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EXPERIENCE, CHARACTER, COMPETENCE, CHARISMA...



Alan and Bawumia Commission Nano Foods LTD

The Hon. Minister for Trade, Alan Kwadwo Kyerematen together with H.E. Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia commissioned Nano Foods Ltd at Nsawam on 20th May, 2021. The establishment of the company is an indication of the government's commitment to supporting the private sector under its flagship 1D1F policy which is supervised by the distinguished Hon. Kyerematen.

On his Facebook wall, Hon. Alan Kyerematen wrote:

“On Thursday 20th May 2021, I together with Vice President, Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, commissioned the NANO FOODS LIMITED, an initiative under 1D1F. The commissioning of Nano Foods Limited underscores the confidence that the private sector has in the Government of President Akufo-Addo, particularly his vision of making Ghana a Manufacturing Hub for West Africa through the Industrialization Transformation Agenda, of which the 1D1F is a key component.

Nano Foods Limited is a classic example of what the 1D1F could achieve through import substitution and export diversification.

The company underscores the need for all the identifiable stakeholders in the agricultural value chain to continue to work together for sustained development. With support from the Ghana Export Promotion Authority, appropriate Smooth Cayenne planting materials were secured for the Out-Growers in Nsawam, Adoagyiri, and Akuapim South Districts of the Eastern Region.

In addition, the Ghana Exim Bank provided funding support to the tune of USD 1.67million for the establishment of the processing line and the issuance of the Food and Drugs Authority certification.”

By: Gyansah Henry



EC plans to end voting at 3pm in future elections

The Electoral Commission (EC) is planning reforms which is to ensure the closure of polls in the 2024 general elections at 3pm on election day instead of the usual 5pm.

This will mean that, no one will be admitted to the polling station to cast their ballot after 3pm but if a voter happens to be in the queue after 3pm, voting will continue until everybody in the queue has voted.

The move is to help pave the way for early counting of votes and declaration of results at the polling station, and to avoid the inconveniences associated with the late close of polls.

The reform forms part of a 16-point proposal by the Electoral Commission (EC) that was agreed on by the Interparty Advisory Committee (IPAC) at the end of a two-day review workshop of the 2020 general elections in Accra.

The workshop was attended by over 10 political parties including the New Patriotic Party (NPP), People's National Convention (PNC), Convention People's Party (CPP), Great Consolidated Popular Party (GCPP), National Democratic Party (NDP) and the Ghana Union Movement (GUM).

The National Democratic Congress (NDC) did not participate in the workshop.

The NDC has already indicated that since it has issues with the 2020 general elections which to them, the EC has not resolved as of now, the party will therefore not participate in any IPAC meeting to review the 2020 elections.

The workshop reviewed issues and proposals relating to voter registration, exhibition exercise, filing of nominations, election security, collation of results as well as the successes and challenges that came with the 2020 elections.

New election time

A communique signed by the participants at the workshop and made available to Graphic Online indicated that the IPAC had agreed that casting of ballots in the 2024 general election should end at 3pm instead of 5pm.

This reform, when implemented, means that casting of ballots will end two hours earlier than the case has been since the 1992 elections which ushered in the 4th Republic.

IPAC also agreed that a certified regional collated results should be announced by the Chairperson to reduce tension and suspicion.

"However, the Commission should state clearly the percentage of results yet to be released," the communique added.

Registration

Over the years, the EC had conducted periodic voter registration involving complete replacement of the voters register or limited voter registration.

The decision by the EC to compile a new voter registration for the 2020 general election was met by stiff opposition by some political parties and civil society organisations (CSOs) who see the exercise as a drain on the national coffers and waste of time.

At the IPAC meeting, the participants resolved to implement the continuous voter registration exercise to enable citizens who turned 18 years and those who had not previously registered to do so.

EC plans to end voting at 3pm in future elections

Cont'd

The participants agreed to set up a committee to deliberate on the implementation modalities for the continuous voter registration regime.

"Continuous voter registration should be implemented with proof of citizenship being limited to the use of Ghana Card and Ghana Passport since the guarantee system is often abused," IPAC further agreed.

Exhibition

On voter exhibition, IPAC agreed to introduce an all-year-round voter exhibition exercise through the use of technology (SMS short code).

Additionally, the participants agreed that the periodic mass verification exercise at exhibition centres should be maintained.

However, they said the EC must put in place a cut-off time for the continuous voter register exhibition to allow for the compilation of the register for voting on election day.

