

Monday, June 10, 2024

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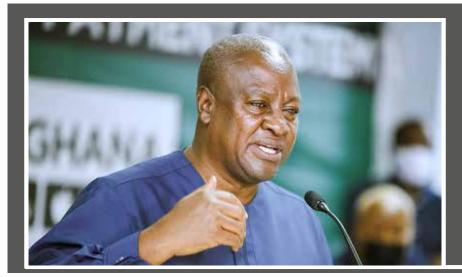
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Commission







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EC's 3-day voter registration mop-up exercise to take place in August

Electoral Commission he (EC) has announced plans to conduct a mop-up voter registration exercise from August 1 to 3, 2024.

According to a letter signed by the Deputy Chairman in charge of Operations, Mr. Samuel Tettey, the exercise will take place at all district offices of the Commission across the country, as well as in prison centres.

"This comes to inform you that the Commission will conduct a Mop Up Voter Registration Exercise at all the District Offices of the Commission throughout the country," a part of the letter read.

"The Registration will also be extended to the Prison Centres. This exercise will take place from Thursday, 1st August to Saturday, 3rd August, 2024," the letter further stated.

"The modalities for the Exercise will be discussed at an IPAC meeting to be held in due course,"

it concluded.

The Electoral Commission began a limited voter registration exercise on May 7, 2024 in accordance with Article 45 of the 1992 Constitution.

It took place at the 268 District

Offices of the Commission across the country and eded on 27 Mav 2024.

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The registration exercise gives an opportunity to Ghanaians who have attained the voting age of 18 years since the last registration in September 2023 and others who are more than 18 years but could not register during the last registration exercise to do so.

Source: The Independent Ghana | Amanda Cartey



Voter registration exercise

12 persons smuggling 400 bags of cocoa beans outside **Ghana arrested after GHC8ok bribe offer**

individuals welve are currently in police custody following an attempt to bribe members of the National Anti-Cocoa Smuggling Taskforce in Kwahu Adawso after intelligence revealed their plan to smuggle 400 bags of cocoa beans.

operators, and loaders who were caught while attempting to offload the cocoa beans.

Chairman of the Kwahu South Security Municipal Council, Emmanuel Atta Ofori Snr., briefed the media on the arrests. He commended the security forces for making the arrests despite being offered a bribe of GH¢80,000.



These twelve suspects are allegedly part of a larger cocoa smuggling ring.

In a coordinated operation involving personnel from the Ministry of National Security, the Formed Police Unit, and the Ghana Cocoa Board, two trucks loaded with cocoa beans destined for Togo were intercepted. The trucks had registration numbers AS 2653-12 and GS 4220-12.

The arrested individuals include drivers, their assistants, boat

"We have arrested 12 people who are currently in police custody and I am keenly interested in the outcome so I will monitor the proceedings to make sure the sanctioned laws of the land are tested. I am therefore appealing to the prosecution and judiciary to swiftly adjudicate issues of national concern like this particular one in order for all necessary sanctions

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12 people arrested for attempting to smuggle 400 bags of cocoa beans

12 persons smuggling 400 bags of cocoa beans outside Ghana arrested after GHC80k bribe offer

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- Continued from page 2

and punishment to be meted out to the culprits when found guilty because they are causing financial loss to the state.

"Last month, we made a similar arrest on the ferry, which was a cargo vehicle. We have arrested a tipper truck too, but today it is a Kia Rhino smuggling cocoa, which is an indication that the smugglers are really in business I want to use this medium to announce to them that the Kwahu South Municipal Security Council will not relent but pursue them anytime they want to transit their smuggled goods through our municipality," said.

This recent arrest marks the third such incident in less than two months within the Kwahu South Municipality.

Cocoa beans are frequently smuggled from Suhum through Adawso to Togo via Dzemeni in the Kwahu Afram Plains area.

Mr. Atta Ofori Snr. has called on his fellow MMDCEs and state security services to demonstrate greater patriotism in combating cocoa smuggling. He also made a heartfelt plea to the judiciary to expedite action on this matter, emphasizing the need for swift justice to deter those engaged in smuggling activities.

Source: The Independent Ghana | Phoebe Martekie Doku

NLA, European Lottery officials collaborate on responsible gaming training

egal Advisor to the European Lotteries (EL), Phillipe Vlaemminck, has called on governments globally to reconsider the practice of taxing lottery winnings as a method of revenue generation, arguing that it discourages participation and diminishes the appeal of the game.

