

Agona East footballers to get Astro Turf in Six Months- Queenstar Maame Pokuah Sawyerr

The workaholic Member of Parliament for Agona East Constituency in the Central Region, Hon Queenstar Maame Pokuah Sawyerr has unveiled a pictorial view of an astro turf to be constructed at Nantefa community in the Agona East Constituency as part of the unveiling a Gala fiesta.

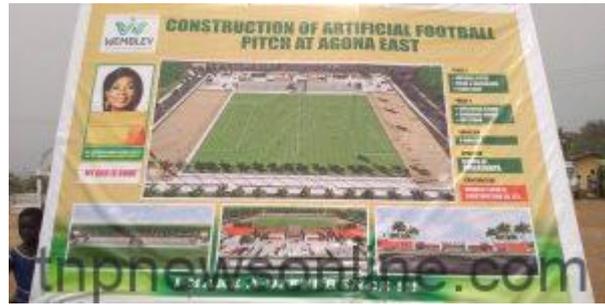


This Astro turf will be completed by six months time and will make the beginning of the gala fiesta in the constituency.



In an interview with the tnpnewsonline.com, Hon Queenstar

Maame Pokuah Sawyerr revealed that the opening match would be played there as part of its commissioning.



She used the opportunity to advise the youth to refrain from immoral acts and be focused with their education.



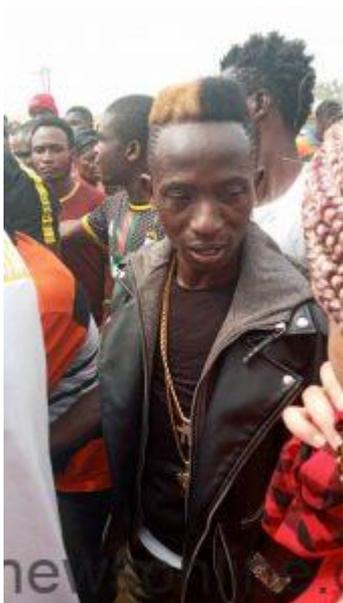
Some top NDC party members were in attendance to support her. They were Hon. Nana Oye Lithur, former Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection, Mr Kofi Adams, former National Organizer of the party and Parliamentary Candidate for Buem Constituency, Hon Nii Lante Vanderpuy, MP for Odododiodio and former Sports Minister among others.



Hon Queenstar Sawyerr also presented footballs to the 100 successful teams ahead of the gala match.



As the event fell on Valentine's Day, Hon Queenstar Maame Pokuah Sawyerr distributed Chocolates to all and sundry gathered.



*Hon Queenstar Maame Pokuah Sawyerr makes a difference...



Source: tnpnewsonline.com

NDC Women to occupy Abronye DC's home

The National Women's Organization of the opposition National Democratic Congress has called on Kwame Baffoe popularly known as Abronye DC, the Bono East Regional New Patriotic Party Chairman to apologize for his unfortunate comment against NDC women or face their wrath to drum home their demand.

READ FULL STATEMENT BELOW

ABRONYE DC MUST RETRACT AND APOLOGISE TO NDC WOMEN

It has come to our attention, comments made on Net2 TV by the Bono Regional Chairman, Kwame Baffoe known as Abronye DC, on the decision by our Deputy National Organizer Chief Hamilton Biney known mainly as Chief Biney to marry Mrs. Afia Akoto of the New Patriotic Party who doubles as the Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the Microfinance and Small Loans Centre (MASLOC).

In his comment, Mr. Baffoe made disparaging comments about women of the National Democratic Congress (NDC). We see the comments as unfortunate especially coming from a man who should know better. As a Regional Chairman of the ruling party, we expected higher standards of engagement from him.

While we congratulate Chief Hamilton Biney for the bold step

taken to take a wife, and while we state that we have no problem about his choice of political affiliation to marry from, we would not take any irresponsible comment about NDC women in this regard.

We are by this statement, calling on Mr. Baffoe to, as a matter of urgency, retract this irresponsible comment and apologise to the women of the National Democratic Congress. Our women are people of enviable repute and would not countenance any efforts at denigrating their persons.

