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General News

Reports on Global Fund suspending shipments to Ghana false - Health Ministry

The Ministry of Health has denied assertions that the Global Fund has suspended the provision of health supplies to Ghana.

Earlier reports suggested a halt in the delivery of vital medical resources by the Global Fund, citing delays in clearing previously donated items at Tema Port.

However, in a statement released on Friday, April 12, the Ministry clarified, "We hereby, wish to state categorically and emphatically that the Global Fund has neither suspended nor intend to suspend any shipments of medicines and other health commodities to Ghana."

Contrary to earlier accounts, the Ministry of Health confirmed that it has received a schedule from the Global Fund outlining the delivery of medications and other health supplies expected in 2024.

The Ministry noted that the initial shipment had already arrived on Monday, April 12, 2024.

Moreover, the Ministry reiterated the government's dedication to meeting the health requirements of

Ghanaians.

"The commitment of the Government, through the Ministry of Health and its development partners, to meet the health needs of all people living in Ghana

continues to be our collective top priority."

On April 12, the Ministry of Health received 14 containers out of a total of 182 at Tema Port. These containers contained essential

medicines for antiretroviral, tuberculosis (TB), and malaria treatments, provided by the Global Fund.

Source: The Independent Ghana / Phoebe Martekie Doku



Ministry of Health

UEW students urge Education Ministry to resolve graduation dispute

Students enrolled in the Distance Education program at the St. John Campus of the University of Education, Winneba (UEW), expressed their disappointment with the institution's management and urged the Ministry of Education to intervene and maintain standards.

These students, nearing the completion of their National Service Scheme (NSS) and anticipating graduation later this month, encountered a hurdle imposed by the university's management.

They were instructed to provide receipts for their school fees spanning from 2019 to 2024 before being cleared for graduation.

This requirement sparked frustration among the students, who saw it as indicative of mismanagement and a lack of

leadership on the part of UEW.

They argued that they had already submitted all necessary receipts before their final exams last year, and producing receipts for each academic year over the past four years would be impractical.

The students perceived this demand as unreasonable and potentially discriminatory, given the challenges of retrieving receipts from multiple years.

They insisted that their prior compliance with financial obligations should be sufficient for graduation clearance.

Expressing their concerns, the students emphasized the administrative burden placed upon them by this unexpected requirement, particularly as they approached the culmination of their academic journey.

In response to these grievances, the students called upon the Ministry of Education to intervene and ensure that UEW upholds fairness and transparency in its administrative processes.

They sought a resolution that recognized their prior compliance with financial obligations and facilitated their smooth transition

to graduation without undue obstacles.

The dispute underscored broader issues of accountability and student welfare within tertiary institutions, highlighting the need for clear and equitable policies that support student success.

Source: The Independent Ghana / Amanda Cartey



University of Education, Winneba (UEW)

General News

GAF warns Tema youth over recent attack on installations and personnel

The Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) has issued a stern warning to the youth of Tema, stating that any future attacks on installations or personnel will be met with a suitable response.

This caution comes after a vehicle belonging to the Eastern Naval Command of the Ghana Navy was attacked by a crowd participating in a festival in Tema Newtown around 7:53 pm on Friday, April 12, 2024, resulting in damage to the vehicle.

“Three of the Naval personnel onboard the vehicle also sustained severe injuries and were sent to the Tema Naval Base Medical Centre for treatment. In the course of the confrontation, three suspects were arrested by the naval personnel.

“They were subsequently handed over to the Tema Newtown District Police for further investigations,” a press release signed by E. Aggrey-Quarshie on Saturday, April 13, read.

Col Aggrey reported that the mob, believed to be among the festival participants, later assaulted the Tema Naval Base with stones and other objects in an attempt to free their colleagues.

At a stage, the security of the Base was threatened, and to protect the sensitive installations in the Base,

warning shots were fired to repel the attack.

He later reported that the Police confirmed that two civilians were brought dead to the Tema General Hospital. The cause of death is still under investigation.

