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A Ship That Carries More Than Gas: The MT Asharami Ghana and What It Means



In This Issue

A Ship That Carries More Than Gas: The MT Asharami Ghana and What It Means. **Page: 01**

Process Here, Export Later: Ghana Changes Terms **Page: 03**

The Limit of Presidential Term of Office: The Reality of the Current Four Years vs the Five Years Proposed by the Constitution Review Committee **Page: 06**

Are We Winning the War Against Reckless Gold Mining?..... **Page: 09**

Weighing the True Cost of Ghana's Nursing Export Deal with Antigua.....**Page: 12**

Pros and Cons of appointing ministers of state from parliament **Page: 14**

Terrorist Attack on Ghanaian Traders in Burkina Faso: A Wakeup Call to Promote Irrigational Farming..... **Page: 16**

The Pros and Cons of the CRC's Proposal to Separate the Legislature from the Executive..... **Page: 18**

The Relevance of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and the Protection of the State Purse..... **Page: 20**

Colophon

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National Anthem

God bless our homeland Ghana,
And make our nation great and strong,
Bold to defend for ever,
The cause of Freedom and of Right.
Fill our hearts with true humility
Make us cherish fearless honesty,
And help us to resist oppressor's rule
With all our will and might for evermore.

Hail to thy name, O Ghana,
To thee we make our solemn vow:
Steadfast to build together
A nation strong in Unity;
With our gifts of mind and strength of arm,
Whether night or day, in mist or storm,
In every need what'er the call may be,
To serve thee, Ghana, now and evermore.

Raise high the flag of Ghana
And one with Africa advance;
Black star of hope and honour,
To all who thirst for liberty;
Where the banner of Ghana freely flies,
May the way of freedom truly lie
Arise, arise, O sons of Ghanaland,
And under God march on for evermore.

National Pledge

I promise on my honour to be faithful and
loyal to Ghana my Motherland.
I pledge myself to the service of Ghana,
with all my strength and with all my heart.
I promise to hold in high esteem our
heritage, won for us through the blood and
toil of our fathers; and I pledge myself in all
things to uphold and defend the good name
of Ghana.
So help me God.

A Ship That Carries More Than Gas: The MT Asharami Ghana and What It Means

By: Richard Aniagyei



WHEN President John Dramani Mahama stood at the Hyundai Mipo Dockyard in Ulsan, South Korea, on March 12, 2026, to commission the MT Asharami Ghana, the occasion was more than about a ship/vesel leaving a port. It was about a country deciding, in concrete and measurable terms, that it can no longer afford to leave its energy security in the hands of forces it does not control.

Ghana currently imports roughly half of its Liquefied Petroleum Gas requirements. That dependence has consequences that run deeper than import bills. It means supply

disruptions, price swings that hit households without warning, and an industrial base that cannot plan with confidence.

The 40,000-cubic-metre, dual-fuel, fully refrigerated LPG carrier that Ulsan launched into Ghanaian service is designed to address exactly that vulnerability. Owned by the Sahara Group and deployed in partnership with WAGL Energy and the National Petroleum Authority, the ship is not a trophy. It is a functional link in a supply chain that Ghana is trying to bring under firmer national control.

The President, speaking at the commissioning,

framed the project as a demonstration of what coordinated public-private effort can produce. The government brings the policy intent and the regulatory framework. The private sector brings capital, technical capacity, and operational expertise. Neither, working alone, gets the vessel off the drawing board and into service. What Ulsan represented was proof that the partnership model Ghana has been attempting to build across its industrial agenda can deliver tangible results.

The ship arrives at a moment of deliberate onshore investment. A 12,000-metric-tonne LPG storage terminal is under construction in Tema, with the first phase of 6,000 metric tonnes expected to be operational by May 2026. The MT Asharami Ghana and that terminal are designed to work in tandem, expanding Ghana's capacity to receive, store, and distribute gas at a scale that changes the economics of supply. Together, they position the country not merely as a consumer of LPG but as a potential regional distribution hub, serving landlocked neighbors in the Sahel who depend on coastal access points for their own energy needs.

The domestic stakes are equally significant. Ghana's stated goal is to raise LPG adoption from around 30 percent of households to 50 percent by 2030. That number has a human story behind it. Millions of Ghanaian families still cook over charcoal and firewood, fuels that fill kitchens with smoke and contribute to deforestation at rates the country can ill afford. The health consequences fall hardest on women and children who spend the most time near indoor cooking fires. Expanding access to LPG is therefore not simply an energy policy; it is a public health intervention and an

environmental commitment rolled into the same supply chain decision.

To reach the 50 percent target, however, the vessel and the storage terminal are necessary but not sufficient. The distribution infrastructure that carries gas from Tema to a household in the Northern Region or a small business in the Brong-Ahafo corridor remains the harder and more expensive problem to solve. Industry observers have noted that infrastructure investments in Ghana's energy sector have at times moved faster than the regulatory frameworks required to sustain them, creating structural gaps that erode the value of the initial investment. Avoiding that pattern this time will require consistent policy attention over several administrations, not just the one that cut the commissioning ribbon.

What the MT Asharami Ghana establishes, though, is a baseline of seriousness. A country that commissions a vessel of this specification, in partnership with credible private sector operators, and times its arrival to coincide with onshore storage expansion, is signaling that its energy strategy is being managed as a coherent system rather than a collection of unconnected announcements. That coherence, sustained over time, is what converts infrastructure into genuine energy security.

As the vessel begins its voyages between supply points and Ghanaian shores, it carries the outline of something Ghana has long needed: a supply chain it helped build, that it partly controls, and that serves both its households and its industrial ambitions. The ship is large. The task it represents is larger still.

Process Here, Export Later: Ghana Changes Terms

By: Richard Aniagyei



FOR over decades, Ghana's economic story followed a repetitive particular pattern. Dig up what the earth offers, load it onto ships, and wait for it to return across the ocean as something more valuable.

The country sold the raw material and bought back the finished product, paying for the difference in lost revenue, lost jobs, and lost ambition. That cycle is now facing its most deliberate challenge yet, not through a single announcement, but through a cluster of industrial decisions that together suggest a genuine shift in how the state intends to manage the country's natural wealth.

The recent wave of commissioning ceremonies tells its own story. In the Greater Accra industrial corridor alone, President John Dramani Mahama has commissioned three facilities

within weeks of each other.

At Lakpleku in Ningo-Prampram, the Phase 2 expansion of the B5 Plus Steel Ball Mill and Manufacturing Plant went live in February 2026, a facility designed to produce structural steel sections, grinding media balls for the mining industry, pre-engineered building systems, and a broader portfolio of finished and semi-finished steel products.

Days later at the Tema Free Zones Enclave, the world's largest calcined clay plant was commissioned on March 5, 2026, a \$110 million facility developed by CBI Ghana Ltd, with an annual production capacity of 400,000 tonnes of calcined clay, supporting the manufacture of up to 1.5 million tonnes of cement per year. Around the same time, the OLAM Agri Pasta Processing Plant in Kpone came online, a

facility designed to reduce Ghana's reliance on imported processed food products by processing locally.

None of these are isolated, because each feed into the industrial argument: that Ghana must capture value within its own borders before anything leaves the country.

At the center of this push in the Western Region is a \$250 million float glass facility in Aboadze, Shama, for which the President recently cut the sod. The logic mirrors what is already happening in Tema. Ghana sits on some of the finest silica deposits in West Africa, yet for years that sand was either left in the ground or shipped abroad to feed other nations' factories. Under the new industrial framework, that material will now feed a domestic plant, emerging on the other end as glass — a finished, taxable, exportable product made by Ghanaian hands.

The same logic governs rubber and non-ferrous scrap metal. Regulations now bar the export of both in their raw forms, compelling firms to invest in the processing infrastructure that turns rubber into industrial sheets and tires, and scrap into usable components.

President Mahama used the B5 Plus commissioning to defend the government's restriction on non-ferrous scrap exports, explaining the policy was designed to feed local processors with raw materials. Government estimates suggest the ban could boost processed metal export earnings by between \$250 million and \$300 million per year and create thousands of jobs across the value chain.

To make industrial investment commercially attractive, the government has restructured power tariffs across its industrial zones. Rates are now tiered under the newly enacted 24-Hour Economy Authority Act, offering lower



costs to companies running continuous, three-shift production schedules.

B5 Plus is among the first companies to register under the programme and has already commissioned a 16.5 MW rooftop solar plant, with an additional 16.5 MW installation underway, bringing total renewable energy capacity to 33 MW. The CBI Ghana cement facility and the OLAM pasta plant are also positioned to operate under the same framework, pushing factories toward the round-the-clock rhythm that serious manufacturing demands.

The CBI Ghana facility adds a dimension that goes beyond import substitution. The plant introduces Limestone Calcined Clay Cement technology that reduces carbon emissions by up to 40 percent compared to traditional Portland cement production, while also requiring significantly less thermal energy. Ghana has long been Africa's largest importer of clinker, the key ingredient in conventional cement. By cutting clinker imports by around 400,000 tonnes annually, roughly the equivalent of ten vessels per year, the initiative supports domestic value chains, generates high-skilled employment, and retains important foreign exchange. A country that once shipped its clay out and imported the cement back is now running the world's largest plant of its kind on home soil.

Hardware and policy alone, however, cannot complete the picture. A factory floor without a trained workforce is an expensive room. The government has announced plans for six new Regional Technical and Vocational Education and Training Centres of Excellence, each equipped with machinery drawn from modern manufacturing environments. The goal is to close the gap between what schools produce and what factories actually need, graduates who can walk onto an industrial floor and

contribute from the first week rather than the first year.

There is something broader at work in this period beyond the economics. When a young engineer at B5 Plus watches computerised controls direct the production of steel sections destined for West African construction projects, or a technician at the Tema enclave sees locally sourced clay transformed into export-grade cement, something shifts in how they understand what their country is capable of. A country that makes things thinks differently about itself than one that merely extracts them. The obstacles remain real. Reliable water supply, consistent power delivery, specialised technical labor, and functional transport links are the unglamorous requirements that determine whether an industrial zone delivers or disappoints. President Mahama has set an ambitious target of increasing manufacturing's contribution to GDP to at least 15 percent by 2030, and sustaining that coordination across multiple zones and administrations will test the policy's durability.

The opportunity, though, is considerable. With Ghana hosting the AfCFTA Secretariat and possessing deep-water ports at Tema and Takoradi, locally manufactured steel, cement, glass, and processed food could supply construction markets across ECOWAS, Sahelian infrastructure projects, and mining operations throughout the sub-region. The continental free trade agreement rewards countries that arrive with goods to sell rather than raw materials to offload.

Ghana's window to claim a meaningful position in that market is open now, while the architecture of intra-African trade is still being built. What is taking shape in Tema and Shama is the country's bid to walk through it, finished product in hand.

The Limit of Presidential Term of Office: The Reality of the Current Four Years vs the Five Years Proposed by the Constitution Review Committee

By: Adwoa Koramah Anokye-Gyimah



IN Ghana's democratic journey, few issues spark as much debate as the length of the presidential term of office. Since the return to constitutional rule in 1992, under the fourth republic, presidents have served a four year term, renewable once through re election, as provided under Article 66(2) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. But recent recommendations by the Constitution Review Committee (CRC) have reignited discussion: should Ghana extend the presidential term to five years? The proposal, though seemingly technical, touches the very heart of governance, accountability and the rhythm of democracy.

The Current Four-Year Reality

Under the existing arrangement, presidents are elected for four years, with the possibility of a second term. This system ensures that governments remain closely tied to the electorate's expectations. Every four years, citizens have the opportunity to evaluate the performance of their leaders and decide whether to renew their mandate. In practice, this short cycle has fostered a culture of accountability, where leaders are constantly aware that their political survival depends on delivering results within a limited timeframe.

However, critics argue that four years is simply

too short for meaningful policy implementation. Large scale infrastructure projects, educational reforms and economic restructuring often require more than a single electoral cycle to bear fruit. As a result, governments are frequently accused of focusing on short term measures designed to win votes rather than long term strategies that could transform the nation. The four year term, then becomes a double edged sword; it guarantees accountability but risks undermining continuity. The CRC's Five-Year Proposal

The Constitution Review Committee under the chairmanship of Professor Henry Kwasi Prempeh through the extensive national stakeholders engagement proposed the extension of Ghana's four year presidential tenure to five years after the extensive consultations. The basis of their argument is that, a longer term would give governments sufficient time to design, implement and consolidate policies without the constant pressure of looming elections. A five year term

would reduce the disruptive cycle of campaigning and allow leaders to focus more on governance.

Importantly, the CRC rejected any suggestion of a third term, maintaining the two term limit. The proposal is not about extending individual leaders' hold on power but about restructuring the balance between accountability and continuity. By extending the term to five years, Ghana would hold elections less frequently, potentially reducing costs and political instability associated with campaigning.

Evaluating the advantages and disadvantages

The debate over four versus five years is not merely academic. It has real implications for governance and democracy.

Advantages of a five year term:

Policy continuity: Governments would have more time to implement medium term projects, especially in sectors like energy, education and



health.

Reduced election costs: Fewer elections per decade would mean significant savings for the state.

Less political disruption: Longer terms could reduce the tendency for governments to enter campaign mode too early, allowing them to focus on governing.

