



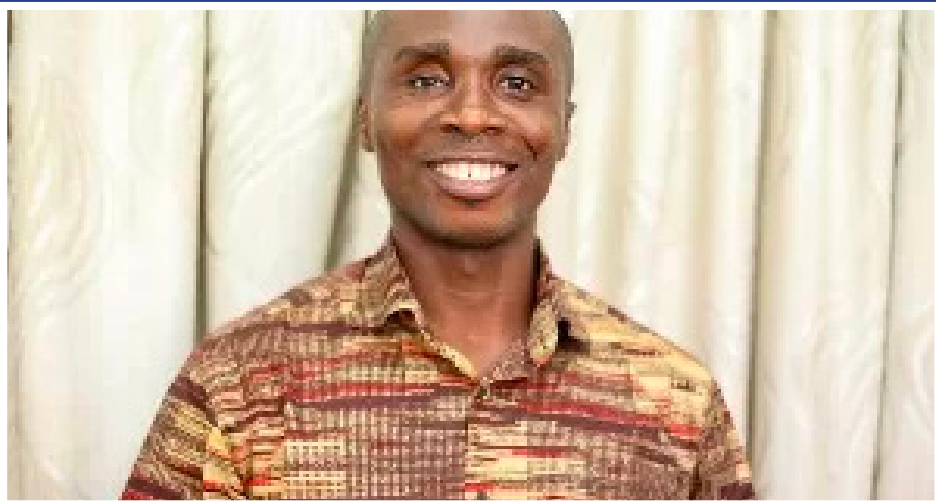
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# General News

## TOR asked to halt intended partnership with Tema Energy limited - OSP

The Office of the Special Prosecutor (OSP) has intervened, instructing the Tema Oil Refinery (TOR) to suspend its intended partnership with Tema Energy and Processing Limited.

In a letter dated November 21, 2023, addressed to TOR's Managing Director, Daniel Osei Appiah, the OSP cited an ongoing analysis of corruption risks associated with the proposed partnership.

The directive requires TOR to furnish all necessary supporting documentation for the agreement by Tuesday, December 5, 2023.

The letter states, "You are directed to immediately suspend the proposed partnership agreement, ongoing negotiations, operations,

and all other ancillary activities arising out of and consequent upon the proposed partnership agreement until you are otherwise advised by the Special Prosecutor."

The move comes amid internal turmoil at TOR, where employees are in conflict with five colleagues and two board members. Allegedly, these individuals established the "TOR Workers' Charity Fund" to clandestinely acquire shares in the TOR-Torentco deal without the consent of over 500 workers. The OSP's decision, however, lacks clarity on the exact trigger for this intervention.

The disgruntled workers assert that the TOR Workers' Charity Trust, registered on August 29 of this year, aimed to support Torentco Asset Management

Limited (TAML), now rebranded as Tema Energy and Processing Limited (TEPL), in its role as the proposed lessee for the transaction. Two board members, two management staff, two UNICOF executives, and one junior staff are accused of collaborating in registering the fund, forming part of a broader scheme to push forward the controversial TOR-Torentco deal.

Despite TOR's capacity to process 45,000 barrels of oil per day, the refinery has grappled with inconsistencies in its operations, sustaining losses over the years. Management crises, political interference, and challenges posed by outdated equipment have contributed to the refinery's struggles.

*Source: The Independent Ghana / Amanda Cartey*



*Kissi Agyebeng, Special Prosecutor*

## NPP is dead – Buaben Asamoia

Former Member of Parliament for Adentan Constituency and ex-NPP stalwart, Yaw Buaben Asamoia, declares that the New Patriotic Party (NPP) no longer exists, citing an overwhelming influence from President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo.

Buaben Asamoia, who recently abandoned his NPP membership along with three other influential figures to back independent presidential candidate John Alan Kyerematen, alleges that the party has been taken over by the president, transforming its character and fostering factionalism.

In an interview on Citi TV's Face to Face program, Buaben Asamoia expresses his concerns, stating, "The party has changed character; a party ought to be an association of like minds with freedom and opportunity to rub minds and seek out the best spaces. The New Patriotic Party that I knew in the beginning is not the New Patriotic Party that exists now. It's become divided by heavy factionalism. Literally, it has been taken over by the executive, that is the blunt

truth. The party doesn't exist.

"The government has taken the party over, the personality of the president is overbearing, and he controls that party, and that means that if you don't do the president's wish; if you are not in the president's good books, you are not useful to that party. That is the bottom line, that is what is happening," he added.

The NPP's General Secretary, Justin Frimpong Kodua, announced

on November 21, 2023, that Buaben Asamoia and three other stalwarts, Hopeson Adorye, Nana Ohene Ntow, and Boniface Abubakar Saddique, had forfeited their membership of the party for endorsing and campaigning for Alan Kyerematen, who had resigned from the NPP ahead of the party's presidential primaries.

Alan Kyerematen, who served as the Minister of Trade and Industry from 2017 to 2023 has formed

a political movement called Movement for Change, with the Golden Butterfly as its symbol.

He has accused the government and the party's leadership of unfair treatment and bias against him and his supporters.

He has also alleged that the flagbearer contest was rigged in favour of Vice President Dr Mahamudu Bawumia.

