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# General News

## 'Galamseyer' accuses high profile personalities of tipping off and colluding with illegal miners

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

A Ghanaian illegal miner has accused some Members of Parliament (MPs), traditional chiefs, and police officers of sabotaging the government's efforts to nip the issue of illegal mining, also known as galamsey, in the bud.

Speaking to Accra-based TV3 on the condition of anonymity, he alleged that these reputable personalities provide intel on government and security raids, and hence the opportunity for illegal miners to evade the claws of justice.

"I wept the first time I entered the business because I saw how vast lands were destroyed. When they began the operation, we had to be friends with DCE, you had to be friends with MP, district police and subchiefs in order not to be caught. These people place a call to alert us not to be on the field on the day of the operation," he claimed.

In his view, there is no clear distinction between illegal miners and companies that secure permits for mining since the latter, with support from political parties, contribute to the destruction of Ghana's water bodies and forest

reserves.

"There is no difference between galamsey and illegal mining. Those who have the licence also spoil our river bodies. We destroy the river bodies because there is more gold there than the plain land. The big men push those who have the money and employ a lame man like me. The mining companies in Ghana are political, one concession belongs to one NDC man because NDC is not in power that concession has been delivered to one sitting NPP woman somewhere at Atiwa," he added.

There have been several government officials who have been relieved of their duties due to their involvement in illegal mining.

Four years ago, the Amansie South District Chief Executive, William Asante Bediako, was sacked by President Akufo-Addo for defending the illegal activity.

In October 2022, the District Chief Executive (DCE) of Bosome Freho District Assembly in the Ashanti Region, Yaw Danso, was sacked by President Akufo-Addo. The former DCE however insists on his



File Photo

innocence.

Presently, there is mounting pressure on the government to fire all Municipal and District Chief Executives under whose watch the practice of illegal mining is taking place. One of the individuals leading such calls is the Convener of the Media Coalition against Galamsey, Kenneth Ashigbey.

Illegal mining has emerged as a significant challenge in the country, particularly due to its detrimental impact on Ghana's water bodies. Despite a series of government interventions ranging from deploying security forces to arresting offenders, the problem of galamsey continues unabated.

Recently, President Akufo-Addo directed the set up of a five-member ad hoc ministerial committee to engage stakeholders to assess the government's efforts to deal with illegal mining activities.

While the reassessment continues, there are also growing calls for the government to ban small-scale mining and declare a state of emergency to protect water bodies and the country's vegetation cover.

Government's representatives in the sector in question have however shot down such calls, citing the economic benefit the country derives from gold production by small-scale miners.

## Parliament reconvenes from recess on October 15

By Amanda Cartey

Ghana's Parliament is scheduled to reconvene on Tuesday, October 15, according to a summons issued by the Office of the Speaker on Monday, September 30.

Speaker Kingsford Alban Sumana Bagbin exercised his authority to reconvene the House under Order 58 of Parliament's Standing Orders.

The fifth meeting of the fourth session of the Eighth Parliament expected to tackle pressing matters, including legislative business and committee reports.

Due to ongoing renovations of the House's Chamber, the session will take place at the Dome of the

Accra International Conference Centre (AICC). Renovation works commenced after the speaker recessed Parliament on July 30.

An emergency meeting called by the Majority Caucus compelled the House to reconvene on September 3, to discuss matters including the motion on the Financing Agreement between the Government of Ghana and the International Development Association, requests for Tax Exemptions for designated beneficiaries under the One District, One Factory Programme, the Ghana Financial Stability Fund, and several bills.

A two-day sitting by the House at the AICC led to the approval of

a \$250 million loan agreement from the World Bank to support the Ghana Energy Sector Recovery Programme.

The ongoing renovation of Ghana's Parliamentary Chamber is estimated to cost the government €2.26 million, for completion by the end of October 2024.

The renovation project will involve major enhancements to the Chamber's infrastructure, including enhancement to the work tables, chairs, and other essential furnishings necessary for the legislative body's daily functions.

Although most of the equipment for the renovation will be

imported, the work tables for the chamber are being produced locally by a Ghanaian company named Fernac.

One of the significant issues the renovation addresses is the malfunctioning of the chamber's audiovisual systems, which have caused difficulties with voting and quorum during parliamentary sessions.



