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Delta's Ghana Calculus: Could America's Giant Enter Ghana's National Airline Race?



▶▶ PAGE 02

Ontic announces Jean-Christophe Gallagher as new CEO



▶▶ PAGE 08

Why Are China's Young People Fed Up?



▶▶ PAGE 09

"Our second coming will be bigger" – Dr. Nduom on GN Savings and Loans Licence Restoration



▶▶ PAGE 05

Emirates brings its Travel Rehearsal programme to Ghana



▶▶ PAGE 06

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Delta's Ghana Calculus: Could America's Giant Enter Ghana's National Airline Race?

By Dominick Andoh



For two decades, Delta Air Lines has quietly built one of the strongest transatlantic aviation relationships between the United States and West Africa through its Accra operations.

Now, as Ghana pushes ahead with plans to establish a new national airline, comments from a senior Delta executive suggest the Atlanta-based carrier may at least be studying the opportunity, a development that could significantly reshape the competitive dynamics of African aviation.

"We are excited to be here. We have a professional and

governance affairs team and a licensing team, and we are aware of it. There will certainly be some thought-provoking discussions and evaluations, but we can't really comment on it. We will see where it goes," said Rob LeBel, Managing Director – International and Specialty Sales at Delta Air Lines, in response to a question from AviationGhana during a media event in Accra on Thursday, May 21, 2026, on whether the airline could be interested in Ghana's planned national carrier project.

The carefully worded response may not constitute a formal expression of interest. But in aviation diplomacy, "never say never" often means

discussions are happening behind the scenes.

Delta's Deep Ghana Footprint

Delta's interest would not emerge in a vacuum. The airline is marking 20 years of uninterrupted service to Accra, a milestone few foreign carriers operating in West Africa can match. Since launching flights to Ghana in 2006, Delta has evolved from a niche transatlantic operator into a dominant force on the U.S.- Ghana corridor.

Its recent seasonal nonstop Accra-Atlanta service proved particularly successful, tapping into surging diaspora demand, student

travel, business movement, and growing cultural tourism traffic between Ghana and the United States. AviationGhana previously reported exceptionally strong passenger loads on the route, particularly during the December "Detty December" travel peak and summer traffic season.

The Atlanta route also strategically complements Delta's broader African network, linking Accra to one of the world's largest airline hubs with onward access across North America. For Ghana, Delta's long-term presence offers something many competitors cannot easily replicate: operational

Continue on Page 04

Continued from Page 2

consistency, premium brand strength, and deep ties with the Ghanaian-American diaspora economy.

A Three-Way Strategic Contest?

If Delta eventually enters Ghana's national airline process, it would likely face formidable competition from

maintenance, pilot training, and operational expertise.

Emirates, meanwhile, brings unmatched long-haul global connectivity and enormous financial strength. However, analysts note that Gulf carriers traditionally prefer commercial dominance through network expansion rather than through equity-heavy ownership structures

Europe and heightened geopolitical pressures affecting traditional global corridors, airlines are seeking high-growth emerging markets.

Accra increasingly fits that profile. Ghana offers political stability, a fast-growing middle class, strong diaspora links, expanding airport infrastructure, and strategic positioning under the African Continental Free Trade Area

It could evolve into part of a broader geopolitical aviation chessboard involving Africa, the Gulf, and the United States.

The Real Question

The critical issue may ultimately not be whether Delta is interested. It is a question of whether Ghana's eventual national



Gulf and African aviation heavyweights already linked to the project.

Emirates and Ethiopian Airlines have both previously shown varying degrees of strategic interest in Ghana's aviation ambitions.

Ethiopian Airlines already has a proven pan-African airline investment model with stakes or partnerships in Zambia Airways, ASKY Airlines, Malawi Airlines and other African ventures. The Addis Ababa-based carrier possesses perhaps the continent's strongest aviation technical ecosystem, including

in African airlines. Ghana's new venture presents a novel opportunity to the Dubai-based airline.

Delta's potential involvement would introduce a different dynamic entirely — an American strategic airline partnership focused heavily on transatlantic flows, premium traffic and U.S.-Africa connectivity.

Why Ghana Matters

The timing is significant. Africa is becoming increasingly important in global airline strategy. With slower growth in parts of

(AfCFTA), headquartered in Accra.

