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Ghana's Vice President Celebrates NPP Canada's 32nd Anniversary

By Ebenezer Amankwah, Toronto, ON

The Vice President of the Republic of Ghana, Dr Mahamudu Bawumia, joined executives and supporters of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) Canada branch in celebrating the party's 32nd anniversary.

Dr. Bawumia, who is also the presidential candidate for the party in the upcoming December 2024 elections, was full of praise for the executives' organizational prowess and for keeping the party active in Canada and throughout North America.

The town hall meeting commemorating the 32nd anniversary was held at the Church of Pentecost in Toronto, Ontario.



Vice President of Ghana Dr Mahamudu Bawumia

The Vice President seized the opportunity to outline his vision for

cont'd on pg. 7

African Embassies in Canada Called to Champion African Culture

By Emmanuel Ayiku and Ebenezer Amankwah, Mississauga, ON

The co-founder of People of Motherland, Georgette Amihere, has expressed concern over the minimal involvement of most African Embassies and Consulates in promoting African culture within Canada.

"African embassies are the worst," she stated, referring to their failure to acknowledge receipt of official correspondence inviting them to events that promote culture. "They don't show up," she added.

Georgette Amihere, who has led the African Pavilion at the highly popular Carassauga Festival for the past 19 years, believes that African Embassies and Consulates should be leading the charge in organizing such events. In their absence, she feels it would be beneficial for them to collaborate



Organizers of African Pavilion

effectively with organizations that have undertaken this responsibility.

cont'd on pg. 30 & 31

Ghanaian Women's Fasting and Prayer Conference Prays on Victoria Day

By Ebenezer Amankwah, Toronto, ON



Group picture of participants

see story and pictures on pg. 27

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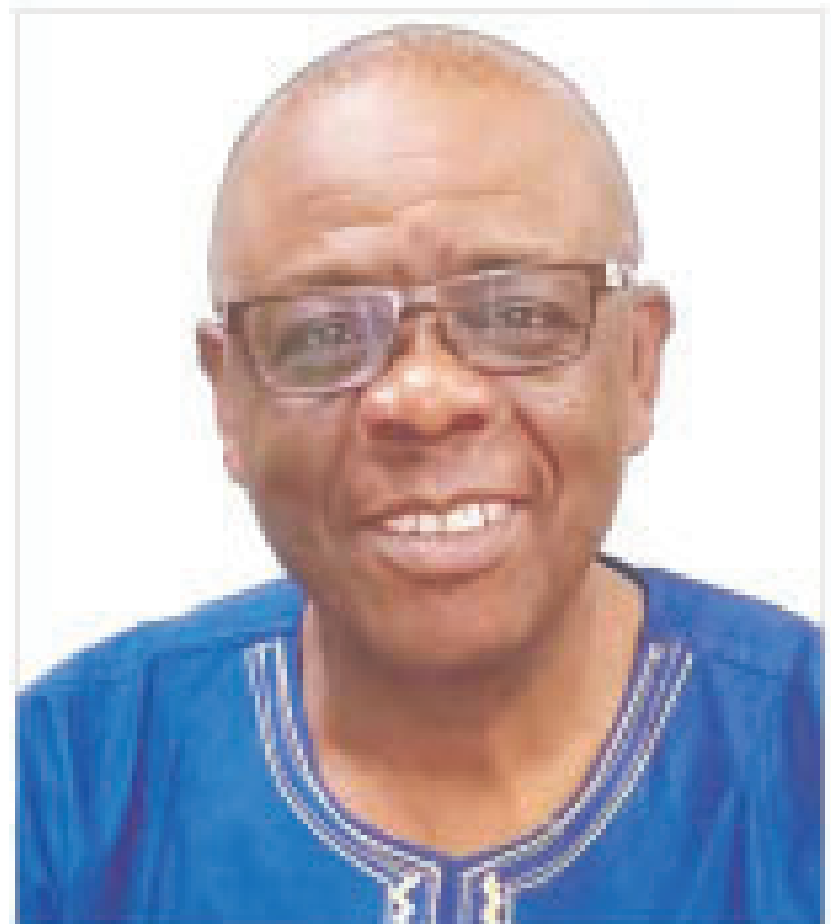
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Residential mortgage debt hits \$2.16 trillion amid slowest growth in 23 years: CMHC

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. says the country's total residential mortgage debt totalled \$2.16 trillion as of February this year, up 3.4 per cent year-over-year and representing the slowest growth in 23 years.

The federal housing agency said in a new report that higher mortgage costs and uncertainty around the Bank of Canada lowering its key interest rate led to softer home sales and prices across many regions in the second half of 2023.

However, it said the slowdown in mortgage growth could be short-lived.

The agency expects the rate of growth for mortgage debt to increase amid forecasts of higher home sales and prices in the coming years.

It said an anticipated decline in mortgage rates, along with population growth and increases in real disposable incomes, will likely fuel the turnaround.

"In a context where debt levels have never been so elevated and households are showing increasing warning signs of financial struggle, household debt vulnerability is becoming a primary area of concern," said CMHC deputy chief economist Tania Bourassa-Ochoa in a press release.

"As homeowners find it more difficult to manage their monthly budgets, policymakers and the financial sector are on high alert when considering risks to the financial industry and the economy."

The report also said borrowers are continuing to opt for shorter-term, fixed-rate mortgages over traditional five-year fixed terms as they remain uncertain of the short- and medium-term mortgage rate outlook.

That's despite "noteworthy increases" in the discounts being offered by lenders on five-year, fixed-rate mortgages in the first two months of this year, which marked a reversal of the trend from the last half of 2023.

"Lenders are foreseeing potential rate cuts by the (Bank of Canada)

occurring sooner than they anticipated last year and are seeking to lock in mortgages at relatively high rates," the report said.

Terms ranging from three years to less than five years remained the most popular choice, representing nearly 40 per cent of all lending for newly extended mortgages in February 2024. Variable-rate mortgages accounted for 15 per cent of all lending for newly extended mortgages.

The report showed the national mortgage delinquency rate hit 0.17 per cent in the fourth quarter of last year, still near historic lows, but trending up for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic.

It also highlighted the Big Six banks taking an increasing share of the market for extended mortgages.

In the fourth quarter of 2023, those banks' share grew 11.8 percentage points from last year, driven by increases in refinances and renewals. Other chartered banks and credit unions recorded decreases of 6.9 and 3.1 percentage points, respectively.

The Canadian Press

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is published in Canada by
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Corporation**

Editorial Office
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Etobicoke, Ont. M9V 1A9
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EDITORIAL

Patronizing our Community Businesses is Key to economic success

Ghanaian Canadian Association of Ontario GCAO's vision in supporting our Community Businesses was demonstrated at the Launching of the Community Market Place at the GCAO HUB, on Saturday May 25 3024. While we encourage our community businesses to strive for higher heights, the Ghanaian News wish to use this opportunity and this column to strongly advise and appeal to our community members to consciously and strongly patronize the businesses in our various Ghanaian community here in Canada.

We all know of the economic, political and social successes of many migrant communities in Canada. We also know that the key to their economic, political and social successes has been due to only one major act of their community members: patronage of the businesses in their various communities. There's a common saying, "It takes a village to raise a child." The power of the community has paved the way for many of our community business owners. When you choose to support community-owned businesses, you're supporting community pride and unity.

While that may be intimidating to some, it would mean the world to many families and communities. Ghanaian entrepreneurship is a tool for survival in a world that does not want to see us win. When we win against all odds, our young children grow up seeing successful entrepreneurs and the world a better place. We do not need to stretch this point very far. We can see these realities of the success of other communities around us. We can take tours of those businesses and establishments and we will come away with only one major reality: the active patronage of these businesses by their community members.

Charity, they say, begins at home. "Home" in this context means 'our own communities' right here in Canada. When businesses in our communities flourish, the benefits transcend to the larger communities as well. The economic success will enable the businesses to support initiatives in our communities from support for youth education, recreation, and services to by extension creating a positive image for our community. The economic successes will also lead to social and political recognition from the larger Canadian community.

Again we can see evidence of these around us from other communities: their economic and business successes mean that the larger society takes them seriously. This has enabled them to make inroads into the bigger political arena enabling them to be part of the vital decision-making process of the country that eventually affects all of us.

We therefore entreat our community members to take cues from the above and actively and strongly patronize the businesses in our community. It is very important. It is vital and it is the major key to our communities' success, revival, recognition and future strength.

STATEMENT BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE NATIONAL ETHNIC PRESS AND MEDIA COUNCIL OF CANADA REGARDING THE WORLD'S CONFLICTS

The National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada (NEPMCC) is an organization whose members are journalists and publishers of newspapers in over 75 languages and also producers of TV and radio programs informing and serving non-Anglo or Francophone communities across Canada, with their roots all over the globe. We are working together, sharing ideas and respect each other's opinion and culture, finding our diversity to be our best asset.

We, the members of the NEMPCC, are deeply concerned about today's wars and conflicts in the world, most recently in Israel and Gaza, as well as in Ukraine and every other part of the world. It concerns and pains us to see the loss of life and the human tragedies they cause. We are also devastated to hear about dozens of our fellow journalists who have lost their lives while performing their professional mission of reporting and informing the international public on these tragic events.

However, as citizens of our unique country Canada – the multicultural and multiethnic mosaic, we are also deeply concerned about the incidents of violence where our

fellow Canadians of differing ethnic origins are turn against each other just because of their respective cultural backgrounds.

For all the above reasons, we appeal to all fellow Canadians to remember that this country is a safe haven for victims of numerous world conflicts and that we work together and build this unique society where people from over 200 ethnic cultural backgrounds, live in peace, dignity and respect for each other towards our diversity, despite our differences. To this extent, let us not destroy this peace and harmony and continue to respect our Canadian values. Let us concentrate on helping those in need wherever in the world they are and not let ourselves succumb to any form of violence or aggression towards each other.

We appeal to our fellow Canadians to keep in mind that we should not let wars and conflicts elsewhere damage our social fabric here in Canada, where we are all sisters and brothers living by the values we pledged to respect when we took the oath of citizenship to become Canadians and the chapter of human rights of our constitution. (NEPMCC)

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NEWS

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Stadium in Etobicoke officially renamed in honour of former Toronto mayor Rob Ford



The premier recounted his brother's love for football during the ceremony, sharing stories about Rob's interactions with the players he coached and how he helped them win championships.

Ford went on to thank the mayor and city council for approving the renaming.

"It just means absolutely everything to us," Ford said. "I'll never, ever forget it. This would not happen if it wasn't for the mayor and city council."

Rob Ford's daughter Stephanie also attended the ceremony, saying that the stadium was an important place for his father.

"If anything were to be named after my father, this stadium would be the most fitting," Stephanie said. "It represents his love for Etobicoke and how much he did for the people as mayor, but also what he did for his second love – football."

She remembered her father's dedication to the players, helping them succeed outside of the game.

"I have been to the stadium many times to watch the yearly football games. While I no longer attend, my younger brother Douglas will get to come here and watch the annual Friday Night Lights football games here in a stadium named after his father," she said.

"My mother as well will be very happy to see this stadium in memory of her late husband whenever she takes a walk in Centennial Park."

The 64th mayor of Toronto died in 2016 at the age of 46 after a battle with a rare form of cancer. He served as mayor from 2010 to 2014 and represented Etobicoke North

as a councillor before and after his tenure until his death.

Toronto's decision to rename the stadium after the politician and former high school football coach followed a council vote in December of last year on a motion brought forward by Coun. Paul Ainslie and seconded by Coun. Shelley Carroll. A number of councillors had argued that Ford's behaviour as mayor had embarrassed the city. In 2013, video of the then-mayor smoking crack cocaine surfaced online, something he would admit to later that year.

Despite the resistance from some councillors, the motion passed 17 to 6, with Chow's support.

"Our late former mayor, Rob Ford, loved football. He loved playing it and coaching it, spending many hours with young people, helping them learn the game and win the game, creating strong bonds in his community and across the city," Chow said at Tuesday's unveiling, which would have been Ford's 55th birthday.

The mayor noted that her late husband, Jack Layton, and Ford were friends and sat beside each other at city council, where they sometimes talked about football.

"I know the pain of losing a loved one, and I know how difficult it is to lose someone so prematurely. He was young," Chow said.

"It was Rob that, when Jack passed away, that brought forward a tribute to Jack by naming the Jack Layton Ferry Terminal. (3:55) And the Layton family is forever grateful for that. So when Councillor Ainslie proposed that we name this stadium Rob Ford Stadium, we said, yes, absolutely, yes."

CTV News

Canada to see warm summer, wildfire risks loom for some regions: Weather Network

Get ready to feel the heat, Canada.

The Weather Network is predicting more sunshine and warmer temperatures for the summer.

The weather broadcaster's annual summer forecast released Wednesday indicates Canada will be blanketed in heat over the next three months as the country sees fewer rainy days and several regions experience humid conditions.

"We'd be very surprised, very surprised, if this didn't turn out overall as a warm summer," Chris Scott, the Weather Network's chief meteorologist, said in an interview.

The broadcaster expects Ontario and Quebec to face periods of cooler weather in June, but the heat will eventually pick up, producing "a very hot and humid" summer with a heightened risk of extended heat waves.

"Summer should come on very strong in July and August and even linger right through into September, so if you invested in a pool, this is when it should really pay off," Scott said.

Canadians in the Atlantic provinces will similarly see warm conditions with the heat expected to peak in July and August.

However, the Atlantic provinces are also facing a "big wild card": hurricanes and other harsh storms that are on Scott's radar for the U.S.

"Atlantic Canada, of course, is in the line of fire," he said.

"We're kind of like the exhaust pipe for storms that come up from the south and if that pipe is aimed in just the wrong direction, that's going to hit us."

In Canada's northern regions, it's

not hurricanes but wildfires and poor air quality that could be the theme as western Nunavut and eastern Northwest Territories face a warm summer and dry conditions.

Wildfires and smoke risks are also top of mind in the Prairies, where drought is a major concern, and a very warm summer is expected across Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Alberta, however, will see a "typical" summer and many regions could get a break from severe dry periods if an active storm south of the border shifts north, bringing rain totals to near normal.

Precipitation levels in recent months bode well for farmers, Scott added.

"This winter was not looking good," he said.

"We didn't have a lot of snowfall, but Mother Nature turned on the taps and we've got a quite a bit of moisture lately, so we're going into the growing season in better shape than it was looking like just a few months ago."

Relief is also in sight for British Columbia, where heat is forecast to be "less persistent and less severe" than it has been in the past few years.

Though dry periods are anticipated, scattered showers and thunderstorms are expected to be more numerous and widespread than in past years.

"Back three years ago, we had the devastating heat wave in B.C.," Scott said.

"While we can't rule out the risk of heat wave, this does not look like a record hot summer for B.C., which I think is pretty good news for most people."

This report by The Canadian Press was first published May 29, 2024.

Ghana's Vice President Celebrates NPP Canada's 32nd Anniversary

cont'd from pg. 1

Ghana and urged the party faithful to spread the good news to family and friends back in Ghana to ensure a victory for him and the NPP.

In attendance were the General Secretary of the Party, Lawyer Justin

Koduah; Ashanti Regional Chairman of the Party, Bernard Antwi Boasiako; Ing. Kwabena Agyei Agyapong; Ghana's High Commissioner to Canada, His Excellency Anselm Sowah; and the President of the Ghanaian-Canadian Association of Ontario, Emmanuel Duodu.

Respect your elders and heed their advice!

By William Doyle-Marshall

Grandmother Power – a Global Phenomenon by Paola Gianturco published by Random House of Canada Limited has been quite a reference point for people of African descent around the world who are interested in taking steps to improve living conditions for Africans whether they are in the continent or around in the Diaspora.

