

## Ghana may face severe cholera outbreak next year - Minority

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# General News

## Sekondi-Takoradi: Two water companies closed amid efforts to control cholera outbreak

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

The Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) has temporarily suspended operations at two sachet water producers in the Sekondi-Takoradi region for failing to meet sanitation standards.

A recent FDA inspection revealed that the companies had neglected regular maintenance of their water filtration systems, prompting this action.

This move is part of the FDA's broader efforts to control the cholera outbreak, which has already claimed 16 lives and resulted in 103 confirmed cases.

The FDA's Western Regional Director, Dr. Martin Kusi, reiterated the agency's commitment to protecting public health.

To address the crisis further, the FDA has given 86 sachet water producers a two-week deadline to submit their water sources for testing by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

"We are leaving no stone unturned in the fight against cholera, producers across the coastal belt Ahanta West, Shama, Ekumfi, and Sekondi-Takoradi must ensure their water sources are safe. We will shut down any producer whose water is found to contain faecal matter," he added.

Dr. Kusi has also urged food vendors to set up Veronica buckets for regular handwashing and cautioned

the public about food safety as the festive season approaches.

He emphasized the need to check expiry dates on food products, avoid buying rusty cans, and handle food carefully to minimize the risk of foodborne illnesses.

The Western Region has recorded 14 fatalities related to the ongoing cholera outbreak, with the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis and Effia-Kwesimintsim Municipality emerging as the primary hotspots.

In an interview with the media, Dr. Yaw Ofori Yeboah, the Western Region Director of Health Services, emphasized that despite intensified public health campaigns and preventive measures such as the ban on vegetable sales by food vendors, residents remain vigilant and strictly adhering to all safety guidelines to curb the further spread of the disease.

"Currently, about 8 districts have reported cholera cases and I must say that up till now, the facilities within these 8 districts have

managed over 800 cases and that is a lot.

"We have lost 14 people so far, currently, the epicentre is Sekondi-Takoradi and adjoining districts, Shama and Ahanta West. We're appealing to everybody to take the basic precautions. It's so important if we don't do that we're going to lose more people, so please personal hygiene is very important, we must wash our hands, and the food we eat must be warm. As soon as anybody gets these symptoms, he/she must report to the nearest health facility," he added.



Dr. Martin Kusi, FDA's Western Regional Director

## Ghana may face severe cholera outbreak next year - Minority

By Amanda Cartey

The Minority in Parliament has warned that Ghana could face a severe cholera outbreak next year if the Akufo-Addo government does not take immediate and decisive action.

The caucus raised concerns over the escalating situation, revealing that as of December 17, 2024, 123 cholera cases and 15 deaths had been reported in the Western Region, with 15 health workers

among those infected while treating patients.

Ranking Member on the Health Committee of Parliament, Kwabena Mintah Akandoh, spoke to the media on Friday criticizing the government for what he called gross negligence. He argued that the same lack of action that contributed to the NPP's electoral defeat should not be allowed to worsen this public health crisis.

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Mr. Kwabena Mintah Akandoh, (Middle) the Ranking Member on the Health Committee of Parliament



# General News

## Ghana may face severe cholera outbreak next year - Minority

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“Without immediate and decisive interventions, Ghana risks facing a full-blown cholera epidemic before the incoming administration takes office,” Akandoh cautioned.

He further expressed deep concern over how what could have been a contained outbreak has instead exposed the vulnerabilities in Ghana’s healthcare system.

“This outbreak, which should have been controlled weeks ago, continues to escalate due to

systemic neglect and inefficiency,” he said.

Mr Akandoh called on the government to allocate adequate resources and provide necessary support to health workers to effectively contain the outbreak and prevent further spread.

The current cholera outbreak highlights the serious consequences of poor public health and sanitation systems.

So far, more than 10 lives have been

lost, and nearly 800 suspected cases have been reported as of December 7, with more than 60 new infections each day.

These numbers show that we failed to act on issues that could have been prevented.

In many ways, it reflects that we haven’t fully learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and the importance of hygiene.

Cholera spreads because of

neglect—neglect of basic sanitation, waste management, and health education. While health officials are working hard to manage the situation by sending out teams and adjusting emergency care, the conditions that allow cholera to spread still remain largely the same. Issues like open defecation, poor handwashing, and eating contaminated food have been raised many times before. However, efforts to fix them have not led to real, lasting improvements.