Disadvantages of a five year term:

Weakened accountability: Citizens would wait longer to sanction poor performance, potentially weakening democratic responsiveness.

Entrenchment of incumbency: Even without a third term, longer terms could make incumbency advantages more durable, reducing competitiveness.

Public trust concerns: Constitution changes affecting term length must be widely accepted, or they risk being seen as elite driven reforms.

The Broader Democratic Context

Globally, presidential terms vary. The United States, for instance, maintains a four year term, while countries like France and Nigeria have adopted five year terms. Each system reflects a balance between accountability and stability. Ghana's debate is therefore part of a wider conversation about how countries structure their political cycles to best serve the citizens.

For Ghana, the question is whether the benefits

of longer terms outweigh the risks. The CRC's proposal is not without merit, but it must be accompanied by strong safeguards. If elections are held less frequently, then oversight institutions like parliament, the judiciary, civil society and the media must be empowered to hold leaders accountable in the interim. Mid term reviews, independent audits and robust parliamentary scrutiny could serve as mechanisms to ensure that governments remain responsive even without the immediate pressure of elections.

Conclusion

The proposal to extend Ghana's presidential term from four to five years is more than a technical adjustment; it is a fundamental question about the nature of democracy. Four years ensures regular accountability but risks short termism. Five years promises continuity but raises concerns about diluted voter power. Ultimately, the decision must rest on broad public consultation and consensus. Constitution reforms succeed only when they reflect the will of the people, not just the preferences of political elites.

As Ghana continues to refine its democratic institutions, the debate over presidential term limits reminds us of a central truth: democracy is not static. It evolves, adapts and responds to the realities of governance. Whether Ghana chooses to remain with four years or move to five, the guiding principle must remain the same. That is, ensuring that leaders serve the people effectively, responsibly and within the bounds of constitutional order.

Are We Winning the War Against Reckless Gold Mining?

By: Adwoa Koramah Anokye-Gyimah



THE battle against illegal and reckless gold mining locally known as *galamsey* has been a longstanding challenge in Ghana. Though gold mining has been an economic activity in the country for years, it was largely regulated and governed by laws grounded on responsible mining. However, the introduction of illegal mining has brought a lot of challenges to the country. Since assuming office, the current government has declared war on this destructive practice, deploying military taskforces, tightening regulations and launching public awareness campaigns. Yet, as rivers remain polluted and forests stripped bare, the question lingers: are we winning?

Gold mining has long been a cornerstone of Ghana's economy. However, illegal mining has left scars on the land and rivers, turning this blessing into a disadvantage. *Galamsey* has caused alarming destruction to Ghana's resources. Rivers like Pra, Ankobra and Offin, which provide water to many communities have

been heavily polluted with mercury and other harmful chemicals. Deforestation and soil erosion caused by illegal mining disrupt ecosystems and destroys arable land for agriculture. Water pollution also threatens aquatic life and human health.

While *galamsey* provides short-term income to thousands of individuals, it brings about long-term economic and social issues. These include loss of government revenue, as illegal miners avoid paying taxes and royalties. Disruption of the formal mining sector, which is crucial to the nation's economy, as well as social injustices like child labour, risky working environments and conflicts between mining communities and illegal miners.

On assuming office in 2017, President Akufo-Addo pledged to continue the fight against illegal mining in order to protect the country's forests and improve the quality of water supply. The unveiling of the Inter-Ministerial Committee

on Illegal Mining (IMCIM) was a bold step towards achieving the objective. Military taskforces, such as Operation Vanguard, were deployed to dismantle illegal sites. However, the operations effectiveness was undermined by allegations of corruption and human rights violations, which led to fewer lasting results in the fight against galamsey.

The government also introduced community mining schemes, aimed to formalize small scale mining while creating jobs and protecting the environment. Unfortunately, these programs faced insufficient funding and lack of oversight. There was also resistance from illegal miners, who often profit more from galamsey operations.

Similarly, the new administration has also shown a visible commitment to the fight by strengthening enforcement through the National Anti-Illegal Mining Operations Secretariat (NAIMOS). Drones and satellite monitoring now track mining activities, while digital platforms have been established to

streamline licensing regime . The Blue Water Guard was also established as a permanent, community-based force to protect rivers, concessions and forest belts from illegal mining.

Alongside these measures, initiatives such as the Responsible Cooperative Mining and Skills Development Programme (rCOMSDEP) was established to provide sustainable employment while formalising small-scale mining operations.

The media, civil society organizations and NGOs have played a vital role in raising awareness about the dangers of galamsey. Radio and television campaigns have amplified public awareness, turning discussions on environmental destruction into a national conversation. Furthermore, investigative journalism has exposed high-profile collusion between some politicians and illegal mining operators, eliciting public demands for accountability. Without the media, galamsey would remain hidden in the forests.



Additionally, international collaborations such as projects supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have provided technical support and funding for sustainable mining practices in Ghana.

Challenges in Fighting Galamsey

Corruption and lack of accountability: Corrupt political leaders and law enforcement officers continue to aid illegal miners clandestinely, weakening the impact of government interventions. Also, lack of punitive actions against powerful individuals and decision makers aggravate the problem.

Poverty and Economic Pressures: Socio-economic realities drive the problem. Poverty and unemployment push rural youth into mining as a means of survival. For many young people living in mining areas, illegal mining offers a quick source of income compared to limited employment opportunities in other sectors. This economic desperation complicates enforcement, making it difficult to completely eliminate illegal mining. As long as poverty persists, illegal mining will remain an attractive livelihood option for many.

Environmental Damage: Restoring the environmental degradation caused by galamsey, such as deforestation and water pollution, will require decades of investment and environmental policies.

Are We Winning?

The honest answer is, not yet. While some progress has been achieved, such as initial crackdowns and policy reforms, the overall battle against illegal mining is far from over. The persistence of galamsey underscores systemic issues like corruption, insufficient enforcement and economic inequality that limit the governments capacity to achieve long-term results.

Efforts to address galamsey will continue to fail unless these underlying challenges are tackled comprehensively.

What More Can Be Done?

Winning the fight against illegal mining will require a shift from reactive crackdowns to proactive policies. It means treating miners not just as offenders but as citizens in need of opportunity. This requires aligning enforcement with empowerment and national policy with global accountability.

Equally important, the fight against galamsey is about creating alternative livelihood solutions. It is about tackling poverty and unemployment which is the root cause of the menace before moving to the stem of the issue. Programs in agriculture, eco-tourism and small-scale manufacturing can provide viable options. Microfinance schemes should be expanded to support entrepreneurs in mining communities. Education campaigns must go beyond slogans, engaging schools, churches and local leaders to shift cultural attitudes toward mining.

On the international front, Ghana must push for stricter supply chain accountability. Partnerships with global buyers can reinforce this transparency, aligning Ghana's fight with international standards.

Conclusion

The war against reckless gold mining remains ongoing. While certain interventions have yielded momentary success, long-term systemic problems like corruption, poverty and environmental degradation continue to hinder progress. To genuinely address the galamsey menace, Ghana must adopt a comprehensive approach that balances enforcement with sustainable development.

Victory will come only when policies move beyond punishment to promise, beyond shutting down pits to opening up jobs and opportunities. Until then, the question "Are we winning?" remains both a challenge and a call to action.

Weighing the True Cost of Ghana's Nursing Export Deal with Antigua

By: Joyce Adwoa Animia Ocran

THE recent deployment of more than 120 Ghanaian nurses and other health professionals to Antigua and Barbuda has stirred debate as health officials and citizens assess both the benefits and the cost implication of the agreement between the two countries.

Under the arrangement established through Ghana's Labour Exchange Programme, Ghanaian nurses were recruited under a formal agreement and sent to work in public hospitals and clinics in Antigua and Barbuda under a three-year contract.

The first group departed from Accra International Airport early in 2026 and were welcomed upon arrival by Antiguan officials, creating visible goodwill between the governments and a sense of shared heritage between the peoples of the two nations.

Supporters of the arrangement in both Ghana and Antigua argue that the agreement effectively addresses genuine needs in Antigua and Barbuda, noting that health officials have long reported persistent nurse shortages in the country.

These shortages have placed significant pressure on local healthcare workers and have created risks to the quality of patient care.

The Antigua government noted that the public healthcare system was operating with roughly 260 local nurses and just over 30 Cuban medical staff at the time the Ghanaian cohort arrived, and that the addition of over 100 Ghanaian nurses was expected to push staffing above the minimum necessary for effective operations.

Government statements in Antigua made clear that the recruitment of Ghanaian nurses was conducted legally, through



government-to-government arrangements that included a memorandum of understanding and service agreements that were reviewed by legal authorities.

Antiguan Health officials explained that the initiative was meant to support existing staff and not to replace Antiguan workers, and that local nurse training and recruitment programmes were continuing in parallel.

From the perspective of Ghanaian health workers, opportunities to work abroad can offer higher wages, new experiences, and professional growth where many nurses from Ghana have sought work overseas independently, taking positions in countries throughout North America, Europe, and the Caribbean.

Ghana's Labour Exchange Programme aims to provide a structured and officially sanctioned pathway for such work, helping to connect qualified professionals with demand overseas rather than leaving them unemployed or underemployment at home.

The Ghanaian government has framed the Antigua agreement as one of several international opportunities arising from bilateral relationships. Officials have said they are also pursuing other partnerships with Caribbean states such as Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago, where demand for nurses

and other health professionals remains high.

Despite these potential advantages, some health analysts and citizens have raised concerns about the impact of exporting nurses from Ghana.

One challenge in the Ghanaian health sector is the emigration of trained professionals, which has, at times, outpaced the country's ability to retain staff in critical services.

Reports indicate that many Ghanaian nurses have left for overseas jobs, driven by low pay, poor working conditions, and limited opportunities for advancement within the domestic health system and career progression system, contributing to staffing strains at home even as Ghana supplies trained nurses abroad. This concerns raised questions about whether agreements like the one with Antigua may inadvertently weaken Ghana's own healthcare capacity. Even if there is a backlog of trained but unemployed nurses within the country, some observers worry that facilitating migration through official channels could deepen long-term shortages if not carefully aligned with domestic workforce planning and retention strategies.

The challenge is particularly acute for specialised areas of care where experienced nurses are in short supply.

There are also the cost considerations related to the support structures needed for nurses working abroad. Ghanaian professionals must adapt to new healthcare systems, cultures, and regulatory environments.

Countries offering these services by sending their health care professionals abroad often invest in preparatory training and orientation, and they bear the reputational responsibility for the welfare of citizens abroad.

While host nations may cover salaries and benefits under the agreed contractor country of origin of these professionals must ensure that their citizens are protected, supported, and fairly treated throughout the duration of their service overseas.

Another dimension is the long-term career impact for the nurses themselves. Working abroad can open doors to further training and experience, yet it can also remove professionals from local networks and professional communities where they would otherwise contribute to strengthening health systems at home.

In Antigua and Barbuda, officials have tried to address concerns about displacement of local workers by insisting that the recruitment of Ghanaian nurses is temporary and that efforts to expand local nurse training capacity will proceed concurrently.

They have pointed to the expansion of training programmes at institutions such as the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus as evidence that local workforce development remains a priority.

There is also a broader diplomatic dimension to the arrangement. The cooperation between Ghana and Antigua extends beyond immediate labour needs, with officials suggesting possibilities for expanded collaboration in education, trade, and cultural exchange.

These wider relationships may help to balance the direct effects of nurse migration with mutual benefits in other areas of national development. The deployment of Ghanaian nurses to Antigua and Barbuda illustrates the complex balance between international cooperation and domestic health system needs. The arrangement provides professional opportunities for Ghanaian nurses, supports an overstretched healthcare system in Antigua, and strengthens diplomatic ties between the two nations.

At the same time, it highlights ongoing challenges in Ghana, including retention of trained staff, the risk of long-term shortages in specialised care, and the need for careful workforce planning.

The ultimate impact of the agreement will depend on how both countries manage these competing priorities, ensuring that international labour initiatives complement each other rather than undermine domestic healthcare capacity.

The Pros and Cons of appointing ministers of state from parliament

By: Joyce Adwoa Animia Ocran



ARTICLE 78(1) of the 1992 constitution requires that majority of government ministers must be appointed from the Parliament of Ghana, linking the executive directly to the legislature and shaping the way government policies are developed and implemented.

This arrangement links the executive branch directly to the legislature, and advocates of this provision argue the system improves coordination between government and the Parliament of Ghana, while critics also contend that it weakens parliamentary oversight and concentrates too much influence in the executive branch.

The arrangement reflects the hybrid constitutional structure adopted in Ghana. While the country operates a presidential system, elements of parliamentary governance are built into the design. The requirement that

most ministers must be members of the Parliament of Ghana means that the executive and the legislative arm share personnel from both sides of the governance structure.

The intention of this policy or political structure was to foster cooperation between the branches of government and help government business pass through Parliament more smoothly and also cut down on cost of payment of double salary.

One clear advantage is to improve communication between the executive and the legislative arms of government. Ministers who are also members of Parliament participate directly in debates, committee meetings, and legislative negotiations.

They understand the concerns of their colleagues and can explain government policies on the floor of the House. This direct

engagement can reduce misunderstanding and help speed up the passage of bills.

Another advantage lies in political accountability to the electorates because ministers who are also members of Parliament of Ghana face their constituents during elections to explain government policies and programs to them.

