



NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE GADANGME COUNCIL

Anyemimeɪ, Ataameɪ ke Awomeɪ, miɲba nyɛdeɲ omanyɛ.

1. As we usher in a brand-new year, I extend warm greetings and heartfelt gratitude to all members and stakeholders of the GaDangme Council.

2024 has been a remarkable year for our Association and it is only fitting to reflect on our achievements and express profound appreciation for your unwavering support and commitment.

2. This year, we made significant strides in

advancing the welfare of the GaDangme people:

2.1. Empowering Community Voices: We successfully secured Provisional Authorisation (Frequencies) to operate three community FM radio stations within the Greater-Accra Region to broadcast exclusively in the Ga and Dangme languages; a major step towards amplifying our voices, preserving our culture, and fostering unity across our communities.

2.2 Educational Opportunities for GaDangme Youth: Through strategic advocacy, just like last year, we secured twenty (20) additional slots for GaDangme students to attend the prestigious Accra College of Education. As you are no doubt aware, this programme of sponsoring Ga and Dangme languages students started about four (4) years ago though we brought fresh impetus since last years. Unfortunately more Dangme Students take advantage over the Ga students. We are asking everyone to work together and use all ideas to make things fair for everyone.

2.3 In addition to the said sponsorship, in the course of the year, the University of Professional Studies, Accra (UPSA), has generously granted Ten (10) full scholarships to deserving GaDangme students who meet their admission requirements. This is a testament to the power of collaboration and the value placed on education as a driver of progress.



2.4 We shall very soon publish the eligibility criteria for brilliant but needy students to apply to attend a selection interview. We need to act quickly, as the university has announced it will reopen for the first semester in January 2025. It is hoped that after graduation these persons will make a strong impact on GaDangme affairs.

3. Supporting Bright Futures: Your financial contributions have been invaluable in providing school fees and educational support for several GaDangme students. Last year we launched an appeal for funds to pay the fees of the students and this year too we did the same. Currently we have made full payments of fees for fresh students as well as 70% of continuing students.

Your generosity has ensured that many young individuals continue their education and work toward achieving their dreams.

4. These milestones would not have been possible without the tireless efforts, selflessness, and dedication of leadership, members, partners, and well-wishers. Your contributions, both in resources and time, have paved the way for these successes, and for that, we are profoundly grateful.

5. In collaboration with the GaDangme Upliftment Group, we were able to assist them to mount GaDangme Samai Atuu/Mohee backdrops during the Homowo and other Dangme Festivals to signify that we also have welcoming words. The President also took part in the sod cutting ceremony for the construction of a new maternity block for Prampram Hospital sponsored by GaDangme Europa Association. The Council met with the Greater Accra Regional House of Chiefs and also the Regional Minister, all in an attempt to explore collaboration in our forward march.

6. We are excited to share that, after persistent efforts with the NCA, we now have three Community FM frequencies to broadcast in Ga and Dangme across three locations in the