Parliament of Ghana

# General News

## Saglemi, Adentan, Koforidua Housing projects not being sold to private sector - Oppong-Nkrumah

By Sebastian Akaho-Tay

Minister of Works and Housing, Kojo Oppong-Nkrumah, has clarified that the go

vernment has no intention of selling the Saglemi, Adentan, or Koforidua housing projects to any private sector.

Speaking at a press briefing in Accra, the minister explained that the government is instead, seeking technical expertise and resources of the private sector to complete the projects.

He emphasized that government plans to sell the completed housing units to workers' unions, and government workers on completion, remains a priority.

"We are working with the private sector to resolve these projects. On multiple occasions, people have mistakenly said we are selling these projects. I want to repeat, for the umpteenth time, that we are not selling the Saglemi, Adentan, or Koforidua housing projects to

the private sector," he stressed adding:

"We have invited the private sector to participate with their funding and technology. They will provide the capital, and we will use their resources to complete the project. As originally intended, these housing units will then be sold to members of workers' unions and government workers."

Mr Oppong-Nkrumah further disclosed that funds recouped from the sale of the housing projects would be used to offset those sourced from the private sector, with potential profits returned to the government.

He explained: "The funding provided by the private sector will be repaid, and whatever investment the government makes will also be recouped. So, I reiterate, that we are not selling these projects; we are working within a public-private partnership (PPP) framework to complete them.

"The fact that the government doesn't currently have enough funds in its treasury doesn't mean these projects should remain stalled. The government is being innovative in raising private capital to finish these projects," the minister further remarked.

The involvement of the private sector in the completion of the Saglemi Housing project has been protested by the Minority in Parliament and the National Tenants' Union of Ghana, who have threatened a lawsuit against the government over the matter. The union argued that such involvement will jeopardize efforts to provide affordable housing for those unable to afford current market rates.

The government is seeking \$100 million in private capital from investors to complete the Saglemi Affordable Housing project commenced by the erstwhile Mahama-led government in 2012. So far, about \$198 million has been

invested in the stalled project.

The New Patriotic Party government initiated the Affordable Housing Programme in 2006 to provide accommodation for the low-to-middle-income workers of the country. The project commenced in six locations namely: Borteyman - Accra, Kpone - Tema, AsokoreMampong - Kumasi, Koforidua, Tamale and Wa. However, these projects have stalled since 2008.

Ghana's housing crisis has persisted for decades despite the government's efforts to tackle the issue. Many Ghanaians still struggle to find affordable and quality housing.



Kojo Oppong-Nkrumah, Minstr of Works & Housing

## Bui Power to expand solar capacity, explore wind energy to meet electricity demand

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

The Bui Power Authority has reiterated its commitment to tapping into solar energy to generate renewable energy and help address the country's increasing electricity demand.

During a recent visit to the 50MW solar power plant in Yendi, BUI Power CEO, Samuel Kofi Dzamesi outlined the authority's strategic initiatives aimed at enhancing its solar capacity and exploring alternative energy sources.

Presently under construction by First Sky Limited, the \$59 million solar power plant is expected to become operational within eight years, with repayment handled by the authority.

This project is part of the Authority's broader mission to ensure reliable power distribution in the country.

Mr Dzamesi underscored the advantages of collaborating with a Ghanaian-owned firm, emphasizing that Bui Power possesses the

necessary experience and expertise to oversee and design solar plants across various technologies.

"We have a powerhouse here, which will ensure that the power is evacuated onto the critical line. And I want to say that Bui Power is very strategic in ensuring that we build more solar plants. God has blessed us with the sun and you don't need to go and buy the sun before you produce the power," he explained.

Expressing optimism about the potential for expansion, he added: "We hope that the land is enough to build 100 megawatts. We are therefore praying that when the contractor completes this first phase and we start selling, we'll enter into another agreement with him to continue with another 50 megawatts to make it 100 megawatts."

"Today, as NEDCO will tell you, the whole northern region uses about 300 to 400 megawatts. Bui Power is going to give you 100 megawatts so that the electricity consumption and frequency in the northern region

will be very smooth, this is what we have," he further noted.

In addition, Mr Dzamesi revealed that the authority has launched pilot projects focused on wind energy as part of its strategy to expedite the transition to sustainable power generation.

