



I won't swear in individuals whose parliamentary victory is quashed by the court - Speaker

- Page 2



Shippers not to bear cost borne by system glitches at Tema, other Ports - GSA

- Page 6



Best Western PLUS.

Accra Beach Hotel, Nungua

For business or leisure, there's always a little something extra.

Reservations: 233 (0) 54 83 25 18 4 bestwesternplusaccra.com

General News

Govt yet to settle outstanding GHC58m owed WAEC

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

Government has made significant progress in paying off its GH¢118 million debt owed to the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), with GH¢60 million part payment.

The Ministry of Education released an amount of GH¢25 million to the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) to support its ongoing operations and ensure the smooth marking of the 2024 WASSCE papers.

WAEC stated that the payment was grossly inadequate to facilitate the release of the 2024 West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) results, which remain delayed.

According to the council, GH¢25 million was just a drop in the ocean as was only going to pay off technicians.

This led to the release of an additional GHS35 million from the Ministry of Education (MoE) on Friday to complete the scanning of the objective answer cards and conclude the processing of results for the WASSCE for school candidates, 2024

However, there is still an outstanding balance of GH¢58 million that remains unsettled.

Head of Public Affairs at WAEC, John Kapi, in a statement issued on Friday, December 27, noted WAEC "wishes to inform its stakeholders that on December 25, 2024, it received a cheque for an additional GHS35,000,000 from the Ministry of Education to enable it to complete the scanning of the objective answer cards and conclude the processing of results for the WASSCE for school candidates, 2024."

The delay in releasing the WASSCE results is frustrating thousands of

students waiting to be accepted into universities, as well as parents and schools who depend on the timeliness of the results.

Thus, receiving more funds according to WAEC is essential to finish the necessary work and release the results.

At the same time, people in the education sector are urging the government to prioritize fixing the funding issue, warning that any further delays could damage trust in the exam system and interfere with students' plans to move forward with their education.



John Kapi, Head of Public Affairs, WAEC Ghana

I won't swear in individuals whose parliamentary victory is quashed by the court - Speaker

By Amanda Cartey

Speaker of Parliament, Alban Bagbin has firmly stated that parliamentary candidates whose election results were annulled by the Supreme Court on Friday, December 27, 2024, will not be sworn in as Members of Parliament on January 6.

These candidates represent constituencies such as Okaikwei Central, Tema Central, Techiman South and Ablekuma North.

The Supreme Court nullified the re-collated results for these constituencies citing irregularities in the process.

This ruling followed a legal challenge by the National Democratic Congress (NDC) against a High Court decision from December 20, which directed the Electoral Commission (EC) to re-collate parliamentary election results in nine disputed constituencies.

Addressing the matter in Parliament on Saturday, Speaker Bagbin reaffirmed that the Supreme Court's ruling aligned with his own

stance on the issue. He emphasized that individuals whose re-collated results were quashed by the Court were not qualified to be sworn in as MPs.

"The decision of the Supreme Court just followed the position I took before they even delivered their decision," Bagbin stated. He explained that to officially become a Member of Parliament, a candidate must be elected by the voters and declared by the Electoral Commission. Only then can they be sworn in by the Speaker.

He added, "But you have to be sworn in by the speaker. Until you are sworn in by the speaker, you remain MP-elect. So I was very clear in my mind that some of those re-collation and re-declarations were completely null and void. They were unknown to the law and so they were not properly so-called MPs-elect and not qualified to be sworn in by me."

The Speaker further revealed that he had already discussed the issue with his parliamentary staff and the Clerk, stating that they were all surprised by his stance.

Mr Bagbin remained resolute, asserting that "I'm the gatekeeper.

The right thing must be done for us to be able to reset Ghana."



Alban Bagbin, Speaker of Parliament

General News

EC to declare Dome Kwabenya MP-elect after Abokobi polling station election re-run

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

The Electoral Commission (EC) has directed a rerun of the election at the Abokobi Women's Development Centre 2 polling station in the Dome-Kwabenya constituency.

This directive follows a thorough review of results from 367 polling stations, which uncovered discrepancies in the data from three specific stations.

