



Gov't is still providing vaccines – Minister justifies payment of COVID-19 Recovery Levy

Page 4

Ghana's galamsey fight has failed - Netherlands Ambassador to Ghana

Page 4



NMC forms media protection committee to tackle disinformation ahead of 2024 elections

Page 2

TOR to resume operations in 90 days - Minister

Page 3



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# General News

## Family to bar Koku Anyidoho from using Atta Mills' name

The family of the late President John Evans Atta Mills is planning to seek a court injunction against Koku Anyidoho, CEO of the Atta Mills Institute, to prevent him from using the former President's name in his activities. The family accuses Anyidoho of damaging Atta Mills' reputation.

Tensions escalated at the wreath-laying ceremony commemorating 12 years since President Mills' passing at Asomdwee Park on Wednesday, July 24, 2024.

Samuel Atta Mills, the late President's brother, expressed the family's frustration, condemning Anyidoho for allegedly tampering with the grave of Prof. Atta Mills without the family's consent.

"When we came, he was here with a rented family, so we just gave him a little bit of encouragement to get out of here, and he ran away

like the coward that he is," Samuel Atta Mills stated. "The next move is to put an injunction on him for using the name Atta Mills. He's not Atta Mills and he will never be Atta Mills."

Nii Lante Vanderpuye, Member of Parliament for Odododiodoo, also criticised the state for allowing Anyidoho, a former aide to the late President, to organise the remembrance event.

He pointed out that several family members, including the late President's direct senior sister Mercy Araba Ahema Quarshie, his brother Cadman Atta Mills, and his son Kofi Atta Mills, are alive and should be recognised in such commemorations.

"Auntie Araba is a direct senior sister of Prof Atta Mills, Cadman Atta Mills is alive, Samuel Atta Mills is alive, the son, Kofi Atta Mills is alive. And people will come

and say they are the family of Prof. Atta Mills, and they are coming to perform the remembrance and national security and the whole state apparatus will permit them to do that," Vanderpuye asserted.

The Asomdwee Park event witnessed chaos when Anyidoho exceeded his allotted time, delaying the memorial service for President Mills' family and members of the National Democratic Congress (NDC).

Previously, the family had accused

Anyidoho of bringing individuals to falsely present themselves as relatives of the late President during his wreath-laying ceremony.

The dispute highlights ongoing tensions over the legacy and memory of President Atta Mills, with his family determined to protect his name and reputation.

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



*Late Professor John Evans Atta Mills, Former President of Ghana*

## NMC forms media protection committee to tackle disinformation ahead of 2024 elections

The National Media Commission (NMC) of Ghana has launched a series of initiatives to safeguard journalists and combat disinformation in the lead-up to the 2024 elections. This move aims to ensure the safety of media practitioners and maintain professional standards during the electoral period.

As part of these measures, the NMC has established a Media Advisory Committee. This committee's primary role is to support and protect journalists, fostering a secure environment for their work.

The NMC has consistently advocated for responsible journalism and warned against hate speech, urging media personnel to adhere to ethical standards.

Executive Secretary of the NMC, George Sarpong, emphasized the necessity of thorough information verification. He announced the

formation of a "public brain trust" comprising respected community experts who will collaborate with regional media. This initiative focuses on three main objectives: protecting journalists, promoting media responsibility, and combating disinformation.

"We call it a public brain trust, well respected in the community, very knowledgeable, but experts in their various fields that we bring together to work with the media in the region," Sarpong explained. "We're going to do three things: firstly, to protect the safety of journalists to enable them to do their work, especially during this election. Secondly, to promote media responsibility during this period. Thirdly, combat disinformation. Their methods of operation will be engaging the media on matters of concern, settling cases."

The NMC also highlighted the dangers of spreading unverified

information, warning that such practices could incite public unrest.

Chairman of the NMC, Yaw Boadu Ayebofo, advised journalists to be cautious with content from social media and stressed the importance of verifying the authenticity of such information before dissemination.

"I will appeal to the mainstream media, now called the traditional media, never ever replicate what you see on social media, without establishing the foundation of it. Because the people on social media have not had the training

that we have. And so, when you receive any material on social media, and you put it out, you're helping them to misinform us," Ayebofo stated.