Despite this progress, he recognized the limitations associated with solar power, stressing the importance of diversifying energy sources and exploring alternatives to enhance the country's energy landscape.

"Now, again, the good news is that because it's a Ghanaian-owned company, everybody here is a Ghanaian. Bui Power has the experience to supervise design and ensure that we have solar plants, no matter the technology in this country.

"We are going to do that. We have also started to do pilot projects in wind so that we can be able to move fast in the track of renewable energy. And I want to say that we should

understand that there is a limitation to solar."

The predominant form of energy used in Ghana is hydroelectric power. The country has a number of hydroelectric power plants, with the Akosombo Dam being the most significant, contributing a large portion of the national electricity supply.

However, in recent years, Ghana has diversified its energy sources, incorporating thermal (natural gas, oil), solar, and wind energy to meet growing energy demands and reduce reliance on hydropower, which can be affected by water levels and climate conditions.



File Photo

# General News

## Organised labour declares nationwide strike on Oct 10

By Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo

Organised Labour has declared a nationwide strike set to commence on Thursday, October 10, in response to the government's persistent inaction regarding their pressing demands related to illegal mining also known as galamsey.

This decision follows a series of unresolved grievances raised by the coalition of workers' unions, highlighting the urgent need for government intervention to address the escalating crisis posed by illegal mining activities.

During an emergency meeting held on Tuesday, October 1, 2024, members of Organised Labour expressed profound disappointment over the government's failure to adequately respond to their concerns.

The coalition had previously set a deadline at the end of September for the government to implement effective measures

aimed at curbing illegal mining, which they assert significantly threatens both the environment and the livelihoods of countless Ghanaians.

Secretary General of the Trades Union Congress (TUC), Joshua Ansah, emphasized the necessity of this drastic action, stating, "Following the expiration of our deadline and the government's failure to meet our demands regarding illegal mining, Organised Labour has decided to declare a nationwide strike effective October 10, 2024."

He underscored that the ongoing illegal mining crisis not only devastates the environment but also endangers the health and well-being of communities dependent on the natural resources of the land.

Galamsey has emerged as a major challenge in Ghana, posing severe threats to the country's water bodies. Despite multiple

government efforts, including deploying security forces and arresting offenders, the issue persists unabated.

In response to this ongoing crisis, President Akufo-Addo has established a five-member ad hoc ministerial committee tasked with engaging stakeholders to evaluate the government's initiatives to combat illegal mining activities.

As this reassessment unfolds, there are increasing demands for the government to impose a ban on small-scale mining and to declare

a state of emergency to safeguard water bodies and protect the country's vegetation cover.

However, representatives from the government sector have rejected these proposals, emphasizing the economic benefits that small-scale miners provide through gold production.

The upcoming strike aims to pressure the government to take immediate and decisive action to protect Ghana's natural resources as well as the welfare of its citizens.



File Photo

## GHC10k benchmark set for investors of Ghana's Gold Coin - BoG

By Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo

Investors looking to purchase Ghana's Gold Coins have been advised by the Bank of Ghana (BoG) to have a minimum of GH¢10,000 in preparation, according to the Central Bank's Financial Markets Advisor Dr. Stephen Opatá.

Speaking to the media on Monday, September 30, 2024, Dr. Opatá indicated that the coins will soon be made available to the public through commercial banks.

"So initially... if you want to buy the quarter-ounce coin, you must have savings of GH¢10,000 minimum. If you don't have that, then you would not be able to do that (invest)," he explained.

His statement follows the BoG's introduction of the Ghana Gold Coin on September 27, 2024, as part of the Central Bank's Responsible Gold Sourcing Policy Framework.

The initiative is designed to

enhance Ghana's foreign exchange reserves by purchasing locally produced gold.

BoG Governor, Dr. Ernest Addison, also emphasized during the launch that the gold coins provide an alternative investment option for individuals who usually buy and hoard foreign currencies like the dollar, potentially easing pressure on the cedi.

The coin, available in three sizes—1 oz, 1/2 oz, and 1/4 oz—each with a purity of 99.99%, showcases the Ghana Coat of Arms on the front and the Independence Arch on the back. The BoG anticipates that this will broaden investment opportunities for Ghanaians.