The EC's Director of Training, Dr. Serebour Quaicoe, explained that while the results from 367 stations had been finalized, three remained unresolved.

He noted that one of these results was rejected by the commission after it was found to have been submitted using incorrect documentation, specifically training sheets instead of the standard statement of poll forms.

The other two results, he explained, were accepted, narrowing the gap between the top two candidates to a mere 165 votes.

However, the rejected result, involving 669 voters, raised concerns about the integrity of the

race.

But EC has insisted that had all those votes been allocated to the trailing candidate, it could have altered the outcome.

As a result to settle the confusion, the EC has called for a rerun at the Abokobi Women's Development Centre 2 polling station.

Dr. Quaicoe has reassured that the rerun will take place before the MPs-elect are formally inaugurated, ensuring that the final result is legitimate and reflects the true will of the electorate.

"The report from the returning officers was that they have concluded collating 367 polling station results. They were left with three of the results, and the three results were brought later." The commission rejected one of them outrightly on the stance that it was declared on a wrong statement of poll because they used training sheets, which is not the one that they should use.

"So the commission has rejected one, so we decided to come and add the two and see what happens. After factoring in the two valid

results, the gap between the top two candidates narrowed to only 165 votes. However, the rejected result accounted for 669 voters. If all of those votes had gone to the trailing candidate, they would have overtaken the leader, leading the Electoral Commission to call for a rerun at that polling station.

"The polling station's name is Abokobi Women's Development Centre 2. We are sending our report to the commission, and then the commission will take the decision on when it should be done, but we are assured that it will be done

before they are inaugurated," he added.

This rerun is crucial in determining the winner of the Dome Kwabenya parliamentary race, where every vote is of paramount importance.

Elikplim Akurugu of the NDC had initially been declared the winner, securing a seat historically dominated by the NPP.

However, her victory has been clouded by accusations of electoral malpractice, including allegations that party supporters altered pink sheets following an intense gathering at the collation center.



Jean Mensa, Chairperson, Electoral Commission

High Court ordered to allow MPs-elect in disputed constituencies to present their defense on Jan 31

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

The Supreme Court of Ghana has instructed the High Court to reconsider cases involving the National Democratic Congress (NDC) parliamentary candidates in contested constituencies. This ruling follows the NDC's challenge to a previous High Court decision, which had directed the Electoral Commission (EC) to re-collate and re-declare results in four constituencies initially awarded to the NDC.

In a decision led by Justice Gabriel Pwamang, the Supreme Court has nullified the High Court's directive and mandated that a new judge be assigned to the case.

As part of the ruling, the High Court is now required to provide the affected NDC MPs-elect the opportunity to present their defense on January 31, 2024.

The NDC had strongly opposed the High Court's decision, arguing that the affected candidates were not given a fair opportunity to defend themselves, a move they

contend violated the principles of fair hearing and due process. The party stressed that no legal ruling should be made without hearing from all parties, particularly when the consequences are significant.

Following the Supreme Court's ruling, the re-collation of results for constituencies such as Okaikwei Central, Ablekuma North, Tema Central, and Techiman South originally declared in favor of the NDC will now be subject to further review.

Justice Gabriel Pwamang stated, "Since the orders which have been brought to be quashed are separate and distinct we have decided to exercise our discretionary power to quash by certiorari having required to the peculiar circumstances of each ruling." Consequently, we hereby quash the orders of mandamus made for collation of results by the EC in the following constituencies Okawkwei Central, Ablekuma North, Tema Central and Techiman South.

"The court found that the trial judge had breached the NDC

parliamentary candidates' right to a fair hearing when they filed their application with the High Court. This ruling directly questions the disputed re-collation carried out by the Electoral Commission and the resulting declarations for the affected constituencies.

However, the court upheld the High Court's instruction for the continued collation of results for Nsawam Adoagyiri and Ahafo Ano North, which remain unaffected.

This legal matter dates back to December 20 when the EC resumed the process of re-collating and declaring results for nine disputed constituencies, including those contested by the NDC. The NDC has repeatedly argued that the EC's actions were unlawful, citing an earlier court order preventing the EC from proceeding with the re-declaration.