According to E. Aggrey-Quarshie, the Ghana Police Service in collaboration with the Ghana Armed Forces have commenced investigations into the incident of attack by some Tema youths.

“Findings of the investigations will be made available in due

course. The GAF commiserates with the bereaved families and urges calm to be maintained by all parties while the incident is being investigated.”

Source: The Independent Ghana / Andy Ogbarmey-Tetty



Ghana Armed Forces (GAF)

Armed robbers attack 10 vehicles on Trabuom-Foase road, strip victims naked

On Friday, April, 12, a group of about six suspected robbers, armed with AK-47 assault rifles, targeted tens of commuters travelling along the Nwineso-Trabuom-Foase road in the Ashanti Region.

The incident, which occurred on the Nwineso Number 1-Trabuom section, focused on at least 10 vehicles primarily transporting traders to Kumasi.

According to an eyewitness interviewed by Nhyira FM (whose name was withheld), the robbers set up a roadblock at a specific spot on the route and proceeded to rob the commuters at gunpoint. Victims

were forced to lie face down during the robbery as the assailants seized unspecified amounts of money, mobile phones, wedding rings, and other valuable items.

“Our driver first saw a flashlight from the robbers but mistook it for an oncoming vehicle. He drove past a man who appeared to be attending to nature’s call. We then ran into a group of six young men wielding these assault rifles used by police and the military. Then, they rushed to our vehicle and demanded we hand over everything in our possession to them. One of them slapped me before he demanded I hand over my money. I

Continued on page 4



File Photo

General News

Armed robbers attack 10 vehicles on Trabuom-Foase road, strip victims naked

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trembled.”

“The robbers will then rush to attack passengers anytime a vehicle gets to the barricade. An old woman complained bitterly to the robbers about her aching feet, but they wouldn’t budge. They assaulted her despite her appeals,” she added.

The eyewitness further reported

that the robbers not only robbed the commuters but also manhandled and stripped some of them naked. They physically assaulted some of the male victims, including a driver, during the ordeal.

“Another woman in her 30s was forced to strip naked in front of the robbers. They insisted she had

hidden some of her money in her private parts. Even if they were to find 50 pesewas in your possession after the first search, they had threatened to shoot you. We have been left traumatised.”

Despite the presence of a police patrol team stationed along the robbery-prone stretch, the attack

reportedly occurred in their absence.

This has raised concerns among victims of Friday’s robbery incident about the current absence of the police in the area.

Source: The Independent Ghana / Phoebe Martekie Doku

Kwabena Boateng beats Nyantakyi, 7 others to win NPP Ejisu primary

Private legal practitioner Kwabena Boateng emerged victorious in the New Patriotic Party (NPP) primaries held in the Ejisu constituency of the Ashanti Region on Saturday, April 13, 2024.

Mr Boateng defeated eight other candidates, including former Ghana Football Association (GFA) President Kwesi Nyantakyi, to become the NPP’s parliamentary candidate for the upcoming by-election.

The other candidates in the

primaries were Dr. Evans Duah, Klinsman Karikari Mensah, Helena Mensah, Jacqueline Abena Pokua Amoah-Boaitey, Portia Baffoe Abronye, Aaron Prince Duah, and Yaa Gyamera Aboagye.

Mr Boateng secured 394 votes out of a total of 1033 valid votes cast, with his closest competitor, Madam Helena Mensah, receiving 302 votes. Yaa Gyamera Aboagye garnered 229 votes, while Kwesi Nyantakyi managed only 35 votes.

Initially, it was thought that the remaining votes would be split

between Dr. Evans Duah and Kwabena Boateng, potentially reducing Boateng’s chances of winning.

However, Dr. Evans Duah received only 63 votes, allowing Boateng to secure victory over him and the other contenders.

In his address to the media, Mr Boateng thanked the delegates for their trust and support, promising to be a dedicated representative for the people of Ejisu if elected as MP.