Speaking during a training session organized by the National Lottery Authority (NLA) in Ghana, Mr. Vlaemminck emphasized that such taxation is counterproductive.

He was accompanied by Ms. Beata Guzik, EL Public Affairs Director. The session aimed to educate management, Lotto Marketing Companies (LMCs), Private Lottery Operators (PLOs), and third-party collaborators on various aspects of lottery operations and regulations.

The training covered a wide range of topics, including the role of lotteries, responsible gaming, combating illegal lotteries, global lottery trends, the legal framework within the European Union, anti-money laundering practices, the impact of artificial intelligence and new technologies, the world lottery market, and types of multi-jurisdictional games. Instead, he urged a focus on sustainable practices that maintain the attractiveness of the lottery.

"When people play the lottery, they want to see all their money, and so taxing their wins deters the player from participating again, which causes lottery institutions and operators who are already contributing significantly to good causes to lose revenue, and so I believe the Ghanaian government and governments in other parts of the world who practice this should completely abolish taxes on the lottery. Let's allow the players to enjoy their wins."

Mr. Phillipe Vlamminck also underscored the crucial role of governments in combating illegal lottery operations, emphasizing that these efforts should support and complement the initiatives of lottery institutions and operators.

Director-General of the NLA, Samuel Awuku, stated that the training would enhance the authority's operations and educate its stakeholders, who can then disseminate this knowledge within their teams.

"This training is key for the operations of NLA in our commitment to adhere to and promote Responsible Gaming practices per the standards of the World Lottery Association. (WLA) and we want to carry our retailers and stakeholders along so we can practice ethically and create a safe lottery space for our patrons". It is also an avenue to deepen our relationship with the WLA and EL". Samuel Awuku, Director-General of the National Lottery Authority (NLA), was invited to speak on illegal gambling in Ghana.

During his presentation, Mr. Awuku outlined measures implemented by the NLA and the Gaming Commission to combat illegal lottery operations and gambling in Ghana.

He called for collaboration with the European Lotteries to tackle illegal activities and hold training sessions for the Authority and its stakeholders. Additionally, he requested Observer status with the European Lotteries to allow the NLA to participate in seminars and training programs organized by the EL to enhance the NLA's operations.

The NLA has achieved WLA Level 2 Certification in Responsible Gaming and has applied to attain Level 3.

Participants of the EL training, who received certificates in Responsible

Gaming, found the sessions enlightening and impactful. They urged the NLA to organize more training to keep them updated on best practices and improve their business operations.

The trainer, Mr. Phillipe Vlamminck, boasts over 40 years of experience in lotteries, betting, and gambling. He represents and advises several European Member States and governments worldwide, their gaming regulators, lottery associations, cooperative structures like EuroMillions, and aspects related to Euro Jackpot & Viking Lotto.

Ms. Beata Guzik, with over 20 years of experience, is involved in various business areas as a lawyer and public affairs expert, following up on EU regulatory developments and court cases.

Source: The Independent Ghanan



Participants were trained on the necessity of enforcing responsible gaming practices, ensuring that profit motives do not overshadow the welfare of patrons. They learned the importance of educating players about the odds of winning to help them make informed decisions and avoid unrealistic expectations and gambling-related problems.

Mr. Vlaemminck highlighted that taxing lottery winnings serves as a deterrent for players and should not be used by governments as a primary means of revenue generation. The training session follows engagements at the EL Public Order Seminar on Enforcing Gambling Regulation: Significance and Challenges, held in Brussels in February by the European Lotteries Association. At this seminar, Mr.

NLA executives with European lottery officials

Canoe Owners Association calls for pension scheme for fishermen

President of the Canoe and Fishing Gears Owners Association, Nana Kweigyah, has called on the flag bearer of the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC), John Dramani Mahama, to implement a comprehensive social security policy for members of the fishing industry if he wins the December 2024 elections.

During Mr Mahama's visit to the Tema Fishing Community on Saturday, June 8, Nana Kweigyah highlighted the difficult conditions faced by fishers upon retirement or in the event of accidents at sea.

He urged Mahama to extend the proposed social security policy for Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU) members to the fishing community and to provide insurance for fishers in case of accidents.