Their performance in office becomes part of the public record that voters assess when deciding whether to renew their mandate, and in theory this creates a direct line of accountability between the executive branch and the electorate.

There is also the benefit of legislative experience. Members of Parliament spend years engaging in debates, reviewing legislation, and interacting with constituents.

When such individuals are appointed ministers, they bring knowledge of legislative procedure and the political landscape to bear on governance and influence policy decisions carefully. This can help them navigate policy discussions more effectively.

Despite these advantages, the arrangement has drawn criticism. One major concern relates to the independence of the Parliament of Ghana, as the number of legislators who are directly tied to the executive branch increases and when many members of Parliament also serve as ministers or deputy ministers of state, this situation can weaken Parliament's role as a body that scrutinizes government actions.

The issue becomes visible during parliamentary oversight processes. Ministers who are also members of Parliament may participate in debates on policies that they themselves are responsible for implementing.

In such situations, the line between oversight and self defence can become blurred. Critics argue that the legislative body/organ/arm should have sufficient independence to question the executive without internal constraints.

Ghana has seen moments when this tension

becomes apparent in all successive governments.

Opposition members often argued that this arrangement limited the willingness of some legislators to question government decisions strongly.

Another drawback concerns workload. Members of Parliament already carry heavy responsibilities that include legislative debates, committee work, and constituency duties.

When a Member of Parliament is also appointed as a minister, the demands of the role increase because managing a government ministry while maintaining parliamentary duties and constituency responsibilities can stretch time and attention.

There is also the broader question of expertise, as critics argue that limiting many ministerial appointments to members of the Parliament of Ghana may reduce the pool of available talents, since Ghana has professionals in fields such as economics, engineering, health, and international relations who may not be active in electoral politics.

A system that allows wider recruitment from outside Parliament could give the executive access to a broader range of technical knowledge.

Advocates of the current system counter that Parliament itself includes individuals with a diverse range of professional backgrounds, ensuring a high level of expertise within the legislative body.

The debate regarding the dual roles of government officials has frequently appeared in public discussions and formal dialogues surrounding constitutional reform.

In Ghana, the requirement under the 1992 Constitution of Ghana in line with Articles 78 to appoint the majority of ministers from the Parliament of Ghana continues to generate debate as the country seeks to balance effective government coordination with strong legislative oversight and accountability.

Terrorist Attack on Ghanaian Traders in Burkina Faso: A Wakeup Call to Promote Irrigational Farming

By: Bala Ali



THE recent terrorist attack on Ghanaian tomato traders in Burkina Faso has sent shockwaves across the nation, highlighting the country's vulnerability to external shocks in its food supply chain. The attack, which resulted in the loss of eight lives, is a stark reminder of the need for Ghana to prioritize irrigational farming and reduce its dependence on imports.

Ghana's reliance on Burkina Faso for tomatoes has been a long-standing issue, with the country importing significant quantities of the vegetable annually. However, the recent attack

has brought to the fore the risks associated with this dependence. The terrorist group JNIM, which claimed responsibility for the attack, has been operating in the Sahel region, targeting civilians and disrupting trade.

Previous governments have attempted to introduce irrigational farming in Ghana, but these efforts have been met with limited success. In the 1960s, the government launched the Volta River Project, which included plans for irrigated agriculture. However, the project was plagued by delays, cost overruns, and poor management.

In the 2000s, the government initiated the Irrigation Development Authority (IDA), which aimed to promote irrigated agriculture through the development of irrigational infrastructure. However, the IDA faced challenges, including inadequate funding, poor maintenance of infrastructure, and limited technical capacity.

Similarly, the touted erstwhile Akufo-Addo government's One Village One Dam project, which was also meant to promote irrigational farming, did not materialize. The same applies to the Pwalugu Multipurpose Dam Project, which was designed to serve three purposes, including control of the annual Bagre Dam flood in northern Ghana, promote irrigational farming and generate hydropower.

Despite these past failures, Ghana is still in the best position to develop its irrigational farming sector. This stems from the fact that the country has significant water resources, including the Volta River, which could be harnessed for irrigation. The government has also identified irrigational farming as a priority area for investment, with plans to increase irrigated land area to 500,000 hectares by 2025.

The Ministry of Food and Agriculture has launched initiatives to promote irrigational farming, including the Ghana Irrigation Development Project, which aims to increase rice and vegetable production through irrigated agriculture. The project has already made significant progress, with over 1,000 hectares of land under irrigation.

However, more needs to be done to address the challenges facing irrigational farming in Ghana. The government must prioritize investment in irrigation infrastructure, including dams, canals, and water storage facilities. There is also a need for technical support and training for farmers to improve their irrigation management skills.



The 14th February tragedy in Burkina Faso should at least cause all Ghanaians to develop an interest in irrigation farming. This makes the role of the private sector in promoting irrigation farming critical. Companies can invest in irrigation infrastructure and provide technical support to farmers, helping to increase productivity and reduce poverty. Perhaps the involvement of the private sector might be the panacea for the problem of inadequate funds, which has been a major hindrance to the development of this crucial sector of agriculture.

In conclusion, the terrorist attack on Ghanaian traders in Burkina Faso is a wake-up call for the country to prioritize irrigational farming and reduce its dependence on imports. While previous governments have made attempts to introduce irrigation farming, more needs to be done to address the challenges facing the sector. The government, private sector, and development partners must work together to invest in irrigational infrastructure, provide technical support to farmers, and promote irrigational farming practices.

The Pros and Cons of the CRC's Proposal to Separate the Legislature from the Executive

By: Bala Ali



THE Constitution Review Committee (CRC), led by Professor Henry Kwasi Prempeh, has proposed the separation of powers and a considerable level of checks and balances between the executive and legislative branches of government. To this end, it recommended that Ministers of State, including deputy and regional ministers, should be selected from outside Parliament. This aligns with Lord Acton's idea or theory that "power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely."

That is to suggest that when power is concentrated at one source, it corrupts absolutely. Therefore, to avoid this, the CRC proposed the separation of powers between the executive and the legislative arms of government to cure this political mischief.

The Pros of Separation

Selecting ministers from outside Parliament could allow the President to appoint competent

experts, leading to effective administration and policy implementation. This could bring in fresh perspectives and skills that might not be available within Parliament. Ministers would focus solely on their roles, promoting efficiency and reducing conflicts of interest. This could lead to better management and utilization of public resources.

Additionally, separating the executive and legislative branches could strengthen Parliament's oversight role. Lawmakers would be able to focus on scrutinizing policies and holding the executive accountable, without being distracted by ministerial responsibilities. This could lead to more robust debates, improved legislation, and greater transparency in governance.

The Cons of Separation

On the other hand, ministers who are not elected representatives may be insensitive to citizens' plight and prioritize technical

considerations over practical realities. This could lead to policies that are not people-friendly and may result in governments losing elections and abandoning projects started by previous administrations. This phenomenon will, in turn, lead to waste of national resources. There's also the risk that ministers without a parliamentary seat might lack the political leverage to implement policies effectively. They might struggle to navigate the legislative process and build consensus, leading to gridlock and policy paralysis.

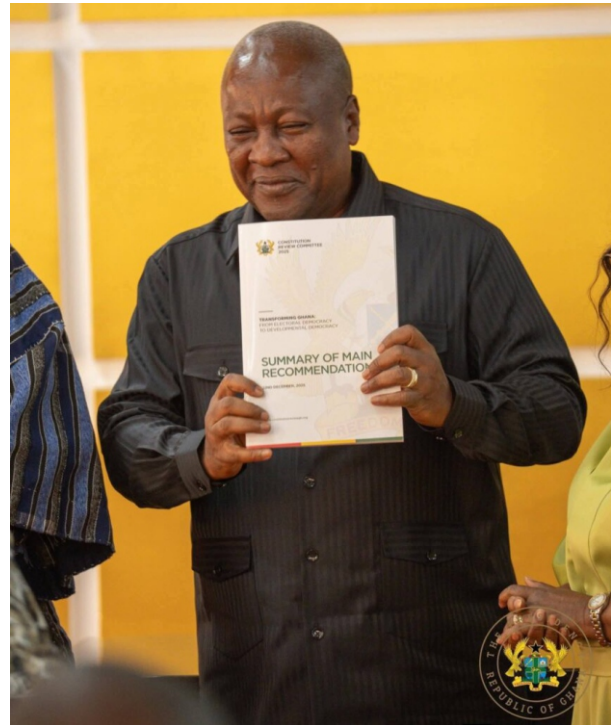
Mitigating the Risks

To mitigate these risks, Parliament could pass laws requiring newly elected governments to continue projects approved by the People's Representative Assembly. This would ensure continuity and accountability. The executive could also establish mechanisms for regular engagement with citizens and civil society organizations to ensure that policies are responsive to people's needs.

The proposal aims to promote good governance, accountability, and effective policy implementation. However, its success depends on effective implementation, accountability mechanisms, and a culture of transparency and collaboration between the executive and legislative branches.

Conclusion

The CRC's proposal to separate the legislature



from the executive is a bold step towards strengthening Ghana's governance architecture. While there are valid concerns about the potential risks, the benefits of separation – including improved policy implementation, reduced conflicts of interest, and strengthened oversight – make it an idea worth exploring. Ultimately, the key to success lies in ensuring that the separation is implemented in a way that promotes accountability, transparency, and responsiveness to citizens' needs.



The Relevance of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and the Protection of the State Purse

By: Doreen Asare



THE Public Accounts Committee (PAC) stands as one of the most important institutions in parliamentary democracy for safeguarding public finances. Its primary role is to examine how government funds, raised through taxes and other revenues are actually spent after budgets have been approved.

By providing independent oversight, the PAC helps protect the state purse, ensuring that public money is used efficiently, effectively, and for the intended purposes. Working closely with the Auditor-General, the PAC reviews the audited accounts of government institutions, that is ministries, departments, and agencies.

It focuses not on the merits of government policies, but on the financial execution and administrative accountability of those policies. Through public hearings, the committee summons accounting officers to explain expenditures, investigates irregularities, and assesses whether value for money was achieved.

The relevance of the PAC is particularly significant in today's context. Governments manage vast sums for infrastructure, healthcare, education, and social services.

Without robust scrutiny, risks of waste, inefficiency, mismanagement, and corruption can erode public resources and undermine service delivery.

The PAC acts as a critical check in the public financial management cycle, identifying weaknesses, recommending improvements, and promoting greater transparency and accountability.

An effective PAC contributes to several key outcomes. It deters misconduct by holding officials personally responsible for their decisions. It drives reforms in procurement and financial controls. It enhances public trust by exposing how taxpayers' money is spent. When the committee operates with cross-party cooperation, independence, and adequate technical support, its impact is even stronger—often leading to the recovery of misspent funds and systemic changes that reduce future leakages.

Challenges remain, however. Many PAC faces issues such as political interference, limited resources, delays in receiving audit reports, and weak follow-up mechanisms by the executive. Overcoming these requires stronger institutional support, timely reporting, and

greater engagement with citizens and civil society.

At its heart, the Public Accounts Committee embodies a fundamental principle of good governance: those entrusted with public funds must be accountable for their use.

By diligently protecting the state purse, the PAC helps ensure that resources meant for national development and citizen welfare are not wasted or diverted.

In an era of increasing public expenditure and fiscal pressures, a vigilant and independent Public Accounts Committee remains essential for maintaining sound financial management and upholding democratic accountability. The state purse belongs to the people, and the PAC serves as one of its strongest guardians.

White Gold, Untapped: Can the Shea Park Resource Hub finally unlock the full value of Ghana's Shea Industry?

By: Edem Ernestina Agblevor

GHANA is enriched with very unique and valuable natural resources that is expected to boost and enrich its economy to enable the nation achieve its goal in terms of development. One of these commodities is the shea butter which unfortunately over decades has not received the publicity it deserves like cocoa which has over the years gained all the attention worldwide.

At a point in time the powerful impact that Shea butter has on the nation has been treated with triviality to the extent that on the global market it is hardly talked about hence we miss what the nation tend to gain if attention had been given to it.

President John Dramani Mahama formally opened the Shea Park Resource Hub in Wa, Upper West Region, Ghana, on January 31, 2026, with the goal of boosting the local economy through value addition in the Shea sector, concentrating on modern processing, quality control, and supporting over 7,000 women.

The hub includes modern processing facilities, quality control labs, storage, warehousing, training centers, and is expected to operate under a 24-hour economy model as well as part of a broader agenda to industrialize the shea sector and increase export revenue.

When the full economic potential of shea butter is unlocked, Ghana would be on her way of becoming a leading player in the global market, valued at \$2.75 billion and projected to grow to \$5.58 billion by 2033.

Ghana will be able to boost its income and provide thousands of jobs for young people who are the most unemployed by turning Shea nuts



into completed goods like food, cosmetics, and medications.

The Shea Park Resource Hub is a significant step in putting Ghana on the International map in terms of development but challenges cannot be overlooked. Some of these include ensuring sustainable sourcing, maintaining quality standards, and accessing international markets.

To overcome these challenges, the government needs to invest in infrastructure, training, and market research to support the industry's growth whilst also encouraging the private sector to invest in the industry.

Additionally, government needs to provide financial support and invest in infrastructure like roads, storage facilities and also promote Ghanaian shea butter globally through trade agreements and marketing campaigns.

