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General News

Tsito SECTECH headmaster, staff interdicted over diversion of food supplies for students

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

The Ghana Education Service (GES) has temporarily relieved the headmaster of Tsito Secondary Technical School in the Volta Region, Rev. Joy Kafui Akpebu, along with two other staff members, of their duties.

The other staff members are Sylvanus Awunyo, the school's storekeeper, and Samuel Kwame Ampeh, the school's driver. This decision follows allegations of diverting over 100 cartons of tinned tomatoes meant for preparing meals for students. The interdiction is intended to facilitate a thorough investigation into their alleged misconduct.

In a statement posted on its official Facebook page, GES explained that the suspensions are in line with Section 8 of the GES Code of Conduct, which permits the interdiction of staff who may interfere with ongoing investigations.

"Rev. Joy Kafui Akpebu, Headmaster of Tsito Senior

High Technical School; Sylvanus Awunyo, Storekeeper; and Samuel Kwame Ampeh, Driver, have been interdicted pending an investigation into the alleged diversion of 100 cartons of tinned tomatoes intended for student meals in the Volta Region. This decision is in accordance with Section 8, Clauses (i-v) of the Ghana Education Service (GES) Code of Conduct," the statement read.

The issue came to light after Apostle Frank Gogo Ekatso, a concerned citizen, intervened

and apprehended a taxi driver suspected of transporting the diverted items. In a widely circulated video, Apostle Ekatso is seen confronting the driver of an Opel Astra (GR 5051 U) while he was allegedly attempting to load the cartons into his car at a secluded spot on the Sokode-Akrofu road in the Ho Municipality.

Apostle Ekatso explained that he had earlier observed goods being offloaded from a bus belonging to Tsito Secondary Technical School. The tinned tomatoes in question

are reportedly part of food supplies collected from the Mawuli Senior High School food center, which serves multiple schools in the area.

The apprehended driver has been handed over to the police and is cooperating with investigators as the case progresses. Meanwhile, GES has assured the public of its commitment to ensuring accountability and maintaining the integrity of the school feeding system.



Student of Ksito SECTECH

Violent clash between military and illegal miners kills 7 in Obuasi; one injured

By Amanda Cartey

Seven illegal miners were killed, and one seriously injured following a violent clash with military personnel at the AngloGold Ashanti mines in Obuasi on January 18.

The incident occurred around 11:00 p.m. when a group of approximately 60 illegal miners breached the security fence at the Cote D'or Ramp, attempting to access the Deep Decline of the mine.

The miners, armed with locally manufactured rifles, pump-action guns, knives, axes, machetes, and other tools, fired at the soldiers deployed as part of Operation HALT II. In response, the military troops returned fire in self-defense, resulting in a deadly shootout.

The Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) reported that "six pump-action BB cartridges were recovered from the scene" and confirmed that a soldier was injured by pellets from a pump-action gun but was treated on-site. The GAF issued a statement reiterating that military personnel on authorized duty "have the right to defend themselves, innocent civilians, and property, including the use of lethal force, if necessary to preserve life."

The military further cautioned illegal miners to "stay away from mining concessions" and avoid violent confrontations, warning that such actions could have fatal consequences. In response to the deadly clash, President John Dramani Mahama called for an immediate investigation into the incident.

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Accident scene after clash

General News

Violent clash between military and illegal miners kills 7 in Obuasi; one injured

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"The government has ordered a full inquiry to determine the circumstances and ensure that any unlawful actions are addressed," a statement from the Presidency stated. He also directed AngloGold Ashanti to

"bear the medical costs of the injured and arrange for the burial of those who lost their lives."

The security agencies have been tasked with restoring peace in the

area and taking preventive measures to avoid further conflicts. As a precautionary measure, AngloGold Ashanti Schools announced a temporary closure for January 20 and 21, with plans to reopen on January

23, if calm is restored.

Residents and stakeholders are calling for swift action to resolve the ongoing security challenges in the region.

I resigned from NIA in 2024, withdraw termination letter - Ken Attafuah to Presidency

By Amanda Cartey

Former Executive Secretary of the National Identification Authority (NIA), Prof. Ken Attafuah, has requested that Dr. Callistus Mahama, Executive Secretary to the President, retract a letter announcing the termination of his appointment.

