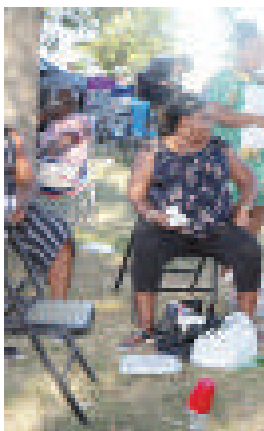
The new direct service will help boost investment,

resources, and establish a seamless travel experience for international passengers who will get access to multiple destinations and more convenient airway connections.

In 2019, Toronto Pearson welcomed 50.5 million annual passengers, which represented one-third of Canada's air passenger volume.

Toronto Pearson grew by approximately 20 million passengers between 2009 and 2019 while integrating several international carriers and offering direct service to 180 destinations worldwide. 2022 saw

Community



y in pictures



COP28 reaches groundbreaking climate deal in Dubai calling for ‘transitioning away from fossil fuels’

Agreement includes language to move away from fossil fuels, but doesn't recommend a phase out

After negotiators worked through the night, a new deal has been reached at COP28 which could signal the world's desire to move away from fossil fuels over the next few decades in an effort to address climate change.

Representatives from nearly 200 countries gathered in a public meeting in Dubai to support the new deal, one day after the climate summit was scheduled to close. Moments after opening Wednesday's session, COP28 President Sultan al-Jaber gave approval of the central document with the drop of the gavel.



Al-Jaber bangs the gavel during a plenary session at the COP28 UN Climate Summit on Wednesday in Dubai. (Kamran Jebreili/The Associated Press)

“From the bottom of my heart, thank you,” al-Jaber said. “Together, we have confronted realities and we have set the world in the right direction.”

“We leave Dubai with our heads held high and our work goes on,” he said.

The agreement contains much stronger language on fossil fuels compared to a previous proposal.

For the first time, the text calls for a “transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, so as to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science.”

Groundbreaking proposal

During the two-week summit, al-Jaber raised expectations by consistently vowing to strike a historic deal in Dubai.

The agreement is groundbreaking as it would mark the first time that nations agree at a UN climate summit to explicitly address fossil fuels and the need to move away from oil, natural gas and coal in order to limit global warming.

“I am in awe of the spirit of cooperation that has brought everyone together,” said John Kerry, U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate.

“To have as strong a document as has been put together, I find, is cause for optimism, cause for gratitude,” Kerry said.

There is added significance considering the climate summit is being held in OPEC-territory and al-Jaber, himself, is the chief executive of the United Arab Emirates' state-owned oil company, ADNOC. hours ago

Duration: 1:46

The draft final agreement of the COP28 climate summit refers to transitioning away from fossil fuels but does not contain the words ‘phase out,’ the phrase which stalled negotiations earlier.

Still, some countries and environmental leaders are feeling disappointed because the deal does not call for a ‘phase out’ or ‘phase down’ of fossil fuels. Al-Jaber had suggested those terms could be included in a final agreement, but are absent.

The phrasing of transitioning away from oil, gas and coal to reach net zero emissions implies that countries will aim to lower their production and consumption of fossil fuels over the coming decades, but can still use them beyond 2050 by using carbon capture facilities and other technology to prevent greenhouse gases from entering the atmosphere.

That's why the agreement is described by some environmental experts as a paradox, since it's neither a small step forward nor a giant leap in efforts to address climate change, but somewhere in the middle.

“It's not the phase out that the president promised, but it would be a significant step forward, especially at a COP that has been so visibly captured by the fossil fuel lobby,” said Caroline Brouillette, an environmental campaigner with Climate Action Network Canada.

The Alliance of Small Island States said on Wednesday it saw “a litany of loopholes” in the agreement.



Climate activists protest against fossil fuels during the final stages of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28), in Dubai on Tuesday. (Thaier Al-Sudani/Reuters)

“The text does not speak specifically to fossil fuel phase out and mitigation in a way that is in fact ‘the step change that is needed,’” said the alliance, known by its acronym AOSIS, which represents several countries that are facing climate effects such as rising sea levels.

AOSIS described the deal as “incremental and not transformational,” but will work with other countries in the spirit of cooperation to accelerate action for its communities.

The deal calls for a tripling of renewable energy capacity around the globe and a doubling of energy efficiency by 2030, which were both supported by Canada.

A proposed deal released Monday was criticized for falling well short of the action needed to address global warming. That initial text was a failure, said Catherine Abreu, founder and executive director

of the advocacy group Destination Zero, but Wednesday's final agreement was worth a B grade.

“Finally, we have a COP outcome that acknowledges the cause of climate change,” she said, “And takes some action on addressing the consequences of climate change by adopting a loss-and-damage fund.

The global climate damage fund was launched during the conference with the support of more than 120 nations. It's designed to help developing countries cope with the impacts of climate change such as floods, drought and rising sea levels. Germany and the host country U.A.E. were the largest contributors, each giving \$100 million US, while Canada pledged about \$12 million US.



COP28 President Sultan al-Jaber applauds after the COP28 deal is reached. (Kamran Jebreili/The Associated Press)

Canada's federal environment minister Steven Guilbeault said in a statement the deal “addresses the impacts of polluting and harmful energy sources, and shapes a path towards energies that are safer and more reliable.



Environment Minister Steven Guilbeault speaks to reporters in Dubai late-Tuesday before leaving COP28. (Kyle Bakx/CBC)

“The text has breakthrough commitments on renewable energy, energy efficiency, and the transition away from fossil fuels. The package is not perfect, no UN text is,” Guilbeault said.

Most large oilpatch companies in Canada already have set net-zero targets for 2050. Canadian oil production is expected to rise in 2024 to a record high. CBC

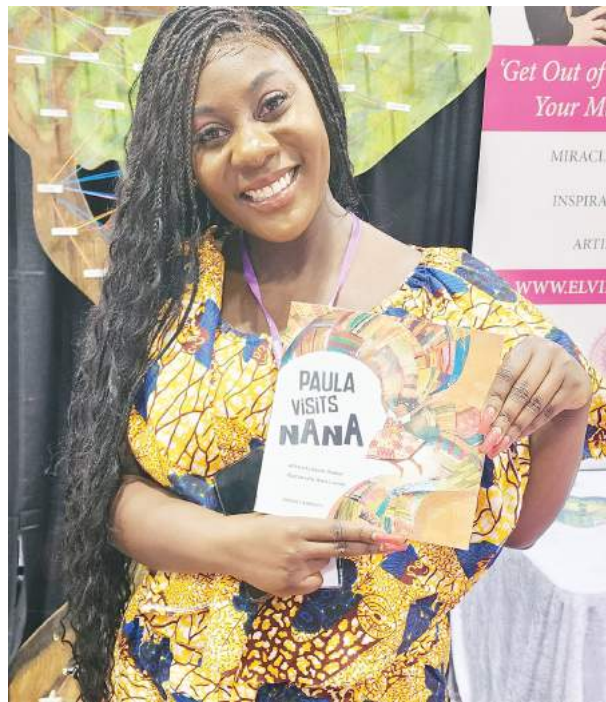
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Denise launches her book “Paula visits Nana”

By Staff Reporter, Toronto, ON

Denise Donkor, an up-and-coming author, and seasoned educator, brings a unique blend of cultural richness and academic expertise to her work. Born in the vibrant multicultural pot of Canada, Denise’s roots trace back to the rich cultural heritage of Ghana. During her formative years, Denise found solace and joy in cultural dance, particularly the traditional Adowa dance. These experiences planted the seeds for her love of storytelling. With a background in Early Childhood Education from Sheridan College and a bachelor’s in arts and education from York University, she has devoted 15 years to shaping young minds.

“Paula Visits Nana” is Denise’s heartfelt tribute to family bonds, inspired by her deep admiration for familial connections. The narrative unfolds as a reflection of the relationship Denise envisioned with her grandmother, a sentiment many readers are sure to resonate with.



Denise Donkor,

A distinctive feature of the book lies in its incorporation of Twi, a Ghanaian language, enriching the narrative and offering readers a glimpse into the nation’s vibrant culture. Denise

believes that introducing Twi words to a global audience is a crucial step in fostering cultural understanding and appreciation.

Denise’s debut book, “Paula Visits Nana,” is just the beginning, as she ambitiously works on a series of educational and culturally enriched books. Her mission as an educator is clear—to inspire resilience and a love for learning in children. Denise Donkor’s literary journey is a testament to her commitment to both education and the celebration of diverse cultures.

For those eager to embark on this enchanting journey, “Paula Visits Nana” is available for purchase on Amazon. To delve deeper into Denise Donkor’s literary world and stay updated on upcoming events, enthusiasts can explore DonkorsBookshelf.com. Embrace the warmth of family, the beauty of Ghanaian culture, and the magic of storytelling through Denise Donkor’s “Paula Visits Nana.”

MUSIGA to empower sound engineers in Ghana

By Joyceline Natally Cudjoe

The Musicians Union of Ghana (MUSIGA) is working on a laid-out strategy that seeks to empower local sound engineers across the regions of Ghana, the President of the Union, Bessa Simons has said.

According to him, the initiative would eliminate the inconveniences artistes from other regions faced when travelling to the capital to find sound engineers.

“Most of the good sound engineers are in Accra, so people travel from wherever they are to record here, and so I think if we can work for those in the other regions for them to also improve on their sound, then it will make it easier because they wouldn’t have to travel all the way to the capital,” he explained.

Bessa Simons in an interview with the media indicated that quality sound production and good mixing gives



Bessa Simons, President MUSIGA

music a more appealing tone and contributes to its success.

That, he noted was the reason MUSIGA has made it a priority to ensure sound engineers give a perfect sound that would meet global standards.

For the country’s songs to travel outside, Bessa Simons said quality sound was key as attention to the song would only be gained when a good sound accompanied it.

Ghana’s creative sector needs conducive policies--- Shatta Wale

By Joyceline Natally Cudjoe

Reggae-dancehall artiste Shatta Wale has called on authorities to regulate frameworks that will attract investors to the industry for Ghanaian musicians to compete evenly with their international counterparts.

According to him, the lack of conducive policies, infrastructure, and resources have hindered the growth and potential of musicians on the international stage.

Expressing his grievances in a new post on his Facebook page, Shatta Wale stated that the lack of appropriate policies were drawing musicians backwards and underscored urgent need for stakeholders to address the issue.

“It is clear that the lack of conducive policies, infrastructure, and resources have hindered our growth and potential on the international stage. We must urgently address this by improving regulatory frameworks, investing in modern infrastructure, and strengthening intellectual property rights and licensing,” he stated.

In moving forward, Shatta Wale said concerted effort by stakeholders to effect desired changes needed for the betterment of the industry.

“It is time for us to work together to



Shatta Wale

create an enabling environment that attracts major global investments and propels our music industry to unprecedented heights, contributing to our national identity and economy,” he stated.

In addition, Shatta Wale expressed the need for stakeholders to rally together and collaborate to open the doors of opportunity for “our” industry.

“By any means necessary, we need to put in efforts to make sure our music is heard globally as Ghanaians,” he added.

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Female Amputee Football Team gets support

By Mawuli Viwotor, Accra, Ghana

The female amputee team of Ernestay Disability and Sports Foundation, The Orcas, has received some support from Kegali Hotel towards team-building.

The team, the first and currently only female amputee football team in Ghana, forms the core of the female amputee football national team, The Black Royals.

Presenting a dummy cheque representing the support to the team, Mr. Denzel Humphreys, CEO of Kegali Hotel, said the support comes in the form of logistics and various ways to ensure the players are well prepared for tasks ahead.

“With this support, it is my belief that as you perform on the field, someone out there would also be inspired to rise up from their corner and aim high,” Mr. Humphreys said as he handed the Ghc150,000.00 dummy cheque to Ernest Yaw Ayisi, Founder of Ernestay Disability and Sports Foundation.