The recent false report claiming that a Ghanaian chef named Smith had broken the record for the longest cooking marathon highlights the prevalence of disinformation.

The Guinness World Records refuted this claim, and Chef Smith later disclosed his actual motive behind the false announcement.

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



*Yaw Boadu Ayebofo, Chairman of the NMC*

# General News

## Maize shortage forcing Ghana to rely on imports - PFAG reveals

The Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana (PFAG) has confirmed a severe maize shortage in the country, compelling feed mills and processors to increasingly depend on imports to meet demand.

"There is no maize in the system. What we have produced in the last few seasons has been entirely consumed, and there is no buffer. Consumers and processors now have to rely on imports from the Sahel regions to meet local demands," former Executive Director of PFAG, Dr. Charles Nyaaba, informed the media.

Dr. Nyaaba criticized the government's Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ) initiative, noting that it has not significantly impacted maize production and

availability.

"The main objective of PFJ is to ensure that we have enough raw materials for industry; specifically with maize, it has not happened," he said.

The PFAG raised concerns about the rising maize prices in local markets, with a 50kg bag now costing GH¢300 or more in some areas.

They questioned the effectiveness of the PFJ 2.0 initiative, given the shortcomings of the initial phase.

The Greater Accra Poultry Farmers Association (GAPFA) and other feed mills in the capital have also expressed frustration over the maize shortage affecting poultry feed production.

A GAPFA representative, who wished to remain anonymous, shared their struggle to obtain sufficient maize for processing over the past few weeks.

Despite the shortages, the government reported spending nearly GH¢2.9 billion on the first phase of the PFJ policy from 2017 to 2022.

This expenditure was primarily

for the supply of improved seeds and fertilizers to boost farmer productivity.

Additionally, GH¢1 billion has been allocated for the implementation of PFJ 2.0, aimed at enhancing food security, reducing food import costs, and addressing youth unemployment.

*Source: Independent Ghana / Sebastian Akaho-Tay*



Maize

## TOR to resume operations in 90 days - Energy Minister

The Minister of State at the Ministry of Energy, Herbert Krapa, has announced that the Tema Oil Refinery (TOR) will resume operations within 90 days.

This announcement followed his visit to TOR and Sentuo Oil Refinery on July 23, 2024.

In a Facebook post, Mr. Krapa stated that the management of TOR has agreed to the three-month timeline.

He emphasized the government's commitment to reviving the refinery and mentioned efforts to secure a strategic partner to aid in its reopening.

"Earlier today, I paid working visits to Tema Oil Refinery and Sentuo Oil Refinery. I am happy to announce that together with the Management of TOR, we agreed on a three-month timeline for the resumption of the plant. I also announced the government's plan to immediately revive TOR's Testing Laboratory for revenue generation. I charged both TOR

and Sentuo to see each other as partners and collaborate for the growth of both refineries," Mr. Krapa stated.

During his visit, Mr. Krapa called on all stakeholders to support the revival of the facility, stressing the importance of collective effort.

"There is no gain in saying TOR needs all our support, and attention and we all need to put our hands on deck. It is for these reasons that I chose TOR to be my first official visit to the institutions that work under the ministry. I don't think it's late in the day."

The facility, currently managed by Kofi Tagoe Mocumbi, ceased operations several years ago due to a shortage of crude oil, its primary raw material.

Previously, TOR had the capacity to process around 45,000 barrels of crude oil daily. However, its inactivity has raised concerns among industry stakeholders about the impact on the cost of imported fuel.

The government's plan to revive

TOR also includes reactivating its Testing Laboratory to generate revenue.

This initiative is part of broader efforts to enhance the refinery's

operational efficiency and contribute to the growth of the oil sector in Ghana.

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



Herbert Krapa, Minister of State at the Ministry of Energy

# General News

## Ghana's galamsey fight has failed - Netherlands Ambassador to Ghana

The Netherlands Ambassador to Ghana, Jeroen Verheul, has expressed concerns over Ghana's persistent struggle with illegal mining, locally known as "galamsey."

According to Ambassador Verheul, the primary reason for the ongoing issue is ineffective law enforcement.

In an interview on JoyNews' AM Show with Benjamin Akakpo on Thursday, Mr. Verheul shared his observations.

