



# NEWSLETTER



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## VICE PRESIDENT BAWUMIAH UNVEILS USD 55 MILLION BIZBOX PROJECT BY GEA AND MASTERCARD FOUNDATION

The Vice President, Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia on Monday, 22nd January 2024, announced the national kick off of the BizBox project by the Ghana Enterprises Agency and Mastercard Foundation at an event at the Kofi Ohene Konadu Auditorium, UPSA, Accra.



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## I WILL CONTINUE PROJECTS OF MY PREDECESSOR - INFO MINISTER DESIGNATE

The Minister for Information Designate, Fatimatu Abubakar has indicated that she would continue to work on some of the innovative media support programs that her predecessor, Honourable Kojo Opong Nkrumah initiated at the Ministry.



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# MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF DIRECTOR



**Charlotte Morgan-Asiedu**  
*Chief Director*

Dear readers,

I gladly take this opportunity to wish all staff, stakeholders and our partners a Happy New Year and hope that the year brings happiness, peace and good health. I also have the privilege to welcome us all to the 2024 1st Quarter of the Ministry of Information's Newsletter.

Over the last three months, the Ministry has continued to effectively update citizens on Government's policies and programmes through the bi-weekly Minister's Press Briefings.

This quarter saw us bid farewell to Hon. Kojo Opong Nkrumah who till February 14th 2024 had served as the Minister for Information since November 2018.

I will also take this opportunity to congratulate the Deputy Minister, Fatimatu Abubakar on her elevation to Minister for Information.

It is our hope that 2024 will offer new opportunities for collaboration, innovation, networking and most importantly support. We remain committed to informing the public on Government development policies, programmes and generating the needed feedback towards accomplishing our mandate.

We appreciate the confidence that our stakeholders and readers have placed in us and in our work. We will strive to be better each day and look forward to working with you in 2024.

# MEET

## Hon. Fatimatu Abubakar

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Honourable Fatimatu Abubakar was born in Kumasi in the Ashanti Region. She graduated from the University of Ghana with a bachelor's degree in Psychology and English Language and Law for her second degree. In 2008 she served as the Vice President of Akafo Hall Junior Common Room and Chairperson of the SRC Week Planning Committee at the University of Ghana.

In January 2017 she was appointed as the Deputy Communications Director at the Office of the President, Jubilee House, Accra, Ghana.

Prior to her political appointments, she worked at the Lansdown Resort, Aburi, and SRM Engineering Limited, where she served as a house manager and a Clerk respectively.

She previously served the then-candidate Nana Akufo-Addo as a campaign aide in the 2016 and 2020 general elections.

She was part of the legal team of President Nana Addo Dankwa-Akufo-Addo during the 2020 Presidential Election Petition.

She has received several awards including Honorary Mention, Lifelink Tertiary Model United Nations. Bronze Medal, West Africa University Games. Global Medal, Ghana University Games (Handball, Women)

Beyond politics, she is a lawyer and an entrepreneur.

In February 2024, she was appointed as the Minister Designate for Information.



**Hon. Fatimatu Abubakar**

*Minister for Information Designate*

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# MEET

## Honourable Sylvester Tetteh

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Honourable Sylvester Tetteh is the Member of parliament for Bortianor Ngleshie Amanfro Constituency and Deputy Minister Designate for Information.

Prior to the 2020 General Elections, he was the Chief Executive Officer of the National Youth Authority in Ghana, the statutory body mandated to facilitate the holistic development of Ghana's youth. As part of his duties, he coordinates and spearheads the development of capacity-building programmes for young people in Ghana.

Hon. Sylvester Tetteh is the board chair for the Ghana Enterprises Agency(GEA), an agency meant to promote and develop MSMEs in Ghana.

Before his Election, he has worked in various managerial capacities in both the private and public sector. Mr. Sylvester Tetteh is an affable individual with the ardent desire to promote youth involvement in governance, entrepreneurship and national development.

Hon. Tetteh is currently the vice chairperson of the communication committee and a committee member of the Local Government, Decentralization and Rural Development In the 8th parliament of the 4th republic of Ghana.



**Hon. Sylvester Tetteh**

*Deputy Minister for Information Designate*

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# MEET

## Mr. Isaac Kobina Ofoe

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A Chartered Accountant and a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants Ghana.

He is also a member of Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) both Ghana and global.

He also holds Master of Business Administration in Finance from the Methodist University College Ghana and Bachelor of Education Degree in Accounting and Economics from the University of Cape Coast.

He has over Nineteen (19) years experience in both the public and private sector business environment and currently works as the Chief Internal Auditor of the Ministry of Information. Prior to joining the Ministry, Mr. Ofoe was the Head of Internal Audit at the Coastal Development Authority. He has also worked as the Principal Internal Auditor at the Ministry of Health, Head Office in charge of auditing IGF, Expenditure Payment, Personnel and Payroll, Fixed Assets, Transport, Fuel Management and Procurement.

He also worked at the Ghana Health Service, Headquarters as a Senior Internal Auditor, Auditing Global Fund Projects (HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB) and Malaria Control Program).

Others were MAF, Gavi, Fuel, Vehicle and Performance Audit.



**Isaac Kobina Ofoe**  
*Head, Internal Audit*

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# VICE PRESIDENT MAHMUDU BAWUMIA UNVEILS USD 55 MILLION BIZBOX PROJECT



*Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia- Vice President*

The Vice President, Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia on Monday, 22nd January 2024, announced the national kick off of the BizBox project by the Ghana Enterprises Agency and Mastercard Foundation at an event at the Kofi Ohene Konadu Auditorium, UPSA, Accra.

The initiative, with a budget of USD 55 million, is aimed to foster entrepreneurship, empower youth, and create a substantial number of jobs across the nation.

Addressing the audience, Vice President Bawumia emphasized the transformative nature of the BizBox Project, which build upon the successful Young Africa Works – Youth Entrepreneurship and Employment programme (YEEP).

