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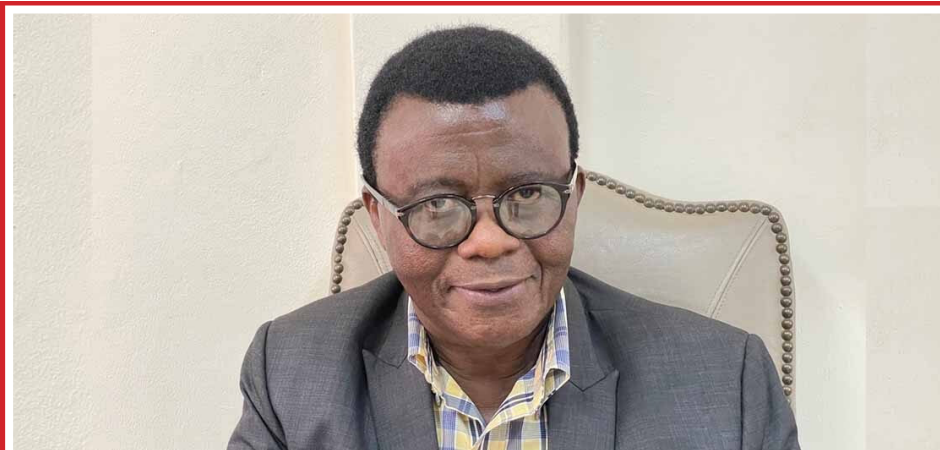


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General News

GHC1.2 million worth of of palm oil gallons ravaged by fire at Akyem New Tafo

A devastating fire has swept through the YWCA-31st December Palm Oil production factory in Akyem New Tafo, Ghana, causing extensive damage and economic turmoil.

The inferno, lasting nearly five hours before being extinguished by Ghana National Fire Service personnel, razed the entire structure to the ground.

The blaze consumed approximately 3000 gallons of palm oil, valued at over 1.2 million cedis, along with vital production machinery and tons of related products.

This catastrophe has disrupted the livelihoods of over 100 artisanal female palm producers and labourers, leaving them in dire straits.

Victims like Mary Mensah and Bashabirafatu, who relied on the factory for their families' support, shared heartbreaking stories of loss and uncertainty about their future.

"My son is in university, this is what I do to take care of him. I was at the funeral when they called me that fire has burnt everything here. I have everything so government should help us we don't have farms, this is what we do to survive,"

Mary Mensah, a palm oil producer, lamented while weeping.

"This is what I do to take care of my three children in Senior High School. I am a widow so I have told my children they have to stop school because I have lost all my investments. I don't know where I am going to get money to help them so we are pleading to government to urgently help us".

Lydia Annor Blay, who was in the midst of supplying international markets, recounted the devastation of losing everything in the fire.

"Since the incident happened I have been sick because I lost everything, all my investments have been lost to the fire. I had made the production of about 50 jerricans of a gallon of palm oil for supply to USA all have been burnt. We have widows, and orphans all working here. We went for loans, all have been lost. We appealed to President Akufo-Addo to help us," Lydia Annor Blay recounted her losses.

Gloria Obeng Peprah, a pregnant laborer, emphasized the urgent need for government assistance to help those affected survive this crisis.

"I am a pregnant woman but I

come here to work, at least I get between GHS50 and sometimes GHS100 a day here. Dozens of laborers come here to work and they all get something to survive on so we are appealing to the government to help".

The destruction of the factory not only impacts immediate economic challenges but also threatens the broader palm oil value chain, affecting families across the region.

Established in the 1990s, the YWCA-31st December Palm Oil Production factory served not only the domestic market but also supplied products to Nigeria, Togo, Benin, Ivory Coast and with individual customers in Europe.

Its destruction not only presents immediate economic challenges but also threatens to disrupt the broader palm oil value chain, affecting hundreds of families reliant on this source of income.

In response to the crisis, the Municipal Chief Executive for Abuakwa North, Alhaji Umar Bodinga, who visited the scene with his entourage appealed to the Gratis Foundation and other corporate organizations and agencies to aid in rebuilding the factory to restore livelihoods for

the affected individuals.