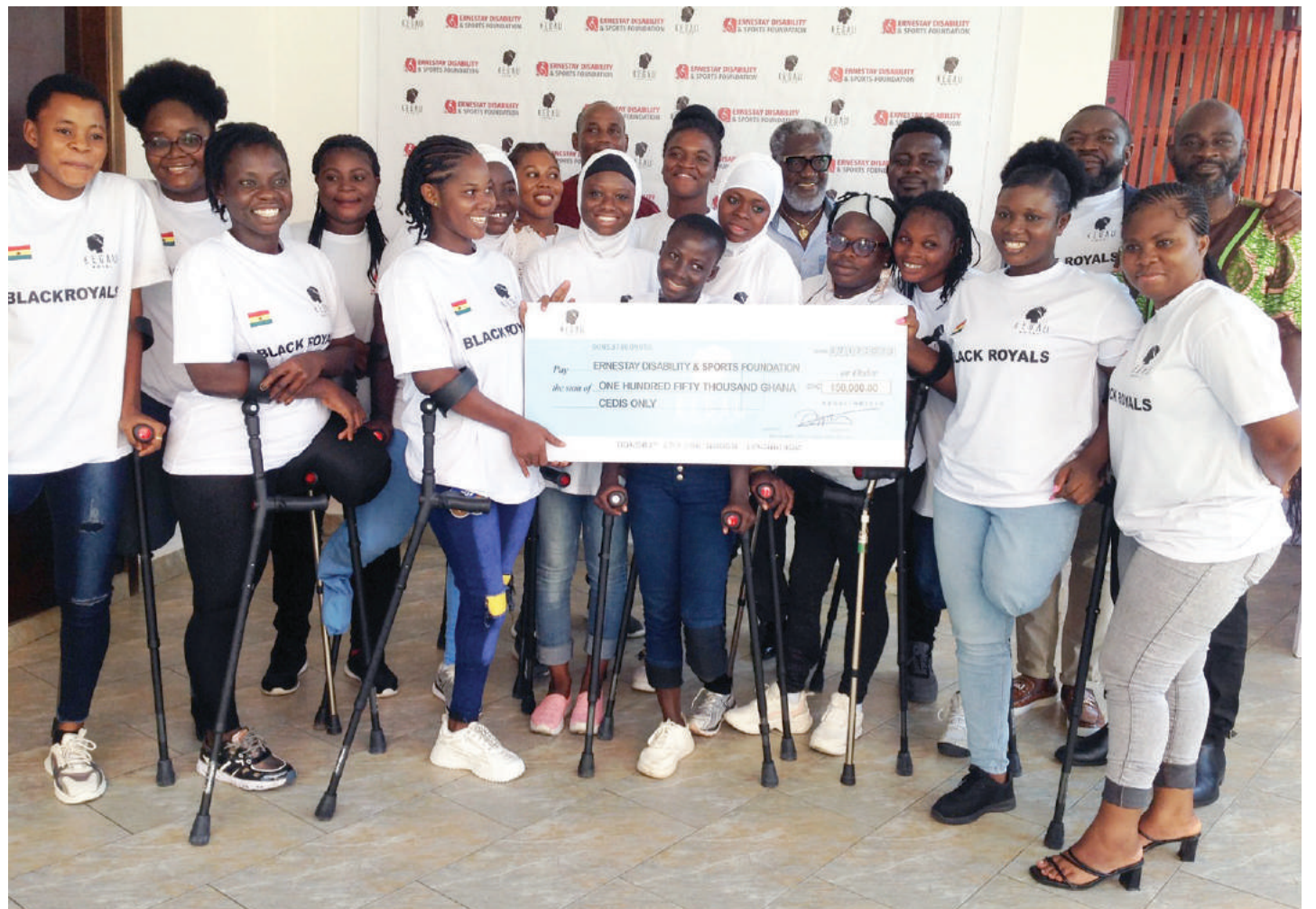
He disclosed that the support would be in the form of accommodation, food, transportation, training facility and other logistics required to train the team towards the first female amputee football world cup to be held in Colombia in November 2024.

“As we progress and get more, we would continue to support you to attain your goals on the field and other areas of your lives,” he assured.

Receiving the cheque, Ernest Yaw Ayisi, President of Ernestay Foundation, expressed appreciation and assured of the foundation’s commitment to helping build a formidable team to win the world cup.

“The team forms the core of the national team and we are doing everything possible to build them and by inference, the national team, for the ultimate assignment,” he stated.

“The National team has lined series of activities, including international friendlies to tune the team up for the world cup and we would do all within



The ladies pose with the dummy cheque

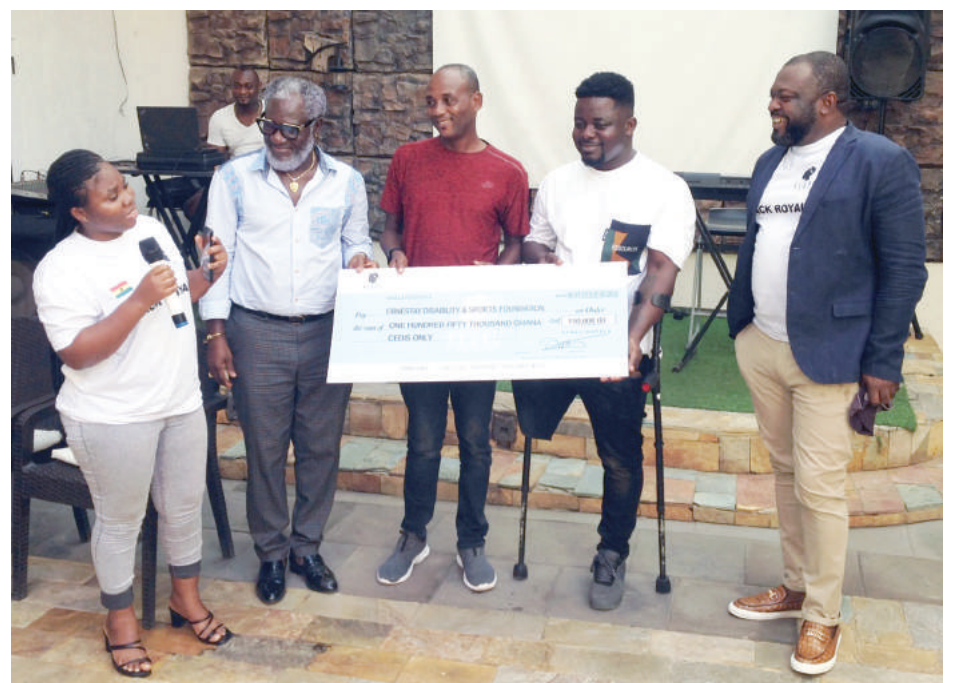
us to realize those plans,” he said.

He appealed to corporate bodies and individuals to support the team in whatever way to bring glory to Ghana.

“Our women are vulnerable, more so when they live with disability; so they need more support. Come and sponsor this dream and make Ghana great in female amputee football,” Ernest Ayisi pleaded.

Technical Director of the amputee football national team, Coach Ali Jarra and Nana Opoku Kwarteng, a Life Patron of the team, were present at the ceremony.

Ghana will participate in the forthcoming female amputee football world cup scheduled for November, 2024 in Colombia.



Mr. Denzel Humphreys looks on as Ernest Ayisi, Ali Jarra, Nana Opoku Kwarteng and Irene Quartey admire the cheque

RCMP warn about spike in online extremism among Canadian youth

RCMP are warning about a rise in violent extremism among Canadian youth, while Jewish leaders urge community members to be diligent about security after two teenagers were arrested on terror-related charges in the last five days.

The Mounties say five Canadian youth have been arrested in terror-related cases since June.

“The RCMP is seeing a concerning trend of violent extremism and terrorist use of the internet, including amongst young persons,” the Mounties said in a statement Saturday.

The statement asked “adults in positions of authority” including parents, guardians, teachers, and coaches, “to be alert for behaviours of concern which may be linked to violent extremism.”

Jewish and Muslim leaders across Canada have reported an increase in hate-motivated attacks since the terrorist attacks launched by Hamas on Israel on Oct. 7, and the massive military response by Israel in Gaza.

Police have made arrests in several hate-motivated incidents, including assaults and the promotion of hatred online.

The RCMP’s warning Saturday specifically addresses the radicalization of youth, often online.

The most recent case involved an Ottawa teen arrested Friday and charged in connection with a plot against the city’s Jewish community. Because of the youth’s age, police did not release much information about the accused, including who or what they were targeting beyond a general description of “Jewish persons.”

The teen appeared in court briefly Saturday and remains in custody with another court appearance scheduled for Monday morning. The youth is charged with facilitating a terrorist activity by communicating instructions about an explosive substance, and with knowingly instructing someone else to carry out a terrorist activity.

It is not known if anyone else is being investigated in connection to that case.

The Jewish Federation of Ottawa said in an email to community members Sunday that police confirmed there is no risk to the community because the teen is now in custody.

Ottawa Police have increased patrols of Jewish institutions, including synagogues, community centres and schools. But the Jewish Federation said police continue to encourage the community to be vigilant.

“We ask that everyone exercise heightened awareness and diligence in following security protocols,” the email said.

Gerry Almendrades, the community security director for the Centre for Jewish and Israel Affairs, said incidents like the new charges laid in Ottawa Saturday are the “culmination” of tolerating antisemitism in Canada.

He said he is reassured the Canadian security and intelligence agencies picked up on the threat and addressed it quickly.

RCMP said the Canadian Security Intelligence Service and the Integrated Terrorism Assessment Centre, along with provincial and municipal police, provided “indispensable collaboration” in the case.

Two days before the Ottawa youth was arrested, the RCMP Federal Policing Integrated National Security Enforcement Team arrested a 16-year-old in Calgary related to an ongoing terrorism investigation in that city.

He was arrested and released pending a terrorism peace bond hearing, under a provision of the Criminal Code allowing for the Crown to seek something similar to bail conditions for someone the Crown has reasonable grounds to fear may commit a terrorism offence.

The teen is the fourth person, and third teenager, arrested in that investigation.

The Canadian Press has asked the

The Doug Ford government will no longer dissolve the Region of Peel

The announcement, made by Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Paul Calandra on Wednesday afternoon, will reverse plans that would have seen Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon become single-tier, independent cities by 2025.

In the summer, the Progressive Conservatives fast-tracked legislation—dubbed the Hazel McCallion Act—through Queen’s Park, skipping public consultation and putting the onus on a [transition board to review issues](#) related to finance, governance and shared core services.



Paul Calandra, Ontario’s minister of municipal affairs and housing, scrums with journalists at the Queen’s Park Legislature in Toronto on Monday, Oct. 30, 2023. Calandra is shooting down a request from big city mayors for a change in funding criteria that would help more of them qualify for money to build infrastructure necessary for new homes. THE CANADIAN PRESS/Chris Young

“While we originally thought that the best way to achieve our goals of better services and lower taxes was through dissolution, we’ve since heard loud and clear from municipal leaders and stakeholders that full dissolution would lead to significant tax hikes and disruption to critical services the people of Peel

Region depend on,” Calandra said in a statement ahead of the announcement.

“This is something our government will never support.”

Instead, the government will introduce legislation in the new year that would “recalibrate the mandate of the Peel Region Transition Board” to focus on making local governments more efficient. This will include improving regional services like policing, paramedics and public health.

The board will be asked to make recommendations on “optimizing the delivery of services that support the commitment to build more homes.”

Officials said these recommendations will help remove a “duplicative layer of regional bureaucracy,” although it’s unclear how this will work, considering shared governance will still be in place.