For Delta, deeper alignment with Ghana could also help counter the growing influence of Gulf carriers across Africa. Emirates, Qatar Airways, Etihad Airways, and the emerging Riyadh Air are all aggressively expanding their operations in Africa.

At the same time, Ethiopian Airlines continues consolidating its dominance as Africa's largest carrier.

A partnership with Ghana could therefore become more than a commercial decision.

airline model aligns with Delta's traditionally cautious international investment strategy.

Unlike Ethiopian Airlines, Delta has historically avoided direct airline ownership plays in emerging markets unless strong strategic synergies exist.

Still, after 20 years in Accra, Delta clearly sees long-term value in Ghana. And in aviation, relationships built over decades often matter more than public statements.

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“Our second coming will be bigger” – Dr. Nduom on GN Savings and Loans Licence Restoration



The ruling marks a major legal victory for GN Savings and Loans, whose licence was revoked during Ghana's banking sector cleanup exercise, leading to the appointment of a receiver and the eventual collapse of the bank's operations.

Speaking to the media after the court hearing on Thursday, May 21, Dr. Nduom said that the restoration of the licence would allow the company to contribute once again to the country's economic growth and prosperity.

“What we promise is that we will restore this company. We will restore our business and we will make certain that our second coming is even bigger than the first,” he declared.

The businessman also reflected on the human and economic impact of the banking sector cleanup, saying many people suffered irreversible losses.

“There are just too many difficulties. Some people have

died; some have lost their jobs. Assets have been destroyed. Many things will not get back,” he lamented..

Despite the challenges, Dr. Nduom said the group remains determined to rebuild the company and emerge stronger.

“Our second coming will be bigger” – Dr. Nduom on GN Savings and Loans Licence Restoration | Source: MyJoyOnline | Aviationghana



Emirates brings its Travel Rehearsal programme to Ghana



Emirates, the world's first Autism-Certified Airline, has brought its Travel Rehearsal programme to Ghana, reinforcing the airline's global commitment to making air travel more accessible and inclusive for all passengers.

The Travel Rehearsal offers a guided simulation of the complete air travel journey, familiarising individuals that have accessible travel requirements with airport procedures and onboard environments ahead of time, with the aim to reduce anxiety and build confidence before an actual flight. The simulation follows a full walk through, starting with check-in – complete with imitation boarding cards – immigration, security and the airport lounge, before following the arrival journey, visiting customs and baggage reclaim.

In partnership with HopeSetters Autism Center, Emirates hosted students on the autism spectrum,

and their guardians, at Accra International Airport, earlier in March. Emirates Airport Services team in Ghana spearheaded the initiative, first meeting with HopeSetters Autism Center to outline the full global initiative and the vital role their students and staff would have in this simulation. The team then mapped out the route in coordination with multiple stakeholders, to ensure the journey was accessible at every possible touchpoint.

Salem Almana, Emirates' Country Manager, Ghana said, "This initiative is about more than travel. It is about building confidence, creating opportunities, and ensuring that every individual feels welcomed, respected, and supported throughout their journey. We remain committed to advancing initiatives that make travel more accessible and inclusive in Accra, across Africa, and around the world. We extend our sincere thanks to our valued partners

at Accra International Airport (ACC), as well as our guests from HopeSetters Autism Centre, for their meaningful participation.

I would also like to recognise the management and team of Emirates Airport Services in Ghana for their outstanding leadership in pioneering this initiative in West Africa, which challenges stereotypes, fosters understanding, and creates a more inclusive travel environment."

Mrs. Bridget Jewell Baaba Enchill, Executive Director – HopeSetters Autism Center said, "The Travel Rehearsal programme is an important step toward making travel more inclusive. By allowing our students to familiarise themselves with the airport environment in advance, Emirates is helping remove barriers and opening up opportunities for individuals on the autism spectrum to travel with greater confidence and independence. We are grateful to Emirates and its partners for creating this thoughtful and empowering

experience for our students."

Mrs. Yvonne Nana Afriyie Opare, Managing Director of Ghana Airports Company Limited said, "Ghana Airports Company Limited is pleased to have provided world-class facilities and services for students with neurodivergence at Accra International Airport as part of Emirates Airlines' Travel Rehearsal programme. We remain committed to making air travel a pleasant and fulfilling experience for all categories of passengers".