Aminata Diao, aged 130 has some very important words for us. As the author of the book Paola Gianturco walk through the village Fatoumata Balde asks if the writer would like to meet the oldest grandmother in Kandia. “We duck into a hut where Aminata Diao sits on a cot wearing only a sarong skirt. “She is 130 years old,” her daughter says. I have never heard of anyone so old.

Aminata has white eyebrows, cataracts, desiccated skin, flat pendulous breasts, and a thick deep voice. She is definitely old but is she really almost twice my age?” Wonders Fatoumata. At first, Paolo is so awed that she can’t think of a single question. Finally, she asks how many grandchildren she has. But she has no idea. There are so many.

“You have seen many changes in Kandia,” I say. “Yes, I remember when there were only 6 huts.” (the population is now 1,000.)

“Why have you lived so long,” Paolo ask. “We used to eat from the trees. There used to be many

in the forest. It’s different now. Everything I ate was natural. We put it in the sun to dry; no harmful preservatives, nothing from a refrigerator. Lots of milk.”

“What advice do you have for elders?” I ask. She responds, “Have more confidence and stay healthy. Refuse to eat things if you don’t know the source.”

“What advice do you have for young people?”

“Respect your elders, take their advice. It’s unfortunate that the young don’t listen to their elders. They think we are old fashioned, that our time is over.”

As if to disprove that allegation, after her daughter helps her put on a pink blouse and headscarf, Aminata grips her cane and slowly walks outside to pose for pictures.”

Great Green Wall coordinator -- horrible famine in Africa many died from starvation; farmers affected -- people cultivated green trees etc. “if you believe everything is possible. “We can make a change” from the Sahel. We need to make this happen-- desertification is a challenge; we sow the seeds in my lifetime. It’s up to us to create an African dream... Inna Modja, singer, music producer. Make waves Production.

In Africa, scientists are hard at work restoring land once rich with biodiversity and vegetation.

Eleven countries in the Sahel-Sahara region— Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, and Senegal—have joined to combat land degradation and restore native plant life to the landscape.

In recent years, northern Africa has seen the quality of arable land decline significantly due to climate change and poor land management. Uniting under the banner of the “Great Green Wall” initiative, national and regional leaders hope to reverse this trend. The bulk of the work on the ground was originally slated to be concentrated along a stretch of land from Djibouti, Djibouti, in the east to Dakar, Senegal, in the west—an expanse 15 kilometers (nine miles) wide and 7,775 kilometers (4,831 miles) long. The project has since expanded to include countries in both northern and western Africa.

Jean-Marc Sinnassamy is a senior environmental specialist with the Global Environment Facility (GEF). He helps manage a program developed under the Great Green Wall initiative with countries in the Sahel and West Africa. The GEF has been with the initiative since the beginning, helping to convene country leaders at the headquarters of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Bonn, Germany, in February 2011. The World Bank and other organizations focused on global development and the environment provide financial and technical support.

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Government expanded visa scheme weeks after UN raised alarm over people trafficking

Experts wrote to David Cameron in March warning that workers on a UK farm could be victims of modern slavery

Some migrant farm workers on a UK government visa scheme were allegedly trafficked to the country, according to United Nations human rights experts.

In a letter sent to David Cameron, the UK's foreign secretary, four UN special rapporteurs said the government knew that workers were at risk of exploitation and its oversight of the farms had been "insufficient". Weeks after receiving the letter, the government extended the scheme until 2029.

The letter detailed how migrant workers have reportedly been deceived about working and living conditions, and had faced abuses including discrimination, mistreatment, wage theft, low salaries and punishment for not meeting targets.

The laws and practices around the visa scheme made seasonal workers particularly vulnerable to exploitation, the experts said. They added that systemic change was needed.

'The appalling treatment of migrant workers verges on modern-day slavery'

"Given the conditions reported to us, we are concerned that [regulatory] entities do not appear to have taken timely and adequate action," read the letter, which was sent in March and made public in mid-May.

Labour MP John McDonnell said overseas workers are among the most exploited people in the farming sector. He called for urgent protections for them.

"[Migrant workers'] exploitation and the appalling treatment they receive at the hands of often brutal, profiteering employers verges on modern-day slavery," he said. "We urgently need comprehensive, strong legislation and enforcement to tackle this stain on our economy."

Much of the UN experts' letter focused on allegations of underpayment and poor working conditions at Haygrove Ltd, one of the UK's biggest fruit producers, and Fruitful Jobs, one of the government-licensed recruiters for the visa scheme.

Last year, the Bureau of Investigative Journalism (TBIJ) reported allegations that Latin American workers employed at Haygrove had not been paid for all the hours they had worked, had been punished by being denied work and had faced bullying on the farm. One person had been physically assaulted by a supervisor, colleagues said.

About 90 Haygrove workers staged a wildcat strike and some were told by the managing director of Fruitful Jobs that if they continued to protest, their visas would be revoked.

Read more stories in this project

'All that is missing is a whip': Home Office ignored migrant worker abuses on farms 'It's almost the same as living on the street': this is how people picking your vegetables have to live UK government 'breaching international law' with seasonal worker scheme, says UN envoy Watchdog criticises Home Office for dropping farm worker visa review Haygrove told TBIJ at the time that it rejected all allegations of wrongdoing in the "strongest terms" and had found no evidence of any mistreatment by supervisors. Fruitful Jobs said the managing director had been trying to resolve the issues with the workers.

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The Home Office believes that four of the workers at Haygrove could have been victims of modern slavery, according to the UN experts' letter.

They wrote that, based on the information they had received, these people would fall under the definition of victims of trafficking.

The experts also sent letters to Haygrove and Fruitful Jobs. They asked for clarification on what was being done to protect workers and called for compensation for those who had been victims of modern slavery.

The UN officials said they had received reports that Haygrove had promised people future work in order to "prevent them from reporting the labour exploitation suffered at the farm".

The workers had been referred to the government's scheme designed to support modern slavery victims, known as the national referral mechanism (NRM). In some cases, though, they were not receiving help with housing, mental health, healthcare or repatriation, according to the special rapporteurs.

One of the workers, who subsequently went to London, has "reportedly been deceived and abused by UK citizens who have employed him for small jobs without paying him", the letter said.

cont'd on pg. 10

FOCUS

Transition from Elementary/Middle School to High/Secondary School

By Joe Kingsley Eyiah, OCT, Toronto-Canada

The months of May and June every year, see a lot of graduation ceremonies in schools, colleges and universities around the world. Happy smiles on the faces of some graduates during the ceremonies could be very deceiving. Not all the graduates are leaving such ceremonies with the desirable diplomas and certificates!

Some graduates from High Schools, Colleges and Universities will have to go back to complete the requisite credits in order to obtain their diplomas and certificates. They have either slackened during the school year to achieve all the necessary credits or have failed in their examinations. Their TRANSITION from one level of the educational system to another level has not been smooth!

I concentrate here on the transition from Middle (Elementary) School to High (Secondary) School and what parents ought to do to ensure their students (children) success from from the Elementary/Middle School to High/Secondary School level. I must state here that, 'no one is better qualified to help you navigate your way to succeed in your endeavours than yourself! You must learn from your failures and make use of available resources to achieve



SUCCESS!' Brookview Middle School in Toronto has this as its motto: SUCCESS HAS U IN IT. I couldn't agree more with this motto!

SUCCESS:

A popular definition of success is 'being able to live your life in your own way, doing only those things that you want to do, with the people/things that you choose, in the situations you desire.'

According to Brian Tracy in his work, 'The Power of Self-Discipline-No Excuses!', "when you begin to

define what 'success' means to you, you can immediately see things that you should be doing more of or less of in order to begin creating your ideal life. And the biggest thing that holds you back from moving in the directions of your dream is usually your favourite excuses and lack of self-discipline. " Thus, you can succeed if you choose to succeed!

PROMOTED, TRANSFERRED OR RETAINED?

As an elementary school teacher I drew parents' attention to the June report cards that students bring home. The last statement in the Learning Skills comment box on the report card clearly spells out the appropriate placement of the student in the next classes or school. According to the directions from school boards, for students accessing the current grade level curriculum, the placement statements should read:

1. Name of student is promoted to Grade X
2. Name of student is transferring to Grade X
3. Name of student is retaining in grade X

For the students with a Modified Individual Education Plan (IEP), the placement should read:

1. Based upon achievement on the IEP, Name of student, is promoted. Name of student's placement is Grade X
2. Based upon achievement on the IEP, Name of student, is transferred. Name of student, placement is Grade X
3. Based on achievement on the IEP, Name of student, is retained. Name of student's placement is Grade X

The good news for parents to follow up or pay particular attention to their children who are either promoted or transferred 'at risk' to the next level is that program interventions or support recommendations should be made for such students. These recommendations should be recorded on a Student Portfolio Support Form and communicated to the parents, students and receiving teacher/school.

I therefore encourage all parents whose children are either promoted or transferred 'at risk' from Grade 8 (Middle School) to Grade 9 (High School) to follow up with their High Schools to ensure that the necessary support are put in place to enable their children succeed,

A student, by school board policy, has the right to attend the school of their choice in the designated attendance area.

Government expanded visa scheme weeks after UN raised alarm over people trafficking

cont'd from pg. 9

In a response published last week, the government said it would not comment on individual allegations. It said licensed recruiters, known as "scheme operators", are responsible for placing workers on farms and ensuring their welfare. Failure to comply with rules could result in the recruiters losing their sponsor licence.

The government also acknowledged that decision making on the NRM was slow, but said a new compliance team had been established to monitor the seasonal worker visa.

It said 1,116 workers were interviewed at 144 farms in the 2022-23 season. That figure represents a decline in the number of workers interviewed at each farm, from an average of 44 in 2021 and 2022 to just under eight, according to inspection reports seen by TBIJ.

After being contacted by TBIJ, Haygrove and Fruitful Jobs sent separate responses to the UN letter. Haygrove chairman Angus Davison wrote that the allegations were "materially incorrect" and gave a "false impression" that there were systemic issues "akin to labour exploitation or

modern slavery" in how the company treated its workers in the UK.

Nearly 90 workers from Chile, Peru and Bolivia joined the unofficial strike at Haygrove

He said that workers are fully informed about the terms and conditions of their employment and are paid at least the national living wage, with legal deductions for accommodation offsets and wage advances only.

Davison said that Haygrove would be paying workers for the time they spent travelling between company sites as "a goodwill gesture" in 2024.

He said the farm offered future employment opportunities "not [as] a means to silence complaints but to provide continued work for those who wish to return".

Responding to the UN special rapporteurs, Fruitful Jobs said it "strongly refutes any allegations". It said its recruitment process was open, transparent and complied with minimum wage legislation. It said it took the issues around the experience of workers at Haygrove seriously and

works closely with farms to provide workers with a formal complaints mechanism.

The seasonal worker visa scheme was introduced in 2019 to address labour shortages in the agricultural sector, which were expected to be exacerbated by the UK's exit from the European Union.

The scheme has been rapidly expanded from an initial 2,500 workers coming in the first year, to more than 30,000 in 2023. This month, the government

announced that the scheme would continue to be extended until 2029.

The letter was signed by Tomoya Obokata, the special rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, Gehad Madi, the special rapporteur on human rights of migrants, and Siobhán Mullally, the special rapporteur on trafficking in persons. It was also signed by Robert McCorquodale, the chair-rapporteur of the working group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises. **The Bureau of Investigative Journalism**

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Britain's 500-year-old Royal Mail is being bought by a Czech billionaire

The owner of Royal Mail has accepted a £3.57 billion (\$4.6 billion) takeover bid from [Czech billionaire Daniel Křetínský](#), paving the way for the sale of one of Britain's oldest and most iconic institutions to a foreign owner for the first time.

International Distribution Services, which owns the loss-making postal service, said Wednesday that [it had accepted](#) a £3.70-per-share (\$4.69) takeover offer from Křetínský's EP Group.

The deal has consequences for thousands of workers and has sparked anxiety about the future of a key piece of national infrastructure, which delivers a vital public service.

EP Group has made several commitments to address these concerns, including upholding Royal Mail's "universal service obligation," which requires it to deliver letters six days a week everywhere in the United Kingdom for the same flat fee.

It has also promised to maintain employee benefits and pensions, and keep Royal Mail's headquarters and tax base in the UK.

"The EP group has the utmost respect for Royal Mail's history and tradition, and I know that owning this business will come with enormous responsibility — not just to the employees but to the citizens who rely on its services every day," Křetínský said in a statement.

He added that IDS has the potential "to become one of the largest postal logistics groups in Europe," but that its "market is evolving quickly" and it must modernize to keep up with rival delivery services. Křetínský's Vesa Equity Investment, a private equity firm, is already the largest shareholder in IDS, with a 27.6% stake.

Politically sensitive

The deal follows a torrid few years for Royal Mail, which was privatized in 2013. It has suffered a sharp drop in demand for its services and recorded a loss of £348 million (\$445 million) for the year that ended on March 31 — a slightly better result than the previous year when it lost £419 million (\$536 million).

"The IDS Board believes that the offer from EP is fair and reasonable given that there are uncertainties ahead and allows investors to realise value at a significant premium," IDS chairman Keith Williams said in the statement.

Not everyone is convinced, however.

Dave Ward, general secretary of the Communication Workers Union, which represents about 110,000 Royal Mail workers, said the takeover was "a direct result of a failed and ideological privatisation over a decade ago mixed with the blatant mismanagement of the company in recent years."

Workers wanted further commitments from EP Group on the future of the company, he said.

"We do welcome some of the commitments that have been made but the reality is postal workers across the UK have lost all faith in the senior management of Royal Mail and the service has been deliberately run down," he added in a statement.

Křetínský's move comes at a sensitive moment politically as the United Kingdom gears up for a general election on July 4. The proposed takeover will be subject to a national security review, possibly by a new government. Opinion polls suggest the Labour Party will win its first election since 2005 and replace the incumbent Conservative administration.

Labour has already taken a keen interest in the deal.

"Royal Mail is as British as it gets, and Labour will take the necessary steps to safeguard its undeniable identity and place in public life," Jonathan Reynolds, the party's business spokesperson, wrote in a [letter](#) to Křetínský earlier this month.

A low-profile Czech national, Křetínský made his fortune through a sprawling empire of European energy companies, retailers and football clubs. He is worth an estimated \$7.7 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, and owns a 27% stake in West Ham United Football Club. **LondonCNN —**

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IMMIGRATION AND SOCIAL ISSUES

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

Differences between Parents and Grandparents as Permanent Residents and Super Visa Holders

This issue of permanent residence and temporary residence for parents and grandparents is being revisited because of the increasing need for permanent residents and/or citizens of Canada to make critically important decisions regarding the type of applications they should make on behalf of their parents and grandparents. The super visa system has been introduced to address the concerns of Canadian citizens and permanent residents who are battling to get their parents and grandparents to Canada. But we should be mindful of the fact that the super visa is not the same as sponsorship.



Under the current super visa application system, a parent or grandparent may apply for a single-entry visa for five years or apply for a multiple-entry visa for up to ten years, the fees payable depending on what you want. Thus, a super visa in form of a multiple-entry visa will provide multiple entries for a period of up to ten years with the status periods for each entry lasting up to five years.

The super visa, no doubt, is a fast way of uniting with relatives in Canada and living with them over a considerably long period of time instead of waiting for years to get sponsorship applications processed.

Like a parent or a grandparent being sponsored as a permanent resident, a super visa applicant is required to be

the parent or grandparent of a citizen or a permanent resident of Canada. Additionally, the super visa applicant, like persons being sponsored as permanent residents, must undergo medical examinations and be medically admissible to Canada. Similar to sponsorship applications, the child or grandchild of the super visa applicant who is in Canada is required to meet the minimum income threshold based on one's family size determined from time to time by the Immigration.