Both Brampton and Caledon had expressed concerns about dissolving Peel Region before the Ford government passed legislation.

Brampton Mayor Patrick Brown said the tax ramifications would be severe, citing a jump of about 38 per cent. He also expressed concerns about shared services.

When asked why the government didn’t consult and review the impacts the dissolution of Peel Region would have on municipalities beforehand, Calandra indicated the legislation and the transition board were

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Federal government unveils what it calls a ‘strict’ oil and gas cap to curb emissions

cont’d from pg. 24

emissions cap and his government “will protect our constitutional right to build our economy in accordance with the priorities of Saskatchewan families and businesses.”

A statement from the provincial government in St John’s said the framework needs detailed analysis and further discussion with the federal government.

“Currently, all impacts of this proposed greenhouse gas emissions cap on Newfoundland and Labrador facilities are not clear,” the statement said.

“Newfoundland and Labrador remains committed to working with the federal government to achieve the net zero 2050 greenhouse gas emission reduction target.”

Environmentalists criticize timeline

Rick Smith, president of the Canadian Climate Institute, described the framework as a “sensible approach” but criticized the government’s timeline.

“There’s no need to push off implementation to 2026 or later,” he said.

“The approach to capping oil and gas emissions announced today is reasonable and necessary. These regulations should be finalized and implemented without further delay.”

Caroline Brouillette, executive director of Climate Action Network Canada, welcomed the framework and called it an example of backing “diplomacy with domestic action.”

“Now we must double down to ensure that draft regulations are tabled by February and that the oil and gas industry finally does its fair share of the national climate effort,” she said.

Energy Minister Jonathan Wilkinson and Environment Minister Steven Guilbeault say it takes time to come up with a cap framework and for the sector to reach certain targets.

The Pembina Institute also welcomed the cap, describing it as “responsible and realistic.”

“The regulatory framework released today is an important step toward meaningful reductions in emissions from the oil and gas sector,” said the institute’s Janetta McKenzie.

NDP environment critic Laurel Collins, however, said the framework misses the mark and panders to the oil and gas sector’s CEOs.

“At a time when people expect the government to take on the climate crisis, the Liberals instead have listened to oil and gas lobbyists, giving them an oil and gas emission cap framework that’s low, riddled with loopholes and won’t put Canada back on the right path for meeting our emission targets,” she said. CBC News

RCMP warn about spike in online extremism among Canadian youth

cont’d from pg. 32

RCMP for information about the fifth youth arrested for terrorism activities but police did not immediately respond.

It has also sought reaction from Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc. The federal Liberals have been promising new legislation for several years to tackle rising online hatred, but progress has been delayed, in part because of the complexities between combating hatred and freedom of speech.

Chantalle Aubertin, spokesperson for Justice Minister Arif Virani, declined to comment on specific cases that are before the courts, but said Virani is working with Heritage Minister Pascale St-Onge and Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc to introduce legislation to keep young people safe from online hatred and other dangers.

“Against the backdrop of the ongoing geopolitical conflicts, we are seeing concerning trends where online radicalization, including hate speech, manifests physically. This is unacceptable. We must put a stop to rising antisemitism and Islamophobia,” Aubertin said in an emailed statement.

“But we must take time to do this properly. Too much is at stake.”

Social media played a prominent role in the cases in Calgary. During a peace bond hearing for a 17-year-old arrested in June, the court heard the teen used TikTok, Instagram and Snapchat to post videos, including one of himself saying to “kill all (gay people)” at an LGBTQ+ protest and another depicting a synagogue being blown up.

cont’d on pg. 49

Goldstar Air, Toronto Airport agrees on Incentive Packages

cont’d from pg. 27

as Toronto is home to a strong West African diaspora.

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Ottawa backs listing Black and LGBTQ workers under Canada's workplace equity laws: source

cont'd pg. 9

The senior government source told CBC News that the "first step" the government will undertake is further consultation with affected communities, unions and employers on how best to implement the task force recommendations. Then, the Liberals will introduce legislation.

The task force report notes that women remain a group facing barriers that require removal. But it cites claims that progress with workplace equity has tended to benefit white women more than Indigenous or other racialized women.

"Early employment equity implementation has tended to focus on including women as a category without paying sufficient attention to diversity within the category of women," the report says. "The need to approach the category of women in a disaggregated and intersectional manner was stated poignantly by many of the stakeholders who appeared before our task force."

Ottawa announced the employment equity task force review in 2021. Its 12 members consulted Canadians, employer and worker organizations, civil society groups, experts and public sector representatives on modernizing the employment equity legislation that applies to all federally regulated workplaces.

More than 1.3 million people are employed in federally regulated industries and workplaces — about six per cent of Canada's workforce.

Among other recommendations, the task force says parliamentary employees and public sector workers who operate abroad should be covered by the Equity Act.

Penalties too low, report says

Since the murder of George Floyd in U.S. police custody in 2020, the use of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) training and practices has increased in workplaces. But the report said EDI

should not eliminate the need for robust legislation.

"Voluntary measures alone will not work to bring equity to Canadian workplaces," it said.

The report says that penalties for violating the act are too low and are rarely levied.

"Our task force was informed that only four employers have ever received a notice of assessment of a monetary penalty," the report says. "We learned that the last penalty was issued in 1991, which is also when the largest penalty was issued — \$3,000.00.

"Someone needs to be making sure that reasonable progress is actually occurring, with a view to achieving and sustaining employment equity that is properly resourced and effectively structured to avoid incentivizing non-compliance. Employment equity must not be sacrificed to wishful thinking."

The task force calls on the federal government to establish an independent equity commissioner who would report to Parliament.

The commissioner would take over tasks from the Canadian Human Rights Commission, whose "tiny" employment equity division can't keep up with the oversight work, the report says.

The commissioner should have a separate budget, guaranteed in legislation, that reflects the number of employers in federally regulated sectors.

"It is time to break out of the idea that equity work should be done on a nickel and a dime," the report says. "If we are committed to championing employment equity in this global moment of rising intolerance, if we understand how critical substantive equality is to our workplaces, our economy as a whole and our identity as Canadians, we must show it."

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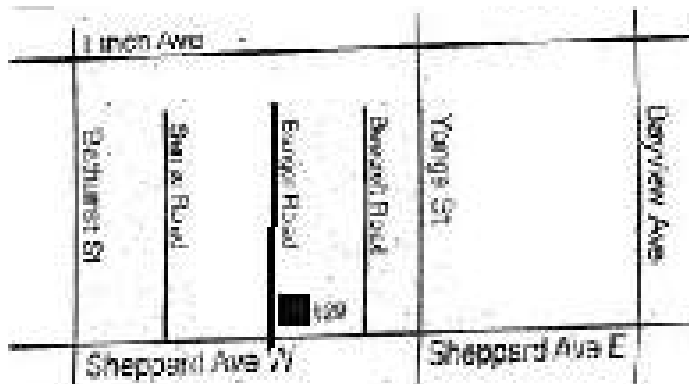
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The Doug Ford government will no longer dissolve the Region of Peel

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needed in order to do that kind of work.

"I'm quite excited about this," the minister said of the board's new mandate.

This is the third major policy reversal since Calandra took over the housing file in September.

The other two policies included the government's decision to carve up the Greenbelt and alter urban boundaries without proper consultation.

NDP Leader Marit Stiles said in a statement that while it's positive the government is reversing their plans, it has become a "concerning pattern."

"In this case, Mr. Ford & Ms. (Bonnie) Crombie used the people of Peel as pawns in some bizarre political chess game," Stiles said.

"Ford has created months of stress and uncertainty for workers in Peel Region who don't know if their jobs are secure. People in Peel Region have been worried about how the services they count on will be delivered and if their taxes will skyrocket. He's wasted an entire year that could have been spent working to actually address the housing affordability crisis.

Crombie, the outgoing mayor of Mississauga and current leader of the Ontario Liberal Party, indicated that she didn't believe this announcement was the end of her vision for an independent Mississauga.

"It's simply a bump in the road," she said.

"I want to acknowledge the premier and minister could have chosen to completely walk away from the dissolution today, but they chose not to because deep down I know they share our collective commitment to ensuring that local government runs efficiently and effectively and that our taxpayers get a fair deal."

There is no indication at this time that the province will dissolve Peel Region at a later date.

OVER A DOZEN MZOS BEING REVIEWED

A review of some MZOs, first promised by Calandra in September, has found that some were "showing a lack of progress" and are being considered for amendment or revocation.

A MZO is a provincial mechanism that allows the government to re-zone a piece of land and override municipal development constrictions.

The province's auditor general noted two years ago that the Progressive Conservative government frequently used MZOs to overcome potential barriers and delays to development.

Forty-four MZOs were issued by the government between March 2019 and March 2021. In the past, about one was issued per year, the 2021 report said.

Calandra has previously said he will run with a "use it or lose it" approach to reviewing MZOs. As such, on Wednesday, he announced that eight orders unrelated to housing are being consulted on for proposed amendment or cancellation.

Another 14 housing-related MZOs are "under enhanced monitoring because they are showing a lack of progress."

CITY AUDITS CANCELLED

Financial audits for the City of Toronto, Mississauga, Caledon, Brampton, Newmarket and the Region of Peel will soon be terminated.

The audit process began in May after municipal leaders and planners expressed concerns about provincial housing legislation that slashed development charges in an effort to encourage more construction.

Some municipalities warned that eliminating these fees and charges will cost them hundreds of millions of dollars. Developer funding is often used to develop critical infrastructure that could support housing or other community projects.

Then-Housing Minister Steve Clark promised to ensure cities are "made whole" during the process.

However, the province said that development charge exemptions for non-profit, affordable and purpose-built rental homes will remain unchanged.

Crombie suggested the audits were almost complete and that the province should release the results publicly, as she believes it would have shown that Mississauga was financially capable of operating as an independent city.

"I understand that these audits are now completed and I urge the government to release the results, as I believe they will help inform future planning not only for all three cities, but for the region."

It's unclear how much the termination of these audits will cost the province. CTV News



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Deal to lower Visa, Mastercard processing fees will come up short for many retailers, critics say

cont'd from pg. 17

Food-borne illnesses usually present as diarrhoea, vomiting and stomach pains. - Source: Getty Images

Unsafe foods, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), contribute to poor health, including impaired growth and development, micro-nutrient deficiencies, noncommunicable and infectious diseases, and mental illness. Globally, one in ten people are affected by food-borne diseases each year. Antonina Mutoro, a nutrition researcher at the African Population and Health Research Center, explains what causes food contamination and how we can lower the risk of disease.

What is food contamination?

Access to safe and nutritious food is a basic human right which many do not enjoy, partly because of food contamination. This is defined as the presence of harmful chemicals and microorganisms in food that can cause illness. According to the WHO, food contamination affects about one in every ten people globally and causes about 420,000 deaths annually.

Food contamination can be:

- **physical:** foreign objects in food can potentially cause injury or carry disease-causing microorganisms. Pieces of metal, glass and stones can be choking hazards, or cause cuts or damage to teeth. Hair is another physical contaminant.
- **biological:** living organisms in food, including microorganisms (bacteria, viruses and protozoa), pests (weevils, cockroaches and rats) or parasites (worms), can cause disease.
- **chemical:** substances like soap residue, pesticide residue and toxins produced by microorganisms such as aflatoxins can lead to poisoning.

What are the most common causes of food contamination?

The most common cause of food contamination is poor food handling. This includes not washing your hands at the appropriate time – before eating and preparing food, after using the toilet, or after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. Using

dirty utensils, not washing fruits and vegetables with clean water, and storing raw and cooked food in the same place can also be harmful. Sick people should not handle food. And you should avoid consuming under-cooked foods, particularly meat.

Poor farming practices can also contaminate food. This includes the heavy use of pesticides and antibiotics, or growing fruits and vegetables using contaminated soil and water. The use of inadequately composted or raw animal manure or sewage is also harmful.