Dr. Opatá further noted that BoG aims to increase inclusivity, suggesting that future phases of the project may allow for purchases through mobile money accounts.

"Like I said, if we are able to

tokenize this, that's the next stage that will become very interesting, then we will have more inclusion. So the next stage is going to be interesting. We want to go into this project in phases, and as we gauge the success and roll this out, we

will see that more people will be included."

"We will even get to the point where Ghanaians should be able to buy this using their mobile money account," he added.



Ghana's Gold Coin

# General News

## Feeding crops 'galamsey water' more lethal than gutter water - Prof Oteng-Yeboah

By Sebastian Akaho-Tay

Retired Professor of Plant and Environmental Biology at the University of Ghana, Prof. Alfred Apau Oteng-Yeboah, has raised concerns about the use of water polluted by illegal mining activities on farm crops, stating that it poses a far greater danger than water from gutters.

Speaking with Accra-based JoyNews, the professor explained that while water from gutters, commonly used in urban farming, poses short-term illnesses caused by microbes on crops, the produce grown with water affected by illegal mining activities when consumed can lead to the accumulation of chemicals such as mercury in an organism, leading to significant health risks.

"We have urban farming systems where many people use gutter water to irrigate small vegetable farms. You can immediately see the impact of microbes on the crops' surfaces, but these microbes are not visible to the

naked eye. We only realize their presence when people consume the crops, resulting in diseases like cholera."

"When water is polluted by illegal mining, particularly with heavy metals, the danger is even greater. These metals are deliberately used to extract gold, but the remnants left behind are often ignored, and they have serious environmental consequences. This is why we refer to it as an existential threat. If we do not act now, we will face a situation of bioaccumulation where living organisms, including humans, absorb these metals through the food they consume from the soil, leading to dire consequences," he clarified.

Prof. Oteng-Yeboah stressed the urgent need to address this issue to avert long-term harm to both human health and the environment.

Rivers such as the Bansa in the Western Region and the Pra in the Ashanti Region have been heavily contaminated by toxic chemicals

used in mining, while forest reserves like the Tano Nimiri in the Western North Region and the Draw River in the Western Region have also suffered extensive damage.

The pollution of the Pra River due to illegal mining activities is causing severe repercussions that extend beyond the immediate destruction of the water source and the lack of potable water for nearby communities.

Recent developments reveal that the contaminated river water is now being used to irrigate crops, putting public health at significant risk. A cocoa farmer from Twifo Praso in the Central Region disclosed this concerning practice

There are incessant calls from the government to take pragmatic measures to finally address the issue of illegal mining. Organized Labour, led by the Trades Union Congress (TUC), has issued a stern warning to the government, threatening a nationwide strike by

the end of September if decisive action is not taken to address the escalating illegal mining crisis.

In a statement issued by Secretary General of the TUC, Organised Labour, Joshua Ansah, demanded the immediate declaration of a state of emergency in all areas affected by illegal mining.

The group also called for a halt to all mining activities in forest reserves, the establishment of special courts to fast-track the prosecution of galamsey operators, and the deployment of the military to remove and destroy all mining equipment in affected areas.



Retired Professor Oteng-Yeboah, Plant & Environment Biology

## Mahama leads Global InfoAnalytics poll, Bawumia dominates Outcome Internationals But who wins?

By Andy Ogbarmey-Tettey

As the December 2024 presidential elections fast approach, uncertainty continues to linger, with polls offering conflicting predictions about the chances of the two main opposing candidates.

According to a recent poll by Global InfoAnalytics, National Democratic Congress (NDC) flagbearer John Dramani Mahama leads with 51.1% of the vote. In contrast, a separate poll by Outcomes International projects that Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) will win with 49.4%, while Mahama follows at 45.1%. These differing poll results underscore the unpredictability of voter sentiment and suggest the possibility of a runoff, leaving analysts and voters uncertain about the outcome.

Global InfoAnalytics' field poll, using the likely voters' model, shows Mahama at 49.3% and Bawumia at

35.9%, with an average polling trend indicating Mahama holding 53% over Bawumia's 36%. However, voter apathy could become an issue for the NPP, with 16% of voters who plan not to vote being NPP supporters.