*Source: The Independent Ghana*



*Buaben Asamoia, Fomer MP for Adentan Constituency*



# General News

## Illegal cigarette trade soars to 39% in Ghana – Study

**E**uromonitor International Limited has conducted a comprehensive study shedding light on the prevalence of the illicit cigarette trade in Ghana.

The findings indicate a notable increase, rising from 35 percent in 2017 to a concerning 39 percent of the total cigarette volume sales in 2018.

The study involved extensive engagement with 425 retailers, with an impressive 90 percent of them consenting to participate in the collection of cigarette packs.

A staggering total of 4,461 illicit cigarette packs were meticulously gathered during this research endeavour.

Notably, all retailers included in the study were found to be selling single sticks, underscoring the prevalence of this illicit trade practice.

Dr. Arti Singh, affiliated with the School of Public Health at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, presented the outcomes of this research project during a stakeholders' meeting on

Tobacco Industry Interference.

The meeting was organized by Vision for Alternative Development – Ghana (VALD-Ghana) and was supported by funding from Cancer Research UK (CRUK).

The study further delved into the distribution of cigarette brands in Ghana, revealing a breakdown with Kingsize commanding 40.9 percent, followed by London Brown/White at 20.8 percent, Pall Mall White at 11.1 percent, Business Royal at 6.7 percent, Fine at 5.2 percent, 555 at 4.3 percent, and others at 3.4 percent.

“The middle and coastal country zones had lower odds of illicit cigarettes sales than the northern zones.

Additionally, it was found that a significant portion of illicit packs could be traced back to Togo (47 percent), with Nigeria contributing 14 percent.

Importantly, the research unearthed regional variations, with the middle and coastal country zones exhibiting lower odds of illicit cigarette sales compared to the northern zones.

Notably, one in every five cigarette

packs collected was deemed illicit.

The study identified provision stores as having 3.5 times higher odds of illicit sales compared to drinking bars, and the odds were an astounding 67.2 times higher in border towns compared to non-border towns.

The study concludes with a set of valuable recommendations, urging the implementation of a national illicit tobacco task force or work plan.

It also emphasized the need for the development of an efficient track-and-trace system aligned with established protocols.

The researchers underscored the importance of technical capacity building for law enforcement officers to effectively combat the illicit cigarette trade.

The overarching goal of this research project is to fortify tobacco control efforts in Ghana by creating a supportive environment for the implementation of the Illicit Tobacco Protocol (ITP).

The objectives encompass engaging with national tobacco control stakeholders, identifying key challenges and opportunities, creating and reinforcing institutional and domestic capacity, establishing an effective track-and-trace system, and applying the study's findings to inform ITP implementation.

It's noteworthy that Ghana ratified the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products on October 22, 2021, reflecting its commitment to combating this pervasive issue.

**Source: *The Independent Ghana / Phoebe Martekie Doku***



*Cigarette*

## WHO issues worldwide warning against abuse of antibiotics

**T**he World Health Organisation (WHO) has raised an alarm regarding the diminishing efficacy of antibiotics due to their misuse, potentially leading to 10 million global deaths by 2050.

This caution follows a WHO survey on antibiotic usage, revealing concerning patterns in prescription practices.

According to the survey conducted in 14 nations, primarily in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, antibiotics were frequently prescribed for conditions like common colds (24 percent), flu-like symptoms (16 percent), sore throats (21 percent), and coughs (18 percent).

The WHO's European branch

outlined these findings in a report, emphasizing the urgent need to address antibiotic misuse to counter the escalating threat of antibiotic resistance.

While acknowledging antimicrobial resistance (AMR) as a natural phenomenon, the WHO emphasized that the misuse of antimicrobials accelerates the development and spread of superbugs, making infections more challenging to treat effectively.

Director of WHO Europe's Division of Communicable Diseases, Robb Butler highlighted the importance of enforcing existing regulations to curb antibiotic misuse.

In the absence of prompt action, the WHO warns that antibiotic resistance could lead to up to 10

million annual deaths by 2050.

A WHO survey revealed that a third of the 8,200 global respondents admitted to taking antibiotics without a prescription, citing improper prescriptions as a “cause for concern.”

The survey also highlighted a worrisome trend, with over 40% of antibiotics being prescribed without a doctor's recommendation. This data contrasts with a 2022 poll in the European Union, where only 8% of participants reported using antibiotics without a prescription.

The WHO identified significant gaps in people's understanding of antibiotics, suggesting that individuals might unintentionally

take these medications. The global health organization's warning underscores the critical importance of addressing antibiotic misuse to safeguard the effectiveness of these crucial medications.

**Source: *The Independent Ghana***



*File Photo*



# General News

## Govt donates 30 vehicles to Ghana Immigration Service to boost effective border control and safety

Government has allocated 30 vehicles to the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) in a bid to strengthen border checks and control across the country.

The Interior Minister, Ambrose Dery, oversaw the donation, which included 23 Toyota Land Cruisers GXR, three Toyota Land Cruisers Twin Turbo, one Toyota Land Cruiser VXS, one Toyota Tundra, and two Toyota Double Cabin Pick-ups.

The decision to provide these vehicles follows recent terrorism threats in neighbouring nations, prompting warnings from stakeholders and the recognition of the necessity to fortify security against potential terrorist activities.