À lire aussi : Power cuts and food safety: how to avoid illness during loadshedding

Fresh foods can lead to a number of illnesses. In Kenya, for instance, the contamination of meat, fruits and vegetables with human waste is relatively common. This is attributed to the use of contaminated water to wash food. Flies carrying contaminants can also directly transfer faecal matter and bacteria onto plant leaves or fruits.

Street foods are another common source of food contamination. These foods are widely consumed in low- and middle-income countries because they're cheap and easily accessible.

What are the signs that you've eaten contaminated food?

Biological and chemical substances are the most common food contaminants. They account for more than 200 food-borne illnesses, including typhoid, cholera and listeriosis. Food-borne illnesses usually present as diarrhoea, vomiting and stomach pains.

In severe cases, food-borne illnesses can lead to neurological disorders, organ failure and even death. It's therefore advisable to seek immediate medical attention if you begin to experience symptoms like persistent diarrhoea and vomiting after eating or drinking.

Children aged under five are the most vulnerable to food-borne illnesses. They bear 40% of the food-borne disease burden. A child's immune system is still developing and can't fight off infections as effectively as an adult's.

In low- and middle-income countries, reduced immunity in children can also occur as a result of

malnutrition and frequent exposure to infections due to poor hygiene and sanitation, including a lack of access to safe water and toilets. Additionally, when children are ill, they tend to have poor appetites. This translates to reduced food intake. Coupled with increased nutrient losses through diarrhoea and vomiting, this can lead to a cycle of infection and malnutrition and, in extreme cases, death.

Pregnant women and people with reduced immunity due to illness or age are equally vulnerable and extra care should, therefore, be taken to prevent food-borne illnesses among these groups.

What can we do to prevent food contamination?

Food-borne illnesses also have negative economic impacts, especially in low- and middle-income countries. The World Bank estimates it costs more than US\$15 billion annually to treat these illnesses in these countries. So it's important to have preventive strategies in place.

Food contamination can be prevented through simple measures:

- washing your hands at key times (before preparing, serving or eating meals; before feeding children, after using the toilet or after disposing of faeces)
- wearing clean, protective clothing during food preparation
- storing food properly
- washing raw foods with clean water
- keeping raw and cooked foods separate
- using separate utensils for meats and for food meant to be eaten raw.

Good farming practices, such as the use of clean water and application of approved pesticides in recommended amounts, can help prevent food contamination.

Food vendors also need to be trained on food safety, and provided with clean water and proper sanitation.

As part of the research team at the African Population and Health Research Center, I'm working on the Healthy Food Africa project, which aims to boost food security in urban informal settlements through the promotion of food safety. In Kenya, the project is working closely with the Nairobi county government to develop a food safety training manual targeting street food vendors. This will go a long way towards improving food safety in the city.

Antonina Mutoro ne travaille pas, ne conseille pas, ne possède pas de parts, ne reçoit pas de fonds d'une organisation qui pourrait tirer profit de cet article, et n'a déclaré aucune autre affiliation que son organisme de recherche.

By Antonina Mutoro, Postdoctoral Research Scientist, African Population and Health Research Center

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Toronto's Ghanaian Presbyterian Church helps feed the homeless

By Ebenezer Amankwah, Toronto.

In a heartwarming act of charity, the Ghanaian Presbyterian Church in Toronto has donated a variety of food items to the Evangel Hall Mission, a local organization dedicated to supporting the city's underprivileged and socially isolated residents.

The donation included canned goods, rice, milk, spaghetti, and oats, all of which will be used to provide daily meals for the homeless.

Not stopping at just donating, the church group also prepared and served dinner to those visiting the Mission post-donation, further exemplifying their commitment to the cause.

Elder Mavis Addo, the deputy clerk of the session of the Ghanaian Presbyterian Church and the leader of the delegation, praised the Evangel Hall Mission for their tireless efforts in promoting emotional, social, and physical health among Toronto's poor and homeless population.

She acknowledged the challenges of such an endeavour and commended the Mission for its achievements over the past century.

Reverend Dale Henry, the Spiritual Coordinator of the Evangel Hall



Reverend Dale Henry taking the delegation on a tour of the Mission

Mission, expressed his gratitude to the Church for their ongoing support. He noted that the Ghanaian Presbyterian Church in Toronto has been a consistent ally of the Mission for several years.

Adding a touch of cultural richness to the event, the Singing Band Union of the Ghanaian Presbyterian Church, who led the presentation, delighted everyone present with a selection of soothing Ghanaian songs.



Delegation helping in food packaging



Preparation of the food items



Some of the other delegation with Rev. Reverend Dale Henry



Reverend Dale Henry, the Spiritual Coordinator of the Evangel Hall giving them information about the place

Quick and Easy Cost-Free Cleaning Home Remedies

1. Restore freshness to your mattress with baking soda

A mattress becomes noticeably slept-in over time, losing its aroma and smelling more like unwashed clothes or even becoming uncomfortable from mites. To keep a mattress smelling aromatic, feeling fresh and pest-free, it is good practice to clean it like you would any other furniture in your home regularly.

Sprinkling baking soda and essential oils onto a mattress will clean and rejuvenate it inside and out. Allow a few minutes for the solution to work before vacuuming it up. The mixture restores freshness and deters mites. Clove, Eucalyptus, Rosemary, Fennel and Tea Tree Oil are essential oils that kill mites.

2. This is why you should pour Vinegar on your Plants in the Garden

Here is the explanation why you should use Vinegar in your garden, especially for your plants. You can use Vinegar as a Herbicide. Therefore, you should take normal white vinegar.

Because of its acetic acid level, which is 5%, it can burn the top of your weed. You will get rid of every plant you don't want to have in your garden. There are lots more you can do with Vinegar around your house. Have a look at the next one, it's a perfect hack, that will make the cleaning of the toilet way easier. This is the kind of hacks we are all looking for.

3. Shaving cream stain remover remedy

Shaving cream dissolves stains on fixtures such as faucets, mirrors and shower heads. You know those pesky little unexplainable stains that are not derived from rust or other corrosion, but just seem to come from use?

Ever look at the drain in a bathroom sink and think, what is that? Maybe it was hair dye, cough syrup, a discarded beverage, or even a nose bleed that put the stain there, but it remains. Greg Shepard (owner of Dallas Maids) says shaving cream dissolves these stains in 15 minutes, allowing you to wipe away residual cream and rinse the surface clean.

4. Brush your garbage disposer with an old toothbrush

Your garbage disposer gets covered with gunk. This is not easy to see and hard to remember until you smell something in your kitchen sink, and it becomes obvious it is in the same drain the garbage disposal is in.

Scrubbing the blades of the garbage disposal unit with a baking soda and lemon juice like brushing teeth is a good way to get rid of the smell and ward off the pests. The acidity of the lemon juice and texture of the baking soda dissolve dried on particles of food, so you can more easily brush the blades clean.

5. Clean your kitchen range hood cooking vent with baking soda

If you cook a lot, grease can buildup on your stove top and in your overhead cooking vent. Stir a box of baking soda with hot water to make a mixture for cleaning your range hood cooking vent. Hot water from tap is fine, but heated water from a stove top tea kettle or countertop electric kettle is better.

The more surface you must clean or thicker the buildup of grease, the more baking soda you should use. One box is usually more than enough. Using a tray like container, immerse the cooking vent completely. The baking soda will dissolve the grease.

6. Dust ceiling fans with socks and pillows

Ceiling fans are great for ventilating any room. Cleaning a ceiling fan can often be messy, however, especially if it has been neglected. A pillow case or long tube socks to wipe the blades of the fan make the job easier and less messy.

Turning socks inside-out also retains more of the dust because it sticks to the fluffy surface of the inside of the sock. A pillow case made of smooth fabric is not as good as fabric that catches the dust. This keeps dust from falling everywhere as you wipe it clean from the blades of the fan.

7. Keep your carpet clean with clear alcohol

Stains on carpet can be bad, especially on short carpet. Cooking with red meat and fish can bring all kinds of oils. While most stains stick out, others blend in. Not every stain is a dark stain. White wines and white sauces can stain carpets too.

Clear alcohol such as Vodka or rubbing alcohol can clean just about any stain out your carpet with little extra money or physical effort. Everyone has spent hundreds of dollars in their life removing stains, but you always only had to spend as much as it takes to buy rubbing alcohol and cotton swabs.

8. Squeegee clean pet hair from out of the way places

The squeegee you use for your car can also be used to clean pet hair from hard-to-reach and out-of-the-way places inside your home. A squeegee can reach into corners and creep along the upper and bottom edges of baseboards in your home, and is long enough to clean surfaces you cannot reach alone.

High up corners and overhead areas above tables and counters are accessible with a squeegee. There is no limit to where the pet hair will go as you know, but a squeegee will extend your reach and give you the ability to clean it from your home.

9. Clean your coffee grinder with stale bread

Getting the coffee grinder clean is a challenge sometimes. Grounds get into the crevices and around the rim of the bowl and into the grooves of the parts inside the bowl that make the blades. The finer you grind your coffee, the more likely it is to accumulate caked on grounds and film.

Sometimes the accumulation of fine grains began to discolor the inside of the bowl of the coffee grinder and the surfaces of the blades. Wadding up stale bread and covering the bottom of the bowl beneath the blades will catch the grounds by running the grinder again!

10. Clean gutters in the dead of Winter

No one ever seems to clean the gutters of their home in the Winter. It is always a chore among the rest of Spring chores around the yard for most. Though the best time to clean the gutters is really not in the Spring, but actually better in the Winter.

All that gunk and garbage can be removed in meshed chunks of ice and debris in the cold of Winter. That is much easier to remove than a soupy stew of leaves, sticks, twigs and slimy things that might suddenly crawl out of the gutter and cling to your skin!

11. Vinegar baking soda rub for your tub

How to make a vinegar baking soda solvent for your tub? Jenice Findley of Fins Property Maintenance says use one-cup vinegar, and one-half cup baking soda...

Mix the rub into hot water. Pour into the tub to cover the surface of the bottom. Allow it to sit 5 minutes. Fill the tub with hot water until quarter-full. Let the water sit 5 more minutes. Release the drain. Rinse thoroughly. You're done!

This allows the mixture to dissolve stains and decompose annoying buildup that is hard to get rid of because it is embedded in grooves around a drain or fixtures.

12. Salt and lemon for cleaning your cutting board

Your cutting board is where you cut your vegetables, meat and fruit. If you are not keeping it clean regularly, it is only because it is not being used. Cleaning a wooden cutting board is not just about killing germs. You must remove the food on the surface and much of the food absorbed into the surface.

A mixture of salt and lemon juice from fruit or from a jar is abrasive enough to scrub the cutting board clean. The salt works on the top of the cutting board surface. The lemon juice helps decompose stains absorbed into the surface.

13. Pour baking soda and vinegar down a dirty drain

As any plumber will tell you there are clogs that come apart from chemical reactions, such as baking soda and vinegar. Other clogs are things like hairballs, and require standard plunging or a snake. For clogs and buildup in a dirty drain that cannot be fixed by the plunger.

First pour some hot water down the drain. Next pour down a half cup of baking soda. Chase it with a cup of vinegar and wait. Let it sit for a moment. The chemical reaction this creates within the drain will dissolve many kinds of clogs that your plunger cannot handle.

14. Lemon oil as an oven cleaner

Lemon oil acts as an aromatic solvent in the oven. Of all the oven cleaning agents out there, the best is essential lemon oil. Even commercial products prove it by including lemon oil alongside of other chemicals and cleaning agents. Yet, the secret is that lemon oil itself is all you need.