The previous Young Africa Works Project impacted approximately 94,000 young people in Ghana between 2020 and 2022.

“Now, armed with a budget of USD 55 million, the new BizBox Project sets an ambitious goal to empower 250,000 individuals, support 125,000 with start-up kits, provide market access support to 50,000 businesses, and regulatory support to 40,000 businesses,” the Vice President stated.

“The BizBox Project, would be implemented across all the 16 regions and 261 districts in Ghana, also benefiting diverse groups, including youth, Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), vulnerable females, majority women-owned businesses, and female youth-led businesses”, he added.

Underlining the importance of the BizBox initiative, Vice President Bawumia indicated that the project symbolized hope and opportunity, encompassing the tools, knowledge, and support necessary to initiate, develop, own, and grow successful businesses for young people in Ghana.

The project would be implemented by the Ghana Enterprises Agency under five pillars: Youth Skills Development, Access to Market, Access to Startup Kits, Youth Social Networks, and Institutional Strengthening, Policy, and Regulatory Support.

It would focus on sectors such as agriculture, agri-business, tourism, creative industry, building and construction, and others, ensuring a comprehensive approach to address the root causes of unemployment.

The Chief Executive Officer of Ghana Enterprises Agency, Mrs. Kosi Yankey-Ayeh, expressed her commitment to the success of the BizBox Project. She mentioned that the project aligned with existing Government initiatives and policies.

“We recognize the importance of collaboration and partnership, to this end, BizBox will leverage partnerships with private sector BDS providers, industry associations, and various stakeholders to ensure the success and sustainability of this program. We stand committed to supporting the dreams and aspirations of the youth, nurturing a generation of innovative and successful entrepreneurs who will contribute to the growth and prosperity of our nation”, she said.

The ceremony was attended by key government officials, including Hon. Kobina Tahir Hammond, Member of Parliament for Adansi-Asokwa and Minister for Trade and Industry; Hon. Ken Ofori Atta, Minister for Finance and Economic Planning; Hon. Henry Quartey, the Greater Accra Regional Minister; Hon. Sylvester Tetteh, Member of Parliament for Bortianor-Ngleshie Amanfro and the Board Chairman of GEA Enterprises Agency, officials from the Mastercard foundation among others.

Source: MOI (PR Unit)

# GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO LAYING BROADCASTING BILL BEFORE PARLIAMENT



*Former Minister for Information, Hon. Kojo Oppong Nkrumah*

The Minister for Information, Honourable Kojo Oppong Nkrumah has affirmed Government's commitment to ensure that the broadcasting bill is laid before parliament.

He stated that the Government had demonstrated enough commitment in terms of laws to deal with free expression in the country.

He cited the Right to Information (RTI) Act and its implementation story as an example of the Government's commitment with regards to laws to deal with free expression in the country.

Hon. Oppong Nkrumah made the comment when he addressed a stakeholder engagement and research report launch organized by the Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) on the theme "Ensuring accountability in the Governance of media and the Internet" on 17th of January 2024.

According to the Minister, there were still emerging issues that have been raised for consideration following some of the correspondents received from the Attorney General in the 2024 re-drafted version of the broadcasting bill.

The Minister explained that one of the reasons for the delay in laying the bill before Parliament had to do with the definition of the word "Broadcasting."

He revealed that in the last draft, broadcasting only referred to television without taking note of other forms of technology-led broadcasting.

He also noted some other issues such as responsibility for moderating content in the media space.

According to him, these issues have carefully been studied with a lot of stakeholders to get a certain common position.

"So, if you are on radio and television, broadcasting applies to you, and you are responsible for moderating the content that comes out", Hon. Oppong Nkrumah stated.

"How about if you move that content onto your Facebook page and somebody wrote under those posts to make comments you will not allow on radio and television be they defamatory or ethnic inciting, do the same rules apply? Shouldn't they apply?," the Minister said.

The Minister questioned the responsibilities of the international bodies' social media platforms with regards to ensuring that some sort of content, which ordinarily one would not allow on television and radio in Ghana being posted on their platforms and further asked if the media house that is operating that platform bare the liability.

Hon. Oppong Nkrumah said that it was important that they got everybody including key stakeholders to align on the key issues that is needed to address before the bill is being laid before parliament.

The Broadcasting Bill is seeking to regulate and sanitize the broadcasting space in Ghana.



# PRESIDENT INAUGURATES FIRST PRIVATE OIL REFINERY IN GHANA



*President Akufo Addo cutting sword for the inauguration of the private oil refinery*

President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo has Inaugurated Ghana's first private oil refinery and pledged to revitalize the state-owned Tema Oil Refinery (TOR). Constructed by the Sentuo Group Ghana, a Chinese conglomerate at the Tema Industrial Area, the first phase of the new refinery is anticipated to process an initial capacity of 40,000 barrels per day and then scale up to 100,000 barrels per day by the end of the year. The second phase of the facility is anticipated to be finished this year, and would raise its capacity to five million barrels per year.

Inaugurating the new facility at a spectacular ceremony, President Nana Addo, said that his government is committed to revamping the Tema Oil Refinery and would also stop at nothing to ensure that such vital state asset was operational.

“The challenges of another domestic oil refinery, the Tema Oil Refinery, are well documented. Nonetheless, I want to assure the Ghanaian people that the Government remains committed to the full operationalization of TOR, and we will stop at nothing to bring it back on stream so that together with Sentuo more and more of our oil will be refined right here in our country, Ghana,” he emphasized.

President Akuffo Addo said, the establishment of the new refinery was a significant milestone towards the country's energy independence and economic prosperity.

“This project represents not just a brick and mortar, but also a symbol of our determination to shape our destiny, strengthen our economy reduce our dependence on foreign oil and inspire investment in our economy”

He was optimistic that Ghana would also soon wean itself off the reliance on foreign fuel for energy needs, and the entire operations of the refinery would also serve as a pivotal step towards the country's energy future.

“No longer will we be relying on an external source for fuel, instead, we will harvest our natural resources to fuel our progress.”