The Member of Parliament for

Nandom constituency in the Upper West Region conveyed the government's acknowledgment of the threats posed by undesirable elements, particularly at the Northern frontiers. He expressed confidence in the Ghana Immigration Service's ability to protect the country's borders, justifying the delivery of the vehicles.

"The government views the GIS as an integral part of the security architecture that can deal with the insecurities at the border, hence the donation of the cars," stated Mr Dery.

During the vehicle handover, the Comptroller General of the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS), Kwame Asuah-Takyi, conveyed gratitude for the government's generous

gesture.

He highlighted the significance of the additional vehicles in enhancing the operational and administrative capabilities necessary for safeguarding the borders and combating crimes.

Mr Asuah-Takyi underscored the evolving situation in the neighbouring Northern countries, emphasising the heightened need for logistical support.

He stressed the importance of this proactive approach to effectively

address emerging threats affecting the safety, peace, and security along Ghana's borders, especially at the vulnerable Northern frontiers.

In addition, Mr Asuah-Takyi urged private entities to contribute to the GIS by providing logistical support. "I will enjoin all well-meaning individuals and corporate bodies to also lend a hand of support to the service, for when the borders are secured, the country is safe," he added.

**Source: The Independent Ghana / Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo**



File Photo

## Govt's Gold4Oil destroying cars - Ghanaians lament high manganese content in imported fuel

A surge in reports depicting impaired spark plugs has emerged, shedding light on the adverse effects of elevated manganese levels detected in the fuel distributed in Ghana.

On the X platform, users are actively responding to notifications that underscore the heightened concentration of manganese in petroleum products available throughout the nation.

This development arises in the wake of concerns voiced by COPEC, IMANI Africa, and other petroleum consumers regarding recent performance issues encountered in their vehicle engines.

The Chamber of Petroleum Consumers has taken a decisive stance, threatening legal action against the National Petroleum Authority (NPA) in response to the alleged manganese concentration found in fuel products.

Executive Secretary of the Chamber, Duncan Amoah, issued a warning, asserting that the increased manganese levels in the current Ghanaian fuel market are

causing damage to car engines, particularly affecting Hyundai vehicles.

"We have conducted checks and found a considerable amount of manganese in some of the products supplied by the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) that has proven to be quite detrimental to certain vehicles," confirmed Duncan Amoah.

Complaints have notably escalated, with petroleum consumers providing evidence showcasing the impact of the elevated manganese concentration in fuel.

On November 23, 2023, a user on the X platform posted an image displaying damaged spark plugs, accompanied by the caption, 'Shaking my head.'

Bright Simons, Vice President of IMANI Africa, also commented on the situation, stating, "Ghana's gasoline/petrol & diesel regulator, NPA, says fuels being imported into Ghana nowadays have too much manganese. But they don't say what has changed. Historically, Ghana imported most of its fuels

from markets that ban or heavily limit manganese. Then 'Gold 4 Oil' came."

Another user suggested that due to the introduction of the "Gold-for-Oil" program, the government is importing fuel from Russia, which contains a high amount of manganese (18g/litre), extremely harmful to car engines.

@\_edemkojo highlighted, "So,

in summary; #Gold4Oil has the government buying fuel from Russia. Russia fuel has high manganese content of 18g/litre which is causing various problems to your cars. So yes, you will buy cheaper fuel but you will use more than you

**Source: The Independent Ghana**



File Photo



# General News

## Foreign Ministry commissions office for Council on Foreign Relations Ghana

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration has commissioned a modern fully furnished office at the Accra International Conference Centre (AICC) for the Council on Foreign Relations-Ghana.

A statement issued by the Foreign Ministry, copied to the Ghana News Agency, said Mr Ramses Cleland, the Chief Director of the Ministry, noted that in fulfilment of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which was signed with the Council in 2019, the Ministry deemed it necessary to provide an office to enhance the work of the Council in further projecting Ghana's contribution to contemporary international affairs.

He indicated that the Ministry

would continue to support the Council in the discharge of its duties to drive Ghana forward on the international stage.

Mr Daniel K. Osei, the Chair of the Council, commended the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration for its unwavering support to the Council in various aspects of its work since it was inaugurated in 2019.

He expressed the Council's readiness to collaborate with the Foreign Ministry in the execution of Ghana's foreign policy agenda.

He was hopeful that the office would help the Council's work of promoting Ghana's development.

The ceremony was attended by members of the Council on Foreign

Relations, Ghana, retired Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) and some officers of the Foreign Ministry.

The Council is an independent non-partisan policy think-tank,

which specialises on Ghana's foreign policy and international affairs, especially those relating to the West African sub-region.

**Source: GNA**



*Delegates from Foreign Ministry*

## James Quayson's trial takes two-month break

The legal proceedings regarding the Member of Parliament (MP) for Assin North under the National Democratic Congress (NDC), James Gyakye Quayson, have encountered a substantial pause, which is triggered by the departure of Justice Mary Maame Ekue Yanzuh, the presiding trial judge, who is currently on leave.

Justice Yanzuh, one of the 12 judges who served during the two-month legal vacation between August and September, is adhering to the customary practice of taking leave after such periods.

This development has led to a substantial pause in the proceedings of the case.

During a court session on Wednesday, November 22, where the prosecution was scheduled to present its third witness, the proceedings took place in chambers, excluding Defense Counsel Tsatsu Tsikata.

Subsequently, the court adjourned.

