

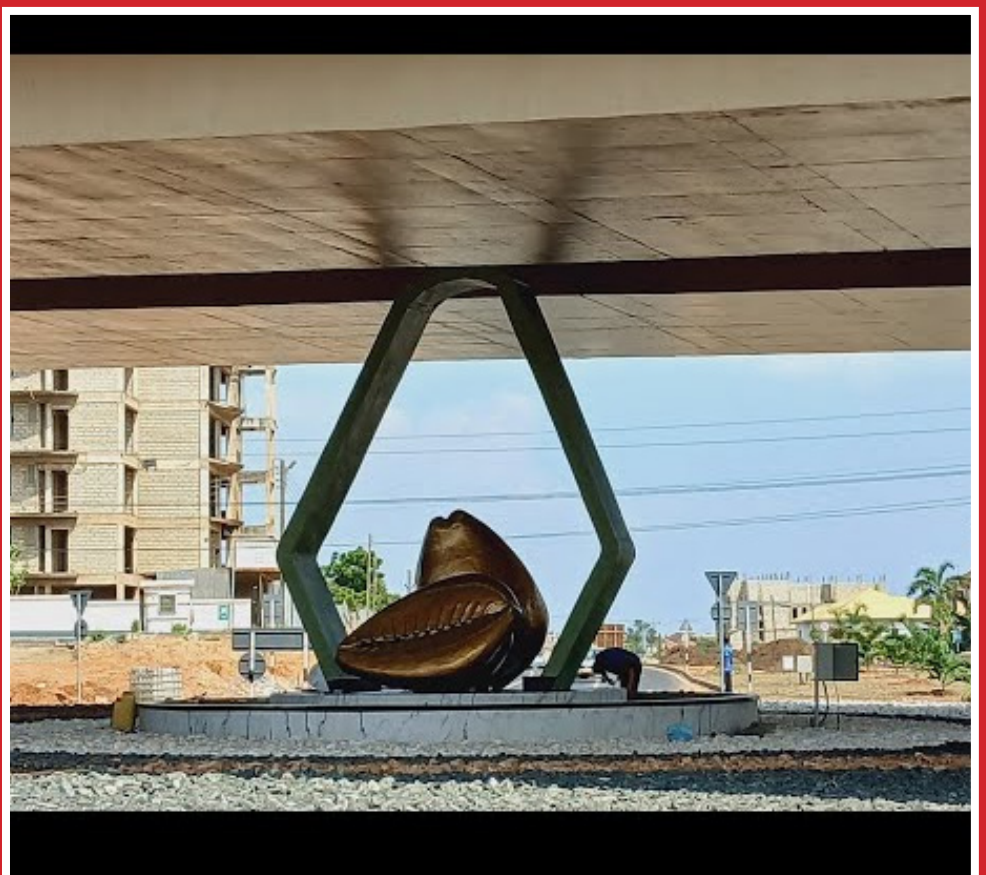


Ghana records rise in fire outbreaks with 4,650 cases from Jan to Sep 2024

Page 4

## Govt bars use of containers, kiosks at Flower Pot interchange

Page 2



## Verdict on anti-LGBTQ bill to be delivered on Dec 18 - Court rules

Page 3



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# General News

## Elections will still hold in Bawku despite ongoing conflict - EC insists

By Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo

The Electoral Commission (EC) of Ghana has reiterated its commitment to conducting elections in Bawku Central and its surrounding areas in the Upper East Region despite ongoing security challenges.

The EC's statement follows concerns raised by some Ghanaians who fear the persistent conflict in the area might hinder voting during the December 7, 2024, elections.

In an interview, the EC's Upper East Regional Director, William Obeng Adarkwa, assured the public of the Commission's collaboration with security forces to ensure peaceful and smooth elections.

"We are prepared as a Commission. The situation in Bawku is primarily a security matter, and the Ghana Police Service is responsible for maintaining order. We are in daily communication with them, and

they keep us updated. Meanwhile, we continue to train our officials and equip them with the necessary skills to conduct the elections," he stated.

Mr. Adarkwa appealed to local residents to foster peace to facilitate the safe delivery of election materials and the smooth movement of officials.

The conflict in Bawku, which has escalated in recent weeks, has claimed yet another life, bringing the death toll to 26 since the resurgence of violence in late October 2024. Despite a strict 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. curfew, armed groups continue to flout restrictions, intensifying fear and tension in the region.

The ongoing violence has led to the closure of schools and caused significant disruptions to local businesses, further deepening concerns among residents about the deteriorating situation.

The recent spike in hostilities has been linked to the return of rival chief Alhaji Seidu Abagre from exile, reigniting long-standing tensions.