President Akuffo Addo said, the refinery would not only provide the country with petroleum product, but also create jobs and

empower local communities, drive investment in related industries and contribute to the overall realization of Ghana's broader industrialization agenda.

“Processing our crude oil domestically, we are creating opportunities to add value, transform raw material into finished products and increase the competitiveness of our manufacturing sector,” he stated.

He said the refinery stood as a good example of “our Ghana made initiative, where we prioritise local production for the benefit of Ghanaians.” He emphasized that the refinery would not only supply goods but would also aid in the development of the nation's, among many other areas. The president indicated that, the good cooperation between the public and the private sectors in the country and investment in the sector would pave way for a robust industrial revolution that will support various sectors, including pharmaceutical, agriculture, manufacturing, and construction industries.

President Akufo Addo was not happy that 95 percent of Ghana's current consumption of petroleum products was imported, resulting in heavy reliance on external sources.

“This over reliance did not only pose challengers such as high cost, and the constant drain on our foreign currency reserve, but also limit our ability to control prices and ensure stable supply. The establishment of this refinery signifies our commitment to reducing this dependence, achieving self-sufficiency and driving the growth of our domestic petroleum industry,” he noted.

The executive chairman of the Sentuo Group Xu Ning Quan on his path said that, the development reflected the long-standing ties between Ghana and China, and what countries could accomplish when the private sector was encouraged. He also expressed his outstanding gratitude to the government of Ghana for creating and building such an excellent and conducive atmosphere for the private sector to thrive, adding that the project would complement Ghana's quest for energy sustainability and efficiency.

Source: MOI (PR Unit)

# GOV'T IS DETERMINED TO BRIDGE DIGITAL DIVIDE - URSULA OWUSU



The Minister for Communications and Digitalization, Honourable Ursula Owusu-Ekuful has reaffirmed Government's commitment to bridging the digital divide in the country.

Delivering updates on initiatives within the sector on Sunday, February 18, 2024, Mrs. Ursula-Ekuful highlighted Government's effort in advancing technology since it assumed office in 2017 and why it is still a priority on government's to-do list.

“Government will not leave anybody behind in our quest for digital transformation,” she affirmed.

Highlighting the significance of digital inclusion, Hon. Owusu-Ekuful underscored the pivotal role of technology in fostering socioeconomic development and enhancing the quality of life for all citizens.

She expressed the Government's dedication to ensuring that every individual, regardless of location or background, has access to the benefits of digitalization.

“Our vision is to create a digitally empowered nation where every Ghanaian can harness the opportunities afforded by technology,” the Minister stated.

Hon. Owusu-Ekuful outlined various initiatives undertaken by the Ministry of Communications and Digitalization aimed at extending connectivity, promoting digital literacy, and facilitating access to government services.

Among the key initiatives mentioned as part of the technological advancement, is the Ghana Rural Telephony and Digital Inclusion Project, which is aimed at providing mobile telephony services to underserved communities, thus bridging the digital divide.

The Minister also highlighted the innovative Ghana.gov platform, designed to streamline access to Government services and payments, as well as the nationwide eGovernment network, aimed

at modernizing governance and connectivity infrastructure.

Additionally, she mentioned that the implementation of the ECOWAS Free Roaming initiative positions Ghana as a trailblazer in regional integration efforts. The initiative allows Ghanaian subscribers to enjoy seamless mobile services in neighboring countries without incurring roaming charges, fostering greater connectivity and cooperation within the sub-region.

The Minister also discussed the Innovative Digital Services and Payments Platform, GHANA.GOV, which serves as a centralized hub for accessing government services online. She emphasized the platform's user-friendly interface and its role in streamlining financial transactions, enhancing transparency, and bolstering fiscal integrity.

Further, Hon. Owusu-Ekuful outlined the revolutionary Nationwide E-Government Network, aimed at broadening broadband connectivity and promoting digital literacy across Ghana.

This initiative, she stated, is poised to transform governance, enhance service delivery, and empower citizens and businesses nationwide.

This, she reiterated Government's commitment to fully role out these projects to drive socioeconomic development.

In response to recent assertions made by the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC) regarding the digitalization efforts of the current administration, the Minister for Communications and Digitalization, Hon. Ursula Owusu-Ekuful, debunked claims that the Akufo-Addo administration altered the e-Services.gov.gh platform established by the erstwhile Mahama administration to Ghana.gov.gh. The Minister explained that the platforms are not the same but different entities.

She expressed confidence in Ghana's digital future and urged stakeholders to join hands in realizing the nation's digital aspirations.

Source: MOI (PR Unit)

# GHANA TO ROLL OUT ECOWAS FREE ROAMING INITIATIVE TO BOOST REGIONAL INTEGRATION



Minister for Communications, Info Min. Designate (middle) and dignitaries

Ghana has taken a significant step towards fostering regional integration as it announces the rollout of the ECOWAS Free Roaming Initiative, a move aimed at facilitating seamless communication across West African nations.

The Minister for Communications and Digitalization, Honourable Ursula Owusu-Ekuful, disclosed this at the Ministers Press Briefing today, highlighting its potential to enhance connectivity and promote economic cooperation within the ECOWAS region.

“Ghana has also taken bold steps to implement the ECOWAS Free Roaming initiative adopted in 2016 but suffering implementation challenges. In June 2023, Ghana and Côte D'Ivoire became the first ECOWAS countries to implement the ECOWAS Free Roaming initiative to promote greater integration among member states and decrease roaming charges within the sub-region,” the Minister said.

She emphasized the importance of the ECOWAS Free Roaming Initiative in breaking down barriers to communication and promoting cross-border collaboration.

“This initiative marks a milestone in our collective efforts to promote regional integration and create a more connected West Africa,” the Minister said.

Under the ECOWAS Free Roaming Initiative, citizens of ECOWAS member states would benefit from reduced roaming charges when traveling within the region, enabling them to stay connected with friends, family, and business associates without incurring exorbitant costs. The initiative is expected to stimulate intra-regional trade and tourism while fostering cultural exchange and collaboration among ECOWAS countries.