The trial has been marked by controversy, primarily stemming

from the absence of the accused MP. His legal team asserts that he is in Canada undergoing medical examinations.

Despite the court's order to continue the trial in his absence, his lawyers are challenging this decision at the Supreme Court.

The case, involving five charges including Deceit of a Public Officer, forgery of passport or travel certificates, knowingly making a false statutory declaration, perjury, and false declaration for office, has been adjourned to February 7, 2024.

This substantial adjournment spans two months and 14 days.

It's worth noting that James Gyakye Quayson has pleaded not guilty to the charges and has been granted bail amid the legal proceedings.

**Source: The Independent Ghana / Phoebe Martekie Doku**



*James Gyakye Quayson, MP for Assin North*

# General News

## Education Ministry faces uncertainty on reopening flood-affected SHSs amid Akosombo Dam Spillage

The Ministry of Education is facing uncertainty regarding the reopening of senior high schools (SHSs) in flood-affected areas, three weeks after the schools initially resumed academic activities. The Akosombo and Kpong dams' spillage, in the aftermath of recent floods, has added complexity to the situation.

St Kizito Senior High School, amidst the challenges, continues to serve as a refuge for numerous residents displaced by the floods in the North Tongu district.

During a media briefing on Wednesday, November 22, the Minister of Education, Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum, conveyed the uncertainty surrounding the

resumption of regular operations in these affected schools. He indicated that the reopening might be contingent on the successful relocation of the flood victims.

"The school became a safe haven, so the community has taken over the school. The assessment we did was that by the end of the week, we will get the community to a better location or safer place or back to their homes, and then St Kizito can reopen. So we have postponed school reopening for St Kizito, which is a high school at Mepe," he explained.

Dr. Adu Twum highlighted the government's efforts to replace the machinery destroyed by the flood at Comboni Technical School. He mentioned that the school,

initially retooled with state-of-the-art equipment by the President, is undergoing assessment and replacement of damaged items.

"This was a school that was retooled by the President with state-of-the-art equipment. So the organization that provided the opportunity for us to do the

retooling has gone back; they've done the evaluation. They think they have to replace a number of items... They are ready to do that, and they are working on that so that we can get all the equipment," he added.

**Source: The Independent Ghana**  
/ Amanda Cartey



Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum, Education Minister

## 50 hospitals under Agenda 111 to be commissioned next year - Govt assures

The government has pledged to inaugurate the initial 50 Agenda 111 hospitals by the middle of the coming year, according to statements made by the Majority in Parliament.

President Akufo-Addo launched this initiative on August 17, 2021, with the aim of constructing 111 district hospitals nationwide to improve healthcare accessibility.

In a parliamentary debate on the approval of the 2024 budget held on Thursday, November 23, 2023, Patrick Boakye Yiadom, the Vice Chairman of the Health Committee of Parliament, asserted that these health facilities would operate 24 hours a day once commissioned.

"Mr. Speaker, by the middle of next year, I am not bragging; we will commission the first 50 of these Agenda 111 hospitals," he stated. "When the hospitals are completed, not only will they provide jobs for thousands of doctors, nurses, and others, but they will also open up businesses in the districts. The hospitals will run 24-hour services."

Agenda 111, a flagship programme of the Akufo-Addo government, seeks to enhance healthcare quality by constructing 111 health facilities nationwide.

Launched by President Nana Akufo-Addo on August 17, 2023, the project aims to provide every Ghanaian with access to quality healthcare, addressing both infrastructure and financial

barriers.

The initiative plans to construct new district hospitals, regional hospitals, and psychiatric hospitals, with each facility estimated to cost \$16.88 million.

However, the project, anticipated as the most significant investment in healthcare infrastructure in Ghana since independence,

has encountered challenges and criticisms from various stakeholders, particularly the minority in parliament.

Concerns include land litigation issues, unrealistic revenue projections, and environmental and social implications.

**Source: The Independent Ghana**  
/ Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo



File Photo



# General News

## Channel your grievances to the right authorities - Dr Bawumia to Police

Vice President Mahamudu Bawumia has advised personnel of the Ghana Police Service to channel their work-related grievances through the Command Structures of the Service, instead of resorting to the public.

He also entreated them to respect the rules and regulations of the Police Service in handling their grievances to ensure peace and harmony.

“Remember, you cannot find solution if you discuss your work-related grievances in a “chop bar” or at a friend’s party when the doors of the office of the chair of the Police Council are always open,” he said.

Dr Bawumia, who is the Chairperson of the Police Council, gave the admonition during the 52nd graduation of the Cadet Officer Course of the Ghana Police Service in Accra, on Wednesday.

The ceremony which took place at the Ghana Police Academy in Tesano, Accra, saw a total of 344 officers commissioned into the Senior Officer Corps of the Ghana Police Service by Vice President Bawumia after undergoing six-month intensive training.

The Vice President noted that the Police Service operated within a well-organised structures and effective communication channels supported by a robust command and control system, hence it was

incumbent on every police officer to comply with it.

He commended the Police Administration for the on-going change in thinking in the training regime of Cadet Officers at the Ghana Police Academy, with significant blend of theory and practical training.

That, he said, was tailored to meet the emerging dynamics of democratic policing, underscored by integrated working with stakeholders and strengthened by a more confident and oriented law enforcement leadership at the district and unit levels across the country.

