



NEWSLETTER



1 PRESIDENT CHARGES MEDIA TO UPHOLD HIGH JOURNALISTIC STANDARD

President of the Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo has urged the media to uphold the highest standards of integrity and ethics in the discharge of their duties. In his closing remarks at the 3rd African Media Convention in Accra, under the theme “Enhancing Freedom, Innovation and Environmental Sustainability in a Dynamic Media Landscape.”



3 GHANA IS READY TO HOST THE 3RD AFRICA MEDIA CONVENTION IN ACCRA

The President of the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA) Mr. Albert Kwabena Dwumfour has announced that Ghana will host the 3rd Africa Media Convention (AMC) in Accra. He made the disclosure at a press briefing at the Ministry of Information.



2 TAKE ADVANTAGE OF MEDIA SUPPORT PROGRAMMES - INFORMATION MINISTER TO PRIVATE MEDIA

The Minister for Information, Honourable Fatimatu Abubakar has admonished the media to take advantage of the media support programmes by the Ministry to build their capacity, improve quality of content and programming.



4 FATIMATU ABUBAKAR AND OTHERS SWORN IN AS MINISTERS AND DEPUTY MINISTERS

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MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING CHIEF DIRECTOR



Lily Fati Soale

Cherished readers,

I am happy to welcome you to the second quarter 2024 issue of our newsletter. We are glad to inform you about some of the Ministry's activities and are honored to count you among our stakeholders.

As part of efforts to effectively disseminate information on government policies and programmes to the citizenry, the Ministry facilitated seven press briefings within the quarter.

The briefings sought to update the nation on new developments within the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). The Agencies that featured for this period are Gender, GJA, Communications and Digitalisation, Lands and Natural Resources, UNESCO and the Public Sector Reform.

The feature stories are even more interesting, revealing and worth reading. I will therefore urge all our cherished readers to find time and visit our website and read.

I am very optimistic that the remaining months of 2024 will present more opportunities for networking, innovation, and collaboration.

As a Ministry, we are dedicated to fulfilling our mandate by disseminating timely government development policies and program government information and also obtain the required feedback and educating the public on .

We hope you will enjoy reading this newsletter and appreciate the confidence you have placed in our sector.

MEET

Lily Fati Soale

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Lily Fati Soale is a specialist in Urban Governance with over 22 years' experience in Local Governance and Public Administration with expertise in Human Resource Management and Financial Management, having worked as Director in charge of Human Resources and Director of Finance and Administration in the various Ministries.

She is also an expert in citizen engagement and community mobilization. In 2019, she was appointed as a member of the Expert Advisory Council on Citizen Engagement by the World Bank Group to provide guidance and expertise to advance the implementation of the Strategic Framework on Citizen Engagement and other issues critical to mainstreaming citizen engagement in the World Bank Group operations for improved results.

Queen Lily has a passion for child protection and women empowerment issues and has gained recognition by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection for her efforts in that regard.

She holds a master's degree in urban management and development from the Institute of Housing and Urban Development Studies (IHS), Erasmus University, Rotterdam, The Netherlands. She is married and has three children. She is also a queen mother in the Bole traditional Area with the title, Kananpe Wurche Birkumu I.

Lily Fati Soale is currently the Acting Chief Director for the Ministry of Information.

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Lily Fati Soale
Acting Chief Director

INFORMATION MINISTER HON. FATIMATU ABUBAKAR TOURS MEDIA HOUSES



Minister for Information 4th left flanked by Management of EIB Network and officers from the Ministry



Minister for Information and management of Kessben Media

The Minister for Information Hon. Fatimatu Abubakar has embarked on a tour on selected media houses in Accra as part of stakeholder engagements in the media sector. The tour which started on May 6 and ended on 31st May aimed to engage with media professionals, foster better relationships, discuss government initiatives, address concerns and explore opportunities for growth and development in the media industry. The tour was a significant milestone in the Ministry's effort to revitalize the media landscape to ensure and sustain Ghana's democracy.

Hon. Fatimatu Abubakar was accompanied by the Ag. Chief Director, a team of government communicators, the PRO and other officials from the Ministry of Information. The Minister visited over 30 selected media organisations in Accra.

