

NEWS LETTER



GHANA NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS



GNAT WANTS GOV'T TO RELEASE 7-MONTH ARREARS ON PENSIONS WITH PENALTY ...see page 4

GNAT THIS MONTH

EDITION: MAY, 2022



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GENERAL SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

The Ghana National Association of Teachers recognizes the efforts made by its members across the length and breadth of the country in our pursuit to impart knowledge. We make great sacrifices even in the remotest parts of the country amidst the challenges. GNAT acknowledges that the economic conditions prevailing at the moment have left many of our members burdened.

The leadership wants you to know that we at the helm of affairs will continue to push and negotiate for arrangements that are in the best interest of our members. Thankfully, the restrictions that COVID-19 brought have been relaxed and we can at least breathe an air of freedom as we work towards returning to normalcy. I must commend GNAT members in particular for developing innovative ways to teach their children while employing the use of technology and innovation.

Among the key decisions taken within the month under review is Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) asking the Ghana Education Service (GES) to withdraw its circular directing teachers or staff occupying government bungalows to pay 10 per cent of their salaries as rent. Also, GNAT has inaugurated a new Board of Trustees to administer tier-3 contributions of members. This Board is chaired by Ransford Kofi Nsiah Lolih. In addition, the leadership has taken a tour of parts of the country to ascertain conditions under which members work so as to inform decisions that will be made for maximum impact.

The leadership of GNAT intends to work on grievances and concerns of member because you are our gems. Let us continue to have a united front, that's our bargaining chip that can open greater doors for the association. We are a formidable force when we stay together.

Long Live GNAT, Long Live Ghana. God bless us all.



NEWS

HIGHLIGHTS



GNAT WANTS GOV'T TO RELEASE 7-MONTH ARREARS ON PENSIONS WITH PENALTY

The Ghana National Association of Teachers, (GNAT) is asking government to release the over seven months arrears owed teachers on their pensions or will incur its wrath. General Secretary of GNAT, Thomas Musah says government should also pay the 3% penalty as stipulated in the Pensions Act 766. Under the Pensions Act 766, deductions from salaries for pension benefits are to be transferred to fund managers within 14 working days. However, GNAT is upset that for seven months now government through the controller and accountant general department has failed to release the amount.

“All these moneys are in arrears and the moneys are expected to be paid with 3 per cent penalty increment but the employer will not pay. The most important thing is that any increment that we give, must have correlation effect on pension. That is the position that we all need to adopt ”.



SHOW COMMITMENT TO BASIC EDUCATION - GNAT TELLS GOV'T

The Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) is questioning government's commitment to providing quality education to Ghanaian students, especially at the basic education level. The association says government has neglected basic schools and seems to be prioritizing Senior High School education, especially since the implementation of Free SHS began.

President of the Association, Rev. Dr. Isaac Owusu has been touring some basic schools and wants government to demonstrate to the association that it has basic education at heart by financing the schools. Dr. Isaac Owusu also indicates the non-payment of capitation grants, unavailability of textbooks for students' use, and teachers' lesson notes, as crippling basic education. He says teachers will not be forced to use their own resources to purchase such teaching and learning materials anymore.



GNAT DEMANDS WITHDRAWAL OF 10% RENT CHARGES ON TEACHERS

The Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) is asking the Ghana Education Service (GES) to withdraw its circular directing teachers or staff occupying government bungalows to pay 10 per cent of their salaries as rent. GNAT said the directive is unfortunate and against the spirit and letter of a Collective Agreement between GES and teacher unions in August, 2020.

On March 11, the GES in Western Region directed all District Directors of Education and all heads of senior high schools in the region to ensure that teachers and staff living in government bungalows pay 10 per cent of their salaries as rent. But Ghana's foremost Teacher Union is cautioning that if the GES intends to renege on the stipulations in the 2020 Collective Agreement, it would not succeed since that would amount to a 'breach of Union trust' and an 'unfair labour decision'.

GNAT also added that any attempt to implement the 10 per cent rent charges on salaries of staff and teachers would be resisted fiercely stressing that the industrial peace enjoyed on the educational front could be jeopardised.