The election's outcome will hinge on candidate loyalty among party supporters and their ability to sway floating voters. Currently, Mahama enjoys 96% support from his base, compared to Bawumia's 88%, giving Mahama an 8-point advantage. Among undecided or floating voters, Mahama leads Bawumia by 31 points (54% to 23%).

The Outcomes International poll highlights that less than 1% of votes will be split among other candidates, with 5.2% of voters still undecided. The poll, which surveyed 25,911 respondents across all 276 constituencies, suggests that a runoff may be inevitable as neither

major party is projected to secure an outright win.

Additionally, the poll shows a decline in support for Bawumia among Muslim voters, dropping nearly 4% between July and October 2024. Among first-time voters, Mahama holds a lead at 46% compared to Bawumia's 38%. Notably, Mahama has also gained the support of 19% of voters who backed Nana Akufo-Addo in 2020, particularly in regions like Greater Accra and Central.

Regionally, Mahama is ahead in twelve regions, while Bawumia leads in just four. The close competition and the influence of smaller parties suggest a highly contested election. Voter dissatisfaction remains high at 77%, and with manifestos playing a critical role in swaying voters, the stakes are significant.

A recent survey by the Office of the President also suggests a likely runoff, with neither the NDC nor

NPP projected to secure an outright majority in the first round. This survey interviewed 25,911 people across all constituencies, with 49% identifying with the two major parties and 3% undecided.

The survey highlights that smaller parties and independent candidates hold 4.4% of the vote, potentially forcing the election into a second round, as neither NPP nor NDC can claim all undecided voters.

With just over two months remaining, Ghana is on the brink of a decisive election, and the true victor of the 2024 elections will soon be revealed.



Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, NPP Flagbearer, on the left, John Dramani Mahama, NDC Flagbearer, on the right

# General News

## Reconsider decision on utility tariffs increment - AGI appeals to PURC

By Amanda Cartey

The Greater Accra Regional Chairman of the Association of Ghana Industries (AGI), Tsonam Akpeloo, has urged the Public Utilities Regulatory Commission (PURC) to reconsider its recent decision to raise utility tariffs for the third quarter of 2024.

Under the new rates, electricity costs will rise by 3.02%, and water tariffs will increase by 1.86%, effective October 1, 2024.

Mr Akpeloo expressed concern that the increase would raise operational costs for manufacturers and diminish consumers' purchasing power.

"We're asking the regulatory authority to be mindful of the inflation index and ensure that, at least in the next quarter, they either take steps to reduce it or maintain it at the previous rate, because this increase will not be beneficial for industrial development."

"As I mentioned, this price increase will have to be absorbed by the producer because, at this rate, we cannot pass it on to the consumer.

Many companies are struggling to stay afloat due to these high utility tariffs," he said during an interview with the media.

He further urged the PURC to reconsider the potential negative effects on industrial growth and the wider economy if the decision is not reversed. A section of the general public has entreated the government to restrain the increase in utility tariffs as such a decision will exacerbate their present economic hardships.

According to the Commission, the recent adjustments are necessary to maintain the "financial viability and ability of utility service providers to deliver on their mandate," ensuring uninterrupted utility services.

Specifically, the depreciation of the Ghana Cedi against the US Dollar by 4.96% between the second and third quarters of 2024 contributed significantly to the rise in electricity tariffs.

The exchange rate effect, combined with the Weighted Average Cost of Gas (WACOG), which declined

slightly from US\$/MMBtu 8.0422 to US\$/MMBtu 7.8368, resulted in a total under-recovery of GHS 173.98 million in the electricity sector.

It also pointed out that, despite marginal improvements in inflation rates - declining from 24.38% to 22.27% - other factors, including fuel costs, continue to drive up utility expenses.

In addition to adjusting the tariffs, the PURC has set a revenue collection benchmark of 98% for utility providers, warning that failure to meet this target could threaten the sustainability of

the electricity and water sectors. For the third quarter, projected revenues are set at GHS 2,024.5 million for ECG, GHS 243.20 million for Northern Electricity Distribution Company (NEDCo), and GHS 227.40 million for GWL.

According to the Bank of Ghana, the Ghana cedi has depreciated by 24.3% against the US dollar on the interbank forex market as of September 2024. This marks a slower depreciation compared to the 22.9% decline recorded during the same period last year.