Despite the similarities between super visa applications and permanent resident applications through sponsorship, there are dissimilarities in several respects. Unlike parents who come to Canada as sponsored permanent residents, super visa holders are viewed as visitors, and are required to demonstrate that they will leave Canada by choice at the end of the visa. And, also, while parents

and grandparents who are sponsored to Canada as permanent residents are permitted to engage in employment freely, super visa holders, being visitors, are denied that automatic right.

Parents and grandparents being sponsored as permanent residents can avail themselves of free Government medical services. This is however not the case with parents and grandparents who come with super visas. The super visa applicant must provide a proof that he or she has a private medical insurance with a Canadian insurance company. The insurance should be valid for each entry to Canada and available for review by a port of entry officer.

Another feature that distinguishes parents who enter Canada as sponsored permanent residents from super visa holders relates to who can accompany the visa holder. The dependants of super visa applicants are not eligible to accompany the applicants. Only the super visa applicant's spouse or common-law partner can accompany the applicant. If dependants want to accompany parents or grandparents who hold super visas to Canada, the dependants will have to apply for regular visitor visas. This is not the case with parents and grandparents who are sponsored to Canada as permanent residents. They can have their dependent children accompany

them to Canada as permanent residents provided they satisfy the conditions of dependency.

Also, the parents and grandparents who enter and live in Canada as sponsored permanent residents may, by virtue of having lived in Canada as permanent residents over a long period of time, be entitled to old age security and other benefits. That might, however, not be the case with super visa holders because, regardless of the aggregate number of years they live in Canada, super visa holders are viewed as visitors throughout the entire duration of their stay in Canada.

It is advisable to weigh the benefits and disadvantages of super visa on one hand against regular single visitor visas or regular multiple-entry visas or actual permanent resident status acquired through sponsorship applications on the other hand before a decision on a form of application to make is taken by a parent or a grandparent or their children. Contact a specialist in Immigration Law for some advice if and when necessary.

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

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

Last month's topic was on triggers of CRA tax audits and this month, the focus will be on how to deal and manage the process of CRA tax audit.

Dealing with the CRA Audit Process:

A CRA audit, or a tax audit as it is commonly known, is a review of an individual tax return. The purpose is to ensure all of the information provided is accurate and in compliance with current tax laws. This process involves reviewing all of the documents submitted with the tax return. As well as supplementary information such as bank statements and receipts.

Depending on the size and complexity of the tax return being audited, this can be a highly involved and time-consuming process. Ultimately, an audit serves to ensure that individuals are paying their fair share of taxes. While doing everything they can to follow government regulations.

If you have been selected for a CRA audit, it is important to cooperate fully with your tax agent. This will ensure the smoothest possible process for everyone involved. Generally speaking, communication is key when it comes to CRA audits. A big no-no is dodging calls and letters, this will only make matters worse for you!

The Income Tax Act grants to CRA a number of arbitrary powers. The Minister does not have to accept your return as filed. In fact, under Section 152(7) of the income tax act, CRA has the right to change your tax return if they don't agree with the way you've filed it.

They can change your income figures, your deductions or your credits prior to the expirations of a normal reassessment period, which is three years.

Your tax-filing fate, therefore can rest with an auditor who perceives your tax and personal affairs quite differently than you do.

1. Do respond promptly to CRA phone calls and/or correspondence. Ignoring them will not make them go away. It will only make them more intolerant later when you try to negotiate with them.

2. Do cooperate by providing them with the information they request. Ask them why they are requesting the information? The tax department does have the right to review your records on your tax return. However, they do not have the right to engage in a "fishing expedition".

3. Do offer to have the tax auditor review your records at your accountant's office. This will reduce your disruption and may make the audit go smoother.

4. Do attempt to negotiate on grey or interpretative matters. Where the rules are not "black" or "white", the auditor may be willing to give a little, depending on the circumstances.

5. Do seek professional tax help. Not all audits go smoothly and mistakes can be made. Misinterpretation of the facts is quite common. A tax professional can help you make sure the auditor



understands your business and your transactions in the best possible light.

6. Don't provide more information than requested unless it helps your case. As mentioned earlier, ask what the auditor needs and cooperate. There is no sense in making a career out of the audit of your business.

7. Don't accept the word of the auditor as gospel. The auditor's interpretation of certain legislation may be right, but then again, it may be wrong. Check with your tax accountant or ask to speak with the auditor's supervisor if you feel that there may be an error.

8. Don't delay in filing a notice of objection. You don't necessarily want to file a notice of objection if you have an open dialogue with the tax auditor on some contentious points. However, keep in mind your deadlines and make sure you file your objection before you run out of time.

Audit experience is rarely a pleasant one. However, it doesn't have to be painful. If you follow the rules and are not too aggressive, you can win this round with a little bit of luck.

Your Tax Audit Strategy:

Have a winning strategy and not a fighting strategy:

Section 152(8) of the income tax act makes the assumptions that CRA is correct in its assessments unless those assessments are challenged by the taxpayer.

While the burden of proof is on you to disprove CRA's assessment or reassessment of your tax return, it is also your duty to defend your right to pay only the correct amount of tax and no more.

It is important you know this and also that it is your right to arrange your affairs within the framework of the law so as to pay the least taxes allowed by the law.

- A winning strategy will be to provide or produce all tax documentation required in the audit letter, on time and in meticulous order or if it is impossible to complete within the timeline, a request for an extension.
- A review of precedents set in tax law regarding similar issues required in the audit letter.

- A review of your rights to appeal processes: Use the Form RC199 Voluntary Disclosures Program. CRA allows one time opportunity to make a full and complete voluntary disclosure and may grant interest and penalty relief.
- Right to Adjust prior filed returns. File Form T1-ADJ.
- Right to Taxpayer Relief Provisions- any unusual hardships, & beyond control, illness natural disaster etc.
- Right to object to the assessment or reassessment, adjust returns for errors or omissions, use the tax relief provisions or in cases where information was previously not disclosed, incomplete and inaccurate or use the voluntary

disclosure program etc.

- Notice of Objection: This is a formal objection to the chief of appeals at the local tax services office. It must be filed within 1 year after the taxpayer filing due date or 90 days after the day of the mailing of the notice of assessment or reassessment. You may also appeal directly to the Tax Court of Canada if CRA has not responded to the Notice of Objection within 90 days.

I hope you don't have to go through this, but if and when it "rains", just make sure you have the coverage and understanding of your rights and responsibilities. All the best!

For any views or comments, I can be reached via email: eddiesmith77@gmail.com

10 per cent of Canadians only making minimum monthly payment on their credit card: TransUnion

Canadians are carrying a lot of debt—about \$2.4 trillion in car loans, mortgages and credit card debt.

Now a new survey (opens in a new tab) by TransUnion finds there's been an increase in delinquencies and about 10 per cent of Canadians only make the minimum monthly payment on their credit cards.

"There are about nine or 10 per cent of consumers in Canada that are making their minimum monthly payment. That number is increasing as people's wallets are stressed," said Matthew Fabian, Director, Research and Industry Insights for Canada at TransUnion.

The survey also found that when it comes to the average consumer balance for loan products in the first quarter of 2024, the average auto loan is now \$28,102. The average credit card debt is \$4,276. Installment loans on average total \$23,769, lines of credit \$34,239 and the average mortgage balance for Canadians is \$360,355.

The 90 plus day delinquency rate in Canada increased 12.67 per cent in Canada over last year and more than 16.46 per cent in Ontario. Fabian said that consumers are feeling financial stress.

"What we are seeing is the impact of inflation and higher interest rates, meaning higher cost of living, higher cost of covering your debts," said Fabian.

As more families turn to credit cards to bridge the gap, it's important to realize that many credit cards have an annual interest rate of about 20 per cent.

Laurie Campbell, a licenced insolvency trustee with Doyle Salewski, said that inflation and other pressures are causing more Canadians financial distress.

"People are becoming more and more reliant on credit cards to make ends meet and that is very concerning" said Campbell.

Campbell said it's important to make minimum monthly payments to keep your credit rating in good standing, but if you only do that you can end up in a cycle of debt.

"Those people only making the minimum monthly payment, it concerns me deeply, because it's going to take them years, if not decades to get out of debt" said Campbell.

As more mortgages come due more consumers will have to renew at much higher rates and even if the Bank of Canada cuts interest rates Campbell says for many it will provide minimal relief.

The survey also found that when it comes to bills some feel it's more important to pay their mortgage or car loan first, but missing any bill can hurt your credit score and a low score means you may have to pay higher interest rates in the future and have fewer loan options. **CTV News**



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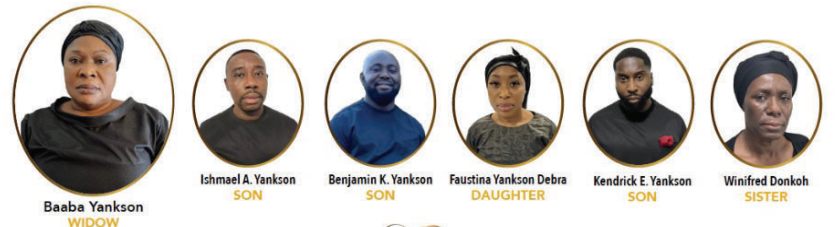
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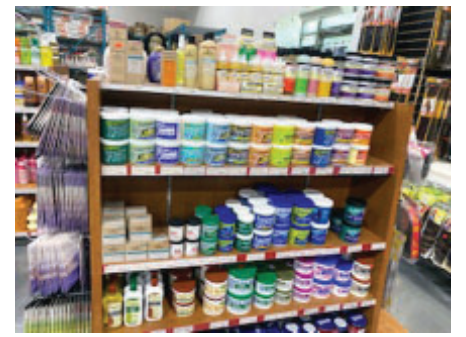
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The Black Community's "Elephant in the Room!"

By Allison Asare, Calgary, AB

I don't want to make this about statistics and numbers but rather a conversation about the elephant in the room. The elephant in this case is mental health. Growing up I always appreciated the Canadian school system addressing the psychological state of mind of young people. Young people in this case represent adolescent youth. I want to take a deep dive into addressing some of the main concerns about what young people tend to face and conceal. I have observed that over the years, young people around the high school age are extremely impressionable and change dramatically. Sadly most parents seem to have a good grip on their kids until about this developmental stage. High school introduces many new challenges and experiences such as peer pressure, drugs, and sexual identity. In the black community, these conversations don't seem to be as openly acknowledged because of stigma. These stigmas in place are due to ignorance, shame, and cultural standards. This is a dialogue I want to openly initiate and is not based on facts from any specific sources. I find that the more culturally focused a black-identified group is the more these issues affecting teens and young people remain an underrepresented topic. This generation of free-spirited, open-minded millennial youth challenges the traditional group of parents and grandparents that grew up



Allison Asare

in a more disciplined era. I heard stories from my parents and grandparents about financial hardships, poverty, academic pressures, long walks to school, and other dated issues commonly shared from accounts of growing up abroad. I was born and raised in Canada, some might reference it as a free country or a very liberal place to be. My family origins stem from Ghana and Jamaica which over the years may have similar economies and educational systems. Not once have I heard my parents or grandparents mention mental health issues or any of the issues plaguing today's youth. When I was in high school, teenage

suicide was heavily on the rise and triggered by a lack of acceptance for homosexuality. Another loss of life among young people was bullying. The numbers have only increased since my high school days. Cultural standards from both nationalities have a high tolerance for the issues addressed above and barely acknowledge that they are real concerns in the black community. Drugs are also stigmatized and seen as a Canadian issue because a lot of people think their children only consume marijuana which is a debatable drug. These are some myths but a reality for some people. The cultural influence of Ghanaians being heavily faith-based tends to limit the doubt of drugs, homosexuality, and other concerns affecting youth because of the community's hegemonic views. I believe things change when that hegemonic umbrella lifts and North American exposure to secular ideals comes pouring in. I have always heard people speak about Canadian culture as demonic, undisciplined, and uncivilized but full of freedom. That freedom component becomes attractive to people who feel repressed culturally and who get exposed to multiculturalism and open-minded unfiltered options. For the culturally entrenched they are told problems get prayed away or you keep it in and move on to something different. For the Canadian ideology, it is ok to be depressed and hurt and experience mental health challenges and there are so many "options" on how to cope with it. If most black communities come from a cultural umbrella that doesn't give platforms for self-expression concerning the confusion and sexual identity crisis affecting young people then how does a parent prepare for the "options" easily available in the North American societies? Coping strategies are something that North American culture grants funding for and implements to help with the high suicide rates of young people. There are medical avenues such as counseling and prescription medications but then there are street remedies. Parents need to know I am not making this up. This is happening whether I write about it or not. Sometimes there is an unfortunate combination of medical remedies and street remedies that become addictive and end up doing more harm than good. Some families can dismiss this reality and pretend their children are active in the church doing well in school and appear healthy and kind but there is a dark side to this and it is called "masking". I use this term to create awareness for illusive behaviors for people who turn a blind eye or the ones naive and are completely clueless until it is too late. Just because a child looks normal and denies any claims of mental troubles and alternative coping mechanisms doesn't mean all is well. It is normal for teens to lie and hide their coping strategies because of fear. Some kids are scared to disappoint their parents. Some are embarrassed about the habits or addictions they have adopted and prefer to self-manage. Some parents might be wondering what they do if they notice these behaviors. You are on the right track. Identifying the odd or secretive behaviours is one thing but understanding how to intervene is the hard part. Keep in mind young people are struggling to find themselves and are facing so many social pressures in school and with other peers. Unless

you have been a victim of similar circumstances, your concerns or questions might pose a threat and make the child more defensive and closed off to you. Snooping through their belongings will violate privacy and if discovered will create more barriers to communication and discussion on intervention. Sometimes as a parent, you may not be the best person to address the issue head-on, and maybe a relative or an outside person of trust can do it better. Don't always assume as a parent you have the right to address your teen or young person on these hyper-sensitive issues because you might be indirectly contributing to their pressure or pain for their coping options in the first place. We like to believe we know our children best but the reality is we know the version of them we raised until their impressionable phase of strong outside influences that occur during their preparation for adulthood. I think this phase starts around 14. I have no clinical degree in this field but I have seen and encountered a lot and want to make this conversation something people can appreciate. I just wanted to scratch the surface of mental health awareness and some of the coping mechanisms young people are vulnerable to in the black community. I hope this starts a new dialogue in your family or allows you to look at your situation differently. When we look at people we see their demeanor and how they look. We can't see a person's heart or mind, only God can. We need to look at people with compassion and consider if there is something else happening and if there is suffering of some sort being revealed through art, literature, or their lack of engagement with others. Sometimes children have been traumatized or witnessed something traumatizing and it eats them up inside and they develop anti-social behaviors or aggressive behaviors towards others. Some children self-inflict wounds or ingest substances to numb themselves so they can't feel the pain they want to forget. The worst part of this trauma is the revictimization of the painful memory or trigger that makes the person want to escape reality. These are hard topics we must consider and how challenging it is for a young person to face this inner fight alone. Too many lives are being lost and so much stigma in our black cultures that publicly represses open conversations about such topics or internal struggles. We need to get more comfortable facing the uncomfortable circumstances people are fighting with because it can be something close to home for most of us. I have a saying I called a poem many years ago and it's called (J-Tai) and it means Just-Talk-About-It, and that is what we need to do. Whether the struggle is right or wrong, culturally appropriate or unspeakable, a dialogue needs to address it so it is analyzed for the sake of understanding the young person's perspective to be able to speak their language. The sooner this can be accomplished the support to address the issue can be beneficial instead of condemnation out of ignorance. If you feel incapable of handling some of the issues your teen or young person might be facing then it is best to get someone more experienced or suitable on the topic or someone that can relate to them socially that can get through. You aren't alone in this and there is a way.