“The feedback and performance outcomes from the field by products of the reform initiative have been inspiring,” Dr Bawumia noted.

He congratulated the beneficiaries for being part of the training reform and urged them to work hard to maintain and improve the standards set by their predecessors to enhance safety and security for socio-economic development of the communities.

“As the Chairman of the Police Council, I am committed to fulfilling my constitutional role alongside the Council team to ensure that the administrative and operational aspects of the Service benefit both officers and citizens.

“In law enforcement, leadership marked by discipline, professionalism, and integrity is crucial for success and credibility Bawumia added.

Fostering a culture based on these principles is not just a preference for the Ghana Police; it is a necessity to uphold public trust and respect, he observed.

He assured of the Government’s commitment to resourcing the Police Service to enable it to continue to play its constitutional role of maintaining law and order for all citizens.

“Certainly, the centrality of law enforcement as pivotal driver for politico-socio-economic development and progress in contemporary times cannot be over-emphasized,” he said.

He highlighted some infrastructure the Government would undertake for the Police Academy including lecture rooms and ultra-modern auditorium and residential accommodation

nearing completion.

That, he said, would improve teaching and learning and adequately accommodate the increasing number of officers admitted to the Academy.

The Government, he said, would continue to support the decentralization efforts of the Formed Police Unit (FPU) of the Police Service nationwide.

So far, he said, more than 122 bases had been established across the country in addition to the provision of motorbikes and related equipment of law enforcement, while more mobilisation of resources is on-going to ensure those FPU bases are self-sustaining.

That, he said, was necessary to capacitate them to deliver the expected formed responses and address emerging violent crimes as may be required of them in the locations they operate.

**Source: GNA**



*Dr Mahamudu Bawumia, Vice President, Ghana and the Police Service*

## ECG initiates electronic bill payments in Volta

The Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) is actively participating in a nationwide initiative to digitize customer consumption data and ensure timely payment of bills in the Volta region.

This comprehensive exercise, running from November 6 to December 11, 2023, encompasses all eleven districts in the Volta and Oti Regions.

The General Manager of ECG

Volta Region, Ms. Christina Jatoo-Kaleo, affirmed that the transition from manual meter readings to a digitized process aims to instill confidence in customers.

During this exercise, ECG officials will visit customer premises to capture consumption data, verify meter readings, inspect meter integrity, and engage customers in arrears to settle their bills.

Ms. Jatoo-Kaleo explained the streamlined process, involving

ECG officials equipped with POS devices to capture and verify meter readings, take images of readings and meters, and transmit the data instantly for billing.

Additionally, customers can request an instant bill, printed on-site by ECG officials using the POS device.

As part of this initiative, ECG staff are well-prepared to train customers on reading their meters, fostering transparency between

the company and its customers. Ms. Jatoo-Kaleo emphasized that customers should actively participate in this educational aspect of the exercise.

The General Manager highlighted the identification features of ECG officials, such as ID cards and reflector vests, and encouraged customers to verify staff through the ECG Power App or shortcode \*226#.

In cases where customers are not

*Continued on page 8*



# General News

## ECG initiates electronic bill payments in Volta

*Continued from page 7*

present during visits, ECG teams will leave contact information for follow-up.

This digitized system aligns with the company's transformative projects, aiming to enhance operational efficiency, offer customer convenience, and minimize system losses.

Ms. Jatoe-Kaleo urged customers to refrain from illegal connections and

seize the opportunity presented by the ongoing "Operation Fix The Bill and Pay The Bill" initiative.

This exercise encourages customers to rectify anomalies and settle bills through the ECG Power App or shortcode \*226#, contributing to sustaining the electricity supply chain.

**Source: The Independent Ghana / Phoebe Martekie Doku**



ECG Signage

## Govt accused of bypassing Parliament to ban imports of rice, yemuadie, others

The government is allegedly actively pursuing the implementation of regulations aimed at restricting the importation of key products, according to the Minority.

The Minority claims that the government is proceeding with the ban without the formation of a committee, as proposed by them, to assess the proposed move.

The list of items facing these restrictions includes rice, fruit juices, yemuadie, fish, cement, and 17 other products.

The Minority successfully thwarted attempts to pass the regulation last Monday, insisting on additional consultations with the Subsidiary Legislation Committee.

Trade Minister KT Hammond

explained the regulation's purpose and significance to the government, but the NDC side sought further discussions before approval.

A full list of 22 items considered for import restrictions includes rice, guts, bladders, stomachs of animals, poultry, animals, and vegetables, oil, margarine, fruit juices, soft drinks, mineral water, noodles, pasta, ceramic tiles, corrugated paper, paperboard, mosquito coils, insecticides, soaps, detergents, motors, cars, iron, steel, polymers, sugar, clothing, apparel, biscuits, and canned tomatoes.

Trade Minister K.T. Hammond announced the government's intention to impose a ban on certain strategic products on

November 21 in Parliament.