"Unfortunately the assembly does not have money to rebuild the facility and provide the machinery. We can try and put up the structure but we can't afford the machinery so we will write to the various agencies to help us rebuild the factory urgently else the implications are going to be dire."

In response, local authorities, including the Municipal Chief Executive for Abuakwa North, are appealing to organizations and agencies for support in rebuilding the factory and restoring livelihoods.

The National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) has conducted assessments, but substantial relief support remains uncertain, underscoring the critical need for government intervention to aid in reconstruction and help affected families recover.

Source: Independent Ghana / Sebastian Akaho-Tay



File Photo

Henry Quartey warns Immigration officers - No escorting friends in uniforms at KIA or face dismissal

Interior Minister Henry Quartey issued a stern warning to immigration officials stationed at Kotoka International Airport (KIA) against the practice of escorting or receiving friends at the airport.

He emphasised that any Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) officer found to be violating this directive would face immediate dismissal.

During his visit to the GIS headquarters in Accra on Thursday, April 4, Mr. Quartey expressed his

disappointment with the conduct observed among some officers.

He highlighted instances where officers in uniform were seen assisting friends through immigration and security checkpoints, a practice he deemed unacceptable.

"Men and women wear uniforms only to go and see off their friends at the Airport. They pull their bags right from the car and walk through checking, immigration, and even security points all the

way.

"You see them lined up waiting for their friends, they take their bags. I have told the CG to send a message to them that it has to stop with immediate effect, and I mean immediate effect.

"We will send plain clothes to go there. If an immigration officer is found around the arrival hall or departure hall, engaging passengers, please consider that you will be at home for a long time, and that will be coming

from me, not the CG. So, tell them." he said during his visit to the headquarters.

Source: Independent Ghana: Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo



Henry Quartey, Interior Minister



General News

Gov't borrowed GH¢19.90 billion through treasury bills in March 2024

Government in March 2024 borrowed GH¢19.90 billion through treasury bills, marking a 17% decrease from February's borrowing.

A portion of these funds, GH¢14.47 billion, was allocated to refinancing maturing debts.

One notable trend was the continual decline in yields.

The 91-day, 182-day, and 364-day yields closed at 26% (128 basis points lower), 28.5% (-125 basis points), and 29.1% (-120 basis points) respectively, indicating a sustained downward trajectory.

Analysts anticipate a sluggish

reduction in yields for April due to slower disinflation and a recent Cash Reserve Ratio increase for banks with loan-deposit ratios below 55%.

Investor demand for T-bills fell below the treasury's target last week, prompting the government to accept all bids, resulting in a raised amount of GH¢2.35 billion against a GH¢4.16 billion target.

This decision impacted target and maturity coverage ratios, reflecting levels last observed in April 2022.

Despite these shifts, yields continued their descent with a 25 basis points drop across all tenors.

The 91-day and 182-day yields settled at 25.75% and 28.25% respectively, while the 364-day closed at 28.85%.

Looking ahead, the government

plans to raise GH¢2.81 billion this week through 91 to 364-day bills to fulfill GH¢2.58 billion in refinancing obligations.

Source: Independent Ghana / Sebastian Akaho-Tay/



Ghana Cedis Notes

We're in trouble if rich folks are classified as needy – Domelevo on scholarship bonanza

Former Auditor-General, Dominic Yao Domelevo, has raised serious concerns about the mismanagement of scholarships in Ghana.

He criticized the system for labeling financially well-off individuals as needy, thus allowing them to benefit from scholarships intended for economically disadvantaged students.

Domelevo highlighted the troubling trend of people exploiting scholarships meant for gifted but underprivileged students.

He expressed surprise at the Scholarship Secretariat's inaction despite these abuses being brought to light through audits.

"So I thought maybe they didn't know, so at least since the audit has revealed some of these things, it was very easy to say look, let's see what is expected of us, the law says this."

During an interview on JoyNews' Newsfile, Domelevo pointed out that even though audits revealed these issues, no corrective measures have been taken.