The Shea Butter Museum in Accra, which most people were unaware of, was recently visited by IShowSpeed, a popular American YouTuber and live streamer known for his chaotic, high-energy, and often unhinged personality.

He frequently conducts 24/7 live streams traveling to different countries, engaging with local cultures, which often draws massive, uncontrollable crowds. This visit made Ghana famous and sparked a great deal of interest in the nation's shea butter sector.

President John Mahama attested that IShowSpeed visit to the shea butter museum was very impactful because he did more advertising for Ghana than the country could have done itself. The visit highlighted Ghana's unique offerings and transformed shea butter into a symbol of luxury and heritage.

Over 20 million searches for Ghana and shea butter were made online as a result of the visit, highlighting the nation's natural goods and rich cultural legacy.

Bookings for the museum, which is owned by Ghanaian businesswoman Hamamat Montia, were completely booked due to an unexpected influx of tourists. This increase in interest has helped local companies and spread Ghanaian culture throughout the world.

It is anticipated that the growing interest in the shea butter sector would enhance the economic standing of the women who are the main producers of shea butter and open up new employment opportunities and revenue streams for the local communities involved in

shea butter production.

Additionally, this will boost awareness of the significance of fair trade and sustainable standards in the shea butter business. This could result in more competition and pressure on local communities to satisfy the growing demand for the produce.

In my candid opinion, I believe Ghana arguably has the best Shea butter in the world because the nuts have the most desirable chemical balance, and the traditional processing methods create a very clean butter. The Shea Park Resource Hub will eventually unlock all the hidden and unknown values of Ghana's shea butter first of all to the Ghanaian citizens before spreading to the entire world.

This hub will create the environment for anybody both local or international to just walk in either for sight-seeing, training, or to purchase any product made for shea butter and this can be for medicinal, food or cosmetics purposes.



Is the minimum age 30 years old mature enough to lead Ghana? The Presidential debate heats up

By: Edem Ernestina Agblevor

ACCORDING to Article 62 of the 1992 Constitution, a person is not qualified for election as the President of Ghana unless they have attained the age of forty (40) years. However, under the current constitutional law reforms being advocated by the Constitutional Review Committee (CRC), the minimum required presidential age is now pegged at 30 years.

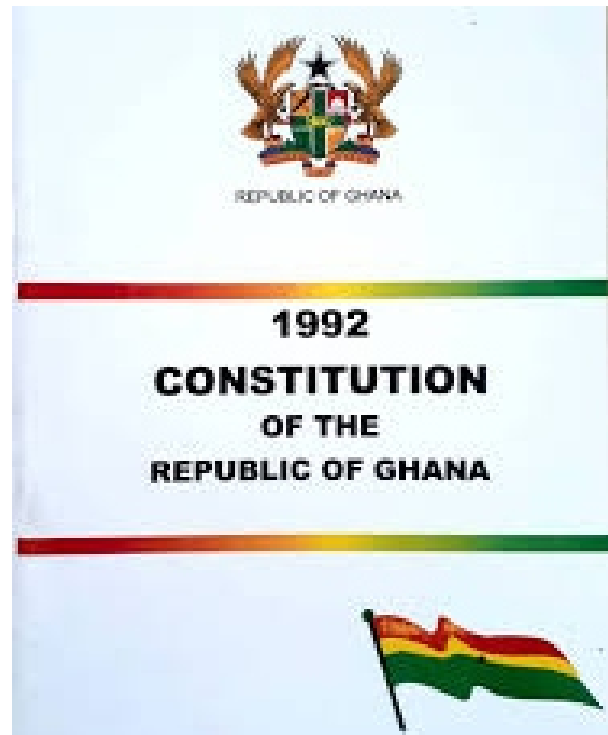
Consequently, as of December 2025, the Constitutional Review Committee, chaired by Professor Henry Kwasi Prempeh, officially recommended an amendment to Article 62 (b) to lower the minimum age from 40 to 30 years.

This proposal aims to enhance youth participation in national leadership roles, but it remains a recommendation until the constitutional amendment process is completed.

The debate over reducing the presidential age requirement to 30 years reflects a significant shift in Ghana's political discourse. The argument in favor of the youth concerning the reduction of age as proposed by the CRC is that, younger leaders often bring innovative ideas and have a better grasp of modern technology in global trends.

Also when it comes to energy and vitality, the physical and mental demands of the presidency require high energy levels, which younger candidates naturally possess. Lowering the age aligns with the "Not Too Young to Run" philosophy, ensuring that the youth who make up the majority of Ghana's population are represented at the highest level of decision-making.

For arguments against the proposal, critics argue that a 30-year-old may lack the emotional temperament and "seasoned" judgment



required to handle national crises or complex international diplomacy.

When it comes to experience, the belief is that the presidency requires a deep understanding of statecraft, security, and economics expertise often gained through years of public service or professional leadership.

In Ghana, Article 62 is an entrenched provision of the 1992 Constitution and amending it is not a simple parliamentary vote; it requires a rigorous national process that include Gazetting: The bill must be published in the Gazette for six months.

Also a National Referendum must be held because it is an entrenched clause and a threshold of at least 40% of registered voters must participate, and at least 75% of those who vote must cast their ballot in favor of the change.

Ultimately, while the energy of the youth is undeniable in governance issues, the decision to lower the age requirement remains a complex balance between modernizing democracy and preserving the status quo that comes with life experience.

Rather than focusing solely on the highest office, a practical solution also lies in creating a robust pathway for young people to participate in decision-making. By integrating the youth into governance at the grassroots and national levels, the nation can groom future-ready leaders. Key initiatives currently driving this shift in Ghana include:

The National Youth Authority (NYA): This body continues to lead the "skills revolution" through the National Apprenticeship Programme (NAP) and the Adwumawura Programme, which empower young entrepreneurs to move beyond job-seeking to job-creation.

The Ghana Youth Parliament: Under initiatives like Youth Parliament, young leaders are given platforms to simulate parliamentary proceedings, advocate for community needs, and engage directly with national policy frameworks.

Mentorship and Advocacy: High-impact platforms such as the International Youth Empowerment Summit (iYES) and the Youth Model Parliament provide mentorship from established leaders in business and governance, helping to bridge the gap between "foster knowledge" and "emerging trends."

Innovative Entrepreneurship: The National Entrepreneurship & Innovation Programme (NEIP) recently introduced a "game-changing" policy allowing student founders to complete their National Service while running their own startups, providing early exposure to high-level management.

In shaping the future of Ghana, Ghanaian youth are already proving to be significant catalysts for change through innovation, digital entrepreneurship, and community service. By institutionalizing their participation through school-based peace clubs or regional youth councils, Ghana can ensure that its most energetic demographic is not just a "reservoir of potential," but an active force in holding leaders

accountable and driving national transformation.

Some young people are ready to take up the challenge, while others might need more experience and grooming. Leadership roles require a mix of skills, knowledge, and emotional intelligence. In Ghana, many young people are making waves in various fields – entrepreneurship, activism, and innovation. They're passionate, tech oriented and socially conscious.

However, presidential roles come with immense responsibility and complexity. It requires a deep understanding of governance issues, diplomacy, and tactful decision-making. Perhaps a balanced approach could be to create pathways for young people to participate in governance, like deputy positions or special advisors, to gain experience and build their leadership skills.

Ghana's youth have immense potential. They're innovative, resilient, and eager to contribute. Many are already making significant impacts in various fields. To tap into this potential, providing opportunities for growth, mentorship, and experience is crucial. This could include internships, leadership programs, and involvement in decision-making processes.

In my opinion, the constitutional age requirement of 40 years for the presidency should be maintained. Leadership at the highest level requires a unique depth of maturity and experience that is often solidified by this stage of life.

However, maintaining this threshold should not mean excluding the youth from national affairs or governance. Instead, we must create a robust "leadership pipeline." By giving young people more opportunities to serve in critical political and administrative roles, such as special advisors, deputy ministers, and regional directors, to allow them build a track record of service.

This approach ensures that by the time a young leader reaches 40, they are not just entering the race with energy and fresh ideas, but with the battle-tested expertise and administrative wisdom required to lead a nation like Ghana.

Can the Government's Agricultural Reset Agenda Achieve Food Security in the Country?

By: Faustina Naa Ayele Johnson



IN an era marked by climate change, population growth, and economic challenges, food security has become a pressing concern for nations worldwide. Governments are increasingly looking for innovative solutions to ensure a stable food supply. One such initiative is the establishment of the Agricultural Reset agenda (ARA). But can this agenda genuinely achieve food security in the country?

The Role of the Agricultural Reset Agenda

The ARA aims to revitalize the agricultural sector by implementing sustainable farming practices, enhancing food production, and

supporting local farmers. Its primary goals include:

Increasing Productivity: Through research and development, the ARA seeks to introduce high-yield crop varieties and efficient farming techniques.

Sustainability: Promoting eco-friendly practices that reduce the environmental impact of agriculture is crucial for long-term food security.

Support for Farmers: By providing training, resources, and financial assistance, the ARA

aims to empower farmers to improve their livelihoods and productivity.

Challenges Ahead

Despite its promising goals, the ARA faces significant challenges such as :

Funding and Resources: Adequate funding is essential for the agency to implement its programs effectively.

Infrastructure: Poor infrastructure can hinder the distribution of resources and access to markets for farmers.

Climate Change: Adapting to changing climate conditions is vital for ensuring consistent food production.

While the Agricultural Reset Agenda has the potential to make substantial strides towards food security, its success will largely depend on effective implementation, collaboration with stakeholders, and adaptability to evolving challenges. By focusing on sustainability and support for local farmers, the ARA could play a pivotal role in achieving a secure food future for the country.

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Terrorism and Insecurity in the West African Sub-region: A Threat to Trade Among Member States

By: Faustina Naa Ayele Johnson



THE West African sub-region, known for its rich resources and diverse cultures, is increasingly becoming a fertile ground for terrorism and insecurity. This crisis poses a significant threat to trade and economic development among member states. Understanding the implications of terrorism on trade is crucial for fostering regional stability and economic growth.

The Nature of Terrorism in West Africa

Terrorism in West Africa has been exacerbated by various factors, including political instability, economic deprivation, land disputes and ethnic tensions. Groups such as Boko Haram, Ansaru, and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) exploit these vulnerabilities, employing violent tactics to destabilize communities and create a climate of fear and insecurity.

These terrorist organizations often target government facilities, civilians, and economic

infrastructure, leading to disruptions that have lasting effects on trade and other economic activities. The pervasive threat of violence has led to increased military presence in affected areas, which further complicates civilian life and economic activities.

Economic Impact of Terrorism

The ramifications of terrorism extend beyond violence, but spread to other areas which include the following:

Disruption of Supply Chains: Terrorist activities can close borders and impede the movement of goods and people. Key trade routes are often rendered unsafe, increasing shipping costs and delivery times.

Increased Security Expenditures: Governments allocate substantial resources to combat terrorism, diverting funds from critical areas such as health and education. This

economic strain hinders overall development and exacerbates poverty levels.

Diminished Foreign Investment: The unstable geographical and political environment discourages foreign direct investment (FDI), which is vital for economic growth. Investors tend to shy away from regions plagued by insecurity and subsequently leading to reduced job opportunities and economic growth.

Market Uncertainty: Terrorism creates an unpredictable business environment, making it difficult for companies to plan and operate effectively. This uncertainty can lead to decreased consumer confidence and reduced trade volume among nations.

Regional Cooperation and Response

To combat the threats posed by terrorism, regional cooperation is essential. Member states within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have initiated collaborative efforts to enhance security across member states. Strategies adopted include:

Joint Military Operations: Collaborative military efforts to dismantle terrorist networks and restore peace to affected areas.

Intelligence Sharing: Information exchange among member states helps in identifying and neutralizing threats before they escalate.

Community Engagement: Addressing the root causes of terrorism through educational

programs and economic initiatives can foster economic, political social in local communities.

Promoting Trade Amidst Insecurity

Despite the challenges, West Africa has opportunities to enhance trade among member states even in the face of insecurity. Here are some strategies:

Infrastructure Development: Investing in roads, ports, and communication networks can facilitate trade and enhance connectivity among member states.

Strengthening Border Security: Implementing effective border management practices can ensure safer trade routes while preventing the infiltration of terrorist elements.

Fostering Economic Diversification: Encouraging countries to diversify their economies can reduce reliance on vulnerable sectors, promoting stability and resilience against external shocks.

Terrorism and insecurity represent significant threats to trade in the West African sub-region. However, through regional cooperation, targeted investments, and proactive measures, member states can combat these threats and foster an environment conducive to trade and economic growth. A collective approach is essential for achieving long-term stability, peace, and prosperity in West Africa

Headline: Inflation Is Falling — So Why Is the Market Still Breaking Pockets?

By: Grace Acheampong



RECENT months have seen good economic news: headline inflation rates in Ghana have been declining, coming down from the double-digit rates of the past few years. However, the average Ghanaian seems not to be feeling the impact, as the prices of basic commodities are still high, the amount of money available for discretionary spending is low, and the cost of living appears to be the same as before. Here is why the disinflation has not yet trickled down to the average Ghanaian

A drop in inflation means prices of goods and services are rising at a slower pace, not that they are coming down. In Ghana, after months of high inflation, essential goods such as food, fuel, and utilities have already reached significantly higher prices. Even if inflation reduces, those elevated prices remain, squeezing household budgets.

