



WAEC to release WASSCE results on Dec 29 - Education Minister

- Page 2



BoG to offer \$120M in auction to BDCs in first quarter of 2025

- Page 6



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General News

WAEC to release WASSCE results on Dec 29 - Education Minister

By Amanda Cartey

The Minister of Education, Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum, has assured Ghanaians that the 2024 West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) results will be released next week. Speaking to reporters after visiting the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), Dr. Adutwum revealed that the council was working diligently, even through the holidays, to ensure the results are ready by December 29, 2024.

"I came to apprise myself of developments. They are working now, even during the holidays, to get the results out on or before the 29th of this month. I observed the workers in action, and as of now, close to 50% of the objectives have been marked," he stated.

His remarks came in response to earlier concerns raised by WAEC about delays in processing the results due to financial and logistical challenges.

Dr. Adutwum noted that

approximately half of the results have been scanned, with the remaining tasks expected to be completed soon. He expressed confidence that WAEC's financial difficulties would not hinder the timely release of the results.

When asked about the government's plans to address WAEC's debt, Dr. Adutwum dismissed the question, stating, "Excuse me, you don't have the facts." He clarified that his visit was not to address financial issues but to monitor the council's progress as part of his routine check-ins with examination bodies. The government currently owes WAEC over GH¢100 million, a debt that has contributed to delays in processing results for approximately 460,000 students nationwide. Recently, the government disbursed GH¢25 million to partially offset the debt.

However, WAEC described the amount as insufficient to cover the costs needed to finalize the results.

"Obviously, it is inadequate. If we decide to invite the technicians today or even tomorrow, all they are going to ask for is the outstanding payment. And so all of that GH¢25 million will go," a WAEC representative explained.

Despite these challenges, Dr. Adutwum remains optimistic that the results will be available within the promised timeframe, offering a glimmer of hope to students and their families eagerly awaiting the outcome.



Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum, Minister of Education

Wesley Girls SHS sued for alleged discrimination against Muslim students

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

A legal case has been filed against Wesley Girls' High School and the Ghana Education Service (GES) over accusations of religious bias.

The suit, brought before the Supreme Court by Shafic Osman, contests the school's policy that mandates all students participate in Methodist religious practices, such as compulsory chapel attendance. Filed on December 15, the legal challenge argues that this policy violates the constitutional rights of Muslim students, specifically their right to religious freedom.

Osman is seeking a ruling that the school's practices are in violation of Ghana's 1992 Constitution, especially in relation to the right to religious liberty, freedom from discrimination, and the prohibition of state-endorsed religion.

The lawsuit claims that the policy discriminates against Muslim students by forcing them to participate in religious activities that do not align with their faith, thereby undermining their rights and well-being.

The legal action also seeks

an injunction to prevent the enforcement of the school's policy and demands that the Ghana Education Service create new guidelines for handling religious observance in public schools in accordance with constitutional principles.

"A declaration that the 1st

defendant's policy compelling and requiring the practice of a compulsory school religion in a public school is contrary to and inconsistent with Articles 21(1) (b) (c) and Article 26."

"A declaration that the limitations on Muslim students in 1st defendant school undermines the

welfare of Muslim students under international human rights of the child cognizable under Article 33(5) of the constitution of Ghana, 1992," parts of the writ read.



Wesley Girls SHS Logo

General News

Ghana's Healthcare gets boost with \$220,000 Mobile Clinic Van from USAID

By Amanda Cartey

Healthcare delivery in Ghana has received a significant boost with the introduction of a \$220,000 mobile clinic van, donated by the United States through its Agency for International Development (USAID).

This state-of-the-art clinic is equipped with essential medical tools, including an ultrasound machine, echocardiogram, consulting rooms, examination beds, air conditioners, a vaccine refrigerator, a generator, and a robust power system.

The HopeXchange Medical Center in Kumasi has been entrusted with managing the clinic. It will deliver specialized healthcare services to communities across the Ashanti Region and beyond, bringing critical care to those unable to access hospital facilities.

During the handover event, Dr. Zohra Balsara, USAID/Ghana Health Office Director, emphasized the clinic's

potential to bridge healthcare gaps. She stated, "The mobile clinic ensures that underserved communities can access quality healthcare, demonstrating a strong commitment to equity and inclusivity."

HopeXchange Medical Center, operated by the Christian Health Association of Ghana (CHAG), is renowned for providing high-quality healthcare to over four million Ghanaians. Since 2013, USAID has invested \$3.5 million in initiatives at the center, including the establishment of a pathology lab, maternal and child health facilities, and research programs.

Between October 2023 and September 2024, the center's outreach team reached more than 12,500 individuals in 63 communities within the Ashanti and Bono East Regions. Their efforts included identifying and treating serious medical conditions, such as performing surgeries for women

with breast lumps.