Nana Kweigyah also criticized the politicization and discrimination

in the distribution of premix fuel and outboard motors to fishermen, advocating for the reinstatement of the Premix Fuel Committee under an NDC government in 2025.

He stressed the dire sanitation conditions at landing beaches, which are plagued with plastic waste and pose significant hazards to the fishing community. Representatives from various regions, other associations in the fishing industry, and chief fishermen voiced concerns about the adverse effects of the closed season on artisanal fishers.

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In his response, Mahama reminisced about his interactions with the artisanal fishing community during his tenure as vice president and president.

He pledged to reestablish the Landing Beach Committee, promote youth participation in beach sanitation, and enforce the exclusive zone policy with assistance from the Ghana Navy.

Source: The Independent Ghana | Amanda Cartey



Nana Kweigyah, calls for pension scheme for fishermen during the John Mahama's visits to Tema

Ghana isn't winning 'galamsey' fight due to lack of logistics - Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission in the Greater Accra Region has identified the lack of logistical support, including vehicles and motorbikes, at its district offices as a major obstacle in combating illegal mining and other degrading activities.

The commission also expressed concern over delays in the release of funds for forestry development activities, which has further compounded the situation. operations and activities at the various districts stations are challenging and we cannot...and that makes it difficult to fight forest offences in our forest reserves."

"These offenses include illegal mining activities, illegal farming, bushfires, illegal lumbering, illegal logging and chainsaw activities to procure a pickup vehicle and two motorbikes for the Forestry Commission to enhance its operational capacity.

"I want to promise the Forestry

Commission that we will procure a pickup and two motorbikes to help facilitate your activities."

Source: The Independent Ghana | Andy Ogbarmey-Tettey



Speaking at a brief ceremony organized by Parliament ahead of a tree-planting exercise last Friday, the Deputy Greater Accra Regional Manager of the Forestry Commission, George Agbenowoshi, emphasized the challenges the Commission is facing. across the country," he said.

"We also have the challenge of timely release of funds for forestry-related activities including plantation activities at our sector and issues sent to court have been there for years without redress. Issues of mining activities involving Chinese that take an interpreter to translate are often thrown out of court as a result of the lack of an interpreter," he added.

"Logistics such as pickup vehicles In his address, Speaker of and motorbikes for our field Parliament Alban Bagbin pledged

Galamsey site

You're not above the law, the day of accountability is near - NDC tells Hawa Koomson

National Chairman of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Johnson Asiedu Nketia, has issued a warning to Hawa Koomson, MP for Awutu Senya East, regarding her alleged illegal activities and involvement in the arrest of the NDC's candidate for the 2024 parliamentary election in Awutu Senya East, Central Region, Phillis Naa Koryoo Okunor.

Phillis Naa Koryoo Okunor was detained by the police on Friday, June 7, and released the following Saturday morning.

At a press conference following her release on Saturday, June 8, Asiedu Nketia urged the police to maintain professionalism in their duties.

He also warned Hawa Koomson to refrain from activities that violate the law, stating that "the day of accountability is near," regardless of any powerful supporters backing her.

The police have not made any

public statements about Okunor's arrest. The initial news came from Sammy Gyamfi, the NDC's National Communications Officer, who condemned the lack of explanation for her detention, calling it an attempt to suppress the NDC.

On Sunday, June 2, 2024, the Ghana Police Service announced the arrest of three individuals, including Phillis Naa Koryoo Okunor, for unlawful possession of a firearm.

They were stopped in a Honda CRV near the Electoral Commission Office at Ofaakor, where a pumpaction gun with four rounds of ammunition was found.

Speaking to the media, Madam Okunor stated she was invited by the police rather than formally arrested. She claimed the firearm in her car was legally licensed for self-defense against the incumbent NPP MP and Minister for Fisheries, Hawa Koomson.

Madam Okunor alleged previous attacks by the MP, during which

the police failed to protect her, necessitated her self-defense measures.

Prior to her arrest for firearm possession, a clash between NDC and New PaP supporters occurred at the EC's office in Ofaakor during the votes transfer exercise. This altercation led to the stabbing of Ato Koomson, the son of Hawa Koomson. The suspect in the stabbing has also been detained.