Unlocking the Secret to Banishing Acne Scars: Expert Insights and Remedies

Are you battling with the aftermath of severe acne, haunted by stubborn scars that mar your skin's natural beauty? The journey to clear, scar-free skin might seem daunting, but fear not! In a comprehensive guide, we unveil the latest strategies and newest treatments to bid farewell to stubborn acne scars and embrace renewed confidence.

Acne scars, often considered a double punishment following an ordeal with pimples, need not be a lifelong reminder. With the right approach and timely intervention, achieving smooth, blemish-free skin is within reach.

Understanding Acne Scars: A Roadmap to Recovery

The path to clear skin begins with understanding the diverse manifestations of acne, ranging from mild to severe. While mild acne typically presents as whiteheads or blackheads, severe acne can manifest as painful cysts or nodules beneath the skin, often leaving lasting scars.

However, the key to combating acne scars lies in addressing the root cause – acne itself. Timely intervention and effective acne treatment can mitigate the risk of severe scarring, underscoring the importance of consulting a qualified dermatologist or plastic surgeon.

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Embark on your journey to clear skin with accessible and effective home remedies. Harnessing the power of ingredients like salicylic acid and lactic acid, you can gently exfoliate and promote skin renewal, diminishing the appearance of acne scars. Additionally, natural remedies such as lemon juice, aloe vera gel, and coconut oil offer promising avenues for scar reduction, albeit with varying degrees of scientific backing.

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Cont'd on pg. 23

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Mr. Politician, in which country will you die?

By Kwaku Obosu-Mensah

Ghana's Prime Minister Kofi Abrefa Busia was overthrown in 1972 when he left Ghana for a medical check-up in Britain. That he was overthrown from power through a military coup d'état was news for some time but nobody paid attention to the fact that the Ghanaian leader did not deem any hospital in Ghana well-equipped enough for his medical check-up.

In 2024, some 52 years later, Ghanaian politicians still travel abroad for medical check-up and treatment. The question is, with all the financial and human resources in the country, why don't Ghanaian leaders equip Ghanaian hospitals with the needed equipment so that the hospitals can properly serve all Ghanaians? Considering the fact that, it takes quite some time for a person to decide to seek medical treatment abroad, it would be rational for Ghanaian leaders to equip Ghanaian hospitals with vital medical equipment.

Below are some Ghanaian politicians who have sought medical treatment abroad or had died in hospitals in foreign countries.

Does June 25, 2012 ring a bell. That was the date President John Evans Atta Mills returned from a "routine medical checkup" in the US and declared that he was fit to continue his duties. That day was remarkable because to exhibit to Ghanaians that he was fit, the president jogged at the airport. Whilst Ghanaians had to endure low rate hospitals in their country, the president had routine checkup abroad.



On January 19, 2018, the Vice-President of Ghana, Muhamadu Bawumia allegedly passed out. As soon as he was stabilized, he was airlifted to Britain for medical care. Luckily, time was on his side; consider the time it took to make the decision to airlift him to Britain and the time it took to get him to Britain. A non-stop flight from the Ghanaian capital of Accra to the British capital of London is at least six hours. The ambulance ride from the airport in London to the designated hospital could also take some time. The vice-president could have died due to the long time it took to get him to an equipped hospital to cater to him.

On February 14, 2021, the Ministry of Finance informed Ghanaians that Ken Ofori-Atta, the Minister of Finance, had travelled to the USA for a special medical review. The statement added that it was necessary for Ken Ofori-Atta to seek medical interventions

in the US because the intervention required was not available in Ghana.

Not long after that, Kennedy Agyapong, the Member of Parliament (MP) for Assin Central announced that he recently underwent a brain surgery in the US to remove a brain tumor. The tumor was diagnosed in a hospital in Ghana but unfortunately, he had to travel all the way to the US for the surgery.

Muhamadu Bawumia, Ken Ofori-Atta, and Kennedy Agyapong survived, and are still with us. However, other Ghanaian leaders had not been that lucky. Kwadwo Baah-Wiredu was Ghana's Finance Minister from 2005 until he died in 2008 at the tender age of 56. He died in a hospital in far way South Africa. Whatever his ailment was, there was no hospital in Ghana well equipped to cater to him. South Africa has equipped some hospitals fit to treat Ghana's Foreign Minister but Ghana doesn't deem it necessary to do likewise.

In 2010, another politician died in a foreign hospital. Courage Quashigah died in a hospital in Israel at the age of 62. He was once the Minister of Agriculture; another time, he was the Minister of Health.

On December 1, 2023, the former Youth and Sports Minister, and once the Minister of Employment and Social Welfare, Enoch Teye Mensah (E.T. Mensah) died at the age of 77 at a hospital in South Africa. His widow narrated the ordeal they went through

to get to South Africa. As she put it, "The flight to South Africa was an episode filled with drama, the details of which are too painful to recount. Upon arrival, his [E.T. Mensah] condition necessitated immediate specialist attention, leading to his admission."

In a Ghanaian hospital, Mrs. Mensah would have stayed at the hospital ward with her husband but she didn't have that privilege in South Africa. According to her, while she was away, she received a devastating call. She rushed to the hospital but her husband was already dead. E.T. Mensah died without his wife or any dear one by his side.

I don't know the circumstances that led to their death, but it is possible that the Foreign Minister, the Sports Minister, and the Health Minister might have survived had they received medical treatment earlier than they did. Consider the time it takes to decide to seek medical attention in a foreign land, the time it takes to find a hospital with proper equipment and personnel to handle your condition, purchasing airline tickets, deciding the family member to accompany you on the journey, arranging for transportation from the airport to the hospital, etc. In short, it takes a long time for a Ghanaian politician to get to a hospital in a foreign country. Therefore, it is rational for Ghanaian politicians to equip Ghanaian hospitals with modern equipment. Until then, the question remains: Mr. Politician, in which country will you die?

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Trump vs. Biden: Exposing Biden's Racist Legislation History While Defending Hunter's Drug Use

Many people around the world are being told that Trump is the racist and Biden is the good guy. Unknown to them, it was Biden who pushed some of the most racist pieces of legislation in the United States that sent thousands of black and brown people to prison for drug use or possession. Still, when his own son Hunter Biden became an addict, he defended him and even praised him.

It's often called the law of karma. It's like when the most anti-gay parent ends up having only gay children, or the most anti-immigrant person has to deal with the fact that their only daughter has fallen in love with an undocumented immigrant and is ready to leave the country to be with them in Guatemala or Sudan.

One of the legislations that Biden pushed fervently was in 1986, when crack cocaine was more prevalent in black communities, while powder cocaine was more common among White users.

As white and black people were using hard drugs, Biden and his colleagues decided in their wisdom to craft a bill that punished black and brown people a hundred times more severely. It was known as the 100:1 disparity and was widely criticized for being racially discriminatory and contributing to systemic racial inequities in the criminal justice system.

The 100:1 sentencing disparity between crack cocaine and powder cocaine refers to a provision in the 1986 Anti-Drug Abuse Act, which mandated significantly harsher penalties for offenses involving crack cocaine compared to those involving powder cocaine.



Specifically, the law required the same mandatory minimum prison sentence for possession of 5 grams of crack cocaine as it did for 500 grams of powder cocaine—a 100:1 ratio.

More than two decades later, in 2010, the Fair Sentencing Act reduced the disparity from 100:1 to 18:1, raising the amount of crack cocaine needed to trigger the mandatory minimum sentence to 28 grams. As you can see, even the reduced ratio still perpetuated unjust sentencing disparities. In case you missed what I just said, here is a summary.

1. Mandatory Minimum Sentences: Crack Cocaine (used mainly by black people): Possession of 5 grams triggered a mandatory minimum sentence of 5 years in federal prison. Powder Cocaine (used mainly by white people): Possession of 500 grams

triggered the same 5-year mandatory minimum sentence.

2. Impact on Sentencing: The disparity above led to much longer prison sentences for individuals convicted of offenses involving crack cocaine compared to those involving powder cocaine, despite the substances being pharmacologically similar.

3. Racial Disparities: Crack cocaine was more commonly used in urban, predominantly black communities, while powder cocaine was more prevalent among white and more affluent users. This resulted in disproportionately high incarceration rates for black individuals relative to white individuals for similar drug offenses.

Below is a recap of some of the most racist bills that Biden fervently pushed, including the 1994 Crime Bill that sent thousands of black and brown people

to prison and ruined their lives forever for drug possession.

1. 1984 Comprehensive Crime Control Act:

This act increased federal penalties for many crimes, established new mandatory minimum sentences, and introduced new measures for asset forfeiture. Critics argue that these policies disproportionately impacted black and brown communities.

2. 1986 Anti-Drug Abuse Act:

This legislation introduced mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses, including a controversial 100:1 sentencing disparity between crack and powder cocaine, as explained above.

3. 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act (Crime Bill):

The bill included provisions for "three strikes" mandatory life sentences, allocated funds for new prisons, and expanded the death penalty. It also included funding for community policing and the Violence Against Women Act. Critics argue that the bill contributed to mass incarceration, which disproportionately affected Black and Brown communities.

4. 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (Welfare Reform):

This act aimed to reduce welfare dependency through work requirements and time limits on benefits. Critics contend that it disproportionately affected low-income families, many of whom were black and brown, by reducing their access to social safety nets. **The Daily Letter**

Trump's Bold Bid for History: Could Defy Odds and Join Grover Cleveland as Only President to Win Non-Consecutive Terms!

If Donald Trump wins the presidential election in November after losing in 2020, he will become only the second president in U.S. history to make such a comeback. This remarkable achievement would place him alongside Grover Cleveland, the only other president who managed to return to the White House after an electoral defeat. Cleveland was first elected in 1884, lost re-election in 1888, and came back to win again in 1892, making his presidency unique with non-consecutive terms?.

Here Are Some Historical Comebacks in U.S. Presidential Elections

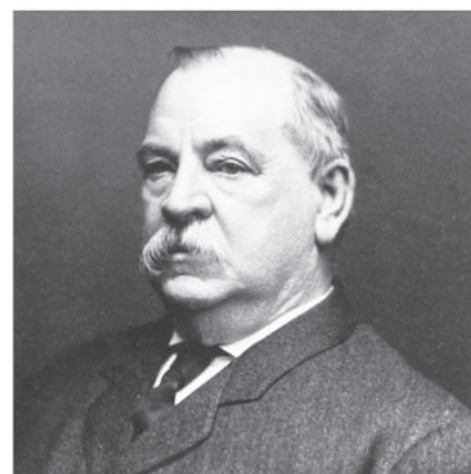
Grover Cleveland: Grover Cleveland is the only U.S. president to serve two non-consecutive terms. He was first elected in 1884 but lost his re-election bid in 1888 to Benjamin Harrison. Cleveland made a successful comeback in 1892, defeating Harrison and

becoming both the 22nd and 24th president of the United States?

Richard Nixon: Richard Nixon lost the 1960 presidential election to John F. Kennedy but managed a political comeback by winning the presidency in 1968. He was re-elected in 1972 but resigned in 1974 amid the Watergate scandal. Nixon's return to politics after a significant defeat highlights his resilience and strategic acumen?.

Theodore Roosevelt: After serving nearly two terms (taking office after McKinley's assassination in 1901 and winning re-election in 1904), Roosevelt did not run in 1908. However, he sought the presidency again in 1912 as a third-party candidate with the Progressive Party. Although he did not win, his campaign split the Republican vote and demonstrated his enduring influence in American politics?.

Andrew Jackson: Andrew Jackson won the popular vote in the 1824 election but did not secure enough



electoral votes, leading the House of Representatives to select John Quincy Adams as president. Jackson came back to win the presidency in 1828 and was re-elected in 1832, marking a significant comeback after an initial defeat in the House?.

Henry Clay: Henry Clay ran for president three times (1824, 1832, and 1844) and, despite never winning, remained a major political figure. His repeated attempts and influence over American politics

highlight his persistence and resilience in the face of electoral defeat?.

William Jennings Bryan: Bryan was a dominant force in the Democratic Party and ran for president three times (1896, 1900, and 1908). Though he never won, his influence shaped Democratic policies, and he remained a significant political figure throughout his career?.

The Daily Letter.

Unlocking the Secret to Banishing Acne Scars: Expert Insights and Remedies

cont'd from pg. 18

Salicylic acid is effective on all forms of acne. It is an excellent supplement to a regular skin care regimen for the majority of individuals who suffer from acne. Therefore, 2% is more than enough for most skin types.

Note: Sensitive skin types should test a product containing this acid on a tiny skin patch before applying it wholly, since it may cause dryness and itching.

Shop for acne products with Salicylic acid

Lactic acid

This has nothing to do with working out at the gym, so relax. A minor 2010 research discovered that lactic acid peels administered by a plastic surgeon or dermatologist once in two weeks for a period of three months enhanced their texture, lightened acne scars and promoted pigmentation of the skin.

There are several peels, ointments, and serums containing lactic acid, however, the natural lactic acid component in diluted apple cider vinegar makes it suitable for use as a toner or spot treatment. However, if you're looking for something more reliable and stronger this toner is more consistent.

Best for: All types of acne scars.

Buy acne products with lactic acid

Natural remedies

Many individuals use natural therapies to assist in getting rid of acne scars, but the science behind them is murky. Some may cause further discomfort or other difficulties, so individuals should exercise care while using them.

Natural home treatments for acne scars include the following:

- lemon juice
- shea butter
- aloe vera gel
- coconut oil
- baking soda
- raw honey

Buy acne treatments with natural ingredients.

Clinical Treatments: Elevating Skincare to New Heights

For those seeking professional intervention, a myriad of clinical treatments awaits. From chemical peels and dermabrasion to laser resurfacing and skin micro-needling, dermatologists and plastic surgeons offer tailored solutions to address acne scars effectively. These advanced therapies stimulate collagen synthesis, promoting skin regeneration and gradually fading scars, restoring skin's natural radiance.

Empowering Yourself: A Call to Action

Acne scars need not be a permanent fixture, dampening one's self-esteem. Whether opting for home remedies or seeking clinical intervention, you should take proactive steps towards achieving clear, acne-free skin.

Dr Speron's Natural Skin Care is dedicated to empowering individuals on their journey to optimal skincare and wellbeing. With a commitment to innovation and excellence, we strive to provide comprehensive solutions tailored to individual needs, fostering confidence and radiance from within. **Newsires**

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African Union Commission Chairperson calls on world to act on Gaza

Doha, Qatar: Chairperson of African Union Commission (AUC) H E Moussa Faki Mahamat has asked international community especially the world powers to shoulder their responsibilities to stop the killing of innocent people in Gaza. He was speaking in the Ministerial Fireside Chat at Global Security Forum 2024 with moderator Folly Bah Thibault, an Al Jazeera-English presenter. "I think the international community particularly the big powers, precisely United States, has to act. They have to act. It is a shame for our humanity watching every day people, children, women killed," said Mahamat.

He said that it causes a real problem of credibility of the international community, of multilateralism, of international law and it is morally unacceptable.

"Our support and solidarity with Palestinian people is not new. Africa has been colonised. We know more than everybody else about colonial regime and an apartheid system," said Mahamat. He added: "From the first instance we condemned in a very stronger stance against this devastating war on Palestinian people. More than 35,000 people lost their lives and the majority are children and women, which is not acceptable."

He said the internal juries should take their responsibility and the United Nation and particularly the Security Council has to take its responsibility.