In addition, a series of ambushes on travelers has exacerbated the crisis, raising alarm over the

worsening security situation in the area.

Despite these challenges, the EC remains determined to uphold its mandate and ensure that eligible voters in Bawku Central can exercise their right to vote on December 7.



William Obeng Adarkwa, EC Upper East Regional Director

## Govt bars use of containers, kiosks at Flower Pot interchange

By Andy Ogbarmey-Tettey

The government has issued a strict directive prohibiting the use of kiosks and containers in the vicinity of the newly commissioned Flower Pot Interchange in Accra.

Greater Accra Regional Minister, Titus Glover, emphasized this stance at the commissioning ceremony, urging Municipal Assemblies to ensure the area remains clean and organized.

"We share the responsibility to maintain and use these resources wisely. In this light, I will like to urge the Municipal Assemblies, particularly the Ledzokuku and Ayawaso West Wuogon under whose jurisdiction this interchange falls, to ensure that this area is kept clean. Additionally, I don't want to see kiosks, containers littered all over here," he stated.

The Flower Pot Interchange, located along the Spintex Road,

was inaugurated on November 19 by President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, who reaffirmed his administration's commitment to transforming Ghana through strategic infrastructure development.

Describing the interchange as a "legacy for the future," President Akufo-Addo expressed pride in unveiling a project he said embodies his government's vision for a modern, inclusive Ghana.

"It is with considerable pride and singular honour that I declare the Flower Pot Interchange duly commissioned. This moment is not merely about the opening of a new piece of infrastructure; it is about unveiling a vision for Ghana's future, one driven by lasting progress, inclusivity, and national pride," he said.

Reflecting on his administration's infrastructure achievements since 2017, the President highlighted the critical role roads play in

national development.

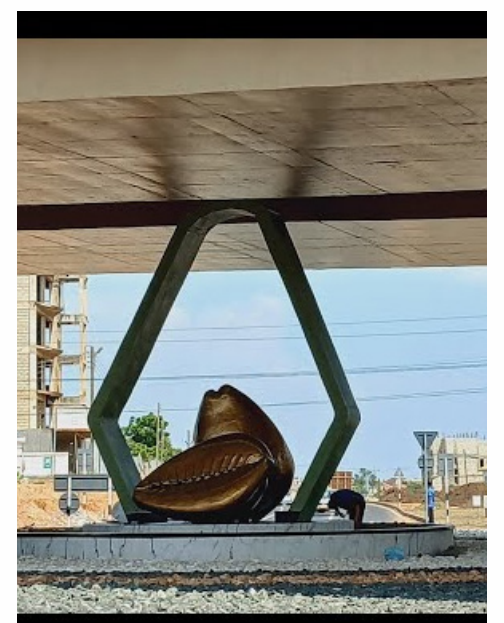
"When we assumed office in 2017, we knew that true national development rests upon the foundation of well-planned and well-executed infrastructure. Roads are pathways to opportunity, prosperity, and a better quality of life for all." He further described the interchange as a testament to his government's dedication to progress. "Today, with this interchange, we reaffirm that our commitment to progress is more than rhetoric—it is action built in stone and steel."

### About the Flower Pot Interchange

The Flower Pot Interchange, featuring a flyover and an underpass, is designed to ease congestion along the Spintex Road, one of Accra's busiest traffic corridors. Its construction, which began in 2017, enhances connectivity between East Legon, Madina, and northern regions with

Teshie, Spintex, La, and 37.

This infrastructure is expected to significantly improve commuting for thousands of Ghanaians while fostering economic growth and urban development. With the government's directive to maintain the interchange's aesthetic appeal, the area is set to become a model for urban infrastructure in Ghana.



File Photo

# General News

## GIHOC denies allegations of selling Aboso Glass Factory at GHS8m

By Amanda Cartey

GIHOC Distilleries Company Limited has refuted claims that the Aboso Glass Factory in Tarkwa was sold for GH¢8 million. Managing Director Kofi Jumah dismissed the rumors, stressing that the company has no intention of selling the facility, which it assumed control of in 2019. Speaking to the media, Mr. Jumah clarified that GIHOC is committed to reviving the glass factory, with plans to restart operations by 2025.

He assured the public that significant efforts are being made to upgrade the factory's infrastructure and enhance its operational capacity. He criticized the circulating reports as baseless, urging the public to disregard them.

"One story that was in your sister station is that we sold over Aboso for 8 million cedis, that is a joke and anytime I hear comments like that I just laugh it off. And I don't think attention should be given to that," Mr. Jumah stated.