He emphasized the danger of allowing affluent individuals to classify themselves as needy, undermining the purpose of scholarship funds.

"If we have a society in which the highest-paid class can classify themselves as needy, then we are in trouble."

One of Domelevo's examples involved a debate where someone argued that a minister earning a substantial monthly salary should qualify as needy for a scholarship.

"So if you are taking between GH¢25,000 to GH¢30,000 a month and you are needy and so it is you who is supposed to benefit from this fund, then I find it unfortunate," the former Auditor-General stressed.

Domelevo criticized such notions, highlighting that many teachers and public servants earn significantly less.

His concerns were echoed by the recent publication 'Scholarship Bonanza,' which exposed beneficiaries close to government officials, including the children of

prominent figures.

The public outcry has urged the Scholarship Secretariat to prioritise transparency, but

the Registrar maintains that no wrongdoing has occurred.

Source: Independent Ghana / Sebastian Akaho-Tay/



Dominic Yao Domelevo, Former Auditor-General



General News

Chief Justice reopens Court of Appeal across the nation after almost 4 years of closure

Chief Justice, Justice Gertrude Sackey Torkornoo, has reopened the Court of Appeal in other parts of the country.

Court of Appeal in Ghana temporarily shut down as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which prompted numerous safety measures and operational adjustments to safeguard public health.

After four years of closure, the Chief Justice said administrative procedures had been put in place to ensure that the reopened courts commenced operations during the latter part of this month.

"A lot of consultation has gone into all these decisions. We have spoken with Parliament, the Bar and other stakeholders to arrive at this," she announced during an interaction with the Judicial Press Corps at the Law Court Complex in Accra which took place on Thursday, April 4,

2024.

This closure was implemented as part of a larger strategy to minimize virus transmission and ensure the well-being of both court personnel and citizens.

Previously, apart from Accra, the Court of Appeal used to sit in Kumasi, Tamale, Ho, Koforidua and Cape Coast to deliver justice pertaining to other parts of the country, but such arrangements were put on hold when the COVID-19 pandemic struck.

With the reopening, apart from Accra, the Court of Appeal will sit in Kumasi in the Ashanti Region, Koforidua in the Eastern Region and Sekondi in the Western Region.

In addition, she explained that the reopening of the Court of Appeal was part of continuous efforts by the judiciary to bring justice closer to people.

"Justice is a product of the people of Ghana. Law is made by the people of Ghana; it is only administered by the judiciary, and therefore, we must take all steps to bring justice closer to people," she added.

The Chief Justice announced that the Court of Appeal in Kumasi will cater to the legal needs of the Ashanti, Bono, Bono East, Ahafo, and Western North regions.

Additionally, virtual court sessions will be conducted for the six northern regions.

"The Court of Appeal for the northern regions will be reopened by a satellite registry in Tamale, and cases will be heard virtually from Kumasi," she said.

Source: Independent Ghana / Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo



Justice Gertrude Sackey, Chief Justice, Ghana

CPP will make a surprising victory in the 2024 elections – Communications Director

The Convention People's Party (CPP) is brimming with confidence as it eyes an unexpected triumph in the upcoming December elections.

Despite recent internal turmoil making headlines, Sylvester Soprano, the party's Director of Communications, reassures that the CPP is primed for this year's electoral battle.

During an interview on Citi FM's Eyewitness News with Selorm Adonoo, Soprano highlighted the party's preparedness, attributing it to public discontent with corruption under both the current President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, and the New Patriotic Party (NPP), as well as the previous president, John Mahama, and the National Democratic Congress (NDC).

Soprano affirmed, "The state of the CPP couldn't be better than it is right now. We're poised to contest

the general elections in December and we believe that we will make a surprising victory."

He pointed to widespread dissatisfaction with bribery and

corruption, stating, "The people of Ghana are fed up with the open bribery and corruption being practiced by President Akufo-Addo's NPP and [former] President John Mahama's NDC. The CPP,

we are in good shape and we are poised for a surprising victory in December."