GNAT INAUGURATES NEW BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR TIER-3 FUNDS



The Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) has inaugurated a new Board of Trustees to administer tier-3 contributions of members. The Board of Trustees is chaired by Ransford Kofi Nsiah Lolih, with Thomas Musah, Victor DeGraft Etsison, Peter Obeng Nyamekye, Helen Asantewaa, Daniel Tomey, Isaac Baah and Philip Dela Zumanu as members. Addressing the inaugural ceremony, the Employment and Labour Relations Minister, Ignatius Baffour Awuah, cautioned the trustees against misapplication of the contributions. He urged them to ensure judicious management of the funds and that the misuse of such contributions will be considered an offence.

GNAT President, Rev. Isaac Owusu in his address to the Trustees said it is important that the newly inaugurated Board works in the interest of GNAT. General Secretary of the Association, Thomas Musah said the board had come at an opportune time to ensure members continue to have confidence in how their contributions are managed. The event was also attended by a former GNAT National President, Philippa Larsen, former officers, current Deputy General Secretaries and other officers from across the country.



GNAT LEADERSHIP CALLS FOR SUPPORT TO DELIVER ON THEIR MANDATE

The newly elected leadership of the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) is asking members to support them in their quest to make lives of teachers better. Newly elected GNAT President, Rev Isaac Owusu says a united membership would make the Association formidable to withstand any form of setbacks.

He was speaking at separate meetings during a tour of the Volta and Oti Regions. “If we remain united, no government, no authority can stumble over us. But if we remain divided, when officers declare action, and our followers are staying in the classroom, there is no way we can make any impact.”

General Secretary, Thomas Musah indicated that the leadership is poised to work in the best interest of the members and improve on policies being implemented.

He wants members to trust the current leadership, made up of people of integrity, which has engaged some of the best firms to ensure best practices, for better and transparent administering of the Association.

“The people that we are working with are well established, they are well accomplished people. They have their integrity and reputation to protect”, he stressed.



About Creditmall

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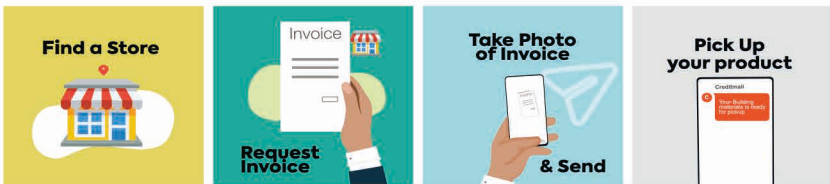
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and Payment Period



Receive Delivery
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Apart from buying via our app with our merchants. Our Bring-your-own-merchant order process allows our users to buy from merchants of their choosing with an invoice of their products they intend to purchase eg Building materials, Aboboyaa, working equipments etc while we provide them with the needed funds to make the purchase.





TEACHERS FUND – ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

The Teachers Fund is a retirement supplement and Solidarity scheme for the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) established by a Trust Deed in May 1998. The Fund started with a monthly deduction of GHC0.10 (€1.000) as basic contributions from the salary of GNAT members through a check-off system.

In February 2017, the basic contribution was further reviewed upwards to GHC50.00. The assets of the Fund have grown from just about GHC 1.50 million in May 1998 to GHC 745 million. It has investments in treasury bills, listed equities, private placements, loans and facilities to members, real estate projects and subsidiaries.



OBJECTIVES

- 1. Retirement supplement** – the monthly contributions are savings for GNAT members. These are invested to generate returns. Upon retirement, a member receives a package made up of the total amount he or she has contributed over the years and the returns thereon.
- 2. Provision of lifestyle enhancing facilities** – the Fund offers four categories of loan to its members with the view to enhancing their lifestyles and ensuring that they live comfortably. These are Personal Loan, Investment Capital Loan, Habitat Loan and Vehicle Loan.
- 3. Access to credit purchases from Credit Mall Limited** – the Fund has established the Credit Mall Limited as a wholly owned subsidiary to sell household consumer items to members on credit.
- 4. To engage in Real Estate Ventures** – The Fund seeks to address the accommodation needs of members by providing housing and accommodation facilities to interested members. It is also involved in the construction and rental of hostel facilities and office accommodation.

Vision

To be the best performing private solidarity fund in Ghana by enhancing contributors’ welfare and quality of life.

Mission

Teachers Fund of GNAT is committed to enhancing the welfare of our members through prudent investments, innovative technology and well motivated and skilled workforce,

OUR PRODUCTS

There are four main loan facilities that members of the Fund can access to meet their financial needs



Personal Loan

This loan facility has been designed to assist members meet their short-term financial obligations such as payment of School fees, rent advance and any other general repairs at home.