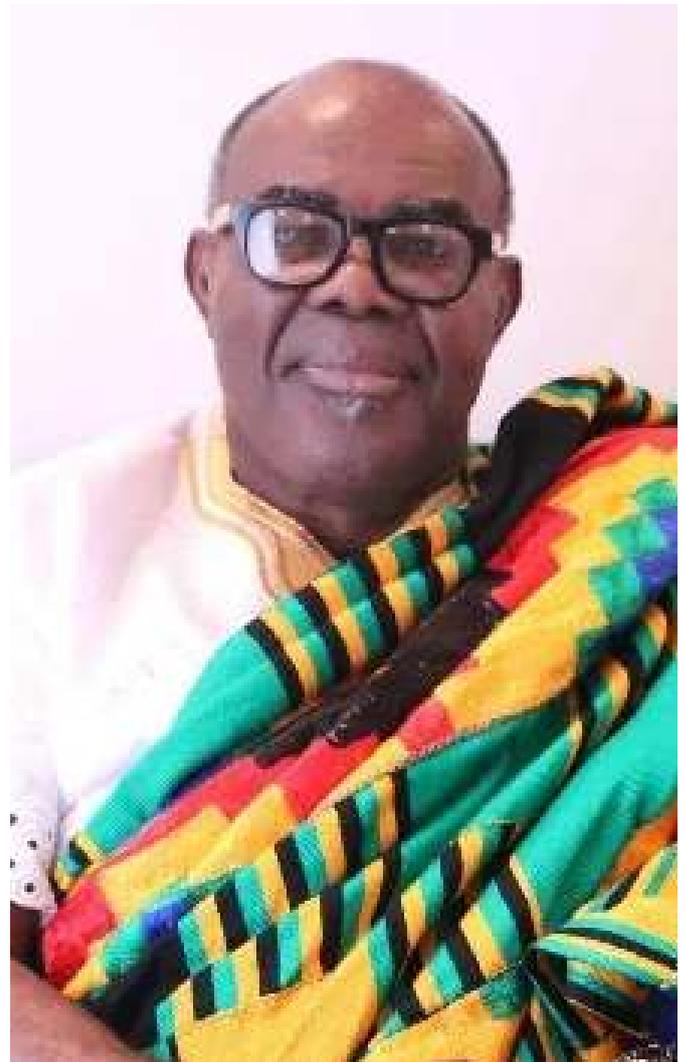
Region. We are confident that, with time, these frequencies can be upgraded to commercial ones—because anything is possible!

As we step into 2025, let us renew our collective commitment to the cause of uplifting GaDangme people. The work ahead is immense, but with unity and determination, we will continue to build a brighter and more prosperous future for our community.

7. On behalf of the GaDangme Council, I wish you all a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year. May this year bring greater opportunities and blessings to all.

Together, we move forward in strength and purpose!

*Yours in service,
Hon Ayikoi Otoo
President, GaDangme Council*





UPSA/GADANGME STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP

As part of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and in a significant stride towards empowering the youth of the GaDangme community, the University of Professional Studies, Accra (UPSA) and the GaDangme Council (GDC) have officially signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) aimed at providing educational opportunities for deserving students. This partnership will award scholarships covering tuition and accommodation to ten deserving but financially challenged GaDangme indigenes to pursue their studies at UPSA.

The signing ceremony, which took place at the UPSA campus, was attended by the Vice-

Chancellor of UPSA, Professor Abednego Okoe Amartey, and the President of GDC, Hon. Ayikoi Otoo. Both leaders expressed their enthusiasm for this partnership, which aims to open doors of opportunity for brilliant GaDangme youth while investing in the development of the community.

"This scholarship program is a testament to UPSA's commitment to social impact and our belief that quality education should be accessible to all, regardless of one's financial background," stated Professor Amartey. "We are honoured to collaborate with the GDC and look forward to welcoming these talented students to our campus."

Honourable Ayikoi Otoo, on behalf of the GDC, echoed these sentiments, saying, "Education is the bedrock of community empowerment. Through this partnership with



UPSA, we can identify and support GaDangme students who have the potential to become future leaders and change-makers within our communities." The Council is optimistic that this collaboration will inspire other institutions to invest in the education of underprivileged GaDangme students.

The scholarship recipients will be selected through a rigorous application process that evaluates academic excellence, financial need, and community involvement. The successful applicants will receive full tuition coverage as well as accommodation support for the duration of their studies at UPSA.

This landmark initiative is expected to have

a transformative impact, not only on the lives of the scholarship recipients but also on the broader GaDangme community. By investing in the education of these bright individuals, UPSA and GDC are paving the way for sustainable development and empowerment within the GaDangme region.

As the partnership takes effect, both organizations are committed to closely monitoring the progress of the scholarship recipients and exploring avenues for further collaboration to create a more equitable and prosperous future for all.

As we look forward to the impact of this MOU, the selected scholarship recipients will

not only benefit from financial support but also gain access to a network of mentors and resources at UPSA, setting them on a path to success.

This initiative marks a hopeful beginning for many young individuals, paving the way for

future collaborations aimed at enhancing educational opportunities within the GaDangme community.

Stay tuned for updates as the program unfolds and the first cohort of scholars embark on their educational journey at UPSA.



HAVE YOU REGISTERED AS A MEMBER OF THE GADANGME COUNCIL?