The Women's Wing of the great NDC reveres its hardworking women, and remains proud of their contributions towards the development of the party and the nation at large. It must not lie in any tongue to assume supremacy over running down our dignity for political expediency.

Failure to act on the demands of this press release, we would be left with no option than to adopt means that would drive our revulsion at the conduct and comments of Mr. Baffoe.

Signed:

Dr Hanna Louisa Bisiw
National Women's Organizer
National Democratic

Source: tnpnewsonline.com

**Ignore the Fake News: Study
Leave With Salary For**

Teachers Won't Be Cancelled!

The Minister of Education, Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh is gradually becoming the number one victim of fake news as moves to slur him thickens.

The latest of such scheming is a news item circulating by 'CoverGhana.com that Study Leave with pay for teachers to be cancelled soon and attributed to the minister.

The Education Minister has on no occasion made such statement as being peddled on some suspected fake news portal established purposely to denigrate the minister.

A highly placed source at the Ministry of Education, said that there are no such plans but rather better plans for teachers who will be on Study Leave.

The source said that it was an avowed agenda of the ministry under the watch of Dr. Prempeh to offer teachers the best.

This, the source said could be verified as teachers are now being catered and cared for than never before.

"It is simply unthinkable for anyone to suggest that Study Leave with pay with be cancelled soon," the source said.

The source said: "The story is nothing but one of the numerous dirty machinations against the hardworking minister and must be treated with the contempt it deserves."

Source: tnpnewsonline.com

Mining to finance NPP activities was to be done legally – Wontumi

The Ashanti Regional Chairman of the governing New Patriotic Party (NPP), Bernard Antwi Boasiako, has said the mention of his name in an audiovisual recording involving **a suspect in the disappearance of seized excavators**, is not an indicator of

culpability in illegal mining.

Also known as Chairman Wontumi, the Regional Chairman insisted on Metro TV's Good Evening Ghana that he did not have any illegal mining concessions.

The recording featured the voices of the Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation, Prof. Kwabena Frimpong-Boateng and the suspended First Vice Chairman of the NPP in the Central Region, **Horace Ekow Ewusi**.

Though not conclusive, suggestions have been made that they were discussing plans to allow NPP members to engage in illegal mining to fund party activities.

The land for the alleged illegal mining was said to belong to Chairman Wontumi.

But in response, Chairman Wontumi claimed the discussions centred on him allowing party members to mine on a concession he had acquired legally.

He explained that he first got involved when he reported the activities of Chinese nationals stealing from his concession.

He made his report to Prof. Frimpong-Boateng, stressing that he had worked hard for his mining rights.

"Me, I have suffered. If we are talking about somebody who has suffered in mining, it is me," he noted.

"They went to stop them. So the time they were going, Ekow Ewusi was the person who led them... so immediately they got there, they stopped them [from encroaching on my concession]," he recounted.

After receiving the help, Chairman Wontumi said he was then asked to by Ekow Ewusi to consider ceding part of his land to some party members via a letter of consent to help the party.

According to Chairman Wontumi, Ekow Ewusi said: “It would be better that you allow some of the party people who are looking for the concessions to work.”

“So he mentions John Boadu’s name.”

Chairman Wontumi admitted that he was willing to cede out part of his concession to party members to mine on “but they never came back.”

Institutional Transformation: Scholarships Secretariat Moving With Speed

Institution Transformation: Scholarships Secretariat leads the way

Set up in 1960 under the Office of the President, the Ghana Scholarships Secretariat is mandated to handle and award government scholarships for the human resource development and growth of Ghana.

These Scholarships are meant for not only brilliant but needy students but for any qualified Ghanaian who merits it.

Set out to become a world class awarding institution using the best practices to deliver service to the satisfaction of its stakeholders, the Scholarships Secretariat has over the past three years transformed itself into one of the most effective State agencies.

other functions of the Secretariat include

- To offer bursaries for post graduate training locally in public tertiary institutions.
- To strengthen the human resource capacity and provide a conducive working environment for the Secretariat.
- To increase equitable access to and participation in quality education at all levels

Turning point

Walking into the premises of the Ghana Scholarships Secretariat in January 2017, one will be met with a setting that did not meet the standards of a State agency.