Source: The Independent Ghana | Phoebe Martekie Doku



Johnson Asiedu Nketia, National Chairman of the NDC

It is an embarrassment that you owe NABCo trainees - Nana Akomea tells gov't

M anaging Director of the State Transport Corporation (STC) and a member of the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP), Nana Akomea, has called on the government to promptly settle the outstanding arrears owed to members of the Nation Builder's Corps (NABCo).

significant issue that needs to be addressed immediately. Nana Akomea expressed hope that the government will take the necessary actions to resolve the matter.

"It's a stigma that government must correct quickly. I am saying that government should correct it quickly by paying them. It is an embarrassment. And I'm hoping that they will be paid very soon," he said on Accra-based 3FM.



Despite the programme's completion, NABCo trainees have been seeking payment for several months of overdue stipends.

In an interview, Nana Akomea, who also serves as the Deputy Chairperson of the Campaign Team for the New Patriotic Party (NPP) flagbearer Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, described the situation as embarrassing.

He emphasized that it is a

The National Builder's Corps (NABCo) programme was introduced by the Akufo-Addo-led administration in 2017 as part of a job creation plan.

The programme ended on September 1, 2022. NABCo was

Nana Akomea, Managing Director of the State Transport Corporation (STC)

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It is an embarrassment that you owe NABCo trainees - Nana Akomea tells gov't

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initially supposed to run for three years and extended for an additional year.

It was aimed at engaging 100,000 young graduates.

Though the government invested approximately GH¢2.2 billion into the policy, a number of the corps complained about the non-payment of allowances by the government.

The programme was said to have ended in October 2021 though trainees were asked to keep working.

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The government had indicated, during the presentation of the

2022 budget, that the YouStart programme and a Digital inclusion program would gradually absorb the remaining NABCO trainees.

Source: The Independent Ghana | Andy Ogbarmey-Tettey

NPP flags to fly at half-mast for 7 days to mourn S.B Kangbere

The New Patriotic Party (NPP) has expressed profound sorrow over the untimely death of the Upper West regional chairman of the party, Saabanye Basilide Kangbere, who passed away on June 7, 2024.

In a press statement signed by the general secretary, Justin Kodua Frimpong, the NPP extended its deepest condolences to his family, especially his wife, and children, and to the people of the Upper West Region for the loss of such a distinguished figure.

As a tribute to his memory, the NPP has directed that all party flags fly at half-mast for the next seven days.

Mr Kangbere, affectionately known as "Chairman Heavy Weight" in political circles, has been the regional chairman since 2018 and previously served as a patron of the regional party.

His journey to prominence began in Owlo, a small town in the Daffiama-Bussie-Issa district of the Upper West Region, where he excelled in his Common Entrance Examinations.

"Chairman Heavy Weight" academic prowess led him to the prestigious Daffiama Secondary School, followed by a distinguished performance in his sixth-form examinations.

He furthered his education at a

College of Education and later at the University of Ghana, where he majored in English.

During his time at the University of Ghana, Kangbere developed a fervent passion for politics and social issues, joining student activist groups.

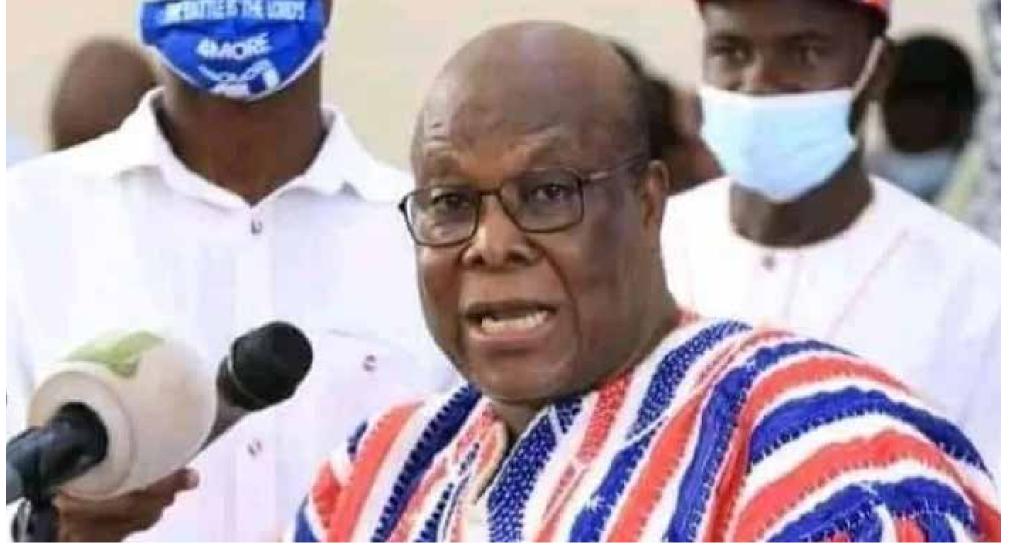
As secretary of the Students Representatives Council, he collaborated with notable figures such as Frederick Worsemao Armah Blay from 1977 to 1978, opposing the imposition of the Union Government (UNIGOV) by the Supreme Military Council of Ignatius Kutu Acheampong. This resistance was crucial in preventing Ghana from becoming a non-party state.