Please follow this link to register: <https://forms.gle/uAVhUWrtR2AeAdB76>



GADANGME COUNCIL

**Join the GaDangme Council!
Embrace Your Heritage!!
Empower Our Community!!!**

Are you a proud member of the GaDangme community? Do you belong to a GaDangme association? Join us at the GaDangme Council to preserve our rich cultural heritage and promote unity among GaDangmes worldwide!

WHO WE ARE:

The GaDangme Council, established as a corporate registered organisation limited by guarantee, granting it power to acquire and manage properties, enter into contracts and engage in various activities within the laws of Ghana, is dedicated to:

- Promoting and preserving GaDangme culture and traditions.
- Supporting community development and educational initiatives.
- Fostering unity and cooperation among GaDangmes globally.
- The most **respected** and **authoritative** voice which advocates for GaDangme communities, associations and people worldwide!

WHY AFFILIATE YOUR ASSOCIATION WITH US?

- **Collaborate:** Collaborate with a trusted partner committed to supporting your community projects.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Connect with GaDangme leaders and members worldwide.
- **Educational Initiatives:** Collaborate on educational programs and scholarships.
- **Recognition:** Gain visibility and recognition for your association.

WHY JOIN US AS AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBER?

- **Connect with Fellow GaDangmes:** Build lasting relationships with GaDangme people across the globe.
- **Participate in Cultural Events:** Join us for festivals, workshops, and other cultural celebrations to promote GaDangme.
- **Make a Difference:** Contribute to projects that improve our communities and preserve our heritage.

GET INVOLVED:

1. **Become a Member:** Join our network of passionate individuals dedicated to making a positive impact.
2. **Affiliate:** Join forces with us to make a bigger impact.
3. **Volunteer:** Offer your skills and time to support our programs and initiatives.
4. **Donate:** Contribute financially to help us achieve our mission and support our activities.

CONTACT US:

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Phone: +233-20-201-1992

Follow us on social media: [@GaDangmeCouncil](#) | [\[Facebook\]](#) | [\[WhatsApp Channel\]](#) | [\[YouTube\]](#) | [\[TikTok\]](#)

Join the GaDangme Council Today! Let's preserve our heritage and empower our community together.
Visit our website to register as member and affiliate your group to the GaDangme Council

The Chairman of the Heritage Committee of the GaDangme Council, **Dr. Eben Anuwa-Amarh**, was installed as the Head of the Kpowuluno Family in Tema, on the 11th of August, 2024.





BECOMING ACCREDITED TRAVEL AND TOURS AGENT WITH GOLDSTAR AIR

Goldstar Air, the Wings of Ghana will be in partnership with travel and tour agencies across the land, by providing them with our ticket sales, including information on our ticketing and tour packages.

The primary role of a travel agent is to help people make travel arrangements, which include booking flights, hotels, sightseeing tours, and making dining recommendations.

Travel agent assesses each customer's unique needs, preferences, and budget to ensure their trip goes as smoothly as possible.

Several factors determine travel agents' salary, including location, level of education, certifications, years of experience, and the specific company they are working for.

In line with this, Goldstar Air proposes reasonable commissions for travel agents and delightful opportunities for all our airline employees. This will initiate three-month salary savings for each junior staff, which will enable them to purchase imported used cars and make their movement to and from work easier to maintain high-level operations and deliver good services.

Furthermore, the airline will be initiating a biweekly (2 weeks) employee pay system in Ghana, which will align with our other destinations' salary structure to avoid employment discrimination and first of its kind in the aviation sector in the country.

Even though employees will make the same amount of money regardless of pay frequency, a biweekly pay schedule makes it easier to reduce debt or save money in the months you receive an additional paycheck.

According to the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Goldstar Air Eric Bannerman, the airline will give special attention to travel and tour agencies to enhance the quality of Ghana's economic transformation. This sustainable partnership is in connection with massive job creation, reduced poverty, and a foreign exchange earner for Ghana, which makes the airline the economic tool of the country.

Goldstar Air will grant accreditation to travel agencies that will enable them to access the airline's inventory, accept payments, and issue tickets 24/7 on the airline's behalf.