A large share of household spending is on food. Food inflation, a major component of Ghana's consumer basket, often remains high even as total inflation declines. Food costs remain high due to poor harvests, supply chain interruptions, and exchange rate pressures, which disproportionately affect the most needy. Ghana's domestic currency, the Cedi, has continuously depreciated against other strong currencies. This has the effect of making imported goods, ranging from fuel to medicine and machinery, more expensive, which ultimately affects the prices of goods produced, despite the low inflation rates in the country.

To control the rising inflation in the country in the past, the Bank of Ghana had to adopt a tight monetary policy by maintaining higher interest rates. High interest rates make borrowing costly

for firms and individuals, thus reducing the pace of economic activities.

Government-initiated changes to utility tariffs and fuel prices, which are often driven by subsidy removals or exchange rate effects, remain a factor in the upward trajectory of the cost of living, even as inflation rates continue to decline.

In many sectors, wage increases have not matched earlier inflation spikes. As a result, even with slowing inflation, real incomes have already been eroded, reducing purchasing power and leaving households financially strained.

Global commodity prices, shipping costs, and regional trade challenges (like ECOWAS trade barriers) continue to affect local prices.

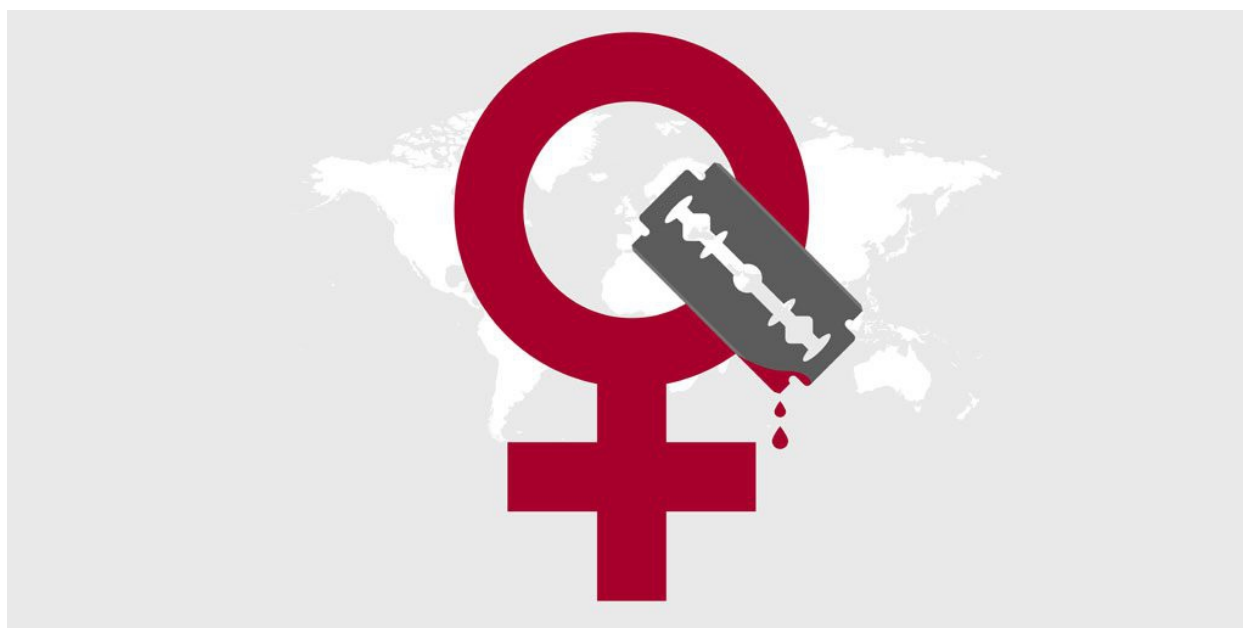
Ghana's economy, being import-dependent, remains exposed to these external pressures.

If businesses and consumers expect future inflation or currency instability, they may adjust prices and spending behaviour accordingly, creating a self-reinforcing cycle that delays the full benefits of lower inflation.

While the decline in headline inflation is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the alleviation of the market-level situation in Ghana, the reality is that the supply bottlenecks, the impact of the exchange rate, the high borrowing costs, and the administered prices and sectoral price movements mean that the population feels financially squeezed. It takes coordinated actions and some time to translate headline disinflation into lower retail prices and higher real incomes.

The Cut Must Stop: How Ghana Can Finally Win the Fight Against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)?

By: Grace Acheampong



FEMALE Genital Mutilation (FGM) is one of the most deeply rooted harmful traditional practices that continues to affect girls and women in Ghana. FGM involves any procedure that removes or causes injury to the external female genitalia and is most frequently performed on young girls in rural, traditional communities. FGM is illegal in Ghana, as it is criminalized by the Domestic Violence Act (2007) and the Criminal Code (Amendment) Act (2007), which makes FGM a serious offense with severe penalties, yet it still continues in some regions of the country.

According to 28TooMany, a charity organization's report on 2029, FGM is practiced by several ethnic groups including the Kusasis, Frafras, Kassenas, Nankanis, Busangas, Wallas, Dagarbas, Builsas and Sisalas, who live mainly in the Upper East, Upper West and Northern regions of Ghana, and the migrant population in the south. As a result, the Upper East and Upper West have the highest

prevalence of FGM, at 32.5% and 13.0% respectively (of women aged 15–49), and all other regions have a prevalence of less than 3%. The Volta region, along the east coast, has the lowest prevalence, at 0.3%. Women aged 15–49 who live in rural areas are more likely to undergo FGM (5.3%) than those living in urban areas (2.5%). The prevalence of FGM is inversely correlated with level of education and wealth, and 94.4% of women aged 15–49 who have heard of FGM believe the practice should be stopped.² The prevalence of FGM among Muslim women aged 15–49 who have heard of FGM is 12%, among those practicing traditional religions is 10% and among Roman Catholics is 5%.

Ghana first criminalized FGM in 1994 under the Criminal Code (Amendment) Act, making it illegal to perform or participate in the practice. The law was amended in 2007 through amendments to Section 69A, which expanded liability to anyone who excises, infibulates, or

otherwise mutilates the labia minora, labia majora, or clitoris of another person. The law also criminalizes those who request, incite, or support FGM, including providing money, goods, or moral support. Conviction carries a minimum of five years and a maximum of ten years' imprisonment.

The physical, psychological, and emotional pains and trauma caused by FGM are catastrophic. Girls suffer from extreme pain, infections, complications during childbirth, and even death. Apart from the health hazards, FGM is a violation of basic human rights, as it deprives women of autonomy over their bodies and sustains gender inequality.

However, there is hope for a better future for girls in Ghana. According to UNICEF, the prevalence of FGM in the country among girls aged 15-19 years has declined from 8% in 2011 to 3% in 2021. However, to completely eliminate FGM, a multi-faceted approach is needed in Ghana.

Although the law in Ghana is very strict on FGM, the application of the law is very weak, especially in rural areas where the practice is deeply rooted. To address this issue, the police including the prosecution team should be trained on how to handle FGM cases.

Community surveillance systems should be put in place to report and prevent secret cuttings. Traditional leaders should be made responsible for ensuring that the anti-FGM bylaws are applied within their jurisdictions.

Victims of FGM require health, psychological, and legal assistance. Simultaneously, girls who are potential victims need to be safeguarded by safe communication channels (hotlines, social advocates).

Additionally, there should be scholarships and economic rewards for families who retain uncut

daughters, and Shelters for girls fleeing forced FGM, similar to those for child marriage victims.

FGM persists due to deep-seated beliefs about purity, marriageability, and other traditional and cultural practices. To change these norms, there should be engagement with traditional practitioners and provide alternative livelihoods such as soap-making or tailoring to replace their income from FGM. The male gender must also be involved in the fight against FGM, many think FGM is a "women's issue," but men must be allies in stopping it.

There is also the need to amplify survivor voices women who have suffered complications should lead awareness campaigns to eradicate the practice.

Leveraging Education & Media: Teaching children about the risks of FGM through educational programs in schools. Using community radio and social media platforms to promote messages against FGM.

Using religious leaders to preach against FGM, thereby clearing myths that FGM is a religious requirement.

Regional & International Collaboration

Because FGM is a cross-border practice such as girls sent to Togo or Burkina Faso for the procedure, Ghana needs to collaborate with other countries on: Cross-border task forces to monitor and intercept FGM cases. and harmonized laws to ensure that other countries in the region also make FGM illegal.

A Future Free from FGM Is Possible, Ghana has the laws, the awareness, and the momentum to end FGM for good. But success will take political will, ownership, and investment in grassroots activism. The cut must stop—not just because it's illegal, but because every girl deserves to grow up whole, healthy, and free.

We Remember the Music, But Have We Honoured the People Who Composed It?

By: Irene Wirekoaa Osei

THERE is a particular kind of magic in Ghanaian music. It lives in the rolling guitar lines of a highlife song heard at a wedding, in the proverb tucked inside a lyric that somehow still speaks to a twenty-year-old hearing it for the first time. That magic did not arrive by accident. It was crafted, note by note, by a generation of extraordinary men and women who gave their lives to music and in doing so gave Ghana a voice the whole world could recognise.

As Ghana continues to grow as a cultural force on the continent and beyond, there is a beautiful opportunity before us to look back with gratitude, look around with care, and look forward with intention. The musicians who built this country's soundtrack deserve more than memory. They deserve honour.

The architects of a sound

The story begins with E.T. Mensah, the King of Highlife, who fused jazz, calypso and indigenous rhythms into something so irresistible that even Fela Kuti travelled from Lagos to study his craft. In 1956, Mensah shared a stage with Louis Armstrong in Accra, putting Ghana on the world's musical map years before many African nations had found their footing. Nana Kwame Ampadu composed over 800 songs with the African Brothers Band, weaving Akan proverbs and the concerns of ordinary Ghanaians into melodies that endure decades after they were first recorded. Osibisa, formed in London by Teddy Osei, Sol Amarfio and Mac Tontoh, became the first African band to break into international mainstream charts, opening doors for every African artist who followed.

Pat Thomas, the Golden Voice of Africa, carried Ghanaian highlife to Europe and back. Daddy Lumba released 34 albums across a career that the BBC described as the work of the greatest



Ghanaian musician in a century. Ebo Taylor, who collaborated with Fela Kuti and whose rhythms were later sampled by Usher and the Black Eyed Peas, was still performing on international stages well into his eighties. Reggie Rockstone fused Twi with hip-hop in the 1990s and birthed an entirely new genre, hiplife, that gave Ghanaian youth a sound they could call entirely their own. These were not simply entertainers. They were nation builders in the truest sense.

A heritage the world is already celebrating

The world has taken notice of what these legends created. In December 2025, Ghana's highlife music received UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage inscription, a recognition that formally placed it among humanity's most treasured cultural expressions. This has been a moment of immense national pride, and it did not come from nowhere. It came from the decades of artistry poured into the genre by every musician who ever picked up a guitar, stepped behind a microphone, or led a band through the early hours of a Ghanaian morning.

Nigeria has the Kalakuta Museum honouring Fela Kuti and the annual Felabration festival drawing thousands. Jamaica turned Bob Marley's home into the country's most visited cultural landmark and championed reggae all the way to its own UNESCO inscription. South

Africa has foundations, monuments and state honours dedicated to its musical icons. These examples are not indictments. They are invitations, showing what becomes possible when a nation decides that its musicians are as worth preserving as its politicians and its cultural monuments.

The work of honouring those still among us

MUSIGA's Ageing Musicians Welfare Fund provides meaningful, but modest, support to veteran artists navigating the quieter years of their careers. The union's Presidential Grand Ball raises funds annually to sustain this work. Following the passing of Daddy Lumba in 2025, MUSIGA President Bessa Simons announced plans for a National Music Museum and Hall of Fame in collaboration with the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board. It is a long overdue vision and now, with momentum behind it, entirely within reach.

GHAMRO continues its work to strengthen the royalties system, partnering with organisations to better track song usage and ensure that musicians are fairly compensated when their work is broadcast. The progress is steady, and in the direction.

What remains is the collective will to go further. A National Music Museum would not only

honour the legends. It would educate the next generation about where their culture comes from. A functioning Hall of Fame would tell every young musician in Ghana that their work matters and that the nation is paying attention. Fair and consistent royalties would mean that a musician who spent forty years filling rooms and lifting spirits does not spend their final years worrying about hospital bills.

A call rooted in gratitude

The music of E.T. Mensah still lives in every Afrobeats track climbing the global charts. Nana Ampadu's proverbs still roll off Ghanaian tongues at gatherings where half the crowd was not yet born when he recorded them. Osibisa's Afro-rock still fills playlists across the world. These are not small things. They are the threads of a national identity woven by people who believed in the power of music to unite, to heal, and to tell the truth.

Honouring them is not a misplaced priority by the state. It is a privilege. It is Ghana saying, clearly and without hesitation, that the people who carried our culture to the world will not be forgotten while they live, and will not be diminished when they are gone. The music remembers them. Now it is time for the nation to do the same.

What It Will Really Take to Get Doctors to Serve in Ghana's Most Deprived Communities

By: Irene Wirekoaa Osei



Accra alone, whilst the five most underserved regions; North East, Oti, Savannah, Western North, and Upper East have fewer than one doctor per 10,000 residents.

