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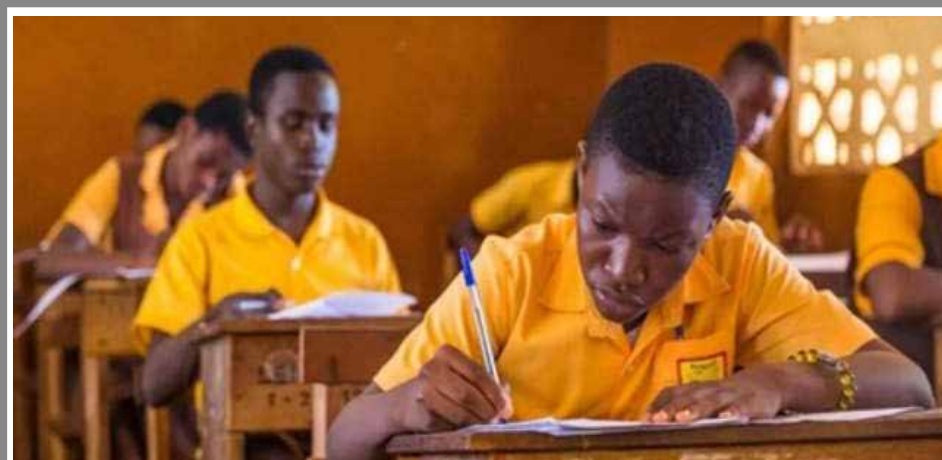


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# General News

## Ghana among top 25 countries sending students to the US

**G**hana has been included in the top 25 countries globally for sending students to the United States, according to the latest Open Doors report.

Published on November 13, 2023, the report reveals that over 6,400 Ghanaian students pursued studies in the U.S. during the 2022-2023 academic year.

The annual Open Doors Report, released by the Institute of International Education (IIE), provides detailed statistics on international students in the United States.

The report highlights a significant 31.6 percent increase in the number of Ghanaian students, with a record 6,468 Ghanaians enrolled in U.S. institutions.

“U.S. colleges and universities offer world-class educational opportunities and Ghanaian students in the United States are deepening the ties of friendship, family, and business between our countries. We are so happy to see Ghanaians seeking to learn, develop their skills, and return to Ghana to benefit their communities,” said U.S. Ambassador to Ghana Virginia Palmer.

The report indicates that Ghana ranks as the 14th largest source

of graduate students in the United States.

A notable 4,140 Ghanaian students were enrolled in graduate degree programs, representing a 38 percent rise from the previous year.

In addition to their academic pursuits, Ghanaian students secured nearly \$9 million in scholarships across 700 educational institutions in all 50 states during the 2022-2023 academic year.

To accommodate the increasing demand, the U.S. Embassy processed a record number of student visa applications in the last fiscal year.

The United States continues to be the leading destination for international students, hosting over one million (1,057,188) during the 2022-2023 academic year, which marks a 12 percent increase from the prior year.

Most international students in the U.S. are pursuing degrees in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM), with mathematics and computer science being the most popular fields of study.

The U.S. Embassy in Ghana has been proactive in supporting this

surge in educational exchanges. It organised the largest-ever EducationUSA college fairs in Accra and Kumasi, attracting over 13,000 students, parents, and academic professionals.

Through EducationUSA, the U.S. Embassy in Ghana assists qualified individuals in navigating the college application process. Advising centres in Accra and Kumasi at ACE Consult in Asokwa offer personalised guidance both in-person and online to support

Ghanaian students applying to accredited U.S. higher education institutions.

Over the past year, advisers from these centres have facilitated applications for admission to hundreds of U.S. universities and colleges for thousands of Ghanaian students, reinforcing the educational ties between the two countries.

*Source: Independent Ghana / Sebastian Akaho-Tay*



File photo

## Akufo-Addo to receive report on leaked IGP ousting tape

**S**peaker of Parliament, Alban Bagbin, has instructed the Clerk of Parliament to deliver a copy of the investigative findings concerning the leaked tape plotting to remove the Inspector General of Police (IGP) to President Nana Akufo-Addo.

This action follows the House's approval of the committee's report.

The report, notably unsigned by its Chairman Samuel Atta Akyea, uncovered that three senior police officers—COP Alex George

Mensah, Supt. George Lysander Asare, and Supt. Emmanuel Eric Gyebi—had engaged in misconduct.

This constitutes a severe breach under police regulations, necessitating disciplinary action as per established Police disciplinary procedures.

Upon the House's adoption of the report, Speaker Bagbin declared, “The report is accordingly adopted. I hereby direct the Clerk

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Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of Ghana

# General News

## Akufo-Addo to receive report on leaked IGP ousting tape

- Continued from page 2

to Parliament to make available a copy of this report, which has just been adopted by the House, to His Excellency, the President, as Chairman of the Police Council for any further action deemed necessary.”

The parliamentary committee concluded its inquiry into the

leaked tape that implicated the senior officers in a plot to unseat IGP George Akuffo Dampare.