Habitat Loan

This facility has been put together to support a greater number of GNAT members who desire to solve their accommodation challenges or aspire to build their homes before they retire from active service.



Investment Loan

More often than not, members of the Fund have business ideas for which they need funds to finance. The Investment Capital Loan facility has been designed for this purpose.



Vehicle Loan

This facility is meant to finance the purchase of vehicles by loan applicants. It is the only loan facility at the Fund that cheques are not written in the name of the applicant rather it is in the name of the vehicle vendor.

GNAT SUPPORTS MEMBERS IN OTI REGION



Executives of the Ghana National Association of Teachers have presented some relief items to members who live in water locked areas in the Oti region. The items, made up of 20 life jackets will aid members safely cross the Volta River to teach and render their services to their respective communities.

The team also presented some bags of flour, cartons of tomato paste and a water tank to the Hohoe School for the Blind and Deaf. GNAT has also donated five thousand (GHC5,000) to an ailing member to aid his treatment

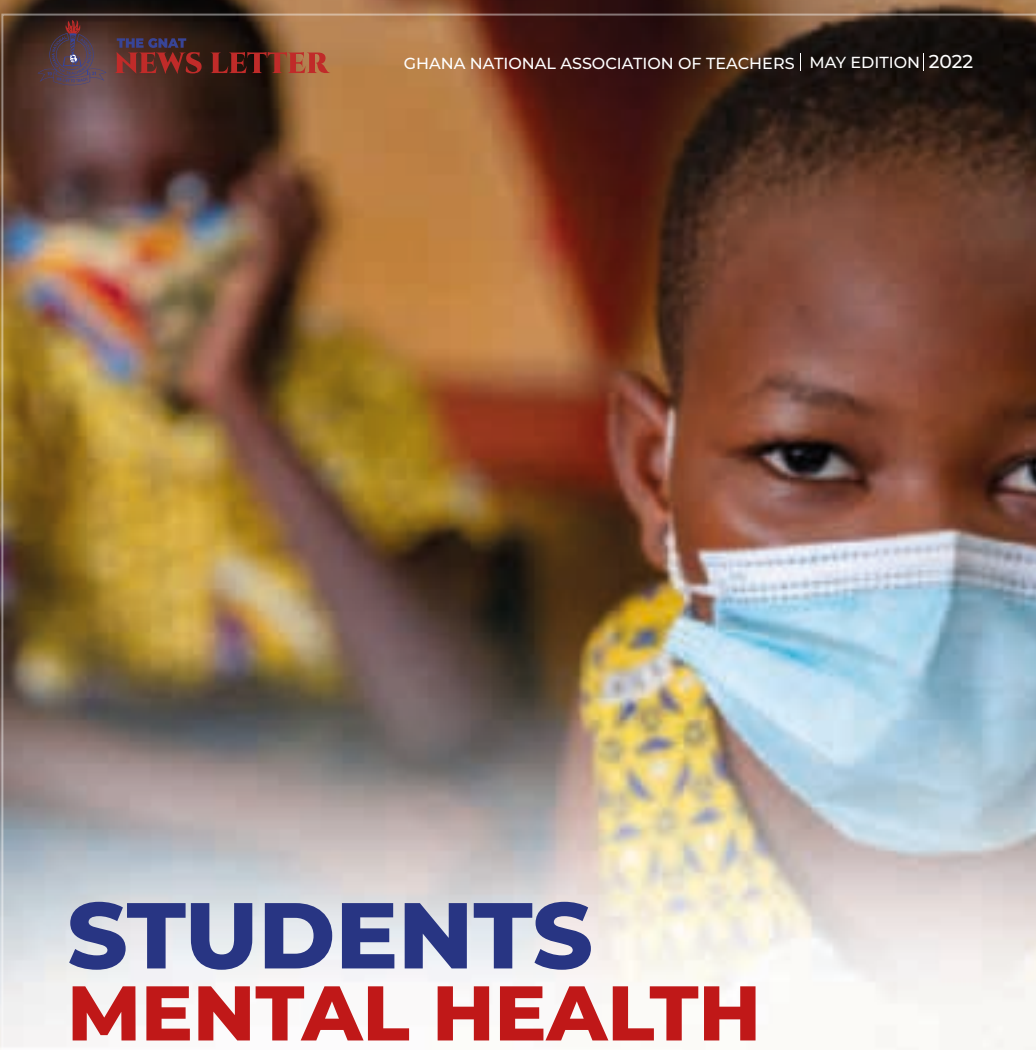


ALL TEACHERS WILL RECEIVE THEIR LAPTOPS – GNAT ASSURES

The leadership of the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) says it would ensure all teachers receive their laptops as promised by the government. The 1 Teacher, 1 Laptop policy initiated by the previous administration of GNAT is being championed by the government to ensure all teachers own laptops to enhance ICT literacy in schools.