The airline will use travel agents as an arm

of its distribution system, and agents must always interact with our sales team to book group travel for their clients. Presently, with Ghana knee-deep in a challenging economic environment, it could be time for agents and airlines to partner once again, even if it is on a customized, case-by-case basis.

Goldstar Air will change the narrative of a hostile relationship between agents and airlines, because nowadays when agents call an airline to book a group, agents end up paying more for the group than a published fare.

The shift away from travel agents began with airline commission caps in 1995 and continued with reduced commissions in 1999.

The travel agency industry was delivered an even heavier blow in 2002 when airlines cut commissions altogether.

Travel agents are highly organized professionals and passionate about travel and helping others. They are focused on creating the best possible experience, directly catered to their clients, and work with hotels, airlines, and other vendors to create travel packages and experiences that their clients will love.

Travel agents can work with large groups,



individuals, families, professional organizations, and others to help create seamless travel experiences that help create memories.

Mr. Bannerman emphasized that, instead of Goldstar Air directly competing with the travel agencies, the airline intends to establish good working relationships in the form of strategic alliances to keep all the Ghanaian travel agencies in business, for them to keep their staff as well, as the airline is projecting over one hundred thousand direct jobs and over one million indirect job opportunities to address the situation on the grounds.

The commencement of the 24-hour operations of Goldstar Air in Ghana is a guarantee of the stabilization of the local currency (Cedi) and a major priority to put Ghana on a sound footing.

More than 90 percent of the travel agencies in Ghana do not have an international billing or distribution system because of the fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) bank guarantee, so Goldstar Air will introduce a billing or distribution system that will accept any deposit amount agents prefer to make to issue tickets against and this will come as a relief to them. The airline will also offer Ghana tour operators competitive air tickets to their clients, ensuring customer satisfaction always.

As part of Goldstar Air's initiative to build the agencies for them to provide employment and also to avoid the fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) bank guarantee, the airline has pledged to offer some seed money to travel agencies that have registered with the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) for over a year and that the agencies must be willing to apply for Goldstar Air's distribution system or local billing system and pay the same amount or more to sell our tickets.

In today's competitive business environment, it is more important than ever for travel and tour agencies to foster relations with

airlines and meet with clients to discuss upcoming travel plans and gather information regarding travel dates, transportation, and budget. This may be done face-to-face in a brick-and-mortar setting or online.

Advising clients on important aspects of their travel plans. This may include providing information on passports, visas, customs, insurance, vaccinations, and trip cancellation policies.

Keeping accurate records of client bookings, such as payments, travel dates, flight numbers, and hotel check-in and check-out dates.

Handling any travel issues that arise, including flight or hotel cancellations, delays, conflicts, and refunds.

Due to the customer-focused nature of travel agent jobs, it's ideal to be passionate about and/or have experience in hospitality. Those who make the best travel agents tend to be versatile and have a friendly personality where they are concerned with keeping clients happy, comfortable, and safe.

Travel agents are key professionals dedicated to helping individuals and families create memories that will last a lifetime. Planning a dream vacation can be stressful for an individual or a family, and having a travel agent can make the process much easier.

If you are passionate about travel organization, and helping others, a career as a travel agent can be a great fit.

Travel agents will constantly be interacting with clients in person, over the phone, and through email. In turn, they need to be strong verbal and written communicators, empathetic, and understanding of the individual needs of each client. Because they may be juggling trips for several clients at a time, travel agents must be highly organized and capable of effectively managing a high volume of booking information.

Travel logistics are inherently complex and

issues can pop up at any given time. Great travel agents have a knack for handling incidents and quickly resolving problems while maintaining their poise. It is easy to mix up things like flight departure and arrival times, hotel check-ins, and transportation rentals, which is why travel agents need to be detail-oriented.

The travel agent career is heavily reliant on technology like travel booking platforms and appointment scheduling software. Travel agents not only need a firm grasp of this technology but are willing to continually learn about new developments and iterations.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) is now forecasting that the global airline industry will this year exceed the profitability it achieved in 2023, although it notes that margins remain thin.

Global airlines are expected to record a combined net profit of \$30.5 billion this year, versus the \$27.4 billion estimated to have recorded in 2023. International Air Transport Association said at its Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Dubai on 3 June, that the revised

projection represents an improvement from the \$25.7 billion industry association forecasted for 2024 in December 2023.