Beyond politics, Kangbere had a rich career in education and business, teaching in several deprived communities in the Upper West Region, Nigeria, the United Kingdom, and Saudi Arabia.

He also established several English teaching schools in Saudi Arabia, some of which remain operational today.

A devoted Catholic, husband, father of five, and noble family man, Kangbere's legacy is one of dedication, hard work, and profound impact.

Source: The Independent Ghana | Amanda Cartey



Saabanye Basilide Kangbere, Upper West regional chairman of the Party

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I will exempt artisanal fishers from the closed-season policy - Mahama

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Former President John Dramani Mahama, the leader of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), has pledged to revive and enhance the fishing sector in Ghana to its former strength.

He made this commitment during a meeting with the fishing community in Tema on Saturday, June 8, 2024.

Mr. Mahama assured the fishing community that if elected, the next NDC government would reinstate the nonpartisan Landing Beach Committee.

This move would ensure a fair distribution of premix fuel and outboard motors to all registered association members without any political bias. He stressed the need to keep politics out of the fishing sector, promising equitable treatment for all members. Additionally, Mr. Mahama promised to reintroduce the subsidised premix and outboard motor policy that had provided relief to fishers during his previous administration.

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He also pledged that artisanal fishers would be exempt from the closedseason policy under the next NDC government.

Furthermore, the NDC leader committed to completing the National Fisheries College, initiated by the late President John Atta Mills. This would ensure that fishing industry members receive proper training, enhancing their effectiveness and efficiency.

Mr. Mahama also vowed to provide fish-finding equipment to fisherfolk, enabling them to locate fish scientifically and streamline their operations.

Source: The Independent Ghana

John Dramani Mahama, Former President and flagbearer of the NDC

Our strength lies in unity, peaceful coexistence among our diverse ethnic groups - NAPO tells Ga Mantse

E nergy Minister Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh has emphasized the importance of fostering strong relationships among Ghanaian ethnic groups, citing them as fundamental to the nation's progress and development.

During his visit to the Ga Mantse, His Royal Majesty King Tackie Teiko Tsuru II, at his residence in Accra on Friday, June 7, Dr. Prempeh highlighted the diverse cultures, traditions, and histories that collectively form the rich tapestry of Ghana.

"Our strength lies in our unity, and our

9th June, 2024 in reciprocation of a similar gesture by the Ga Mantse, he added.

The Manhyia South lawmaker continued, "The UP tradition, front runner for the present day New Patriotic Party was not the endeavour of a single ethnic group, but a collective effort of Ghanaians from various backgrounds and so we are always reminded of the foundational principles of inclusivity and unity."

The Ga Mantse expressed his satisfaction at meeting with the Energy Minister, highlighting the longstanding cordial relations that have existed between himself and the Asantehene. He noted that these relations date back to the time of their forebears. affection and the great historical ties."

The Energy Minister had previously visited the Awoamefia of Anlo land, Torgbui Sri, and the Omanhene of Sefwi Wiawso, as part of efforts to strengthen the relationship between the political class and traditional authorities.

Source: The Independent Ghana



progress is rooted in the cordiality and peaceful coexistence among our diverse ethnic groups," he said.