Filing of Nominations

Regarding the modalities for filing of nominations, IPAC agreed that the five-day period for filing of nominations introduced in 2020 should be maintained. They also resolved that the period set aside for political parties to obtain signatures from their supporters before filing their nomination should be increased.

Additionally, IPAC agreed that the filing fees for female candidates and persons with disabilities (PWDs) should be reduced by 50 per cent to encourage them to put themselves up for election.

Aside that, they said the period for election campaign should be defined.

"It should commence after the nominations are filed," the parties agreed.

Turning to special voting, the participants at the workshop said the current arrangement where the media, security services and election officials were allowed to apply and vote under the special voting period should be maintained until such a time that the process is fully entrenched.

Security

IPAC agreed that security around elections was the responsibility of the Ghana Police Service and not the EC. Therefore, the workshop said the Ghana Police Service should arrange a periodic platform to engage IPAC and other stakeholders on election security. In the interest of accountability and deepening of democracy, IPAC urged the Ghana Police Service to provide updates on the 2020 elections malpractices and violence.

"Political parties and the media must show commitment to the democratic process and be mindful of their comments, as some of

their statements have the tendency to provoke violence and inflame tensions and suspicions," the communique added.

Further engagement

Although some proposals were tabled for discussion, IPAC agreed that there was the need for further deliberation on the way forward.

For instance, IPAC said the proposal for validation of voters during exhibition to indicate that they will be available for the impending elections needed more discussion.

Also, the issue of reduction by 50 per cent the filing fee of female candidates and PWDs would be given further consideration.

In addition, a proposal for the refund of nomination deposits for all contesting candidates was to be discussed further.

Among other issues to be explored further is the recommendation to have data entry only at the constituency collation centre so as to reduce manual inputs at all levels and other technological suggestions to strengthen results collation

.Others are the introduction of results collation at the electoral area and affixing of ballot boxes to tables or stands in a bid to avoid ballot box snatching.

Successes

The Chairperson of the EC said the efficient handling of the electoral process had accounted for the 79 per cent voter turn-out on election day. She said value for money regimes by the EC had also saved the country GH522 million through the reducing of the cost per head from \$13 to \$7.70.

"For the first time in Ghana's electoral history, the 2020 elections were fully financed by the Government of Ghana without any donor funding," she said.

Mrs Mensa also said the deployment of technology to enable the citizenry to check their registration details all through to election day made the election a major success.

Challenges

While cataloging numerous the successes by the EC, MRS MENSA said there were some challenges that needed to be addressed. She said the phenomenon of high number of rejected ballots and manual verification of voters remained a huge challenge to grapple with.

The EC chairperson also said the registration of unqualified persons such as minors and foreigners as well as violence in some centres could not be swept under the carpet.



The National Identification Authority, NIA has indicated that Ghanaians who have not received their 'Ghana Cards' yet would receive them by June this year, which is just about 10 clear days away.

The Authority says it has so far issued over 15 million cards to applicants while a backlog of about 200,000 still remain to be cleared.

Acting Head of Corporate Affairs, Abudu Abdul Ganiyu speaking on the 3FM's Sunrise Morning Show said "Effective June people who have not received their cards will receive their cards. We are working with the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and the assurance that we are picking across the country is that MMDA's are ready to provide us office space. NIA is very busy now to ensure we are able to move to these districts so we will issue a statement right from June".

"Out of a population of 15,500,000 (Fifteen Million Five Hundred Thousand), we have been able to print and issued 15,300,000 (Fifteen Million, Three Hundred Thousand) cards as we speak so there is just a backlog of about 200,000. But these 200,000 people equally need their cards".

According to Abdul Gayinu, there were challenges with people's data and needed attention.

"There were data inconsistencies and we needed to adjudicate on those inconsistencies so that the system now can clear it," he stated.

His comment comes on the back of proposed reforms by the Electoral Commission that the EC will accept only Ghana card and passport as proof of citizenship ahead of the 2024 elections.

Source: ghanaweb.com



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Coronavirus 2nd dose of vaccine - what you should know

The 2nd phase of COVID-19 vaccination began on Wednesday, May 19, 2021. With 350,000 additional doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine under the COVAX facility, about 852,047 people are expected to receive the 2nd dose of their vaccination. This comes some 12 weeks after the first phase was rolled out in Ghana.