This, Hon. Owusu-Ekuful underscored Ghana's commitment to supporting initiatives that promote regional cooperation and strengthen ties with neighboring countries.

She said by implementing the ECOWAS Free Roaming Initiative, Ghana reaffirms its commitment to the ideals of the ECOWAS community and demonstrates its willingness to leverage digital technology for the collective benefit of all member states.

I Will Continue with The Projects of My Predecessor – Information Minister Designate Has Said

The Minister for Information Designate, Fatima Abubakar has said that she would continue to work on some of the innovative media support programs that her predecessor, Hon. Kojo Opong

# I WILL CONTINUE WITH THE PROJECTS OF MY PREDECESSOR



*Minister for Information Designate, Fatima Abubakar*

The Minister for Information Designate, Fatimatu Abubakar has said that she would continue to work on some of the innovative media support programs that her predecessor, Hon. Kojo Opong Nkrumah initiated at the Ministry.

In an interview on the AM Show on Joy TV, Ms. Abubakar noted that, she would see to the continuous implementation of the innovative media support programmes that Hon. Kojo Opong Nkrumah had initiated.

“I am not going to reinvent the wheel especially some of the innovative media support programmes that Hon. Kojo Opong Nkrumah initiated like the Coordinated Mechanism on Safety on Journalist and Media Capacity Enhancement Programme and other campaigns that we started at the ministry are things that I believe I should renew the energy and make sure we see to the continues

implementation of those”.

She stated that, the President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo had personally communicated with her his expectations of the office.

“By virtue of this nomination the President of the Republic has personally communicated to me his expectations of the office”.

She added that as a Minister designate, she is expected to give direction and guidance as to how she would assist the various Ministries Department and Agencies of Government to effectively communicate Government project and policies. She mentioned that her experience as a communicator at the Jubilee House and deputy Minister for Information has equipped her enough to handle her position excellently.

Hon. Fatimatu Abubakar before her appointment served as a deputy minister for Information from 2021 till her nomination as Minister for Information on February 14, 2024.

Source: MOI (PR Unit)

# SAFEGUARD MEDIA SUPPORT PROGRAMMES - OPpong NKRUMAH



*Former Minister for Information, Hon. Kojo Opong Nkrumah*

The former Minister for Information, Honourable Kojo Opong Nkrumah, has urged staff of the Ministry to continue to safeguard and enhance the media support initiatives initiated during his tenure as Minister.

In a passionate farewell address during a staff durbar at the Ministry's press centre on Friday, February 16, 2024, the Minister made a passionate plea for the continued support and expansion of the media support programmes encouraging them to work in close collaboration with the incoming Minister, Fatimatu Abubakar, to ensure their sustainability.

“Do not turn your back on our media support programs. We need to support the public communications ecosystem continuously. It is necessary if we want the media and others to excel in our democracy,” he said.

Hon. Opong Nkrumah, who steps down to take on the Minister for Works and Housing role as part of President Akufo-Addo's major Ministerial shake-up last Wednesday highlighted the crucial role these programmes play in strengthening Ghana's media landscape. He cited the Media Capacity Enhancement Programme (MCEP) and the Coordinated Mechanism for the Safety of Journalists (CMSJ) as a prime example of media support programmes that need constant support to serve their purpose.

He commended the programmes for successfully providing comprehensive training to over 140 journalists from diverse media houses nationwide, equipping them with the skills and expertise

needed to excel in their profession and ensuring the safety and security of media practitioners.

Emphasising the necessity of collaboration, Hon. Opong Nkrumah called upon Government agencies, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and the private sector to unite in addressing the challenges faced by these media support programs. He urged collective action to uphold their integrity and effectiveness, underscoring their vital contribution to the country's democratic progress.

Despite recognising the difficulties in securing cooperation with other institutions to ensure the execution of these programmes, Hon. Opong Nkrumah urged staff to persist. “Keep pushing for more cooperation even when they aren't responsive. We will get there eventually,” he asserted.

Additionally, the Minister stressed the importance of upholding high research standards to provide accurate and valuable feedback to the government. He said already, the Ministry has a working research department that must be put to good use to complete the government's efforts in bringing good governance to the doorstep of Ghanaians.

Concluding his speech on a personal note, the Minister expressed gratitude to the staff for working to make his time at the Ministry a success and solicited their continued support in the execution of the Ministry's key duties.

Source: MOI (PR Unit)

## GHANA POISED TO HOST THE BEST EVER AFRICAN GAMES – SPORTS MINISTER



*Hon. Mustapha Ussif, Minister for Youth and Sports,*

The Minister for Youth and Sports, Honourable Mustapha Ussif has maintained that the country stands ready to host the African Games.

Speaking at the Ministry of Information during the Minister's Press Briefing today, Hon. Ussif underscored the nation's commitment to deliver a groundbreaking event, highlighting the significant progress made in preparation for the 13th African Games slated to commence from March 8th to 23rd, 2024.

“The completion of sporting facilities for the hosting and organization of the 13th African Games, Accra, 2023 underscores the commitment of His Excellency, the President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, to the development of sports in Ghana,” Hon. Ussif stated.

He emphasized the transformative impact of the newly constructed Borteyman Sports Complex and the University of Ghana Stadium, heralding them as landmarks that position Ghana as a beacon of sports development on the continent.

“Facilities at Borteyman, especially the Aquatic Centre, are one of a kind in the whole of Africa. This will make Ghana a centre of sports development on the continent,” the Minister added.

The Minister also emphasized the comprehensive preparations in terms of logistics, security, and participant engagement. Measures

such as the installation of CCTV cameras, deployment of security personnel, and provision of free visas for foreign athlete's underscore Ghana's commitment to ensuring a safe and welcoming environment for all participants.

“The facilities at Borteyman, especially the Aquatic Centre, is one of its kind in the whole of Africa. This will make Ghana a center of sports development on the continent,” Mr. Ussif emphasized.