He added, "If people are gullible, let them take it, but one thing is that, eventually we are going to have a huge factory there. We've spent a lot of resources and time, moving from Accra to Aboso alone is not easy."

The Aboso Glass Factory, built in 1966 under Ghana's first President, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, was a leading producer of glass bottles for the beverage industry. At its peak, it employed about 500 people and produced millions of bottles, glass items, and louvre glass annually.

However, financial difficulties led to the factory's closure. It was later renamed Tropical Glass Factory under Gilchrist Olympio's ownership. In 2003, the facility was put up for sale after the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) cut off power supply.

In 2017, the government unveiled plans to rehabilitate the factory

with support from investors. By 2019, GIHOC Distilleries had taken over, aiming to repair and relaunch the facility to curb reliance on imported bottles and glass. This initiative also sought to support GIHOC's liquor brands such as Castle Bridge, Kaiser, and Schnapps.



Kofi Jumah, Managing Director, Aboso Glass Factory

## Verdict on anti-LGBTQ bill to be delivered on Dec 18 - Court rules

By Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo

The Supreme Court has announced December 18 as the date to deliver its verdict on the legal challenge to the Anti-LGBTQ+ Bill filed by Richard Dela Sky. Richard Dela Sky initiated his challenge on March 5, shortly after the bill was passed by Parliament on February 28. He argues that the passage of the Anti-LGBTQ+ Bill is unconstitutional.

The legal challenge has temporarily halted the transmission of the bill from Parliament to the Presidency, where President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo would have potentially assented to it. Speaker of Parliament Alban Bagbin has described the court's intervention as unconstitutional.

The case has been pending for approximately eight months. On May 8, Chief Justice Gertrude Torkornoo announced a sine die adjournment in the case, prompting criticism from proponents of the bill. They accused the Chief Justice of unnecessarily delaying its resolution, with some resorting to protests to demand an expedited hearing. In response, the court

explained that the adjournment was to allow parties to submit the necessary documents to advance the case. During a recent hearing on Tuesday, the court permitted the applicant to revise sections of their statement of case, granting the defendants an opportunity to file responses to the amendments.

Following these developments, the

court adjourned proceedings and set December 18 as the date for its ruling. Should the court throw out the suit, President Akufo-Addo will have to assent to the bill, making it law and cause the implementation of prison sentence of up to five years for the "wilful promotion, sponsorship, or support of LGBTQ+ activities". Individuals engaged in LGBTQ+ activities could face

prison sentences ranging from six months to three years.

The bill has ignited widespread debate and drawn legal opposition especially from the international communities. Critics insist that it infringes on basic human rights and disproportionately affects marginalised groups.



Supreme Court

# General News

## Ghana records rise in fire outbreaks with 4,650 cases from Jan to Sep 2024

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

Ghana is grappling with a surge in fire outbreaks, with the Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS) reporting 4,650 incidents between January and September 2024. This marks a notable increase compared to previous years, attributed largely to factors like urbanisation, housing deficits, and unsafe practices.

Assistant Division Officer Alex King Nartey of the GNFS pointed out that fires were mainly caused by electrical faults, misuse of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), and improper handling of open flames such as candles and mosquito coils. These issues are exacerbated in densely populated areas, especially slums built from flammable materials like wood, which have become prevalent due to rapid urbanisation.

Urban migration has led to increased pressure on housing in Accra, with many residents resorting to unsafe accommodations. This, combined with lax fire safety measures, creates a dangerous environment.

Mr. Nartey acknowledged that the rise in fire reports also reflects improved public awareness and better emergency reporting mechanisms. "The figure doesn't pose an alarming threat. Now, if you see a layperson out there, out of five persons, I am sure three will be able to give our emergency numbers," he noted.

Despite the increase in incidents, the GNFS has managed to protect properties worth over GH¢94 million in the first half of 2024. The service has also achieved significant progress in restoring previously non-functional fire tenders. Over 80% of the country's

fleet is now operational, with critical stations such as Korle Bu and Amasaman back in service.

A recent report revealed that Ghana has just 248 fire tenders serving a population of over 30 million, with only 155 operational earlier in the year. This shortage raises concerns about the GNFS's capacity to respond effectively, especially as the dry season

approaches. During this period, dry winds and combustible materials heighten the risk of fire outbreaks.

The GNFS has urged Ghanaians to adopt preventive measures and exercise caution to minimise fire risks. They have also called for continued public support in reporting fires promptly to mitigate damage and save lives.



File Photo

## Tribunal throws out GCNET's GHC4bn claim, awards \$2.2m to Ghana

By Andy Ogbarmey-Tettey

An international arbitration tribunal seated in London has dismissed a significant claim filed by Ghana Community Network Services Limited (GCNet) against the Republic of Ghana, which had sought over GHC4 billion in damages.