File Photo

## We have not been paid our GHC250 monthly salaries for almost a year - Zoomlion workers lament

By Sebastian Akaho-Tay

A group of employees from Zoomlion Ghana Limited are demanding their unpaid salaries, which have been in arrears for nine months.

One worker expressed frustration, revealing that they receive a meager salary of GH¢250 per month, equating to around GH¢8 per day.

She described the hardships they face, including the tragic deaths of two colleagues due to a lack of access to quality healthcare.

"Two people are dead as I speak, and we buried one last Saturday. We don't have money for medication. The salary is GH¢250 a month, which means about GH¢8 per day. Now, as we enter October, it becomes ten months without pay. How do we take care of our

children in school? How do we get medication when we are sick?" she lamented.

She further highlighted the lack of support from the company for deceased workers, with no financial contribution to their funerals or benefits for their families.

"When someone dies in service, the company doesn't contribute anything towards the funeral. We, the leaders, have to push for the arrears to be given to the children of the deceased. There are no allowances or health insurance. Some of us have worked for 15 to 17 years without any pension or designated healthcare facilities," she added.

Management has attributed the delayed payments to contractors, who in turn claim they have fulfilled

their financial obligations. The worker shared their frustration, stating, "Contractors say they don't owe any money, but our leaders say the government has to pay them before they can pay us. So, who is holding our money?"

The group is appealing to relevant authorities to intervene, seeking both the overdue payments and a reconsideration of their wages to help manage their debts and

restore their dignity.

In line with Section 113 (1) (a) of the Labour Act, 2003 (Act 651), the National Tripartite Committee increased the national daily minimum wage from GH¢14.88 to GH¢18.15 effective from January 1, 2024. This highlights a contradiction, as the waste management company appears to be non-compliant with the approved minimum wage.



File Photo

# General News

## Nationwide measles-rubella immunisation exercise set for today

By Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo

The Ghana Health Service's (GHS) nationwide measles-rubella immunisation campaign, targeting 275,465 children aged nine months and under 5 years, is set to commence today.

The five-day exercise aimed at protecting children from measles and rubella while, also offering essential vitamin A supplementation to boost their overall health and well-being will run from Wednesday, October 2, to Sunday, October 6, 2024.

The immunisation will be carried out in health centres and temporary posts in schools, markets, and communities.

In a media engagement this week, Regional Health Service Director Dr Samuel Boakye-Boateng highlighted the necessity of this campaign due to the rising number of measles cases across the country, particularly in the northern regions.

"This year, we recorded outbreaks across the whole country, and in

the Upper East region, two districts recorded outbreaks—that's three or more cases. Those districts had about one or two cases a month or two ago. When we say outbreak, those that recorded three or more cases happened in Bawku West and Garu. So that's why we call it an outbreak and how to investigate it," he explained.

Dr Boakye-Boateng added that the Upper East Region experienced earlier outbreaks in Bawku West and Garu Districts, along with five other districts reporting cases.

Highlighting the complications of measles and rubella, including blindness and deafness, Dr Boateng advised parents to take advantage of the opportunity to vaccinate their children against these preventable diseases.

Parents are advised to keep their children at vaccination sites for 15 minutes post-vaccine. The Ghana Health Service warns that children with severe allergies, weakened immune systems, or serious illness should not participate. Mild reactions such as

fever and swelling may occur after vaccination.

Some children may react mildly to the Measles-Rubella vaccine. Some of the common reactions include fever, pain at the site of the injection, redness and swelling at the site and rashes.

### Rubella

Rubella, also called German measles is caused by rubella virus: it is usually a non-life threatening disease but can be a very dangerous disease in pregnancy. Rubella infection in early pregnancy may result in miscarriage or the birth of an infant with congenital rubella syndrome (CRS). CRS can cause blindness, deafness, mental retardation, heart defects and a range of other conditions from diabetes to autism (a disorder that affects the social, emotional, and behavioural development of children).

An estimated 112,000 babies around the world are born with CRS every year in Ghana. The incubation period of the rubella

virus is usually 14 days and begins at the moment of infection and lasts until the appearance of a rash. It is spread through direct contact with an infected person or pregnancy (virus can pass through the placenta into the circulatory system of the unborn child causing deformity to the unborn child).

### Measles

Measles is a dangerous disease, which either disables or kills children. It is caused by a small germ, called the measles virus.