Hon. Abubakar and her team first visited the EIB Group which owns GhOne, Starr FM and Kasapa FM, as its flagship brands.

The Minister Designate commended management and staff of the media houses for championing professionalism and using their platforms to engage all stakeholders in national discourse. She urged the workers to continue to engage the government and provide feedback on issues of national concern.

Hon. Abubakar stressed that the Government is committed to ensure a conducive environment for free and responsible media while assisting the enhancement of the work of journalists through capacity building.

Interacting with management and staff at the media houses, Hon. Abubakar called for greater collaboration between the media and all other stakeholders including the government in deepening the country's democracy.

3rd Africa Media Convention

The Minister Designate called for media support and participation in the upcoming 3rd Africa Media Convention which is scheduled for May 15-17, 2024. The convention which is an annual media convention is a collaborative effort supported by African media stakeholders, to reflect on the fundamental role of journalism on the continent, celebrate fundamental principles of press freedom and

deliberate on measures to safeguard media freedom, promote access to information, the safety of journalists and media visibility in Africa Union member states.

Global World Press Freedom

Hon. Abubakar reiterated Ghana's significant improvement from 62nd out of 180 countries to 50th. She attributed the performance to Ghana Office of the Safety of Journalist and the Media Capacity Enhancement Programme which have contributed immensely to the quality of journalism in Ghana.

Media Capacity Enhancement Programme

Hon. Fatimatu Abubakar announced that the 3rd Cohort of the Media Capacity Enhancement Programme will commence soon and urged media owners to allow their media personnel to participate in the training.

International Fund for Public Interest Media (IFPIM)

The Minister for Information Designate informed the media owners of the International Fund for Public Interest Media (IFPIM), a media development fund targeted at independent media institutions. She indicated that IFPIM's interest is focused on the sustainability of media houses and urged all media houses to take advantage of the fund.

Combating Mis/Disinformation in the digital space

Media owners bemoaned the increasing rate of mis/disinformation in the digital space and appealed to the Ministry to support them sanitize content online.

The team also visited Kessben Media and Wontumi Radio and

NEW MEDIA ASSOCIATION OF GHANA TO SUPPORT GOVERNMENT SANITIZE DIGITAL SPACE



Hon. Minister for Information in the middle with the President 4th from right, executives of the New Media Association.

Minister for Information, Honourable Fatimatu Abubakar has commended the president and members of the New Media Association for their effort in championing professionalism and using their platforms to engage stakeholders in national discourse. The Minister stressed the Government's commitment to ensuring a conducive environment for free and responsible media.

Touching on some of the Ministry's interventions, Hon. Abubakar mentioned the launch of the Media Capacity Enhancement Programme (MCEP) as the Ministry's intervention to enhance the work of journalists through capacity building adding that 140 journalists have been trained since it was launched.

Hon. Abubakar announced that the 3rd Cohort of the MCEP will commence soon and urged the association to allow their members to participate in the training.

The Minister also informed them of the International Fund for Public Interest Media (IFPIM), a media development fund targeted at independent media institutions. She said that IFPIM's interest is focused on the sustainability of media houses and urged them to take advantage of the fund.

The Minister called for a greater collaboration between the media and government to deepen the country's democracy. She further assured them of her support and urged them to present a detailed proposal to enable her to initiate stakeholder engagements on the issues they have raised.

On their part, the President of the New Media Association of Ghana, Eugene Osafo-Nkansah assured the Association's readiness to support the Ministry of Information and government to sanitize the digital media space in Ghana. He indicated that they would ensure continues training on ethics of professional journalism for their members and deal with fake content creators within their work environment. "We will support government with the needed information since they make the laws for us to operate and also train our members using the ethics of professional journalism to deal with fake content creators within the industry," he said.

The president made these remarks when he paid a courtesy call on the Minister for Information Hon. Fatimatu Abubakar as part of the Minister's tour on some media houses in Accra. He appealed to the Minister to support them to establish an institution that will concentrate on training digital media and content creators. According to the Association, some of the giant social media owners who do not have representation in Ghana like Meta, TikTok and others should be encouraged to establish offices like they have in Nigeria and other African countries. This they said will help their members generate money from the content they create and for government to also raise more revenue from social media.