The letter, which surfaced on social media on Thursday, January 16, stated that Prof. Attafuah's position as Executive Secretary of the NIA had been revoked with immediate effect. It also directed him to hand over his responsibilities to Mr. Wisdom Yaya Deku, the newly appointed

Chief Executive Officer of the NIA. However, in a Facebook post on January 18, Prof. Attafuah clarified that he had retired from public service on November 13, 2024, after his post-retirement contract expired following his 65th birthday on November 9, 2024.

He stated, "My exit from NIA followed the expiration of my post-retirement contract after my 65th birthday on 9th November 2024."

Prof. Attafuah emphasized that he handed over his responsibilities to Mr. Mahama Sualihu, Director of Internal Audit at the

NIA, who has been serving as the acting Executive Secretary since November 14, 2024.

"I duly submitted my Handing Over Notes to the Transition Team on time and have handed over all properties belonging to NIA in my custody," he added in his post.

He went on to address the confusion surrounding the letter, urging the public to disregard any claims to the contrary. "The withdrawal of the impugned letter will help redress the awkwardness and embarrassment it has caused me personally and also address any

apparent slighting of the lawful appointment of Mr. Mahama Sualihu as Ag. Executive Secretary since 14th November," he said.

Prof. Attafuah further shared details of his conversation with Dr. Mahama, revealing that they had discussed the situation and the misunderstanding behind the circulated letter.

"In short, I'm happily retired and not serving as Executive Secretary of NIA. Any suggestion to the contrary is false and should be disregarded," he concluded. Prof. Attafuah expressed confidence that Dr. Mahama would take the necessary steps to clarify and resolve the matter.



Prof. Ken Attafuah, Former Executive Secretary of the National Identification Authority (NIA)

General News

Ashanti Region: Over 50 homes burnt to ashes in Nima-Moke

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

A fire outbreak has rendered several residents of Nima-Moke, a slum in the Asokore Mampong Municipality of the Ashanti Region, homeless.

The blaze, which started around 4:30 p.m. on Friday, destroyed over 50 wooden homes and disrupted the livelihoods of many families.

According to reports, the fire spread rapidly due to the highly combustible materials prevalent in the densely populated community. Nima-Moke is home to a significant number of migrants from northern Ghana who moved south in search of better opportunities.

On the day of the fire, most residents were at the Kumasi market, leaving their homes and valuables vulnerable to the devastating flames.

Eyewitnesses described scenes of chaos as the fire tore through the

area, with many residents unable to salvage their belongings in time. This disaster comes just a few years after a similar blaze in 2020, which also left many families without shelter.

Local officials have appealed for immediate assistance to support the displaced families in rebuilding their lives. The incident underscores the broader issue of fire outbreaks in Ghana, which recorded 4,650 fire incidents between January and September 2024. These incidents have caused widespread destruction, affecting businesses and homes alike.

On January 2, a massive fire swept through Kantamanto Market in Accra, destroying properties and livelihoods. This fire added to the growing number of market fires across the country, raising significant public safety concerns. In response to these challenges, the Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS) has introduced new measures to strengthen fire safety protocols in major markets. A

statement issued on January 14 announced that fire personnel and equipment will be stationed at markets nationwide from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. daily to provide round-the-clock coverage and ensure rapid responses to any fire incidents.

Additionally, the GNFS has established a dedicated task

force to patrol markets daily, enhancing vigilance and ensuring swift action in emergencies. Plans are also underway to set up fire stations or units in key markets. These efforts will focus on increasing fire safety awareness, conducting regular inspections, and ensuring adherence to safety regulations.



50 homes lost to fire outbreak at Nima-Moke

Appointments Committee to vet 13 of Mahama's ministerial appointees today

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

The vetting of ministerial nominees appointed by President John Dramani Mahama will resume today, January 20, and is scheduled to conclude on January 27.

According to the Appointments Committee of Parliament, the sessions will begin daily at 9:00 a.m. in Committee Rooms 1 and 2 of the New Administration Block. During the vetting process, the nominees will undergo a thorough evaluation of their qualifications, expertise, and readiness to assume their respective ministerial roles. This assessment will encompass their professional experience and suitability for pivotal regional and

national responsibilities.

The process is part of Parliament's constitutional duty to ensure transparency, accountability, and the appointment of highly qualified public officials.