"As African, as global South, I think people realise



Chairperson of African Union Commission H E Moussa Faki Mahamat speaking at Global Security Forum 2024.

that there is double standard which is a real threat to our current system. So we have to revise it. At least we have to implement what we commonly decided," said Mahamat. To a question about the security problem in Africa, he said: "That's why I'm talking about credibility of the whole system. If you still

continue to use double standard. I think a life of a Palestinian or Israeli or an African is the same.

"I think it is our duty to tell our international community and our current institutions to just apply what we decided to what we call the international legalities to ensure peace, stability, justice, equality among human beings." Speaking about the suspension of countries from African Union, he said that this phenomenon is a real challenge for African Union and the African continent.

"For the first time there is six African countries suspended from African Union because of unconstitutional changes. We will be celebrating next weekend the 20th anniversary of our Peace and Security Council where the issue of unconstitutional change will be on the top of our agenda in few days," said Mahamat.

"We have to evaluate whether there is a risk for the credibility of our peace and security architecture because 20 years ago we set this instrument, Peace and Security Council .

The Peninsula

African communities face complex challenges that require multilayered solutions: ForAfrika

African communities increasingly face a complex set of challenges that require multisector, layered initiatives that support their efforts to reshape their environments, says ForAfrika, the largest African humanitarian development organisation.

The effects of climate change and war have led to unprecedented numbers of internally displaced people, many of whom are to be found in Africa, especially in the north and east where conflict has led to 9.7-million people fleeing their homes, 6-million in Sudan and 3.7-million in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

"Over 40 years of operating as Africa's largest humanitarian development organisation, we have developed a three-tiered programming framework that helps communities get back on their feet. Repeatedly we have seen it prove its worth," says Dr Mary Okumu, the organisation's technical director.

The ForAfrika approach supported Rosemary Anania's journey from losing everything as she fled from unrest in South Sudan in 2017 to owning a small business in Uganda in 2021.

Anania joined a group of 30 people who were cultivating a market garden they established with support from ForAfrika, which provided watering cans, spades and seeds. ForAfrika also helped the group to establish a village savings and loan association (VSLA), through which members make small monthly cash deposits and can take loans when needed.

Anania used a small loan from the VSLA to boost her business after she started selling surplus from her part of the market garden. She has repaid her loan and now employs a few other people.

She has also opened a small shop, which has allowed her to acquire some goats and chickens.

"These assets will help me in case of emergencies so that I don't remove cash from my business," she says.

In Mozambique, farmer Tomás Siteo's fortunes took off after he received technical training through a ForAfrika partnership with the National Institute for Disaster Risk Management and Eduardo Mondlane University.

Before joining a ForAfrika community agriculture project in 2020, Siteo was struggling to grow surplus

crops to sell so that he could support his family. The technical training gave him skills in composting, zero-tilling, agroforestry, early warnings and disaster management as well as how to save money through a VSLA.

By 2024 he was successfully farming nine hectares of land, growing cassava, maize, groundnuts and vegetables. He earned \$10 000 during 2023's harvest, selling more than 350 bags of groundnuts, each weighing 50kg.

"My success also came from the agricultural knowledge I got from the training. I always dedicated myself to transforming with responsibility and believing in improving my family's lifestyle," says Siteo.

"Without ForAfrika's support, where I am today would still be a dream; the income from charcoal and firewood selling was very little."

Dr Okumu says that at each stage of ForAfrika's developmental transformation model, processes and solutions are carefully and deeply discussed with the community in question so that vulnerable groups are able to drive their own sustainable progress beyond temporary external aid. The sense of ownership that this inculcates in communities is critical.

"Our proven process model has been developed over four decades of working closely with local communities, listening to grassroots voices to direct localised solutions that are tailored to contexts," she says.

ForAfrika facilitates a continuum of transformation from emergency aid towards self-sufficient communities, achieving this through an integrated programming approach that is rooted in collaborative partnerships and capability transfers. It is ForAfrika's goal to ensure that, by 2032, it has helped 20-million people reach self-sufficiency.

"Development is not a one-time event, but an ongoing process centred on strengthening capacities to transform current vulnerabilities into adaptive strengths through locally led innovation," says Dr Okumu.

All these processes and the programmes that develop from them complement national development plans in the countries in which ForAfrika has a presence: Angola, the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan and Uganda. **FLOW Communications**

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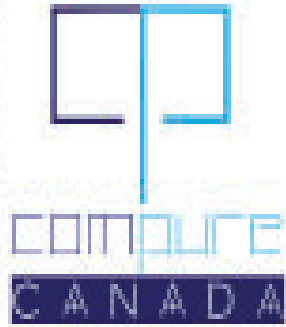
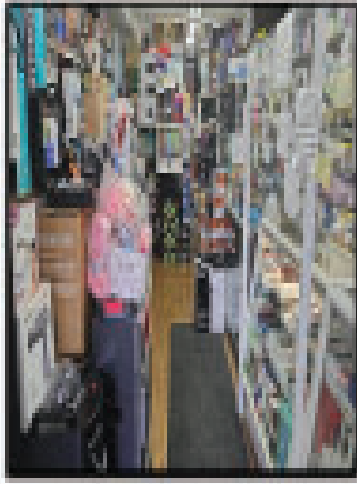
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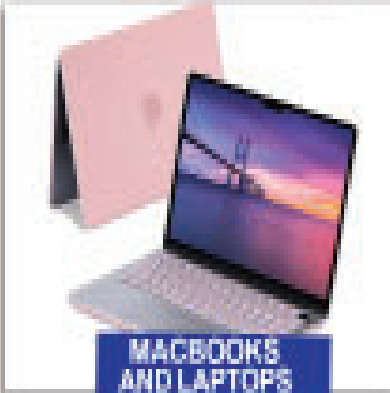
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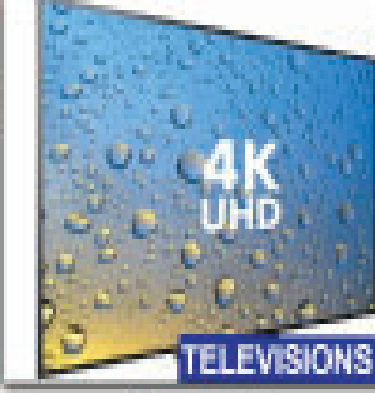
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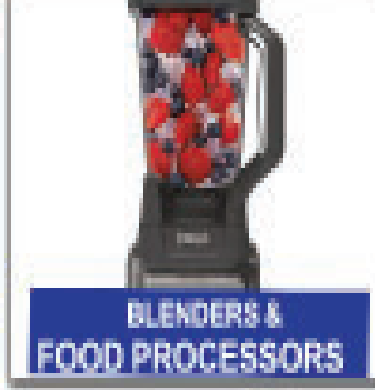
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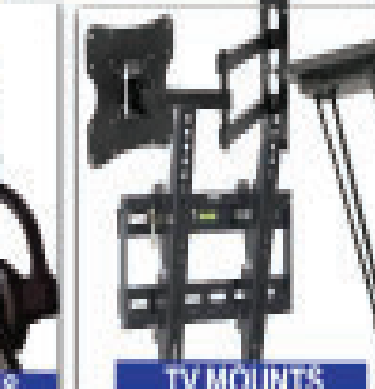
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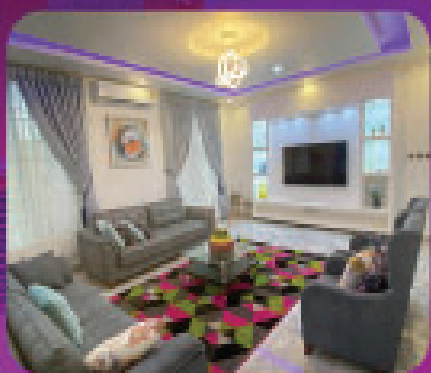
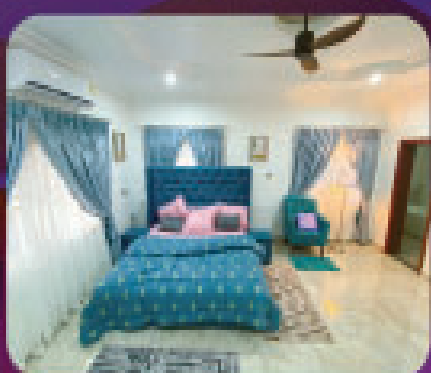
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Ghanaian Women’s Fasting and Prayer Conference Prays on Victoria Day

By Ebenezer Amankwah, Toronto, ON

Members of the Ghanaian Women’s Fasting and Prayer Conference have gathered to offer prayers to God, seeking guidance and protection for all, especially Ghanaian families in the diaspora.

due to diseases, suicides, accidents, and shootings.

Mrs. Comfort Ayiku, President of the Ghanaian

cont’d on pg. 33



Mrs Alberta Asante Yirenkyi

The conference, held at the Living Word Assembly of God Church in Toronto, centred around the theme “Who do you say I am,” taken from Matthew 16:15.

The prayers focused on the prevalent news in the community and media, which often highlight deaths



Rev. Eleanor Adu Anane (left) and Mrs. Comfort Ayiku



Mrs. Jennifer Owusu



Rev. Winnie Manu



The Women fervently praying



Prayer Time

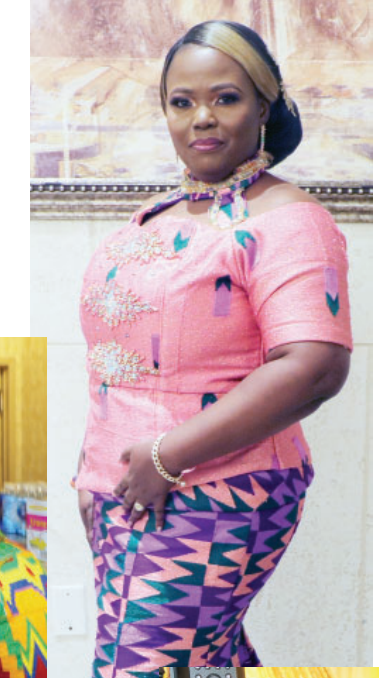


Cross section of participants in prayer



Cross section of participants in prayer

COMMUNITY



IN PICTURES



African Embassies in Canada Called to Champion African Culture

cont'd from pg. 1

She emphasized that the African community in Canada could become a formidable force only by uniting to promote African culture.

According to Amihere, the responsibility also lies with the parents of Black children to educate them about their heritage, and cultural events play a significant role in supporting parental efforts.

Georgette Amihere said this in an interview during the 2024 Carassauga Festival held at various event centres in Mississauga.

The Carassauga Festival, an incorporated non-profit volunteer

community organization, has been celebrating multiculturalism since 1986. Recognized as Canada's largest multicultural festival, Carassauga is organized by the city of Mississauga. This city-wide, family-friendly event aims to foster understanding, respect, and cooperation among Canadians of diverse backgrounds.

Ranked among the top 100 multicultural festivals in Canada, Carassauga attracts over 275,000 visitors annually, with the African Pavilion drawing between 10,000 to 15,000 attendees.

The pavilion serves as a cultural hub that unites African countries

cont'd on pg. 31



Opening Ceremony



Showing of African Custom



Vendor



Youth Drummers



African Pavilion Media



Vendor



African group on stage



Vendor



Vendor



Vendor



Vendor



Vendor



Vendor

African Embassies in Canada Called to Champion African Culture

cont'd from pg. 30

and communities, along with friends and partners of Africa from various origins. It showcases the history and richness of African heritage through crafts, local products, traditional dress parades, and more.

People of Motherland is an organization that offers citizen groups from Mississauga, hailing from various countries, the opportunity to raise public awareness and foster appreciation and enjoyment of their cultural expressions.



Opening ceremony



Vendor frying Africa dessert



Georgette (l) and a member of People of Motherland



Participants



Some Participants of the African Pavilion



Participants



Vendor



Interviews with Georgette Amihere, (r) Organizer of the African Pavilion by Ghanaian News Reporter



Participants



Stage Representer



Vendor



Ghanaian cultural group



Vendor



Vendor



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1 in 8 pregnant people have disabilities but face lack of accessible care: report

One in eight pregnant people in Ontario has a disability, but many face barriers to accessible care and disrespect from health-care providers, a new report published Tuesday says.

People with disabilities have been overlooked in reproductive health care partly because of false societal assumptions that they aren't sexual and won't have children, Hilary Brown, lead author of the report and an adjunct scientist with the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences in Toronto, said in an interview.

The researchers examined health records of pregnant people in Ontario between 2010 and 2020, including data from almost 150,000 births to people with physical, sensory and developmental disabilities.

That data showed women with disabilities were more likely to visit the emergency department or be admitted to hospital during pregnancy than women who didn't have a disability.

“(What) emergency department visits in pregnancy usually tell us is that there's some sort of gap, you know, that could have potentially been addressed with a person's primary-care (provider) or obstetrician,” Brown said.

Ghanaian Women's Fasting and Prayer Conference Prays on Victoria Day

cont'd from pg. 27

Women's Fasting and Prayer Conference, emphasized the urgent need for prayer in light of recent global events, urging members to continue praying without ceasing, as the Bible instructs.

In his welcome address, Pastor Isaac De-graft Takyi, Lead Pastor of the Living Word Assembly of God, highlighted the significance of this fasting and prayer conference.

He acknowledged the power of prayer in comforting those affected by crime, sickness, and negativity.

Pastor Takyi also praised the women who took up the mantle of intercession for their families, community, and the world, encouraging more Christian women to join their ranks.

During the conference, prayer leaders guided participants through various topics, with a particular focus on the recent surge in deaths from diseases such as stroke, liver and kidney malfunction, various cancers, vehicular accidents, and shootings.

A moment of silence was observed to honour the late Retired Reverend Joseph Osei-Amoah, whose contributions significantly impacted the growth of the Prayer Conference.

The Ghanaian Women's Prayer Conference, established on May 24, 2002, holds two meetings annually: one on Victoria Day (the third Monday in May) and another during Thanksgiving (October).

The conference is non-denominational, welcoming members from every Bible-believing church.

The researchers also interviewed more than 60 people with disabilities, health-care and service providers.

Although many of them reported positive experiences with pregnancy, the researchers also heard “lots of stories about people being met with quite negative and ableist attitudes from health-care and social service providers about their pregnancies,” Brown said.

Some disabled participants in the study told researchers that nurses and doctors assumed they wanted to get abortions when they were seeking pregnancy care, she said, or made negative assumptions about their future parenting capabilities.

Some participants reported a lack of accessibility in doctors' offices for people with mobility issues, as well as a lack of sign language interpretation during critical times such as labour and delivery.

Others reported a lack of understanding from health-care providers about their disabilities, what they are capable of doing and the care they needed.

“If people had questions about how their disability might impact their pregnancy or how the pregnancy might impact the progression or symptoms related to their disability, they were often met with providers who just weren't sure where to find information, because they just didn't have many resources themselves,” Brown said.

The report calls for more education and training about disabilities for physicians, nurses and other care providers who work with pregnant people.

It also calls for more flexibility in Ontario's fee-for-service payment model for doctors, where they are only paid for a certain amount of time spent in appointments with pregnant patients.

Pregnant patients with disabilities often need more time with their doctor — and the doctor needs more time to help arrange additional care and accommodations for their patients, Brown said.

“A lot of providers really wanted to provide more comprehensive care, but it was often quite difficult for them to do that within the current (fee) structure that they had available to them.”

The only surprising part about the findings is that the gaps in care are just now coming to light as a significant issue, said Wendy Porch, executive director of the Centre for Independent Living in Toronto, who was on the advisory committee for the report.

“Disabled parents have existed forever. We're not new,” she said.

“I think there was a lot of goodwill and a lot of interest in supporting me. But there was not necessarily a lot of knowledge attached to that,” she said.