## Man who destroyed vehicles of MPs in Parliament sentenced to 5 years in prison

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

A 33-year-old Ghanaian man, Christopher Kofi Okyere Sorkpa, has been handed a five-year prison sentence by an Accra Circuit Court for damaging the vehicles of Members of Parliament and their staff.

On Thursday, Christopher and his accomplice, Wisdom, both alleged preachers from Kasoa, secretly entered the car park of Parliament House.

Christopher, carrying a handbag with a concealed earth chisel, used the tool to vandalize the vehicles.

Christopher faced six charges, including conspiracy to commit unlawful damage and actual damage.

The prosecution stated that he smashed the windscreens of two Toyota V8 SUVs, two Toyota Camrys, and a Toyota Rav 4.

The vehicles that were damaged belonged to Members of Parliament Kwaku Okyere Agyekum of

Fanteakwa South and Eugene Boakye Antwi of Subin, as well as Parliamentary staff members; Jessica Mensah, Sena Atsu, and Gifty Gbah.

Wisdom, aged 42, was accused of encouraging Christopher during the act. Both individuals were detained by Parliamentary security personnel, and their statements were recorded in the presence of an independent witness.

On Friday, Christopher pleaded guilty to all charges. Judge Samuel Bright Asiedu sentenced him to

three years for conspiracy to cause unlawful damage.

For the remaining five charges, he received five-year sentences on each, to be served concurrently.

Wisdom was remanded in custody as his charges were found to be incomplete.

The prosecution requested an adjournment to amend the charges, and the case has been rescheduled for January 9, 2025.



Christopher Kofi Okyere Sorkpa

# General News

## More than 12,000 Ghanaians were deported globally in last 4 years – GIS

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

The Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) has reported that over the past four years, a total of 12,646 Ghanaians, comprising 8,186 men and 4,459 women have been deported from various countries.

Most of these deportations occurred from countries such as Libya, the United Kingdom, Germany, the United States, and Canada.

This update was shared by Assistant Commissioner at the Migration Information Centre for Returnees at Kotoka International Airport, Madam Yaa Oppong Opoku-Agyeman, during a ceremony in Accra marking International Migrants Day.

The event, organized by the SEWA Foundation in collaboration with the Ghana Airports Company Limited and other partners, was themed “Safe Migration: Building

Bridges, Not Barriers.”

Madam Opoku-Agyeman highlighted that 2022 saw the highest number of deportations, with 3,028 Ghanaians returned, including 1,813 men and 1,215 women.

According to her, in 2021, 2,881 Ghanaians were deported, and in 2020, the figure stood at 1,143.

She added that in 2023, a total of 2,750 deportations were recorded, with 1,889 men and 861 women. As of November 2024, the total stands at 2,843, with 2,269 men and 574 women.

“In 2023, we had 1889 males and 861 females and a total of 2750. And in 2024 up to November, we had 2,269 males and 574 females, making a total of 2,843,” she added. She emphasized that while migration can significantly benefit Ghana through remittances, knowledge exchange, and personal development, irregular migration often leads to grave consequences.

These include the risk of deportation, exploitation, forced labor, human trafficking, and even loss of life.

“On the contrary, when migration is irregular in the form of stowaway, travelling through the desert, human trafficking, improper documentation, and irregular or overstayed, it could lead to the following, deportation or repatriation, loss of life, sexual exploitation, loss of vital body organs, depression, forced labour, detention, among others,” she added.

Assistant Commissioner at the Migration Information Centre for Returnees at Kotoka International Airport noted that the GIS is committed to assisting Ghanaians in traveling through the proper channels to safeguard their well-being.

Secretary of the SEWA Foundation, Mrs. Selma Enyonam Tsatey, suggested that Ghana could learn

from global best practices to create a more structured approach to labor export.

She noted that by establishing proper training and recruitment programs, Ghana could create legitimate migration pathways for its youth. She also proposed reviewing visa policies and improving the support systems of Ghanaian embassies to ensure the public receives accurate and helpful information.

“By designing and implementing robust training and recruitment programmes, Ghana can create legitimate pathways for our young people,” she said.

A migrant, Bright Opoku Appiah, who recently returned to Ghana, called on the government to cultivate an environment that encourages responsible migration, ensuring that Ghanaians abroad contribute positively to the country’s economic development.