Following the recount, the EC declared victories for NPP candidates in seven constituencies, while four constituencies initially won by the NDC—Obuasi East, Okaikwei Central, Tema Central, and

Techiman South were re-declared in favor of the NPP.

Although the Supreme Court has granted the NDC's request for a re-hearing of the disputed seats, the cases for Ablekuma North and Dome Kwabenya remain unresolved. In Ablekuma North, the NDC's Ewurabena Aubynn was declared the winner despite missing results from 62 polling stations, while in Dome Kwabenya, NDC's Elikplim Akurugu emerged victorious over NPP's Mike Oquaye Jr.



Justice Gabriel Pwamang

General News

Ablakwa accuses Akufo-Addo govt of pressuring ADB to approve \$750K electronic servicing deal

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

Member of Parliament for North Tongu, Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa, has criticized what he describes as “reckless” and “unpatriotic” actions by officials in the outgoing Akufo-Addo/Bawumia administration.

He has accused the government of jeopardizing the national interest through questionable financial practices.

In a Facebook post on December 26, 2024, Ablakwa disclosed what he described as an alarming increase in last-minute contract approvals and expedited payments as the transition to the new government on January 7 approaches.

He asserted that leaked documents expose financial irregularities that not only erode public trust but also breach established governance standards.

One such example he revealed was the Agricultural Development Bank

(ADB), where the bank’s board is said to have approved a \$750,000 (GHS 12 million) electronic servicing contract with Virtual Security Africa.

Ablakwa pointed out that the contract, still in draft form and amid unresolved negotiations, was rushed through despite significant concerns within the bank.

According to him, intense political pressure is being applied on the ADB to ensure that the full payment is made by December 27, even though the contract has not undergone necessary audits or due diligence procedures.

“Intercepted memos continue to expose reckless and unpatriotic officials of the Akufo-Addo/Bawumia government for awarding sleazy midnight contracts and insisting on full payments before January 7, 2025. The Board of the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) met 3 days ago and hurriedly

approved a controversial electronic servicing agreement valued at US\$750,000.00 (GHS12million) per annum.

“Deep throat sources at ADB tell me they are under extreme political pressure to effect full payment by tomorrow the 27th of December, 2024,” he wrote.

Ablakwa further claimed that senior ADB officials were shocked by the board’s decision, stressing that the hastily approved deal bypasses critical due diligence processes and erodes accountability.

He also reminded the public that the president-elect’s, John Dramani Mahama’s transition team had explicitly warned against approving financial transactions in the final days of the administration, echoing similar warnings made by the New Patriotic Party (NPP) during the 2016 transition period.

In his statement, Ablakwa issued a stern warning that officials

responsible for sanctioning such “questionable” transactions under political pressure would face legal and administrative consequences under the incoming administration. The revelations have sparked public outrage, with calls from civil society groups and citizens alike for immediate investigations and punitive actions against those involved in these alleged “midnight deals.”

The ADB is a government-owned entity in Ghana, and was established as the country’s first development finance institution. It provides both financial and technical support to agribusinesses, farmers, and businesses in rural communities. Operating as one of the licensed commercial banks under the supervision of the Bank of Ghana, the national banking regulator, its core mission.



Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa, MP for North Tongu



For business or leisure, there's always a little something extra.

Amenities:

- Delicious Breakfast
- 24 Hour Parking
- Complimentary continental breakfast
- Pool with waterfall
- Refrigerators in all rooms
- WiFi Internet
- 37 min from the airport

Accra Beach Hotel

51 Beach Drive, Nungua P: 233 (0) 302 71 11 11 - 8
Reservations: 233 (0) 54 83 25 18 4 bestwesternplusaccra.com

Wherever Life Takes You, Best Western Is There.®

Each Best Western® branded hotel is independently owned and operated.

Business

Shippers not to bear cost borne by system glitches at Tema, other Ports - GSA

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

The Ghana Shippers' Authority (GSA) has issued an important reminder to the shipping community, emphasizing that shippers should not be held responsible for costs arising from delays at the Tema Port or other ports in Ghana due to system failures or equipment malfunctions.