President Mahama has submitted 12 ministerial nominees for consideration. The Appointments Committee has already vetted three individuals: Dr. Cassiel Ato Forson as the Minister of Finance-designate, John Abdulai Jinapor as the Minister of Energy-designate, and Dominic Akutiringa Ayine as the Attorney General and Minister of Justice-designate. These three nominees are now awaiting parliamentary endorsement.

In line with his commitment to a

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Vetting Committee

General News

Appointments Committee to vet 13 of Mahama's ministerial appointees today

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lean government of 60 ministers, achieved through the merger and elimination of certain ministries, President Mahama has also presented 13 regional ministerial nominees from Ghana's 16 regions. Among the nominees for the key ministerial portfolios are Haruna Iddrisu as the Minister of Education-designate, Eric Opoku as the Minister of Food and Agriculture-designate, Kwame Agbodza as the Minister of Roads and Highways-designate, and Elizabeth Ofosu-Adjare as the

Minister of Trade, Agribusiness, and Industry-designate. Abla Dzifa Gomashie has been nominated as the Minister of Tourism, Culture, and Creative Arts-designate, Ahmed Ibrahim as the Minister of Local Government, Chieftaincy, and Religious Affairs-designate, Dr. Agnes Naa Momo Larrey as the Minister of Gender, Children, and Social Protection-designate, Emelia Arthur as the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture-designate, and George Opare-Addo as the Minister of Youth

Development and Empowerment-designate.

For regional positions, Adolf Ali John has been nominated for the Northern Region, John Kwadwo Agyapong for the Oti Region, James Gunu for the Volta Region, Rita Akosua Adjei Awatey for the Eastern Region, and Ibrahim Tia for the North East Region. Other regional nominees include Dr. Frank Amoakohene for the Ashanti Region, Akamugri Donatus Atanga for the Upper East Region,

Charity Gardiner for the Ahafo Region, Salisu Be-Awuribe for the Savannah Region, Linda Ocloo for the Greater Accra Region, Wilbert Petty Brentum for the Western North Region, Eduamoah Ekow Panyin Okyere for the Central Region, and Joseph Nelson for the Western Region.

The Appointments Committee is expected to ensure a fair and transparent process as it reviews the nominees' capabilities and vision for their respective roles.

GHS cautions Ghanaian travelers against respiratory illnesses in China

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

The Ghana Health Service (GHS) has issued a caution to Ghanaian travelers regarding the rise in acute respiratory infections, particularly the Human Metapneumovirus (hMPV), which is currently spreading across China and other parts of the Northern Hemisphere.

The GHS through its Director-General, Patrick Kuma-Aboagye, emphasized that the current surge

in infections is not linked to a new virus like COVID-19, but is instead a typical seasonal increase in hMPV cases during colder periods. The GHS urged the public to stay alert and adopt the necessary precautions to reduce the risk of exposure.

"Ghana has noted reports of outbreaks in the Northern hemisphere due to acute respiratory virus infections, particularly those caused by the Human Metapneumovirus(hMPV)

in China since late December 2024. This virus is not a new one, unlike the case with COVID-19.

"The Ghana Health Service wishes to assure the public that it is taking the necessary steps to safeguard the health of the people in Ghana and will provide regular updates on the situation," it added. The Authority also outlined key developments from a recent session of the Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC).

It noted that the National Influenza Centre (NIC) contributed valuable insights, confirming that routine respiratory samples from all 16 regions of Ghana have shown no signs of unusual respiratory pathogens, including hMPV. In efforts to bolster preparedness, the GHS has indicated that it has rolled out a series of measures, collaborating with multiple partners and adhering to guidelines set by the World Health Organization (WHO).



Kotoka International Airport (KIA)

General News

Joseph Boahen Aidoo steps down as COCOBO CEO

By Amanda Cartey

The Chief Executive Officer of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), Joseph Boahen Aidoo, has officially resigned from his position. This decision follows a directive issued on January 13, terminating the memberships of all boards in State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs).

In a letter dated January 16, 2025, and addressed to President John Dramani Mahama, Mr. Aidoo explained that his resignation was intended to facilitate a smooth transition within the organization. He emphasized that his decision would enable stakeholders and business partners to seamlessly engage with the incoming

leadership, even though his renewed mandate was set to expire in July 2025. "I hereby tender my resignation as Chief Executive of the Ghana Cocoa Board," Mr. Aidoo stated, reaffirming his dedication to the cocoa sector and pledging his support during the transition process.