Madam Yaa Oppong Opoku-Agyeman, Assistant Commissioner at the Migration Information Centre for Returnees at Kotoka International Airport

# General News

## You cannot change the rules when it suits you - Mahama tells EC over election discrepancies

By Amanda Cartey

President-elect John Dramani Mahama has urged the Electoral Commission (EC) to be fair, consistent, and honest when handling disputed election results. His comments come after the EC announced it would not confirm results in nine constituencies because some of the results were declared under pressure.

Mahama, however, criticized the EC for applying different rules in similar situations.

He pointed to the 2020 elections, specifically the Techiman South constituency, where results were declared despite reports of irregularities and complaints from some people.

He questioned the EC's decision to stop the recounting of results in the nine constituencies, saying it made the whole process seem unfair and weakened people's trust in the commission.

Speaking to African diplomats on December 20, Mahama stressed that the EC must be transparent and treat all political parties fairly. He said the EC shouldn't change its rules depending on who benefits

from the decision.

"You can't change the rules when it suits you," Mahama said, reminding the EC that in 2020, the commission allowed results to be declared even in situations where there were issues, and people were told to go to court if they disagreed.

Mahama pointed out that if a declaration has been made, the

circumstances, whether under pressure or not, should not change the process.

"The same arguments were passed that there should be a re-collation, and the EC said no... In the same circumstances, declarations have been made," Mahama said. "If the people have any grievances, they must go to court and address those grievances there."

He stressed that the EC should apply the same principles in all cases, warning against shifting the rules depending on the situation or the parties involved.

"We don't think the goalpost should be shifted depending on who is at the other end of the stick. We think that there must be fairness and justice in everything we do," he added



John Dramani Mahama, President-elect

## Utilize resources left behind by Akufo-Addo to protect public purse - NPP MP to NDC

By Amanda Cartey

The Member of Parliament for Ablekuma North Constituency, Sheila Bartels, has urged the incoming government to refrain from purchasing new vehicles, as the fleet left behind by President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo's administration is more than adequate for use.

Bartels emphasized that the current administration is leaving behind a well-maintained fleet of vehicles that can be reused by appointees under John Dramani Mahama's government for their official duties.

In a social media post, Bartels, who will not be returning to Parliament,

highlighted the resources handed over during the transition process. "The Akufo-Addo government has so far handed over 200 pickups, 200 motorbikes, and 20 brand-new land cruisers to the incoming NDC administration via the transition team," she stated.

She stressed that there is no need for the incoming government to buy new vehicles, particularly luxury SUVs, as the existing ones can serve their purpose and help save taxpayers' money.

"There should be NO purchase of cars, V8s, to save taxpayers money. Obiaa nnuusi dada noaaaa! Things are looking good!" she added.

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Sheila Bartels, MP for Ablekuma North Constituency

# General News

## Utilize resources left behind by Akufo-Addo to protect public purse - NPP MP to NDC

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Ms Sheila Bartels, lost her bid to represent the New Patriotic Party (NPP) in Ablekuma North in the 2024 General Election.

It was a successful revenge for a former MP for Ablekuma North, Nana Akua Owusu Afriyieh, who was declared winner of the fiercely contested race.

Out of a total of 1, 393 valid votes cast, Ms Bartels polled 637 votes while Nana Afriyieh polled 756 votes.

The former MP did not hesitate to express gratitude to her constituents for the opportunity to represent them in Parliament.

## National Service ghost names scandal: Oral team receives dossier for investigation

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

The Operation Recover All Loots (ORAL) team has officially taken possession of a comprehensive report detailing the National Service ghost names scandal.

This was disclosed on Friday, by the team's chairman, Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa.

Ablakwa acknowledged the vital role played by investigative organizations, including The Fourth Estate and the Media Foundation for West Africa, in compiling the report.

He expressed gratitude to them

for their dedication to the nation, emphasizing that their contributions are pivotal to recovering stolen resources and restoring accountability.

In a post shared on his X page, he wrote, "Team ORAL has today received the full dossier on the National Service ghost names scandal which conservative estimates indicate has cost Ghana over GHS500million. We are extremely grateful to The Fourth Estate and the Media Foundation for West Africa for the presentation and their exceptional patriotism. Together, we shall reset Ghana and recover all loot".

The scandal, which highlights issues of corruption and financial

mismanagement, has become a focal point for ORAL's ongoing efforts to retrieve stolen public funds and expose fraudulent activities.

The ORAL team has reassured the public that any evidence or leads provided will be managed with care and urgency.

According to the team, they remain committed to a thorough examination of the scandal to hold those responsible accountable.