Staff worked from a very inhumane environment with just a single vehicle (Nissan patrol) which was used to carry out the entire duties of the Secretariat.

As if that was not enough, the over 33 staff of the office had to make do with just three (3) computers and two (2) printers which adversely affected the work of the Secretariat.

Moreover, the female staff had to trek for minutes in order to get a place of convenience for themselves.

Regrettably, it was very shocking to learn that in this modern era of Information Communication Technology, a very strategic national asset like the Scholarships Secretariat had no active website.

As at now, the Secretariat has an upgraded and very interactive website which can be easily assessed by all persons for information with regards to the activities and openings of Scholarships.

Eager to turn things around, the new administration, led by Mr Kingsley Agyemang, immediately provided a salubrious working environment for the staff to improve efficiency of work.

Knowing how important this office is, the new administration quickly procured 5 cross country vehicles and a saloon car to

aid work of the Secretariat, which has yielded positive results.

Staff Motivation

Aware that a motivated staff can go a long way to impact on the work of the Secretariat, a number of measures were put in place to train the staff including sponsorship packages for them to further their training both locally and abroad.

Again, not oblivious of the fact people derive value, staff motivation was shored up to the extent that those who had voluntarily put themselves up to be transferred or posted out of the Secretariat rescinded their decision and placed their foot on the wheels of progress to make the Secretariat live up to its mandate.

Clearing of arrears

However, one daunting task that faced the new administration was to clear the over GH¢230 million evolving liability debts inherited from the previous administration, which resulted in Ghana being blacklisted from a number of foreign universities.

With the believe that the proof of the pudding is in the eating, the new management set out to work assiduously in order to bring back the confidence that people had in the Secretariat and ensure that it sets out to execute its mandate to the benefit of all Ghanaian students irrespective of their background, geographical location or political party affiliation.

End to students' unrest

Times past, there was no day without news of students picketing at Ghana missions abroad for delay in their stipends and fees and locally, public second cycle institutions in the three northern regions; Northern, Brong Ahafo and Northern

Volta could go a whole year without the payment of their boarding fees.

Not only was this embarrassing to the Government but exposed the students to all sorts of ridicule and the temptation to engage in social vices to make ends meet.

Through hard work, Ghanaian scholarship beneficiaries abroad have seen the difference and periodically now writing write to eulogize the President for the timely payment of their stipends and other commitments

Non-Bilateral Scholarships

There were virtually no non-bilateral scholarships at the Secretariat as at 2017. The new management signed a number of MoUs with foreign universities with a focus on Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) related programmes. It can be recalled that in 2018 alone, 66% of all scholarships awarded were STEM related subject areas. The remaining 34% was scholarships awarded in non-STEM related programmes.

The number of Postgraduate beneficiaries in STEM related awards for the 2018 was 70% whilst 30% of awardees were undergraduate students.

As at December 31 2019, 70 % of all non-bilateral awards were STEM related scholarship awards, leaving 30% for non-STEM related programmes.

The total number of Postgraduate students for STEM related programmes was 72% with 28% being at the undergraduate level of study.

Bilateral Agreements

It was realised that the Secretariat did not pursue programmes that would inure to the benefit of the country. For instance, the new management saw that Ghanaians were being sponsored to

countries like Algeria, (a French and Arabic speaking country) to pursue a degree course in English language. To this end, there was a review in all the bilateral agreements to reflect the human resource demand in the country with a focus on STEM related programmes.

Thesis and Bursary grants

Another thing was the existence of thesis and bursary grants for only Postgraduate students in the Public Tertiary Institutions. What existed was just a manual system of awards which led to duplication of claims. Even with this, beneficiaries had to do with their payment of grants on table tops which could delay for more than a year.

Set out to rectify this issue, a software was introduced to ensure the efficient and stress-free operations in the disbursement of grants whilst the problem of table top payment was rectified. As at now, Scholarship grants are paid directly into bank accounts of beneficiary students within the academic year with no arrears.