In addition to hosting a successful event, he said Ghana has ambitious plans for post-games management of the facilities.

Hon. Ussif revealed that the Borteyman Sports Complex would be transformed into a University of Sports for Development, further cementing Ghana's status as a leader in sports development within the West African sub-region.

# GOVERNMENT TO CONVERT BORTEYMAN SPORTS COMPLEX TO SPORTS DEV. UNIVERSITY



*Hon. Mustapha Ussif, Minister for Youth and Sports,*

The Minister for Youth and Sports Mustapha Ussif has disclosed government's intention to convert the Borteyman Sports Complex into a full University for Sports development in Ghana. According to the Minister, the decision forms part of the government's plans to properly maintain the facilities, ensure sustainability and position the country as a sports hub within the West African Sub-region.

“To ensure that the facilities are well maintained for the continuous benefit of the good people of Ghana, the facilities at Borteyman will be converted to a university for sports and I have mentioned on countless occasions that the vision of the Republic of Ghana is to ensure that once we finish with the games, we convert those facilities to a university for sports to ensure sustainability and legacy of the games”.

The Minister made this revelation at a press briefing session on Monday, March 4, at the Ministry of Information press center in Accra.

He told the media that, the completion of sporting facilities for the hosting and organization of the 13th African Games, Accra, 2023 underscores the commitment of His Excellency, the President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, to the development of sports in Ghana. Hon. Mustapha Ussif cited the Aquatic Centre as one of its

kind in the whole of Africa adding that it will make Ghana a center of sports development on the continent.

He indicated that other facilities, such as hostels, football pitches, cafeterias and a medical center will be added to the facility.

“Additionally, infrastructure such as hostel facilities, football pitches, cafeterias, and medical center's will be provided at the site to attract local and foreign federations to camp in Ghana and prepare for various competitions”, he said.

The Minister was confident that the facility including that of the University of Ghana will attract local and foreign sports federations to camp in Ghana and prepare for various competitions and position Ghana as a sports hub within the West African sub-region.

“The expectation is that once we finish these games, we should use the facilities that we have gotten to drive more traffic for competitions here in Ghana”, he noted.

# LET'S SANITIZE ONLINE SPACE- INFO MINISTER DESIGNATE APPEALS TO TIK TOK



Minister for Information designate, Fatimatu Abubakar

The Minister for Information designate, Honourable. Fatimatu Abubakar has called on technology giants and App developers to support the Ministry as it begins to draft the National Action Plan to combat misinformation and disinformation.

She indicated that the impact of dis information and misinformation is more dangerous compared to that of COVID 19 and called on the App developer to explore the possibility of partnering the Ministry to work together to intensify the fight against the canker to bring some sanity online.

She made the appeal during a working visit by a team from TikTok earlier today at the Ministry ahead of the inaugural edition of its annual Safer internet Summit for Stakeholders across Sub-Saharan Africa in Accra on March 14, 2024.

Hon. Abubakar mentioned that Ghana's online space is very vibrant with a lot of youths actively engaged online and there was the need to ensure online safety especially with children having access to the internet.

“About 35% of youth mostly hold engagements online and there is the need to harness the gains and make the platforms safe for them, Minister for Information designate highlighted.”

She called on the new Media Association of Ghana which supports individuals and organizations using content creation and online marketing to rally its support behind government to be able to formulate policies that will continue enhance free speech.

“This is very important to me, because it is when we get the support and collaboration of all those people, including the content creators, that is only when we make the laws, and because of their participation, there will be compliance”, she emphasized.



Info. Min. designate, Fatimatu Abubakar (middle) Deputy Info. Minister designate and the Chief Director and delegation from Tik Tok

Hon. Abubakar indicated that COVID-19 exposed the dangerous impact of dis/misinformation and called on stakeholders to see it as a wakeup call to stem the tide.

For his part, the deputy minister designate for Information, Hon. Sylvester Tetteh underscored the huge market potential of tik tok for education and expressed government's preparedness to harness the economic gains while it ensures sanity of the space. He also emphasized the need to take further discussions on formulating legislations to protect online users as well as leverage it for government communication

The Government Relations and Public Policy for Tik Tok in Nigeria and West Africa, Tokunbo Ibrahim in her address extolled the Ministry for its efforts in fighting disinformation online and encouraged synergy between Tik Tok and the Ministry to take the fight a notch higher, adding that online safety is a priority for Tik Tok.

“Tik Tok is committed to fight mis/disinformation and the need to keep the platform safe, Mr. Tokumbo emphasized.”

“But also, we are very focused on fighting disinformation and misinformation. Generally, and particularly as regards to elections. Keeping the platform safe for our users is very important to us. And just over the next couple of days tomorrow, we will be posting in workshops for regulators and law enforcement in Ghana, where we are basically trying to teach them more about the app, as well as educate them on how it can report content that the offensive and content is illegal, Mr. Tokumbo added.”



# AU FORUM REVIEW INITIATIVES ON TERRORISM AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES OF GOVERNMENT IN AFRICA



*AU Commissioner, Ambassador Bankole Adeoye*

The African Union (AU) Commission in collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Government of the Republic of Ghana, is set to organize the Second AU Reflection Forum to review initiatives undertaken on the Declaration on terrorism and unconstitutional changes of government in Africa and also assess key achievements and gaps in implementing its recommendations.

The forum also referred to as the Accra II, it would be held from 18 to 19 March 2024, in Accra, Ghana. The forum, which will be held under the theme, “Robust Response, Deepening Democracy, Sustainable Security”, would build on the first edition held in March 2022 and on the Declaration on Terrorism and Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa, also known as the Malabo Declaration on UCGs, adopted during the 16th Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union on Terrorism and UCGs in Africa on May 28 2022.

Addressing the media at the Ministry of Information press center in Accra, H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace, and Security, stressed the importance of the forum and affirmed the AU's dedication to upholding democratic principles and ensuring sustainable security in Africa.