The expected aggregate net profit of \$30.5 billion in 2024 is a great achievement considering the recent deep pandemic losses.

Tamale will serve as a pivotal hub for our airline's maintenance, cargo, and training school and plans are underway to operate international passenger flights to and from the Sahel region and Hajj flights to and from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Goldstar Air will initially operate flights from Kumasi to Rome, Madrid, Hamburg, London, Dusseldorf, and Milan.

Also, flights from Accra shall include destinations such as Washington, Dubai, Lagos, Toronto, Monrovia, Conakry, Abidjan, Guangzhou, Dakar, Banjul, Rhode Island, London, and Freetown and pending cities such as Miami-Florida, Atlanta-Georgia, Chicago-Illinois, Glasgow-Scotland, Houston-Texas and many more.



Goldstar Air
Print **Procurement** In Ghana's Aviation Industry
With Goldstar Air.
Coming soon.





GADANGME STUDENTS UNION (GADASU) CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT

The GaDangme Student Union (GADASU) celebrated its 25th anniversary at the University of Ghana, Legon. The theme was *GaDangme and National Development: The Role of the Youth & Professionals*.

Mr. Ayaa Kojo Armah, 1st Vice-President of the GaDangme Council, speaking on behalf of Hon. Ayikoi Otoo, spoke about how young people must work hard to help develop Ghana. He reminded them of the important roles GaDangmes have played in Ghana's history and asked them to follow those good examples. He also shared some achievements of the GaDangme Council under Hon. Ayikoi Otoo. These include:

- Creating a GaDangme Strategic Blueprint.
- Restarting the standing committees.
- Building a website.
- Setting up WhatsApp groups for communication.

Miss GaDangme, an ambassador of

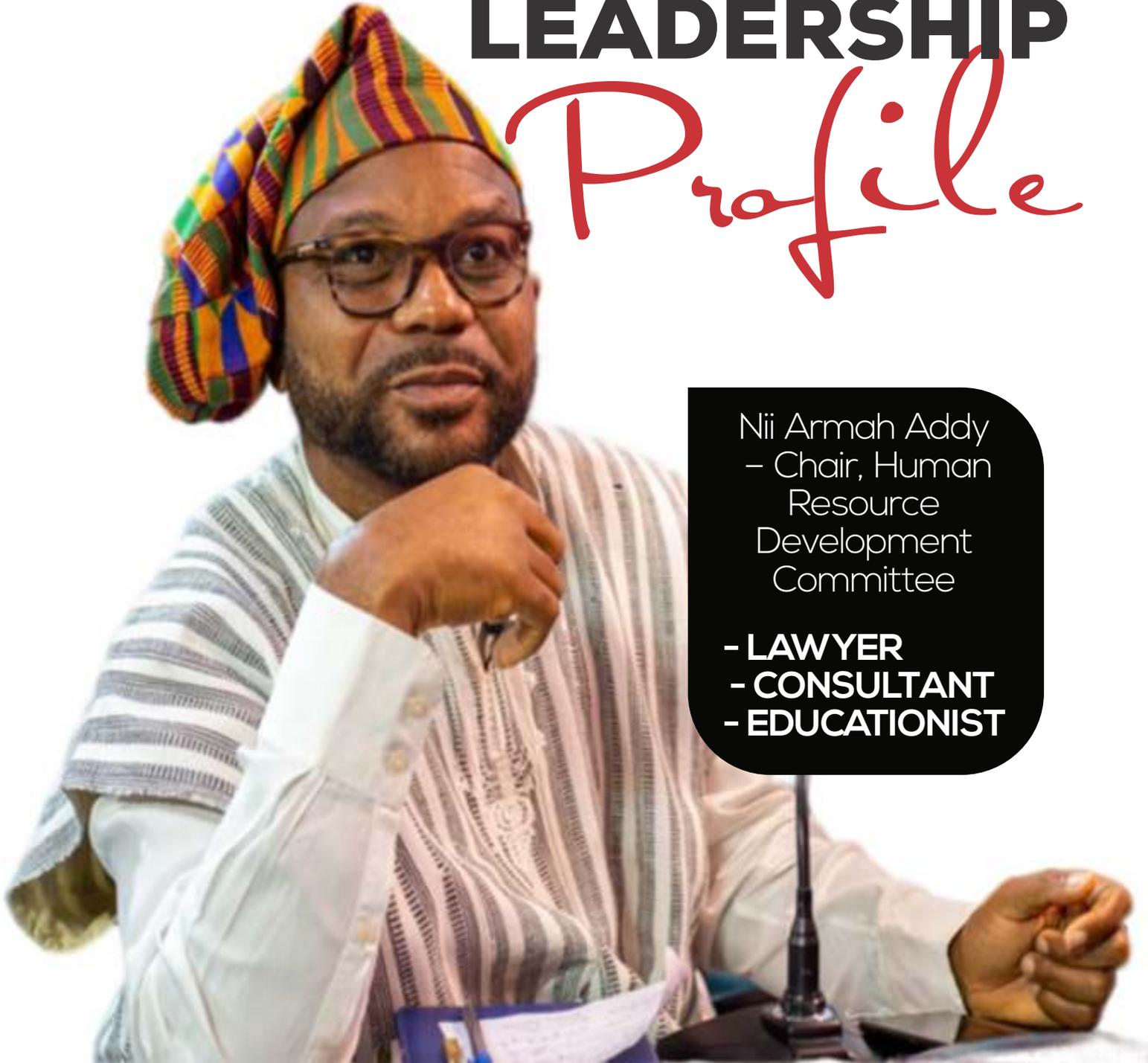
GaDangme culture, asked people to value and practice their customs.