Source: Independent Ghana / Sebastian Akaho-Tay





General News

Kumasi Market women donate GHC 220k to Otumfuo's Heal KATH

Market women in Kumasi, in the Ashanti Region, have demonstrated remarkable generosity by collectively donating GH¢220,000 to support Otumfuo's Heal Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (KATH) initiative.

The contribution was a collaborative effort from various markets within the region. Kejetia, Central, and Abinkyi markets contributed GH¢100,000, while Bantama, Race Course, and Suame markets donated GH¢120,000.

In a significant display of solidarity, Nana Yaa Fowaa, the Market Queen of Kejetia, and Nana Kyeiwaa, the Market Queen of Bantama, led the women in presenting a symbolic cheque to Otumfuo Osei Tutu II

at the Manhyia Palace on April 4, 2024.

The market women expressed their commitment to supporting initiatives aimed at enhancing healthcare services within their community.

Their gesture is intended to complement efforts to improve healthcare infrastructure and access to quality medical care at institutions like KATH.

The Heal KTAH initiative, spearheaded by Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, seeks to raise \$10 million for the renovation of the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital.

This fundraising initiative was officially launched on Sunday,

October 15, 2023, during the Akwasidae festival.

The mobilization of funds aims to address the pressing need for infrastructural improvements at Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital,

Ghana's second-largest teaching hospital, which serves as a referral center for 12 out of the 16 regions in Ghana.

Source: Independent Ghana / Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo



Kumasi Market Women Representatives

Prof. Agyeman-Duah advocates for mandatory mental health assessments for aspiring high-ranking officials in Ghana

Former senior advisor at the United Nations (U.N) specializing in governance, Professor Baffour Agyeman-Duah has called for mandatory mental health assessments for prospective high-ranking officials in Ghana.

He emphasized the crucial need to prioritize the mental well-being of potential officeholders, citing the significant impact their decisions can have on the nation.

Referring to international norms, Prof. Agyeman-Duah urged Ghana to implement similar measures where mental health evaluations become a prerequisite for individuals seeking public office.

He expressed concerns about whether such assessments have ever been conducted in Ghana for aspirants to public positions, highlighting the importance of scrutiny to avert potential risks to society.

In an interview on Asaase Radio, Prof. Agyeman-Duah voiced his reservations regarding the ambitious campaign promises made by candidates vying for

higher office ahead of the 2024 elections.

He specifically mentioned a proposal by Presidential hopeful Nana Kwame Bediako, also known as Cheddar, who pledged to dredge the sea to Kumasi.

Questioning the feasibility and credibility of such grand promises, Prof. Agyeman-Duah cautioned