The committee’s recommendations included disciplinary measures against COP Mensah, Supt. Asare, and Supt. Gyebi for their violations of police regulations and professional conduct codes. These

infractions involved activities that entangled them in political disputes and potential abuse of their positions.

The committee urged Parliament to notify President Akufo-Addo of these findings, aligning with Section 19 of the Police Service Act, 1970 (Act 350), which authorizes the president to enforce

disciplinary sanctions.

The President’s response is now anticipated to address the breach of trust and protocol within the police ranks.

**Source: *The Independent Ghana* / Andy Ogbarmey-Tetty**

## Ghana’s population to exceed 50 million by 2050 - GSS

The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) projects that the country’s population will surpass 50 million by 2050, a significant increase from 30.8 million in 2021.

This is according to the 2021 Population and Housing Census Thematic Report on Population Projections.

The report forecasts the population to grow 1.7 times larger

than in 2021, with Greater Accra and Ashanti regions expected to remain the most populous, each reaching approximately 7.5 million people by 2050.

Meanwhile, the Northern, Northeast, and Savannah regions are anticipated to experience the highest growth rates, doubling their populations by 2050.

The report also notes demographic shifts, such as a decline in the

youth population and a rise in the elderly population. Urban areas are set for substantial expansion, with more than half of all regions projected to be urbanized by 2030.

“By the end of the decade (2030), the population is expected to grow to 37.2 million persons, meaning that an estimated 711,706 additional persons, on average will be added to the population annually. The population residing in urban areas is projected to

increase by 4.0 percentage points between 2021 and 2030: from 56.7 to 60.7 percent.”

“By 2030, more than half of the 16 regions are expected to be urban. Seven regions (Volta, Oti, Western North, North East, Upper West, Savannah and Upper East) will remain predominantly rural in 2030.”

**Source: *The Independent Ghana* / Phoebe.M.Doku**



Street of Accra

# General News

## Suspects arrested for Ayawaso West Wuogon NPP office attack rises to 7

The police have announced the arrest of six more suspects in connection with the violent attack and destruction of properties at the Ayawaso West Wuogon NPP office on Sunday, July 7.

This incident had escalated tensions within the community, prompting swift intervention by authorities to restore order.

Initially, one suspect was arrested, and seven others were declared wanted by the police.

In a press statement issued on Thursday, July 11, the police confirmed that six out of the seven wanted suspects have now been apprehended.

The individuals arrested are Alhaji Issah Kamara, Theophilus Kodzo Bedzra, Abdulai Victoria Naematu Nadolie, Hope Adzrah, Francis Agbessi Funu, and Christian Biakuse. They are currently in police custody and are cooperating with the ongoing investigation.

The police assured the public that they are continuing their efforts to apprehend the remaining suspects involved in the incident.

Authorities have called for calm and urged the public to assist with any information that could lead to the arrest of the remaining suspect.

*Source: The Independent Ghana / Andy Ogbarmey-Tettey*



File photo

## WAEC denies fabricating exam results in favour of any government

Head of Public Affairs at the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), John K. Kapi, has denied claims that WAEC manipulates examination results for political reasons.

He emphasized that WAEC maintains fairness and adheres to rigorous standards in their marking processes.

"It's untrue that we alter results to favour any government. No one should claim our exams are politically influenced. What candidates deserve is exactly what they receive," Mr. Kapi stressed.

He made this known in an interview with the media on Thursday, while addressing concerns about undue influence and compromised WAEC officials.

Mr. Kapi asserted that there is no intent to appease any government by altering the marking scheme.

"Such claims are baseless. No one within our organization would compromise our standards. We meticulously review and agree on marking schemes during

coordination meetings to ensure consistency," he explained.

The WAEC official stated that examiners are directed to strictly follow the established criteria and are not allowed to use their discretion to benefit any candidate.

"We stand by our rigorous processes to guarantee fair and impartial examination outcomes," he added.

In related events, the West African Examinations Council has raised concerns about a potential delay in releasing the 2024 Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) results if the government does not disburse the remaining funds promptly.