Additionally, ORAL has introduced new interactive tools aimed at empowering citizens to fight corruption.

These platforms, in a press statement by the Mahama Transition Team, provide secure and anonymous channels for reporting corrupt practices.

This initiative forms part of a broader strategy to promote transparency and rebuild public confidence in the government's operations.

According to the transition team's spokesperson, Felix Kwakye Ofose, these measures represent a significant step toward restoring trust in national institutions and reinforcing accountability among public officials.



Dr Mahamudu Bawumia (L) and John Dramani Mahama (R)

# General News

## NDC rejects recollated results for 5 constituencies favouring NPP

By Amanda Cartey

The National Democratic Congress (NDC) has strongly rejected the seven parliamentary results announced by the Electoral Commission (EC) after a re-collation process.

This came after a High Court ruling concerning the disputed results from seven constituencies. The EC went ahead with re-collating and announcing the results, which were all in favor of the New Patriotic Party (NPP).

The constituencies involved include Ahafo Ano North, Techiman South, Ahafo Ano South West, Nsawam Adoagyiri, Obuasi East, Okaikwei Central, and Tema Central.

In a statement, the NDC's General Secretary, Fifi Fiavi Kwetey, called the re-collation process illegal and manipulated.

He claimed the EC's actions lacked transparency and fairness, accusing the Commission of favoring the NPP.

"These results, declared under questionable and illegal circumstances, represent a blatant assault on Ghana's democratic principles and a betrayal of the sovereign will of the Ghanaian people."

"It is abundantly clear that the Electoral Commission, under the leadership of Jean Mensah, has consistently chosen a path of illegality and impunity. By engaging in actions that deliberately undermine the integrity of Ghana's electoral process, the EC has compromised its mandate and deepened public mistrust in the institution."

"The NDC strongly condemns these undemocratic practices and reminds all involved that electoral crimes have no expiry date and that the date of reckoning would come."

The NDC commended its rank and file for maintaining peace and avoiding confrontation with security forces.

"We commend our rank and file

for heeding our call to maintain peace and avoid confrontation with security forces deployed to intimidate and oppress innocent citizens."

So far, the EC has successfully declared results in seven

constituencies, all in favour of the New Patriotic Party (NPP).

These include, Ahafo Ano North, Techiman South, Ahafo Ano South West, Nsawam, Adoagyiri, Obuasi East, Okaikwei Central, and Tema Central.



Fifi Fiavi Kwetey, NDC's General Secretary

## Uphold Supreme Court ruling, to keep politicians out of Civil Service - CLOGSAG warns Mahama

By Amanda Cartey

The Civil and Local Government Staff Association of Ghana (CLOGSAG) has called on the incoming government to uphold the Supreme Court ruling that ensures civil servants are not appointed based on partisan politics.

This ruling, which the Supreme Court made clear, states that no civil servant's appointment should be linked to political activities.

In a statement during CLOGSAG's Thanksgiving Service in Accra, the Executive Secretary of CLOGSAG, Mr. Isaac Bampoe Addo, stressed that the association would "strongly resist" any attempts to

appoint politicians to positions within the Civil Service or Local Government Service.

Warning that the group would use "workers' power" to block such actions.

"There is a Supreme Court decision that says that no civil servant must owe his appointment to partisan activities," Mr. Addo said. "We want to believe that the incoming Government will adhere to the Supreme Court ruling and ensure that politicians are not appointed to encumber civil service institutions."

He also highlighted concerns over the "winner-takes-all" approach to public appointments,

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Mr. Isaac Bampoe Addo, Executive Secretary of CLOGSAG

# General News

## Uphold Supreme Court ruling, to keep politicians out of Civil Service - CLOGSAG warns Mahama

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which he believes gives the President excessive powers in the appointment of public officers, potentially politicizing these roles. According to Mr. Addo, this practice must be reevaluated to determine whether it truly benefits the country's development.

"Indeed, it is time for us to evaluate the democracy that has

characterized the governance under the Fourth Republic to ascertain whether this type of governance is helping us to develop as a country," Mr. Addo stated.

Furthermore, Mr. Addo pointed out the limitations of Ghana's decentralized systems, particularly in dealing with issues like illegal

mining.

He argued that local authorities, such as District Assemblies, should be more involved in addressing these challenges, as they better understand the local context and can implement more effective, sustainable solutions.