He expressed gratitude to former President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo for the opportunity to lead COCOBOD over the past eight years. Appointed as acting CEO in 2017, Mr. Aidoo played a significant role in managing Ghana's cocoa industry during his tenure. The government is yet to announce a replacement, leaving industry players and stakeholders awaiting the next leadership decision.



Joseph Boahen Aidoo, COCOBO CEO

Prof. Kwasi Prempeh heads Mahama's Constitutional Review Committee

By Amanda Cartey

President John Dramani Mahama has inaugurated a Constitutional Review Committee as part of his commitment to revising Ghana's 1992 Constitution to address contemporary challenges.

The committee comprises respected legal experts, political analysts, and civil society advocates renowned for their dedication to good governance. It is chaired by Prof. H. Kwasi Prempeh, with Justice Sophia Adinyirah, Prof. Kwame Karikari, Mrs. Charlotte Osei, Dr. Godwin Djokoto, Ibrahim Tanko Amidu, and Dr. Esi Ansah serving as members. Dr. Rainer Akumperigeya has been appointed as the committee's secretary.

The primary mandate of the committee is to identify shortcomings in previous constitutional review efforts and recommend practical solutions to strengthen Ghana's democratic systems.

As part of this effort, the committee will engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders to gather diverse views and insights.

initiative, President Mahama stated, "This review is essential to ensure that our Constitution stays relevant and continues to meet the evolving needs of our people." He expressed confidence in the committee's ability to deliver comprehensive and effective recommendations within the next five months.

The review will consider concerns raised by earlier efforts, such as

those by the 2010 Constitution Review Commission and the 2023 Constitution Review Consultative Committee, and work toward addressing unresolved issues.

The goal is to ensure Ghana's democratic framework evolves to reflect the aspirations of its citizens. Key reforms proposed by the committee will incorporate

feedback from consultations with various groups and individuals to ensure that the recommendations align with the needs and hopes of Ghanaians.

The outcomes of the review are expected to guide significant constitutional changes to enhance governance and promote national development.



Highlighting the significance of the

Prof. Kwasi Prempeh, Lawyer, educationalist, and the current executive director of the Ghana Center for Democratic

General News

Kadjebi now a haven for 200 victims of Nkwanta violence seeking refuge

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

Nearly 200 people have sought refuge in neighboring communities in the Oti Region after fleeing Nkwanta amidst escalating violence.

With the administrative town now in turmoil, areas such as Pampawie and Ahamansu in Kadjebi have transformed into temporary havens for those escaping the chaos.

Among the displaced, several pregnant women have been observed traveling through the bushes in distress. One such individual, Madam Serwaa Afia Twumasi, shared her fear for both her safety and that of her unborn child. "I'm scared for my life and the life of my unborn child," she said, explaining that the violence stems

from a long-standing dispute over the ownership of Nkwanta. The conflict involves the Akyode, Adele, and Challa ethnic groups, which continues to fuel the unrest. Speaking to the media, a community leader in Pampawie, Madam Agnes Afua Obour, revealed that many of the displaced individuals had received financial aid to support their relocation. "We sent them money to help them relocate, and many reached here late Friday," she said. She also emphasized the urgency of the situation, calling for a unified approach to address the crisis.

Reports indicate that the recent violence erupted during a burial in Nkwanta when armed assailants opened fire on mourners, forcing them to flee in fear. A witness shared an account of the incident,

saying, "Thankfully, the burial had been completed, so we managed to escape unharmed."

Despite their narrow escape, the violence has left at least seven people dead, with eight homes and shops destroyed by fire. The streets of Nkwanta, once bustling with life, are now deserted, with only military

personnel visible as they patrol the town in armored vehicles.

While some locals view the military presence as essential to restoring peace, others are concerned about potential abuses. The ongoing violence and displacement underscore the urgent need for peace-building efforts and a long-term resolution to the conflict.



File photo

GoldBod will bring transparency in accounting for gold - UGBS Finance lecturer

By Amanda Cartey

Senior Finance Lecturer at the University of Ghana Business School, Dr. Benjamin Amoah, has expressed optimism about the establishment of a Gold Board, highlighting its potential to bring transparency to Ghana's gold export accounting.