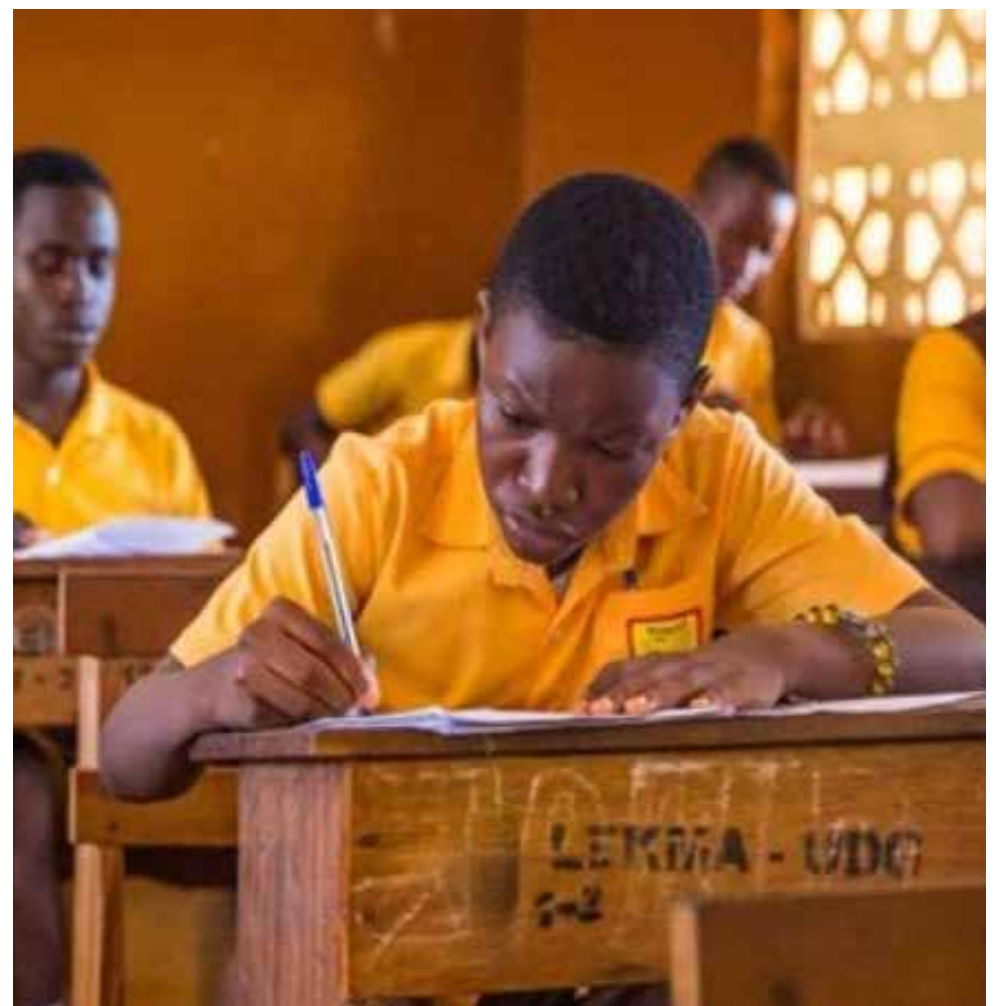
Mr. Kapi emphasized that such delays could disrupt the academic calendar, affecting students, educational institutions, and the broader educational system.

"So far, we are still writing the examinations. There are a lot of things that will go on after the examination before the marking and processing of results will

begin. So, my belief is that by the time we start marking, looking at the process that has been started, we should be able to get the money

in before the marking exercise starts," he stated.

*Source: The Independent Ghana / Amanda Cartey*



File photo

# General News

## Parliament approves Herbert Krapa as Minister of State at Energy Ministry

Parliament has officially endorsed Herbert Krapa as the Minister of State-designate for the Energy Ministry.

This approval comes after an earlier attempt by Majority Leader Alexander Afenyo-Markin to expedite Mr Krapa's vetting and approval was blocked by the Minority.

President Akufo-Addo nominated Herbert Krapa, currently the Deputy Energy Minister, to serve as Minister of State at the Energy Ministry following the selection of Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh, the incumbent Energy Minister, as the running mate for New Patriotic Party (NPP) flagbearer Vice President Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia.

In response, the Majority Leader sought parliamentary fast-tracking of the approval process to prevent any potential leadership gaps at the

ministry.

However, this move was met with opposition from the Minority in Parliament.

Deputy Minority Leader, Emmanuel Armah-Kofi Buah, argued that the current Energy Minister remained in office, rendering the urgency unnecessary.

On Wednesday, July 10, the issue was revisited, resulting in the Appointments Committee recommending Herbert Krapa's approval.

Despite a walkout by the Minority in protest, the report ultimately received parliamentary approval.

*Source: The Independent Ghana / Phoebe.M.Doku*



*Herbert Krapa, Minister of State at the Energy Ministry*

## Committee report on IGP leaked tape 'so anaemic', it must be rejected – Atta Akyea

Chairman of the ad hoc committee that investigated a leaked tape regarding a plot to remove Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dr George Akuffo Dampare, Samuel Atta Akyea, has criticised the committee's report as lacking substance for parliamentary action.

Mr Atta Akyea asserted that the report, which implicated senior police officers for misconduct under police regulations, did not provide a sufficient logical basis for parliamentary endorsement.

His comments come after all other members of the committee had signed the final report of the probe into the leaked tape on the IGP, Akuffo Dampare.

The committee's unsigned report indicated that three senior police officers, COP Alex George Mensah, Supt. George Lysander Asare, and Supt. Emmanuel Eric Gyebi, was found to have engaged in misconduct, a significant breach of police regulations necessitating sanctions under the police disciplinary procedure.