Delivering his New Year message

to members of CLOGSAG, Mr. Addo acknowledged the year had been commendable despite challenges in achieving a Unique Salary Structure for its members.

He assured CLOGSAG members that ongoing negotiations would eventually lead to progress on salary and service conditions.

## We will terminate illegal recruitment, promotions in public institutions, agencies - Asiedu Nketia

Amanda Cartey

The National Democratic Congress (NDC) has made it clear that it will not tolerate any unlawful appointments or promotions in public institutions once it assumes office.

National Chairman of the party, Mr. Johnson Asiedu Nketiah, said they will cancel any last-minute appointments or promotions made by the outgoing New Patriotic Party (NPP) government if they are found to be unlawful.

Speaking at a victory rally in Sunyani on December 20, Asiedu Nketiah shared that the NPP government had issued about 10,000 appointment letters and promoted many government workers in the last days of their term.

He questioned why these decisions were made so quickly and pointed out that some of these appointments were backdated, possibly to cover up the rot of the outgoing NPP government.

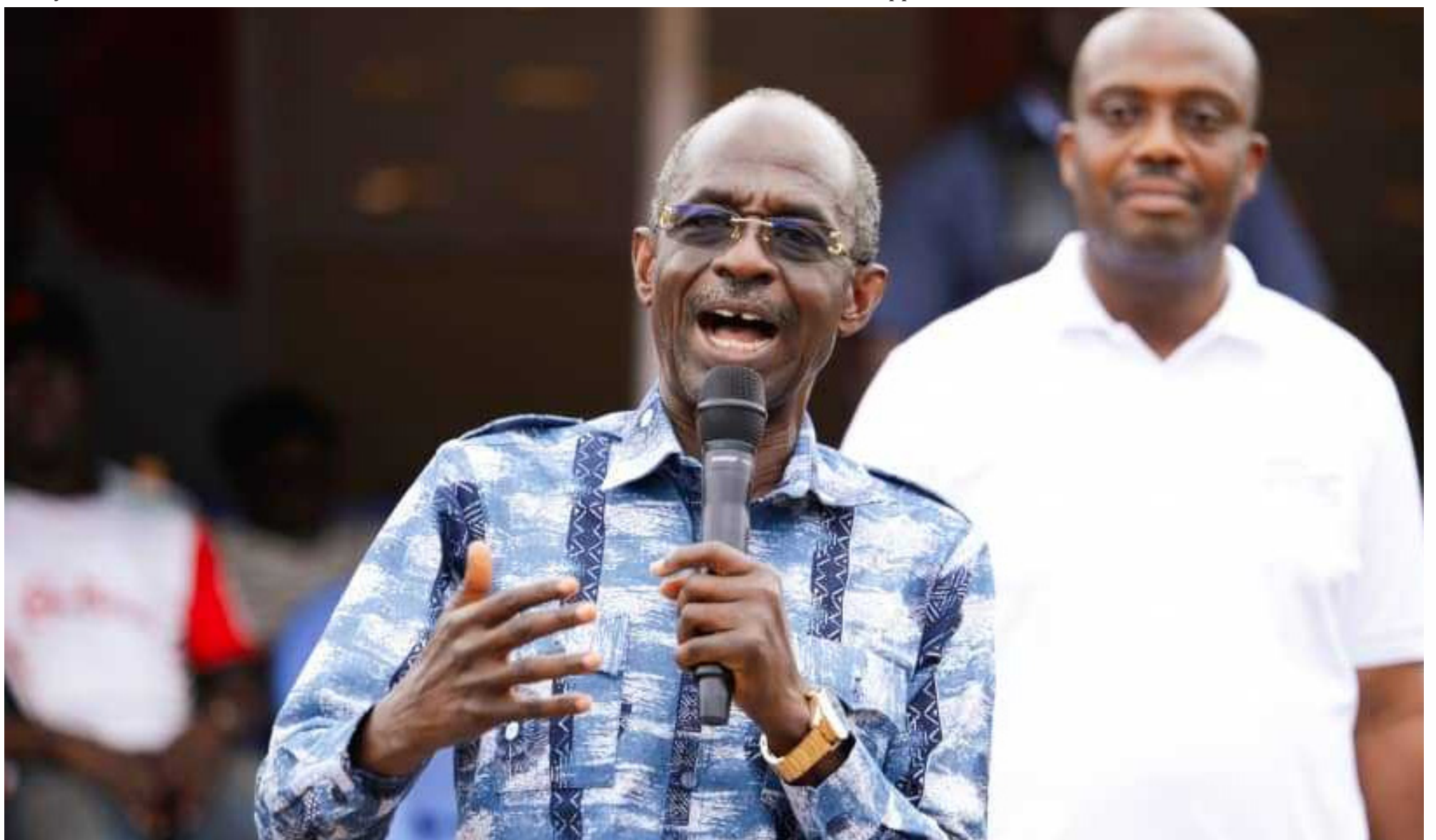
"All those who illegally gain recruitment and promotions in the public institutions and agencies will be terminated or reversed," he said.

