

# LEARN THE NEWS

(Formerly: The Times I Am Living In)

Informative digital news for upper primary and lower secondary students

English Edition

March 17, 2015

ISSUE 29

**WORLD**News

[www.learnthenews.com](http://www.learnthenews.com)



The Solar Impulse 2, the first solar powered aircraft to attempt a round-the-world flight has reached the city of Ahmedabad, in India.



Photo: AFP / CARE / Inga Mepham

## DIFFERENT NAMES, SAME TYPE OF HUGE STORMS

A big, wild storm struck a little island country in the Pacific Ocean last week.

The storm was one of those big storms called cyclones.

These winds happen in different parts of the world.

If they happen in the United States, Mexico and

the Caribbean Sea they are called hurricanes. If they happen in Asia they are called typhoons. ■

### QUICK QUIZ...

1. Where do fierce winds happen that are called cyclones?
2. What is the name of the cyclone that struck Vanuatu?



Photo: Crys Lee, Empower Playgrounds, Inc.

## PLAYGROUND POWER IN GHANA

A country in west Africa called Ghana has a problem similar to South Africa.

There is not enough electricity.

In Ghana, people have come up with an answer to this problem in one village.

They have made a roundabout for children to play on.

As it turns, it makes electricity.

Wheels called turbines in a fast-flowing river make electricity much the same way. ■

### QUICK QUIZ...

1. Which big river flows through southeast Ghana?
2. What is the money used in Ghana called?

## Swings and roundabouts: powering rural Ghana through play

Pediatorkope, Ghana / AFP / -- The southeastern island of Pediatorkope is one of **rural** Ghana's poorest places, with most people living from farming **mussels** on the Volta River.

But despite being cut off from the **national grid**, Pediatorkope is **relatively** well-off compared to the capital Accra and the rest of the country when it comes to power.

How? It uses the natural energy of children to generate enough electricity to power lanterns every time they use **specialty adapted roundabouts**.

When children play on the equipment at the Pediatorkope Basic School, their effort turns a **turbine** connected to a rechargeable battery that powers **LED** lanterns.

The children use the lanterns at home, bringing them back to the school when they need recharging, teacher Gerson Kuadegbeku told AFP. "So it is helping the students to learn."

Kuadegbeku said the scheme -- the **brainchild** of US-based charity Empower Playgrounds Incorporated -- has been a success, allowing children to study at home, when previously it was impossible for lack of electricity.

"**Formerly** the performance of the children in the school was very low," he told AFP.

### - Energy crisis -

Ghana is **in the throes** of a **crippling energy crisis**, which is slowing down economic activity and raising fears about its effect on the **emerging economy's** overall development.

Most homes receive electricity for 12 hours but can then be without power for the next 24.

The government, criticised for failing to **maintain economic growth** after the country began **commercial oil production** in 2010, recently signed new contracts with **external power suppliers**.

While Ghanaians wait for those new facilities to begin producing power, **demand for generators** is increasing.

Some businesses have threatened to leave the country for places with more regular supply. Others said they are being forced to **downsize** their workforce.

The main opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP) and its supporters last month took to the streets, claiming that President John Dramani Mahama has crippled business by not **resolving** the problem.

"If you are running a factory and you have to power a generator before you can produce, then there's a real problem," said Isaac Osei, an **opposition member of parliament**.

### - Power through play -

If the situation is **acute** in cities such as Accra, then it is even worse in rural areas, with schoolchildren among the hardest hit by the lack of electricity.

George Thompson, the project manager at Empower Playgrounds Inc., said the system was helping to improve the chances of rural children continuing their education beyond junior school.

"So far we're in 42 schools and what we do is that any school that has... junior high, we **assess** them by their final year examinations," he said.

"It has really brought improvement in the lives of these children's education.

"All that we expect from the community is to ensure that when the kids bring these lanterns home, they (use them) to do their home studies."

### - Small price to pay -

A separate scheme using **solar power** is also running on the island, where residents pay 500 **cedis** to buy a battery, which is recharged by the sun via roof panels at a "charging station". **Continued on Page 9**

## From Page 8

Local man Humphrey Teye Ayeh said he decided to enrol because of the increasing cost of **kerosene** previously used to provide light.