Porch was born missing part of her right arm and part of her left hand. Her son Jasper is now 11, but throughout her pregnancy she tried to get guidance from her health-care providers about how she could hold and breastfeed her baby — and they weren't able to help.

“I felt far more disabled in those first few months of being a mom than I had pretty much my whole life,” she said in an interview.

The nurses in the hospital who were checking on new moms as they learned to breastfeed didn't recognize she was having trouble and sent her home, Porch said.

Although most health-care providers are well-meaning, years later there still aren't enough pregnancy and postnatal supports for people with disabilities, she said.

“I don't think that there is even close to adequate training for any kind of medical practitioner, frankly, about what supporting a disabled parent could look like,” Porch said.

“I think that the report makes that quite clear, that there's a lot of room to grow there.”

The report on pregnancy and disability was co-authored by the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences, the University of Toronto Scarborough and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

This report by The Canadian Press was first published May 28, 2024.

Canadian Press health coverage receives support through a partnership with the Canadian Medical Association. CP is solely responsible for this content. **The Canadian Press**

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African Union Election Observation Mission Arrives In South Africa Ahead Of The 2024 General Elections

The African Union Election Observation Mission (AUEOM) has arrived in South Africa ahead of the 29 May 2024 General Elections. At the invitation of the Government of South Africa and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) of South Africa, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, approved the deployment of the short-term AUEOM to assess and report on the conduct of this election.

The AUEOM is led by H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta, former President of the Republic of Kenya and is comprised of 60 short-term observers (STOs) drawn from ambassadors accredited to the African Union, officials of election management bodies, members of African civil society organisations, African election experts, human rights specialists, gender and media experts, and representatives of youth organizations. The observers are drawn from 24 countries which include Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The AUEOM will base its assessment on the legal framework governing elections in the Republic of South Africa and the OAU/AU Declaration on

the Principles Governing Democratic Elections, the standards and obligations stipulated in the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG), and the International Declaration of Principles (DoP) for International Election Observation among others.

The Mission shall interact with state authorities, the Independent Electoral Commission, political parties, the media, civil society organisations and representatives of the international community. The Mission will also interact with other election observation missions deployed to observe the 2024 General Elections in South Africa.

The Mission will release its preliminary findings and recommendations on the conduct of the elections on 31 May 2024 in a press conference in Johannesburg, South Africa. A final and comprehensive report will be released within two months from the date of announcement of final election results and will be posted on the AU Commission website.

The Mission's Secretariat is located at the Hilton Hotel, Sandton, South Africa.

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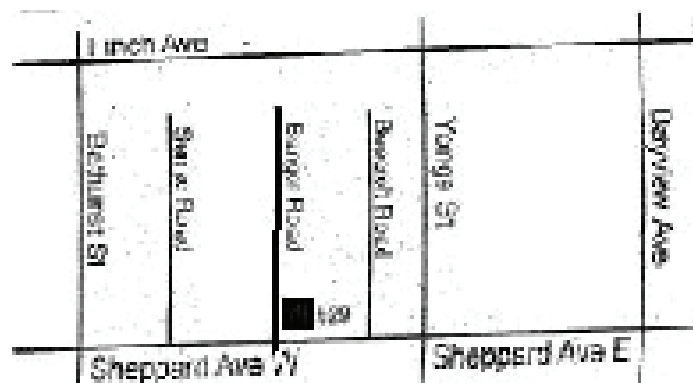
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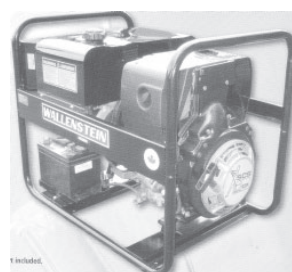
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Tick sightings in Ontario top 1,000, at least 60 reports of Lyme disease so far

Peak tick season is only just beginning but reports of bites – and tick-borne illnesses – are already higher than normal in Ontario.

Ontario is home to 13 established species of ticks, with dozens more reported across the province. The insects, found year-round, are most active in the summer months, when temperatures stay above 0 C. While not all ticks carry infectious agents, and not everyone who is bitten by an infected tick will develop symptoms of disease, a bite can expose humans to an array of health concerns, including Lyme disease. So far this year, at least 1,124 sightings of blacklegged ticks, the species most likely to transmit disease, have been reported in Ontario. Just over 600 of those were found on humans, according to eTick.ca, the primary public reporting platform for monitoring ticks across Canada.

Reports made to the platform have been increasing since it launched in 2014. Five years ago, in 2019, the organization received just over 120 reports of blacklegged ticks in Ontario over the same timeframe.

While there isn't usually much activity on the platform prior to April, this year "people and [their] pets have been encountering ticks in parts of southern Ontario and a few spots in eastern Ontario in December and January," Associate Professor Manisha Kulkarni with the University of Ottawa's School of Epidemiology and Public Health said in a media release.

Kulkarni said Ontario has seen a continued expansion of the species in Canada, with more regions, such as Ontario, Quebec, and the Atlantic provinces, reaching the endemic stage.

Historically in Ontario, blacklegged ticks were found only in cooler areas, near the shores of the Great

Lakes. But according to the most recent map of established risk areas, the insects can now be found many miles inland and more and more often, in urban and residential areas.

"Unfortunately, these areas are often close to where people live or which is used for recreation, allowing more human tick exposures in residential settings and people's own yards," Kulkarni said.

The warming climate and subsequent expansion has caused a significant spike in tick-borne illnesses – in the last decade, the number of cases of Lyme disease in Canada has increased by 1,000 per cent, according to government statistics.

Lyme disease symptoms occur in stages. Often, the affliction first presents as a red bump or rash around the site of a tick bite. In later stages, those with Lyme disease can develop joint issues, nerve pain, dizziness, headaches, heart palpitations, memory issues and more. In very rare cases, it can be fatal.

From 2018 to 2021, more than 8,000 Canadians were diagnosed with the disease.

According to provincial data, there have been 60 reports of Lyme disease in Ontario so far this year. The average year-to-date is 43.

HOW TO PREVENT TICK BITES

According to TickTOOL, an educational resource compiled by the University of Montreal and eTick, the best way to prevent Lyme disease is to avoid tick bites altogether.

Wearing long pants, socks, and closed-toe shoes while outdoors can help avoid a bite. Light-coloured clothing can also make ticks easier to spot, if they end up on you.

The resource also recommends applying bug spray containing one of the two ingredients for tick protection recommended and authorized in Canada, DEET and Icaridin.

While you're outdoors, watch where you walk,

the resource says. Ticks are found in long grasses or vegetation, especially along trails, so if you're heading outdoors, it's important to be mindful of your environment and prepare accordingly – and don't forget to reapply bug repellent.

HOW TO SPOT A TICK

Blacklegged ticks are small – the nymphs are about the size of a poppy seed and the adult females, the size of a sesame seed – making them easy to miss when checking yourself and your pets after an outdoor outing. The males are even smaller.

If they've fed, however, they can swell significantly – with adult females reaching up to 10 mm in length.

The species ranges in colour, appearing brown or black, with spots of crimson near the abdomen.

You may not notice a tick bite because ticks are tiny and their bites are usually painless.

Once coming home from outdoors, check your clothes, gear, and pets for ticks before going inside. TickTOOL advises particular attention to shoes, socks and pants. It then advises placing your clothing in the dryer on high heat for at least 10 minutes. Ticks die in dry conditions, not hot ones, so using a washing machine is not effective, it says.

When inspecting your skin, look for dark or discoloured spots and use your hands to feel for small bumps.

HOW TO REMOVE A TICK

If you find a tick on your body, you will need it carefully removed. Health Canada has an educational video that instructs on how to remove a tick properly.

With clean, fine-point tweezers, start by grasping the tick at the head, as close to the skin as possible, the agency advises.

"Take your time and slowly pull it straight out. Try not to twist or squeeze the tick."

Being in a well-lit area or using a magnifying glass may help you to see better, the guide says. If you are not comfortable removing a tick or cannot reach it yourself, ask another person to help you as soon as possible. Once it has been removed, clean the area with soap and water, or alcohol solution.

"Be aware that those various 'home remedies' you may have heard for tick removal have not been proven effective and can potentially do more harm than good," the agency said on its website. "Under no circumstances should a flame, ointment, flammable liquid (gasoline, oil, lighter fluid, acetone, nail polish, etc.) or caustic material be used in removal attempts."

MONITORING FOR SYMPTOMS OF TICK-BORNE ILLNESSES


Generally, a tick must have been attached to a body for 24 hours or more to transmit Lyme disease. Still, it is recommended to monitor for symptoms even if the tick has been removed in less time.

Signs and symptoms of Lyme disease can vary from person to person. Early symptoms may include fever, headache, muscle and joint pain, fatigue and an expanding red rash, often bullseye-shaped with a ring around it.

In July 2023, the Ministry of Health designated tick-borne illnesses as reportable diseases of public significance, requiring public health units to enter case information about all individuals into the integrated Public Health Information System within one business day of initial notification. CTV News

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Ghanaian Canadian Achievement Awards 2024

Let's Celebrate 24 Years Of Recognizing Our Community Achievers

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

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

We wish to note the constant presence of a large number of mainstream Canadians: from politicians, public servants to Police Officers at these events. If these high-profile people from mainstream Canadian society recognize the importance of this event and regularly show up to support us, then it is incumbent on us as the community organizing this event to embrace it and turn out in our numbers to support it.

We also depend on community members to nominate the known achievers in our community who are deserving of these awards. We therefore entreat community members to constantly be on the lookout for those that are achieving laurels in various aspects in our community and nominate them for the awards when the time comes.

We call on community members to turn up to support and applaud our achievers for this year on

They deserve our recognition, our praises and our support.

Finally we extend our heartfelt and warm congratulations to all our award recipients for this year. Do not rest on your oars. Keep pushing to make yourself, your community and our nation proud. We are proud of you!

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Code # 9632581
Contact: Robert Frans (289-541-5579)
Felix Gyimah (289-931-8443)

Edmonton Methodist

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Redemption Methodist Church

Location: 955 Wilson Ave., Unit 12, North York, ON

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Divine Service, Sundays 10 am - 12:30 pm
Contacts: Agnes Donkor - 647-881-4808, Felicia Owusu - 647-533-1093, Grace Kubi - 647-608-5373

Ottawa Methodist

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Peniel Methodist Church Vancouver

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647-895-7131

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Holy Trinity Methodist Church, Montreal

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Day and Time of Worship

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Contact: Bro. Joselin Twumasi 438-881-6640

Ebenezer Methodist Church

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FRIDAY f 10M

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Resident Minister

Rev. George Agyei Kwabi

FOOD FOR LIFE

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

THE CHRISTIAN IN 2024: “PERFECT LOVE CAST OUT FEAR”

THE TEXT:

7 Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. 8 But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. 10 This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. 11 Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. 12 No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us. 13 And God has given us his Spirit as proof that we live in him and he in us. 14 Furthermore, we have seen with our own eyes and now testify that the Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. 15 All who declare that Jesus is the Son of God have God living in them, and they live in God. 16 We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. 17 And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we live like Jesus here in this world. 18 Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love. 19 We love each other^[a] because he loved us first. 20 If someone says, “I love God,” but hates a fellow believer,^[b] that person is a liar; for if we don’t love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see? 21 And he has given us this command: Those who love God must also love their fellow believers. 1 John 4:7-21

INTRODUCTION

Today, I want to delve into a passage that speaks directly to the deepest emotions and struggles we face as human beings: the interplay between love and fear. In 1 John 4:18, we encounter a profound truth that illuminates the transformative power of love and its ability to dispel the darkness of fear.

As we navigate life’s complexities, we often find ourselves wrestling with fear in its various forms. It can manifest as anxiety about the future, apprehension about our worth and abilities, or even dread of the unknown. Yet, amidst these



struggles, the Bible offers us a timeless message of hope and liberation. The apostle John, in his letter to the early Christian community, encapsulates this message succinctly in 1 John 4:18. He writes, “There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.” This verse serves as a beacon of truth, inviting us to explore the profound dynamics between love and fear. It invites us to ponder the nature of perfect love — a love that originates from God Himself and has the power to dispel fear’s grip on our hearts and minds.

Let’s define fear and love in the biblical context.

FEAR:

Fear in the Bible can have multiple meanings depending on the context. It can refer to a sense of reverence and awe towards God (Proverbs 9:10), acknowledging His greatness and holiness.

Fear can also represent a negative emotion, such as anxiety, dread, or terror. This type of fear is often associated with the consequences of sin, judgment, and punishment (Genesis 3:10; Hebrews 10:31).

LOVE:

Love, on the other hand, is central to the message of the Bible. It is often described as selfless, sacrificial, and unconditional (1 Corinthians 13:4-8).

In the biblical context, love is not merely an emotion but an action that seeks the well-being and good of others, reflecting God’s own nature (1 John 4:7-12). Understanding fear and love in the biblical context involves recognizing the tension between reverent fear of God’s authority and judgment on one hand, and experiencing His unconditional love, grace, and mercy on the other. *The Bible teaches that perfect love, which originates from God, has the power to overcome all forms of fear, including fear of punishment, rejection, and uncertainty* (1 John 4:18).

Let’s explore the connection between fear and punishment, highlighting how perfect love removes fear:

The connection between fear and

punishment is a fundamental aspect of human psychology and is intricately linked in the biblical context as well.

Fear and Punishment in the Bible:

In the Old Testament, the fear of punishment is often associated with the consequences of disobeying God’s commandments. This fear is depicted as a deterrent to sinful behavior (Proverbs 1:7).

The concept of punishment for sin is also evident in the New Testament, where the apostles and Jesus Himself warn about the judgment that awaits those who reject God’s ways (Matthew 25:46; Romans 2:5-8).

Perfect Love Removes Fear:

The essence of the gospel message is that God’s perfect love has the power to remove the fear of punishment from our hearts. This love is exemplified in Jesus Christ, who willingly took upon Himself the punishment for our sins (Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:10). When we grasp the depth of God’s love and grace, fear of punishment diminishes because we understand that our sins have been forgiven and we have been reconciled to God (Romans 8:1; 1 John 4:18).

How Does Perfect Love Removes Fear?

- Perfect love assures us of God’s mercy and forgiveness, leading us to repentance and a desire to live according to His will (2 Corinthians 7:10).
- Perfect love instills confidence in our relationship with God, knowing that He is for us and that nothing can separate us from His love (Romans 8:38-39).
- Perfect love transforms our mindset from one of fear and condemnation to one of trust, gratitude, and obedience (1 John 4:19).

Being Made Perfect in Love:

Being made perfect in love refers to the ongoing process of maturing spiritually and growing in our understanding and expression of God’s love. It involves aligning our thoughts, attitudes, and actions with the principles of love as outlined in Scripture (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). This concept recognizes that no one is perfect, but through God’s grace and the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we can progressively become more like Christ and exhibit His love to others (Philippians 1:6; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

It’s Significance in Our Relationship with God:

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Pastor in Charge
Rev. Milton Offei

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Fax: 416-242-8573

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Friday Prayer Meeting: 7p.m. - 9:00p.m.



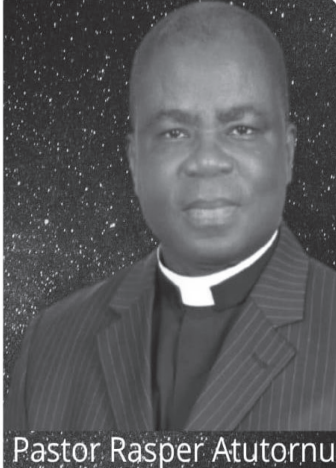
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Contact: *Bro. Fordjour Acheampong: 416-671-4268*

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John 10 :10-11

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Here are the ultraprocessed foods you most need to avoid, according to a 30-year study

(CNN) — Eating ultraprocessed foods is associated with an early risk of death, according to a 30-year study — but different foods have different impacts.