He emphasised that the committee's role is not merely to accept statements at face value but to thoroughly

investigate matters.

"I want to submit with the greatest of respect that this report reduced parliament and the good committee of parliament to a conveyor belt that anything they drop on it should go. You do not just listen to people who come before a committee and that will bring you to a conclusion of the matter. You delve into the matters."

"A committee of parliament is not a conveyor belt. They're supposed to delve into this matter. And on that showing, this report is so anaemic."

"It lacks substance for plenary to find, with the greatest of respect, any decision on it and to uphold this report. Yes. And I urge this House to reject this report because there is no foundation of evidence for this report. And we shouldn't make a resolution based on such an anaemic report," he stated.

In response, Vice Chairman James Agalga defended the report, refuting Mr Atta Akyea's assertions as misrepresentations.

He clarified that the committee had carefully deliberated and appropriately handled legal definitions, rejecting claims

of inadequate investigation or misinterpretation of facts.

"Mr Speaker, quite a number of issues have been raised, which constitutes a gross misrepresentation of the facts and of the report...in the course of the committee's deliberations, the chairman had the opportunity to raise the arguments that he has canvassed before this house this evening that we could not elevate conspiracy to the level of our criminal jurisprudence under section 23 of the criminal and

other offences act and we all agreed as a result of that intervention," he stated.

"Mr Speaker, if you look at the report, we did not use the definition of conspiracy under section 23 of the Criminal and Other Offences Act. We borrowed the dictionary meaning of conspiracy and dealt with the matter as such," he stated.

*Source: The Independent Ghana / Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo*



*Samuel Atta Akyea, Chairman of the ad hoc committee*

# General News

## We will ensure you enjoy reliable and stable power supply - Gov't

Minister of State at the Energy Ministry, Herbert Krapa, has reassured Ghanaians during his appearance before the Parliament's Appointments Committee on July 9th.

He affirmed the Akufo-Addo government's steadfast commitment to maintaining a consistent and reliable power supply nationwide.

Mr. Krapa highlighted ongoing government investments aimed at bolstering energy infrastructure and capacity, ensuring uninterrupted electricity supply.

He also noted significant expansions in electricity access to previously underserved areas, underscoring the administration's efforts to enhance nationwide reliability.

Addressing concerns about power outages, Krapa assured that there is currently no 'dumsor', emphasising the proactive

measures taken by the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) and the Energy Ministry to manage any challenges effectively.

"Mr chairman, the power situation as I believe every Ghanaian can attest to, we are delivering reliable and stable power supply to all our consumers across the country."

"The work of ECG is essentially to do that, and I can assure this committee and the Ghanaian people that the challenges that we saw for the last couple of months, the ECG and the Ministry has a firm hold of the situation now and will continue to perform the function of ensuring that our consumers and customers have reliable and dependable power supply across the country," he said.

Prior to his assurance, several parts of the country had experienced intermittent power supply owing to shortage of gas supply among others.

Also, erratic power supply

looms owing to debt owed by the government to Independent Power Producers (IPPs).

The cumulative invoice on debts owed Independent Power Producers is projected to hit \$450 million by the end of the year should talks between the IPPs and the government for the

restructuring of energy sector debts fail to progress.

Currently, the government is in talks with IPPs to restructure the debts which stand at \$1.46 billion.

*Source: Independent Ghana / Sebastian Akaho-Tay*



*Herbert Krapa, Minister of State at the Energy Ministry*

## Court bans media commentary on ambulance procurement trial

The Appeal Court judge presiding over the ongoing ambulance procurement trial, Justice Afia Serwah Asare-Botwe, has issued a ban on media commentary regarding the proceedings.

The trial, which has spanned over two years, involves former Deputy Finance Minister Cassiel Ato Forson and businessman Richard Jakpa.

Justice Afia Serwah Asare-Botwe expressed concerns about public comments on the evidence presented in court, which she felt were verging on contempt.

She highlighted remarks made by both involved and uninvolved lawyers and pointed to media interviews given by the third accused, Richard Jakpa, as

problematic.

Jakpa had provided a detailed account of the ambulance contract process during an interview on July 3, 2024.

To ensure the integrity of the trial and fairness in the proceedings, the judge emphasised the importance of refraining from media commentary.

"The court notes that the proceedings are being streamed live, and anyone can log on and observe the proceedings. There is no need for any analysis to be made at this time. Anyone who wants can log on to have an opinion and not make any judgment on the matter. No lawyer or any person shall make any comment bordering on the weight of the evidence adduced - *continued on page 7*



*Justice Afia Serwah Asare-Botwe*

# General News

## Court bans media commentary on ambulance procurement trial

- Continued from page 6

or yet to be adduced or make any comment that will prejudice this case," Justice Afia Serwah Asare-Botwe stated in court.

The ambulance trial is a criminal case where Cassiel Ato Forson and Richard Jakpa have been accused

of causing financial loss to the state of Ghana.

The charges stem from the alleged wrongful procurement of ambulances that were found unfit for use, resulting in an approximate loss of €2.37 million to the state.