Source: MOI (PR Unit)

INFORMATION MINISTER COMMENDS MANAGEMENT OF GBC ON SIGNIFICANT MILESTONES



The Minister for Information, Honourable Fatimatu Abubakar The Director General (DG) of GBC, Professor Amin Alhassan flanked by management of GBC, the AG, Chief Director of MOI and delegates of Ministry of Information

The Minister for Information, Honourable Fatimatu Abubakar has commended the management of the state broadcaster, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) on its prudent decision to acquire four new transmitters to service the Upper East, West, Ashanti and Greater Accra regions. She was optimistic the move will significantly improve GBC's broadcasting capacity and reach.

The minister lauded management on its effort to pay the long service benefit due all retirees of the corporation as well as the payment of substantial amount of the legacy debt it owed the electricity company of Ghana (ECG), which has been a significant burden on the corporation.

Hon. Abubakar engaged management on the corporation's challenges including huge operational cost, obsolete infrastructure, limited resources and the lack of modern out of station broadcasting vans to enable it to meet the ever-changing needs in the media space.

While she reiterated government's commitment to continue to support GBC's operations and ensuring its financial stability, she assured the management of government's resolve to address the challenges and explore opportunities for growth.

The Director General (DG) of GBC, Professor Amin Alhassan

appealed to the minister to support the corporation with two OB vans for operations in the Greater Accra and Ashanti regions. He called for government intervention in the face of huge operational cost and technological upgrades.

The DG assured of the corporation's readiness to deliver quality content and a comprehensive coverage of the 2024 elections.



Source: MOI (PR Unit)

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF MEDIA SUPPORT PROGRAMMES - INFORMATION MINISTER TO MEDIA



Hon. Minister for Information (middle) with the Ag. Chief Director and delegates from MOI, management of Unity Group and Class Media, and delegates from MOI

The Minister for Information, Honourable Fatimatu Abubakar has admonished the media to take advantage of the media support programmes by the Ministry to build their capacity, improve quality of content and programming.

She implored the management of Unity Group and Class Media to apply for the International Fund for Public Interest Media (IFPIM), a global initiative that supports independent media outlets with financial resources and technical assistance to enhance media operations, content quality and sustainability.

The Minister emphasized the importance of growth and development in the media industry and encouraged the media to explore innovative programming, digital transformation and audience engagement strategies to stay competitive and relevant.

Hon. Abubakar reiterated government's commitment to promote media pluralism and diversity considering the role of private media in providing diverse perspectives and voices in the media landscape.

She assured the media that the Ministry will collaborate with them to pursue justice for impunity and other crimes against journalists that have been reported to the law enforcement agencies.

The Class Media Group bemoaned the frequent attacks on the media in recent times and called for high protection for journalists especially during this period when media houses are

being attacked recklessly by duty bearers with or without any provocation and cited the recent attack on the organization as one of the many reported incidents.

The management of Unity Media was worried about the high cost of operations and other financial challenges with the migration onto the Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) platform and called for the minister's intervention.



Source: MOI (PR Unit)

INFORMATION MINISTRY TO ADVOCATE FOR STIFFER PUNISHMENT FOR PEOPLE WHO ATTACK JOURNALISTS



Hon. Fatimatu Abubakar with her delegation and management of ZED multimedia

The Minister for Information, Honourable Fatimatu Abubakar has announced that the Ministry is engaging with the judicial service and other relevant stakeholders to ensure stiffer punishment for people who attack journalists in the line of their duties. Hon. Abubakar further stressed that the Government is committed to ensuring a conducive environment for free and responsible media. Hon. Abubakar cited the Coordinated Mechanism on the Safety of Journalists (CMSJ) as one of the interventions introduced by the Ministry to protect and ensure the safety of Journalists in the country.

“The one instance that was prominent when it comes to the framework is when Citi reported an issue involving Caleb Kuda with the national security to the office and the office led the group and the victim to pursue action,” she noted.

The Minister gave the assurance when she paid a courtesy call on the management of the ZED Multimedia as part of engagements with stakeholders within the media sector.

She commended the management of ZED Multimedia and employees for promoting professionalism and utilizing their platforms to include all interested parties in national dialogue. She also urged the personnel to keep interacting with the government and provide input on matters of national importance.