Measles is transmitted or passed from person to person when droplets containing the measles virus are discharged from a patient's mouth or nose, when he/she coughs or sneezes, are inhaled (breathed in) by another person. The period from infection to onset of symptoms is usually around 10-14 days.

Symptoms of these two diseases include inflamed/red eyes (conjunctivitis), fever, skin rash, runny nose, cough, and hearing problems.



File Photo



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# Business

## Petroleum sector generates \$247.6m in revenue in Q2 2024 - Finance Ministry

By Andy Ogbarmey-Tettey

Ghana recorded a total of \$247,620,870.49 in petroleum receipts for the second quarter of 2024, according to the Petroleum Receipts and Distribution Report.

The report, released by the Ministry of Finance, reflects oil revenues gathered from two separate liftings in the Jubilee oil field.

Key highlights from the report show that 1,857,242 barrels of oil were lifted during the quarter, divided between the 75th and 76th liftings. The average reference price for a barrel of oil during this period stood at \$80.318 for the 75th lifting and \$86.360 for the 76th lifting. The market price per barrel ranged from \$77,135,889.01 in the 75th lifting to \$82,256,345.20 in the 76th lifting.

The Gross Receipts from

Ghana's group lifting totalled \$159,468,883.09, with \$71,135,889.01 attributed to the 75th lifting and \$82,332,544.08 to the 76th lifting. From this, Royalties accounted for \$22,475,655.73, and the Carried and Participating Interest contributed \$115,069,970.32.

The Net Carried & Participating Interest (70%) provided a significant portion of these earnings, amounting to \$47,655,527.18, in addition to other petroleum receipts totalling \$140,522,365.31 for the quarter.

The Corporate Income Tax contributions from major players in the sector were also substantial, with Tullow Ghana Limited paying \$56,622,407.40 and KOSMOS Energy contributing \$18,154,030.00.

The Government of Ghana received

\$107,988,517.30 in net receipts from the petroleum liftings, with \$52,367,048.40 coming from the 75th lifting and \$56,621,468.90 from the 76th lifting.

The report also detailed that surface rental payments made by companies, including Tullow Ghana Limited and PetroSea Operating Company, contributed

a smaller portion of the total earnings, at \$59,093.43 and \$8,725.00 respectively.

The petroleum sector remains a key driver of Ghana's economy with several reports indicating steady growth in the industry to support the government's fiscal policy and infrastructural development.



Dr. Mohammed Amin Adam, Finance Minister

## Over €1.7m raked in by gov't from timber exports to ECOWAS countries in Q2 2024 - Forestry Commission

By Andy Ogbarmey-Tettey

The Forestry Commission of Ghana has generated €1,702,426.33 from timber exports to ECOWAS countries in the second quarter (April to June) of 2024.

This revenue came from exporting 4,804.924 m<sup>3</sup> of timber and wood products, indicating that Ghana remains active in the regional timber market despite experiencing a drop in both volume and value compared to the previous year.

This year's revenue shows a significant decline compared to the €3,038,606.66 earned in the same period in 2023, when export volumes were considerably higher at 7,906.619 m<sup>3</sup>.

The average unit price also dropped from €384.31/m<sup>3</sup> in Q2 2023 to €354.31/m<sup>3</sup> in Q2 2024, reflecting challenges such as global market fluctuations and increased competition from other timber-exporting nations.

In Togo, the value of timber exports

fell from €815,314.30 in Q2 2023 to €382,156.79 in Q2 2024, while the export volume dropped from 2,056.520 m<sup>3</sup> to 983.399 m<sup>3</sup>. Senegal experienced a significant decline, with export values dropping from €1,005,581.13 to €184,362.86 and volumes from 2,707.041 m<sup>3</sup> to 566.980 m<sup>3</sup>.

Burkina Faso's export earnings decreased from €756,597.25 in 2023 to €420,293.60 in 2024, with volumes falling from 1,745.277 m<sup>3</sup> to 1,194.280 m<sup>3</sup>. In contrast, Niger saw an increase in volume, from 938.692 m<sup>3</sup> to 1,208.583 m<sup>3</sup>, though the value decreased slightly from €344,650.21 to €405,905.03, indicating possible changes in market demand.