In his 25th address, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo announced that the rollout is being done in 43 districts across 3 regions; the Greater Accra, Ashanti and Central Regions.

Drones, according to Mr. Akufo-Addo, will be used to deliver the vaccines in communities that are difficult to reach.

There are also various dates that have been announced to help know when one's 2nd dose is due.

So, what should you know about this 2nd dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine?

First, is the fact that the date written on your card issued by the health facility where you took your first shot, was initially supposed to give you a clue about when your next shot is due.

However, a text message from the Ghana Health Service will confirm whether or not you are due for your shot, according to the Director of Health Promotion at the service.

Dr. DaCosta Aboagye says this is a measure put in place by GHS to avoid overcrowding at health facilities where the vaccines will be administered.

What to do before the dose:

The first dosage of AstraZeneca had some side effects on individuals who took them. This varied from person to person. In fact, in some cases, people confirmed very little to no side effects from the vaccine.

There was however another group that suffered minor side effects ranging from mild fever to headaches, body aches, flu, and in some cases weakness. This was, however, mostly between the periods of 24-48 hours.

Most health experts, in this case, advised that people apply these helpful tips to reduce the effect of the fever.

- Dress lightly

- Drink plenty of fluids

To reduce pain and discomfort where you got the shot;

- Apply a clean, cool, wet washcloth over the area

- Use or exercise your arm

For this second dose, it has not yet been confirmed any possible side effects or whether or not these may supersede the first. It is however safe to apply the previous tips to avoid any of such reactions.

Why do I need two doses of the vaccine?

One dosage of the vaccine is not enough to immunize your system against the effects of the coronavirus. Two doses with a 12-week spacing will help build strong immunity against the coronavirus.

Source:ghanaweb.com



IPAC approves proposal for EC to conduct continuous voter registration

Eligible voters will now be able to register all year round. This is part of proposals approved by the Inter-Party Advisory Committee (IPAC) at the just-ended review workshop on the 2020 presidential and parliamentary elections. The workshop was to give the political parties in the country and the Electoral Commission (EC) the opportunity to review the 2020 polls and come up with ways to reform Ghana's elections.

Currently, the EC sets different dates to conduct voter registration exercises.

In a communiqué issued after the workshop, IPAC said the stakeholders agreed that the Electoral Commission should no longer compile voters register from scratch as part of preliminary preparations for the conduct of presidential and parliamentary polls. "Implement the Continuous Voter Registration Exercise to enable citizens who turned 18 years and those who had not previously registered to do so".

To this end, a committee will deliberately be set up for the implementation of modalities for continuous voter registration. The continuous voter registration according to IPAC would be implemented with proof of citizenship being limited to the use of Ghana card and Ghana passport since the guarantor system is often abused.

In all, IPAC approved 16 resolutions aimed at improving subsequent elections.

Some civil society organizations, including the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO), have, in the past, recommended the proposal adding that there needs to be an integrated system that will automatically identify 18-year-olds who qualify to register.

Other agreed proposals
Exhibition

1. Introduce an all-year-round Voter Exhibition Exercise through the use of technology (SMS shortcode). Additionally, maintain the periodic mass verification at Exhibition Centres.
2. Put in place a cut-off time for the Continuous Voter Register

Exhibition to allow for the compilation of the Register for voting on Election Day.

Filing of Nominations

1. The Five (5) day period for filing of Nominations introduced in 2020 should be maintained.
2. The period set aside to enable the Political Parties to obtain signatures from their supporters should be increased.
3. The period for the Election Campaign should be defined. It should commence after the nominations are filed.

4. Encourage nominations of female and persons with disabilities (PWDs) candidates by reducing their filing fees by 50%.

Special Voting

1. Current arrangement whereby the Media, Security Services and Election Officials are allowed to apply and vote under the Special Voting period should be maintained until such time that the process is fully entrenched.

Elections

1. The polls should end at 3:00 pm instead of at 5:00 pm.
2. Certified Regional Collated Results should be announced by the Chairperson to reduce tension and suspicion. However, the Commission should state clearly the percentage of results yet to be released, etc.