Accessible Travel for All

Emirates became the world's first Autism-Certified Airline in 2025, after more than 35,000 cabin crew and ground staff completed specialised autism awareness training. The programme equips employees with in-depth knowledge of the autism spectrum, common misconceptions, challenges faced during travel, and personalised support strategies tailored to individual passenger needs.

The Accra Travel Rehearsal marks the fourth roll-out in Africa, after Durban, Harare and Luanda, both completed in 2025. Since April 2025, Emirates' Airport Services teams have come together to arrange 40 of these travel rehearsals across airports like Accra, Athens, Bali, Bangalore, Barcelona, Bologna, Brussels, Cairo, Christchurch, Da Nang, Delhi, Dubai, Dublin, Durban, Düsseldorf, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Guangzhou, Hanoi, Harare, Hong Kong, Istanbul, London, Luanda, Madrid, Mauritius, Milan, Newcastle, Nice, Orlando, Oslo, Paris, Peshawar, Port Luis, Rome, Stansted, Stockholm, Sydney, Toronto, Trivandrum, Venice and Vienna

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Ontic announces Jean-Christophe Gallagher as new CEO



Ontic, a leading supplier to the world's civil and military aircraft, has appointed Jean-Christophe (JC) Gallagher as Chief Executive Officer, as the company builds on a sustained period of strong growth.

Gareth Hall, who has led Ontic for over 10 years through its significant growth and expansion, will transition from CEO to Executive Chairman, where he will continue to guide the company's long-term strategy and key relationships. Gallagher joins as CEO to further strengthen Ontic's leadership team, as the business continues to scale globally.

Ontic's purpose – supporting a lifetime of flight by sustaining and advancing the systems that keep aircraft flying – remains at the heart of the business as it continues to grow its portfolio

and scale operations to meet increasing customer demand.

Gareth Hall said the move reflects both continuity and ambition: "Ontic is entering an exciting new phase of growth, and this is the right moment to add to our leadership structure to match that opportunity. JC brings deep aerospace expertise and a strong track record of leading high-performing global teams. His appointment further strengthens our senior leadership and positions Ontic to build on the momentum we have created."

Gallagher joins Ontic following a 20 year career at Bombardier, most recently serving as Executive Vice President of Aircraft Sales and Defense. He is widely recognised for delivering commercial success, leading large-scale organisational growth, and

building strong, collaborative cultures.

"What stood out most about JC was his alignment with Ontic's strategy, values and long-term ambition," said Hall. "He brings enormous energy, global perspective, and a clear passion for this industry. He will be a strong champion for our customers, partners, and people."

Ontic will continue to execute its long-term strategy – focused on supporting customers and OEM partners through engineering expertise, operational excellence, and global scale.

Gallagher commented: "Ontic plays a vital role in keeping aircraft flying for generations, and I'm honoured to join a team so deeply committed to that mission. The company's purpose – supporting a lifetime

of flight – resonates strongly with me, and I'm excited to build on the exceptional momentum Gareth and the team have created. Together, we'll continue to scale globally, deepen our partnerships, and deliver the long-term value our customers rely on every day."

The transition process will take place progressively over the coming months, with Gareth Hall and Gallagher working closely together to ensure continued momentum across the business and ongoing support for Ontic's customers and partners – with a continual focus on providing availability and longevity to customer's fleets.

Gareth Hall concludes: "I'm incredibly proud of what we've built together so far – and even more excited about what comes next."

Why Are China's Young People Fed Up?

By Yi Fuxian



For several years now, a significant share of young Chinese people, disillusioned with their economic prospects, have embraced “lying flat,” a principled rejection of careerist competition (the proverbial “rat race”). Since such attitudes do not bode well for the country’s economic future, Chinese authorities have responded by portraying the movement as a foreign-backed effort to undermine national development and morale.

This is not a new tactic. When I spearheaded opposition to China’s one-child policy, I was accused of colluding with hostile foreign interests to undermine the country through overpopulation. Now that China’s population decline is undeniable, I am accused of exaggerating the crisis and bashing China.