The General Secretary of GNAT, Thomas Musah, during a tour of the Volta and Oti Regions revealed that the distribution of laptops to teachers in junior high schools has begun nationwide. This according to him follows the completion of distribution to teachers in the Senior High Schools.

Mr. Musa indicated that so far, teachers in Senior High Schools and some Junior High Schools except those in Ashanti and Volta regions have been served, however, teachers in Primary schools and kindergarten are yet to be served. He added that leadership has been notified that the stock supplied to some districts in the Volta Region would not be enough per the statistics given. “We will do the necessary follow up and ensure the outstanding ones [laptops] are supplied”, he assured.



STUDENTS **MENTAL HEALTH**

HOW TEACHERS SHOULD HANDLE STUDENTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES



BY: DR. RUTH OWUSU-ANTWI

PRESIDENT, PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION OF GHANA (PAG)

About three children in every class suffer from a mental health condition.

1 in 10 young people age 5-16 years old have a mental health illness.

Suicide, the most feared and tragic outcome of psychiatric disorders, is the third most common cause of death among adolescents preceded only by accidents and homicide.

How do the teachers spot possible mental health issues in these students and how do they handle them?



COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS IN STUDENTS

- Repeated absenteeism from school with flimsy excuses and sudden decline in academic performance.
- Difficulty concentrating in class, absent-mindedness and increased repeated errors.
- Social withdrawal, isolation and low mood which has been consistent for more than 2 weeks.
- Change in appetite leading to rapid weight loss or weight gain.
- Poor self-care or neglect of personal hygiene.
- Repeated violations of school rules and truancy despite punishment or warnings.
- Unexplained scars, cuts or even swelling from possibly punching something.
- Evidence of bullying.
- Talking negatively about themselves.
- An increase in irritability, recklessness or aggression.

HOW TO HANDLE STUDENTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

1. It is important to always reassure the young person and their parent or carer and explain to them that they are not alone. Often mental illness is common and treatable and you can help them access the support and treatment they need.
2. Facilitate mental health support in the classroom.
3. Create a safe space to discuss mental health issues. There is still a lot of stigma surrounding mental health. This can hold students back from talking about their struggles. Teachers need to continue this throughout the rest of the year so that students will be more likely to open up about mental health struggles and seek support.
4. Extend time for test-taking and completion of assignments.
5. Assign classmate as a volunteer assistant.
6. Help students realize their self-worth is not based on grades. Mental well-being is just as important as academic performance. That should place a high priority on safeguarding their mental health.



SUSTAINING THE GNAT CANCER FUND

In fulfillment of one of its objectives to meet the welfare needs of its members, the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) passed a resolution to authorise the deduction of Two Ghana Cedis (GH¢ 2.00) from each member per month.

The objective was to fund the treatment of any member who suffers cancer.

The treatment goes for all cancers, apart from blood-related cancers.

The Fund which operates on the principle of insurance, covers a member, his or her spouse and two children below eighteen (18) years of age.

The Fund is in collaboration with the Sweden Ghana Medical Centre (SGMC), a state-of-the-art oncology center for the treatment of cancer.

Through sensitisation and the many testimonies from members who have undergone treatment and the smiles that it has brought to many families, more people are benefiting from the Fund, now than ever before.

The fact that the cost of treating our members at the Centre continues to witness astronomical figures cannot be overemphasised.



Patient treatment at SGIVIC

A quick juxtaposition of the revenue from the Two Ghana Cedis (GH¢ 2.00) paid per member per month with the expenditure over the same period makes the picture clearer.

It is instructive to note that, the cost of treating one cancer patient ranges from Forty-Five Thousand Ghana Cedis (GH¢ 45,000.00) to Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Ghana Cedis (GH¢ 250,000.00). It has become very evident that, the Two Ghana Cedis (GH¢ 2.00) per member per month, can no more sustain the Cancer Fund.