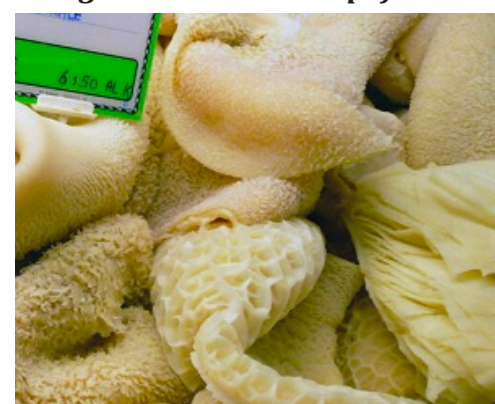
According to the minister, this initiative is part of a broader strategy to boost local production. Import restrictions on specific products serve as a policy tool to encourage domestic industries, reduce reliance on foreign goods, and stimulate economic growth.

Speaking during a press briefing in



Parliament, Minister of Trade and Industry K.T. Hammond stated, "Stomach of animals, bladder and chunk of intestines (yemuadie), the country had to put in an amount of about \$164 million towards the importation of these items. We are taking steps to ensure that, in terms of rice, there's no poverty of rice in the country."

**Source: The Independent Ghana / Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo**



Rice and Tripe meat

## Nuclear Power remains key to Ghana's industrialisation agenda - NPG

Executive Director, Nuclear Power Ghana (NPG), Dr Stephen Yamoah, has restated the potential of nuclear power in boosting Ghana's industrialisation agenda.

He said this in Accra, at the opening of a three-day media workshop organised by NPG in collaboration with the Ghana News Agency (GNA) and Ghana Journalists Association (GJA).

Dr Yamoah said though nuclear power was noted to ensure sustainable supply of energy for industrialisation, many people had limited knowledge on it and tasked the media to bridge the information gap.

He said how media professionals framed the narrative would significantly impact people's perception and understanding of nuclear power.

"Your role is instrumental in facilitating an open dialogue about nuclear energy, its potential benefits to secure our energy needs and employment for our youth," Dr Yamoah said.

The training, an annual event, was organised for selected journalists in Accra.

This year's edition is on the theme: "Shaping the Perception of Nuclear Power Technology in Ghana; the

Media Factor".

Dr Yamoah emphasised that the successful integration of nuclear power into Ghana's energy mix depended not only on technological advancement, but also on the shaping of public perception.

He said the media must, therefore, disseminate accurate and comprehensive information on nuclear power.

*Continued on page 9*





# General News

## ***Nuclear Power remains key to Ghana's industrialisation agenda - NPG***

*Continued on page 8*

"Nuclear information must be presented consciously and continually after a well-researched and unbiased information for public consumption," he said.

Dr Yamoah added that, the discussion on nuclear power should emphasise its immense transformational socio-economic benefits, and must as well address concerns related to safety, waste management, security and safeguards.

Mr Albert Kofi Owusu, General Manager of the Ghana News Agency, said it was necessary for

Journalists to take keen interest in specialised reporting.

"Good, reliable Journalism is what consumers want and would go for, so journalists must step up their game," he said.

He added that: "We need to develop insights into subjects that will distinguish our reporting from what untrained journalists put out in social media, that often leads to misinformation."

Mr Owusu said having full grasp and detailed information on nuclear power technology would

enable journalists to render effective reportage to feed the public.

He said areas the media could play critical role regarding nuclear power, included development, public perception, economic viability, long-term sustainability, environmental impact and how nuclear energy could combat climate change.

Professor Benjamin J. B. Nyarko, Board Chairman, NPG, and a former Director-General, Ghana Atomic Energy Commission,

also emphasised the role of the media in shaping the attitude and perception of the public.

He said the media needed to allay the fears of people while ensuring public safety using case studies.

Prof Nyarko said having a better understanding of the nuclear power technology would guarantee smooth implementation of Ghana's nuclear energy project to the benefit of all Ghanaians.

**Source: GNA**



*File Photo*



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# Business

## Delayed debt restructuring may hinder Ghana's economic revival – PwC

Pricewaterhouse Coopers Ghana (PwC) has underscored the critical importance of swiftly concluding negotiations with external creditors and debt holders to safeguard Ghana's economic recovery.

The auditing and tax firm outlined its concerns in the 2024 Budget Digest, titled "Pursuing Growth and Development within a Stable Macroeconomic Environment."

Expressing apprehension, PwC highlighted the potential consequences of prolonged negotiations, cautioning that this could disturb the investor community, create instability in financial markets, and potentially result in further downgrades of Ghana's bond ratings by international rating agencies, pushing them into the undesirable territory of junk credit.

Despite acknowledging positive economic indicators, such as a noteworthy decrease in headline inflation and currency stability, PwC underscored the urgency of addressing challenges arising from delayed debt negotiations.

The firm did acknowledge positive developments in the public debt position, citing successful debt treatment exercises that led to a reduction in the public debt-to-GDP ratio from 73.1% in late 2022 to 66.4% in September 2023.

These improvements were attributed to increased economic activities, enhanced current account positions, and financial support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

However, the report tempered optimism with a cautious tone, drawing attention to less favorable microeconomic indicators.