Protecting the kitty

One mandate of the new administration was to save money in its operations just as President Akufo-Addo has assured the nation of protecting the public purse.

A number of efforts have been carried out to ensure this. The Secretariat realizing that there was no implementation of capacity audit and headcount reports, efforts were made to put this in place. It can be reported that the frequent and robust implementation of capacity audit and headcount reports saved the Secretariat almost GHC20Million in the 2016/2017, 2017/2018, 2018/19 academic years. (From Second Cycle Awards).

Again, the new management renegotiated the Ghana Government deal with Cuba for the Medical Training of Ghanaians in Cuba. Whereas the previous management, in 2012, had to dole out a

whopping amount of USD\$96,090.00 as tuition and accommodation fee per student for 6 years , that cannot be said of today.

The renegotiation has saved the public purse a lot of money by almost half of the previous amount in 2012. In 2019 alone, tuition and accommodation per student for 6 years is now USD\$55,000.

Innovations

- **Farmers Scholarship Scheme**

As part of efforts to make sure that scholarship benefits every Ghanaian living everywhere, President Nana Akufo-Addo during the 2018 Farmers Day celebration announced a package for wards of farmers and fishermen, known as *the Presidential Farmers Scholarship Scheme* with phase one implemented last year. An amount of GHC2 million was released by the Finance Ministry for a smooth take off.

The Secretariat collaborated with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture and honoured the pledge made by the President and sent the national winners of the 2018 National Best Farmers to Morocco for capacity training. One interesting thing about this scheme was that these farmers also had their workers and dependents as beneficiaries.

This bold initiative has been welcomed by farmers and fishermen across the country who believe this groundbreaking policy will help them improve on their farming activities.

- **District Scholarship Scheme**

Last year at Fijai in the Western Region, the Secretariat again going by the saying “put your money where your mouth is” launched the first-ever decentralised district level scholarship scheme as part of a blueprint to Free Meritorious Tertiary Education in the country.

The Secretariat liaised with the Regional Coordinating Councils, Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies for the establishment of the District Scholarships Review Committee (DSRC).

The composition, made up of traditional leaders, district chief executives, a representative of tertiary institutions and the Ghana Education Service as well as a representative from the Scholarship secretariat, shortlisted and interviewed applicants who had applied for scholarships at the various assemblies and made recommendations to the Central Scholarship Committee in Accra for consideration and scholarship awards.

An amount of GH¢30 million was set aside by the government for this all-important exercise.

- **EOCO**

The Scholarship Secretariat again in collaboration with the Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO) and the support from government, has retrieved scholarship funds that were unutilised from headteachers and that had ensured that the secretariat was able to settle supplementary allowances and other entitlements to students in various countries.

Labour bank

In order to address the issue of graduate unemployment, the Scholarship Secretariat in partnership with the Association of Ghana Industries and the Ghana Investment Promotion Corporation, has created a labour bank to allow industries and businesses to easily source the requisite manpower for growth.

Government, through the Scholarship Secretariat, is aiming to get to a point where it can export excess labour to its neighbouring countries.

MoUs

As part of efforts to exchange ideas and students between Ghana and other countries, both on the continent and outside, a number of deals in the form of Memoranda of Understanding has been signed.

In June this year, the Scholarships Secretariat signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the St George University School of Medicine in the Caribbean island of Grenada.

Under the agreement, selected students who have first degrees in medical sciences would be offered scholarship for post graduate training in the medical field.

With St George University contributing about 40 per cent to the Grenada Gross Domestic Product (GDP) due to its international affiliations to over 400 schools across the globe, the deal will give the Ghanaian students lots of exposure to different cultures and experiences in building that capacity and skills.

Another MoU was also signed with Koc University in Turkey to provide scholarship to Ghanaian students to study in the university.

The agreement involved scholarship packages, ranging between 50 to 100 per cent. It will be fully funded by the awarding institution with the secretariat as the coordinating agency.

The programme will cover Master's and PhD courses.