In fact, “lying flat” is a direct result of the one-child policy. Just as biological homeostasis—avoiding deviations in blood pressure or blood sugar, for example—is necessary to prevent illness or death, so economic homeostasis requires maintaining the right balance between consumption and production. Introduced in 1980 in the belief that a smaller population would improve employment, the one-child policy produced the opposite result. By reducing children—well-known “super-consumers”—it weakened household bargaining power, driving the share of household disposable income in GDP from about two-thirds in the 1980s (broadly in line with peer economies) to just 44% today.

That is why Chinese domestic consumption and job creation

remain subdued. Faced with less income accruing to households and a weak social safety net, many workers are compelled to log longer hours to make ends meet. And competition for employment is so intense that those who hold a job feel pressure to work overtime just to keep it. As a result, the average Chinese work week has risen to around 49 hours—and as high as 60 hours in some cases—compared to 38 hours in the United States, 33 in Germany, 37 in Japan, and 42 in Vietnam.

Moreover, Chinese youth unemployment (ages 16–24) is especially high, reflecting a mismatch between surging higher-educational attainment and an underdeveloped services sector. Policies promoting a “talent dividend” and “new productive forces,” along with family pressures, have increased

the number of annual graduates from 1.01 million in 2000 to 12.22 million in 2025. Yet weak consumption still limits the growth of the services sector—the main employer for recent graduates—to just 47% of jobs, far below the 70–80% typical of advanced economies with similar levels of higher education.

After China’s youth unemployment rate hit 21.3% in June 2023, the government halted data releases for months before issuing revised, lower figures. But this obviously did not change the harsh underlying reality. During last year’s civil-service exams, 2.8 million applicants competed for just 38,100 positions. With the job market so bleak, some universities are adopting “educational downshifting,” offering vocational training to

Continue on Page 10

Continued from Page 09

undergraduates and encouraging PhD candidates to pursue more employment-oriented master's degrees. No wonder graduates who can rely on financial support from their one-child families are "lying flat."

But "lying flat" reflects privilege. Among the millions of young Chinese who can neither find stable employment nor rely on family support, many have been forced into the gig economy, working as food deliverers, ride-

Of course, China's combination of too few consumers (children), low household incomes, and long working hours has also pushed hundreds of millions of workers into export-oriented manufacturing. The decline in household income as a share of GDP mirrors the expansion of state fiscal capacity and extensive industrial subsidies, which have produced a pathological manufacturing boom—akin to hypertension and hyperglycemia in the human body. Hence, China now accounts for about 17% of global GDP and 28%

argument that China's "engineered governance" model is worthy of emulation. If anything, its manufacturing success and infrastructure achievements reflect a continuation of the status quo. It is China's strong state control over resources that enables rapid mobilization toward specific goals—often at the cost of social and economic homeostasis. The Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC), which pioneered this approach and built the Great Wall, lasted only 15 years. The Communist Party of China's Great Leap Forward and one-

youth unemployment further discourages marriage while eroding the financial capacity to raise children. China's share of global manufacturing may have risen from 3% in 1990 to 28% today, but its share of global births has fallen from 17% to 6%, and it is projected to drop below 3% by 2050.

China is churning out everything except the people it will need to sustain its economic development over time. The problem is not that Chinese youths are lying flat. It is that



hailing drivers, couriers, or live-streamers. China now has about 240 million flexible workers—nearly one-third of its labor force.

Yet heavy investments in AI, robotics, drones, and autonomous driving are already squeezing these jobs, pushing unemployment among those aged 25-29 to a record 7.7% in March—a trend that is likely to accelerate. Worse, unlike in the US, where AI adoption may ease persistent inflationary pressures, China's aggressive push into AI will intensify deflationary pressures alongside already weak consumption.

of global manufacturing value-added, but only 12% of global household consumption.

A more balanced economy would be healthier for both China and the world. China's export-driven model has harmed manufacturing abroad, especially in the US, its largest export market. The US has responded by imposing tariffs, cutting its share of goods imports from China to 8%, down from 22% in 2018. If other countries follow suit, the five million-plus STEM graduates that China produces annually for manufacturing may struggle to find jobs.

These weaknesses undercut the

child policy then followed the same logic.

Today's manufacturing boom likewise comes at the cost of demographic and even civilizational sustainability. China's household income share is so low that many families struggle to raise even a single child. Long working hours deprive young people of time to build relationships. The government's pursuit of "new quality productive forces," together with "educational downshifting," is narrowing the window for family formation, leading to delayed marriage, rising singlehood, and lower fertility. High

the country's leaders are lying to them—and to themselves.