Lemon oil as an additive mixed with chemicals achieves nowhere the same level of clean as used alone. You can clean an oven in less time with less scrubbing. Lemon oil is also much safer than many toxic commercial oven cleaners that cannot achieve the same natural clean.

15. Steam clean outdoor grills with wet paper towels

A grill is always in need of cleaning, no matter how much you try. One easy way to reduce extra cleaning is to use paper towels. When the grill is still scolding hot, wet a bunch of paper towels and literally cover your grill with them in a thick blanket.

This will cause the grease to bake onto the paper towels. As the steam breaks apart the oil and grease, it covers the paper towels. When the grill is cool all you have to do is peel the paper towels from the grill and dispose them into a plastic bag.

16. Get rid of couch stains using clear alcohol

Couch stains are a pain to clean using costly and potentially harmful commercial products, but are very easy and safely removed using clear alcohol. The stronger and more potent the alcohol the better. Vodka is a good choice of clear alcohol, and one we already know we can use for carpets. Vodka even comes as 200-proof at a price.

This may be more than you need. Rubbing alcohol is another good choice as we

Quick and Easy Cost-Free Cleaning Home Remedies

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know, and easier and cheaper to buy than undiluted Vodka. Not only does this method eliminate the stain, but much of any odor that might exist.

17. Dust window blinds with old socks

Window blinds very quickly build up dust and grime over time, and it becomes easy to see when they need cleaning. Only cleaning blinds is messy and you risk getting that messy crude all over the floor or floating freely through the air in the room to a new location.

It is better to use old socks turned inside-out. This allows the fluffy inside of the sock to catch the dust and dirt before instead of come loose when wiped from the surface of the blinds. You can then dispose of the lint into a plastic bag, and you're done!

18. Pour Vinegar on your Bread and leave it in the Garage

This may sound like a joke to you, but you will see that you only need a single piece of bread and a bit of vinegar. These ingredients should everyone have at home. Maybe you too? The hack works this way: Pour a little bit of vinegar on a piece of bread and throw it in the trash. Then put something over it. Vinegar can neutralize the smelly garbage and is also bactericidal. This way, your kitchen will smell way better. There is so much more you can do with Vinegar. Find out!

19. This is why you should use a Dishwasher Tablet in your shower

This Hack is very easy and yes we are talking about a normal dishwasher tablet which you can use perfectly to clean your shower. It will get really clean and it will shine. Also, it is a cheap and easy method, because you can get them in every supermarket.

What you will need besides the dishwasher tablet is gloves and warm water. After that, you should wait around 20 or 30 minutes. But be careful, it can get slippery. But it's a perfect way to get your shower clean, try for yourself and tell your colleagues. Have a look at the next point.

20. This is why you should pour Vinegar on your Plants in the Garden

Here is the explanation why you should use Vinegar in your garden, especially for your plants. You can use Vinegar as a Herbicide. Therefore, you should take normal white vinegar.

Because of its acetic acid level which is 5% it can burn the top of your weed. You will get rid of every plant you don't want to have in your garden. There are lots more you can do with Vinegar around your house. Have a look at the next one its a perfect hack, where you only need to keep your old butter knives, they will clean the air vents.

21. Keep old butter knives to clean air vents

Old butter knives are helpful for cleaning the crevices of places that are hard to get into. Many air vents in your home regularly acquire dust, and if left alone begin to form veils of dust that open like curtains when the heat or AC kicks on.

This sort of thing is quickly removed using an old, decommissioned butter knife to clear the dust and lint from vents in various rooms of your home. Keeping old kitchen utensils like butter knives instead of pitching them is a good idea because they can be turned into handy tools for such use.

22. This is why you should place a toilet paper roll under the seat

We come to this point on our Cleaning Hacks List. Toilet seats should be cleaned very often, because they are having a lot of bacteria. When you flush the toilet, the bacteria will get from the bowl on to the toilet roll, and toilet paper is easy for bacteria.

That's why you should put a toilet paper roll under the seat. Have a look at the next hack. It's about Coffee filters for dusting electronics. You should try it out! It will get cleaner and dust free. Have a look at the other hacks in our list, you will be surprised!

23. Coffee filters for dusting electronics

Electronics get dusty fast. The dust that accumulates on electronics is hard to remove because it seems like many cloth surfaces will only smear the grime around. Using things like cleaning agents on electronics is limited to specific products that may be unavailable.

It is not always true you will have an air can on-hand, for instance, and many people do not like using the air can. Coffee filters are a useful substitute because they will pick up the grime instead of spread it around. Dust also tends to cling to a coffee filter because of its texture and composition.

24. This is why you should drop a bit of soap in your garden

When working in the garden, you will hate it when a bug bites you. We gardeners all know and hate that. It is not easy to get rid of mosquitoes and other blood-sucking bugs. And this is why you will love this hack especially. Use the bar soap to get rid of them. Make your soap a bit wet and then rub it over your bug bite, and you will feel the relief.

If you have a problem with deers and also mice, you can use the soap as well. The reason why this hack is working is because deers will avoid the area, because don't like the fragrant soap.

25. Use a seam ripper to clean vacuum heads

A seam ripper such as used by a seamstress or for everyday sewing is a good tool for cleaning out your vacuum head. A sewing tool for cutting and removing stitches, a seam ripper can remove the strands of hair, fabric, threads of carpet and other miscellaneous items that end up wound around the roller and tangled up inside the vacuum head elsewhere.

This not only keeps your vacuum clean of unsightly filth that seems to create a smell when the vacuum head is spinning, but it also ensures you are not wearing out your vacuum head before its time.

26. Make old shoes look new again with nail polish remover

Sneakers and other fancy footwear you love to keep clean often need cleaning too. Shoes take on wear and tear and discoloration from stains, but cleaning them is usually believed to be more of a challenge than it really is.

You can clean some of the worst stains and from your shoes and boots with only a little bit of nail polish remover. Simply dab a bit of the nail polish remover on the affected spot and wipe clean with a wet rag or paper towel. Repeat the process for each affected area until your shoes look vibrant and new!

27. Make lint cleaning easy by using an old tee

Lint in your drier is not only dirty, it's dangerous. If lint is not cleaned from the drier filter regularly it could cause a fire. This messy job is very often coveted by children in a household, if you remember wanting to be the one to scrape the mat of lint out of the filter when it was thick.

The truth is it should never get that thick. This job is less messy if you swipe it clean with an old tee, saving your hands from getting all dry and dusty and dirty from handling the lint in the filter.

28. Vinegar and baking soda recipe to soak oven racks clean

Just as you can get a range hood cooking vent clean with hot water and baking soda, you can get oven racks clean with another such mixture. You can do something similar with vinegar and baking soda for your oven racks.

Simply immerse your oven racks into a tray with one bottle of vinegar until the vinegar absorbs the grease and oil. The baking soda helps break down the baked on bits of food and grease and layers of oil caked on the oven racks. Once soft enough, you should be able to wipe away the residual grease and grime.

29. Use bread balls to clean spills from delicate surfaces

Many spills are not easy to clean on a surface because of it might be wood or bamboo, a table or tray that may absorb the spill. A fast easy approach is to take a slice or two from your bread loaf and make it into a bread ball you can use like a sponge.

The bread balls soak up the spill before it sinks below the surface. Wine spills on wood that need to be removed immediately after they occur are a good example of how to use bread balls to clean the spill in this way. You should really try this!

30. Dust screens with an adhesive lint roller

Dirt and crude become stuck inside window and door screens. Vegetation and dead insects begin to cover the mesh along with bird droppings and things from inside your home when you have the windows open and the wind is blowing through them.

Things like dust, lint and pet hair. You might feel like you must take each screen out and scrub it down with soapy water, but this isn't always necessary. Using an adhesive lint roller for clothes often removes this mess on your screen. At least, buying you time before you have to use the hose on them again.

31. Keep good pots and pans clean with olive oil

Mat Franken from Aunt Fannie's says to clean your good pots and pans with olive oil. This allows you to scrub delicate and rough surfaces of pots and pans without scratching them or damaging them.

Olive oil acts as a natural solvent and can break down baked grease and burned-on grime just as well as (and often better than) commercial soaps can. You can remove blemishes and stains in this way on steel, titanium, and non-stick pots and pans. Iron pots and pans are ideal candidates for cleaning with almost only olive oil, using very little soap and water ever.

32. Create a concoction to clean unseen kitchen grease

Kitchen cabinets become oily and greasy too, and eventually need cleaning inside and out. You can always polish and wax your nice wooden cabinets, but this is not going to be the way you clean them every time you choose.

A simple recipe of baking soda and vegetable oil is both abrasive enough and delicate enough to use on these surfaces, allowing you to more easily wipe these

cont'd on pg. 43

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surfaces clean with fresh rags and paper towels. Even if your cabinets are not made of wood, you can use the same solution. The vegetable oil, however, is ideal for wood surfaces.

33. Remove pet odors with vinegar and oil

Getting rid of pet odors is never easy. Getting pet odors out of furniture is harder than removing them from anywhere else. That is because pet accidents go deep inside furniture, whereas on carpets and rugs the floor is the deepest they go.

Getting rid of these annoying odors when they occur requires only vinegar and oil. The vinegar will evaporate and take the pet odor with it. The more pet odor you must remove, the more vinegar you should use. Replace the odor with essential oils to deter the pet from choosing the same spot as a bathroom again.

34. Use a solution to sterilize plastic cutting boards

Plastic cutting boards must be handled differently than wooden cutting boards when being cleaned and sanitized. Lemon juice and salt are what you use for wooden boards, but for plastic boards we need a different solution to do the trick.

Plastic boards require a special mixture of baking soda, dish washing soap and hydrogen peroxide. Stir in enough of each ingredient to make a thick, bubbly purée that can be used to scrub the plastic cutting board using a sponge or washcloth. This will not only wash and sterilize, but also give the plastic cutting board a clean, fresh scent.

35. Use ammonia to clean greasy stovetops

Stovetops get very greasy and oily from cooking. If you have a gas stove this is especially true for you because you have to take apart the burner covers and clean them separately. It can be a major chore to scrub these clean, and commercial products do not seem to make the job easier.

Fortunately, this gruesome task can be made more tolerable using ammonia. Seal the burner covers into a plastic bag with a bit of ammonia overnight. Remove them the next day when all of the oil and grease has dissolved from the burner covers into the ammonia.

36. Use Pine-Sol to revitalize your toilet bowl brush

Pine-Sol in the toilet bowl is a good way to clean your toilet brush. You may think, why? After all, it is always being used to clean, shouldn't it be clean? Yes, but it also sits inside its carriage, where it dries after cleaning the toilet bowl.

The other things in the carriage combined with things that survive on the brush after cleaning the toilet bowl should be guarded against as well. A cleaning agent like Pine-Sol is ideal for sanitizing the toilet brush after cleaning the toilet bowl. Also, you get the fresh scent of Pine-Sol in your bathroom.

37. Clean toys in the washing machine

Washing toys in the washing machine is easy and something you should do regularly to keep them clean. After all, toys spend a lot of time on the floor, and are shared by children and sometimes also pets.

You can wash toys in a washing machine by putting them in a mesh bag or other laundry bag, and putting them into the washer. Be sure to set the washing machine to rinse without a spin cycle. Laundry soap, hot water, and even added bleach could be used to ensure the toys are properly sanitized before going back into the playpen.

38. Wash pillows with tennis balls to keep them fat and fluffy

Pillows are not easy to wash because they tend to lose their fluff after the first few washings. This is because they are filled with water and rinsed dry on a spin cycle. After that they are tumbled dry and shrink in the heat of the drier.

One of the things to deter the shrinking of pillows in the drier is to put tennis balls into the drier without using heat. The tennis balls absorb moisture released by the pillows, allowing them to dry faster, shrinking less. Using the highest spin cycle on the washer lessens time in the drier.