Hon. Fatimatu Abubakar announced also that the 3rd Cohort of the Media Capacity Enhancement Programme (MCEP) will commence soon and urged the management to allow their media personnel to participate in the training.

On the Broadcasting Bill, the Minister indicated that the draft bill

was 90% completed and hoped that the media will help sensitize the public on the importance of the Bill.

She informed them also of the International Fund for Public Interest Media (IFPIM), a media development fund targeted at independent media institutions and urged them to take advantage of the fund to support their growth.

The Minister called for a greater collaboration between the media and government to deepen the country's democracy. She further assured them of her support and urged them to present a detailed proposal to enable her to initiate stakeholder engagements on the issues they have raised.

On his part, Mr. Elvis Darko, a Senior Editor with the ZED Multimedia noted that the biggest challenge facing the media was financing and called for government's support.

“The media's biggest challenge is financing, “the media, our biggest problem is financing. So, if there's a fund and it's headquartered in Ghana and we had to make applications to the fund, it is a very good thing,” he said.

He further suggested that there should be a team of experts to guide media houses and individual journalists to submit applications to enable them to get funding from IFPM since it could assist media houses and journalists to craft and shape their proposals to suit both local and international standards for applications of funds.

Zed Multimedia comprises the New Finder Newspaper, Zed 101.9fm, Zed TV, Zedonline and Zed Tech.

NAA OKROMO TO BE REUNITED WITH HER FAMILY



Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection - Designate, Hon. Dakoa Newman

The Minister Designate for Gender, Children, and Social Protection, Honourable Dakoa Newman has disclosed that the child, Naa Okromo would be reunited with her family after the parents have signed a bond.

She disclosed this at a press briefing organised by the Ministry for Information.

Hon. Dakoa Newman revealed that the Social Welfare Department of the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection had taken the child through counselling.

“Medical assessment has been undertaken. The medical assessment indicated that she is not pregnant and has no other health concerns”, Hon. Newman revealed.

She added that records from her crèche and primary school indicated that she is 15 years old and was born on 18th July 2008. The Minister mentioned that the child would continue to pursue her education.

Meanwhile, the Attorney-General has issued an interim report dated 18th April 2024 and has advised that in the

best interest of the child by sections 2 and 5 of the Children's Act, the child should be released to her parents pending review of their docket.

Background

It would be recalled that on Sunday 31st March 2024, the media carried a news story about an alleged marriage between the Nungua Gborbu Wulomo, a 63-year-old man, and the 12-year-old Naa Okromo.

The public outrage of the alleged marriage, age, and rumours of pregnancy led the Ghana Police Service to identify and locate the 12-year-old girl who was allegedly married to the 63-year-old Gborbu Wulomo in Nungua, Accra. The girl and her mother were placed under Police protection.

The Ghana Police Service collaborated with the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection and the Department of Social welfare to provide the child with the necessary support while the matter was being investigated.

GHANA IS READY TO HOST 3RD AFRICA MEDIA CONVENTION IN ACCRA



The president of the Ghana Journalists Association, Albert Dwumfuor briefing the media

The President of the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA) Mr. Albert Kwabena Dwumfour has announced that Ghana will host the 3rd Africa Media Convention (AMC) in Accra.

He made the disclosure at a press briefing at the Ministry of Information.

He mentioned that the conference is a fast-growing platform that would generate a coalition of ideas, support systems, and actors to shape the future of media in Africa and hopefully around the world. “It is important to state that the AMC is a fast-growing platform that I believe will generate a coalition of ideas, support systems, and actors to shape the future of media in Africa and hopefully around the world”, the GJA President said.

He described Ghana as one of Africa's fast-growing conference destinations citing the World Press Freedom Day Celebration and several ECOWAS and AU heads of state summits as examples.

Mr. Dwumfour stated that the conference is expected to discuss how to promote a positive African narrative globally and how to

combat misinformation on the continent's social media platforms “Additionally, it will focus attention on how to combat misinformation on the continent's social media platforms, especially in the face of threats to democracy,” he added.

The GJA President appealed to interested media personnel who would like to be part of the conference to register via online (www.3rdafricanmediaconvention.com) or contact this number: [02566622583](tel:02566622583).