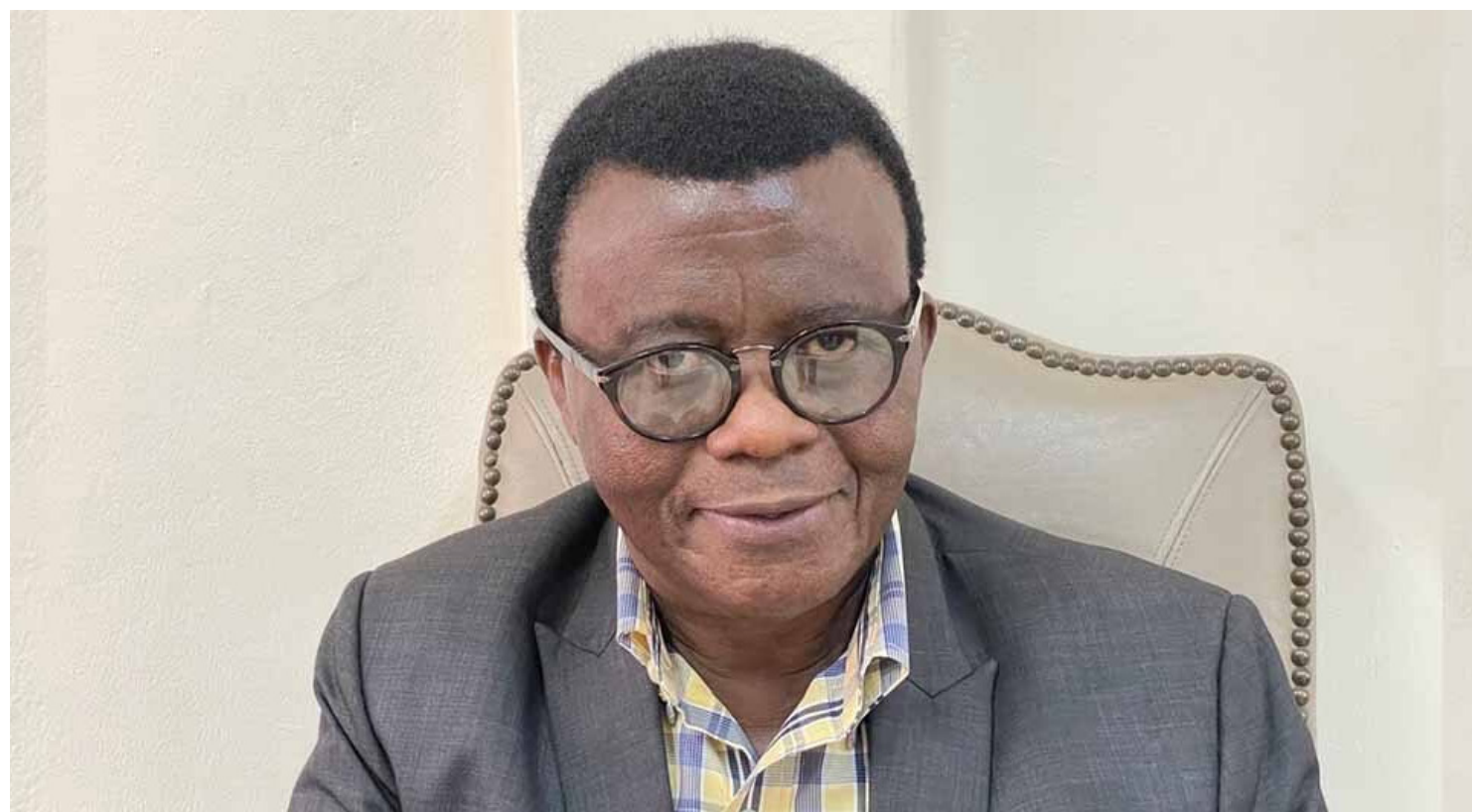
against the potential consequences of unrealistic commitments and stressed the necessity for thorough background assessments of individuals aspiring to leadership roles in the country.

"As you know, on the campaign trail, people are making all kinds of promises, and somebody is even suggesting dredging the sea to somewhere up north. You wonder

what their background or integrity is," he remarked.

Cheddar's proposal aims to dredge the sea to Kumasi, believing it will facilitate ship docking in the city upon completion, thus boosting import and export activities in the Ashanti region.

Source: Independent Ghana / Sebastian Akaho-Tay



Professor Baffour Agyemang-Duah, Former Senior Advisor, UN



General News

Be patient; all contractual agreements will be left unfulfilled - Atta Akyea on power cut to neighbouring countries

Chairman of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Mines and Energy, Samuel Atta Akyea, has assured that the government will fulfil all of its contractual agreements with neighbouring countries to which Ghana exports power.

This comes after President Akufo-Addo issued a directive to halt the export of electricity to neighbouring countries in response to the ongoing intermittent power outages popularly known as 'dumsor'.

While some stakeholders such as Independent Power Generators Ghana (IPGG) have lauded the move by the government, businesses in the affected countries cry over the

effect of the power outages.

In response to this, the Parliamentary Select Committee Chairman in a media engagement after a stakeholders meeting in the power sector on April 6, 2024 noted that "all contractual obligations will be met very soon and then we don't have problems".

According to him, the government cannot afford a complete seizure of power export as that would amount to a breach of contract.

Mr Akyea implored Cote D'Ivoire, Togo among other countries receiving power from Ghana to be patient as what is happening currently "is temporary" while highlighting the need for the

government to resolve the current domestic power crisis.