In response to this reality therefore, the organisation proposed an increase to Five Ghana Cedis (GH¢ 5.00) per member per month, which was approved by Conference.

Sustain the Fund and Save Life...

NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES

Since its inception in 2014, up to December 2020, a total of Six Thousand, Seven Hundred and Seventy-three (6,773) members have received treatment under the Fund. Out of this number, Three Thousand, Nine Hundred and Fifty-two (3,952) have been fully treated.



IMPACT STORIES



TEACHING PUPILS WHO DO NOT UNDERSTAND YOUR LANGUAGE



TEACHING PUPILS WHO DO NOT UNDERSTAND YOUR LANGUAGE

JUDITH ADUSE-POKU SHARES HER EXPERIENCE

Almost all basic schools in the rural communities in the Northern Region have infra-structural challenges. Aside this, some communities have no access to potable water, quality healthcare delivery, electricity, mobile phone network, among others. For these reasons, many teachers turn down posting to these deprived areas. But Judith Aduse-Poku is seeking to change the narrative. Though she's spent just a year at the Kumdi D/A primary school, her influence on the pupils and residents has been phenomenal. Her biggest worry is having to teach pupils whose language she can't speak and vice versa. But Judith says she's enjoying that experience.

'Teaching was very difficult. The children do not understand my language neither do I understand them. Language became a barrier. I asked myself, how could I communicate with these children and teach them, I was very sad', she recounted. She says her aim is to get these pupils on the same pedestal as those in urban areas. She is asking her colleagues not to reject posting to rural communities but to come and help shape the future of the rural children. Judith is however appealing to the Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service to always post kindergarten teachers who understand the indigenous language of areas they are sent to, to make teaching and learning easier and better.



GNAT LEADERSHIP VISITS MEMBERS AT HOHOE







GNAT LEADERSHIP VISITS MEMBERS AT ADIDOME

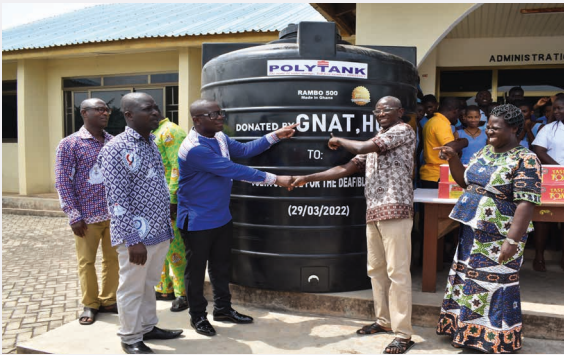






NATIONAL EXECUTIVES VISIT HOHOE SCHOOL OF DEAF







GNAT LEADERSHIP VISITS MEMBERS AT JASIKAN







NATIONAL EXECUTIVES VISIT KPANDO





TEACHERS QUOTES FOR PUBLICATION

QUOTE

1. The teacher who is indeed wise does not bid you to enter the house of his wisdom but rather leads you to the threshold of your mind. – **Kahlil Gibran.**

“

2. When you love your class, your students just know.

”

“

QUOTE

3. Children learn best when they like their teacher, and they think their teacher likes them.

”

“

5. Teaching kids to count is fine, but teaching them what counts is best. — **Bob Talbert.**

”

“

6. A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops. — **Henry Brooks Adams.**

”

“

4. Watch a teacher with a classroom full of students and you will know what real love looks like.

”

“

7. Our fingerprints don't fade from the lives we touch. Only the brave choose to teach.

”

8. The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires. — **William Arthur Ward**

“

“

9. Teaching is the profession that teaches all the other professions. – Unknown

”

“

10. To the world you may be just a teacher but to your students you are a hero.

”



GHANA NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS



Our Mission

To campaign effectively on behalf of our membership using legitimate channels for improved terms and conditions in line with National and International Labour Laws and provide Professional Development, Psycho-social and Economic services for our members in a Democratic, Non-partisan, non-sectarian and Environmentally responsible manner through Innovation and a Committed Workforce.



OUR VISION

Become a vibrant, resilient, pro-active, result-oriented teachers' Union championing the cause of teachers and quality education for a brighter future.



OUR CORE VALUES

- TOLERANCE
- RESILIENCE
- UNITY
- SOLIDARITY
- TRANSPARENCY
(TRUST)