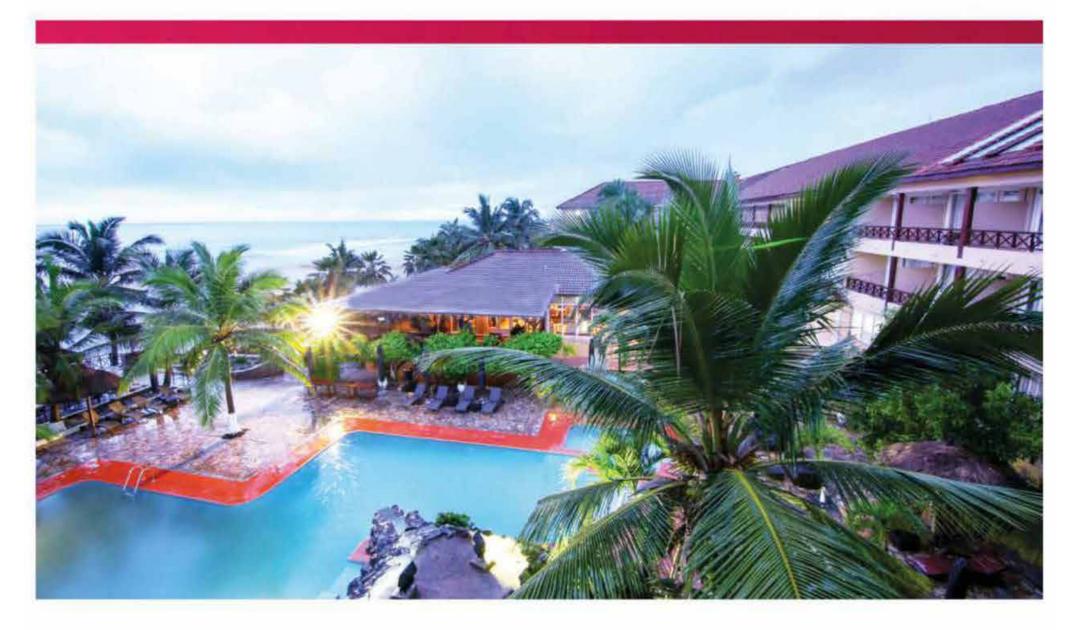
The Minister recollected to His Royal Majesty, the extremely affectionate relations that have existed between Asantes and Gas as buttressed, for instance by the archival document of the programme line-up on 25th July 1946 of a durbar in honour of the then Asantehene, my grandfather, Otumfuo Sir Agyeman Prempeh II at the Old Polo Ground, Accra.

Incidentally, the current Asantehene, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II is also scheduled to visit the Ga Mantse on Sunday, "I believe that, we must guard the peace we have in our country jealously because it is in that co-existence that we can have development. I am always inclined to people who are not divisive and so I am happy to see you"he said

He continued, "On Sunday, I look forward to receiving my brother, Otumfuo and I believe it will be in furtherance of the close bond of

Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh greeting His Royal Majesty King Tackie Teiko Tsuru II, the Ga Mantse





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Business

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Ghana's gold production grew to 4 million ounces in 2023 - Ghana Chamber of Mines

The Ghana Chamber of Mines has reported an 8.3 percent uptick in gold production, reaching 4 million ounces in 2023 compared to 3.7 million ounces the preceding year.

This increase was predominantly attributed to a surge in output from small-scale miners, which compensated for the decline in production from the large-scale sector.

This milestone marks the highest level of gold production for Ghana since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In contrast, gold output from the large-scale sector decreased from 3.1 million ounces in 2022 to 2.9 million ounces in 2023, reflecting a 4.9 percent decline.

On the other hand, the smallscale sector witnessed substantial growth, soaring by 70.6 percent from 0.66 million ounces to 1.1 million ounces within the same timeframe.

Looking forward to 2024, gold production is anticipated to rise between 4.3 and 4.5 million ounces, with forthcoming projects such as Newmont's Ahafo North and Cardinal Resource's Namdini Gold Mine poised to play pivotal roles in this expansion.

Furthermore, manganese production is forecasted to escalate to 5 million tonnes, bauxite output is expected to range between 1.2 million and 1.5 million tonnes, and diamond exports are projected to reach between 220,000 and 250,000 carats.

Source: The Independent Ghana | Phoebe Martekie Doku



Ghana's \$360m third tranche to be approved by IMF **Board by end of June**

second review hana's program for a third tranche of US\$360 million is anticipated to be presented to the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) by the end of June 2024.

This review aims to secure approval and the subsequent disbursement of additional funds Since then, Ghana has received under the country's Extended Credit Facility (ECF) program with the IMF, supporting economic recovery and stability.

bringing the total to about US\$1.6 billion in disbursements since May of 2023," she noted.