Both accused have pleaded not guilty to the charges against them.

Justice Asare-Botwe's order aims to maintain a fair trial by preventing external influences and ensuring that the case is judged solely on the evidence presented

in court.

The public can continue to follow the case through live streams and media reports without engaging in speculative commentary.

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

## 200 homes in Amrahia constructed by State Housing Company 75% complete - Oppong-Nkrumah

**M**inister of Works and Housing, Kojo Oppong-Nkrumah, has revealed that the construction of 200 homes by the State Housing Company (SHC) in Amrahia is now 75% complete.

This milestone represents significant progress in the government's efforts to reduce housing costs and improve living standards for Ghanaians.

In a briefing received from SHC, Oppong-Nkrumah highlighted the project's benefits. "The objective is to reduce the cost of housing units for the benefit of the Ghanaian

people," he stated.

The Minister shared updates on his X platform, noting that roads and water connections are being provided at no cost to the developer as part of the housing incentive package.

"Soon this will be extended to all master developers who sign up for the government's PPP framework for affordable housing," Oppong Nkrumah added.

The initiative aims to encourage private sector participation in affordable housing projects, leveraging public-private partnerships to meet Ghana's

housing needs.

This project in Amrahia is part of a broader effort by the SHC to rejuvenate dormant housing projects and instill optimism in Ghana's housing market.

A notable example is the Adentan housing project, which has been revitalised after a decade-long hiatus. Originally commissioned during the Atta-Mills administration, the 70-unit development had stalled due to legal disputes with the contractor.

Now, with legal issues resolved, the SHC is diligently working towards completing the Adentan project.

During an inspection of the site, SHC officials and the Minister expressed satisfaction with the progress.

"We are committed to completing this project in partnership with the private sector and making the units available for public purchase," said Kwabena Ampofo Appiah, Managing Director of SHC.

This commitment underscores the SHC's dedication to addressing the housing deficit and providing affordable housing solutions for Ghanaians.

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



**Kojo Oppong-Nkrumah (L), Minister of Works and Housing**

# General News

## Expedite proceedings on Ahmed Suale's murder - GJA tells AG

President of the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA), Albert Kwabena Dwumfour, has called on the Attorney General to expedite the investigation and prosecution of the murder case of investigative journalist Ahmed Suale. Speaking at the GJA's 75th Anniversary Lecture in Ho, Dwumfour highlighted the urgency of addressing this long-standing issue.

"We also wish to use this platform to appeal to the Attorney General to start expediting action on the Ahmed Suale murder case, a single issue that keeps affecting the position of the media on the World Press Freedom Index," Dwumfour stated.

Ahmed Suale, who was part of the investigative team led

by renowned journalist Anas Aremeyaw Anas, was murdered on January 16, 2019.

He was shot three times, twice in the chest and once in the neck, by unidentified assailants while driving in his car in Madina, Accra.

Despite the passage of five years, there has been little progress in resolving the case.

The call for expedited action on Suale's case follows a recent attack on three journalists, which has prompted a media blackout on certain political figures, including Fisheries Minister Hawa Koomson.

The incident involved the assault of David Kobbena, a journalist from Cape FM, by individuals allegedly linked to Koomson.

Kobbena was attacked while covering a political event at the Central Regional Coordinating Council after being mistaken for another journalist who had allegedly insulted Koomson on a TV panel.

Following this incident, the GJA declared a media blackout on Hawa Koomson, urging all media houses to avoid covering her activities.

Dwumfour stressed the GJA's commitment to protecting journalists and advocating for justice.

"In 2024 alone, the GJA imposed a media blackout on key state personalities due to attacks on three journalists while they were on duty. Let me use this anniversary lecture to call on the government and authority to

intensify its collaboration with the GJA in ensuring the safety and security of journalists in Ghana," he said.

Dwumfour also emphasised the importance of public support for the media and encouraged anyone with information about the Ahmed Suale case to assist the police in their investigation.