Security 1. Security around elections is the responsibility of the Ghana Police Service. 2. Ghana Police Service should arrange a periodic platform to engage IPAC and other Stakeholders,

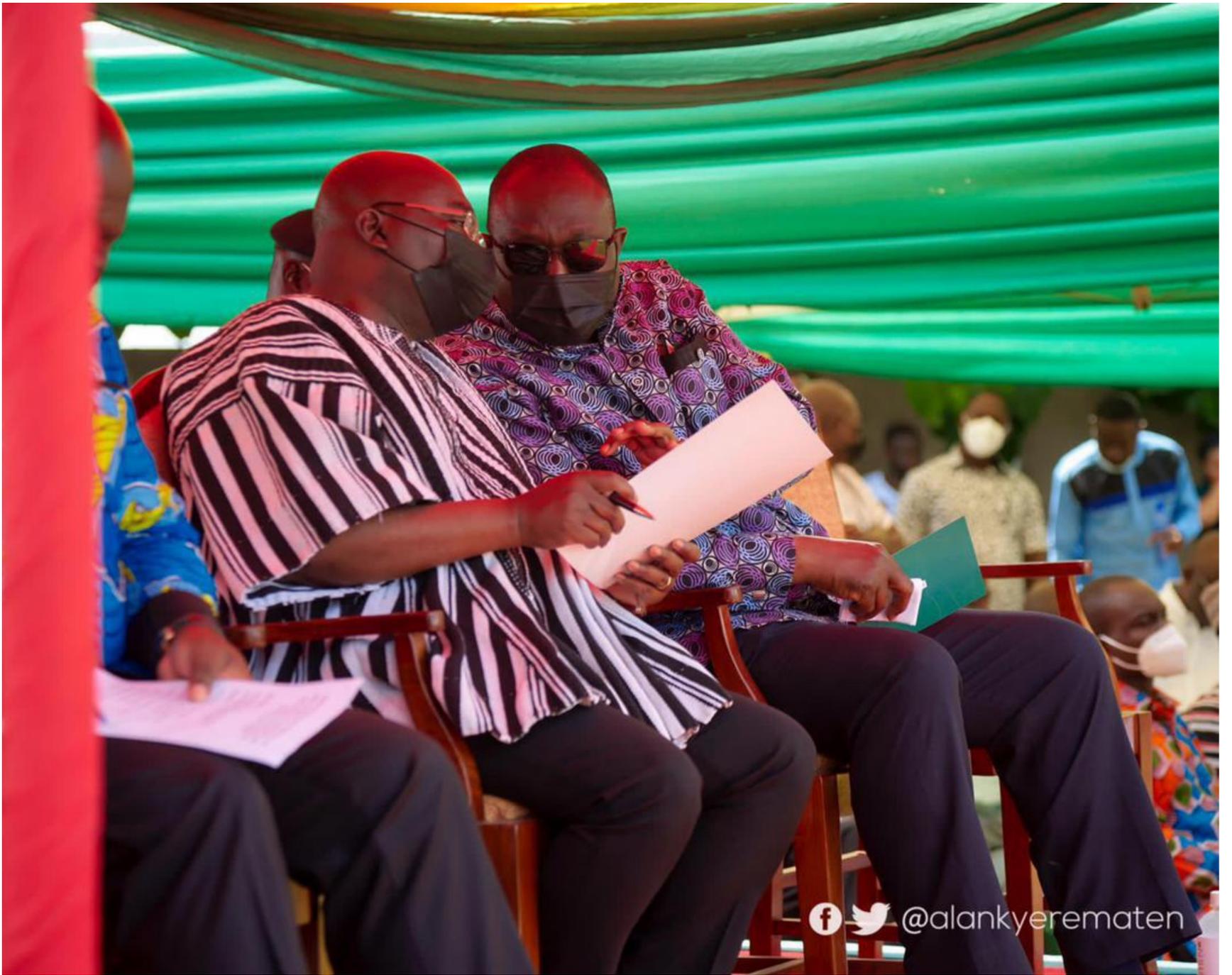
3. Ghana Police Service should provide updates on the 2020 Elections malpractices and violence.

4. Political Parties and the Media must show commitment to the democratic process and be mindful of their comments, as some of their statements have the tendency to provoke violence and inflame tensions and suspicions.

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THE ALAN SUPPORTER OF THE WEEK



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BUCKMAN**

**FMR. CAPECOAST CONSTITUENCY
YOUTH ORGANIZER**

**FORMER PRESIDING MEMBER OF CAPECOAST
2004 PARLIAMENTARY PRIMARY ASPIRANT**

ALAN CELEBRATES MOTHER'S 101st BIRTHDAY



**HAPPY
101st
BIRTHDAY**

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