He dedicated his victory to the late MP, Dr. John Kumah, and pledged to continue his legacy.

The by-election in Ejisu was necessitated by the passing of Dr. John Kumah, who was also a Deputy Finance Minister, on Thursday, March 7, at the age of 45. The Electoral Commission has scheduled the by-election for Tuesday, April 30.

Source: The Independent Ghana



Kwabena Boateng, Newly elected Parliamentary candidate for Ejisu constituency

General News

Akufo-Addo did not sack SSNIT boss, Ofori-Tenkorang, over misconduct - Presidency

The Presidency has provided clarification on the dismissal of Dr. John Ofori-Tenkorang as the Director-General of the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT).

In a statement released on Saturday, April 13, Eugene Arhin, the Director of Communications at the Presidency, explained that Dr. Ofori-Tenkorang's dismissal was not a result of misconduct or malfeasance.

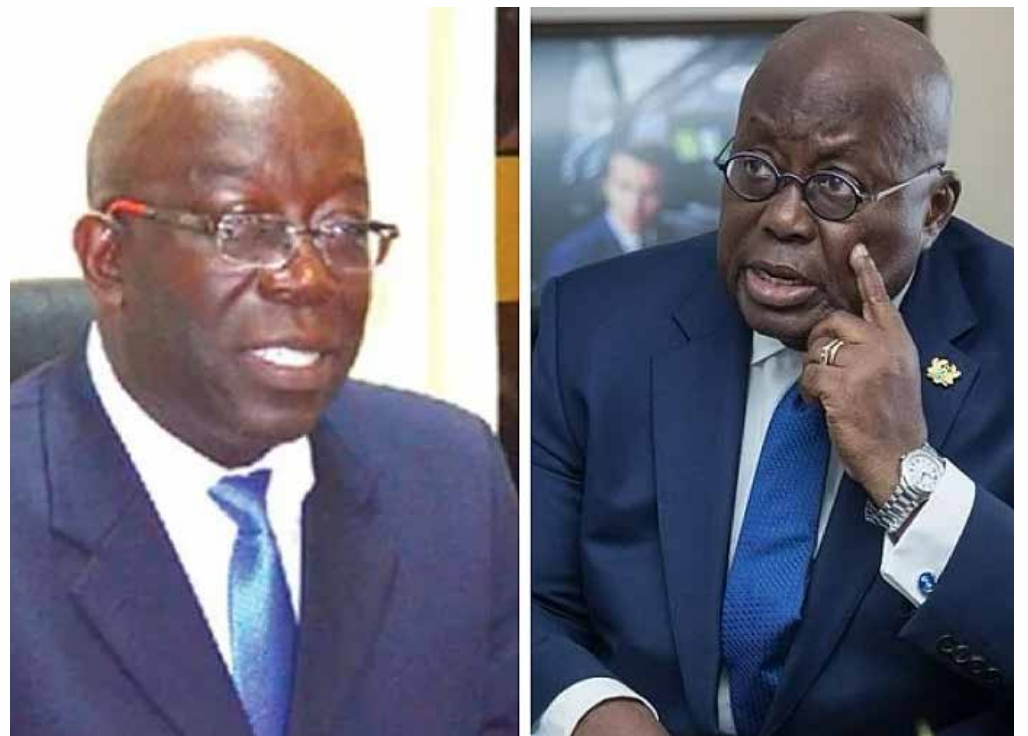
On Monday, April 8, President Akufo-Addo terminated Dr. Ofori Tenkorang's tenure as the Director-General of SSNIT. He has been instructed to transfer his responsibilities to Kofi Bosompem

Osafo-Maafa by Monday, April 15.

Contrary to rumors suggesting misconduct as the reason for his dismissal, the Presidency asserts that Dr. Ofori-Tenkorang's departure is part of the ongoing restructuring initiated by President Akufo-Addo.