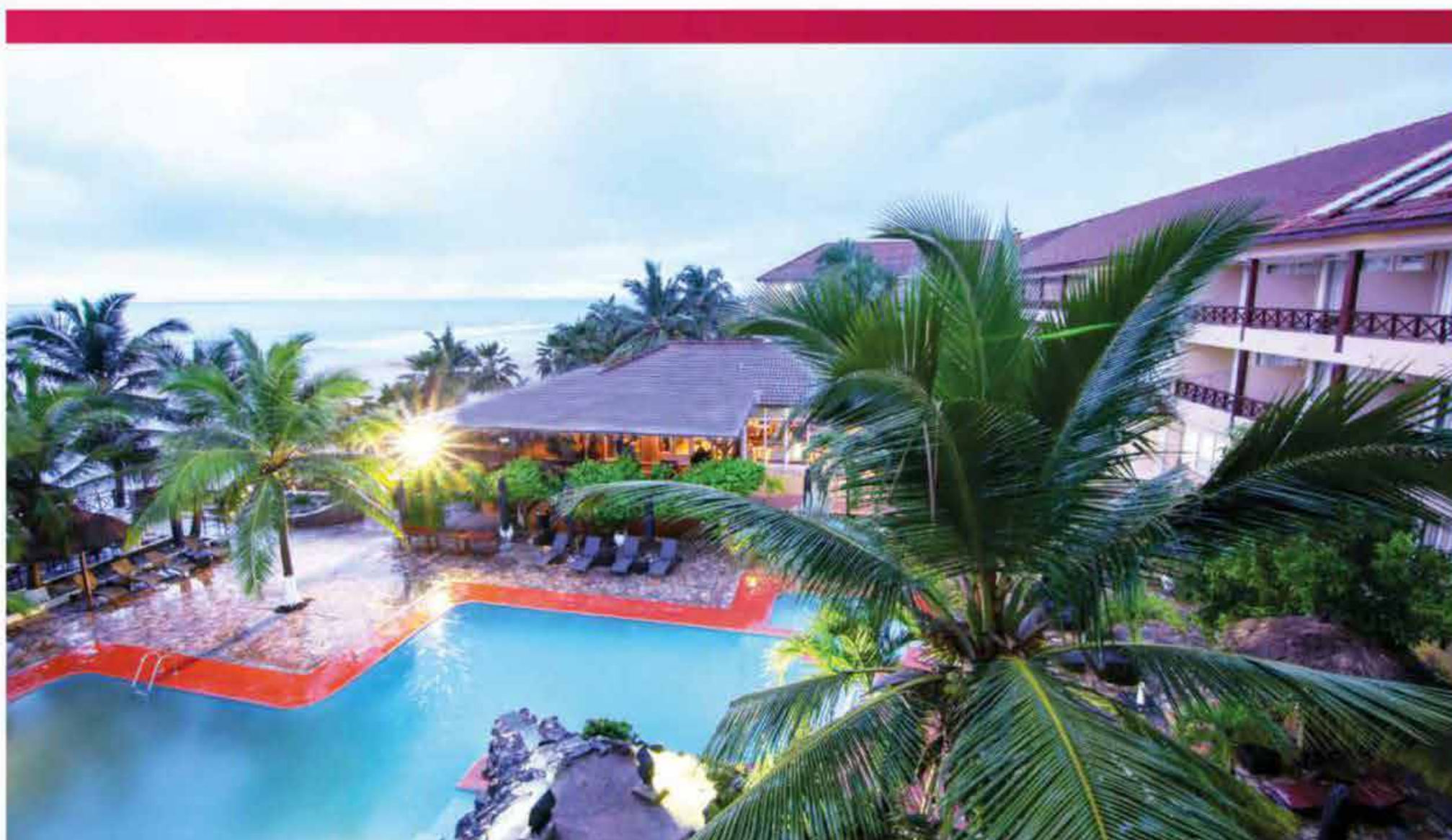
"I also want to urge anyone with information about those responsible for this matter to help the police investigate this case. The media cannot thrive without the support of the public. As a result, we call for collaboration in this regard as we work to address our developmental challenges."

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



**Ahmed Suale, Investigative journalist**





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# Business

## COCOBOD designs forward sales strategy for cocoa beans to mitigate price increase

Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), Joseph Boahen Aidoo, has noted that the cocoa bean forward sales is imperative in fostering sectoral growth and sustainability.

His remarks come in response to calls from several Civil Society Organizations for COCOBOD to reconsider its forward sales cocoa marketing system, especially in light of escalating market prices.

Speaking to the media following visits to farms in the Western and Central regions, Mr. Boahen Aidoo underscored that employing forward sales is a deliberate strategy designed to mitigate price risks and manage stock effectively.

"I am not ruling out a spot for sales, but it is always better to do forward sales. The buyer himself want forward sales just as the sellers. At all times, forward sales have been better than spot".

Mr. Boahen Aidoo explained that "The situation only changed for last year due to some announcement from the World Meteorological Centre on the El Nino which caused the market to

panic a bit which resulted in people raising the price of cocoa."

"Now, El Nino has retreated and the prices of cocoa have started coming down," he added.

Mr. Boahen Aidoo advised cocoa farmers across the seven regions to adopt hand pollination practices.

He noted that some farmers have experienced notable productivity gains, resulting in increased incomes since the introduction of hand pollination interventions in 2017.

Additionally, he endorsed the use of motorized slashers and pruners to enhance cocoa tree exposure to sunlight and air, which aids in increasing fruit production.

"Now that prices are good on the international market, what is needed is more yields to make farmers benefit. That's why we've deliberately come up with the hand pollination programme. So, all cocoa farmers should embrace it,"

"Ordinarily, if you allow even pruned farms to fruit on their own, for the natural insects to do the pollination, you may end up getting about five

to eight bags per hectare, but some farmers were producing between 20 bags and 30 bags per hectare. That's where we want all our farmers to get to" he added.