Speaking to the media, Dr. Amoah drew parallels between the proposed Gold Board and the Ghana Cocoa Board, suggesting that the Gold Board could replicate the Cocoa Board's role in the cocoa industry.

"It is very possible that this can happen. It also appears that the Gold Board is likely to play a similar role to what the Ghana Cocoa Board does in the cocoa sector. That is my suspicion, but because the manifesto did not clearly spell out the details of the Gold Board, it is difficult to fully understand its exact mandate," he remarked.

Dr. Amoah further explained that the Gold Board's focus is likely to center on addressing challenges within the small-scale mining sector,

where issues of transparency and accountability have long persisted. "Clearly, if you read between the lines, it seems that the Gold Board will function similarly to the Ghana Cocoa Board, but this time focusing primarily on small-scale mining.

That sector has faced a lot of issues, especially regarding transparency. For large-scale mining companies, documentation and tracking their activities is often easier. However, in the small-scale mining sector, it can be difficult to know exactly what is happening," he noted.

He emphasized that the establishment of the Gold Board would provide much-needed clarity for industry stakeholders and enhance oversight, particularly in the small-scale mining sector.

"If we have the board, the issue of transparency will definitely become much clearer for all industry players, especially in the small-scale mining sector," he concluded.

Dr. Amoah made these comments following the appointment of Sammy Gyamfi as the Managing Director of the Precious Minerals Marketing

Company (PMMC). Gyamfi has been tasked with overseeing the setup of the Gold Board to ensure the sustainable management of Ghana's gold resources.

The proposed Gold Board has sparked significant interest and debate among industry players and analysts. Many are hopeful that it will address long-standing issues in

the mining sector, including illegal mining and the underreporting of gold exports. However, questions remain about the specifics of the board's mandate and how it will operate effectively to achieve its objectives.

As Ghana continues to explore ways to improve its mining sector, stakeholders remain optimistic



Dr. Benjamin Amoah, Senior Finance Lecturer at the University of Ghana Business School



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Business

Global economy expected to expand by 3.3% in 2025

By Phoebe Martekie Doku

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has slightly revised its global growth forecast for 2025, projecting a rate of 3.3%. This adjustment was revealed in the IMF's January 2025 update of its World Economic Outlook (WEO). While the figure marks a modest upward revision, it remains below the historical growth average of 3.7% recorded between 2000 and 2019.

The slight improvement in the growth outlook is largely attributed to a more optimistic forecast for the United States, which has offset downward revisions for other major economies. However, the IMF's report highlights several significant challenges to global growth, including tightening financial conditions, geopolitical instability, and persistent inflationary pressures.

"Global growth is projected at 3.3 percent for both 2025 and 2026, below the historical average of 3.7 percent (2000-2019). The forecast for 2025 remains largely unchanged from the October 2024 WEO, mainly due to an upward revision for the United States, which compensates for downward adjustments in other major economies. Global headline inflation is expected to fall to 4.2 percent in 2025 and 3.5 percent in 2026, converging to target sooner in advanced economies compared to emerging markets and developing

economies," the report stated.

The IMF noted that developed economies are expected to reach their inflation targets earlier than emerging markets and developing economies, indicating a divergence in recovery trajectories across regions.

The report underscores the critical role of policymakers in balancing inflation control with growth promotion as the global economy continues its post-pandemic recovery.

"Medium-term risks to the baseline are skewed to the downside, while the near-term outlook presents a mix of divergent risks. Upside risks could further boost growth in the United States in the short term, while risks in other regions remain tilted to the downside due to heightened policy uncertainty," the IMF said.

"Policy-induced disruptions to the ongoing disinflation process could derail the transition to more accommodative monetary policies, affecting fiscal sustainability and financial stability. To navigate these risks, policymakers must focus on balancing inflation control with economic activity, rebuilding buffers, and promoting medium-term growth through targeted structural reforms and enhanced multilateral cooperation," the outlook concluded.

For Ghana, the global economic forecast presents both challenges and opportunities. With global inflation

expected to decrease to 4.2% in 2025, the country may experience some relief from inflationary pressures that have been impacting its economy. However, the IMF's warning about tightening financial conditions could raise borrowing costs for Ghana, potentially making it harder to secure affordable financing and further exacerbating the country's public debt challenges.