"What I understand is when your house is on fire try and put off the fire before going to help your

neighbour. I think there is logic in that" he said.

Source: Independent Ghana / Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo



Samuel Atta Akyea, Chairman, Parliamentary Select Committee on Mines and Energy

Majority leader Afenyo-Markin elected 3rd Deputy Speaker of ECOWAS parliament

Ghana's Majority Leader in Parliament, Member of Parliament for Effutu constituency, Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin, has been appointed as the 3rd Deputy Speaker of the ECOWAS Parliament, marking a significant milestone in his parliamentary career.

Afenyo-Markin's extensive experience in both national and ECOWAS parliamentary affairs makes him well-suited for this prestigious position.

The inauguration of the 6th ECOWAS Parliament took place on April 4, 2024, with Guinea's reinstatement into the community serving as a positive sign of regional stability following its recent political turmoil.

However, the absence of Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso at the ceremony highlighted a gap in the unity of the ECOWAS community.

The Republic of Togo, responsible for nominating the Speaker for the 6th Parliament, is yet to

announce its candidates. As a result, Sidie Mohamed Tunis has been temporarily appointed as the ceremonial Speaker, especially since Togo's parliamentary elections have been postponed.

The lineup of Deputy Speakers includes Barau Jibrin from Nigeria, Adjaratou Coulibaly from Ivory Coast, and Billay G. Tunkara from the Gambia, holding the 1st, 2nd, and 4th positions respectively.

The selection of Deputy Speakers was marked by intense lobbying, with Cabo Verde's bid being unsuccessful due to its failure to fulfill financial commitments to the ECOWAS, echoing challenges faced during the 5th ECOWAS Parliament.

This situation has sparked concerns among member states regarding financial participation and its potential impact on

governance.

As the newly elected representatives of the 6th ECOWAS Parliament assume their roles, they face the crucial task of addressing regional issues and advancing the collective objectives of member nations, amidst a backdrop of complex political and economic dynamics across the region.

Source: The Independent Ghana



Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin, Majority Leader



General News

EC set to hold emergency IPAC meeting on April 9

The Electoral Commission (EC) has set an emergency Inter-Party Advisory Committee (IPAC) gathering for Tuesday, April 9, in response to critical issues requiring attention from political entities.

This move comes after the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the primary opposition party, urged the EC to hold discussions with political stakeholders.

The NDC specifically raised concerns about missing laptops and the return of certain outstanding Biometric Verification Devices (BVDs).

In an invitation letter to

participating parties, the EC outlined an agenda covering various vital topics.

These include the upcoming voter registration exercise, the Ejisu by-elections, updates on biometric equipment, and any other pertinent matters.

Mustapha Gbande, the NDC's deputy general secretary, expressed appreciation for the EC's decision to heed their request, calling it a goodwill gesture.

He stressed the need to address concerns about potential machine tampering and advocated for adopting prescribed standards and tools to ensure integrity.

Gbande emphasized transparency and reconciliation's significance in safeguarding electoral process credibility, assuring stakeholders that measures would be taken to prevent compromises.

"I bring to you warm greetings

from the Electoral Commission and trust this letter finds you well. This letter comes to invite you to an IPAC meeting on Tuesday 9th April 2024," the statement by EC.

Source: Independent Ghana / Sebastian Akaho-Tay/



Jean Adukwei Mensa, Electoral Commission Chairperson

The value is the same – NPP responds to Alan, Abu Sakara merger

New Patriotic Party (NPP) has reacted to the alleged threats of the merger of the Movement for Change (M4C) and the National Interest Movement (NIM) will have little to no impact on the electoral prospects in the December 2024 elections.

This is in response to a joint statement on April 4 by M4C's Alan Kyerematen and NIM's announcing the formation of the Alliance for Revolutionary Change (ARC) following successful negotiations with various political factions.

Also remarks from political scientist Dr. Asah-Asante of the University of Ghana, who mentioned during a media engagement the likelihood of the Alan Kyeremanten's Movement of Change and Dr. Abu Sakara Foster, of NIM coalition having the tendency to push the 2024 elections into a run-off.