The Ghana Cocoa Board is also asking farmers to stop the use of cocktail chemicals which is the practice of mixing insecticides and fungicides to spray farms, but rather use poultry manure to improve soil nutrients to support higher yields of produce.

"Now that prices are good on the international market, what is needed is more yields to make farmers benefit. That's why we've deliberately come up with the hand pollination programme. So, all cocoa farmers

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"Ordinarily, if you allow even pruned farms to fruit on their own, for the natural insects to do the pollination, you may end up getting about five to eight bags per hectare, but some farmers were producing between 20 bags and 30 bags per hectare. That's where we want all our farmers to get to" he added.

The Ghana Cocoa Board is urging farmers to cease using cocktail chemicals—mixtures of insecticides and fungicides for spraying farms—and to instead utilize poultry manure to enhance soil nutrients for increased crop yields.

*Source: The Independent Ghana*



Cocoa beans

## ECG to embark on a 3-day emergency maintenance on Nuri Kamstrup prepayment server

The Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) has announced that it will undertake emergency maintenance on the Nuri Kamstrup Prepayment Server.

The maintenance work is scheduled to begin on Friday, July 12th at 11:00 pm and will last until Sunday, July 14th at 11:00 pm.

In a statement, the ECG advised all Nuri Kamstrup customers to ensure they have sufficient credit to cover the duration of the maintenance.

"This step is crucial to maintain uninterrupted power supply throughout the maintenance," the statement read. The company also apologised for any inconvenience caused and expressed appreciation for the understanding and cooperation of its customers.

Meanwhile, the Minister of State-

designate at the Energy Ministry, Herbert Krapa, has reassured Ghanaians of the government's commitment to maintaining a reliable and stable power supply nationwide.

Addressing the Appointments Committee of Parliament on Tuesday, July 9, Mr. Krapa stated, "The stable electricity currently enjoyed by the country will persist without disruptions."

Mr. Krapa emphasised the government's ongoing efforts to invest in the energy sector, aiming to improve infrastructure and capacity. "Under the current administration, electricity has been extended to previously unconnected areas, significantly enhancing access to reliable power throughout all regions," he noted.

Addressing concerns about power outages, commonly referred to as "dumsor," Mr. Krapa assured the

committee and the public that there is no dumsor in the country.

He highlighted the collaborative efforts between the government, ECG, and the Energy Ministry in effectively managing the situation.

"Ghanaians have

consistently enjoyed reliable electricity supply," he concluded, underscoring the government's commitment to ensuring stable power.

*Source: The Independent Ghana / Amanda Cartey*



File photo



# International

## Kenyan president fires ministers after anti-tax protests

**K**enya's under-fire President William Ruto has dismissed with "immediate effect" all his ministers and the attorney-general, following the recent deadly protests that led to the withdrawal of an unpopular tax bill.

The president said the move came after "reflection, listening to Kenyans, and after holistic appraisal of my cabinet".

He has said he will now consult widely in order to set up a broad-based government. The dissolution of his cabinet does not affect the deputy president, who can't legally be fired, and the prime cabinet secretary who is also the foreign affairs minister.

Mr Ruto said that government operations would continue uninterrupted under the supervision of senior civil servants.

He said he would consult "across different sectors and political formations and other Kenyans, both in public and private" over a new government, but did not say when it would be announced.

The dramatic move is highly unusual, coming less than two years after he took office.

Three of the sacked ministers were MPs before leaving their legislative roles to join the cabinet barely two years ago.

One of them is Aden Duale, who in a prompt post on X (formerly Twitter) thanked the president and said he would "forever be indebted to him and the people of Kenya for this opportunity to serve" as Kenya's defence minister.

Last Thursday, President Ruto chaired a cabinet meeting which one of the local newspapers described as the "last supper" for the ministers.

Some of the ministers were linked to corruption scandals that led to the suspension of senior government officials within several ministries. But Mr Ruto had defended them, saying that there were no evidence to sack them.

Last October, Mr Ruto announced a mini-cabinet reshuffle that affected at least eight ministers.

The last time an entire cabinet was dissolved was in 2005 when then President Mwai Kibaki did so shortly after losing a referendum over a new constitution.

Mr Ruto has been under pressure from Kenyans who have continued holding anti-government protests and demanding more accountability from government, even though he agreed to withdraw his controversial tax rises.

Some of the protesters have been calling for the president to go. Last week, Mr Ruto announced a number of austerity measures across various government agencies.

He also ordered a freeze in proposed pay rises for members of his cabinet and parliament following a public outcry.

*Source: BBC*



*William Ruto, Kenya's President*

## Burkina Faso junta adopts draft law to criminalise homosexuality

**B**urkina Faso's military junta said it has adopted the draft of an amended family code that criminalises homosexuality.

The West African nation has been among just 22 out of 54 countries on the continent that allow same-sex relations, which are punishable by death or lengthy prison terms in some states.

Burkina Faso has been under military rule since two successive coups in 2022 and is part of a confederation with juntas in neighbouring Mali and Niger.