Background

The 3rd Africa Media Convention is scheduled for May 15-17, 2024. It is an annual media convention with a collaborative effort supported by African media stakeholders, to reflect on the fundamental role of journalism on the continent, celebrate fundamental principles of press freedom, and deliberate on measures to safeguard media freedom, promote access to information, the safety of journalists and media visibility in Africa Union member states.

GHANA TO HOST THE 2024 GLOBAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO INFORMATION (IDUAI)



Hon. Fatimatu Abubakar (middle) with UNESCO representative and his delegation and management of MOI

The Minister for Information, Honourable Fatimatu Abubakar has announced that Ghana has won the bid to host the 2024 Global Conference of the International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI). She added that the conference would be held in Accra from October 1-2, under the theme: “Mainstreaming Access to Information and Participation across the Public Sector”. According to the Minister, this marks the first time the conference is being hosted by an African Member State, a significant testament to Ghana's progress in promoting the right to information.

Hon. Abubakar made these remarks when she launched the 2024 global conference of IDUAI with UNESCO and other stakeholders.

She said this year's conference is to offer Governments and the civil society a list of best practices for mainstreaming the right to information into the organisational systems and culture of different public authorities. She noted that the conference will involve a high-level Inter-Ministerial panel discussion to improve mainstream access to information across Government sectors.

“The panel will also discuss the role of the standard-setting instruments from the African Union, the Council of Europe, and other intergovernmental organisations, focusing on various mainstreaming aspects of access to information”, she added.

The Minister for Information noted that the conference presents an unparalleled opportunity to showcase our achievements, share best practices, and learn from other nations committed to upholding the right to information.

She Ghana hosting the 2024 Global Conference is not only a recognition of our efforts but also a call to action to continue advancing the frontiers of transparency and accountability.

Hon. Abubakar expressed her appreciation to UNESCO for the honour and to all stakeholders for contributing to make Ghana's RTI journey a success. She called on Ghanaians to make the 2024 Global Conference of the International Day for Universal Access to Information a landmark event that will inspire and propel us towards even greater transparency and empowerment.

Speaking on behalf of UNESCO, Mr. Yakub Abdul Hamid, national programme officer for communication and information explained that, as the coordinator for the celebration of IDUAI, UNESCO supports nations that will adopt and implement legal, constitutional or policy framework that guarantees access to information.

He noted that UNESCO surveys the public on information access each year to monitor the advancement of these guarantees' adoption and application.

AFCFTA TO MOBILIZE \$10 BILLION TO SUPPORT SMES – WAMKELE MENE



Secretary-General of African Continental Free Trade Area - Wamkele Mene

The Secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) has announced that it will raise \$10 billion to support the growth of small and medium-sized businesses in Africa that are championed by youth.

The secretariat stated that it had already set aside \$150 million to help young African entrepreneurs to expand their enterprises. Additionally, through collaborations with organizations like the Africa Exim Bank and the United Bank of Africa, it hopes to augment its funding sources.

During the event to welcome Kenyan President H.E. Dr. William Ruto to the AfCFTA Secretariat, Secretary General Wamkele Mene stressed the secretariat's role in supporting youth-led firms in Africa.

“We're signing an MOU with United Bank of Africa, where they are committed to disburse 7 billion dollars to SMEs that are led by young people. It has been reported to us that already 150 million

dollars under this fund has been disbursed. We will mobilize up to 10 billion dollars to ensure that in the implementation of AfCFTA, young people are at the centre to benefit,” he noted.

Dr. William Ruto, the president of Kenya, affirmed his willingness to work with President Akufo-Addo to make sure that all financial institutions under the African Union are recognized in order to promote trade and investment between the two nations.

“I want to specifically underscore the importance of us working together and building synergies and creating institutions. I will be working with President Akufo-Addo to make sure that all financial institutions under the AU, from the fund to the bank, to the insurers are all ratified. So that we can build the necessary financial ecosystem to support trade, investments, and businesses in our continent,” he added.

FATIMATU ABUBAKAR AND OTHER MINISTERS SWORN IN



Hon. Fatimatu Abubakar, Minister for Information

President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo swore in what might be considered the final group of ministers.