Moreover, the IMF highlighted that advanced economies are expected to reach their inflation targets more quickly than emerging markets. This suggests that Ghana's economic recovery may lag behind that of developed economies, presenting additional risks to the country's growth.

The IMF stressed the importance of balancing inflation control with fostering growth. For Ghana, this means managing

fiscal sustainability while focusing on structural reforms to strengthen long-term economic resilience.

To mitigate global risks, the IMF has emphasized the need for countries to diversify their economies beyond traditional sectors like agriculture and mining. Strengthening infrastructure, investing in human capital, and improving governance will be crucial to ensuring sustainable growth.

While the IMF's global growth projection offers some optimism, Ghana faces a complex economic landscape in 2025. Managing inflation, securing financial stability, and implementing structural reforms will be key to the country's ability to navigate the challenges of the global economy and achieve sustainable growth.



File photo

Take advantage of non-compliance fees to cut down import duties - Deloitte to SMEs

By Amanda Cartey

Senior Manager of Tax and Regulatory at Deloitte, Joachim Owusu Afriyie, has urged Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Ghana to take full advantage of the seven free days available during the importation process to avoid incurring unnecessary additional costs.

Mr. Owusu Afriyie highlighted this critical aspect of the importation procedure during a business advisory program aimed at equipping SMEs with financial and business development insights for the year.

He explained that businesses can clear their goods without incurring charges within a seven-day window. However, if they fail to clear goods within this grace period, they will face warehousing rent fees.

"We have non-compliance fees. For example, in Ghana, when you bring your goods in, you have seven free days to clear them. If you clear them within this period, you don't pay any additional fees. But if you exceed that period, you will incur warehousing rent. It's like the state

is storing your goods, and you have to pay rent for that. This increases your costs," he said.

The tax expert stressed the need for SMEs to plan and act swiftly within the allotted timeframe to minimize costs, warning that warehousing rent could significantly raise their expenses.

Owusu Afriyie's advice serves as a timely reminder for businesses to stick to deadlines and take advantage of the free clearance period. This can help reduce costs and improve efficiency in the importation process.

SMEs drive Ghana's economy, significantly contributing to employment and economic growth. However, despite their importance, these businesses face challenges with taxation that often create barriers to compliance and limit their growth and contribution to national revenue.

By optimizing the free clearance period, SMEs can boost their operational efficiency, cut costs, and overcome some of the challenges posed by Ghana's tax policies.



Joachim Owusu Afriyie, Senior Manager of Tax and Regulatory at Deloitte

International

At least 70 die in explosion in Nigeria while collecting fuel from overturned tanker

At least 70 people have died in north-central Nigeria after a gasoline tanker exploded after crashing in the early hours of Saturday morning, the country's emergency response agency said.

Nearly all the victims were locals who had rushed to collect the fuel that spilled when the tanker overturned.

"They finished scooping the fuel and they brought a generator to use to transfer the fuel into another truck. And when they started the generator, the explosion happened," said eyewitness Abdulazeez.

The Federal Road Safety Corps says most of them were burnt beyond recognition.

This was not the first incident of its kind.

With the absence of an efficient railway system to transport cargo, fatal truck accidents are common along most of the major roads in Nigeria.

In addition, the petrol price has gone up by over 400 per cent since May 2023 when President Bola Tinubu scrapped a decades-old fuel subsidy.

This has led many to risk their lives to recover fuel during tanker truck accidents.

In October last year, more than 170 people died in a similar incident in Jigawa State, in northern Nigeria.

Source: Africa News



Accident scene

TikTok shuts down US access

TikTok stopped working for users in the United States on Sunday and became unavailable on prominent app stores just before a federal law banning it in the country was to take effect.

"A law banning TikTok has been enacted in the US," said a message to users attempting to use the app. "Unfortunately, that means you can't use TikTok for now."

App stores have pulled the popular short-form video platform from the US market. It is no longer available on Google App store, Apple store or TikTok.com.

The app shutdown in the US took place after the company warned its users late Saturday that the app would soon become "temporarily unavailable" as a law banning it in the country was set to get implemented. The app stores cannot allow the platform to stay available under a federal law that required TikTok's China-based parent company, ByteDance, to sell the platform or face a US ban.

With the ban in effect now, the app is now indefinitely out of access for its 170 million users in the US.

Even if short-lived, the ban is going to significantly impact the US-China relations.