"There is not a lot of success in combating illegal mining, and if I speak to organisations that are forcefully opposing illegal mining, they tell me it is very difficult to get enforcement. For example, if the police act and arrest somebody, that person is often out of prison very soon," he said.

Despite an increase in gold production, Mr. Verheul noted that this growth is mostly in the

informal sector rather than the formal, regulated sector. This shift complicates the fight against illegal mining activities.

He also prefers describing the issue as "small-scale illegal mining" instead of "galamsey," stating, "I avoid using the term 'galamsey' because it implies something cultural or uniquely African, which I believe is inaccurate."

The Ambassador highlighted the need for substantial efforts to combat illegal mining but expressed skepticism about the feasibility of curtailing the menace.

He suggested that some parties likely benefit from the continuation of illegal mining and therefore have a vested interest in its persistence.

"I do not have the knowledge and expertise to indicate who those parties might be, but if there was a general political will and if there

was an enforcement capacity, then Ghana would be able to solve this issue, but it is not happening," Mr. Verheul stated.

Illegal mining poses several significant challenges for Ghana, affecting both the environment and socio-economic conditions.

These activities often lead to severe environmental damage, including deforestation and river pollution with toxic chemicals such as mercury and cyanide used

in gold extraction.

This contamination impacts water sources, posing health risks to local communities and disrupting ecosystems.

Furthermore, the informal nature of illegal mining means that the government loses potential revenue from taxes and royalties, which could otherwise support national development projects and the overall economy.

**Source: The Independent Ghana**



Jeroen Verheul, Netherlands Ambassador to Ghana

## Gov't is still providing vaccines – Minister justifies continued collection of COVID-19 levy amidst calls for relief

Government will persist in collecting the COVID-19 recovery levy to address the ongoing impacts of the pandemic, according to Minister of State at the Finance Ministry, Abena Osei Asare.

This stance comes in response to growing calls from the Minority in Parliament and various public sectors to eliminate taxes like the COVID-19 levy and e-levy to ease the financial burdens on Ghanaians, who are grappling with a high cost of living.

During a Public Accounts Committee hearing on Wednesday, July 24, Osei Asare highlighted the necessity of the levy, despite the official end of the pandemic.

She stressed the continuing need for funding to maintain the country's supply of COVID-19 vaccines, which are crucial for building citizens' immunity.

"COVID is no more, but we still feel the impact of COVID. There are many things that we did during COVID-19 that we are now having to take care of," Osei Asare explained.

When asked about a potential end date for the COVID levy, she could not provide a specific timeline but noted that its introduction in Parliament came with the agreement that it would be subject to review after a certain period.

"What I know is that COVID-19 vaccines are still in the system and, Mr. Chairman, they are not for free. We still have to service the 10 million bond loans we took from the Bank of Ghana," she added.

Meanwhile, leader of the Movement for Change, Alan Kyerematen, has also called for the abolition of the COVID-19 levy and the Ghana Health Service disinfection fee during the launch of his Great

Transformation Agenda.

He questioned the relevance of these fees in 2024, asking, "How can we be collecting COVID fees and disinfection fees in 2024?"

Kyerematen further outlined plans to phase out taxes and charges on imported spare parts within two years if his administration is established under a government

of National Unity.

The ongoing debate over the COVID-19 levy reflects broader concerns about the financial pressures on Ghanaians and the government's strategy for economic recovery in the post-pandemic era.

**Source: Independent Ghana / Sebastian Akaho-Tay**



File Photo

# General News

## Bawumia to replace fertilizer with lime, provide farmers tractors on credit

Flagbearer of the governing New Patriotic Party (NPP), Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, has pledged robust support for Ghanaian farmers by introducing lime as an alternative to traditional fertilizers and providing tractors on credit to boost agricultural productivity.

He stressed that this shift from traditional fertilizers to lime will significantly improve agricultural productivity.

“We are going to help the farmers with tractors and with credit for them to harvest, and we are going to move from the normal fertilizer to lime. Lime makes our soil very fertile, and we have lime in Ghana, and we are going to help our farmers use lime in Ghana,” he added.

Speaking at a campaign rally in Wa

East, Dr. Bawumia underscored the essential role of farming in ensuring food security and reducing food prices.