“Through robust dialogue and collaboration, we aim to address the root causes of unconstitutional changes of government and strengthen democratic governance across the continent,” he stated.

The AU Commissioner Ambassador Bankole explained that the gathering would offer an opportunity to review the latest developments since the Accra I Forum, deepen reflection on the structural root causes and impacts of UCGs in Africa, and provide recommendations on the necessary steps to improve and adapt the AU's responses to the new challenges posed by UCGs, towards consolidating democratic practice and effective governance in Africa.

He indicated that policymakers, civil society organizations, and development partners will engage in candid discussions and exchange ideas to advance democratic governance and enhance the rule of law.

H.E. Ambassador Emilia Mkusa, Chairperson of the AU Peace and Security Council, highlighted the forum's role in shaping effective responses to evolving challenges.

“By engaging a diverse range of stakeholders, including representatives from AU member states, regional economic communities, and civil society organizations, we can collectively develop strategies to prevent and address unconstitutional changes of government,” she noted.

Participants are expected to exchange views on consolidating democratic governance, advancing national ownership of governance processes, and strengthening constitutionalism and the rule of law in Africa and align on coordination and coherence to effectively implement the Malabo and Accra Declarations.

Source: MOI (PR Unit)

# GHANA HOSTS ANNUAL SAFER INTERNET SUMMIT



*Deputy Information Minister Designate, Sylvester Tetteh*

In a move to tackle the spread of misinformation and disinformation online, countries in sub-Saharan Africa converged in Accra on Thursday for the regional Internet Safety Summit under the theme, “Together for a Better Internet.”

The gathering was for a coordinated public dialogue and a pledge to make the internet a safe democratic space across Africa.

The Deputy Minister Designate for Information, Hon. Sylvester Matthew Tetteh, in his address stated that the proliferation of misinformation and disinformation was a threat to democracy and good governance across sub-Saharan Africa and the world.

He outlined a comprehensive Ghanaian action plan featuring initiatives like a digital media literacy campaign, a national seminar on misinformation's impact on electoral integrity, and the launch of the fact-checking platform, [www.ghanatoday.gov.gh](http://www.ghanatoday.gov.gh).

He said a collaborative, multi-stakeholder approach was vital, and called on tech giants to implement rigorous verification systems.

“Big companies must put in measures to ensure the accuracy of information on their platforms and fashion out mechanisms that detect factually inaccurate information circulating.”

Mr Tetteh advocated for a national discourse on regulations of social media platforms as part of sanitizing the new media space.

TikTok's Director of Government Relations, Fortune Mgwili-Sibanda commended Ghana for being the first to host the important event focused on creating a safer, more inclusive digital world, especially for African youth.

He indicated TikTok was open to further discussions with the Ghanaian government on legislation to protect online users and maintain a sane digital space, while leveraging economic

opportunities on the platform.

“There is a huge market potential for TikTok, especially in relation to education in Ghana,” Mgwili-Sibanda stated.

The Director acknowledged the proliferation of misinformation and disinformation which poses a grave threat to democracy and governance across the region.

He called on bigger technology companies to implement robust measures to ensure accuracy of information on their platforms and develop mechanisms to detect and curb the spread of factually inaccurate content.

“On the part of government, it is high time we consider a national discourse on regulations of social media platforms as part of sanitizing the new media space,” Mgwili-Sibanda remarked.

He emphasized that digital safety principles and cybersecurity are paramount for a safer, better internet experience for young people across Africa. He pledged TikTok's commitment to collaborate closely with partners to enhance and promote online safety initiatives continent-wide.

The summit not only catalyzed crucial policy discussions but also facilitated knowledge-sharing among regulators, security agencies and online safety experts united in fortifying the sub-region's cyber defenses.

This year's Internet Safety Summit brought together policy makers, regulators, security agencies and safety professionals to strategize on curbing harmful online content and boosting digital literacy across sub-Saharan Africa.

Source: MOI (PR Unit)

# NCA'S PROACTIVE MEASURES ENSURES GHANA'S INTERNET RESILIENCE

The Director General of the National Communications Authority (NCA), Dr. Joe Anokye has explained that the proactive actions of the Authority dating back to 2020 was the reason Ghana did not experience complete internet outage during the 14th March undersea cable disruptions.

He indicated that a number of countries along the West African Coast down to South Africa experienced widespread and massive internet outage when four (4) submarine cables, which coincidentally are operational in Ghana got disrupted on the high seas leading to disruptions in data services.

During the outage, consumers on AT did not experience any disruptions while those on MTN had some access to the internet. All three mobile network operators (MNOs) in Ghana have since restored full internet capacity while the submarine cable providers are continuing repair efforts.

He revealed that the NCA had directed MNOs to establish and maintain physical cable connections to at least 3 submarine cable providers for redundancy and resilience.

“The NCA had directed MNOs to establish and maintain physical cable connections to at least 3 submarine cable providers for redundancy and resilience – this was back in April 2020, and all MNOs adhered to this” the NCA Director General stated.”

Addressing the media at the Ministry of Information on Sunday 24th March 2024, Dr. Anokye explained that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Authority had a series of meetings with various stakeholders to find out what level of support they needed.

“The proactive engagements and subsequent directives to MNOs contributed to Ghana not experiencing complete internet outage on 14th March, 2023, Dr. Joe Anokye said.”

He mentioned that one of the meetings focused on the NCA's risk assessment of mobile network operator's capacities at the time and their redundancies to Subsea Cable Landing Service Providers. Subsequently, all MNOs were in a letter dated 30th April, 2020 directed amongst others that, from a national emergency point of view, all MNOs should establish and maintain physical cable connections to at least three (3) submarine cable companies.

Further to the above, all redundant cable connections should be capable of being lighted within 24-hours in the event of outage on your primary links.

“It was based on this directive that AT secured a 3rd leg of its cable provider in Nigeria, leading to them having service, with MTN also having another leg in Nigeria with some capacity that was relied on during the crisis, Dr. Joe Anokye revealed.