The Tribunal ruled that the Government of Ghana lawfully terminated its agreement with GCNet and rejected the company's claims for excessive compensation.

GCNet's dispute with the government began after the Ministry of Trade and Industry terminated a service agreement with the company in April 2020. The agreement, which was originally signed in 2000 and had been extended several times, granted GCNet the exclusive right to manage electronic systems for processing customs payments and trade documents at Ghana's ports.

GCNet sought compensation for the early termination, including

a claim of over GHC2.1 billion for what it argued was wrongful termination, as well as another GHC1.19 billion for past alleged breaches when the government granted exemptions and discounts to some importers.

Despite GCNet's demands, the Tribunal found in favor of the Government of Ghana. It upheld the country's argument that the termination of the agreement in April 2020 was in full compliance with the contractual terms.

Additionally, the Tribunal dismissed GCNet's claims for damages related to government policies on exemptions and discounts, stating that the company had waived its right to pursue such claims and was bound by that waiver.

In a decisive ruling, the Tribunal concluded that GCNet was the "unsuccessful party" in the arbitration and ordered the company to pay Ghana a total of \$2.2 million in legal fees. This amount includes \$1.7 million for legal representation and \$441,932

for the fees and expenses of Ghana's expert witnesses.

The ruling also emphasized that the government had saved millions of dollars by handling the case without foreign legal counsel, further reducing the financial

burden on the nation.

Ghana has by this ruling avoided paying the massive compensation GCNet sought but also secured a significant sum in legal costs from the company.



Godfred Yeboah Dame, Attorney-General

# General News

## Ashanti Region records 37% decrease in road fatalities – 2023 Kumasi Road Safety Report

By Abigail Twumwaa Ampofo

The Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly recorded a 37% decrease in road deaths last year, Kumasi Road Safety Report has revealed.

Speaking at a press conference held at the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly (KMA) office on November 19, 2024, Metropolitan Chief Executive Samuel Pyne highlighted the positive impact of initiatives implemented by his office to curb road accidents and fatalities.

The report, which compiled data from 13 police stations across Kumasi, recorded 83 fatalities in the year under review. Of these, 61% were attributed to pedestrian knockdowns, while 25% involved motorcycle accidents.

It identified the peak risk period as between 4:00 PM and 6:00

PM and listed high-risk locations, including Anloga Junction, Silicon Hotel Junction on the Accra Road, Santasi Station, Oteng Nkwanta, and Sofoline Station.

The report further highlighted high-risk corridors within Greater Kumasi, such as the Asafo Interchange to Tech Junction, the Sunyani Corridor, the Bekwai Corridor, and the Eastern By-Pass.

The release of the report coincided with the 2024 World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims.

Ashanti Regional Director of the National Road Safety Authority, Akwasi Agyenim Boateng, expressed the authority's commitment to reducing road fatalities during the festive season.

"The Drive Safe campaign should

be a priority for everyone to ensure safe driving on our roads and reduce the fatality rate in the region," he said.

In 2024, about 1,817 lives have been lost through road accidents from January to September. Notably, the total number of road crashes has decreased, with

9,820 incidents reported this year, representing a 7.48 per cent drop from 10,614 last year.

The Public Relations Officer for the NRSA, Pearl Adusu Sateckla, who revealed this in an interview, and urged citizens to comply with road traffic laws.



File Photo

## Ghana achieves 18th spot in global rankings for students enrolled in U.S. universities

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

Ghana has reached a significant milestone in global education rankings, securing the 18th spot among countries with the highest number of students enrolled in U.S. universities for the 2023-2024 academic year.

According to the 2024 Open Doors Report, 9,394 Ghanaian students are currently pursuing higher education in the United States, a record-breaking 45.2% increase compared to the previous year.

This growth highlights Ghana's prominence in international education. Notably, 6,337 of these students are enrolled in graduate programs, making Ghana the 9th largest contributor of graduate students to U.S. universities.

These students are distributed across more than 680 institutions in all 50 states, with many pursuing fields in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), which remain the top areas of study for international students.

Ghanaian students have collectively earned approximately \$9.2 million in scholarships, showcasing the recognition of their academic potential by U.S. institutions. This increase reflects broader trends, as international student numbers in the United States reached over 1.1 million, a 7% rise from the previous year.