"We regret that a US law banning TikTok will take effect on January 19 and force us to make our services temporarily unavailable," read a notification to US users who opened the app Saturday night.

"We're working to restore our service in the US as soon as possible, and we appreciate your support. Please stay tuned," the message added.

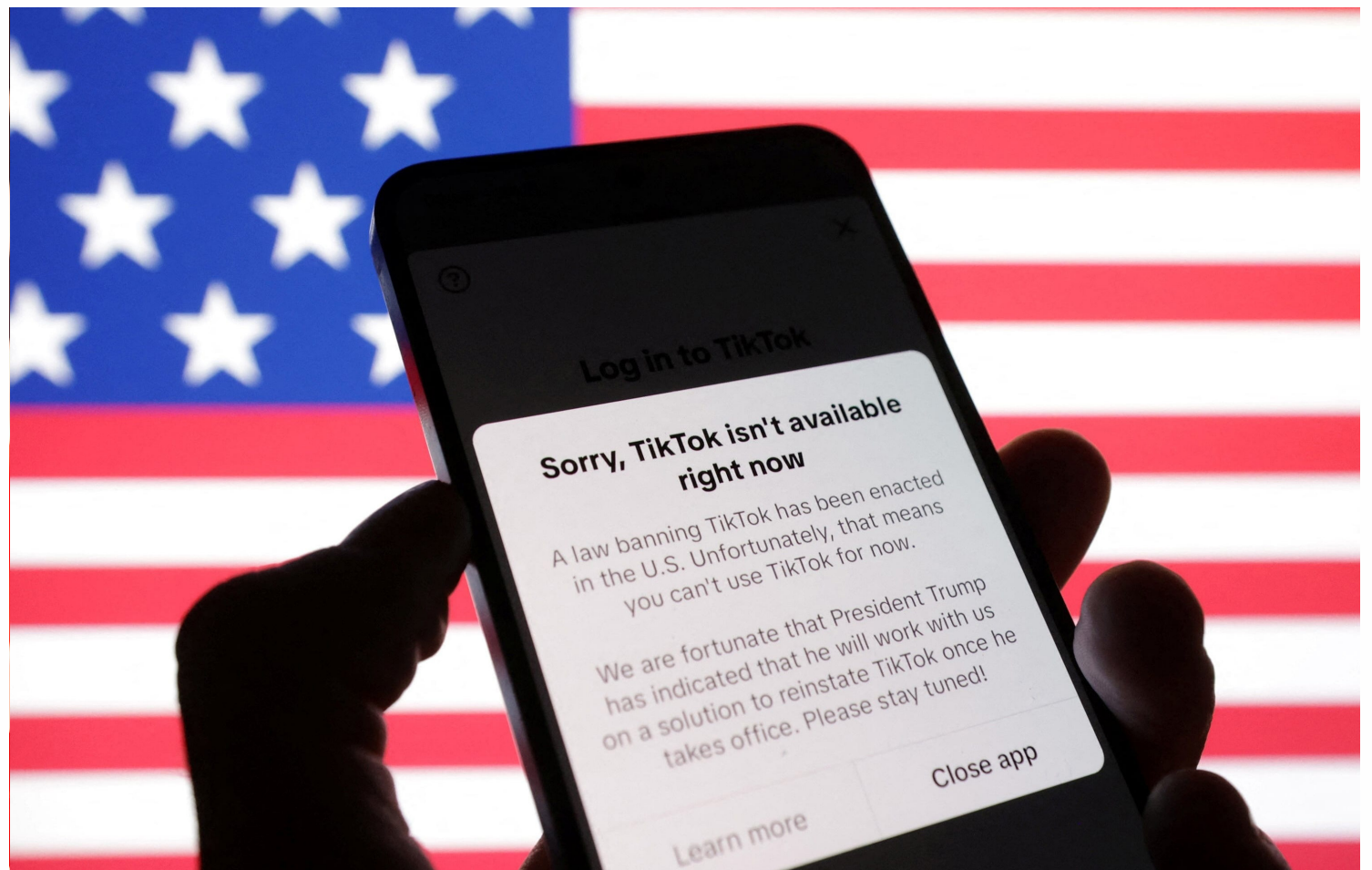
TikTok sent notices to some users saying, "It is fortunate that President Donald Trump has indicated that he will work with us on a solution to reinstate TikTok once he takes office." What did Donald Trump say?