39. Use a toothbrush to clean your toaster

A toothbrush can clean a lot of things as we already know. A toaster often represents an issue to clean because most brushes are made of metal. Of course, never could you put a metal brush into a plugged in toaster, it could be very dangerous.

Most brushes can get stuck inside a toaster, and can even damage the inside of a toaster. A toothbrush that is usually made of plastic, however, is a safe and effective alternative to a standard kitchen brush. You can easily use the bristles of the brush to clean all the delicate and hard-to-reach places inside the toaster.

40. Use essential oils to clean toilet stains

Doyle James of Mr. Rooter Plumbing says if you can't get stains out of your toilet bowl, it may be time for a different approach. A mixture of essential oils can be used to soften and loosen the buildup that causes these stains.

If you mix 15 drops of Tea Tree Oil and 15 drops of lemon or orange essential oil and let sit in the bowl for 30 minutes, you will be able to scrub these stains clean again. The solvency of the Tea Tree Oil and the acidity of essential citrus oil decompose stubborn buildup and kill germs.

41. Vinegar and baking soda dishwasher cleaning solution

Many people assume running the dishwasher is the same as cleaning it. Since you are always cleaning dishes with it, it is always clean right? Well, maybe not. While this is basically true, there are other things to keep clean in a dishwasher that require cleaning agents, such as bacteria and microbes that may not be desirable on your dishes.

Periodically, cleaning your dishwasher requires only a jug of vinegar and baking soda. To thoroughly sanitize and refresh your dishwasher pour the vinegar into the dishwasher. Empty the box of baking soda into the vinegar, and run for one cycle.

42. Lemon and vinegar microwave freshener

Sliced lemon and one-quarter cup of white vinegar set in a small bowl inside your microwave for a few minutes will freshen it up completely. When you open the door again the concoction will hit you with an aromatic wave and sometimes even a lemony flavor you can taste in the air.

Any baked-on food and stains will soften from the vapor, and can easily be wiped from the inside with a paper towel. Vinegar, as we all know, acts as a cleaning agent, impeding the spread of germs and unwanted microbes. Lemon adds a strong, fresh scent that lingers.

43. Use chalk to remove grease from walls

Cooking in the kitchen often yields grease marks. Strangely these grease marks may turn up elsewhere, such as in the bathroom or by doors with more traffic in your home. Who knows what they may be made of?...but, they are not all the same.

Many oils and fluids come from jobs or tools used around the home, but cooking in the kitchen puts the most grease on walls. Rubbing chalk on these oily streaks and blemishes soaks up the grease until it is thin, allowing you to wipe the residual film clean from the surface with a soapy paper towel.

44. Bathroom tissue roll crevice cleaner

A toilet paper roll when it runs out of paper becomes a brown cardboard cylinder we usually crush and pitch. However, it is good to keep one handy because it can be used as a crevice cleaner on the nozzle of a vacuum attachment.

You can easily use it to go into the dark and damp places in your bathroom you do not want to let get dirty at all, such as shower windows, cabinet corners and underneath the toilet. Using the bathroom tissue roll over the nozzle keeps the nozzle clean, and you can pitch the dirty cardboard tissue roll.

Source **Facts & Fun**



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THE CHRISTIAN IN 2023: THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS IS THE SPIRIT OF PLANNING

Quotes to note

Many plans are in a man's mind, but it is the LORD's purpose for him that will stand (be carried out). Proverbs 19:21 (AMP)

"Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life" Mary Oliver

"In preparing for battle I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable" Dwight D. Eisenhower.

"For tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today" African Proverb.

God is a planner and He created us to be planners. What is your plan for the next 25 years of your Life?

In Isaiah 14:26 the Bible says "This is the purpose (PLAN) that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. 27 For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?"

The prophet Jeremiah in Jeremiah 29:11 affirms that "For I know the thoughts (PLANS) that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts (PLANS) of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end".

Many Believers go about their day-to-day activities without any sense of purpose that they are accomplishing anything. All too often they live their lives out with no plan of a better future. If we would take a look at God's plan of redemption, we would realize that He is a Master Planner. Nothing just happened in His sending Jesus to consummate our redemption, but everything was planned. Planning is a major step toward changing things as they are in our lives to the way we want them to be and to how God's Word reveals they can be. As we position ourselves for 2024 and beyond, I will admonish that we take the following steps as outlined by John Rasicci.

1. TAKE TIME TO PLAN

Just as a Pastor must set aside time for prayer, he also must set aside time for planning. It's not possible to "plan when I have time." The life of the church depends on the two "P's": prayer and planning. The same holds true for our individual lives. It is in prayer where we receive God's plans Mark 1:35. Prayer without a doubt is the most important, and through prayer comes the ability to get God's plans. It's as reasonable to lock your door, unplug your phone or go to a private place to plan as it is to do the same to pray. You must set aside the time for it. You must plan to plan. You can't set goals and plan without regular time set aside to do it. A certain amount of time each day must be reserved for



planning. People who do not plan do not plan to plan. Planning is a form of work. It's not a matter of "let's get our planning over with and then we'll start working." Planning is not only work, but it is probably the most efficient type of work. Ecclesiastes 10:10 "If the ax is dull, and its edge unsharpened, more strength is needed but skill will bring success." (NIV)." It's much better to work wisely than to expend all your energy, to spin your wheels and get nowhere.

2. PLANNING MUST BE FLEXIBLE

Regardless of how well we think things through, there is a constant need for monitoring, reflecting, evaluation and correction if the goal is to be reached. Plans should never be set in cement. Things change. Unforeseen events take place. Our environment is always changing. Plans made a year ago may not fit what needs to happen now. Planning must never be seen as a one-time event but as a process. Proverb 16:9 The mind of man plans his ways, but the Lord directs his steps. If plans are considered as fixed and unchangeable, they will most likely fail. We need to constantly monitor and evaluate our progress to see if we are reaching the goal. If we're planning to drive 1000 miles across unfamiliar territory, it's best to look at the road map once in a while to measure progress. If we get on the wrong road, we need to adjust.

Checkpoints to monitor progress need built into the planning process because planning cannot anticipate every aspect of the future. **Planning involves thinking through what you expect you will need to do, but as you progress, you must constantly evaluate and re-plan to handle things you didn't see when you began.**

3. PLANNING IS PEOPLE

The planning process should involve or take into consideration those who will be responsible for their

accomplishment. You must act for your future. Where the plan is about an organization, family, or group. Please note that people more readily support what they help to create. It's easier to get enthused about our ideas than if we are handed someone else's. When people are involved in the planning process, it gives a sense of "ownership" to them which creates better commitment and stronger motivation to carry out the plans. Our ideas aren't the only ideas, and many people know more about certain things than we do. As a leader you don't have to know how everything is to be done, but you do need to know why. There's a saying in the business world that earmarks the successful endeavors of any organization or department, **"Those who know how, are usually the ones working for those who know why."**

Let's learn to plan in the light of eternity as we obtain inspiration from the following Bible Characters: Always remember that God's people create God-inspired plans.

Moses: In Moses' first encounter with God, he's given the plan to lead the people of Israel out of slavery. Later, when not having a plan became too much to handle and was seen by his father-in-law Jethro, he said to him, "What you are doing is not good." In Exodus 18:17, a plan was developed.

There would be many more carried out by Moses, including a plan to build the Ark and the succession plan to have Joshua be the next leader.


Joshua: Speaking of Joshua, when reading the book of Joshua, there is one plan after another. The fall of Jericho happens through a plan. Later, Consequently, in Joshua 6 and 7 when Joshua decides to make his own plan without hearing the Lord first, things do not go so well. Learn to plan, better still, learn to plan with God.

Nehemiah: Nehemiah took a strategic approach to reconstruct Jerusalem's walls: he evaluated their status, calculated the expenditure, and appointed leaders and helpers to help him complete the task. In short, he prayerfully followed a plan.

Jesus: The ministry of Jesus was all part of the plan. He sought out men who he would develop to send out and carry on the mission after his resurrection and would even give them a plan to do so (Matthew 28:19-20 and Acts 1:8). His entire life on earth was all part of God's plan to bring redemption to mankind, as Jesus came to "seek and save the lost." (Luke 19:10)

What is the personal growth plan for your life? Do you have a plan at all? Not having a plan is planning. The question is, do you like your plan?

Proverbs 21:5 says, "The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty."



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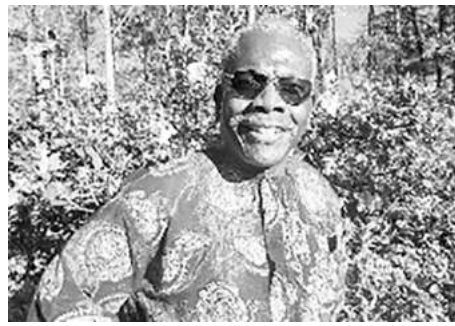
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Any pastor with bodyguards must be a thief – Rev Som-Pinpong

In Rev Dr Albert Som-Pinpong's view, "it is not scriptural, it is not biblical" to have bodyguards as a pastor.



Rev Dr. Albert Som-Pinpong

He spoke on No.1 FM, 105.3 on Wednesday, December 13, 2023, during the Adom Mmere (Time of Grace) morning show, hosted by Evangelist Prince Adu Asare.

Known to be a US-based pastor, he argued that while he lived in Israel, the founder of Christianity, "Jesus Christ had no bodyguards".

Based on this, he asserted, "No pastor, whether you call yourself bishop, archbishop, circle bishop, square bishop, triangular bishop, or general apostle, apostle," etc., "you don't have the right to have a bodyguard".

"It becomes an apostasy or blasphemous when we say Jesus Christ had bodyguards – and the disciples were his bodyguards.

They weren't his bodyguards. They were people that he called to send out to proclaim his word".

A pastor only needs a bodyguard when "there's something [he's] hiding or stealing or maybe [he's] offended someone," Rev Som-Pinpong pressed.

He noted God promises protection to his servants in the Psalms which read: "He'll not allow the weapons of the wicked to fall on your lot so that you will not be prompted to do evil".

"So, God is our protector, he's our

shepherd, he's our everything and if we surrender to him and walk with him, and preach the word as he wants us to preach it, there'll be no need for bodyguards," the pastor of 50 years exhorted", he said.

He also rebuked church leaders who measured their impact by physical edifices like ultramodern auditoriums.

He warned that the Lord Jesus may deny them on the day he returns, as Christian doctrine anticipates if this is not heeded.

Quoting from the prophet Isaiah, he reminded church leaders the entire universe cannot house God.

He said God desires to indwell "the poor, the downtrodden, the brokenhearted".

He underlined that the real church is the people gathered to God.

"If you focus on God's word, the many people you lead to Christ, you're building a house [for God]," he said. [Classfonline.com](https://www.classfonline.com)

Akufo-Addo would have no choice but to assent to anti-gay bill Alban Bagbin

The Speaker of Parliament, Alban Bagbin, has stated that no individual, including the President of Ghana, can stop parliament from passing the anti-LGBTQ+ bill, the house is currently considering.

According to him, after parliament has passed the anti-gay bill, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo would have no choice but to eventually sign it into law.

The speaker, who made these remarks during the consideration of the draft Promotion of Proper Human Sexual Rights and Ghanaian Family Values bill (anti-LGBTQ+ bill) in parliament on Tuesday, December 12, 2023, added that persons who have issues with the bill can go to the courts when it becomes a law.

"It is not the case, constitutionally, that when a person finds problems with the laws we pass that have concerns that are constitutional in nature, it is not only that, they could be legal, not constitutional, they may be even matters of policy. But the president is not indulge with veto power.

"He only makes comments and resubmits it to the house, If the house insists that what we have passed is



Speaker of Parliament, Alban Bagbin,

the right thing. The president has no option than to assent to it," he said.