Asiedu Nketiah pointed out that key institutions, including the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS), the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA), the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA), and the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA), were among the organizations affected by these sudden appointments and

promotions.

He also threatened that any government official who played a role in the "fake" recruitment and promotions would be sacked from office if he or she failed to defend or explain themselves.

He stressed that the NDC would act decisively to undo any last-minute moves designed to undermine the public service and secure political advantages for the outgoing administration.



Asiedu Nketia, NDC National Chairman





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# Business

## Ghana's oil market growing more competitive as top OMCs lose market share

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

The 2023 Ghana Petroleum Industry Report by the Chamber of Bulk Oil Distributors (CBOD) has revealed a decline in market share for the top 10 Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) in the country, dropping from 65% in 2022 to 61% in 2023.

The report also highlighted that 34 OMCs faced the risk of closure in 2023, signaling the tough challenges companies are grappling with to remain viable.

While the total number of OMCs decreased from 235 in 2022 to 201 in 2023, the data shows a significant 69% increase in the overall number of OMCs over the past decade, from 2013 to 2023.

Although the overall number of OMCs has shrunk, the market dominance of the leading 10 companies continues to weaken, indicating the intensifying competition.

The state-owned company, Goil, remained the market leader for the ninth consecutive year, though its share dropped from 20% in 2022 to

16% in 2023.

This reduction was largely attributed to falling sales of diesel and petrol, which decreased by 3.5% and 6.5%, respectively.

"The top 10 BIDECS imported about 80% of the petroleum products consumed in 2023. Although the number of OMCs reduced from 235 in 2022 to 201 in 2023, the trend shows that the number of OMCs has increased by about 69% from 2013 to 2023. The decrease in the number of OMCs in 2023 notwithstanding, the market share of the top 10 OMC declined from 65% in 2022 to 61% in 2023, indicating the sector is gradually becoming competitive," parts of the report read.

On the flip side, Star Oil saw a remarkable surge, moving up from fifth to second place in the rankings, with its market share increasing from 2.5% to 8.4%.

Other major players, including Vivo Energy, TotalEnergies, Zen Petroleum, and Puma Energy, all experienced a decline in their market share over the same period. Emerging companies such as Benab, Dukes, Gaso, and Frimps also gained ground, with

Dukes Petroleum notably entering the top 10, displacing Petrosol.

In terms of sales volumes, Goil marketed over 700,000 metric tons of refined products in 2023, while Star Oil, Vivo Energy, TotalEnergies, and Zen Petroleum each sold over 300,000 metric tons.

Meanwhile, four other companies sold between 100,000 and 200,000 metric tons, and Frimps Oil marketed under 100,000 metric tons.

On the infrastructure front, the number of retail outlets across the

country grew to 5,046 in 2023, marking a 66% increase since 2014. However, despite this expansion, outlet productivity saw a decline of 22% in 2020, primarily due to the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown.

In spite of the challenges, the total national demand for petroleum products grew by 6% in 2023, rising from 4.22 million metric tons in 2022 to 4.49 million metric tons, demonstrating the sector's ability to adapt and its potential for future growth.



Fuel station

## Ghana receives aviation fuel supply from Dangote Refinery

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

Ghana has secured a vital supply of aviation fuel from the Dangote Petroleum Refinery, as global oil trader Vitol finalizes the sale to BIDECS, a leading Ghanaian bulk import, distribution, and export company.

This transaction underscores the growing significance of the \$20 billion Dangote Refinery, positioning it as a crucial supplier of refined petroleum products across West Africa.

This deal will not only strengthen regional trade but also address the increasing demand for aviation fuel, especially as Ghana's aviation sector continues to expand with the rise in air traffic.