He emphasized that enhancing farming practices is pivotal to achieving these goals, and committed to supplying farmers with the necessary resources to increase their yields.

Highlighting the disparity in agricultural productivity, Dr. Bawumia noted that farmers in Brazil and China produce 10 and 12 tons of maize per acre, respectively, compared to Ghana’s average yield of four tons per acre. To bridge this gap, he promised to introduce advanced farming techniques from Brazil and China to Ghanaian farmers.

“I want to help our farmers. Farming is the key to bringing food

prices down, and we are going to help the farmers increase their productivity. If you go to Brazil, an acre of land, maize can come to 10 tons; in China, they can get 12 tons, but in Ghana, we get only four tons. I’m going to apply the practices that we are seeing that have worked in Brazil and in China to our farmers in the Wa East District, to increase productivity,” Dr. Bawumia stated.

In addition to adopting new farming practices, Dr. Bawumia announced plans to establish “super aggregators” who will purchase produce directly from farmers. This initiative aims to ensure farmers receive fair prices and minimize post-harvest losses.

“We are going to establish super aggregators who will come and buy the produce from the farmers

so that the food does not go to waste, and they can get good prices for their goods,” he said.

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



*Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, Flagbearer, NPP & Vice President of Ghana*

## Information Ministry justifies GH¢151k COVID-19 risk allowance paid to staff

The Ministry of Information has defended its decision to allocate over GH¢150,000 as risk allowances to its staff during the Covid-19 lockdown.

This comes after the Auditor-General’s report raised concerns about the legitimacy of these payments and ordered a reimbursement.

The Auditor-General, Johnson Akuamoah Asiedu, in a report covering Covid-19 transactions from March 2020 to June 2022, questioned the payment of GH¢151,500 to the Ministry’s management and staff.

The report stated, “During our review, we noted that senior management staff and other supporting staff of the Ministry of Information paid themselves a total amount of GH¢151,500.00 as COVID-19 risk allowance for coming to work during the lockdown.”

In response, Director of Finance and Monitoring at the Ministry of Information, Mawuli Segbefia,

explained that the allowances were intended to motivate staff who were required to work daily during the lockdown.

“The allowances were part of the plan that was submitted to the Ministry of Health for approval,” he said.

Segbefia further justified the payments by highlighting the essential role the Ministry played during the pandemic.

“You will recall that during that

time when the country was locked up, most officers of MDAs were required to stay at home, but the Ministry of Information was required to report to work every day as part of the response to the COVID-19 fight. So we needed to motivate those staff who came daily to the office to help develop the Covid-19 response plan for publication,” he added.

The Ministry’s justification comes amid heightened scrutiny

and demands from the Auditor-General for the reimbursement of the GH¢151,500, citing a lack of prior approval for the expenditure.

The debate continues as the public and oversight bodies call for greater accountability in the use of public funds during the pandemic.

*Source: The Independent Ghana / Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo*



*Fatimatu Abubakar, Information Minister*

# General News

## Flood warning system to be operational before next rainy season – Oppong-Nkrumah

Minister for Works and Housing, Kojo Oppong-Nkrumah, has announced that the government's newly introduced Flood Early Warning System will be operational before the upcoming rainy season.

During the sod-cutting ceremony for the Nima-Paloma drain, part of the Greater Accra Resilient and Integrated Development (GARID) Project, the minister detailed how the flood early warning system will offer advanced alerts about flood-prone areas following heavy rainfall.

This system is expected to provide substantial relief to residents in the capital.

"The structural interventions alone cannot completely eradicate the flooding challenges in Accra, the Ministry of Works and Housing in collaboration with the Ghana Hydro Authority, Water Resources Commission, Ghana Meteorological Agency and NADMO through the GARID Project is establishing a flood early

warning system for the Greater Accra Region."

"The early warning system will provide advanced notification of impending floods to residents in flood-prone communities so they can take steps to protect lives and properties ahead of a flooding event," he said.

He disclosed that an agreement has been finalized with the service provider for the technology that will power the flood warning system.

Additionally, Mr Oppong-Nkrumah mentioned that all necessary and relevant equipment required for the program's implementation has been supplied to the responsible agencies.