The speaker added, "Ghanaians are after that permitted to take it to any court for interpretation. So, we are not bound to be looking over our shoulder because the present is there to make comments" [ghanaweb](https://www.ghanaweb.com).

RCMP warn about spike in online extremism among Canadian youth

cont'd from pg. 33

Twenty-year-old Zakarya Hussein, who pleaded guilty earlier this month to one terrorism charge, admitted in court that he had shared recruitment videos for the Islamic State group on TikTok and posted on Snapchat that his mission would begin during Pride Month.

Hussein is awaiting sentencing.

Jon Mitzmacher, head of the Ottawa Jewish Community School, said he received only a handful of queries from concerned parents following the news Saturday of the Ottawa youth's arrest.

"I was expecting many more emails from parents," he said. "I don't know

if people have become numb to this at this point."

He said there has been heightened anxiety in his school community since the Oct. 7 attacks and security protocols have been increased, and he said his school and his students are safe.

The school received a bomb threat in October, though it was later proved to not be a true threat, Mitzmacher said.

Mitzmacher said one of the most distressing results of the incidents is a feeling in the Jewish community that they are alone. He said the most heartfelt thing anyone can do to help is to reach out and show support, however you can. [The Canadian Press](https://www.thecanadianpress.com)

Integrity of immigration system at risk as international student numbers balloon, minister says

cont'd from pg. 13

With Canada facing an acute shortage of affordable housing, the federal government is considering putting a limit on the number of international students it allows in each year.

Speaking to *The House*, a number of international students in Ottawa pushed back on the idea that people like them are making housing unaffordable. In fact, said Rishi Patel, a student from Zambia, international students often have a more difficult time finding housing than domestic students as they often lack credentials.

"I just came to Canada. I don't have any credit checks yet. I don't have any employment references," he said.

Mike Moffatt, an assistant professor at the Ivey Business School who specializes in housing policy, agreed with that sentiment when he spoke in P.E.I. earlier in the week.

"This is a systemic failure, I would say, of both the federal and provincial government and as well that the higher education sector in which I work to ensure that there's enough housing for both domestic and international students."

"Domestic and international students are the biggest victims of this, not the cause of it," he said.

Housing has become a top political issue federally, with the Tory opposition hammering the government as Canadians struggle with the cost of living.

"We as Conservatives will make sure that international students have homes, health care and when they want it, jobs so that we can get back to a system that supports our universities, attracts the world's brightest people, helps the demographics of our country but does not leave people living in squalor," Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre said.

Talking with Dyer, Miller said the focus of his department was on ensuring the system was working properly for those trying to come to Canada.

"What we don't want to see is hopes dashed based on a false promise," Miller said. [CTV NEWS](https://www.ctvnews.com)

Pepper soup consumers live longer

Good news for pepper soup consumers. A recent study by Semaniuk et al. (2022) showed that the regular use of chili peppers whether in soup or any other form improves life spans. Indeed, chili pepper fruits contain phenolic substances structurally similar to those with anti-aging properties. Chili powder added to food in concentrations of 0.04%-0.12% significantly extended the median lifespan in fruit fly cohorts of both genders by 9% to 13%. However, food supplemented with 3% chili powder shortened the lifespan of male cohorts by 9%.

A previous report by the American Heart Association (2020) also revealed that consumption of chili peppers may reduce the relative risk of cardiovascular disease mortality by 26%, according to an analysis of diet and mortality data from four large, international studies. Chili pepper consumption was associated with a 25% reduction in death from any cause and 23% fewer cancer deaths, compared to people who never or only rarely consumed chili pepper.

These studies drew my attention to the Nigerian Pepper soup and the Ghanaian light soups with hot spices. For instance, one study by Jiang TA (2019) found that frequent consumption of spicy foods was also linked to a lower risk of death from cancer and ischemic heart and respiratory system diseases. However, the actual role of spices and herbs in the maintenance of health, specifically concerning protecting against the development of chronic, non-communicable diseases, is currently unclear.

In the case of the Nigerian pepper soup is embedded with a burst of natural flavors and spices that awaken your food senses and set your appetite straight. It is very versatile as it can be made with various fleshy foods like turkey, chicken, fish, and even our nutrient-packed offals.

Adegoke et al. (2015) study evaluated the perception of consumers on the culinary, social, and health attributes of pepper soup. A structured questionnaire was used to identify reasons for taking pepper soup, the preferred type of pepper soup, the social environment for the consumption of pepper soup, beverage accompaniment preferred with pepper soup, and types of food preferred as accompaniment with pepper soup. It also evaluated the perception of the claimed health benefits of the constituents of pepper soup. The survey indicated that pepper soup was mostly a weekly and occasional diet taken by respondents for enjoyment (68.3%) and relaxation (55.8%).

About 90.2, 85.9, 90.2, and 92% of the respondents preferred catfish, goat meat, chicken, and cow tail as the flesh components in their pepper soup. The preferred color, texture, and flavor was either light or dark brown, viscous or light, and peppery and spicy. Hot and warm pepper soup was preferred by 97% and 65.8% of the respondents, respectively.

The respondents (66.3 and 79%) preferred to take their pepper soup with beer and wine, while 75.9 and 90.7% of respondents had a preference for non-alcoholic

beverages as accompaniments preferred carbonated beverages and juices or mineral water, respectively. The majority of respondents (60.5 ± 8.52%) disagreed significantly that pepper soup possessed most of the health benefits associated with herbs, spices, and other constituents of pepper soup, implying that pepper soup may not be consumed for its perceived medicinal value.

The nutritional benefits of pepper soup generally depend on the ingredients that are used in its preparation. The spices and condiments used have been proven to be effective in medical treatments. Pepper soup is a healthy dish that is packed with nutrients. The soup is low in calories and fat, and it is a good source of protein. Pepper soup is also high in vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin C, iron, and potassium. In addition to being healthy, pepper soup is also a delicious and easy-to-make dish. The soup can be made with chicken, goat meat, or yams. Pepper soup can also be spiced to taste.

An article by Eunice Olaleye (2022) published in the Tribune revealed that a scientific review by Dr. Heben's team on DrHealthBenefits.com says that the soup does help to control heart rate. It also helps to control blood pressure and keep it from getting ridiculously high or low. In other words, it helps to stabilize blood pressure.

Another medicinal function of pepper soup is that it chases away free radicals that could cause cancer because it is an antioxidant (Nwose EU, 2009; Agbor et al. 2019). Pepper soup can relieve you of cold and cough. There

are several other medicinal benefits it has that you should look out for.

The author also revealed that the soup is good for the cold weather. Hot and spicy pepper soup is essential to provide warmth for your body. It's a win-win. You enjoy your pepper soup and your body gets warmth while you are at it. According to youmustgethealthy.com, what makes pepper soup healthy is the ingredients found in it. Unripe plantain, fresh catfish, cow skin, beef, or goat meat can be found in pepper soup, and they don't only taste nice; they contain anti-oxidants.

Consuming pepper soup is one way to ensure adequate intake of nutrients all while staying hydrated. Due to its spicy nature, one tends to take in a lot of water.

Key takeaways:

From the literature, pepper soup made with local spices has many health benefits. Also, the American Heart Association (2020) also revealed that the consumption of peppers or hot spices may reduce the relative risk of cardiovascular disease mortality by 26%, according to an analysis of diet and mortality data from four large, international studies. Chili pepper consumption was associated with a 25% reduction in death from any cause and 23% fewer cancer deaths, compared to people who never or only rarely consumed chili pepper. With this information, lovers of hot spices can add them to their diets in any form to improve their health.

The writer is a Professor of Naturopathic Healthcare, a Medical Journalist, and a science writer.

Importance of Early Detection and Intervention for Hearing Loss

We are all plugged in all the time, pushing our senses to the limit, in an effort to survive in a demanding, stressful, and ever-changing world. Perhaps the most important of our sensory capabilities, listening helps orient us to the environment and serves as a means of communication between individuals. Listening happens at home, during the commute, and at the workplace for recreational or occupational reasons.

Occupational and Recreational Hearing Loss

In occupations such as gardening or carpentry, individuals are exposed to sounds around 85 dB. Exposure of a mere two hours to such volume without protection for one's ears can cause hearing damage. Recreational listening is believed to be safe. But personal listening devices are tuned to reach volumes of 105 to 110 dB. What's concerning is that it takes as little as five minutes at such a volume to suffer hearing damage.

Impacts of Hearing Loss

According to the CDC, more than 360 million people are today living

with hearing loss. In adults, waiting too long to address hearing loss can detrimentally affect the HRQoL (Health-related quality of life) of individuals and their families. Hearing loss is often associated with feeling isolated, increased depression and anxiety, and lessened self-efficacy. In the elderly, it is also linked to increased cognitive decline and with global brain atrophy, particularly in the temporal lobe.

But where hearing loss has still more severe outcomes is in children. Children who suffer from hearing loss from birth or in their early years suffer from speech, language and behavioral problems. Their academic performance is also affected. The cost of not addressing hearing loss globally is high. The good news: Early diagnosis and intervention for slight-to-mild hearing loss can help arrest these patterns and restore hearing in adults and children.

Intervention for Hearing Loss

The type of intervention depends on the underlying cause of the hearing loss. If the cause is earwax, then its removal may restore the hearing to normal.

To do so, a doctor may use a suction tube, dissolve the wax using a liquid, or use an instrument. In the case of an ear infection, the suggested course of action may be surgery. If there is irreversible hearing loss, especially from damage to the inner ear, then the doctor resorts to the use of hearing aids and cochlear implants.

There are both over-the-counter (OTC) and prescription-style hearing aids. OTC hearing aids can be bought directly from medical stores without consulting an audiologist or a doctor. These are suitable for mild hearing

loss. For moderate to severe hearing loss, prescription-style hearing aids are available, which are pre-programmed for the degree of hearing loss a person has. Hearing aids also come in various styles such as behind-the-ear, in-the-ear and canal. The style of hearing aid is picked by the ENT specialist after taking into account the occupation, extent of hearing loss, and age of the patient.

Authored by Dr. Girish Anand M S, Consultant - ENT Surgery, Aster CMI Hospital, Bangalore

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Health/Lifestyle

Ottawa launches \$13B dental-care program with kids and seniors first up for coverage

Applications for seniors aged 87 and over will open later this month before eligibility expands in new year

Federal Health Minister Mark Holland says a \$13-billion dental-care plan will significantly improve access for millions of Canadians who don't have access to care through workplace insurance plans.

The federal government unveiled its new dental-care plan on Monday — a \$13-billion insurance program that will start covering routine dentistry costs next year for people who meet a certain income threshold.

Ottawa will cover kids under 18 and some seniors first before expanding the program to all eligible low- and middle-income Canadians in 2025.

Applications for seniors aged 87 and over will open later this month. Other age groups will be able to apply in the new year.

The staggered application process is designed to make the rollout as smooth as possible. The government says it expects millions of people to avail themselves of this new component of Canada's social safety net.

Coverage will be phased in over time, but some eligible participants will start to receive benefits as early as May 2024. Costs incurred before the relevant start date will not be covered.

This insurance-based program replaces the interim program that has been sending cheques directly to families with kids under 12 for the last two years.

To be eligible for the program, a person must have a household income below \$90,000 and no access to an existing private insurance plan. The person must also have filed a tax return so the government can verify income.

The plan is most generous for families that have household incomes below \$70,000. They face no co-pays to a participating dentist, hygienist or denturist, and Ottawa will pick up the tab for covered services like cleaning, polishing, examinations, X-rays, fillings, root canal treatments and complete and partial removable dentures.

Families with incomes between \$70,000 and \$79,999 will face a 40 per cent co-pay, and for those in the \$80,000 to \$89,999 income bracket, the co-pay jumps to 60 per cent. The federal plan will cover the rest of the costs incurred.