Koç University is a private non-profit comprehensive research institution that offers a world class educational experience in Istanbul, Turkey and the highest-ranking university in Turkey based on Times Higher Education rankings for 2018.

It is also ranked the 8th best university in Europe.

Other similar agreements have been signed with other institutions in the United Kingdom (UK), United States of America (USA), South Korea and Canada, Czech Republic among others.

Support for Technical education

With the resolve of the President to transform Ghana into an industrialised nation, the role of technical education cannot be overemphasized.

The scholarships Secretariat in order to be part of this agenda, has moved from just awarding scholarships to students undertaking courses in technical and vocational education to supporting agencies that focuses on technical and vocational training.

In 2018, an amount of GH500,000 was presented to the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) by the Secretariat to help train more youth to acquire hand on skills.

The amount would be used in the purchase of tools and for the payment of fees. This falls in line with government's commitment to the technical vocational education and training sector.

The Scholarships Secretariat has given its firm assurance that it will continue to support the NVTI because of the important role it plays in the nation's development.

Endorsement

The works of the Secretariat under the able leadership of Kingsley Agyemang has caught the attention of the legislature with Members of Parliament lauding it for bringing a new breadth of life to its operations especially the introduction of the District Scholarship Scheme.

Legislators including MP for Nsawam-Adoagyiri, Frank Annor Dompoh, have lauded the decentralisation of the operations of the Secretariat stressing that it will bring scholarships to the doorsteps of all deserving Ghanaians.

Introduction of conference and research allowances

The Secretariat is about to roll out research and conference allowances for students on scholarships who are studying for a postgraduate doctoral degree.

This decision was reached as a result of the huge expenses incurred by PhD students in relation to research and publication of their work which has the impact to affect their ability to gain exposure and form networks by publishing in academic journals.

It also falls in line with a decision made by the National Accreditation Board and the Ministry of Education, which require a doctoral degree as a prerequisite qualification for university teaching.

Online application for scholarships

From May this year, new applications for scholarship will be processed online to prevent applicants from applying in writing to the secretariat.

What this means is that applicants will instead have to register online, provide information on academic transcripts, biodata and any other relevant information and generate a unique number during the online process.

Applicants will then need to take an online aptitude test as part of the process to qualify for a scholarship to increase transparency and meritocracy.

As soon as one's online application is successful, an SMS or email will be received indicating that the application is successful or otherwise.

Once the application is deemed successful, the applicant will be notified to proceed to the district he selected when processing the application to appear before the District Scholarship Review Committee.

Other feats

Partnership with Ministry of Health (Medical and Dental Council of Ghana) for the seamless integration of returning medical students.

Collaboration with GNPC for the sponsorship of 200 Ghanaians for Medical training in Cuba.

The Education office at the Ghana High Commission in UK was revived to enhance the operations and activities of the Scholarships Secretariat. The office was revamped and resourced to handle scholarship student concerns such as passports, visas, permits, internships, monitoring of studies and other related services in Europe and the Americas.

Source: tnpnewsonline.com

Multimedia In Trouble For Lies Against Chief Of Staff's Aide

The Multimedia Group is in trouble for peddling falsehood about Mr. Frank Asiedu Bekoe, the director of Political Affairs to the Chief of Staff at the Office of The President, in connection with a documentary it recently aired on auction cars.

Mr. Bekoe's lawyers are demanding immediate retraction and apology from the Multimedia Group for defaming him.

A letter dated January 21, 2020, signed by Mr. Gary Nimako, Managing Partner, Safo & Marfo @ Law, said that the documentary, produced by Kwetey Netey, which was aired on January 15, 2020, had created false impression about Mr. Bekoe.

In the letter, it was stated that the said documentary, which was pushed on "myjoyonline," headlined "Joynews Uncovers Confiscated Cars Were Auctioned Cheaply to Politically Connected," was inaccurate.

"In the said documentary, you created the false impression that our client who was then Member of the Confiscated Assets Committee allocated and auctioned seized vehicles to politically connected cronies of the government without the beneficiaries paying the required assessed duties and further indicated in the said documentary that Mr. Bekoe declined to comment when contacted by the producer of the documentary, Kwetey Netey," the letter said.