During a media appearance on April 5, 2024, NPP's Deputy General Secretary, Haruna Mohammed, mentioned that each party would have garnered votes independently, rendering the

alliance inconsequential.

He said, "Come to think about it, these parties that are coming together would have contested the elections anyway. They would have contested in their own strength and they would have garnered the same votes as they were going to get.

"It is just like if you have 2+2 that is 6, if you decide to separate all the two to stand alone, it doesn't change the numbers. If they come together, it is going to still give them the numbers that they would have gotten in the larger political discourse in terms of the contest."

The ARC aims to challenge the traditional dominance of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the NPP.

However, Haruna emphasised that while the NPP wasn't overly concerned about the potential impact of this alliance on their electoral prospects, they remained committed to rallying these supporters for their cause.

Their goal is to secure political

power in the upcoming 2024 elections.

"Notwithstanding that, we are not going to leave any stone unturned in terms of having engagement and making sure that we are able to get some of the smaller political parties to our side," he said.

During the same program, Mustapha Gbande, Deputy General Secretary of the NDC, expressed his view that the new alliance serves to enhance and strengthen the country's democracy.

Source: Independent Ghana / Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo



Alan Kyeremanten, Leader of Movement for Change on the left, Abu Sakara, Leader of National Interest Movement



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Business

Ghana could lose power export market if Akufo-Addo's directive to curtail power continues – Nana Amoasi VII

Executive Director for the Institute for Energy Security (IES), Nana Amoasi VII has warned of potential consequences as Ghana grapples with an energy crisis and President Akufo-Addo's directive to limit power exports.

President Akufo-Addo recently directed the Volta River Authority (VRA) to prioritize domestic power needs over exports, a move aimed at mitigating the ongoing energy challenges.

Samuel Atta Akyea, Chairman of the Energy Committee of Parliament, revealed this during an interview with JoyNews.

Atta Akyea stated that the President's decision reflects a focus on national priorities over international profit generation.

However, industry experts doubt the effectiveness of this strategy without addressing underlying capacity deficits.

Nana Amoasi VII emphasized the continued shortfall in generation capacity, indicating that merely halting exports wouldn't resolve the crisis.

"We were expecting that if we halt the export, it will solve the issue. No, we still have a deficit of 400 megawatts thereabout, so load shedding will continue," said Nana Amoasi VII.

He cautioned that prolonged measures could jeopardize Ghana's electricity export market.

"The negative ramification is that if the proposed solution is extended, we may end up losing the export

market."

In response, SONABEL, Burkina Faso's power distributor, seeks dialogue with Ghanaian officials to tackle mutual power supply concerns.

Ghana faces immediate challenges

due to its government's curtailment decision, impacting both domestic and international stakeholders.

Source: Independent Ghana / Sebastian Akaho-Tay/



Nana Amoasi VII, Executive Director, IES

Fuel price to soon exceed GHC 17 per litre – COPEC announces

Executive Secretary of the Chamber of Petroleum Consumers (COPEC), Duncan Amoah, has forecasted that fuel prices will soon surpass either GH¢16 or GH¢17 per litre

This prediction comes after Nana Amoasi VII, the Executive Director of the Institute for Energy Security (IES), also anticipated a significant increase in fuel prices in the upcoming weeks during an interview on the Citi Breakfast Show (CBS) on Citi FM.

This recent surge in fuel prices marks the largest increase since February 2023, when a litre of fuel was priced at GH¢15.40 and diesel at GH¢15.50.

During a conversation with Selorm Adonoo on Eyewitness News on Citi FM on Friday, Mr. Amoah indicated that the trends in the international market price and the performance of the Cedi suggest an

imminent increment in fuel prices.

"We are widely exposed, and the signals as far as international market price movement and the cedi's performance is concerned don't look too good and sooner than later fuel will cross [GH¢]16, [GH¢]17 in no time," he stated.