Nigeria also experienced a drop in exports, with revenue declining from €53,862.81 to €92,959.86, as the volume fell from 150.033 m<sup>3</sup> to 255.849 m<sup>3</sup>. Smaller markets such as Côte d'Ivoire and Mali showed reduced demand, contributing only minimally to the overall

export figures.

Out of 115 exporters during Q2 2024, leading companies included Samartex Timber and Plywood Company Limited, Logs and Lumber Limited, and Multimodal Freight Services Limited, exporting various products like lumber (air-dried and kiln-dried), plywood, and billets.

In total, the Forestry Commission reported earnings of €31,256,035.35 from 68,965.620

m<sup>3</sup> of timber and wood products exported during Q2 2024. This marked a decline of 15.27% in value and 15.34% in volume compared to €36,890,952.87 from 81,462.698 m<sup>3</sup> in the same period in 2023.

The top five exported products were air-dried lumber, kiln-dried lumber, plywood (overland), plywood, and billets. The primary destinations for these exports were India, Senegal, the United States, Germany, and Togo.



File Photo

# International

## AfDB and USAID sign \$600m landmark regional development agreement for the Sahel

By AfDB

The African Development Bank Group and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) have signed a landmark Regional Development Objective Agreement (RDOAG) to strengthen social and economic development in the Sahel. The signing ceremony was held at the U.S. Embassy in Dakar, Senegal.

The agreement, valued at \$600 million, reflects a joint commitment to tackling the critical challenges facing the Sahel region, including security threats, political instability, climate change, and widespread humanitarian needs. Through this parallel co-financing agreement, support will be provided to key sectors over the next five years, including good governance, resilient agriculture, private sector development, water security, sanitation, and health systems.

The Bank was represented by its Director General for West Africa Regional Development and Business Delivery Office Lamin Barrow, and the Country Manager for Senegal, Mohamed Cherif. USAID was represented by USAID/Senegal Mission Director Alyssa Leggoe and Sahel Regional Program Office Director Juan Gamboa, alongside senior USAID officials.

Speaking at the event, Barrow emphasized the strategic significance of this partnership in addressing the region's pressing challenges: "This agreement is about unlocking the tremendous potential of the Sahel, building resilience, and fostering a more inclusive and prosperous future for its people. We believe that by working together with strategic partners like USAID, we can help tackle the immediate humanitarian needs of people in the Sahel while also driving long-term, sustainable development."

Leggoe added, "USAID is proud to partner with the African Development Bank to address the root causes of instability in the Sahel. This agreement will build on the long-standing relationship between the two institutions to provide meaningful and direct opportunities for the people of the region, ensuring they have access to economic growth, governance, and essential services."

The agreement will complement the Bank's own pipeline of operations in the Sahel, including projects aimed at enhancing food security, improving access

to water, and promoting private sector solutions. These projects will be further strengthened by the additional resources from USAID, maximizing impact. Together, the Bank and USAID will jointly implement high-impact projects, collaborating closely with local communities to ensure meaningful results on the ground.

With this new partnership, both institutions reaffirm their commitment to fostering sustainable development and improving the lives of millions across the Sahel.



File Photo

## DRC recorded in 2023 its highest number of victims of sexual violence ever

New data reveals that teams with Doctors Without Borders and the DRC's health ministry treated more than two victims and survivors of sexual violence every hour in the Democratic Republic of Congo last year. To be precise, 25,166 victims of sexual violence sought care in 2023, the group said Monday (Sep. 30).

This figure is by far the highest number ever recorded by Doctors Without Borders also known as MSF in DRC. It is based on data from 17 projects set up in five provinces with 4 located in the DRC's war torn east.

Victims who are mostly women and girls were treated in displacement camps near Goma, the capital of of the North Kivu province.

Residents of eastern DRC have suffered from armed violence for decades. More than 120 armed groups fight for power, land and

mineral resources while others try to defend their communities.

Some armed groups have been accused of mass killings, rapes and other human rights violations. The violence has displaced some 6

million people in the east.

Earlier this week, Human Rights Watch said both Rwanda and Congo's army have killed displacement camp residents, committed rapes and obstructed

aid. The frightening trend has continued, with teams having treated 69 per cent of the numbers across all of 2023 in just the first five months of 2024.



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