Health Minister Mark Holland described the government's plan

as "transformative" because it will provide coverage to the nearly nine million Canadians who do not already have access to dental insurance. **41 minutes ago** **Duration 1:55**

Federal Health Minister Mark Holland says a \$13-billion dental-care plan will significantly improve access for millions of Canadians who don't have access to care through workplace insurance plans.

"We know we can have the best health system in the world and today is a monumental step in that direction," Holland said.

"It's going to make life better for eligible Canadian residents who won't have to choose between paying their bills and getting the help they absolutely need," he said.

Citizens' Services Minister Terry Beech said Canadians do not need to do anything at this stage — the federal government will reach out to eligible people by mail to invite them to apply for the benefit when it's their turn.

The first letters will go out to invite seniors 70 and up to apply for the plan — those seniors will apply over the phone.

Here's when seniors can expect to receive those letters:

- Seniors aged 87 and above starting in December 2023
- Seniors aged 77 to 86 starting in January 2024
- Seniors aged 72 to 76 starting in February 2024
- Seniors aged 70 to 71 starting in March 2024

Then, in May 2024, the application process will switch from the telephone to online as people aged 65 and older become eligible to apply.

People with valid disability tax credit certificates and children under 18 will be able to apply starting in June 2024.

Filling gaps in system

In a background briefing with reporters, senior servants responsible for the program stressed that this federal initiative is meant to "fill the gaps" in the system and not replace existing provincial and territorial programs that already cover some oral health services.

But the federal government has

received no assurances from the premiers that they will keep their programs operational once the national program rolls out.

A decision to dismantle those plans would push up the price tag of the dental care plan — in its current form, it is slated to cost the federal treasury about \$4.4 billion a year.

Dedicated call centre for queries

The program will be administered by insurance giant Sun Life and dentists will directly submit claims to that company for reimbursement. If there's a co-pay, insured people will pay that cost out of pocket to the provider.

While the program will be run by a third party, the government said people can still work with Service Canada agents to deal with any issues that arise, including eligibility or coverage

disputes. There will be a dedicated call centre to deal with dental services.

The government is hopeful that oral health professionals will enrol in the program and accept the Canadian dental-care insurance plan as payment.

Officials said the government will launch an education campaign to brief dentists and the organizations that represent them in the new year on how they can sign up to provide covered care.

There will be a set "fee schedule" for services — but the costs reimbursed by Ottawa will vary from province to province.

The government said the fees paid are "relatively generous compared to other public plans across the country," which should provide an incentive for providers to participate. **CBC News**

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Days of Hearts of Oak, Asante Kotoko dominance over - Stephen Appiah

Former Hearts of Oak midfielder Stephen Appiah believes the days the Phobians and rivals Asante Kotoko will dominate the Ghana Premier League are over.

The former Black Stars captain says other teams have stepped up and are giving the two most successful clubs in Ghana a run for their money.

Hearts of Oak and Asante Kotoko combined have won over 40 Ghana Premier League trophies and many other Cup titles.

“Gone are the days when you see only three teams, Kotoko and Accra Hearts of Oak, that they have all the best players so you see them winning and winning,” Appiah told Joy Sports.

“But these days we have teams like Medeama, you have other clubs doing so well. So it is very very competitive.”



Ex-Black Stars captain, Stephen Appiah

Medeama won their first Ghana Premier League title last season and are performing creditably well in the CAF Champions League, winning one game, drawing another and losing the other.

Also, Dreams FC are performing wonders in the CAF Confederation Cup, winning two games; one away and the other at while losing their opening game in Tunisia.

footballghana.com

My eldest son wants to play for Ghana - CK Akonnor

Former Black Stars coach CK Akonnor has disclosed that his eldest son, Charles-Jesaja Herrmann, has expressed a keen interest in playing for Ghana.

Having previously represented the German U-17 side, Herrmann, who currently plays for SV Waldhof Mannheim, has communicated his desire to follow in his father’s footsteps and join the Black Stars, as revealed by Akonnor in a recent interview.

“The older one (Charles-Jesaja Herrmann) was also a national team player, who played in the under-17, and he is now playing for a third-division side. He is now willing to play for the Black Stars when he gets the chance,” Akonnor told Graphic Sports.

However, Akonnor advised his son to work harder to increase his chances of a Black Stars call-up, noting that playing in the lower-tier league might limit his opportunities.



Jesaja Herrmann

“I told him to do more than he is doing now. For the national team, you don’t have to be in the third division; you have to be in the premier and make waves for yourself to be seen as a national team player; but for now, he is a little bit far from the national team,” Akonnor emphasized.

Charles-Jesaja Herrmann has also been part of the German U-15, U-16, U-18, and U-19 teams.

www.ghanaweb.com

Ghanaian referees take centre stage in CAF Confederation Cup showdown between SOAR and Abu Salim SC

Four Ghanaian referees have been selected to officiate the TotalEnergies CAF Confederation Cup clash between Super Olympien d’une Afrique Renaissance (SOAR) of Guinea and Abu Salim SC of Libya.

The quartet, led by Daniel Nii Ayi Laryea as the referee, includes Kwasi Acheampong Brobbey and Emmanuel Dolagbanu as Assistant I and Assistant II, respectively, with Nii Akwa Nunoo Julian Nii Akwa serving as the Fourth Official.

The Stade de la Paix de Bouaké will be the stage for this thrilling encounter, scheduled to kick off at 19H00 on Wednesday, December 20, 2023.

The Ghanaian officiating team will be supported by Kokou Ognankotan Ntale from Togo as the Match Commissioner, while Komi Konyoh, also from Togo, will serve as the Referee Assessor.



Referee Daniel Nii Ayi Laryea

Kabelo Bosilong from South Africa will act as the General Coordinator, and Aminata Diallo from Mali will be the Security Officer for the match.

This international assignment showcases the talent and expertise of Ghanaian referees on the continental stage, and their presence is expected to contribute to the fair and smooth conduct of the game.

ghanasoccernet.com

I am ready to play for Ghana - Enoch Adu Kofi

In a passionate declaration of commitment, Ekenäs IF midfielder Enoch Adu Kofi is breaking his silence, expressing unwavering readiness to don the Black Stars jersey once again.

Despite consistently delivering stellar performances on the European stage, the 33-year-old has found himself on the periphery of the national squad, last representing Ghana in a friendly against South Africa back in October 2016.

The former FC Nordsjælland, Club Brugge, Malmo FF, and AIK maestro, capped only once by Ghana, voiced his lingering disappointment over the apparent oversight.

“I am ready to play for Ghana, I have been playing active football for the past years,” Adu Kofi told Angel Sports.

“My qualities as a midfielder



Enoch Adu Kofi

will be impactful if I get the chance to be in the Black Stars squad for the AFCON,” he added.

Ghana is in Group B alongside Mozambique, record champions Egypt, and Cape Verde. Ghana will open their 2023 AFCON campaign against Cape Verde on 14th January 2024.

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FOOD AND RECIPES

Traditional African Dishes

Compiled by Nana Ama, Toronto, ON

Quick and Easy Chocolate Pound Cake

Ingredients

1. 50 grams Chocolate bar (Ghana chocolate black)
2. 30 grams Vegetable oil
3. 20 grams Hot chocolate mix or cocoa powder
4. 10 grams Sugar
5. 50 grams Pancake mix
6. 1 Egg
7. 2 tbsp Milk



Cooking Instructions

1. Melt the chocolate bar. Add the vegetable oil, and mix.
2. Add the pancake mix, instant cocoa mix, and sugar to Step 1, then mix with a whisk.
3. Add the egg to the Step 2 mixture, and mix with the whisk. Then add the milk and mix some more.
4. Pour the Step 3 batter into the pound cake mold lined with parchment sheet, and bake in the oven for 20 ~ 30 minutes at 180°.
5. When you insert a toothpick, if it comes out clean, it's done.
6. When cooled, if you sprinkle on powdered sugar, doesn't it look like a second cousin of gateau au chocolate?
7. I made it quickly for a snack the other day. It had been a long time since I cooked it last. The taste was great!
8. I baked in cups. It only made 4 pieces.

Angwa Mo with Tolo Beef

Angwa Mo (or angwamu) is a delicious traditional Ghanaian dish consisting of fried rice that is often cooked with salted beef (tolo beef).

Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons peanut oil
- 1 cup fragrant white rice
- 3 oz. salted beef (tolo beef), diced (recipe below)
- 2 onions, chopped (divided in 2)
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 cube Maggi chicken broth
- 1 red hot pepper, diced
- 2 cups water
- Salt
- Pepper

For the salted beef (tolo beef)

- 3 oz. beef (sirloin or rib eye)
- 2 tablespoons sea salt
- 2 bay leaves



Instructions

Salted beef (tolo beef)

- In a plastic or glass container with a lid, add the beef and sprinkle with sea salt.
- Rub the beef with the salt, then add the bay leaves.
- Cover the container and place in a warm place for 24 hours.
- Drain the blood then cover the container again and place in a warm place for another 24 hours.

Angwa Mo

1. Wash rice, drain and dry.
2. In a pot, heat the oil and fry the chopped onions in hot oil until golden brown.
3. Take half of the onion and set aside.
4. Add the salted beef and mix well.
5. Add rice and fry over medium heat for about 2 minutes, stirring constantly.
6. Add the bouillon cube and stir. Add the hot pepper and mix.
7. Add the water and stir well. Cook for 5 minutes.
8. Add the remaining onion and cook again for 5 minutes.
9. Remove from heat.
10. Cover and let stand 5 minutes before serving.

Dry Ghanaian Doughnuts

Ingredients

1. 4 Cups - Flour
2. 1/2 cup - sugar
3. Pinch baking powder
4. Pinch salt
5. 1 tbsps - yeast
6. 1 tbsps - butter
7. 1 - egg
8. 1 1/4 cups - lukewarm water



Cooking Instructions

1. In a clean bowl, sieve all the dry ingredients with the exception of butter.
2. Mix everything together with clean hands.
3. In a separate bowl break the eggs into the lukewarm water and whisk until fully combined.
4. Slowly add to the dry ingredients and keep mixing until well combined and form a ball with the dough.
5. Paste the butter to the dough and continue kneading to achieve a glossy, smooth and shiny dough.
6. Transfer the dough to a clean, floured surface and knead it with the heel of your palm (always pushing the dough away from you) for about 5-10 minutes.
7. Divide the dough roll them out into 12 even balls.
8. And spread the balls on a clean floured tray and apply melted butter or oil on top of each ball using tissue paper or brush.
9. Cover it with a clean cloth and leave it to rise in a warm place for an hour or 2.
10. Once your dough balls are risen to twice their size, pour oil into a frying pan and place on a medium heat.
11. Add the doughnuts to the oil and constantly turn the doughnuts for an even cook.
12. Once browned use a slotted ladle and remove the doughnuts into a colander.

Tatale

Tatale are delicious small spicy plantain patties that are also called the "golden pancakes of Ghana". They are generally served with bambara beans.

Ingredients

- 2 yellow plantains (very ripe)
- 1/2 cup corn flour (fine corn meal)
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- 1 small lemon (freshly squeezed)
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper powder
- 1/2 pinch salt
- Vegetable oil (for frying)



Instructions

1. Slice the plantains, place in a large bowl and immediately sprinkle with lemon juice.
2. With a fork, mash the plantains and add the onion and ginger.
3. Add the corn flour, chilli and salt and mix well with a wooden spoon.
4. In a deep skillet, heat a large amount of vegetable oil over medium heat.
5. Maintain the temperature of the oil around 340 F (175 C) during frying.
6. Form balls the size of a ping pong ball, flatten them slightly and fry on both sides until they are golden brown.
7. Serve immediately.





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