PwC expressed reservations

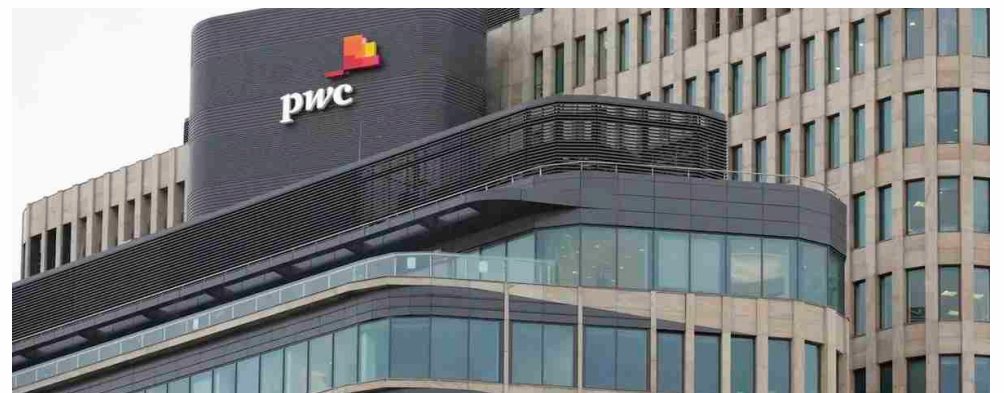
about reported after-tax profits in the banking industry, prompting questions about associated costs. Notably, the report highlighted a significant deceleration in the annual growth rate of private sector credit, indicating a contraction of 21% in real terms. Of particular concern was the rise in the non-performing loans (NPL) ratio from 14% in August 2022 to 20% in August 2023.

This increase was cited as evidence of the poor performance of the real sector, signaling

heightened risk aversion among banks towards various sectors of the economy.

In conclusion, PwC's comprehensive analysis urged stakeholders and policymakers to address these nuanced economic challenges promptly, emphasising the critical need for swift resolution in debt negotiations to safeguard Ghana's economic recovery and overall financial stability.

**Source: The Independent Ghana / Phoebe Martekie Doku**



PwC Building

## Current IMF programme most costly in recent years - Economist

An economist and lecturer at the University of Ghana Business School, Dr. Patrick Assuming, says the current International Monetary Fund (IMF) Programme is the costliest of the 16 other programmes pursued by the government.

He said certain government decisions influenced by the IMF programme, notably the Domestic Debt Exchange (DDEP), were drastic and had dire economic consequences for businesses and households.

He made the remarks during the Graphic Business/Stanbic Bank Meeting on Fiscal Discipline and Breaking the Political Business Cycle in 2024.

He observed that the current IMF programme tried to solve the country's public financial challenges, but it fails to address the fundamental issues afflicting the country, notably the country's reliance on import and lack of economic resilience.

"Even the measures we had to undertake for the IMF

programme to come into being are drastic. This is the costliest IMF programme for ordinary Ghanaians because of its nature and the sacrifices the citizens had to undertake. Ordinary Ghanaians and businesses have really been impacted, so we see a big part is the Domestic Debts Exchange (DDEP) and the challenges and problems impacted businesses in the financial sector as well as senior citizens," he said.

Experts say Ghana's economic woes resurface after the electioneering year, as elections are usually characterised by budget excesses, especially overspending and spending on unplanned expenditures by the regime in an attempt to appease the voters.

Dr. Assuming said the 2024 general election could stall the economic recovery efforts of the country.

He advised the citizens and Parliament to develop a keen interest in the budget by scrutinising the expenditures

to monitor a possible budget overspending.

Mr. Boahene Asamoah, Editor, Graphic Business, questioned the government's capacity to fulfil its commitment to the 2024 budget in view of less success in securing an external debt restructuring.

He said the government's decision to increase base pay by 23 percent could exacerbate fiscal discipline efforts due to the size of the wage bill.

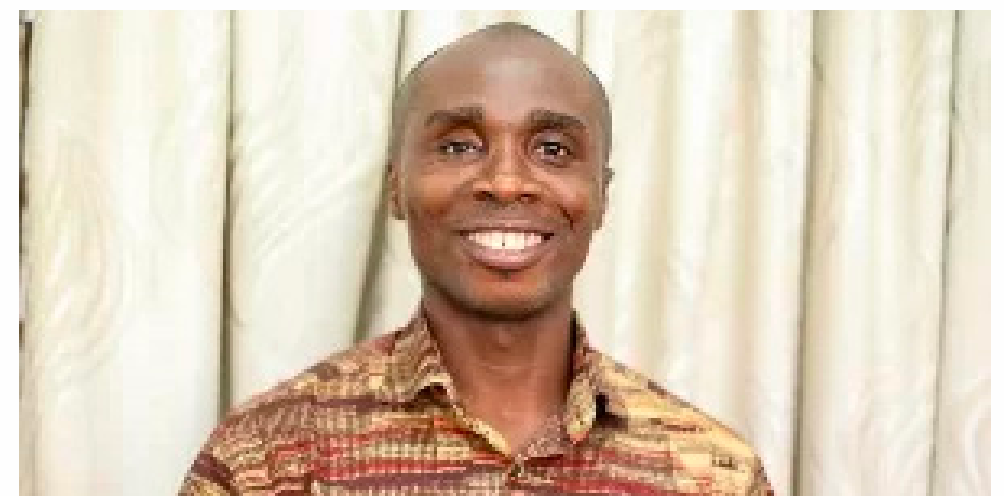
He added that the government did not have the leverage to overspend in the 2024 elections due to the unsuccessful attempts

to secure external debt relief.

Mr. Bozumbil Michael, the Chief Executive Officer for Petrosol, urged businesses to place a lower premium on the budget due to the government's failure to address the industry's key challenges with taxes and other financial obligations.