Fuel consumers in Ghana are preparing for higher prices following the National Petroleum Authority's (NPA) decision to reverse the suspension of the Price Stabilisation and Recovery Levy on petroleum products.

On April 3, 2024, the NPA issued a directive to stakeholders in the oil marketing and distribution sector, instructing them to apply additional charges: 16 pesewas per litre for Petrol, 14 pesewas per litre for Diesel, and 14 pesewas for every kilogram of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG).

Consequently, GOIL, the state-owned Oil Marketing Company, has adjusted its prices. As of April 4, 2024, petrol and diesel are now

priced at GH¢14.15 per litre and GH¢14.74 per litre, respectively.

Source: Independent Ghana / Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo/



File Photo



International

Petitioners to appeal anti-gay law upheld by Ugandan court

Uganda's Supreme Court could have a final say on whether the Anti-Homosexuality Act 2023 will remain in the books of law, in what promises a new round of legal battle, petitioners say. This week, the Constitutional Court in Kampala declined to annul the law in its entirety but ruled that some sections violated basic human rights, including access to healthcare.

Some 22 private citizens and rights activists had filed petitions in the Constitutional Court challenging all sections of the Act, arguing they contravened human rights and freedoms that are guaranteed under the Constitution of Uganda and international human rights instruments to which Uganda is a party.

Ugandan human rights lawyer Nicholas Opiyo, who was part of the petitioners, said they disagreed with the court's decision not to annul the law, adding that of the 14 issues raised, 13 will be appealed at the top court.

"We cannot wish away gay Ugandans because they are here and are our children. So we need to find ways of protecting them," he said.

In their ruling, a panel of five

judges led by Deputy Chief Justice Richard Buteera declared that the Act complies with the Constitution of Uganda.

"We declined to nullify the Anti-Homosexuality Act 2023 in its entirety; neither would we grant a permanent injunction against its enforcement," Justice Buteera said on behalf of the Bench.

It is now not a crime to give property to homosexuals or fail to report acts of homosexuality, as had been provided in the Act.

The court, nonetheless, has not sealed pressure from human rights campaigners and Uganda's main donors to seek a review of the law. The European Union said it would continue to engage with the Ugandan authorities and civil society to ensure that all Ugandan citizens, regardless of their sexual orientation and gender identity, are protected and treated equally with dignity and respect.

"The EU restates its position that the AHA is contrary to international human rights law and regrets the retention of the death penalty, to which the EU is opposed in all circumstances, it said.

The US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, said the verdict undermines human rights

and public health for all and poses grave threats to LGBTIQ+ Ugandans and allies, adding that Uganda's international reputation and ability to increase foreign investment depend on equality under the law.

The US and the World Bank had, last year, paused funding programmes in Uganda in protest of the law. In turn, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni publicly began defying the West, arguing Uganda would continue to pursue its development path free of interference.

According to Opiyo, however, of the 14 issues raised earlier before the Constitutional Court, 13 will be appealed at the top court.

History:



File Photo

Zimbabwe launches new gold-backed currency - Vanguard News

Zimbabwe has introduced a new gold-backed currency called ZiG.

Central bank governor John Mushayavanhu said the ZiG would be structured and set at a market-determined exchange rate.

ZiG stands for Zimbabwe Gold.

It's the latest attempt to try to stabilise an economy that has lurched from crisis to crisis for the past 25 years.

The US dollar, which accounts for 85% of transactions, will remain legal tender.

The notes come in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 50, 100 and 200, the governor said.

Coins will also be introduced to overcome the shortage of US coins, which has seen people receive change in sweets, small chocolates

and pens.

Zimbabweans have 21 days to exchange old, inflation-hit notes for the new currency.

Mr Mushayavanhu said the new currency will be implemented

with immediate effect and banks must convert current Zimbabwe dollar balances to the ZiG.

It replaces a Zimbabwean dollar that has lost three-quarters of its value so far this year.

Zimbabwe has tried a variety of means to stabilise its currency - at one stage the bank was printing ten trillion dollar notes, as inflation ran out of control.

Source: Vanguard News



File Photo

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