The Presidency also noted that President Akufo-Addo is pleased with Dr. Ofori-Tenkorang's performance, as the institution experienced significant transformation under his leadership.

Source: *The Independent Ghana*



Dr. Ofori-Tenkorang (L) and President Akufo-Addo (R)

Approve anti-gay bill when Akufo-Addo is out of the country – Dafeamekpor to Bawumia

Member of Parliament (MP) representing South Dayi, Rockson-Nelson Dafeamekpor, has responded to Vice President Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia's recent remarks regarding the issue of homosexual activities in Ghana.

However, Dafeamekpor issued a challenge to Dr. Bawumia, urging him to enact the Promotion of Human Sexual Rights and Family Values Bill (commonly known as the anti-gay bill), which currently awaits presidential assent, into law during his interim presidency.

This he said can only occur when Dr. Bawumia assumes the role of Head of State during President Akufo-Addo's absence from the country.

"In this video, Alhaji Dr. Mahmoud Bawumia, our Veep, is heard and seen saying that, by our cultural ethos and his Muslim beliefs, he is against LGBTQ+. Fantastic.

"I expect our Veep to sign the bill into law when next the Prez travels and he acts as the Head of State. That's all," he said.

Dr. Bawumia's stance on the matter was clear during his address at the Eid-ul-Fitr prayers in Kumasi on Thursday.

He adamantly opposed homosexuality, citing his adherence to Islamic principles and Ghanaian societal norms.

"I will like to take this opportunity to personally comment on the raging issue of LGBTQ in Ghana. First of all, it is important to note that our cultural and societal norms and values as Ghanaians frown on the practice of homosexuality.

"Furthermore, as a Muslim, my view on this matter aligns with the position of my religious faith. The Holy Quran is replete with verses frowning on LGBTQ acts, including same-sex marriages. My faith is, therefore, very strictly against the practice of homosexuality, with no 'ifs' or 'buts.' No shades of grey."

"I personally cannot support that which my religion, and

indeed, all the major religions in Ghana, clearly and unequivocally forbid.

"All the major religious traditions in Ghana, Christianity and Islam, are opposed to this practice, and I stand opposed to it now, and I will stand opposed to it as President, Insha Allah," he added.

Source: *The Independent Ghana / Amanda Cartey*



Rockson-Nelson Dafeamekpor, Member of Parliament (MP) representing South Dayi

General News

GIS confiscates cocoa beans being smuggled to Togo at Kpando Torkor

The Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) has intercepted three trucks suspected of smuggling cocoa beans at Kpando Torkor in the Volta Region.

The vehicles, registered as GE 1782-U, AS 7907-22, and GT 5932-12, were intercepted at dawn on Friday, April 12.

Head of Public Affairs at GIS, Superintendent Michael Amoako-Atta, stated that the Officer-in-Charge of the GIS in the Kpando Municipal Command, Deputy Superintendent of Immigration (DSI) Peter Austin Hall, and a team of officers were deployed based on intelligence to Kpando Torkor.

They observed a boat suspected to be from the Afram Plains unloading bags of cocoa beans into the trucks, parked near the landing site, apparently for smuggling through

an unapproved route at Wli to Togo.

The suspects, Wahab Abdulai, Nicholas Agbesi, and Fodume, all aged 42, were arrested, and the trucks were handed over to the Kpando Police for further action.

Superintendent Amoako-Atta emphasized GIS's commitment to border protection and prevention of cross-border crimes.

He commended border residents and the public for their continuous collaboration through information-sharing and urged citizens to report suspicious persons and activities to GIS and other security agencies as part of the "See Something, Say Something" campaign.

Source: The Independent Ghana



Trucks of cocoa beans suspected to be smuggled to Togo

Fire destroys late Krachi East MCE's office

A fire erupted last Thursday night, causing significant damage to essential documents and assets at the office formerly occupied by the late Krachi East Municipal Chief Executive (MCE) in Dambai.

Although the cause of the fire is currently unknown, the Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS) has initiated an investigation into the incident.