“I am confident that there is enough time for you to make a difference and significant contribution. Indeed, anyone who has something to prove can make a point within a short period and I am sure that your various competencies, experiences, and talents make this distinctly possible,” he said.

The oath of allegiance, office, and secrecy were administered by President Akufo-Addo, who also gave each of the 14 deputy ministers and 10 ministers of state an instrument of office in the national colors of red, gold, and green.

He stated that the level of integrity in their work was crucial and that they should remember the government's serious pledge to work together to provide competent and honest services to Ghanaians.

In addition to reminding the ministers of their constitutional need to quickly register their assets and conduct themselves above reproach in all public transactions, he warned them that the fate and fortunes of the NPP party would be greatly influenced by their collective actions within the executive branch.

The President cautioned the recently sworn-in appointees not to overlook the fact that the political climate was typified by some harmful remarks and that even the most innocent of their acts would be stigmatized and attributed to the darkest of intentions.



New Ministers and Deputy Ministers taking their oaths



Hon. Sylvester Tetteh, Deputy Minister for Information

PRESIDENT CHARGES MEDIA TO UPHOLD HIGH JOURNALISTIC STANDARD



President Nana Akufo-Addo addressing participants at the event

President of the Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo has urged the media to uphold the highest standards of integrity and ethics in the discharge of their duties.

The president was speaking at the closing ceremony for the 3rd African Media Convention in Accra, under the theme “Enhancing Freedom, Innovation and Environmental Sustainability in a Dynamic Media Landscape”. His excellency Nana Akufo-Addo emphasized the need for the press to enlighten and mobilize society towards a common goal that respects the truth and dignity of all individuals.

He reiterated the need for the media to navigate the challenges of misinformation and combat falsehood in its reportage, in order to maintain its credibility. On climate change, the President charged the media to use its powerful tool to amplify the voices of those affected by the menace, especially, communities that are overlooked during international discourses.

Ghana was selected to Co-host the 3rd African Media Convention, with UNESCO for the year 2024.



President Nana Akufo-Addo (Middle), with Ministers of State and other delegates at the event

Source: MOI (PR Unit)

MOI CELEBRATES DEDICATED OFFICERS IN THE FIRST QUARTER

Management of the Ministry of Information has recognized a group of officers from all directorates and units for their commitment and hard work during the first quarter in 2024. This initiative, which is the first of its kind seeks to motivate the entire staff to aim for greatness and improve productivity in the subsequent quarters.



Mr. Charles Hottor
(Human Resource
Management Directorate)



Ms. Esther Adufo
(Accounts unit)



Ms. Dorothy F. Gyenin
(Internal Audit)



Ms. Mavis Okudzeto
(Procurement/Stores)



Ms. Bridget Ama Ayimadu
(Policy Planning Budget
Monitoring and Evaluation)



Mr. Emmanuel Koranteng
(Finance, and Administration)



Ms. Ernestina Amenyedzie
Public Relations and Social
Media Unit



Ms. Benedicta Tetteh
Research Statistics/Info.Mgt. Unit

THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT CELEBRATE CIVIL SERVICE WEEK WITH A CLEAN-UP EXERCISE



Ministry of Information and Information Service Department Staff undertaking a clean up exercise

As part of the 2024 Civil Service Week celebration, the Ministry of Information and the Information Service Department have undertaken a clean-up exercise. The exercise began in the respective offices and ended around the premises of the Ministry.

The exercise was a call for Civil Servants to always maintain a clean environment in and around the office premises. Staff came out in their numbers in solidarity, participated and sustained the excitement till the end of the exercise.

The 2024 Civil Service Week Celebration was themed ***“Combating threats to Sub-Regional Peace and Security, Perspectives of the Civil Service”***

A number of activities have been lined-up including a Press Launch, Christian and Muslim Thanksgiving, Public Lecture, Policy Fair, Cooking Competition, Games and the Civil Service Awards Ceremony.



Cleaning the enclave of the ministry

Source: MOI (PR Unit)

ENSURING SAFETY MECHANISMS FOR THE PROTECTION OF JOURNALISTS IN GHANA



In Ghana, journalists play a vital role in upholding democracy, transparency, and accountability by uncovering truths and holding power to account. However, their work often exposes them to various risks, including threats, harassment, and violence.