It stated that the narratives in the documentary were inaccurate, adding that when Kwetey Netey contacted Mr. Bekoe on the issues raised in the documentary, he requested the journalist to put his questions into writing for them to be addressed, but it was not done.

It is therefore false to state in the documentary that Mr. Bekoe declined to comment on the issue.

The letter further stated that on the pricing of vehicles, Mr. Bekoe, as then Member of the Confiscated Assets Committee, had no input in the determination of prices or assessable duties on the confiscated vehicles.

“The imposition of taxes on vehicles, charges, duties is the prerogative of the Customs Division of the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA). Hence the suggestion that Mr. Bekoe had given cars away cheaply is untenable,” it said.

On recommendation of beneficiaries, the letter said that Mr. Bekoe only recommended people who applied to purchase confiscated vehicles to the Commissioner General of GRA for consideration, adding “It is instructive to note that the said letter was only a recommendation, the outcome of which was to be solely determined by the Customs Division of the GRA. Therefore the letter of recommendation endorsed by Mr. Bekoe cannot and should not be construed as a letter of allocation.”

The letter said that contrary to the impression created by the documentary, the persons recommended to the Customs Division of the GRA by Mr. Bekoe are not “political cronies,” as alleged; rather, they are citizens of Ghana.

Mr. Bekoe, through Safo & Marfo @ Law, is demanding immediate apology and retraction of the statements attributed to him within seven days upon receipt of the letter in the same prominence attached to the documentary.

“Failure by Multimedia to retract and apologize to Mr. Bekoe within seven days upon receipt of the letter, court action will be initiated to vindicate Mr. Bekoe’s right without any further recourse to Multimedia,” the letter warned.

Source: tnpnewsonline.com

Mahama's Running Mate: NDC Refusing To Think

The National Democratic Congress (NDC) is in a quagmire because the party is refusing to do things in a manner that would benefit it, going into the 2020 elections.

Political drama, personality clash, competition of agendas, and raging turf wars are destroying the NDC and those in the party who ought to know better are the very people involved in the dirty game.

The party is so much engrossed in self-destruction that it is refusing to acknowledge that power dynamics and unwritten rules exist for the betterment of the party.

The self-destructive button was pressed just months after the party lost the 2016 elections under circumstances that could best be described as nauseating.

Instead of doing serious self-assessment and fixing the broken joints, the doors of the NDC are ajar to the extent that even Student Representative Councils in Senior Secondary Schools are better organized than the entity that could boast of heavyweights in Ghana's political landscape.

Certain elements within the umbrella family feel that it is when they become power grabbers or political climbers that they would be recognized in the family, when indeed such thinking was nothing but a figment of their imagination.

Being the party that made the then opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP) to shred its integrity and credibility with numerous false corruption allegations, it is expected that it would behave in a certain direction that would help in restoring its credibility and image.

But that has not been the case because of selfish agenda coupled with greed.

The NDC has refused to do critical thinking not because the party lacks critical thinkers but because the party is fast losing its bearing.

Forces that have to be truthful and display sincerity and honesty have allowed themselves to be led by money and other goodies that come with power.

In all these, the NDC is playing the ostrich game and doing things as if everything is in order going into 2020 with the NPP as the incumbent.

First, the NDC as a party shot itself in the foot by allowing some Members of Parliament (MPs) who were alleged to have received double salaries to contest in the primaries to become Parliamentary candidates for 2020.

The matter is still pending and the government knowing what is at stake this year, through the Attorney General's Department, can bring up the case anytime and play it to its advantage. What it means is that those candidates would be battling the matter in court and could hardly make time to campaign for the elections.

What is amazing is the fact that some of the MPs caught in the double salary saga were mentioned as potential running-mate of Candidate John Dramani Mahama, creating the impression that the NDC lacks people for the running-mate position.

The running-mate issue itself has been reduced to comedy, as it is being treated like one of those political issues.

Whoever partners a candidate for Presidential election is very crucial and that is what the hawks in the NDC are forgetting.