A 2021 analysis published in the journal *Human Resources for Health* estimated the annual cost of this maldistribution at roughly 88 million

WHEN the Ministry of Health posted roughly 700 newly qualified doctors to rural health facilities in December 2025, about 70 percent of them simply did not show up. In the Upper West and Upper East regions, the arrival count was zero. The Health Minister responded with an ultimatum: accept the posting or be removed from the government payroll. It was the most coercive measure Ghana has ever attempted on this question. It was also an admission that two decades of gentler approaches had failed. The depth of that failure is written in the numbers.

The scale of non-compliance is not an isolated incident but a reflection of deeper structural imbalances within Ghana's health system. The numbers behind this crisis are not new. Greater Accra has one doctor to every 3,035 people, while Upper East has one to every 21,465. The World Health Organization recommends a ratio of 1 Doctor to 1,000 patients. Ghana's national average sits around 1:7,000, but that average papers over a health system that is, in practice, split in two.

Forty-two percent of all doctors work in Greater

dollars, money effectively wasted by overstaffing already-served urban facilities while rural posts sit empty.

Brain drain compounds the domestic divide. A 2024 survey of 641 practising Ghanaian doctors found that nearly 72 percent intended to emigrate, to the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada as top destinations. Between 2018 and 2021, more than 3,000 Ghanaian health professionals left for the UK alone. The pipeline leaks at both ends: doctors who stay in Ghana concentrate in cities, and those who leave take their training entirely out of the system.

Understanding why some doctors refuse posting to rural areas requires setting aside the assumption that money is the main obstacle. Research shows otherwise. A study that interviewed 84 Ghanaian doctors found that their foremost concern was what one participant called "career death" — being forgotten by the Ministry of Health, losing access to specialist training, and watching peers at teaching hospitals advance while they stagnated in under-resourced district facilities.

Salary featured in their concerns, but it ranked below professional isolation, lack of mentorship, and the near-impossibility of securing study leave from a rural post.

The working conditions themselves are often unsustainable. Only about a third of public health facilities have reliable electricity or backup generators. Essential drugs face chronic stockouts. Diagnostic equipment is frequently absent or broken. Doctors posted to northern regions also lose access to the supplementary income from locum work that makes urban salaries livable. And for those with families, the calculus grows harder still: their spouses have few employment options, quality schools for children are scarce, and being posted far from one's home region dramatically raises the likelihood of simply not going.

Ghana has tried to address this challenge of brain drain for years. The Deprived Area Incentive Allowance has existed since 2004, offering doctors in 55 designated districts an additional 20 to 35 percent allowance above basic salary. A survey conducted the following year found only 15 percent of health workers reported receiving it. The University for Development Studies in Tamale, which trains doctors through a community-based curriculum, has produced graduates who disproportionately serve in rural areas. Bonding schemes that tie subsidized training to return-of-service obligations exist on paper. The Community-Based Health Planning and Services initiative deploys nurses to deliver doorstep primary care. Each of these represents genuine thinking. None has been implemented with the consistency or funding needed to change the system.

Most remarkable is the fate of the Deprived Area Incentive Document, a comprehensive policy package prepared, completed, and submitted to Parliament. As of December 2025, the Ghana Medical Association president described it as gathering dust at the Ministry of Health. The problem Ghana faces is not a shortage of policy ideas. It is a shortage of political will to execute them.

The evidence on what actually works is consistent and has been for over a decade. A study that tested preferences among every fourth-year medical student in Ghana found that improved clinical equipment and supportive management were more strongly associated with rural job preference than salary increases. Providing superior housing attracted nearly five times more doctors in cost-benefit modelling than a 30 percent pay rise. Guaranteed study leave after a defined period of rural service ranked as the single most valued incentive in multiple surveys. These findings point toward a bundled approach: decent housing, functional infrastructure, a clear career ladder, and financial incentives that are actually paid.

Ghana also has a model that works, sitting underused. Over 3,800 trained and licensed Physician Assistants who already handle the majority of rural health needs remain unemployed because the government has not issued financial clearance to hire them. Deploying them requires no new law, no new training programme, and no new research. It requires a budget decision.

South Africa has run a compulsory community service programme for doctors since 1998 and places over a thousand new graduates in underserved facilities every year. After 25 years, the lesson is clear: compulsion fills posts but does not keep doctors. Only about 15 percent plan to remain in rural practice after their service year. The doctors who do stay are those who found professional development opportunities during their posting. Coercion and career investment, it turns out, are not alternatives. They work collaboratively.

Ghana's rural communities have waited long enough for the government to treat their health needs as a genuine priority rather than a recurring crisis to be managed with threats. The solutions are documented, tested, and affordable. What has been missing, consistently and conspicuously, is the follow-through.

New Rules, New Money? What Ghana's Mining Reforms Mean for Investors and Communities

By: Jacinta Amo-Apraku



GHANA is one of Africa's key mining countries and has always been highly valued for its gold, bauxite, and manganese deposits, among other key minerals. Historically, the mining sector in Ghana has been a double-edged sword. While it has generated substantial income and attracted foreign investment, it has also faced criticism for environmental degradation, social inequities, and inadequate community engagement. Subsequent to this criticism, the government has introduced new reforms to address the challenges in the sector.

One of the critical changes under the new reforms is the introduction of stricter environmental regulations. Companies

operating in Ghana must now adhere to more rigorous environmental impact assessments (EIAs) to obtain licenses. This encourages mining firms to adopt greener technologies and practices, ultimately reducing their ecological effects in the mining communities where they operate. For investors, this means an increased upfront cost but promises of long-term operational sustainability, appealing to environmentally conscious investors and global stakeholders.

The reforms also place a greater emphasis on local content requirements, mandating that mining companies prioritize the employment of local labour and the procurement of local goods and services. This strategy is aimed at fostering

economic development in mining communities, ensuring that the benefits of resource extraction reach those directly affected by mining operations. Investors who align with these local content policies can not only enhance their reputation but also benefit from a more stable operating environment due to local support.

Ghana's reforms also seek to strengthen community relations by ensuring that communities have a voice in the mining process. There are enhanced obligations for mining firms to engage the local indigenes solicit their input in decision-making, and share benefits derived from mining activities. This collaborative approach is expected to reduce conflict and enhance trust, positioning Ghana as a favorable location for investors who prioritize social responsibility and ethical considerations and practices.

The introduction of a mineral revenue allocation in the policy transparency. This framework stipulates how revenues from mining operations should be distributed to communities, enhancing accountability and ensuring that the indigenes can see tangible benefits from the activities occurring in their

backyards. For investors, this movement toward transparency builds goodwill and can mitigate operational risks associated with community unrest or disputes over resource allocation.

The transformation of Ghana's mining sector is not without its challenges. The effectiveness of these reforms will largely depend on the commitment of both the government and mining companies to uphold the new standards. However, for investors willing to navigate this evolving landscape, the potential rewards are considerable.

As Ghana embraces these new operational mining guidelines, it opens the door to a more sustainable and equitable mining sector. Investors looking for opportunities in Africa will find a country that is not only rich in resources but also increasingly committed to responsible mining practices that prioritize the welfare of its indigenes and the development of the communities. In this emerging paradigm of "new money," the interplay between profit and social responsibility could redefine Ghana's mining narrative for the better.

Forest for the Future: How the Forestry Commission Can Balance Growth with Conservation in Ghana

By: Judith Twumwaa



GHANA'S forests are more than stretches of green on a map. They shelter wildlife, regulate rainfall and climate, protect rivers and soils, and support thousands of livelihoods, from cocoa farmers and timber workers to tour guides and herbal medicine practitioners. Yet these same forests are under intense pressure. Illegal logging and mining activities, known locally as galamsey, agricultural expansion, as well as heavy dependence on fuelwood are steadily eroding the country's natural cover.

The Forestry Commission of Ghana operates under the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources. Its task is to drive economic growth while ensuring that future generations inherit

forests that are healthier and more valuable than those of today. Achieving that balance requires vision, coordination, and a willingness to innovate.

A Commission Built for Integration

The Forestry Commission was re-established under Act 571 of 1999 to bring together several agencies responsible for forest and wildlife management. The idea was straightforward but ambitious to manage Ghana's forests and wildlife as interconnected systems rather than as isolated sectors.

Today, the Commission works through three main divisions:

- Forest Services Division (FSD) – This arm manages forest reserves, supervises timber harvesting, and prepares management plans to ensure sustainability. It is the frontline of forest protection and regulated resource use.
- Wildlife Division – Responsible for safeguarding Ghana’s fauna, this division oversees national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, regulates hunting, and combats poaching. Its work sustains biodiversity and supports ecotourism.
- Timber Industry Development Division (TIDD) – Focused on the economic side of forestry, this division promotes timber trade, monitors wood flow from source to export, and encourages investment in value-added wood products.

Supporting these divisions are the Forestry Commission Training Centre and the Resource Management Support Centre, which provide technical expertise, research, and capacity building. Together, they ensure that policy decisions are grounded in science and best practices rather than short-term expediency.

Why Conservation Cannot Wait

Conservation is the foundation upon which all other forest-related activities depend. Ghana is estimated to lose about 2 percent of its forest cover each year. If left unchecked, this trend threatens biodiversity, weakens climate resilience, and undermines rural livelihoods.

Forests regulate water cycles, maintain soil fertility, and absorb carbon dioxide. They protect species such as the white-bellied kingfisher and countless other plants and animals that form part of Ghana’s ecological heritage. When forests disappear, so do these services.

Ghana’s legal framework recognizes this urgency. The 1992 Constitution, particularly Article 36(9), directs the state to manage natural resources sustainably. The recently enacted Wildlife Resources Management Act further strengthens wildlife protection and clarifies enforcement powers. These laws give

the Forestry Commission both authority and responsibility to act decisively.

Still, laws alone are not enough. Enforcement must be consistent, transparent, and backed by adequate resources. Illegal logging and mining persist partly because of weak monitoring and economic desperation in affected communities. Addressing these root causes is as important as policing forest boundaries.

Growth Through Sustainable Forestry

While conservation protects natural capital, forestry also plays a role in Ghana’s economy. Timber exports generate revenue and create jobs. Plantation development offers investment opportunities. Ecotourism brings in foreign exchange while showcasing the country’s natural beauty.

The Timber Industry Development Division has been working to promote lesser-used timber species. By expanding the market beyond a handful of high-demand species, the Commission reduces pressure on vulnerable trees and diversifies income streams. Encouraging value addition, such as processed wood products rather than raw logs, keeps more economic benefits within the country.

The Commission’s commitment to responsible trade is further reflected in Ghana’s participation in the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) initiative, which promotes legally verified timber exports. This strengthens Ghana’s reputation in international markets while reinforcing domestic accountability.

Making Growth and Conservation Work Together

Balancing development and preservation require more than good intentions. It demands a deliberate blending of regulation, innovation, and community partnership.

Strong Regulation and Enforcement

Permit systems for logging, detailed management plans for reserves, and strict oversight of timber transport are essential. Without credible enforcement, sustainable

forestry becomes an empty slogan. Tackling illegal mining and logging must remain a top priority.

Diversified Revenue Sources: Relying solely on timber harvesting is risky and unsustainable. Initiatives like the Ghana Forests Economy Programme (GFEP) promote agroforestry, support lesser-used species, and encourage alternative livelihoods that reduce dependence on natural forests.

Technical Expertise: Through its Resource Management Support Centre, the Commission develops management systems that balance ecological health with economic feasibility. Data-driven planning ensures that harvesting levels remain within regenerative limits.

Community Engagement: Programs like the Modified Taungya System (MTS) allow farmers to grow food crops alongside timber trees on degraded lands, with a share in future timber revenue. This model aligns reforestation with immediate livelihood benefits.

Overcoming Challenges, Embracing Opportunity

Despite clear strategies and legal backing, the Forestry Commission faces persistent obstacles. Limited financial resources, climate change impacts, population growth, and competing land demands complicate the implementation of the reforms. Illegal mining and logging also continue to threaten forest reserves.

Yet within these challenges lie opportunities. National tree-planting initiatives such as Green Ghana Day aim to restore degraded

landscapes through large-scale tree planting. Additionally, international partnerships also provide funding and technical expertise. Community-based management models, which have been introduced, also empower residents to participate actively in monitoring and protecting forest resources.

Research consistently shows that conservation efforts succeed when communities are involved in decision-making and benefit sharing. Empowering Community Resource Trusts and clarifying land tenure arrangements can strengthen accountability and ensure that forest wealth is distributed fairly.

A Green Legacy Within Reach

Ghana's forests are a shared inheritance. They feed rivers, shelter wildlife, sustain farmers, and contribute to national income. The challenge before the Forestry Commission is to ensure that economic ambition does not erode ecological foundations.

By strengthening enforcement, investing in restoration, expanding sustainable economic opportunities, and deepening community partnerships, the Commission can chart a path where growth and conservation activities complement each other rather than compete.

The future of Ghana's forests will not be secured by policy alone. It will depend on sustained commitment from government agencies, private investors, traditional authorities, and local communities alike. If these efforts remain aligned, Ghana can build an economy that grows not at the expense of its forests, but alongside them, leaving a legacy of green resilience for generations to come.

Ghana–Zambia Relations: Prospects and Challenges

By: Judith Twumwaa

THE relationship between Ghana and Zambia, long grounded in shared Pan-African ideals, has entered a new and promising phase. Following high-level engagements in early February 2026, the two countries formalized a broad economic partnership aimed at unlocking mutual growth and long-term prosperity.