Ensuring the safety of journalists is not only essential for their well-being but also for the preservation of free speech and democracy. Recognizing this, Ghana has implemented several mechanisms to safeguard the rights and security of journalists across the nation.

Government Support and Accountability:

The Ghanaian government plays a crucial role in ensuring the safety of journalists. While there have been instances of harassment and intimidation by state actors, including law enforcement agencies, the government has also taken steps to protect journalists. The Ministry of Information, with the National Media Commission, inaugurated the Safety of Journalists in May 2021 to address issues of attacks on Journalists.

According to the UN Plan of Action on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity endorsed by the UN Chief Executive Board on 12 April 2012, crimes against journalists are multifaceted and cannot be addressed by a single organization.

The Plan of Action aims to create a free and safe environment for journalists and media workers. It requires a multi-stakeholder approach, involving all the actors at the global and country level, to comprehensively address the three Ps i.e. Prevent violence against journalists, protect journalists in danger and prosecute the perpetrators

To combat crimes against journalists and uphold SDG 16 which aligns with the broader human rights framework by promoting societies that respect and uphold individual rights, as well as the right to privacy, freedom of expression, and access to information. It aims to create a safe environment for journalists and media workers, including inter-agency mechanisms and legislation development.

The Coordinated Mechanism for Safety of Journalist Office commissioned in May 2021, emphasized the development of a framework for use by all stakeholders and an online application system to create a safe and conducive environment for the practice of journalism.

This framework gained prominence during the investigation and resolution of an attack on a Citi TV/FM journalist and has been further employed to resolve unsettled cases since 2021.

Also, SDG 16 requires all countries to demonstrate progress in ensuring public access to information and protecting fundamental freedoms, which include the right to freedom of expression and safety of journalists.

Challenges and wayforwrd

Despite these mechanisms, there are still issues in guaranteeing Ghanaian journalists' safety. Attackers against journalists continue to do so with impunity, with many of them getting away with their crimes. Furthermore, the evolving nature of threats, including online harassment and cyber-attacks, requires continuous adaptation of safety measures and resources.

In the future, Ghana has to put more emphasis on developing a culture of respect for press freedom and freedom of expression, as well as fortifying its legal framework and improving law enforcement's ability to look into attacks on journalists. Moreover, since these problems frequently increase the risks that journalists confront, efforts should concentrate on resolving underlying problems like political interference, impunity, and corruption.

Conclusion

In conclusion, preserving Ghana's democracy, accountability, and openness depends critically on protecting the safety of journalists. Ghana can maintain an atmosphere that is favorable for journalists to fulfill their vital role in society by combining legislative protections, lobbying initiatives, training programs, and international cooperation. Ghana demonstrates its commitment to preserving democratic values

EMPOWERING GHANAIAN MEDIA THROUGH THE IFPIM INITIATIVE

INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR PUBLIC INTEREST MEDIA

The practice of public interest media in Ghana and Africa as a whole, is going through a transformative change, thanks to the establishment of the International Fund for Public Interest Media (IFPIM).

This significant development promises to strengthen the capacity of media organizations across the nation, in ensuring that they are better equipped to serve the public with accurate, reliable, and impactful journalism.

The IFPIM project aims to address the critical challenges facing media outlets not only in Ghana but in all 11 participating African countries, where financial constraints and political pressures often hinder the ability of journalists to perform their essential role in society. Also, the proliferation of media houses, competition for the same audience, markets, and advertising bids despite markets being stationary creates a hurdle in the space. The IFPIM project seeks to create a sustainable environment for public interest media and foster a more informed and engaged populace by providing this substantial funding and support.

The selection of Ghana to host the IFPIM regional secretariat for Africa and the Middle East is a laudable testament to the country's commitment to media freedom and development. By hosting the IFPIM secretariat, Ghana aims to overcome some hurdles faced by local media practitioners by offering these outlets access to vital resources and funding.

The regional secretariat is endowed with \$55 million fund dedicated to supporting public interest media. Some local media houses have already benefitted from this fund to support operational cost and sustain their organisation. The fund is expected to stimulate a wave of innovation and improvement in African journalism.