Processed meats and sugary foods and drinks aren't correlated with the same risks as ultraprocessed whole grains, for example, said lead study author Dr. Mingyang Song, associate professor of clinical epidemiology and nutrition at Harvard's TH Chan School of Public Health.

The study analyzed data from more than 100,000 health professionals in the United States with no history of cancer, cardiovascular disease or diabetes. From 1986 to 2018, the participants provided information on their health and lifestyle habits every two years.

Every four years, they completed a detailed food questionnaire. The group eating the least ultraprocessed food ate about three servings a day on average, while the highest averaged seven servings a day, according to the [study published Wednesday in The BMJ journal](#).

Those who ate the most had a 4% higher risk of deaths by any cause,

including a 9% increased risk of neurodegenerative deaths, the data showed.

Song described the correlation as “moderate,” noting that the connection was not equally strong among all kinds of ultraprocessed foods.

“The positive association is mainly driven by a few subgroups including processed meat and sugar sweetened or artificially sweetened beverages,” he said.

Findings in this study were consistent with hundreds of others in the field, but what makes this one unique is its parsing out of different subgroups within the ultraprocessed food category, said Dr. Marion Nestle, the Paulette Goddard professor emerita of nutrition, food studies and public health at New York University.

DO WE NEED TO GET RID OF ALL ULTRAPROCESSED FOODS?

Song wouldn't necessarily advise a complete rejection of all ultraprocessed foods because it is a diverse category, he said.

“Cereals, whole grain breads, for

example, they are also considered ultraprocessed food, but they contain various beneficial nutrients like fiber, vitamins and minerals,” he said. “On the other hand, I do think people should try to avoid or limit the consumption of certain ultraprocessed foods, such as processed meat, sugar-sweetened beverages and also potentially artificially sweetened beverages.”

There are also more questions that need to be answered when it comes to ultraprocessed foods.

First, the recent study is strong because of the length of time covered, but it is an observational study. That means that while researchers can observe a correlation, they can't say that the foods were the cause of the deaths, said Dr. Peter Wilde, emeritus fellow at Quadram Institute Bioscience in the United Kingdom.

Researchers also need to look more at the components of ultraprocessed foods that might be affecting health — whether they be food additives, emulsifiers or flavors — to advise governments and institutions on how to regulate foods, Song said.

OVERALL DIET MATTERS MOST

Researchers also found that the most important factor to reducing risk of death is the quality of a person's overall diet, Song said.

“If people maintain a generally healthy diet, I don't think they need to be like scared or be freaked out,” he said. “The overall dietary pattern is still the predominant factor determining the health outcomes.”

A healthy diet is varied, with as many colorful fruits and vegetables and whole grains as possible, Wilde said.

“If you are worried about food additives, then choose foods that have low levels of additives,” he said in an email. “Just be mindful of the nutritional content of (the ultraprocessed foods) that you do choose to consume.”

It is also important to recognize that foods need to be eaten in balance. Fruit juice contains beneficial vitamins, minerals and antioxidants when consumed in moderation, but too much will have high levels of sugar that may override their benefits, Wilde said.

“This is not black and white,” he said. “A particular food is not either good or bad, it will contain elements of both, and the balance between the two may depend on how much you eat.” CNN

THE CHRISTIAN IN 2024: “PERFECT LOVE CAST OUT FEAR”

cont'd from pg. 45

a. Intimacy and Connection: Being made perfect in love deepens our intimacy with God as we grow in our understanding of His love for us (Ephesians 3:17-19). It fosters a closer relationship marked by trust, transparency, and communion with Him.

b. Transformation and Sanctification: As we embrace God's love and allow it to permeate every aspect of our lives, we experience transformation and sanctification. This process involves surrendering our old ways, allowing God to renew our minds, and conforming us to the image of Christ (Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 5:17).

c. Impact on Others: Being made perfect in love also has a profound impact on how we relate to others. It empowers us to love our neighbors as ourselves, to forgive as we have been forgiven, and to demonstrate Christ-like compassion, kindness, and generosity (Matthew 22:39; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:12-14).

d. Witness and Testimony: Our growth in love serves as a powerful witness to the world of God's transformative work in our lives. It reflects the reality of our faith and draws others to experience the love of Christ through us (John 13:35; 1 Peter 3:15).

6 Practical strategies and resources for developing a deeper understanding of God's love.

1. Study God's Word: Regularly read and meditate on passages that speak about God's love, such as John 3:16, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:7-12, and Psalm 136. Use study Bibles or

commentaries to gain deeper insights into these verses. Engage in systematic Bible study plans or devotionals focused specifically on God's love. You can find many resources online or in bookstores that provide structured studies on this topic.

2. Prayer and Reflection: Dedicate time in your daily prayer life to thank God for His love and ask Him to help you understand it more deeply. Pray for a revelation of His love that transcends intellectual knowledge and touches your heart. Reflect on your own experiences of God's love in your life. Journaling can be a powerful tool for recording these moments and processing your thoughts and emotions.

3. Community and Fellowship: Connect with other believers who have a strong understanding of God's love. Join small groups, Bible studies, or Christian communities where you can discuss and learn from each other's insights and experiences. Seek mentorship from mature Christians who can guide you in developing a deeper relationship with God and understanding His love.

4. Read Christian Literature: Explore books written by reputable Christian

authors that delve into the topic of God's love. Some recommended titles include “The Love of God” by Oswald Chambers, “Knowing God” by J.I. Packer, and “Crazy Love” by Francis Chan. Listen to sermons or podcasts by pastors and speakers known for their teachings on God's love. Many churches offer online resources that you can access for free.

5. Practical Acts of Love: Put God's love into action by showing love and kindness to others. Volunteer in your community, support charitable organizations, or simply be a listening ear and a source of encouragement to those in need. Practice forgiveness and extend grace to others, mirroring the unconditional love and forgiveness God offers us.

6. Reflect on Jesus' Sacrifice: Take time to reflect

on the ultimate demonstration of God's love through Jesus Christ's sacrificial death on the cross. Attend Communion services regularly to remember and appreciate the depth of God's love expressed through Christ's redemption.

LET'S APPLY AND PRAY:

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

- How does, understanding God's perfect love change your perspective on fear?
- In what ways can you cultivate perfect love in your daily life?
- What practical steps can you take to overcome fear and walk in God's love?

PRAYER POINTS:

- Pray for a deeper revelation of God's perfect love in your life.
- Pray for the strength to overcome fear and walk in faith.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you in cultivating love, compassion, and courage in your interactions with others.

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Certain vegetarian diets significantly reduce risk of cancer, heart disease and death, study says

(CNN) — Eating a vegan, vegetarian or lacto-ovo vegetarian diet significantly reduces the overall risk of developing cancer, heart disease and dying early from cardiovascular disease, according to a new “umbrella” analysis of more than 20 years of research.

An umbrella review looks at existing meta-analyses of large numbers of studies, providing a high-level view of existing research on a topic.

In addition to lowering cardiovascular risk factors such as blood pressure and cholesterol, the umbrella analysis found a “protective effect” for specific cancers, including “liver, colon, pancreas, lung, prostate, bladder, melanoma, kidney and non-Hodgkin lymphoma,” said lead author Dr. Angelo Capodici, a graduate student in health science, technology and management at Scuola Superiore Sant’Anna in Pisa, Italy.

Vegetarians don’t eat any animal flesh, while the lacto-ovo version of vegetarianism allows dairy products and eggs while excluding all meat, poultry and fish. Veganism, the stricter form of vegetarianism, bans any food products made from meat, poultry and seafood as well as any animal by-products such as gelatin.

However, the protective nature of the diets could be sabotaged if poor dietary choices were made, the study authors said via email.

“Diets that emphasize consumption of unhealthy plant foods, such as fruit juices, refined grains, potato chips, and even sodas” might counter the positives of a plant-based diet for health, said study coauthor Dr. Federica Guaraldi, medical director of the pituitary unit at the IRCCS Institute of Neurological Sciences of Bologna in Italy.

Fruit juices, which are “full of sugars or sweetener,” Guaraldi said, “(were) recently demonstrated to have detrimental impact on metabolism as much as or even more than white sugar.”

RESULTS MAY BE AFFECTED BY OTHER LIFESTYLE FACTORS

Researchers have long known that people who follow plant-based diets often live healthier lives full of exercise and an avoidance of sugar-sweetened foods and beverages, refined grains, snacks, alcohol and tobacco, the study said.

“What is attributed to diet here may be in part due to other lifestyle practices,” said Dr. David Katz, a specialist in preventive and lifestyle medicine who founded the nonprofit True Health Initiative, a global coalition of experts dedicated to evidence-based lifestyle medicine. He was not involved in the study.

“That is a minor concern, however,” Katz said in an email. “The net effect of plant-predominant dietary patterns is clearly favorable to crucial health outcomes even if some of the observed benefit is attributable to other lifestyle practices.” In fact, adopting a plant-based diet, even without additional exercise, could still yield health benefits,

according to a November study on twins by Christopher Gardner, one of the coauthors of the umbrella analysis published [Wednesday](#) in the journal PLOS One.

In the 2023 study, healthy twins who ate a vegan diet for eight weeks had lower “bad” low-density lipoprotein, or LDL, cholesterol, better blood sugar levels and greater weight loss than siblings who ate a diet of meat and vegetables, according to Gardner, a research professor of medicine at the Stanford Prevention Research Center in Palo Alto, California.

“There was a 10% to 15% drop in LDL cholesterol, a 25% drop in insulin, and a 3% drop in body weight in just eight weeks, all by eating real food without animal products,” Gardner told CNN at the time.

One reason for that may be the nutritional boost that plants provide, including high levels of vitamins, minerals and other substances with antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects, while also reducing the inflammatory impact of meat and processed food, the authors said.

“Plants have more fiber (animal foods have zero), less saturated fat and zero cholesterol (all animal foods have cholesterol),” Gardner said in an email. “An entirely separate category is phytochemicals (literally, ‘plant chemicals’) such as antioxidants. By definition there are no phytochemicals in animal foods.”

NO MEAT, POULTRY OR SEAFOOD, BUT DAIRY AND EGGS ARE OK

The new review analyzed 48 meta-analyses that had investigated the impact of eating a vegetarian or vegan diet on the development of cancer, cardiovascular disease and early death. “We analyzed reviews considering vegan and vegetarian diets that completely exclude(ed) meat, poultry and seafood,” said study coauthor Dr. Davide Gori, an associate professor of biomedical and neuromotor sciences at the University of Bologna in Italy.

“To be more precise regarding vegetarian diets, lacto-vegetarian (allowing certain dairy products such as yogurt, cheese and milk), ovo-vegetarian (allowing whole eggs, egg whites and egg-containing foods such as mayonnaise, egg noodles and certain baked goods), (and) lacto-ovo-vegetarian diets were included,” Gori said in an email.

However, vegetarian diets limiting but not completely excluding certain types of meat and fish, such as pescos- or pollo-vegetarian diets, were excluded, he said.

The review found eating these plant-based diets reduced the risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and inflammation by affecting risk factors such as body mass index, fasting glucose and other measures of blood sugar control, and the systolic (top) and diastolic (bottom) measurements of blood pressure.

The diets also significantly lowered

total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, and “C-reactive protein — an index of inflammation that is typically higher in cardiovascular and metabolic disease,” Gori said. Metabolic disease is a constellation of symptoms such as obesity, high blood pressure and poor control of cholesterol and blood sugars that can all lead to type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

However, there was no benefit in eating plants for pregnant women, an “intriguing finding” that needs further research, said Guaraldi of the IRCCS Institute of Neurological Sciences. It’s also possible that the hormones of pregnancy might affect findings, and “we cannot rule out that participants have taken supplements during the study period that could have altered the impact of diet on the considered parameters.”

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS OF PLANT-BASED DIETS

Because certain vitamin and minerals are more easily found and absorbed from meat, dairy or fish, vegetarians and vegans must take extra precautions

to add those into their diets, experts say.

Unless the diet is carefully optimized, additional sources of B12, calcium, iron, zinc, iodine and vitamin D may be needed to avoid a deficiency, [according to the Mayo Clinic](#).

“Strictly vegan diets can be deficient in vitamin B12,” Gardner said. “This is easily resolved by consuming foods fortified with (vitamin) B12 — easy to do because the recommended daily allowance for B12 is lower than any other vitamin or mineral.

“Iron is another nutrient that is harder to get from a fully vegan diet,” Gardner added. “Many plant foods are relatively high in iron (beans/legumes). Again, supplements can be helpful.”

Protein is also a challenge, but good sources in plants include legumes such as lentils, chickpeas and beans, nuts, seeds, whole grains and soy products such as edamame, tempeh and tofu.

Processed meat substitutes are options as well, experts say, but due to the processing can be packed with sodium, so read labels carefully. CNN

Raw milk may be riskier amid avian flu outbreak in U.S. Stick to pasteurized dairy, experts warn

Early research shows pasteurization works to neutralize H5N1 virus

An outbreak of avian flu in U.S. dairy cattle has federal officials in Canada and the U.S. testing milk sold in stores to ensure pasteurization and other food safety measures are working.

Cows sickened with H5N1 in the U.S. produced milk that was abnormally thick and yellowish. The first known outbreak of this form of H5N1 in dairy cattle has since been confirmed in several U.S. states.

Veterinarians also discovered the virus in the lung of a U.S. dairy cow that didn’t show symptoms and originated from an affected herd. The animal did not enter the food supply.

But federal officials in Canada noted last month that spillover into livestock increases opportunity for genetic changes that could result in a virus better able to infect mammals, which includes humans, “especially if the infections are mild or asymptomatic in cattle and go unnoticed with minimal infection precautions.”

After U.S. scientists discovered fragments of the virus in one in five samples of processed milk, officials on both sides of the border introduced surveillance of milk being sold on store shelves to ensure it is free of traces of the virus.

Early research from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration shows

pasteurization works to neutralize H5N1.

No cases have been reported in Canadian cows. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency says commercially sold milk and milk products remain safe to consume, largely because all milk sold and used in most types of cheese in Canada is pasteurized.

Here are some of the measures taken to keep disease-causing bacteria and viruses like bird flu out of dairy products in Canada.

Duration 2:04

A decision by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to bolster testing of the milk supply is the right move as the U.S. deals with an avian flu outbreak in dairy cattle, infectious disease specialists say, because it adds a layer of safety on top of pasteurization of milk sold in stores.

How does pasteurization protect against germs like avian flu?

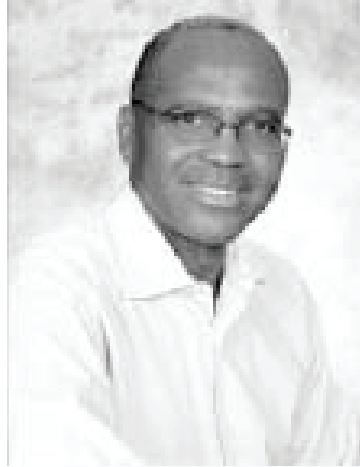
Pasteurization is the process of heating a food to kill germs like bacteria, viruses and moulds.

“Apart from sanitation and hand washing, milk pasteurization has been the best and most effective food safety intervention in history,” said Keith Warriner, a professor of food safety at the University of Guelph’s food science department. **cont’d on pg. 54**

Health/Lifestyle

Herbal supplements: What to know before you buy Herbal supplements aren't right for everyone. Get the facts before you buy.

Dr David Y Twum-Barima



Echinacea to prevent colds. Ginkgo to improve memory. Flaxseed to lower cholesterol. The list of herbal remedies goes on and on.