So disgusting are certain names that have come as likely people to partner John Mahama that political observers and

opponents of the NDC are making fun of the candidate and the party.

The NPP knowing what it is about has been fixing pressure on the NDC presidential candidate to name his running-mate quickly.

The truth of the matter is that some the names that are making the rounds as likely running-mate have been pencilled down for investigations and prosecution by the NPP administration.

How would Ghanaians take the NDC should a running-mate be named today, and tomorrow that person is up for investigations and possible prosecution?

The whole running-mate thing, which is the sole prerogative of the candidate, has become a cash cow for some top party people.

What such dishonest people are doing is that they collect money from others to hype them as people who could not be bypassed by Candidate Mahama as he searches for his running-mate.

The party that used age as a campaign tool against the then Candidate Akufo-Addo now has certain persons who are older becoming interested in having the running-mate slot.

Media hirelings have been engaged to run people down and promote the interest of certain persons in the manner that they would be seen as the frontrunners in the exercise.

There have been series of articles on various persons within the corridors of the party. The tone of some of the articles is purposely to run some persons down, something that does not augur well for the party.

Presently, attention is in the Ashanti Region where the Ashanti Regional Caucus is staking a huge claim in the running-mate.

Certain names that have come up from the regions and being pushed by the caucus are very interesting because some of them have not even checked themselves to know whether they are material for running-mate or not.

Those persons mentioned have issues that bother on investigations by the country's anti-graft agencies and they are likely to be harassed by the NPP just to shred the credibility of the NDC.

Some of the names that have come up include Mr. Kwabena Duffuor, former Finance Minister; Mr. Samuel Sarpong, former Ashanti Regional Minister; Mr. Kwame Awuah-Darko, former TOR and BOST boss, Mr. Kojo Bonsu, former Kumasi Mayor and a host of others.

It is important for the NDC and those pushing for some of the persons to be wiser and think about the overall interest of the numerous members, supporters and sympathizers of the party and stop pursuing their own interests.

Almost all the names coming from the Ashanti Region are suspect and they must be checked because the integrity and credibility is at stake.

The NPP would pounce on them and make mince of the NDC should anyone who had been questioned by the anti-graft agencies be picked by Mr. Mahama as his running-mate.

Mr. Mahama should not allow anyone to hoodwink him into making a wrong decision. He should get someone who comes to the table with credibility and integrity to make the ticket overly attractive for Ghanaians to buy into it.

Source: tnpnewsonline.com

Spio-Garbrah Schools NPP over 1-District-1 Factory programme

Spio-Garbrah writes:

At last, the NPP government has admitted through Minister Akoto Osei that they will be unable to establish a factory in each of the 275 Districts by the end of their first term...contrary to what the Ghanaian electorate was led to believe during the 2016 campaign.

But while opponents of the NPP could gloat and rejoice at this disappointing news, I am not inclined to rejoice, as delays or failures in the IDIF program implies continued high levels of youth, women and graduate unemployment.

May I respectfully suggest to the NPP government that they can ask their own unemployed members whether they would prefer a new voter ID card from the new electoral register, or rather get a good long-term job. Once the NPP administration gets to the realization that jobs and good jobs are more important to most Ghanaians today than new voter ID cards, they may decide to invest the GHC 400 million budgeted for the new voter register in establishing new factories to create employment. The GHC 400 million budget for the new voter register could help to create at least 400 new factories in possibly all the districts.

If the government contributed just GHC 1 million in equity towards any factory project, that would be enough to attract another GHC 2-4 million of equity from other investors which could then be used to generate some GHC 5-7 million of debt from banks for any project managed by the private sector. 400 Factories valued at between GHC 5-15 million each are more than adequate to process most of the fruits, vegetables, cereals and other crops that routinely get rotten on Ghanaian farms or in transit to markets. Then there are furniture, electrical, extrusion, concrete, electronics, plastics, clothing, ceramics, aluminium, construction material and all kinds of other factories that need to be built to grow the Ghanaian economy.

The 100,000 people that these factories could initially employ could grow to 1 million people or more as the factories succeed, grow, expand and diversify. So NPP, please help to create more factories to employ more Ghanaians, to add value to our agric and other products, to increase our exports, reduce our dependency on imports, and strengthen the depreciating cedi. The proposed new voters register will not put food on anybody's table.