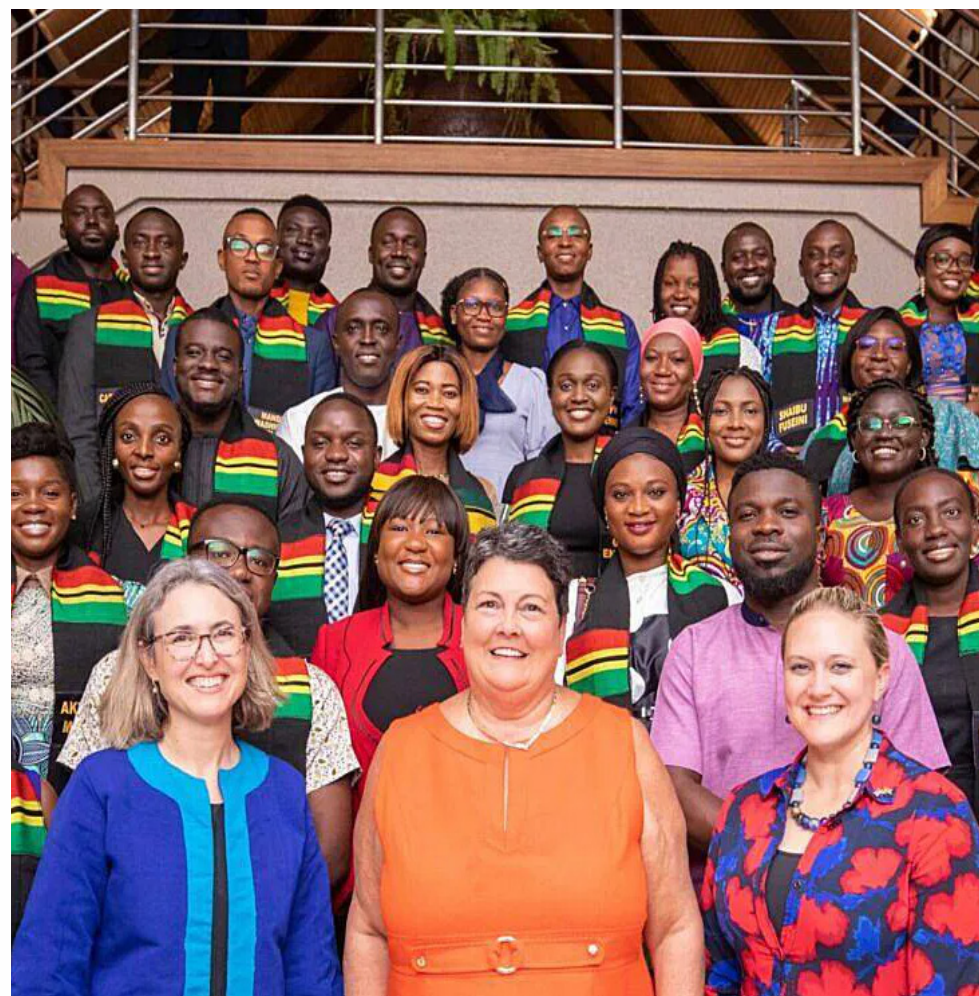
The U.S. Embassy in Ghana attributes part of this development to EducationUSA centres in Accra and Kumasi, which provide vital guidance to prospective students. A new facility in Osu is set to enhance these efforts by late November. These centres help students navigate admissions, scholarships, and other critical steps in studying abroad.

Meanwhile, A U.S. Customs and Border Protection report revealed that 1,910 Ghanaians overstayed their B1/B2 visas in 2023, representing a 7.5% overstay rate. Student and exchange visitor visas saw a 21% overstay rate, with 537 out of 2,559 holders exceeding their permitted stays. These figures signal a rise in visa compliance

issues, posing potential challenges for future applicants.

While Ghana's increased enrollment in U.S. universities

reflects educational progress and global recognition, the visa compliance concerns threaten the country's reputation and student opportunities.



File Photo

# General News

## 2021 Auditor General's report on Lamens' unsafe food supply to SHSs resurfaces amid fresh accusations

By Andy Ogbarmey-Tettey

The 2021 Auditor General's report has gained renewed attention following fresh accusations against Lamens Ventures and the National Food Buffer Stock Company (NAFCO) regarding the distribution of expired rice to senior high schools in Ghana earlier this year.

According to the report, Lamens Ventures supplied 65 bags of rice and five cartons of milk in March 2021, later found to be unfit for consumption during an audit conducted in September of the same year. These supplies were directed to Prestea Huni-Valley Senior High Technical School and Asankragwa Senior High School.

"In contravention of Section 52 of the PFM Act, 2016 (Act 921), we noted that supplies of 65 bags of rice in March 2021 to Prestea Huni Valley Senior High and Technical School, and five cartons of carnation milk to Asankragwa Senior High School by Lamens Ventures were found to be unwholesome at our time of audit

in September though the expiry date on the product was October 2021," the report stated.