The Director General disclosed that, going forward, the Authority would require MNOs to make provisions for another leg of their cable to land with a cable provider who does not land in-country but is close by.

“We are happy to note also that the NCA in 2023, licensed a fifth cable landing operator, Bayobab, operator of the 2Africa Cable with a design capacity of 180tbps which is about four times the combined design capacity of the existing cables; this service is expected to be operational by 4th Quarter of 2024 or sooner”, he said



*Director General, National Communications Authority,*

The Director- General added that, the 2Africa would be the only cable that circles the entire African continent – providing geographical diversity, additionally, from a distance layout standpoint, the 2Africa Cable is much farther away from the existing 4 cables in the high seas.

Dr. Anokye also disclosed that the NCA has augmented our existing satellite licensing portfolio to include recent broadband satellite services to provide alternative connectivity options for domestic and enterprise users.

“We will work with regulators and the industry in the sub-region to encourage the extension of inter-country terrestrial fiber to enhance resilience of our respective internet connectivity, He said.

About NCA

The National Communications Authority, (NCA), was established by an Act of Parliament, Act 524 in December 1996, which has been repealed and replaced by the National Communications Authority Act, 2008 (Act 769). The Authority is the statutory body mandated to license and to regulate electronic communication activities and services in the country.

# AGENDA TO BRING GHANAIAN MUSIC ALIVE; PLAY GHANA CAMPAIGN MAKES SIGNIFICANT IMPACT



The creative arts industry is admittedly one of the country's economic indicators that has suffered the neglect of local content to foreign ones. Experts and notable stakeholders within the industry have attributed this to Ghanaians insatiable crave and preference to foreign creative arts especially music. This is evident in Ghana's Spotify Wrapped results for November 30, 2022 report where Nigerian artists are enjoying a sweet spot in Ghana as Burna Boy takes the top spot as the most streamed artist in the country with Spotify RADAR Global Artist Ayra Starr topping the list as the most streamed female artist in Ghana living Black Sherif and Gyakie taking second spots respectively.

Ironically, as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022, the industry was the third contributor to Ghana's GDP after cocoa and gold according to the former Minister for Tourism, Arts and Culture Dr. Ibrahim Awal as captured by the Ghana web. "The sector will overtake the cocoa sector and become the number one contributor in 2024 and 2025," he predicted.

The State of the Creative Arts in Ghana 2017 'Artwatch' Ghana Annual Report indicated that the Creative Arts and Culture contributes substantially to the respective economies of countries that formulate better policies for its growth and implement same effectively and efficiently. According to the National Endowments for the Arts (NEA) 2013 report, the Arts and cultural production contributed to \$704.2 billion to the US economy.

Mr. Zapp Mallet, a renowned sound engineer and music producer who is obviously worried about this development cautioned Ghanaians to appreciate and patronize local songs to boost the creative arts industry noting that the quest for foreign music to the neglect of the local songs had affected the industry. According to the engineer, if care was not taken, the Ghanaian music especially highlife songs would lose its relevance. captured on peace FM online. The creative industry in Ghana has great potential. Notwithstanding, it needs timely investments and policy direction to realize its full potential.

## The Play Ghana Campaign

In a timely contribution to salvage the sharp decline in local music, the Creative Arts Agency Ghana in collaboration with music artists and stakeholders in the arts sector on December 14 launched a musical campaign dubbed: "Play Ghana" to promote Ghanaian music and arts in the country.

Source: MOI (PR Unit)

In a timely contribution to salvage the sharp decline in local music patronage, the Creative Arts Agency Ghana in collaboration with music artists and stakeholders in the arts sector on December 14 launched a musical campaign dubbed: “Play Ghana” to promote Ghanaian music and arts in the country. The campaign aimed at promoting a ratio of 70% Ghanaian music played on the airwaves and social events targeting the festive season and beyond. The campaign was ably supported by the Ministry of Tourism and creative arts and the Ministry of Information. The campaign was launched to bring Ghanaian music alive by encouraging music producers and DJs to prioritize local music during the festive season. The campaign was also supported by key industry players like renowned music producer and cultural activist Smallgod-Nana Appiasei, Black Sheriff, , Reggie Rockstone, and D-Black among others.

Launching the campaign at the Ministry of Information's press center, the Director of Creative Arts Agency Ms. Gyankroma Akufo-Addo, said the time had come for the country to review the Creative Art Sector in relation to local content. She said most countries, including Nigeria had implemented similar local content laws in the arts and Ghana could not be an exception. Ms., Akufo-Addo therefore, called for the amendments to both the cultural policy and the broadcasting bill, taking inspiration from Nigeria's 70 per cent local content law across music, film, and broadcasting.

Smallgod-Nana Appiasei, a music entrepreneur, Samini, the 'My Own' hitmaker, Black Sherif, Reggie Rockstone, D-Black and others equally shared similar sentiments while encouraging Ghanaians to support the initiative and patronize local music.

## Impact

For many Ghanaians, the launch of the campaign was yet another ordinary statement that would come and vanish into thin air in the shortest possible time. However, the story was entirely different. The launch and the campaign made a lot of airwaves especially within the festive season setting the agenda for most of the digital and traditional media houses in and outside Ghana. The massive media drive, interest and support it received was essentially because the campaign was launched on one of the biggest platforms in Ghana 'The Minister's Press Briefings' created by the Ministry of Information, Ghana.

In addition to a live telecast on the station with the nationwide coverage GTV, the campaign made headlines and was a major subject of discussions in most of the radio and television morning shows alongside the promotion of good local music. The story of the campaign made its way into the news bulletins of TV3, GTV, UTV, TV Africa, GH One, Metro TV, Atinka TV, Net2 TV Kasapa FM, Kingdom FM, Marhaba FM, and Accra FM on the same day. The print media was not left out in the euphoria surrounding the launch of the Play Ghana Initiative. Quiet a number of the very notable newspaper outlets focused on the campaign. The play Ghana campaign also became the subject of discussion on United showbiz, a popular live entertainment show on UTV on 17th December, 2023 as captured by myinfo.com.gh where an entertainment pundit, Kwame\_A Plus responding directly to the Play Ghana campaign proposed a policy that would make it easier for Ghanaian music to be consumed and patronized nationwide.