"In December last year, the ministry donated equipment to support the establishment of the Accra Flood early warning system to the implement institutions," he added.

### Background

On Friday, May 17, 2024, Parliament

approved an additional US\$150 million from the World Bank for the Greater Accra Resilient and Integrated Development (GARID) Project. This funding will support solid waste management, drainage improvements, and other flood mitigation measures.

The World Bank financing will facilitate a range of initiatives aimed at mitigating floods and enhancing waste management in the Odaw River Basin. Key projects under this funding include repairing sections of the Odaw Basin, constructing storm drains in Kaneshie and Nima-Paloma, and creating water detention ponds.

Additionally, the project will establish a Flood Early Warning System in the Greater Accra Region and develop a waste transfer station along with an engineered landfill site.

These efforts are expected to alleviate flooding in the Odaw River Basin by improving drainage, waste management, and infrastructure services in high-risk informal settlements.

As a result, about half a million people living in low-income communities around the Odaw Basin are anticipated to benefit both directly and indirectly from these improvements.

**Source:** *The Independent Ghana*



Kojo Oppong-Nkrumah, Minister for Works and Housing

## Ghana's cocoa output to fall below 500,000 metric tons this season - World Bank predicts

Ghana's cocoa output is set to fall below 500,000 metric tons in the 2023/2024 crop season, according to the World Bank's latest Ghana Economic Update.

This significant drop is attributed to the devastating impact of the swollen-shoot disease on cocoa farms.

In the previous 2022/2023 crop season, cocoa production was approximately 670,000 tons. The World Bank noted a sharp increase in cocoa prices, rising from \$2.39 per kilogram in 2022 to \$5.56 per kilogram in February 2024.

The rollover of presale contracts for unfulfilled volumes over the past two seasons has complicated COCOBOD's ability to pre-sell future production.

COCOBOD, the Ghana Cocoa

Board, has faced substantial financial challenges due to high rollover costs of outstanding cocoa bills, increased operational expenses, and investments in fertilizer provision and rural road development.

In contrast, the 2020/2021 crop season saw Ghana achieve a record cocoa production of over one million metric tons.

However, this season has been the poorest in a decade, primarily due to severe weather conditions caused by El Niño, widespread smuggling, and the swollen-shoot disease.

Reuters reported that Ghanaian cocoa farmers are hopeful for a rebound in the 2024/2025 season, starting in October 2024.

An increase in cocoa production

would not only benefit Ghana's economy but also help address the global chocolate industry's supply constraints.

The World Bank's report highlights the need for strategic

interventions to combat the swollen-shoot disease and other challenges to stabilize and boost cocoa production in Ghana.

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



Cocoa beans



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# Business

## Ghana's oil income surges to \$840m in first half of 2024 - Report

Ghana's oil revenue surged to \$840 million in the first half of 2024, marking a significant 36% increase compared to the \$540 million recorded during the same period in 2023.

This growth in revenue is attributed to various sources including oil liftings, corporate taxes, surface rentals, and interest on the Petroleum Fund account.

The Petroleum Holding Fund report from the Bank of Ghana reveals that the majority of the income, \$470 million, came from oil liftings across six fields.

Corporate taxes added \$350 million, surface rentals contributed \$580,000, and interest earnings

amounted to \$7 million.

Additionally, the report highlights allocations to the Ghana Petroleum Funds, with \$91 million directed to the Ghana Stabilization Fund and \$39 million to the Ghana Heritage Fund, totaling approximately \$130 million.

This report, issued under section 28 of the Petroleum Revenue Management Act, 2011 (Act 815), provides a detailed breakdown of Ghana's crude oil liftings and the distribution to the Ghana Petroleum Funds. The Bank of Ghana is responsible for receiving and managing the country's petroleum revenues.

The significant increase in oil

revenue underscores the potential and importance of the oil sector in contributing to Ghana's

economy.

*Source: Independent Ghana / Sebastian Akaho-Tay*



File Photo

## Local banks facing cyberattack threats due to recent global software outage - ACDT

Experts have raised alarms about the vulnerability of local banks to cyberattacks due to a global software flaw.