The **sustainable energy system** -- which can be used to power electrical devices such as mobile phones -- has got people more connected, he said.

For Thompson, the decision to come to Peditorkope made sense because it would take time for the island to get onto the national grid.

"We thought it wise to come to this island and ensure that the people in this community also have a little life here," he said.

"Our **objective** is not to make any money or profit from this but we need to get the system, the centre sustainable or the project sustainable, so we ask them to pay 500 Ghana cedis to be hooked up to the system and then each time they bring the battery for recharge, they pay five cedis for that." ■

## GLOSSARY

The southeastern island of Peditorkope is one of **rural** Ghana's poorest places, with most people living from farming **mussels** on the Volta River.

Rural areas are places in the country. Places in the city are known as urban areas.

Mussels are shellfish.

But despite being cut off from the **national grid**, Peditorkope is **relatively** well-off compared to the capital Accra and the rest of the country when it comes to power.

The network of electricity cables in a country that connects power stations with sub-stations and eventually homes and factories where electricity is used, is called the national grid.

If Peditorkope is relatively well-off, it is not very well off (which means rich) if you compare it with wealthy places, such as the United States and Japan. However it is well-off compared with poorer places.

How? It uses the natural energy of children to generate enough electricity to power lanterns every time they use **specially adapted roundabouts**.

Specially adapted roundabouts are roundabouts

that have had things put on to them that make them able to do something special. In this case it is to make electricity.

When children play on the equipment at the Peditorkope Basic School, their effort turns a **turbine** connected to a rechargeable battery that powers **LED** lanterns.

A turbine is a machine that makes electricity using a wheel that is made to turn around and around. Electricity is made from the energy that is captured. Hydro-electric power stations use fast-running water to make turbines turn around. In this case it is the roundabout that causes it to happen.

LED stands for light emitting diode. LED lights make a bright light using less electricity than other lights.

Kuadegbeku said the scheme -- the **brainchild** of US-based charity Empower Playgrounds Incorporated -- has been a success, allowing children to study at home, when previously it was impossible for lack of electricity.

A brainchild is an idea that one particular person has come up with.

Continued on Page 10

## GLOSSARY

### From Page 9

*"Formerly the performance of the children in the school was very low," he told AFP.*

Formerly means before.

*Ghana is **in the throes** of a **crippling energy crisis**, which is slowing down economic activity and raising fears about its effect on the **emerging economy's** overall development.*

A crippling energy crisis is a situation where there is suddenly no electricity, which causes enormous problems. If Ghana is in the throes of a crippling energy crisis, it is in the middle of such a crisis.

A country's economy is everything that makes it make wealth, from farms and factories to shops and ports, railways and schools. An emerging economy is one that is young and still developing.

*The government, criticised for failing to **maintain economic growth** after the country began **commercial oil production** in 2010, recently signed new contracts with **external power suppliers**.*

To maintain economic growth means to keep growing everything that makes wealth. That means to keep things like electricity cables and pylons, power stations and roads, hospitals and train lines in working order. That often takes a lot of work and costs a lot of money. However, if it is not done, then these things fall apart and stop making wealth for the country.

Commercial oil production means producing oil to sell.

External power suppliers are people and companies that can make electricity, and who come from other countries.

*While Ghanaians wait for those new facilities to begin producing power, **demand for generators** is*

*increasing.*

Generators are engines that run on diesel and produce electricity. When there is a demand for generators, many people want them and are usually willing to buy them at a high price.

*Others said they are being forced to **downsize** their workforce.*

When a company downsizes its workforce, it reduces the number of jobs it offers to people. This involves telling certain workers they no longer have jobs.

*The main opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP) and its supporters last month took to the streets, claiming that President John Dramani Mahama has crippled business by not **resolving** the problem.*

To resolve a problem means to sort it out.

*"If you are running a factory and you have to power a generator before you can produce, then there's a real problem," said Isaac Osei, an **opposition member of parliament**.*

A country's parliament is filled with members of parliament who a country's people have voted to be there to stand up for them and make sure the government does things that make their lives better. Some members of parliament belong to the ruling party while others belong to political parties that are against the ruling party. These are opposition members of parliament and they belong to opposition parties. There may also be other members of parliament that belong to no political party. They are called independents.