Source: tnpnewsonline.com

GES Under Threat

The Ghana Education Service (GES) has been marked for destabilization for political reasons.

Certain elements for political reasons have planned to use teacher unions and unemployed teacher trainees to terrorize the GES.

The demonstration by some trained teachers who were yet to be posted to start working, staged at the premises of the GES in Accra a few days ago, was to test the grounds for future unprovoked attacks on the country's education supervisory outfit.

The lead character in the agenda is a former president of one of the teacher unions in Ghana (name withheld).

He has been coordinating the assault on the GES and some personalities playing the front role in the scheme of affairs.

It has been established that the January 13, 2020 demonstration was staged at the behest of those in charge of the agenda to destabilize the GES.

It has been revealed that some of the persons that took part in that demonstration were not teachers at all, but hirelings engaged for that purpose.

That demonstration was staged by teachers who graduated from 2016, 2017 and 2018 after training in various teacher training institutions throughout the country.

They had earlier picketed at the same venue on January 10, this year.

The teachers and their coordinators for the disturbances were emboldened after the picketing and decided to have a full blown demonstration without permit.

The protestors had lied that they were invited by the GES, according to the police that arrested some of the protestors.

The GES Director-General, Professor Kwasi Opoku Amankwa, for instance, has been earmarked for serious character assassination.

Various social media platforms have been established for the purposes of running the GES boss down.

It was through such platforms that the disgruntled teachers were mobilized for the demonstration that led to the arrest of them for perpetrating an illegal act.

The GES had earlier explained that some of the teachers would be employed while the others wait for clearance to be secured from the Ministry of Finance in order to be employed.

However, because of the planned mischief against the GES, the teachers behaved as if there was no communication to tell them of the arrangements.

There are indications that another illegitimate demonstration is in the offing to make things to look as if the GES was antagonizing the teachers that it was to employ.

Source: tnpnewsonline.com

Nobody Apart from Customs Fixes Prices Of Auction Cars

It has been established that no person, apart from the Customs Division of the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA), has the power to fix prices for auction vehicles.

It is therefore inaccurate and balderdash for anyone to suggest that certain personalities in the current government fix prices of auction vehicles.

Accra-based Joy FM in a documentary accused certain figures at the Presidency, including the Political Aide to the Chief of Staff, Mr. Frank Asiedu Bekoe, who it claimed were abusing the

auction system.

It is instructive to know that per the structure of the GRA, Mr. Bekoe cannot determine the prices of cars allocated, that function is professionally conducted by Customs Division of the GRA hence the issue of giving cars away cheaply untenable.

Persons at the Presidency could only recommend people for consideration by the Commissioner General of the GRA.

It therefore stands to reason that letters from the Presidency were only recommendation and not to force anyone at GRA to give out auction cars.

The outcome of such recommendation was solely determined by the Customs Division of the GRA, making claims by Joy News that Mr. Bekoe exerted pressure on officers involved in the final decision palpably false.

Per facts checked, only few persons that were recommended for cars by the Office of the Chief of Staff had the cars, an indication that no pressure was mounted on the officers of the GRA.

Other persons that were recommended turned down the offer because the vehicles were unserviceable, whilst some vehicles could not be located as they had been given to their original owners/importers on first offer.

According to the Joy FM report and as confirmed by the custom Officer, it is absolutely a normal practice for institutions/persons to send proposals to the customs division of GRA to be "CONSIDERED" during allocation. Therefore, an application for consideration CANNOT and SHOULD NOT be misconstrued to be a letter of allocation.

Auction vehicles by the Customs have over the years become a huge controversy because of the politics of how it is run.

Political party members and sympathizers rely on the auction regime to own cars and attempts to streamline things have always been resisted by those who want to benefit from the auction.

The current GRA Board Chairman, Professor Stephen Adei, upon his appointment, has altered how auction of confiscated and forfeited vehicles and goods should be handled.

Source: tnpnewsonline.com