Mr. Bernard Aborkugya Mensah, who served as the MCE of Krachi East Municipality, passed away on April 5th of this year, having held the position for just one year.

Appointed by President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo to succeed the late MCE, Francis Kofi Okesu, who passed away in September 2022, the deceased's tenure was brief.

Assistant Divisional Officer 1 (ADO1), Stephen Agortor of the Dambai Fire Command, confirmed the occurrence to the Ghana News Agency (GNA). He stated that at approximately 10:00 PM last night, a passer-by alerted the Service to the situation.

The Information Ministry reports

that there have been no updates from the police regarding the investigations.

In a statement released by the Information Ministry on April 5th,

the government, represented by the Ministries of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs, Interior, and the Greater Accra Coordinating

Council, affirmed its dedication to probing the issue and deciding on the necessary steps forward.

Source: The Independent Ghana / Amanda Cartey



Fire destroys late Krachi East MCE's office

General News

Gov't "erroneously" includes 67 projects in Performance Tracker

The government has acknowledged that 67 entries were mistakenly included on the list of projects featured on the performance tracker following its launch.

In a tweet, the Ministry of Information expressed gratitude for the considerable interest shown by citizens in the tracker.

"Following the successful launch of the Performance Tracker, the Government expresses gratitude for the remarkable interest and scrutiny from citizens.

"This level of engagement demonstrates the public's

commitment to ensuring the accuracy and integrity of the information provided. Within 48 hours following the launch, our attention has been drawn to 67 entries which were erroneously included," the tweet read.

Also, the Ministry noted that some 74 projects which should have been included as they had been concluded by June 2023 have found their way onto the tracker.

Further information on the exact projects that have been taken out and included is yet to be provided.

The government launched

the Performance Tracker on Wednesday, April 10, with the aim of enhancing transparency and accountability in the implementation of infrastructure projects nationwide.

During the launch, Minister-designate of Works and Housing Kojo Opong-Nkrumah emphasized the tracker's role in promoting transparency and accountability in infrastructure projects across the country.

He highlighted that the tracker addresses long-standing concerns about the accuracy and reliability of project presentations,

particularly regarding the use of artist's impressions to depict outcomes.

Currently, the tracker showcases over 13,000 projects nationwide. The MP for Ofoase-Ayirebi noted that the tracker represents an upgraded version of the previously introduced Delivery Tracker by Vice President Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia in 2020, emphasizing its significance in monitoring the progress of various projects across the nation.

Source: *The Independent Ghana*



The Performance Tracker was launched on April 10, 2024



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Business

IMF set to release \$360M to Ghana as program reaches Staff-Level Agreement for second review

International Monetary Fund (IMF) Mission staff and Ghanaian authorities have successfully reached a staff-level agreement on economic policies and reforms, marking the conclusion of the second review within the three-year ECF-supported program.

This development signifies that Ghana is poised to access approximately US\$360 million in financing once the review is sanctioned by IMF Management and formalized by the IMF Executive Board.

The IMF, in a statement released on its website, commended Ghana's robust policy framework, noting that performance under the program has been generally commendable, with significant achievements in meeting quantitative objectives and implementing pivotal reforms. The statement highlighted Ghana's commendable economic

strides, citing higher-than-expected economic growth, declining inflation rates, and notable improvements in fiscal and external positions throughout 2023.

However, the IMF emphasized the importance of timely completion of the second review, stressing the necessity for Ghana and its official bilateral creditors to reach a consensus on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for debt treatment, aligning with the principles established in January 2024.

"I am pleased to announce that IMF staff and the Ghanaian authorities have reached a staff-level agreement on the second review of Ghana's economic program under the Extended Credit Facility arrangement. This staff-level agreement is subject to IMF Management approval and Executive Board consideration once the necessary financing

assurances have been received.