All three interim governments have so far failed to hold elections and turned away from traditional Western allies.

In a statement late on Wednesday, Burkina Faso's junta said it had

adopted the amended family code draft in a weekly council of ministers overseen by interim military leader Ibrahim Traore.

"From now on, homosexuality and related practices are prohibited and punishable by law," interim Justice Minister Edasso Rodrigue Bayala said in a presidency statement on the meeting.

For the law to come into force, it will need to pass a parliamentary vote and then be promulgated by Traore.

There has been a further clampdown on LGBTQ rights in Africa over the past 14 months. Uganda signed one of the world's toughest anti-LGBTQ laws in May last year, while lawmakers in Ghana unanimously passed legislation

in February that intensifies the repression of LGBTQ people.

The daughter of Cameroon's president, Brenda Biya, came out as a lesbian last month and

has since called for laws that ban homosexuality in the country to be changed.

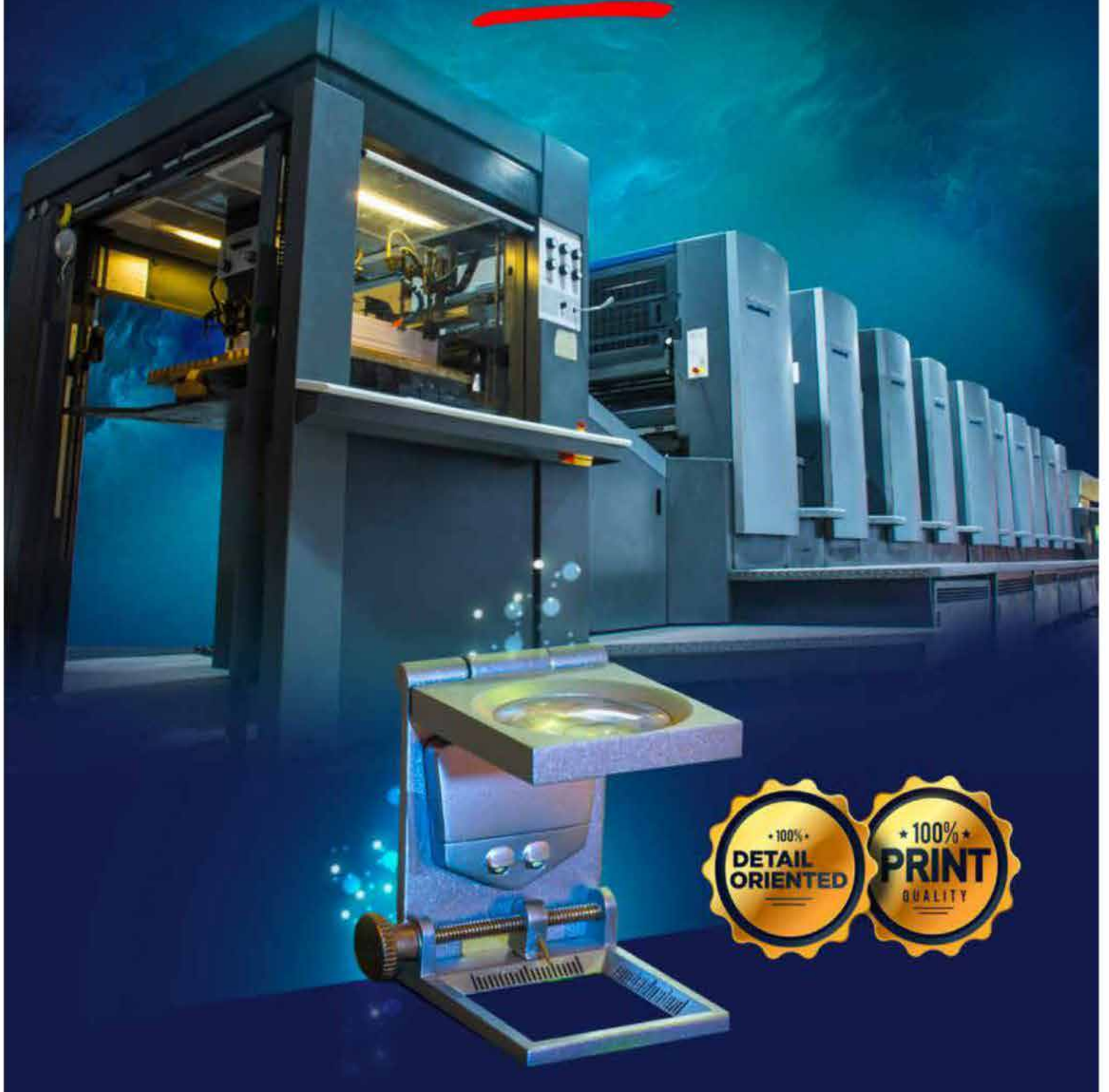
*Source: Reuters*



*Ibrahim Traore, Burkina Faso's military leader*

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