This development follows the country reaching a staff-level agreement on economic policies and reforms for the second review of the program on April 13, 2024.

Ms. Kovack highlighted that the authorities' Ghanaian strong policy and reform efforts are yielding results, with signs of economic stabilization beginning to emerge.

"For example, growth in 2023 was higher than we had initially envisaged," she said.

Source: The Independent Ghana



"Our aim is to bring the review to the IMF's Executive Board for approval before the end of June," Julie Kovack, the Director of the Communications Department at the IMF said this during a press briefing on Thursday, June 6.

draft Memorandum of а Understanding (MoU) from its Official Creditors and is currently reviewing it before signing to formally conclude negotiations.

Looking ahead, steadfast implementation of policies and reforms will be crucial to fully and durably restore macroeconomic stability and debt sustainability in Ghana.

Reflecting on the progress of the "This would give Ghana access three-year loan-support program, to US\$360 million in financing,

IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva and Mohammed Amin Adam, Finance Minister

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International

Dozens killed by suspected DR Congo rebels in spate of attacks

t least 45 civilians have been killed in a spate of attacks Lover the past week across the Democratic Republic of Congo's troubled North Kivu province.

Decades of fighting between armed groups over lucrative gold and mineral deposits has devastated the region, forcing millions from their homes.

The Congolese government has not confirmed who was responsible for this week's killings, but multiple local sources say Islamic Statelinked Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) were to blame.

The attackers targeted several villages in the region surrounding the city of Beni, to which many people have since fled.

Reports suggest that the worsthit district was Mamove, where a number of homes were also torched and motorbikes were stolen.

"The [death] toll could rise as the search continues, the population is fleeing and heading towards supposedly secure areas," Leon Siviwe, an administrative leader in Beni, told the AFP news agency on Wednesday.

The ADF was created across the border in eastern Uganda in the 1990s, and took up arms against the country's long-serving Museveni. president, Yoweri alleging government persecution of Muslims.

Its alliance with Islamic State is thought to have begun about six years ago, but analysts say those links are tenuous.

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An online post by Islamic State says one of this week's attacks in North Kivu targeted Christians.

Joint military operations by Ugandan and Congolese forces against ADF rebels began in 2021 but they have failed to stop attacks on civilians.

Another rebel group, the M23, has recently revived its deadly campaign in eastern Democratic Republic and has been seizing territory from government forces.

Rwanda is widely understood to be backing the M23 rebels, but Kigali vehemently denies this.

Source: BBC



File photo

Two women in Comoros detained on gay sex charges after marriage bid

olice in Comoros detained two women on Saturday on charges of engaging in samesex sexual activity after they asked an Islamic preacher to marry them, a public prosecutor said.

Gay sex is illegal in Comoros, a

up to two years, he added.

It was not immediately possible to reach a lawyer representing the women. There has been a growing crackdown on same-sex relations in some African countries in recent years, with tough anti-LGBTQ+



archipelago Muslim-majority nation in the Indian ocean which has a population of 870,000.

Public prosecutor Ali Mohamed Djounaid said the women were being held in pre-trial detention at a prison in the capital, Moroni, after a court appearance in which they were charged with having "unnatural sex".

"They are accused of acts that are contrary to good morals and against nature," Djounaid said. If convicted, the two women who are aged 22 and 25 could be jailed for laws passed in Uganda and Ghana drawing strong condemnation from Western countries and rights campaigners.

The Ugandan law enacted last year includes life imprisonment for gay sex and the death penalty for certain same-sex acts.

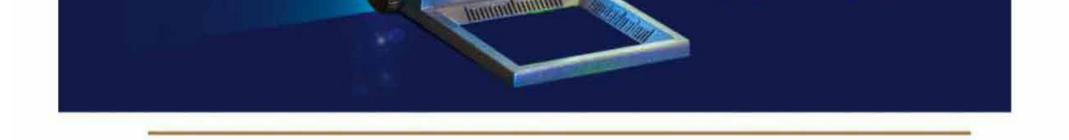
A report by the UK-based Human Dignity Trust, a rights group, said there were few known examples of anti-LGBTQ+ laws being enforced in the Comoros in recent years.

Source: Reuters

File photo

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