The Auditor General raised alarms over potential health risks if the items had been consumed, emphasising the schools' accountability in reporting such issues. A parliamentary investigation, led by MP Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa, unveiled a broader scheme involving Lamens Ventures and NAFCO, alleging the nationwide distribution of contaminated rice. Mr. Ablakwa criticised the actions as reckless and called for the prosecution of those involved. He also accused officials of shielding perpetrators within NAFCO and the political system.

The Ministry of Education's Public Relations Officer, Kwasi Kwarteng, denied allegations of expired food being supplied to schools. Speaking to Joy News, Mr. Kwarteng explained that the rice in question had a "best before" date of December 2023 and was deemed fit for consumption by the Food and Drugs Authority

(FDA). "For the record, Lamens was fined for not getting authorisation for the repackaging of the food. It has nothing to do with the declaration of the wholesomeness of the food," he stated, adding that the fine imposed on Lamens by the FDA was due to unauthorised repackaging, not unwholesome food distribution.

He questioned the logic of the allegations, arguing that no authority would approve the distribution of 22,000 bags of unsafe rice to schools.

"Who would fine an agency just GH¢100,000 for supplying 22,000 bags of unwholesome food? Who, even in the Ministry of Education, would approve the distribution of 22,000 bags of unwholesome rice to schools across Ghana?

Would the Minister of Education sit there and say that 22,000 bags of rice should be distributed to schools, knowing they were unwholesome, and we would all just sit there and clap over it?" Mr. Kwarteng remarked. In a counter-response, Mr. Ablakwa accused the Education Ministry of acting as a spokesperson for Lamens Ventures, which has yet to release an official statement. He reiterated his call for accountability and urged further investigations into the matter.

This controversy has intensified concerns about food safety standards in Ghanaian schools, with critics urging systemic reforms to safeguard student health and well-being.



Kwasi Kwarteng, The Ministry of Education's Public Relations Officer

## EC trains visually impaired voters in Ahafo ahead of Dec 7 elections

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

The Electoral Commission (EC) has conducted a training session for visually impaired voters in the Ahafo Region ahead of Ghana's December 7 elections. The initiative introduces the Tactile Ballot Jacket, a device designed to empower visually impaired individuals to cast their votes independently.

Asunafo North Municipal Director of the EC, Gideon Yeboah, explained that the training was aimed at familiarising first-time voters with the device. This effort seeks to ensure that visually impaired voters can maintain ballot secrecy and participate fully in the electoral process. "We are assuring them of the availability of the tactile ballot to ensure they can cast their votes for their chosen candidates," Mr. Yeboah affirmed.

Participants received guidance on the voting process and the practical use of the Tactile Ballot Jacket. Caregivers were also encouraged to assist visually impaired voters by accompanying them to polling stations to ease the process. The EC plans to provide two Tactile Ballot Jackets at each polling station—one each for presidential and parliamentary ballots.

This initiative highlights the broader push for electoral inclusivity. However, concerns remain about the initiative's nationwide implementation. Attempts to confirm plans for other regions were unsuccessful.

Meanwhile, organisations advocating for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) have called on the EC to address longstanding accessibility issues in Ghana's elections. They pointed out that some polling stations remain

inaccessible, and long queues often hinder PWDs from voting efficiently. Stakeholders have been urged to ensure facilities and arrangements cater to all voters' needs.

This development comes as Ghana moves closer to what is expected to be a fiercely contested general election, with the EC under pressure to deliver a credible and

inclusive process.

"Voting as we know is done in secret and independently, but when it comes to visual impairment, it is the other way round, that is why we proposed the use of tactile jackets where the visually impaired person can vote by themselves without or with little help from someone," he added.



Jean Mensa, Electoral Commission Chairperson



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# Business

## Petrol prices drop by 1.8%, now selling at GHS15.45

By Amanda Cartey

Petrol prices in Ghana have seen a marginal reduction as some Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) adjust their rates effective November 19, 2024. Leading the charge, GOIL, one of the country's largest fuel providers, has lowered the price of petrol by 1.8%, now selling a litre at GH¢15.45—a 29-pesewa decrease compared to two weeks ago.

Despite the reduction in petrol prices, diesel remains unchanged at GH¢15.45 per litre. These adjustments stem from the bi-weekly price review mechanism, which factors in fluctuations in global crude oil prices and exchange rate dynamics.

Other OMCs have indicated they are in the process of reviewing their rates, but the extent of the reductions remains uncertain. Ghana's downstream petroleum sector currently boasts over 150

OMCs, with market competition playing a critical role in pricing strategies.