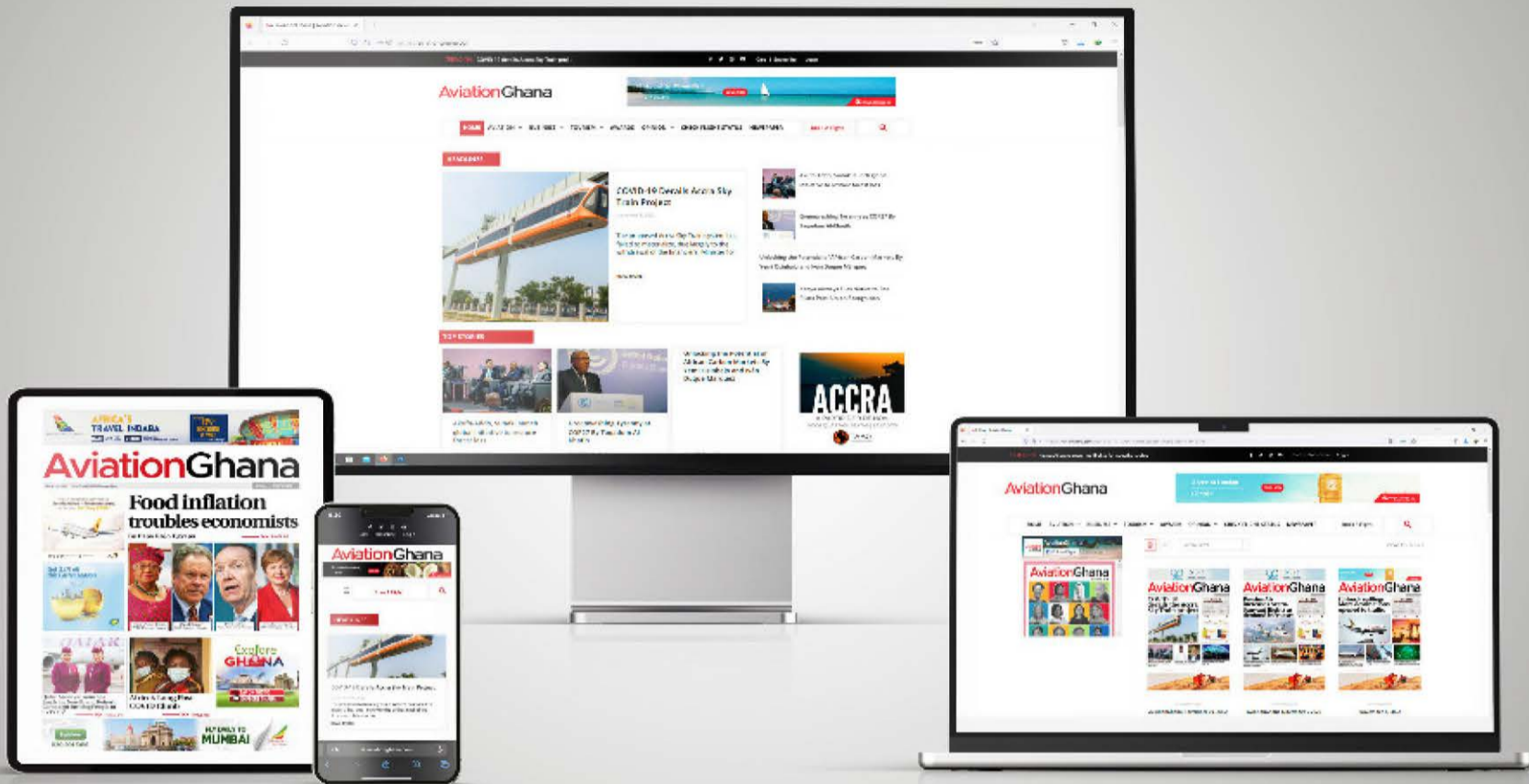
Yi Fuxian, a senior scientist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, spearheaded the movement against China's one-child policy. His book *Big Country with an Empty Nest* (China Development Press, 2013), initially banned, now ranks first in China Publishing Today's 100 Best Books of 2013 in China.

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