*Smallgod-Nana Appiasei, Black Sheriff, Samini, Reggie Rockstone, D-Black etc.*

The campaign was also very much alive on online and social media channels including face book, X, YouTube and Instagram. This was because the launch was streamed live on the Ministry of Information Facebook page with over 2.3K viewers watching the stream 24 hours after it ended. The initiative attracted *Elikplim Doe Kwashie Zevor*, a famous writer, Michael Mensah Ashley, a popular DJ in Ghana, Afua Asantewaa's singathon brand and other popular personalities in the creative industry to contribute to promoting Ghanaian music.

The agenda to play more Ghanaian music also attracted the Ghana Music Awards USA, an award scheme that promotes Ghanaian music consumed in the United States of America (USA). According to the Founder of the awards, Don Denis, the call to play more Ghanaian music in Ghana is in tandem with the core mission of the awards scheme. *“This is a good agenda. We can only put Ghana music on the map when we put what is ours first. That is one of the main objectives of the Ghana Music Awards USA,”* he noted. Joy Entertainment, 4 January 2024

## Conclusion

Indeed, the Play Ghana initiative has created awareness and made great impact. However, its ultimate objective is yet to be realized. The appeal from the Creative Arts Agency and stakeholders for Ghanaians to patronize local music is very urgent, commendable and needs all the support it can get as it will help address increasing challenges facing our creative industry.

Perhaps, the return of Ghana Music Month Festival by MUSIGA is a great start and hopefully stakeholders within the industry will take advantage to further push the agenda to bring Ghanaian music alive. The over reliance on foreign goods is what has made Ghana an import driven economy. The adverse effect of this situation is that every single import is equivalent to shipping jobs and promoting growth of other economies and weakening the value of the Cedi. George Sarpong writes: Patronizing Made-in-Ghana goods; are we on course? March, 2022.

# BREAKING BARRIERS: WOMEN MAKING WAVES IN THE MEDIA SPACE



*Gifty Osei Boakye Bingley*

In recent years, Ghana and the world has witnessed a significant shift in the landscape of media, with women taking center stage and breaking traditional barriers in the media industry. From journalism to broadcasting and digital media, women are making remarkable strides and reshaping the narrative in the media sphere. One notable trend is the increasing number of women occupying key roles in media organizations across the country. Female journalists are no longer confined to covering "soft" news topics but are boldly delving into hard-hitting investigative journalism, shedding light on pressing social issues and holding the powerful accountable.

In the realm of broadcasting, women are not just limited to hosting entertainment shows but are also leading discussions on politics, business, and current affairs. Their voices are being amplified, challenging stereotypes and offering diverse perspectives on a wide range of topics. The digital media space has provided even more friendly additional platform for them to showcase their creativity and innovation. Female content creators, bloggers, and influencers are using social media to reach a wider audience, engage in meaningful conversations, and advocate for important causes.

Gifty Osei Boakye Bingley is one of many such accomplished women trail blazers in the Ghanaian media space. Gifty Boakye is a trained journalist from the Ghana Institute of Journalism (GIJ) and also holds a double Master's Degree in Political Communication from the University of Leeds; and Development Management from the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA).

She previously served as the Director of Corporate Communications and Corporate Responsibility at Tigo Ghana. Before Tigo, she managed the internal and external communications team and a PR agency at a rival telecommunications company, Vodafone Ghana. Before joining the telecommunications industry, she worked at the British High Commission in Accra. She also spent a decade at Ghana's leading television network, TV3, where she rose through the ranks from Broadcast Journalist to Head of News and Deputy Editor-Assignments, developing and managing content for the various news bulletins. She also worked as a News Reporter, Production Assistant and Script Writer at Shaft Radio 98.1.

Gifty is currently the Senior Communications Officer at African Union, a position that sees her oversee daily communications both internal and external of the Pan-African body. For more than 10 years, she has worked with some of Africa's leading telecommunications and government organizations, focusing on modernizing and evolving communications, PR, CSR, and government relations capabilities.

Gifty was among 7 Ghanaian Women listed as part of Africa's most influential corporate women featured in Leading Ladies Africa in May 2021. Leading Ladies Africa is a women-focused non-profit organisation that is committed to driving leadership for African women in Business, Governance and Corporate sectors in Africa.

Gifty's exceptional contributions have been acknowledged through various awards, including the Africa PR Team of the Year and PR Discovery of the Year. Gifty Osei Boakye Bingley's journey exemplifies a dedication to excellence, strategic thinking, and impactful leadership across the realms of communications, government relations, and social responsibility.

She is an alumna and member of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations, CIPR, UK.

Ghana can equally boast of other notable female media personalities that are determined and forcing hard to serve as icons and good role models for other up and coming media practitioners. Prominent personalities like Anita Erskine, Nana Aba Anamoah and Portia Gabor can certainly not miss any microscope within the media.

Gifty Osei Boakye Bingley is a well-known TV personality and a journalist she's such an inspirational voice on social media and openly fighting for the rights of young people and giving them a voice. She has carved a niche for herself as a respected media personality beyond the shores of Ghana.

Despite these advancements, challenges persist for women in Ghanaian media, including gender discrimination, unequal pay, and limited opportunities for career advancement. However, these obstacles have not frightened the resilience and determination of Ghanaian women in media, who continue to push boundaries and pave the way for future generations.

It is evident that women's contribution within the media space are not only shaping the industry but also driving social change and promoting gender equality. The stories of these trailblazing women serve as an inspiration and a reminder of the importance of diversity and representation in the media landscape.

As the media landscape in Ghana evolves, becoming more inclusive, and reflective of the diverse voices and experiences of its population, the narrative of women in media in Ghana will continue to be that of progress, empowerment, resilience and excellence.

Source: MOI (PR Unit)