This renewed alliance goes beyond diplomatic symbolism. It reflects a deliberate effort to deepen economic integration, expand trade, and strengthen people-to-people ties, aligning closely with the broader vision of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

A Shared History, A Renewed Purpose

The bond between Ghana and Zambia dates back to the post-independence era, when both nations stood firmly for the liberation of the African continent and promotion of African unity. Leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah and Kenneth Kaunda built a strong personal and political relationship that laid the foundation for decades of cooperation.

Today, that historic solidarity is evolving into a more focused economic partnership. President John Dramani Mahama's recent state visit to Zambia has injected fresh energy into the existing bilateral ties, shifting the emphasis toward investment, trade, and practical collaboration.

Expanding Economic Cooperation

A clear sign of this renewed commitment is the signing of ten Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) covering key areas of cooperation. These agreements outline a structured path toward translating political goodwill between the two countries into tangible economic outcomes.



The Ghana–Zambia Business Dialogue has already produced measurable results. Fintech agreements alone have led to transactions valued at \$7 million, with ongoing negotiations expected to generate an additional \$65 million and create an estimated 8,000 jobs across both countries. This early progress highlights the strong potential for expanded trade and investment, particularly in sectors where both nations complement each other.

Priority Sectors for Growth

Several strategic areas have been identified for deeper collaboration:

Agriculture and Food Systems: Both countries aim to strengthen Agro-processing and value addition, improving food security while creating jobs and sustainable livelihoods.

Energy: Cooperation in renewable energy and power trade is a priority. Zambia's expertise in solar energy regulation offers opportunities for technical exchange.

Mining and Manufacturing: With both nations rich in mineral resources, the focus is on value addition and environmentally responsible practices. Zambia is particularly interested in learning from Ghana's experience in the mining industry.

Fintech and Digital Services: This sector is already showing strong momentum, especially in modernizing cross-border payments and financial systems.

Education and Technology: Sharing knowledge and technical expertise is seen as essential for long-term development.

Improving Connectivity and Mobility

One of the most notable achievements and outcomes of the visit is the Pan-African Visa Agreement, which allows citizens of both countries to travel visa-free to each other's country for up to 30 days. Effective February 2026, this policy will significantly ease challenges associated with the progress of tourism, business, and cultural exchange.

In addition, the Air Transport Agreement, which paves the way for direct flights between Accra and Lusaka, is expected to reduce travel barriers and strengthen commercial links. Together, these measures will reinforce people-to-people connections and open the door for broader collaboration.

Efforts to standardize product certification are also underway, helping to reduce non-tariff barriers and simplify trade processes. Plans to establish new trade corridors will further position Ghana and Zambia as strategic links between ECOWAS and SADC blocs.

Challenges That Remain

Despite the promising outlook, several obstacles could slow progress if not carefully addressed.

Infrastructure Gaps: Limited and poorly integrated transport networks between West and Southern Africa continue to drive up costs. Inadequate freight routes make intra-African trade less competitive than trade with markets outside the continent.

Low Intra-African Trade Levels: Only about 14–15 percent of Africa's trade takes place within the continent. Bilateral efforts like the

Ghana–Zambia partnership are important, but their full impact depends on broader continental integration.

Implementation Gaps: Turning signed agreements into real investments and job creation requires consistent follow-through. Infrastructure upgrades, regulatory reforms, and strong private sector engagement will be critical.

Geographic Distance: The physical distance between the two countries has historically limited sustained engagement. While direct flights and visa waivers may help, logistical and structural challenges remain to be addressed.

Macroeconomic Pressures: Both countries have faced economic headwinds, including debt restructuring and inflation. Maintaining investor confidence will require continued macroeconomic discipline, sound debt management, and transparent governance—especially in the management of natural resources.

Conclusions

The Ghana–Zambia partnership represents a meaningful step toward deeper African economic integration. Built on decades of shared history and Pan-African solidarity, this renewed alliance offers real opportunities in trade, investment, energy, agriculture, and technology.

Challenges remain, particularly in infrastructure, policy implementation, and broader continental integration. However, the political will demonstrated by both governments suggests a serious commitment to making the partnership work.

If sustained and effectively implemented, the Ghana–Zambia collaboration could serve as a practical model for other African nations, demonstrating how shared history, strategic planning, and economic pragmatism can come together to advance the goals of AfCFTA and strengthen Africa's collective prosperity

Breaking the Monopoly in Ghana's Legal Education: The Legal Education Bill and the Future of Law Training in Ghana

By: Margaret Adjeley Sowah



Introduction

For decades, the Ghana School of Law has stood as the sole gateway to professional legal education and practice in the country. Its monopoly over legal professional training has been both celebrated and criticized. It has been celebrated for its tradition and prestige, but criticized for bottlenecks, limited intake, and the frustrations of thousands of potential law graduates who find themselves locked out of the profession despite years of academic study. Each year, hundreds of graduates sit for the entrance exams, only for a fraction to gain admission, creating what many describe as an artificial scarcity of lawyers and limiting access to justice.

The Legal Education Bill now being considered by parliament promises to change that narrative. By opening the doors to enable accredited universities and other institutions to provide professional legal training, the Bill seeks to decentralize access, democratize opportunity, and reshape the future of legal education in Ghana.

Legal Education Bill

The Legal Education Reform Bill was laid before Parliament on 24th October 2025 by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General, Dr. Dominic Ayine. The Bill seeks to decentralize professional legal training for the first time in Ghana's history. Parliament has since adopted the committee report, moved it to the consideration stage, and debated its amendments, with the law becoming an Act expected to take effect from September 2026.

When Ghana attained independence in 1957, training legal professionals was governed by the Legal Practitioners Ordinance (CAP 8), later replaced by the Legal Practitioners Act of 1958. The General Legal Council was tasked with administering, supervising, and preparing candidates for admission to the Ghana Bar. Since then, the Ghana School of Law has remained the sole institution for professional legal training.

Under the new framework, accredited universities and institutions can run the Law

Practice Training Course and prepare candidates for the National Bar Examination. The oversight role will be provided by a newly established Council for Legal Education and Training, tasked with ensuring uniform standards across institutions. Importantly, the Bill also formally recognizes the Ghana School of Law in providing legislation for the first time, despite its existence since 1959.

Dr. Ayine explained that the new system will create a fairer and more inclusive pathway for all qualified citizens who wish to pursue a career in law. Debating the Bill, the Attorney-General assured the House that robust quality-control mechanisms will be put in place to maintain high standards in legal education and professional training.

“What this bill does is to clear the bottlenecks. We are introducing an accreditation programme that will make sure that it is not every mushroom LLB school that will produce lawyers who will go to write the bar exam,” he emphasized.

This rollout is not just about numbers; it is about reimagining legal education. Universities will be able to innovate, introduce specialized modules, and tailor training to meet the demands of a rapidly changing legal landscape from technology law to international arbitration.

Prospects for Other Institutions

The prospects for other institutions are noteworthy. Universities across the regions can now train lawyers, reducing the centralization in Accra. Students from outside the capital will have greater opportunities without relocating,

while competition among institutions could drive improvements in teaching quality and facilities. Institutions may also diversify curricula, offering niche areas of law that reflect global trends, thereby producing a new generation of lawyers equipped for both domestic and international practice.

Challenges

Yet, decentralization comes with risks. Ensuring uniform standards across institutions will be essential, and the credibility of the National Bar Exam will become the ultimate safeguard. Universities must also meet strict accreditation requirements in faculty strength, infrastructure, and curriculum design. There is also the question of commercialization. Will private universities rush to cash in, and if so, how will regulators balance profit motives with quality assurance?

Conclusion

The Legal Education Bill represents a turning point in Ghana’s legal education history. If implemented effectively, it could break the bottleneck, democratize access, and produce a more diverse and well-trained legal workforce. But the success of this rollout will depend on robust regulation, transparent accreditation, and a credible examination system. Without these, decentralization risks diluting standards rather than raising them. In essence, the Bill is more than a reform; it is a redefinition of legal education in Ghana. For other training institutions, it is a chance to step into a space once monopolized, to innovate, and to shape the future of the profession.

Trotro, Taxi, and Sweat: The Daily Struggle of Getting Around Cities in Ghana

By: Margaret Adjeley Sowah



THE daily morning rush hours in Ghana's cities is a ritual of chaos and endurance. As dawn breaks over Accra, Kumasi, or Takoradi, the streets come alive with the shouts of 'trotro' mates calling out destinations, taxis honking impatiently, and commuters weaving through traffic in a desperate bid to beat time. For millions, the daily commute is not simply about getting from one place to another; it is a struggle defined by sweat, discomfort, and resilience.

The trotro, Ghana's iconic minibus, remains the backbone of urban transport. Affordable and accessible, it ferries workers, students, and traders across sprawling cityscapes. Yet the experience is rarely smooth. Overcrowding is the norm, with passengers squeezed shoulder to shoulder, sweat trickling in the humid air, and mates leaning precariously out of windows to

tout for fares. Routes shift depending on demand, breakdowns are frequent, and delays are inevitable. Still, for many, the trotro is not just a choice but a necessity, the only affordable way to move through the city.

Taxis offer a more comfortable alternative, but they come with their own frustrations. Negotiating fares is a daily ritual, often leaving passengers feeling shortchanged. Traffic congestion means that even short trips can stretch endlessly, draining energy before the day has even begun. Ride-hailing apps have entered the scene, promising convenience and predictability, but their reach is limited, and their fares remain out of range for the average commuter.

Underlying these struggles is the state of urban infrastructure. Roads are choked with traffic,

pedestrian walkways are scarce, and bus terminals overflow with people desperate to catch a ride. A journey that should take thirty minutes can easily drag into two hours, turning the commute into a test of patience and endurance. For office workers, students, and market women alike, the daily grind of transport shapes the rhythm of urban life.

Yet, within this chaos lies a peculiar sense of community. Strangers squeezed together, share jokes, frustrations, and sighs of relief when traffic finally eases. The banter of trotro mates, the collective groan when a taxi driver takes a longer route, and the shared silence in

gridlock all form part of a culture of endurance. Commuting in Ghana's cities is not just about movement; it is about survival, adaptation, and the unspoken camaraderie of people navigating the same struggle.

Urban transport reform has been promised time and again, modern buses, rail systems, improved road networks, but for now, the reality remains trotro, taxi, and sweat. It is a story of resilience, but also a reminder that the future of Ghana's cities depends on finding solutions to a transport system stretched to its limits. Until then, the daily struggle continues, shaping lives and defining the pulse of urban Ghana.



The 24-hour Economy Project: A Pathway to Tackling Youth Unemployment

By: Priscilla Osei-Wusu Nimako



YOUTH unemployment remains one of the most pressing development concerns in Ghana today. Thousands of young graduates and skilled workers enter the labour market each year, yet many struggle to find stable employment.

This reality has sparked renewed attention for policies by governments that can stimulate job creation, expand productivity, and unlock new economic opportunities. Among the ideas gaining attention is the proposed 24-Hour Economy project, which many observers believe could reshape the structure of Ghana's economy and open new doors for the country's youthful workforce.

The concept of a 24-hour economy revolves around keeping key sectors of the economy active throughout the day and night. Rather than limiting productivity to traditional daytime hours, businesses, public institutions, and services would operate in rotating shifts across a full 24-hour cycle. Industries such as manufacturing, agro-processing, transportation, health services, logistics, retail,

and digital services stand to benefit from extended operational hours. With proper coordination and policy support, the system could multiply employment opportunities as firms recruit additional workers to cover night and early morning shifts.

Advocates of the proposed project believe that legislation is necessary to guide and regulate the implementation of the policy, hence the 24-Hour Economy Authority Bill is expected to establish an institutional framework responsible for coordinating government agencies, supporting businesses willing to operate round the clock, and ensuring that labour standards, safety regulations, and social protections are respected. Such an Authority would also be tasked with addressing infrastructure needs, including reliable electricity supply, transport systems, security services, and digital connectivity that can sustain continuous economic activity.

For many young people searching for work, the potential benefits are clear. A system that operates throughout the day naturally demands

a larger workforce. Factories, warehouses, call centres, hospitals, security services, and hospitality businesses would require additional staff to sustain multiple shifts. This expansion could create thousands of entry level opportunities for young graduates and skilled artisans who often face intense competition for limited daytime jobs.

Beyond job creation, the 24-hour economy concept could deepen industrial growth. Manufacturing firms, for example, would be able to increase production volumes by running equipment for longer hours. Agro-processing companies could handle perishable produce more efficiently, reducing post-harvest losses while increasing output. These changes would strengthen local supply chains and enhance Ghana's competitiveness in regional and global markets.

Another benefit lies in the potential for improved urban services and convenience. In many global cities, transportation networks, retail outlets, and service centres operate around the clock. This allows workers, travellers, and entrepreneurs to access services whenever they need them. With the right safeguards and planning, Ghana's cities could gradually adopt similar patterns, supporting tourism, commerce, and innovation.

However, the success of a 24-hour economy will depend on careful planning and strong collaboration between government, businesses, and labour unions. Workers engaged in night shifts must be protected through fair wages, safe working conditions, and access to transportation. Adequate lighting, security patrols, and emergency services will also be necessary to ensure that communities remain safe during extended hours of activity.