The recent price cuts come on the back of a decline in global crude oil prices, which have dropped from around \$80 per barrel in September 2024 to approximately \$72 per barrel. This decrease has created room for lower pump prices locally.

Additionally, the Ghanaian cedi's improved performance against the US dollar has bolstered hopes for further price reductions.

As of November 19, 2024, the dollar was selling at GH¢15.90 in some commercial banks, with the cedi experiencing one of its longest stretches of stability in recent months.

Analysts credit this trend to increased dollar injections by the Bank of Ghana and reduced demand for foreign currency ahead of the festive season.

Industry stakeholders, including Duncan Amoah, Executive Secretary of the Chamber of Petroleum Consumers (COPEC), and energy analyst Dr. Yusif Suleman, believe the magnitude of future price reductions will largely hinge on the cedi's performance.

According to Mr. Amoah, if the cedi continues to strengthen, consumers could benefit from fuel price decreases of up to 5% in the near term. However, any volatility in exchange rates or a rebound in global crude prices could limit these gains.



File Photo

## Asante Gold issues 31.9m shares to settle \$35m debt owed creditors

By Andy Ogbarmey-Tettey

Asante Gold Corporation has taken a significant step in addressing its financial liabilities by converting \$35 million of debt into equity.

The Canadian-Ghanaian mining firm issued 31,896,857 shares at a valuation of C\$1.50 per share as part of a \$100 million private placement strategy aimed at bolstering its operational capabilities in Ghana. This transaction represents the second instalment of the financing plan, with a final \$40 million tranche scheduled for December 2024.

The company, which manages the Bibiani and Chirano gold mines, intends to leverage these funds for operational upgrades and future growth. At Bibiani, enhancements to crushing equipment are expected to increase ore processing capacity, while Chirano's upgrades aim to achieve a significant boost in annual gold production. Asante plans to elevate its total output to over 500,000 ounces annually

by 2028, marking a commitment to long-term expansion in one of Africa's most prolific gold belts.

Commenting on the arrangement, CEO of Asante Gold, Dave Anthony, emphasised the growing confidence in the company's outlook. "This represents a significant vote of confidence in the long-term future of Asante by key Ghanaian suppliers and partners who have chosen to participate as shareholders in the company," he noted.

The transaction also aligns with Ghana's renewed status as Africa's top gold producer, following a 32% increase in production in 2022, which saw the country reclaim its leading position from South Africa.

The securities issued are subject to a four-month holding period under applicable laws, with no commissions or finder's fees associated with the placement.

Asante's dual listing on the Canadian Securities Exchange and the Ghana Stock Exchange

positions it as a key player in the region's mining sector. The company's exploration efforts continue at the Kubi Gold Project and other ventures near Ghana's Golden Triangle, showcasing its commitment to uncovering new reserves in a resource-rich

territory.

This strategic move not only addresses immediate financial obligations but also strengthens the company's foundation for future operations and partnerships in Ghana's thriving gold mining sector.



File Photo



# International

## Vaccinate to protect everyone! - WHO cautions

**Source: WHO**

In our constant quest to promote a healthy lifestyle, we still face the challenge of protecting ourselves against pathogens that challenge our immune system. In this context, vaccines emerge as a powerful ally, strengthening our natural defence and reducing disease risk.

Exploring the essential role of vaccines in maintaining an entire and healthy life is crucial to understanding how to guarantee energy and vitality in the face of everyday challenges.

In the 18th century, the English physician Edward Jenner carried out a pioneering experiment that led to the creation of the first vaccine. Observing that people who milked cows and contracted the animal disease became immune to human smallpox, Jenner conducted a study with the virus of a disease acquired from cows, which had similar symptoms to smallpox.

This innovative process of using the same medication on individuals with similar symptoms was officially called 'vaccination' in reference to its bovine origin.

According to the World Health Organisation, a vaccine is a preparation designed to generate immunity against a disease by stimulating the production of antibodies. Vaccines are the most effective way of preventing illness, disability and death.

When we receive a vaccine, our body undergoes a complex and crucial process to strengthen immunity. The process of inoculating the virus or bacterium - attenuated, dead or just small parts of it - into our body demands a specific response from our immune system to fight it. In doing so, our system generates short- or long-term memory - antibodies. So, if we are exposed to the same disease again, our immune system will already be able to fight it because it has a known structure. The reactions we experience when vaccinating, such as fever or feeling unwell, are a sign of this

incredible internal work in the immune system.

Today, thanks to technological advances, the production of vaccines is increasingly sophisticated and safe, and they are already capable of preventing more than 20 types of disease, which is why they are called vaccine-preventable.