This statement follows recent reports of significant disruptions at the Port of Tema, particularly caused by recurring scanner issues at MPS Terminal 3 and intermittent problems with the Integrated Customs Management System (ICUMS).

The GSA stressed that any additional charges resulting from these delays are unjustifiable and should not be transferred to shippers.

"It has come to the notice of GSA that shippers have experienced significant delays in the delivery and evacuation of containers from the port of Tema, due to either the breakdown of the scanners at Terminals or system glitches, with attendant grave impact on the entire cargo clearance process. GSA is aware of the strenuous

effort being made to resolve the persistent challenges, especially with the continuous breakdown of the scanner at the MPS Terminal 3, and the intermittent system glitches of ICUMS," the statement emphasized.

The Authority also encouraged cargo owners, consignees, and service providers to immediately report any such charges to the GSA, ensuring that refunds would be processed if the delays were found to be caused by system failures.

While acknowledging the ongoing efforts to address these challenges, the GSA reaffirmed its commitment to working with all stakeholders to improve the efficiency of the shipping sector.

"GSA hereby reminds the shipping community that, no shipper using a port in Ghana should pay for cost associated with delays not occasioned by the shipper. All cargo interest holders, consignees, and Service Providers should report

to the Ghana Shippers' Authority promptly where any such cost is imposed or paid, for the necessary investigation and a refund, where it is established that the delay was due to systemic failure. GSA will continue to work with all stakeholders to ensure efficient delivery of service in the shipping sector for the benefit of all," it added.



Ghana Shippers Authority Signage

Rice farmers in Northern Region get boost with introduction of ISFM technologies

By Amanda Cartey

Rice farmers in the Tolon District of Ghana's Northern Region are set to benefit from the adoption of Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM) technologies, introduced during a field day and demonstration visit organized by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research-Savanna Agricultural Research Institute (CSIR-SARI) at Kpalgun. The event highlighted several ISFM techniques, including the use of climate-smart rice varieties such as AGRA and Banse, mineral fertilizer combinations, and good agronomic practices.

Farmers observed the AGRA rice variety being evaluated under various mineral fertilizer combinations, compared to traditional methods involving no inputs.

Dr. Edwin Akley, Project Manager for CSIR-SARI, lamented the declining soil health and crop yields, saying, "The steady decline in crop yields

and soil health over the years has made it difficult for farmers to produce abundant food to feed their families and the country."

He added, "The project is being implemented to help enhance crop production and to improve food and nutrition security." Dr. Akley also noted that the initiative aims to empower young people to view farming as a profitable business, addressing poverty and unemployment in rural communities.

The ISFM initiative forms part of a project titled "Advancing Agriculture through Upscaling of Innovative Soil Health Technologies in Ghana," funded by the AGRA PIATA Consortium.

It targets 50,000 smallholder farmers across 17 districts in the North East, Northern, Upper East, and Upper West Regions, focusing on rice, maize, soybeans, groundnuts, and cowpeas.

Abdul Ganiyu Amidu, an Agricultural Extension Officer for the Kpalgun

operational area, explained the potential benefits of the program. "Easy access to improved and climate-resilient rice varieties will help farmers boost their production capacity because of the persistent dry spell in the area," he said.

He urged stakeholders to support farmers with quality farm inputs, training, and capacity-building opportunities to fully utilize the technologies.

Farmers in the community expressed optimism about the initiative. A local farmer, Sulemana

Adam, encouraged others to adopt the innovative practices, saying, "I piloted the variety, and I encourage other farmers to embrace it to help maximize their yields and production."

Another farmer, Madam Iddrisu Memunatu, highlighted the program's impact on women, stating, "The technologies are laudable initiatives, especially for women, as they will help improve our economic resilience and reduce issues of domestic violence, which are often connected to poverty."



File Photo

Our excellent customer service and high quality printing make us the most reliable printing partner for all the projects you need done, right now.

Your Print Solutions Partner



Universal
CRYSTAL PRINT GHANA LTD.

No. 13 St. John's Road, Achimota
P.O. Box AN 19472 Accra North

+233 (0) 302 409 210
+233 (0) 302 409 211

www.universalcrystalprint.com
info@universalcrystalprint.com

com