The event brought stakeholders in the financial sector, representatives of government agencies, and the media together to share insights on how to ensure fiscal discipline in the election year.

**Source: GNA**



Dr. Patrick Assuming, Economist & Lecturer, UG Business School

# International

## Ethiopia drought: Fifty die of hunger in Tigray and Amhara amid aid freeze

**M**ore than 50 people have died in Ethiopia's northern Tigray and Amhara regions amid drought and an aid freeze, local officials have told the BBC.

The Horn of Africa has had five failed rainy seasons since 2019, according to the UN.

The US and UN suspended aid earlier this year after allegations of theft, worsening the humanitarian crisis.

Tigray is recovering from a two-year civil war which ended a year ago, while a conflict has erupted in Amhara.

About 46 people died in the town of Yechila in Tigray, while six died in the neighbouring Amhara region of Wag Hemra, because of food shortages, the officials said.

Over 4,000 cattle have died because of severe drought.

As northern Ethiopia battles drought, the country's southern and eastern regions have been deluged by flash floods.

In a statement on X, formerly known as Twitter, the UN said that more than 370,000 people had fled

their homes because of the floods.

At least 43 people have been killed by the flooding and landslides in the eastern Somali region.

During the war in Tigray, the region was cut off from humanitarian aid, leading to an unknown number of deaths. But it has been estimated that about 500,000 people may have died as a result of war, lack of medical supplies and hunger amid what were described as "famine-like conditions".

The conflict ended after the Ethiopian government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) signed a peace deal brokered by the African Union (AU).

After the conflict ended, there was a steady flow of aid until June, when the US and UN paused humanitarian assistance, saying it had been systematically stolen by corrupt officials.

The US says widespread food deliveries will be resumed in December after significant reforms had been made to ensure that the supplies reached those who needed it most.

Across East Africa, heavy rains

and flash flooding have killed 130 people in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia in recent weeks, according to the Associated Press.

The UN has described them as a "once-in-a-century event".

In a statement, Fati N'Zi-Hassane, Oxfam in Africa Director said, the region was "going from one disaster to the next as climatic shocks become more frequent and intense".

Somalia has been especially hit hard by the floods, after suffering from catastrophic droughts in recent years. The worst hit town is Beledweyne, where the Shabelle River burst its banks.

The El Nino phenomenon has

greatly affected East Africa. It is caused by warming in the Pacific Ocean and is linked to flooding, cyclones, drought and wildfires.

Not all droughts or floods are due to climate change, but excess heat in the atmosphere is drawing more moisture out of the earth and making droughts worse, while a warming atmosphere caused by climate change makes extreme rainfall more likely.

The world has already warmed by about 1.2C since the industrial era began and temperatures will keep rising unless governments around the world make steep cuts to emissions.

**Source: BBC**



File Photo

## Israel and Hamas to start four-day truce on Friday - Qatar mediators

**I**srael and Palestinian Islamist group Hamas will start a four-day truce on Friday morning with a first group of 13 Israeli women and child hostages released later that day, mediators in Qatar said.

The agreement - the first in a brutal, near seven-week-old war - would begin at 7 a.m. local time (0500 GMT) and involve a comprehensive ceasefire in north and south Gaza, Qatar's foreign ministry said.

Aid would start flowing into Gaza, the first hostages would be freed at 4 p.m. and it was expected Palestinians would be released from Israeli jails, ministry spokesperson Majed Al-Ansari told reporters in the Qatari capital Doha.

"We all hope that this truce will lead to a chance to start a wider work to

achieve a permanent truce," Ansari added.

Hamas - who had been expected to declare a truce with Israel a day earlier on Thursday only for negotiations to drag on - confirmed on its Telegram channel that all hostilities from its forces would cease.

Israel had received an initial list of hostages to be freed from the Gaza Strip and was in touch with families, the Israeli prime minister's office said in a statement that stopped short of confirming a truce had been agreed.

Palestinians gather as others search for casualties at the site of an Israeli strike on a house in Rafah, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas, in the southern Gaza Strip November 23.

Israel launched its devastating war in Gaza after gunmen from Hamas burst across the border fence, killing 1,200 people and seizing about 240 hostages on Oct. 7, according to Israeli tallies.

Since then, more than 14,000 Gazans have been killed by Israeli bombardment, around 40% of them children, according to health authorities in the Hamas-ruled territory.

Israel has said the truce could last beyond the initial four days as long as the militants free at least 10 hostages per day. A Palestinian source has said a second wave of releases could see as many as 100 hostages go free by the end of November.

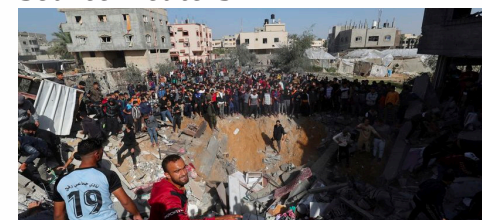
Both sides have said they will go back to fighting once the truce is over.

Qatar said an operations room in Doha would monitor the truce and the release of hostages, and had direct lines of communication with Israel, the Hamas political office in Doha and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

"The important thing is that we maintain a very clear line of communication with everybody through the operations room," Qatar's Ansari said.

Qatar hopes to negotiate a subsequent agreement to release additional hostages from Gaza by the fourth day of the truce, he added.

**Source: Reuters**



File Photo

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