The Africa Center for Digital Transformation (ACDT) warns that, the recent software update from cybersecurity firm CrowdStrike, which triggered a worldwide technology outage, affecting businesses and institutions, including Microsoft, could also pose risks to local banks.

The disruption, ACDT believes, has left domestic banks exposed to cyber threats, emphasizing the need for increased vigilance to protect depositors' funds.

The ACDT noted that CrowdStrike's update, intended to enhance antivirus protection for Microsoft Windows devices, inadvertently caused system failures across various sectors such as banking, healthcare, and aviation.

In addition to the technical issues, a phishing site is circulating a fraudulent CrowdStrike hotfix that installs the Remcos RAT, disguised as a BBVA intranet portal. This malicious archive includes instructions advising

banks to install the update to avoid connectivity issues, posing a serious threat to financial institutions' data.

The ACDT urges all banks, savings and loans institutions, and rural banks in Ghana to be cautious of this cyber threat. Kwesi Atuahene, Executive Director of ACDT, highlighted the significant impact of the software defect on Windows systems worldwide.

"The defect in CrowdStrike's software update had a massive impact on Windows systems at numerous organisations, making it too good an opportunity for cyber-criminals to pass. Microsoft confirmed on their website that the faulty update affected 8.5 million Windows devices worldwide. The damage happened in 78 minutes between 04:09 UTC and 05:27 UTC," Atuahene stated.

Although CrowdStrike is working to resolve the issue, the overall impact has been substantial, causing thousands of flight cancellations and significant disruptions at various banks. The Cybersecurity Unit of ACDT has also identified a new group of cybercriminals spreading data-wiping malware disguised as a

CrowdStrike update. This malware destroys systems by replacing files with zero bytes and then erasing them.

Financial institutions using antivirus solutions from CrowdStrike and Microsoft Azure should be aware of these threats, as attackers are mimicking CrowdStrike in emails used to distribute the data-wiping malware.

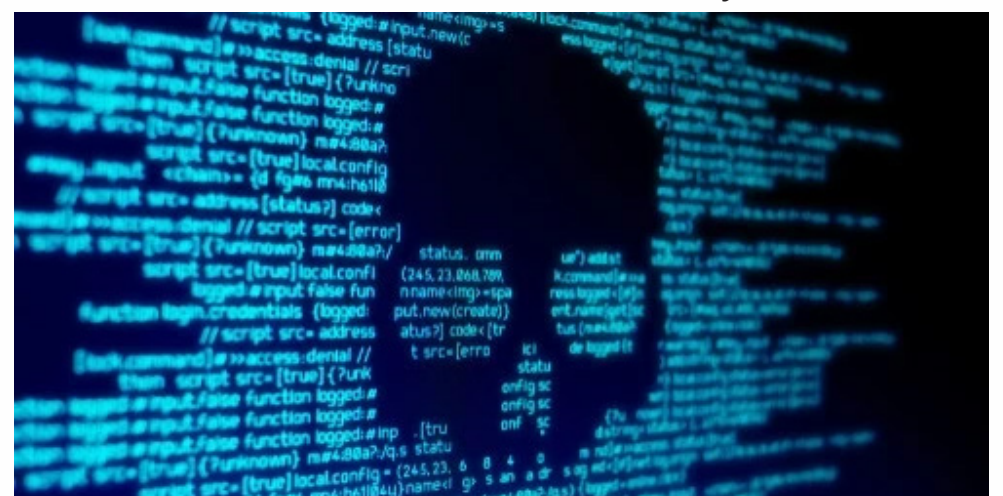
While CrowdStrike and Microsoft are addressing the challenge with a multi-faceted approach, ACDT has outlined several measures to mitigate the impact and enhance resilience. These measures include activating backup systems and redundancies, switching to back up servers and data centres

if primary systems are affected, ensuring critical operations can continue using alternate systems or manual processes, and implementing business continuity plans (BCP).

The ACDT also advises financial institutions to invest in enhanced IT resilience strategies, including stronger disaster recovery solutions and a range of cloud service providers.

"ACDT strongly recommends that by taking these steps, banks in Ghana can mitigate the impact of the outage, maintain customer trust, and improve their preparedness for future incidents," Atuahene reiterated.

*Source: The Independent Ghana / Amanda Cartey*



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