In this way, vaccination prevents the contraction of diseases that can be transmitted directly through physical contact with a person or animal infected with a disease, without the interference of an intermediary object, and indirectly, through the transfer of the microorganism (virus or bacteria causing the disease) via objects contaminated by a sick person (food, water and contaminated objects) and transmitted by vectors (flies, ticks, mosquitoes, rats, bats and others). Depending on the type of virus or bacterium, they can have a high-speed reproduction system, which means that a single sick person can contaminate many others around them for directly transmitted diseases.

### **The power of the vaccine**

Fortunately, by getting vaccinated, you protect yourself and those around you. When 95 per cent of the population is vaccinated, there is a reduction in the number of infectious agents circulating, enabling collective protection in

communities. The yellow fever epidemic and the COVID-19 pandemic have shown how dangerous a virus can be for the population. It is the responsibility of each of us to get vaccinated, to vaccinate our loved ones and to ensure that periods like these, which we have recently experienced, become a memory of the past.

The Angolan Ministry of Health, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and partners have been working hard to ensure that vaccines reach the population free of charge and are available to the most significant number of people throughout the country, as is the case with the polio vaccine.

For this reason, after an outbreak of circulating type 2 vaccine-derived poliovirus (VDPV2) was confirmed on 27 February 2024, in response, Angola carried out four mass vaccination campaigns across the country, two at the national level and two at the sub-national level. As a result of this commendable effort by the government and its partners, around 17 million doses of the nOPV2 vaccine were administered to children under five years of age. It should be noted that Angola has made significant progress in the fight against polio and was declared free of the wild poliovirus in 2011. However, due to low vaccination coverage, it has faced sporadic outbreaks of polio, reaffirming the importance

of all of us together strengthening surveillance, improving vaccination coverage, addressing vaccine hesitancy, implementing innovative strategies and revitalising sustained political and financial commitment to ensure that all children are vaccinated and protected from the lifelong paralysis and disability caused by polio. The examples are clear - vaccination already saves millions of lives yearly and is widely recognised as one of the most successful interventions for protecting people's health. That's why we all have a responsibility to protect ourselves and our families from vaccine-preventable diseases by taking three crucial steps:

a) get vaccinated and ensure that your children receive routine vaccinations;

b) make your family, friends and neighbours aware of the importance of vaccination; and

c) pay attention to the dates of the vaccination campaigns announced by the government and welcome the vaccination team. Only together can we create a future free of vaccine-preventable diseases and protect everyone around us. Stay informed through reliable sources.



File Photo

# International

## Trump confirms he will deploy the military for mass deportation plan

Source: Africa News

President-elect Donald Trump has confirmed his intention to declare a national emergency to address border security and utilize the US military to execute a sweeping deportation initiative targeting undocumented migrants.

Immigration, a central theme of Trump's campaign, is set to dominate his return to the White House. The former president has vowed to deport millions of undocumented immigrants and secure the southern border with Mexico, citing a surge in illegal crossings during President Joe Biden's tenure.

Taking to his platform, Truth Social, Trump shared a post from a conservative activist, which claimed the president-elect was "ready to declare a

national emergency and deploy military resources to reverse the Biden administration's immigration policies through mass deportation." Trump simply added, "True!" to the repost.

The announcement comes as Trump prepares to return to the Oval Office following his November 5 election victory over Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris. He has begun naming key figures to his administration, including immigration hardliner Tom Homan, who will serve as the "border czar."

Homan, a former acting chief of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), has long been an advocate for stricter immigration policies and recently urged undocumented migrants to "start packing now."

The proposed deportation plan could affect millions of families across the United States. Authorities estimate there are approximately 11 million undocumented individuals in the country, with Trump's sweeping policies expected to impact over 20 million people indirectly.

While border security has been a persistent challenge for successive administrations, Trump's rhetoric has intensified concerns. Throughout his campaign, he described an ongoing "invasion" of migrants and used provocative language to allege that undocumented immigrants posed a threat to American society.

He also signaled plans to invoke the centuries-old Alien Enemies Act of 1798, a move critics say is outdated and reminiscent of

controversial policies such as Japanese-American internment during World War II.

Trump has yet to detail the full scope of his immigration agenda but has made clear his intention to act swiftly. His remarks come as border patrol encounters have stabilized, mirroring 2020 levels after peaking at 250,000 in December 2023 — the highest monthly figure on record.

As Trump assembles his cabinet, his hardline stance on immigration signals that border policy will remain a focal point of his administration, reigniting debates on how to manage America's complex immigration challenges effectively and humanely.



Donald Trump, US President-elect & US Military

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