Herbal supplements, sometimes called botanicals, aren't new. Plants have been used for medicinal purposes for thousands of years. However, herbal supplements haven't been subjected to the same scientific scrutiny and aren't as strictly regulated as medications. For example, makers of herbal supplements don't have to get approval from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) before putting their products on the market.

Yet some herbal supplements — including products labeled as “natural” — have drug-like effects that can be dangerous. So it's important to do your homework and investigate potential benefits and side effects of herbal supplements before you buy. And be sure to talk with your doctor, especially if you take medications, have chronic health problems, or are pregnant or breast-feeding.

Are herbal supplements safe?

Herbal supplements are regulated by Health Canada as drugs or as foods. They fall under a category called dietary supplements. The rules for dietary supplements are as follows:

- Manufacturers don't have to seek Health Canada approval before putting dietary supplements on the market. In addition, companies can claim that products address a nutrient deficiency, support health or are linked to body functions — if they have supporting research and they include a disclaimer that Health Canada hasn't evaluated the claim.
- Manufacturers must follow good manufacturing practices to ensure that supplements are processed consistently and meet quality standards. These regulations are intended to keep the wrong ingredients and contaminants, such as pesticides and lead, out of supplements, as well as make sure that the right ingredients are included in appropriate amounts.
- Once a dietary supplement is on the market, Health Canada is responsible for monitoring its safety. If Health Canada finds a product to be unsafe, it can take action against the manufacturer or distributor or both, and may issue a warning or require that the product be removed from the market.

These regulations provide assurance that herbal supplements meet certain quality standards and that Health Canada can intervene to remove dangerous products from the market.

The rules do not, however, guarantee that herbal supplements are safe for anyone to use. Because many supplements contain active ingredients that have strong effects in the body, these products can pose unexpected risks. For example, taking a combination of herbal supplements or using supplements together with prescribed medications could lead to harmful, even life-threatening results. For this reason, it's important to talk with your doctor before using herbal supplements.

How do you know what's in an herbal supplement?

Health Canada requires that the following information be included on the labels of all herbal supplements: The name of the herbal supplement, the name and address of manufacturer or distributor; a complete list of ingredients — either in the Supplement Facts panel or listed beneath it; serving size, amount and active ingredient

If you don't understand something on an herbal supplement's label, ask your pharmacist or the distributor for an explanation. If you are not sure check with your doctor.

How do you know if herbal supplements' claims are true?

Manufacturers of herbal supplements are responsible for ensuring that the claims they make about their products aren't false or misleading and that they're backed up by adequate evidence.

So be a smart consumer and do a little homework. Don't just rely on a product's marketing. Look for objective, research-based information to evaluate a product's claims. To get reliable information about a particular supplement:

- **Ask your doctor or pharmacist.** Even if they don't know about a specific supplement, they may be able to point you to the latest medical guidance about its uses and risks.

Contact the manufacturer. If you have questions about a specific product, call the manufacturer or distributor. Ask to talk with someone who can answer questions, such as what data

the company has to substantiate its products' claims.

Who shouldn't use herbal supplements?

If you have health issues, it's essential that you talk with your doctor before trying herbal supplements. In fact, in some high-risk situations, your doctor will likely recommend that you avoid herbal supplements altogether.

It's especially important that you talk to your doctor before using herbal supplements if:

- **You're taking prescription or over-the-counter (OTC) medications.** Some herbs can cause serious side effects when mixed with prescription and OTC drugs, such as aspirin, blood thinners, blood pressure or diabetes medications. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about possible interactions.
- **Pregnant or breast-feeding women should avoid herbal preparations at all costs.** Medications that may be safe for you as an adult may be harmful to

your fetus or your breast-feeding infant. As a general rule, don't take any medications — prescription, OTC or herbal — when you're pregnant or breast-feeding unless your doctor approves.

- **People who are undergoing or have recently had surgery should avoid herbal preparations.** Many herbal supplements can affect the success of surgery. Some may decrease the effectiveness of anesthetics or cause dangerous complications, such as bleeding or high blood pressure. Tell your doctor about any herbs you're taking or considering taking as soon as you know you need surgery.

As a rule of thumb, do not mix herbal medicines with prescription medications or medications that you buy over the counter. Be ware of herbal medications that claim to “Cure” different diseases. Remember, in life there are no short cuts and easy/quick fixes may lead to trouble.



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FIFA WC Qualifiers: Andre Ayew left out of Ghana squad by Otto Addo

Black Stars skipper Andre Ayew has been overlooked by handlers of Ghana's national team the Black Stars ahead of the upcoming 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers against Mali and the Central African Republic.

Andre enjoyed a decent stint with French Ligue 1 side Le Havre in the just ended season scoring 6 goals in 19 appearances to help them survive.

However, that does not seem to have been enough to retain his place within the team ahead of the crucial double header.

He recently spoke out about turning around the team's worrying run of form which has seen Ghana getting dumped out of the Group stage in back to back Afcons.



Ghana take on Mali on the 6th before squaring up against the Central African Republic on the 10th of June 2024.

Ghana has recorded a win against Madagascar and a defeat to Comoros in Group I.

2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers: Arsenal star Thomas Partey to lead Black Stars as skipper for Mali, CAR games



Arsenal star Thomas Partey will lead the Black Stars as captain for the upcoming 2026 World Cup qualifying matches against Mali and Central African Republic.

The former Atletico Madrid midfielder is back in the team after missing several games due to injury setbacks. He missed the 2023 AFCON tournament in Ivory Coast early this year, where Ghana bowed out at group stage.

Having made a return to the team, the deputy captain is expected to lead the Black Stars in the absence of captain Andre Ayew, who has been left out of Otto SAddo's 26-man squad for the crucial assignment.

The squad include notable players like Jordan Ayew, Mohammed Kudus, Ernest Nuamah, Alexander Djiku and others.

Whiles Kamaldeen Sulemana of Southampton and Fenerbache's Alexander Djiku have all made a return to the team.

Ghana will begin their training camp on Thursday at the University of Ghana Stadium in Legon.

The Black Stars will face Mali on June 6 at Stade 26 Mars in Bamako before hosting Central Africa Republic at the Baba Yara Stadium on June 10.

The West Africa powerhouse will be aiming to secure maximum in both games after a sloppy start to the qualifiers last year.

The Black Stars commenced the qualifiers with a win and defeat. They inflicted a 1-0 win over Madagascar before succumbing to a narrow defeat to Comoros. Currently, Ghana are 4th in Group I ahead of the third and fourth games.

'This team is Canada's team': Here's what you need to know about the WNBA's Toronto expansion

The Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) has officially announced that it's expanding north of the border with a first-ever Canadian team in Toronto.

All three levels of government were on hand to mark Thursday's announcement, as well as WNBA Commissioner Cathy Engelbert and Toronto businessman Larry Tanenbaum, who heads Kilmer Sports Ventures which was awarded the franchise.

"This team is Canada's team," Tanenbaum told an audience in downtown Toronto, which included local rap superstar Drake, Toronto Raptors All-Star Scottie Barnes and former Raptor and 2019 NBA champion Kyle Lowry. The WNBA announces its first-ever Canadian expansion team in Toronto on May 23, 2024.

"Just over 30 years ago, I saw an opportunity to bring the NBA to Canada. We, as a city and as a country, were ready to welcome Canada's first NBA franchise to Toronto. It was the right time at the right place, and I jumped on the chance," the chairman of Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment, which owns the Raptors and the NHL's Maple Leafs, said.

"Today we're here because once again, we were in the right place at the right time. And that's entirely because of the talent, hard work and perseverance of the many women in this room today."

Kilmer Sports Ventures is paying US\$115 million for the team, which has not yet been named.

Here's everything you need to know about Toronto's WNBA franchise.

WHEN WILL THE TORONTO WNBA TEAM START PLAYING?

According to the WNBA, the Toronto team will start playing in the 2026 season in May as the league's 14th franchise.

Speaking to CP24 Thursday afternoon, the team's president, Teresa Resch, said a general manager could be in place by the end of the year. That person, she said, would then have the task of hiring a head coach.

"What's great is I've seen firsthand for the last 11 years how to build a team working for the Raptors and in the front office," said Resch, who is from Minnesota and moved to Canada a decade ago to join the Toronto's NBA team.

"I'm really excited to find someone to empower them and also provide some insights when they ask."

Resch said she wants to build a team that could win when it joins the WNBA.

"We want to make sure that we set our team up for success so we can compete at a championship level right out the gate," she said.

"We want to represent all of Canada, and we want to win."

WHERE WILL THE TORONTO WNBA TEAM PLAY?

The team will play its home games at the 8,700-seat Coca-Cola Coliseum, located at Exhibition Place in downtown Toronto. The arena is also home to the AHL's Toronto Marlies and hosted the first Professional Women's Hockey League's (PWHL) Toronto team, as well as its first-ever playoffs.

Tanenbaum said the team will play some games at Scotiabank Arena and across Canada, including stops in Vancouver and Montreal.

The team has also committed to building its own "state-of-the-art" practice facility, the league said.

HOW DO I BUY TICKETS?

Basketball fans looking to buy season-tickets can do so by placing a \$50 deposit here.

According to Resch, about 2,000 people have already signed up on the ticket waitlist.

"Make sure you get your spot in line because I want to make sure (0:48) you guys can all come to the games," she said.

"We're going to try to make sure to have different packages so we can get to everybody on that waitlist. We want people to pack the stands."

HOW IS THE CITY MARKING THE NEWS?

Mayor Olivia Chow marked Thursday's announcement by declaring May 23 "WNBA Day" in Toronto.

"A new WNBA team will have the power to bring people together," Chow said, while reflecting on her own memories of playing the game as a teenager.

"It will give people another reason to cheer for Toronto... The team will inspire generations of young people who will have new heroes, new role models, legends and new memories of favorite plays."

WHAT IS THE TEAM'S NAME?

According to Tanenbaum, the team will take their time and "solicit public input" to name the franchise.

Resch added that Toronto basketball fans should be on the lookout for ways to be involved in naming the team.

"We want people to be part of this and we want you to give us lots of ideas of how you want to be part of it, too," she said.

The last WNBA expansion team was awarded to Golden State in October. The franchise announced earlier this month that their hoopers will be dubbed the Golden State Valkyries.

The Associated Press and The Canadian Press

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Raw Milk may be riskier amid avian flu outbreak in U.S. Stick to pasteurized dairy, experts warn

cont'd from pg. 50

Warriner said dairy products are pasteurized at 72 C for 15 seconds. Historically, that temperature and time were used to reduce a heat-resistant bacterial pathogen in milk called *Coxiella burnetii*, which causes Q fever, a flu-like illness.

Nowadays, it is pathogens like E. coli O157:H7 in dairy products that lead to outbreaks. But Warriner said such outbreaks are less common in Canada than in the U.S., where some states allow raw milk to be sold.

In Australia, a young boy died in 2014 after his parents gave him unpasteurized (raw) milk to drink, believing it would be good for him. The boy developed haemolytic uraemic syndrome, a complication from bacteria like E. coli getting into the bloodstream and kidneys.

Warriner pointed to the Australian case to show why Canada continues to mandate pasteurization.

After milk from several farms is collected and brought to a dairy plant, scientists conduct analytical tests for safety and quality and food processors then skim the cream and pasteurize the products.

In Canada, farmers may drink raw milk from their own cows but aren't allowed to sell it to others. There have been legal challenges to the mandate.

Is raw milk safe?

In Canada and the U.S., surveys suggest about three per cent of people had consumed raw milk, also known as unpasteurized milk.

Health officials in Canada, the U.S. and other countries say consuming raw milk is not recommended.

That's especially the case in places where avian flu outbreaks have occurred on farms, the World Health Organization said.

Consuming unpasteurized milk is associated with an increased risk of serious illness, particularly for children and populations with reduced immunity, such as those who are pregnant and older adults.

Long-standing recommendations to consume pasteurized or boiled milk and milk products and to wash your hands after handling raw products are meant to protect consumers from a variety of disease-causing microbes, also called pathogens.

Unpasteurized milk contains bacteria such as E. coli, Listeria, Campylobacter and bovine tuberculosis that can lead to very serious health conditions ranging from fever, vomiting and diarrhea to life-threatening kidney failure, miscarriage and death.

Health Canada made pasteurization of milk mandatory in 1991, meaning dairy farmers can't sell unpasteurized milk. Raw milk cheese is available.

It is legal to sell raw milk in many American states and European countries.

What other products include raw milk?

Raw milk cheese typically isn't filtered and is not pasteurized, Warriner said.

Cheese made from raw or unpasteurized milk include soft and semi-soft varieties like brie, Camembert and blue-veined cheeses. Cheese makers use raw milk because it adds texture and flavour to the products.

In Canada, the "60-day rule" is used to reduce the hazard from raw milk cheese.

Warriner said the 60-day rule was developed in the 1940s based on a doctor's observation of a typhoid outbreak. The common source was cheese. Those who were sickened recalled having cheese that was aged for less than 60 days, while those who ate older cheese were fine.

Health Canada recommends that children, older adults, and people with a weakened immune system avoid eating cheese made from raw or unpasteurized milk, especially soft and semi-soft types.

What other safety steps are there?

Veterinarian Moez Sanaa, head of standard and scientific advice on food nutrition at the World Health Organization, told reporters this week in a webinar that several good hygiene practices also help protect the milk supply:

- Milk sick cows separately.
- Keep abnormal milk out of the retail supply.
- Collect milk from farms with zoonotic or diseases transmitted from non-human animals to humans in a special stream.

The goal is to reduce viruses or other pathogen loads in the raw milk as much as possible, Sanaa said.

"Different barriers can be built from the farm level," Sanaa said. "You have the temperature, the possible heating, the lactic acid during the fermentation. We need to think of all those barriers." **CBC NEWS**

FOOD AND RECIPES

Traditional African Dishes

Compiled by Nana Ama, Toronto, ON

Garden Egg / Egg Plant Stew

Garden egg stew is a popular Ghanaian dish featuring African eggplant, or garden egg as its main ingredient. Although the eggplant is a fruit, it is prepared as a vegetable in this stew, combined with tomatoes, onions, peppers, palm oil, dried fish or shrimp, and seasonings such as ginger and nutmeg.

The stew is often served for lunch or dinner, accompanied by boiled plantains.

Ingredients

- 10 large Garden Eggs
- 1-2 large fresh Tilapia, each cut into 3 pieces
- 5-6 large Tomatoes
- 2 scotch bonnet pepper and a handful of kpakpo shito. You can use other peppers
- 2 Large Onions
- 3/4 cup Palm Oil
- Salt to taste



Direction

1. Season the tilapia with salt and spices and keep in the fridge
2. Fry the chopped onions in palm oil for 5 minutes
3. Cut off the stalks of the garden eggs and slice each into two
4. Boil the garden eggs for 10-15 minutes on high heat in a pot until they become transparent and the outer layer begins to peel off
5. Add the blended tomatoes and peppers to the pot of frying onions (stew) and continue to stir regularly for about 10-15 minutes
6. Add salt to taste
7. Remove the outer layer of the garden eggs (optional)
8. Mash the garden eggs into a rough paste
9. Add the mashed garden eggs to the stew
10. Add the fresh tilapia to the stew
11. Leave the stew to simmer on low to medium heat stirring occasionally for another 15-20 minutes
12. Add boiled eggs to garnish (optional)
13. Garden egg stew can be served with yam and or boiled plantain



Tatale

The best way to describe Tatale to our English speaking readers is that it is similar to pancakes in its preparation but, made primarily with mashed over ripe plantain.

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)
- ½ cup corn flour (fine corn meal)
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- 1 small lemon (freshly squeezed)
- ½ teaspoon red pepper powder
- ½ 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.





The Ghanaian News

P R E S E N T S



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