After discussing TikTok with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Trump, in a Saturday interview to the NBC News, said he may activate a 90-day reprieve

once he takes office on Monday.

"I think that would be, certainly, an option that we look at. The 90-day extension is something that will be most likely done, because it's appropriate," he said, ahead of Monday's inauguration.

"If I decide to do that, I'll probably announce it on Monday," Trump added.

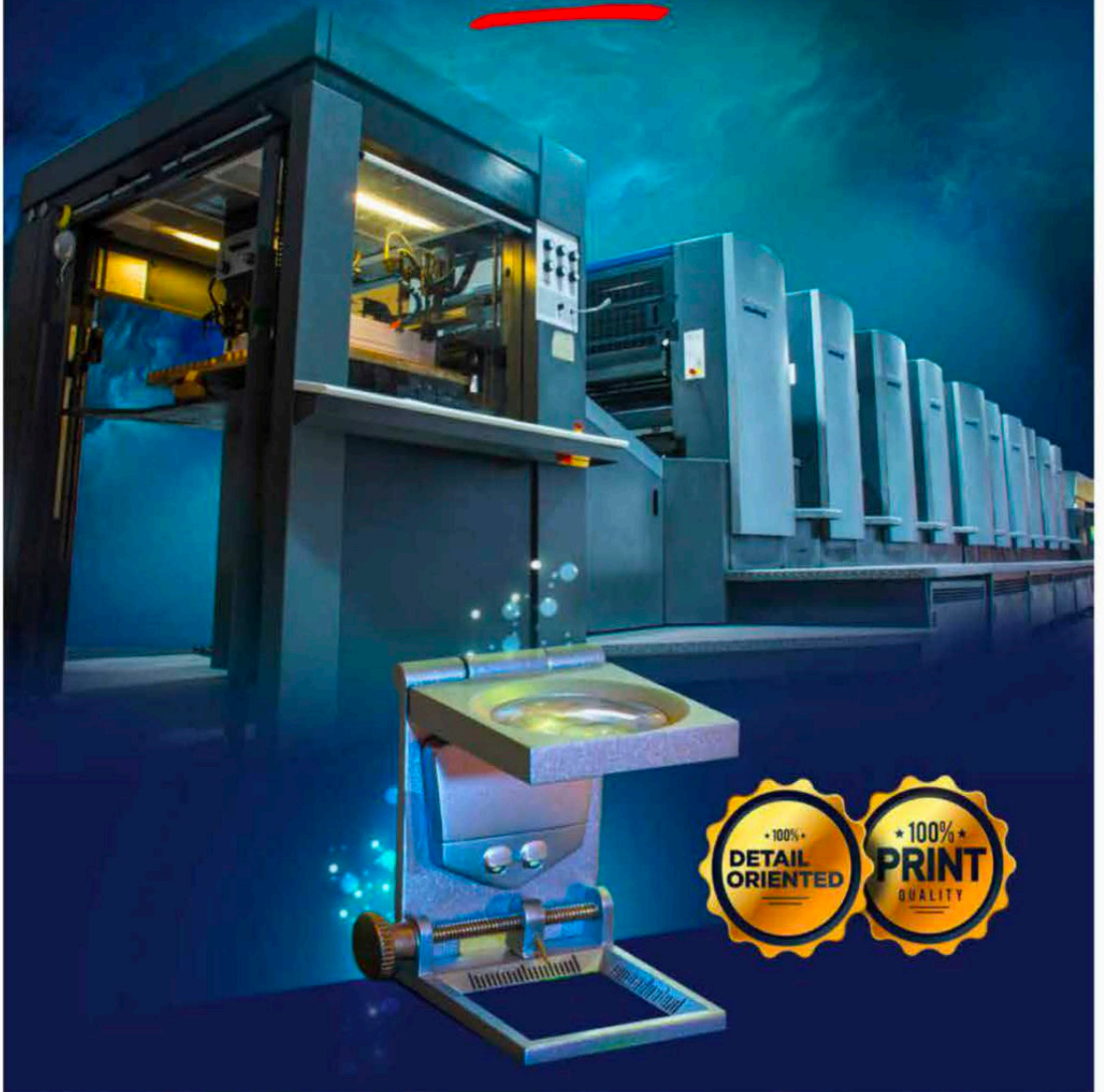


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What did TikTok say?

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