The presence of the IFPIM in Ghana is more than just a financial boon; it represents a commitment to the principles of independent, accountable, and high-quality journalism. Media organizations across Africa are encouraged to engage with the IFPIM to access these funds and other resources designed to elevate their work.

Hon. Abubakar has been vocal about the need for media



Hon. Fatimatu Abubakar, Information Minister

practitioners to seize this opportunity. “Ghana has won the bid to host the regional secretariat of IFPIM for Africa and the Middle East. That also means we need to sensitize our media practitioners to take advantage of the proximity,” she noted during her recent media tour. This proximity offers a unique advantage to Ghanaians, providing easier access to funding, training, and support.

The establishment of the IFPIM regional secretariat in Ghana is a call to action for media practitioners across the Nation. This is an invitation to tap into the resources available, to innovate, and to strengthen the foundations of public interest journalism. The fund aims to empower media organizations to navigate the challenges they face and to continue serving the public with integrity and excellence.

As the IFPIM takes root in Ghana, it heralds a new era for African media—one where financial support and professional development are within reach, enabling journalists to perform their critical role in society with renewed vigor and dedication. The future of public interest media in Africa looks promising, with the IFPIM leading the charge towards a more robust, independent, and impactful media landscape.

ENHANCING COMMUNICATION: GHANA'S PATH TO 5G NETWORK IMPLEMENTATION



Typical 5G Mobile Tower - Image by the daily telegraph

Nations across the world are embracing the potential of 5G networks to transform communication as technology keeps advancing at a fast speed. Healthcare, transportation, education, and communication are just a few of the areas that 5G technology has the potential to transform with its fast speed, incredibly low latency, and widespread device connectivity.

At a recent press briefing at the Ministry of Information, the Minister of Communications and Digitalization, announced that Ghana is progressing significantly to rollout 5G technology to propel the nation into a fully digital economy. According to the Minister, Next-Gen Infracore (NGiC) consortium has been given a contract to create the required infrastructure for the implementation of 5G in the country within the next six months. The consortium comprises the Government of Ghana, Ascend Digital, K-NET, Radisys, Nokia and Tech Mahindra, and Mobile Network Operators (MNOs).

The implementation of 5G networks holds great potential for several sectors. Examples of technologies that can significantly improve access to high-quality healthcare services include remote patient monitoring and real-time data transfer.

Per the agreement, the consortium would provide the necessary infrastructure to serve as a single use for all telecom operators who desire to operate the 5G network.

In a similar vein, 5G networks have the potential to facilitate distant learning and immersive virtual classrooms.

The Ghanaian government has moved proactively to make the deployment of 5G networks easier. To provide a supportive regulatory framework, the National Communications Authority

(NCA) and the Ministry of Communications have collaborated closely with telecom providers and industry stakeholders. This entails distributing spectrum frequencies and creating regulations to promote 5G infrastructure investment.

Ghana is only now beginning the process of putting in place a 5G network, but things seem promising. As long as new spectrum frequencies are assigned and infrastructure development continues, the country can fully exploit 5G technology.

This will not only improve people's digital experiences but also foster economic growth, investment, and innovation. Ghana may establish itself as the sub-region's premier technological hub and draw in both domestic and foreign companies.

Ghana's endeavor to deploy a 5G network is indicative of its dedication to adopting cutting-edge technology and enhancing connectivity for its populace. The goal of having a fully connected, 5G-enabled Ghana is attainable with the help of the government, telecom operators, and other stakeholders working together. The country stands to gain from improved digital experiences, creative solutions, and faster socio-economic growth as the implementation moves forward.

While the prospects of 5G implementation in Ghana are exciting, there are several challenges to overcome. One of the key challenges is the availability of adequate spectrum frequencies and the need for efficient spectrum management to avoid congestion. Additionally, infrastructure development, including the installation of more base stations and fiber optic cables, is crucial to ensure widespread coverage and optimal performance. Addressing these challenges requires collaboration between the government, telecom operators, and other stakeholders.

Source: MOI (PR Unit)

PICTURE GALLERY



Minister at the 6th Anniversary celebration and rebranding of Citi TV to Channel One TV



Minister's Media Tour



Minister's press briefing



Clean up exercise



Contestants of the cooking competition



ISD/MOI contestant with staff from MOI



Team MOI and opponent in action



Team MOI line up