This new development marks a key moment in enhancing energy cooperation across the region, reinforcing the Dangote Refinery's role as a transformative force in Africa's energy industry. Reports indicate that the fuel

shipment has already reached Ghana, while this could be the first official delivery to a Ghanaian BIDECS, there are signs that other products from Dangote's refinery may have already made their way into the Ghanaian market.

With a daily capacity to process 650,000 barrels of crude oil, the Dangote Petroleum Refinery is poised to be a strategic asset, helping to reduce Africa's reliance on imported petroleum products.

The Dangote Petroleum Refinery features the largest pipeline infrastructure globally, extending 1,100 kilometers and handling 3 billion standard cubic feet of gas per day.

Founded in 1978, the Group's primary focus is to deliver locally-produced, value-added products and services that address the essential needs of the community.

Its 435MW power plant is sufficient to supply all of Ibadan DisCo's electricity needs.



Dangote Refinery

# International

## Death toll in latest stampedes in Nigeria rises to at least 32

Source: Africa Business Insider

The death toll from stampedes during two separate Christmas charity events in Nigeria has risen to 32, police said on Sunday.

The victims include at least four children.

As the country grapples with the worst cost-of-living crisis in a generation, large crowds had gathered to collect food and clothing distributed at the Christmas charity events.

The dead included 22 people in southeastern Anambra state's Okija town, where a philanthropist had organised a food distribution, local police said.

Ten others died in the capital, Abuja, during a similar church-organised event.

"They opened the gate this morning, everybody just rushed in, then some people fell, and they started marching on people. They marched on them till they died," said one eyewitness.

"We discovered that a lot of people were trampled upon. It took a lot of effort to be able to move them immediately to the hospital," said Tunji Disu, head of the Intelligence Response Team in Abuja.

Police said they are investigating the two incidents, which took place only days after dozens of children were killed during a crush at a holiday funfair in Ibadan.

The organisers had promised to give cash handouts and food.

Africa's most populous country is seeing a growing trend by local organisations, churches, and

individuals to organise charity events ahead of Christmas to ease economic hardship.

The stampedes have prompted growing calls for the authorities to enforce safety measures at such

events.

Nigerian police have also mandated that organisers obtain permission prior to holding them.



File photo

## US State Dept imposes visa restrictions on multiple people in South Sudan

Source: Africa Business Insider

The U.S Department of State has announced plans to impose visa restrictions on multiple individuals responsible for the ongoing conflict in South Sudan.

The statement from the US Department of State said individuals accused of serious offenses, including mismanaging the nation's resources, failing to tackle public corruption, and enabling elite capture of the country's wealth, will face visa restrictions.

Additionally, they were accused of failing to protect the people of South Sudan from human rights abuses and violations of their civil and political rights.

Lastly, they were charged with failing to maintain peace and stability in the region.

"The United States had hoped to join the people of South Sudan this week in celebrating their country's first election since the creation of an independent Republic of South Sudan."

"Instead, we mark another missed opportunity for the transitional government of South Sudan to bring

the cycle of election delays to an end and respect the people of South Sudan," the statement noted.

### South Sudan's growing challenges

South Sudan is facing a severe economic crisis, with civil servants unpaid for nearly a year due to disrupted oil exports caused by a damaged pipeline amid the civil war in neighbouring Sudan.

Still recovering from its five-year civil war that ended in 2018, the country struggles with poverty, food insecurity, and limited access to basic services.

Natural disasters, including severe flooding affecting over 735,000 people, have worsened the humanitarian crisis, leaving 9 million in need of aid and 7.1 million requiring food assistance.

South Sudan's reliance on oil exports and global price fluctuations adds to its challenges.

In September, the government postponed elections to December 2026, citing a lack of preparedness.

"The presidency, under the chairmanship of President Salva Kiir Mayardit, has announced an extension of the country's transitional period by two years as well as postponing

elections, which were initially scheduled for December 2024 to December 22nd, 2026," Kiir's office said

This delay has sparked concerns about the country's ability to transition to a stable democracy despite the 2018 peace agreement.

This is the second time the country, which gained independence in 2011, is postponing elections and extending a transitional period that started in February 2020.

The US said its decision to impose sanctions on South Sudan reflects its unwavering commitment to

supporting the country's people in their pursuit of strengthened democracy and rule of law.

This sanction is the third round of measures taken under Section 212(a)(3)(C) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as part of a 2019 policy targeting individuals who undermine or impede lasting peace in South Sudan, as well as their family members.

By taking this action, the US says it aims to promote accountability among those responsible for undermining peace in the region.



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