"An agreement between the Ghanaian authorities and their official creditors on an MoU for a debt treatment in line with program parameters, would provide the needed financing assurances. Upon completion of the Executive Board review, Ghana would have access to SDR 269.1

million (about US\$ 360 million), bringing the total IMF financial support disbursed under the arrangement since May 2023 to SDR 1,171.9 million (about US\$ 1,560 million)," parts of the statement read.

Source: The Independent Ghana / Phoebe Martekie Doku



International Monetary Fund (IMF) head office

Dep. SSNIT Director General resigns over alleged tension with Osafo-Mafo's son

The Deputy Director General in charge of Finance and Administration at the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT), Michael Addo, has resigned with immediate effect.

His resignation is reportedly due to tension between himself and the newly appointed Director General, Kofi Bosompem Osafo-Mafo.

Sources suggest that Osafo-Mafo was allegedly mistreated during his tenure as a deputy, and his recent promotion to Director General may have prompted Addo's decision to step down.

Mr Addo's resignation came shortly after outgoing Director General, Dr. John Ofori Tenkorang, presented his handing over notes to the Board of the Trust on Friday, April 12, 2024, before the Monday deadline to vacate his position.

President Akufo-Addo terminated

Dr. Ofori Tenkorang's appointment on Wednesday, April 9, and appointed Kofi Bosompem Osafo-Mafo as his replacement.

This led to Pearl Nana Ama Darko, the Deputy Director General for Operations and Benefits, being reassigned to the role of Commissioner for Support Services at the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA).

Juliana Kpedekpo has taken over from Pearl Nana Ama as the new Deputy Director General for Operations and Benefits.

The President is expected to appoint a new Deputy Director General for Investment and Development to replace Kofi Osafo-Mafo, as well as another deputy for Finance and Administration to succeed Michael Addo in the coming days.

Source: The Independent Ghana



Michael Addo, Deputy Director General in charge of Finance and Administration at SSNIT

International

Iran warns Israel against 'reckless' retaliation

Iran has warned Israel that any "reckless" retaliation to its unprecedented aerial attack would receive a "much stronger response".

More than 300 drones and missiles were launched at Israel by Iran overnight, following the 1 April Israeli strike on Iran's consulate in Syria.

Israel said it and allies had intercepted 99% of the weapons.

It marked Iran's first direct attack on Israel, with the two countries having waged a years-long shadow war.

World leaders have urged restraint amid concerns about a major escalation in tensions in the Middle East.

Following the attack, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed "together we will win", but it is unclear how his country plans to respond.

Last week, Israel's defence and foreign ministers warned that if Iran attacked Israel, Israel would strike back inside Iran.

An attack had been anticipated after the strike on the Damascus consulate killed seven Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) officers.

In a statement reported by AFP, Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi said "if the Zionist regime [Israel] or its supporters demonstrate reckless behaviour, they will receive a decisive and much stronger response".

Iran's IRGC - the most powerful branch of its armed forces - said it had launched the attack "in retaliation against the Zionist regime's [Israel] repeated crimes, including the attack on the Iranian embassy's consulate in Damascus".

Following the strikes the Iranian mission to the UN said "the matter can be deemed concluded".

Iranian armed forces chief of staff Maj Gen Mohammad Bagheri told state TV the US had been warned - via Switzerland - that American backing of an Israeli retaliation would result in US regional bases being targeted.

US President Joe Biden spoke to Mr Netanyahu following the launch of

the Iranian attack and reaffirmed "America's ironclad commitment to the security of Israel".

He condemned the "unprecedented" attack on Israel and said the US had helped Israel and other allies to "take down nearly all" of the missiles and drones.

Sirens sounded across Israel and loud explosions were heard over Jerusalem, with air defence systems shooting down objects over the city.

The New York Times, citing Israeli intelligence sources, reported that the main targets appeared to be military installations in the occupied Golan Heights.

An Israeli military spokesman said around 360 munitions had been fired - including 170 explosive drones, 30 cruise missiles and 120 ballistic missiles - but Israel has said very little damage had been done.