The new mobile clinic will enable the team to expand their reach even further, offering free health education, screenings, and specialized services to remote communities.

General Manager of the HopeXchange Medical Center, Dominic Osei, expressed confidence in the van's impact, noting that it will help bring life-changing healthcare to underserved populations, including vulnerable children and families.

The United States remains a key partner in Ghana's development, investing over \$150 million in the past year to support sectors like health, education, and agriculture.

A significant portion of this support, amounting to \$30 million, is dedicated to advancing maternal and child health, improving nutrition, and promoting family planning, reinforcing the shared commitment of both nations to better the health and well-being of Ghanaians.



Mobile Clinic Van

Ghana secures its largest navy ship to aid maritime security

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

President Akufo-Addo presided over the commissioning of the Ghana Navy Ship (GNS) Achimota, the largest vessel in the fleet, at the Sekondi Naval Base on Monday.

This new addition to the fleet is a crucial element of the Ghana Navy's modernization efforts, aimed at enhancing its operational capacity. The GNS Achimota is expected to play a pivotal role in strengthening the nation's maritime security, combating illicit activities, safeguarding natural resources, and contributing to the overall security of the region.

"I am proud to say that we have acquired over 20 modern platforms, including the four Offshore Security Vessels, two Boundary Class Ships, Rigid-Hulled Inflatable Boats, Zodiac Boats, and the landmark Ghana Navy Ship Achimota," he said.

President Akufo-Addo who doubles as Commander-in-Chief of the Ghana Armed Forces, emphasized that the commissioning of the vessel reflects his government's collective commitment to safeguarding the country's valuable maritime resources and asserting

its sovereignty in the Gulf of Guinea.

"When I assumed the mantle of leadership, I envisioned a Ghana Navy that would be a beacon of strength, resilience, and innovation, one capable of safeguarding our vast maritime resources and asserting our sovereignty on the waters of the Gulf of Guinea," he said.

"Standing here today, I see that vision realised and I am overwhelmed with pride for what we have achieved together. And it is a moment of reflection, celebration, and renewal, a time to honour the milestones we have achieved together and to set our sights on the uncharted horizons of the future."

President Akufo-Addo further revealed that efforts were underway to acquire two additional 72-meter Offshore Patrol Vessels, aimed at enhancing the Ghana Navy's operational capabilities.

Reflecting on his tenure, he expressed pride in the remarkable progress made, stating that the Ghana Navy is now stronger, more capable, and more respected than ever before.

The President commended the leadership of the Ghana Navy for their foresight and professionalism

in transforming the service into one of the premier naval forces in the West African region.

Chief of Naval Staff, Rear Admiral Issah Adam Yakubu, thanked the President for his unwavering commitment and dedication in modernizing the Navy, enabling it to effectively safeguard the country's maritime security.

Minister of Defence, Mr. Dominic Nitiwul, noted that under President Akufo-Addo's leadership, the Ghana Armed Forces had undergone profound transformations, guided by his vision of fostering a modern, well-equipped, and highly professional military force.

The Ghana Navy Ship (GNS) Achimota, a high-endurance vessel capable of deep-sea navigation, is a diesel-powered, single-

screw fixed-pitch propeller ship built in September 1999 by the Kurinoura Shipbuilding Company in Yawatahama, Japan. The vessel has a length of 65.4 meters, a width of 9.4 meters, a draft of 4.8 meters, and a gross tonnage of 499 tons.

The commissioning ceremony was highlighted by a Presidential Fleet Review, a significant event where the sitting Head of State, accompanied by other officials, civilian dignitaries, and military personnel, reviews the operational readiness and capabilities of the naval fleet.

These reviews, typically held on special occasions, allow the Commander-in-Chief to assess the strength, resilience, and operational excellence of the Navy.



President Akufo Addo commissioning at Ghana Navy Ship (GNS) Achimota

General News

Ghana records more than 100 fire outbreaks in less than a week

By Amanda Cartey

The Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS) has expressed grave concern about the alarming surge in fire incidents recorded across the country since Friday, December 20, 2024.

'Over 100 fire outbreaks' have been reported within just three days, with domestic fires accounting for the majority of cases.

According to statistics from the GNFS, there were 39 incidents on Friday, 33 on Saturday, and a significant spike of 44 on Sunday. Greater Accra reported the highest number of incidents, with 10 outbreaks, followed by the Ashanti Region with 8, and the Eastern Region with 7.

Domestic fires continue to be a leading cause, accounting for 34 of

the recorded cases, while bush fires closely followed with 31 incidents. The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) of the GNFS, Mr. Julius Kuunuor, disclosed that the service has recorded a total of 5,596 fire outbreaks between January and November of this year, compared to 5,258 during the same period last year, marking a 6.43 percent increase.