*If the situation is **acute** in cities such as Accra, then it is even worse in rural areas, with schoolchildren among the hardest hit by the lack of electricity.*

Acute means serious.

Continued on Page 11

## GLOSSARY

### From Page 10

*"So far we're in 42 schools and what we do is that any school that has... junior high, we **assess** them by their final year examinations," he said.*

To assess how electricity made by roundabouts affects a school means to work out how it has affected them.

*A separate scheme using **solar power** is also running on the island, where residents pay 500 **cedis** to buy a battery, which is recharged by the sun via roof panels at a "charging station".*

Solar power means power made from sunlight.

The money used in Ghana is called the cedi.

*Local man Humphrey Teye Ayeh said he decided to enrol because of the increasing cost of **kerosene** previously used to provide light.*

Kerosene is a type of fuel, made from oil. It is also known as paraffin.

*The **sustainable energy system** -- which can be used to power electrical devices such as mobile phones -- has got people more connected, he said.*

A sustainable energy system is one that can keep on making electricity without running out of anything that is needed to make it.

*"Our **objective** is not to make any money or profit from this but we need to get the system, the centre sustainable or the project sustainable, so we ask them to pay 500 Ghana cedis to be hooked up to the system and then each time they bring the battery for recharge, they pay five cedis for that."*

An objective is something you plan to achieve.

## WORKSHEET True or False?

State whether the following sentences are true or false:



1. Ghana's capital city is Accra. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Humphrey Teye Ayeh has never in his life used kerosene to provide light. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Isaac Osei is a member of Ghana's ruling party. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Gerson Kuadegbeku has a career in education. \_\_\_\_\_
5. President John Dramani Mahama belongs to the New Patriotic Party. \_\_\_\_\_



## WORKSHEET ANSWERS

**WORLD: ANSWERS:** Quick quiz ... The Indian and South Pacific Oceans; Cyclone Pam.  
**WORKSHEET:** 1-e; 2-a; 3-c; 4-b; 5-d.

**ASIA: ANSWERS:** Quick quiz ... Honshu, Osaka.  
**WORKSHEET:** Tokyo to Osaka; Tokyo to Kanazawa; Aomori to Kyushu.

**AFRICA: ANSWERS:** Quick quiz ... Volta; cedi.  
**WORKSHEET:** 1. True; 2. False; 3. False; 4. True; 5. False.

**ENVIRONMENT: ANSWERS:** Quick quiz ... Virunga; Dian Fossey. **WORKSHEET:** 1. Belgium; 2. active volcanoes; 3. Uganda and Rwanda; 4. The United

Nations; 5. west.

**BUSINESS: ANSWERS:** Quick quiz ... Waterloo; the centenary of the beginning of World War I.  
**WORKSHEET:** 1. Eagle; 2. The Duke of Wellington; 3. Belgium's finance minister, Johan Van Overtveldt; 4. Napoleon; 5. Portugal.

**SPORT: ANSWERS:** Quick quiz ... St Patrick's Day; Shannon River. **WORKSHEET:** 1. Gaelic; 2. Offaly; 3. Mass; 4. Pub; 5. Ring.

**TODAY IN HISTORY: ANSWERS:** 1. 14; 2. 10; 3. 1982; 4. 9; 5. 31.



|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| s | a | b | g | i | h | s | l | d | e | o | a |
| r | n | o | a | c | c | t | y | s | d | e | d |
| a | i | p | r | e | s | i | d | e | n | t | o |
| n | k | n | b | a | t | h | k | b | h | o | r |
| s | m | r | g | j | r | d | n | m | t | n | t |
| o | f | f | a | l | y | c | e | d | a | p | m |
| a | s | d | e | t | w | i | p | r | i | s | v |
| c | e | r | l | n | d | e | u | k | r | b | s |
| e | f | a | i | r | h | d | b | i | d | i | n |
| b | c | i | c | n | n | n | w | a | t | z | h |
| l | r | y | k | i | r | e | r | i | r | o | b |
| s | a | c | r | p | r | o | k | c | d | i | j |
| o | s | i | h | c | u | p | a | s | n | o | h |