Israel Defense Forces (IDF) spokesman Rear Adm Daniel Hagari said some Iranian missiles had hit inside Israel, causing minor damage to a military base but no casualties.

Israel's ambulance service said a seven-year-old Bedouin girl had been injured by shrapnel from falling debris in the southern Arad region and it has been reported she has undergone surgery.

World leaders will be considering their response to the major escalation in tensions between Israel and Iran, with many condemning the attack or warning of the dangers of escalation.

Mr Biden said he would convene "my fellow G7 leaders to coordinate a united diplomatic response to Iran's brazen attack".

The UN Security Council will also hold an emergency meeting later, its president Vanessa Frazier said.

UN Secretary General António Guterres issued a statement saying he "strongly condemn[ed] the serious escalation represented by the large-scale attack launched on Israel" by Iran.

He called for "an immediate cessation of these hostilities" and for all sides to exercise maximum restraint.

UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak called the strikes "reckless", while

the European Union's foreign affairs chief Josep Borrell said it was a "grave threat to regional security".

China's foreign ministry urged restraint, characterising it as "the latest spillover of the Gaza conflict", while Russia's foreign ministry expressed "extreme concern over another dangerous escalation".

Speaking to crowds at the Vatican on Sunday, Pope Francis made a "heartfelt appeal for a halt to any action that could fuel a spiral of violence with the risk of dragging the Middle East into an even greater conflict".

There have been increased tensions in the Middle East since the 7 October Hamas attacks on Israel, in which 1,200 people were killed and more than 250 others were taken hostage, and the subsequent Israeli military operation in Gaza.

The Hamas-run health ministry says at least 33,729 people have been killed in Gaza since the war began.

Source: BBC



File Photo

General News

Nearly 55 million face hunger in West and Central Africa, UN warns

Nearly 55 million people will struggle to feed themselves in the coming months in West and Central Africa as soaring prices have fuelled a food crisis, United Nations agencies have warned.

In a joint statement on Friday, the World Food Programme (WFP), the UN children's agency UNICEF, and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said that the number facing hunger during the June-August lean season had quadrupled over the last five years. It said economic challenges such as double-digit inflation and stagnating local production had become major drivers of the crisis, beyond recurrent conflicts in the region.

And it noted that Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Mali would be

among the worst affected.

The UN agencies said the prices of major staple grains had continued to rise across the region from 10 percent to more than 100 percent compared with the five-year average.

The situation was particularly worrying in northern Mali, where some 2,600 people are likely to experience catastrophic hunger, it added.

"The time to act is now. We need all partners to step up ... to prevent the situation from getting out of control," said Margot Vandervelden, WFP's acting regional director for West Africa.

"We need to invest more in resilience-building and longer-term solutions for the future of West Africa," she added.

Malnourished children

Food shortages have also resulted in "alarmingly high" levels of malnutrition, with children badly affected.

The agencies said eight out of 10 children aged between six and 23 months do not consume the minimum amount of food required for optimal growth and development.

It also said some 16.7 million children under the age of five are acutely malnourished and more than two out of three households are unable to afford healthy diets.

"For children in the region to reach their full potential, we need to ensure that each girl and boy receives good nutrition and care, lives in a healthy and safe environment, and is given the right learning opportunities," said UNICEF Regional Director Gilles

Fagninou.

"To make a lasting difference in children's lives, we need to consider the situation of the child as a whole and strengthen education, health, water and sanitation, food, and social protection systems," he added.

The region's heavy dependence on food imports has tightened the squeeze, particularly for countries battling high inflation such as Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone.

Policies should be introduced to boost and diversify local food production "to respond to the unprecedented food and nutrition insecurity", said Robert Guei, the FAO's Sub-regional Coordinator for West Africa.

Source: Al Jazeera via News Agencies



Sudanese children suffering from malnutrition are treated at a clinic in Metche Camp, Chad, near the Sudanese border

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