During their Nine Lessons and Carols Thanksgiving Service in Accra, themed "Be an Agent of Peace," the GNFS attributed the rise in fire outbreaks to several factors, including harsh weather conditions, public non-compliance with fire safety measures, road traffic accidents, electrical faults, and gas leakages.

Mr. Kuunuor also highlighted the GNFS's proactive efforts to improve

fire safety in the country. These initiatives include a nationwide campaign to prevent bushfires, the introduction of an online system to manage fire permits and certifications, the establishment of two new fire academies and training schools, and the opening of additional fire stations.

Further, the service has renovated its national headquarters, provided public fire safety education, and conducted thorough fire safety checks on public and commercial buildings to ensure they comply with safety standards.

Emphasizing the GNFS's ongoing commitment to safety, Mr. Kuunuor assured the public that the service is focused on maintaining its equipment in optimal condition and ensuring that its personnel are

well-trained, especially during the festive season when fire incidents are most likely to increase.

Mr. Kuunuor stressed on the critical need for heightened fire safety awareness during the festive season. He urged the public to always turn off electrical appliances when not in use and to avoid leaving cooking unattended to prevent fire hazards. He further encouraged individuals to take immediate action in the event of a fire or emergency by contacting the following emergency numbers: 112, 192, 0299 340 383, or 0302 277 2446.

By staying vigilant and proactive, he emphasized, the public can help mitigate the risk of fires and protect lives and property during the holiday season.



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Business

BoG to offer \$120M in auction to BDCs in first quarter of 2025

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

The Bank of Ghana (BoG) is set to conduct a foreign exchange auction of \$120 million for Bulk Oil Distribution Companies (BDCs) in the first quarter of 2025, aimed at stabilizing the country's fuel supply.

To facilitate this, the central bank has released a detailed auction schedule.

The auction series will consist of six sessions, each offering \$20 million, and will take place biweekly from January to March 2025.

The first auction is scheduled for January 14, with additional auctions on January 29, February 12, February 26, March 12, and March 26.

These auctions will be governed by the BoG's established guidelines to ensure transparency and efficiency in the process.

This initiative forms part of the BoG's broader strategy to address

foreign exchange demand pressures and stabilize the cedi, particularly within the downstream petroleum sector.

In a press statement, the Bank of Ghana (BoG) emphasized that by providing Bulk Oil Distribution Companies (BDCs) with consistent access to foreign currency, the auctions are expected to facilitate the smooth importation of refined petroleum products, reduce supply disruptions, and promote price stability within the sector.

"The Bank of Ghana announces for the information of all Authorised Foreign Exchange Dealing Banks, the Bulk Oil Distribution Companies (BDCs) FX forward Auction Calendar for the first quarter of 2025.

"In accordance with the BDCs Forex Forward Auction guidelines, bids are invited as per the prescribed format to purchase United States Dollars against Ghana cedis, separately on each auction date

and should be submitted via the dedicated email bogforwards@bog.gov.gh," it added.

Participants in the market, including authorized foreign exchange dealing banks and Bulk Oil Distribution Companies (BDCs),

are required to submit their bids through the specified channels within the allotted timeframes. The outcomes of each auction will be disclosed on the same day, ensuring quick and clear communication with all relevant parties.



Dr Ernest Addison, Governor, Bank of Ghana

DVLA to begin motor vehicle licensing on Jan 2

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) has announced that the official motor vehicle licensing process for the 2025 registration period will begin on January 2, 2025. However, pre-registration activities have already been initiated in December to streamline and simplify the registration process nationwide.

In a press statement, the DVLA explained that the registration process will occur in two stages, beginning with pre-registration and culminating in final registration starting in January. During the pre-registration phase, vehicle owners are required to present their vehicles along with relevant customs entry documents for inspection and validation at authorized Vehicle Testing Stations and DVLA offices.

Upon completion of pre-registration, owners can proceed to finalize their registration at any preferred DVLA office starting January 2, 2025. This step involves making necessary payments, capturing biometric data, and collecting key registration documents such as license plates and roadworthiness certificates.

As part of the new process, vehicle owners will receive a Vehicle

Registration Smart Card and a Certificate of Title containing important vehicle details. Additionally, all new license plates will feature a "-25" suffix to signify the 2025 registration year, in line with the Road Traffic Regulations,

2012 (L.I. 2180).

The DVLA has also highlighted the use of its Online Vehicle Registration System, designed to enhance security and improve the efficiency of the registration process for all vehicle owners.

This system aims to provide a more convenient and seamless experience for vehicle owners throughout Ghana.



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