Energy reliability will be another key factor. Businesses operating through the night cannot afford frequent power interruptions. Investments in stable electricity generation, renewable energy solutions, and efficient

distribution networks will therefore be essential to sustain continuous production and service delivery.

The private sector also has a major role to play. Businesses must assess how extended operating hours can improve productivity and profitability. Incentives such as tax breaks, reduced utility tariffs for night operations, and access to credit may encourage companies to adopt the model more quickly.

Across the world, several economies have benefited from round-the-clock activity. Cities such as New York City, London, and Tokyo demonstrate how extended business hours can stimulate employment, strengthen tourism, and keep commercial centres vibrant at all times. While Ghana's context is different, the lessons from these cities show that with strong policy direction and infrastructure support, continuous economic activity can generate widespread benefits.

For Ghana, where more than half of the population is under the age of thirty-five, the urgency of addressing youth unemployment cannot be overstated. Young people possess energy, creativity, and entrepreneurial drive. What many lack is opportunity. The proposed 24-Hour Economy Authority offers the opportunity that could unlock new avenues for employment, innovation, and economic expansion.

If implemented with careful planning, strong regulation, and sustained investment in infrastructure, the policy could transform the rhythm of Ghana's economy. Factories would produce longer, services would expand, and new forms of work would emerge across sectors. For thousands of young people searching for their first opportunity, a 24-hour economy could represent more than a policy idea. It could become a gateway to meaningful employment and a more inclusive national economy.

A Roof Over Every Worker's Head: Examining the Feasibility of Affordable Housing For Ghana's Labour Force

By: Priscilla Osei-Wusu Nimako

FOR many Ghanaian workers, the search for decent and affordable housing remains a daily struggle. Teachers, nurses, market traders, security personnel, factory workers, and young professionals often spend a large portion of their income on rent. In major urban centres such as Accra and Kumasi, rising housing costs have forced many workers to live far from their workplaces, increasing commuting time, transport expenses, and daily stress.



Available data shows the scale of the problem. Ghana currently faces a housing deficit estimated at 1.8 million housing units, according to the national housing data and the 2021 Population and Housing Census. This means millions of people either live in overcrowded accommodation or struggle to secure decent housing altogether. Experts estimate that the country must build over 100,000 housing units annually to keep up with population growth and demand.

The demand for housing continues to grow as Ghana's population expands and urban migration accelerates. Cities attract thousands of people each year whose hope is to find work and better living conditions. Yet housing supply has not kept pace with this growth. The result is overcrowded communities, informal settlements, and rising rents that place enormous pressure on the labour force.

Affordable housing is often described as

housing units that allow individuals and families to meet their accommodation needs and finances without sacrificing other essential expenses such as food, education, healthcare, and transportation. For many workers in Ghana, that balance remains difficult to achieve. Salaries in both the public and private sectors often fall short of the amounts required to secure decent accommodation in urban areas.

The situation is particularly challenging for young workers entering the labour market. A newly recruited nurse, teacher, or administrative officer may struggle to raise the advance rent payments that landlords typically demand. In many cases, tenants are required to pay one or two years of rent in advance, a practice that places heavy financial strain on workers whose earnings are just beginning to stabilize and against the rent laws which limit rent advance to six months.

Government initiatives have attempted to address the housing gap over the years. Institutions such as the State Housing

Company and the Ghana National Housing Corporation were established to expand access to residential accommodation. These bodies have constructed estates in various parts of the country, yet the scale of demand continues to exceed available supply.

According to the Ministry responsible for housing, over 10,700 housing units are currently under development in parts of the Greater Accra Region, including areas such as Pokuase, Kpone, Tesano and Lartebiokorshie. These projects include one bedroom, two bedroom and three-bedroom units intended to support different income groups.

Recent policy discussions have also explored new approaches to housing development. Some proposals focus on public private partnerships that encourage real estate developers to construct housing units at lower costs. Others examine the role of housing cooperatives, where workers pool resources to build and manage residential communities collectively.

Mortgage financing presents another avenue that could support workers seeking long-term housing security. The Ghana Home Loans and the National Housing and Mortgage Fund have been part of efforts to expand access to housing finance. However, mortgage products often remain out of reach of many low and middle-income workers due to high interest rates and strict qualification requirements.

The cost of building materials also affects the affordability of housing in Ghana. Cement, steel, roofing sheets, and other inputs frequently rise in price, increasing the overall cost of construction. Developers pass these costs on to buyers and tenants, making housing less accessible to ordinary workers. Experts have therefore called for greater investment in local building materials such as compressed earth blocks and other alternatives that can reduce construction expenses.

Transport and infrastructure planning also play

a role in housing accessibility. When workers live far from their places of employment, the burden of long commutes becomes part of the cost of housing. Expanding road networks, improving public transportation, and encouraging residential development around industrial zones could help bring housing closer to workplaces.

Some employers have begun exploring staff housing schemes to support their workforce. In sectors such as mining, health care, and education, staff accommodation has helped workers remain close to their jobs while maintaining stable living conditions. Expanding such initiatives could help reduce the housing burden faced by employees in both urban and rural areas.

Affordable housing is not only a social concern but also an economic one. Workers who spend excessive amounts on rent have less income available for savings, education, and investment. When workers live in stable and comfortable environments, productivity often improves. Communities also benefit from stronger social networks, improved sanitation, and safer neighbourhoods.

The vision of providing a roof over every worker's head may appear ambitious, yet it remains achievable through coordinated action. Government agencies, financial institutions, real estate developers, labour unions, and community organizations all have roles to play. Policies that support large scale housing development, accessible financing, and sustainable urban planning could gradually close the housing gap.

For Ghana's labour force, affordable housing represents more than a place to sleep. It represents dignity, stability, and the assurance that hard work can lead to a better quality of life. Ensuring that workers have access to decent homes will shape not only the future of Ghana's cities but also the well-being of the people who keep the country's economy moving every day.

How Ghana Can Make the Best out of AGOA Before the United States Deadline?

By: Sarah Safo Boamah



AS the expiration of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) approaches, Ghana stands at critical crossroad. For over two decades, the trade framework has provided duty-free access for thousands of African products into the U.S. market, creating opportunities for export diversification, industrial growth, and job creation. Yet the window for fully leveraging these benefits is narrowing. The question now is not whether AGOA has helped Ghana, but how Ghana can maximize its remaining opportunities before the deadline reshapes trade realities.

To fully benefit from AGOA in its remaining period, Ghana must deepen its competitiveness in high-potential export sectors. Textiles and garments, processed agricultural products, cocoa derivatives, and light manufactured goods remain among the most promising. However, global buyers demand consistency in quality, certification, and timely delivery.

This calls for stronger quality assurance systems, better packaging standards, and improved logistics. Investment in industrial parks, cold storage facilities, and export-ready infrastructure can help Ghanaian producers

meet international expectations and scale production quickly.

Many of the firms that could benefit most from AGOA are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), yet they often lack financing, technical expertise, and market information. Expanding targeted support through institutions such as the Ghana Export Promotion Authority can help bridge these gaps.

Practical measures to achieve this include export readiness training, product certification assistance, and digital platforms connecting Ghanaian producers directly to U.S. buyers. Strengthening SME participation ensures broader economic impact and reduces reliance on a narrow group of exporters.

One of AGOA's biggest opportunities lies not just in exporting raw commodities, but in exporting value-added goods. Ghana has long been a major exporter of cocoa beans, for example, yet processed chocolate and cocoa-based products command significantly higher returns in international markets.

Encouraging domestic processing, branding, and product innovation will help Ghana capture more value per export and create skilled employment. This shift also aligns with long-term industrialization goals beyond AGOA itself.

Efficient trade procedures are essential if Ghana is to compete with other AGOA eligible countries. Simplifying customs clearance, reducing port delays, and ensuring regulatory transparency can make Ghana a more reliable export partner.

Close coordination among policymakers, particularly within the Ministry of Trade and Industry is vital to ensure exporters receive consistent support. Policy stability and investor

confidence are critical in the final years of AGOA eligibility.

While maximizing short-term gains is essential, Ghana must also prepare for a future where preferential access may diminish or end. AGOA should be treated not only as a trade advantage but as a transitional platform for building global competitiveness.

This includes strengthening regional trade integration through collaboration with institutions such as the African Continental Free Trade Area Secretariat. Expanding intra-African trade can help cushion potential losses from reduced access to U.S. markets.

Foreign and domestic investment remains central to maximizing AGOA's final phase. Investors seeking access to the U.S. market may view Ghana as a production hub particularly if policy incentives, infrastructure, and labour skills are aligned.

Encouraging joint ventures, export-oriented manufacturing, and technology transfer can accelerate industrial capacity while building long-term resilience.

The approaching AGOA deadline represents both urgency and possibility. Ghana has already demonstrated its potential as a



competitive exporter, but the remaining period offers a decisive chance to consolidate gains and build enduring economic strength.

By strengthening export competitiveness, supporting SMEs, promoting value addition, improving trade system, and preparing for a post-preference future, Ghana can transform AGOA from temporary trade benefit into a lasting foundation for industrial and economic growth.

The opportunity is still open but time is limited. The decision taken now will determine whether Ghana merely participates in AGOA's final chapter or fully capitalizes on its legacy.

Turn on the Tap: Why Water Scarcity in Parts of Ghana Is a Crisis We Keep Ignoring

By: Sarah Safo Boamah



IN a country blessed with rivers, lakes, and seasonal rains, it seems almost unthinkable that access to safe and reliable water remains a daily struggle for many communities. From urban neighbourhoods to rural settlements, water scarcity continues to shape lives, strain households, and threaten public health. It is a crisis that quietly deepens even as we grow accustomed to it.

In cities like Accra and Kumasi, residents frequently wake before dawn to store water before supplies run dry. In coastal towns such as Cape Coast and industrial centres like Tema, entire neighbourhood sometimes go days without a drop from their taps. For many families, the routine has become painfully normal, chasing water tankers, queuing at

boreholes, or rationing every bucket.

This is not simply an inconvenience it is a structural failure with far-reaching consequences.

The strain on the national water system is growing. Population expansion, rapid urbanization, and informal settlements have increased demand far beyond what existing infrastructure can comfortably supply. Facilities operated by the Ghana Water Company Limited struggle to meet consumption needs while managing ageing pipelines, leakages, and limited treatment capacity.

Major sources of urban water, including the Weija Dam and Lake Volta, face environmental

and operational challenges from pollution to inconsistent rainfall patterns. Even agencies such as the Volta River Authority must balance competing demands between energy production and water supply management. In short, the system is stretched and increasingly fragile.

Rainfall patterns have become less predictable. Extended dry spells reduce reservoir levels, while intense rains often overwhelm drainage systems rather than replenishing usable supplies. Climate variability is no longer an abstract threat, it is already altering how water is stored, treated, and distributed.

Communities that once relied on seasonal consistency now face uncertainty. For farmers, this means reduced crop yields. For households, it means longer queues and higher costs for water from private vendors.

Water scarcity is not only about thirst. It affects sanitation, hygiene, and disease control. When households cannot access enough clean water, basic practices such as hand-washing, cooking safely, or cleaning living spaces become difficult. This results to increased vulnerability to preventable illnesses.

In densely populated urban areas, irregular supply also encourages unsafe storage practices, which can contaminate otherwise clean water. The burden falls hardest on low-income families, who often pay more per litre for consumption.

Perhaps the most troubling aspect of water scarcity is not its severity but our collective tolerance of it. Temporary shortages are often treated as normal seasonal inconveniences rather than warning signs of systemic failure.

Policy discussions frequently prioritize roads, energy, and housing, visible infrastructure that signals development. Water systems, mostly

hidden underground, receive less urgency until breakdowns become unavoidable.

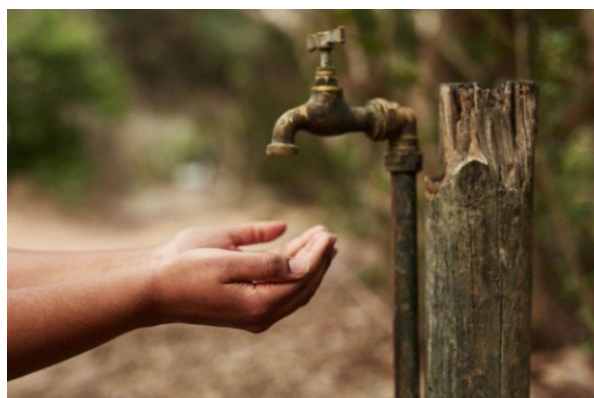
There is also a social dimension. Those with resources can drill private boreholes or buy tanker delivery services. Those without must endure the consequences. This inequality reduces pressure for comprehensive reform because the most affected communities often have the least influence.

Addressing water scarcity requires more than emergency repairs or temporary rationing schedules. It demands sustained investment in infrastructure expansion, maintenance, and modernisation. It requires protecting water bodies from pollution, strengthening urban planning, and integrating climate resilience into long-term policy.

Equally important is public accountability. Reliable water supply is not a luxury, it is a basic necessity for dignity, health, and economic productivity.





Ignoring the crisis does not make it disappear. It only normalises hardship.

Until the day every household can turn on a tap with confidence not uncertainty, water scarcity will remain one of the most urgent challenges we have yet to confront honestly. And the longer we wait, the harder it will be to solve.





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