Nii Legon talked about some achievements of the association, such as:

- Providing scholarships for studying abroad and offering support to GaDangmes in remote areas.
- Calling for government and stakeholder support to address challenges. These include:
 - Providing accommodation for students.
 - Help with traditional GaDangme clothing and regalia to promote our culture.
 - Setting up a central office for GADASU.

Mr Bernard Korley, representing McDan and a former leader of GADASU, encouraged the youth to work seriously for the good of GaDangme. He assured them of McDan's support and good wishes.

LEADERSHIP Profile



Nii Armah Addy
– Chair, Human
Resource
Development
Committee

- **LAWYER**
- **CONSULTANT**
- **EDUCATIONIST**

Nii Armah Addy brings over 25 years of experience across both the public and private sectors, with a portfolio that spans numerous high-level engagements. He holds a BA (Hons.), two Master's Degrees, an LLB, a Postgraduate Diploma in Legal Practice (PGDLP), and is currently a PhD candidate. Nii Armah has also

gained international experience as a legal intern at the International Criminal Court in Rwanda.

A passionate advocate for excellence, Nii Armah is never content with anything less than the best. He is driven to meet corporate objectives and stands out as a strategic thinker with a wide range of skills that ensure his success. His ability to multitask and work

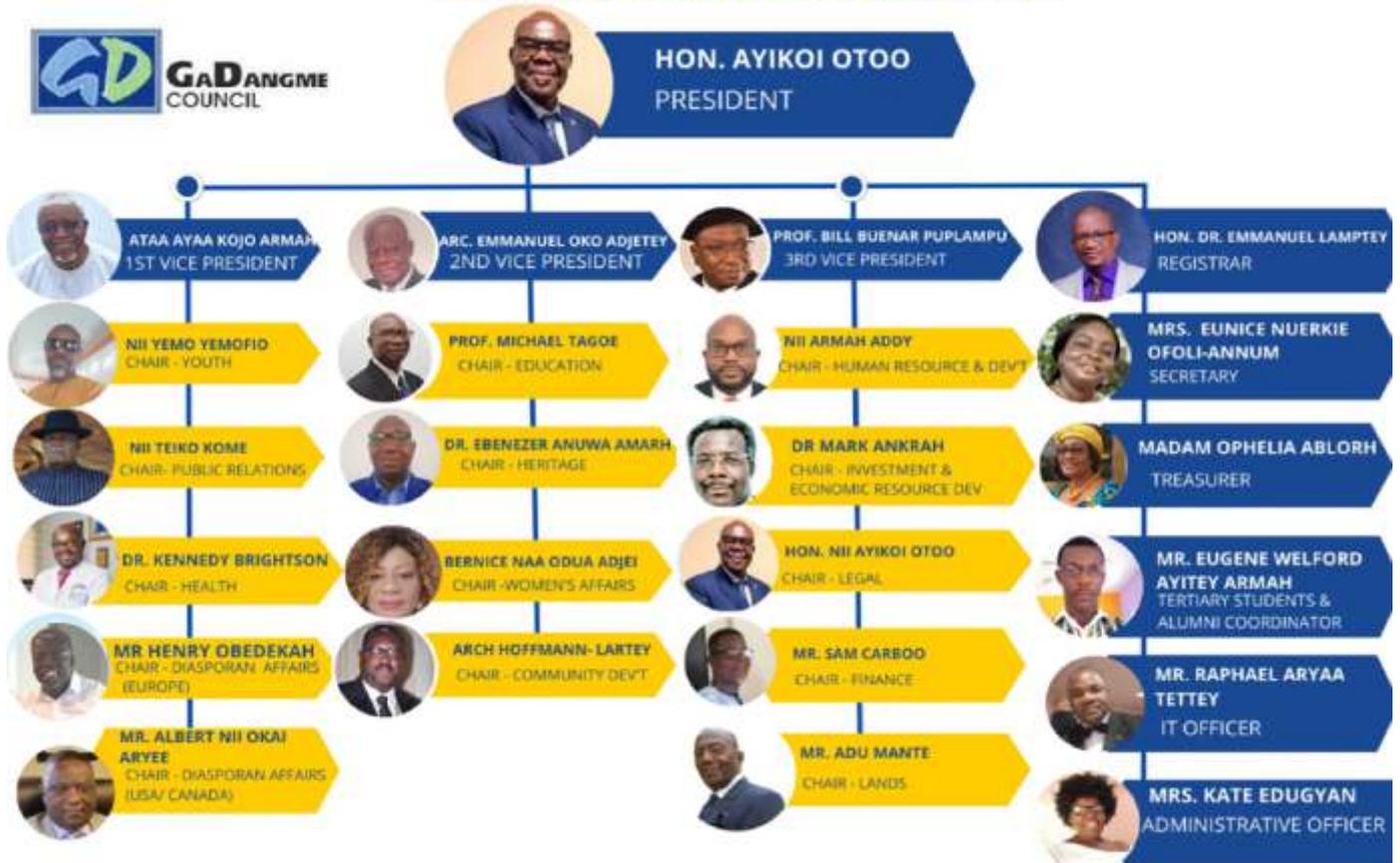


independently with minimal supervision is one of his greatest strengths, while his collaborative nature, sense of humour, and emotional intelligence make him a valuable team player. His leadership abilities are exceptional.

Nii Armah Addy currently serves as the Chair of the Human Development Committee of the Gadangme Council, further expanding his leadership role in both traditional and modern governance. He has also contributed to numerous National Committees in education

and has facilitated a variety of corporate training programs across diverse sectors, including manufacturing, oil marketing, insurance, hospitality, accounting, banking, healthcare, entertainment, event management, information technology, printing and publishing, and education. Nii has been a sought-after speaker, delivering papers at summits and conferences both in Ghana and abroad.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



PAYMENT DETAILS FOR DUES

ACCOUNT NAME: GADANGME
 ACCOUNT NUMBER: 1491600000169
 BANK NAME: GCB
 BRANCH: NUNGUA
 SORT CODE: 040149
 SWIFT CODE: GHCBGHAC
 CURRENCY: US DOLLAR

LOCAL MEMBERS

ACCOUNT NAME: GADANGME
 ACCOUNT NUMBER: 1491180003729
 BANK: GCB
 BRANCH: NUNGUA
 CURRENCY: CEDI
 ACCOUNT NO: 1491180003729

DIASPORIAN MEMBERS

1. One-time Registration Fee
 £50/\$50/€50/GHS 200-500 (minimum of 200 GHS).
2. Monthly Dues:
 £5/\$5/€5/GHS 50

3. DUES PAYMENT COMMENCED IN JUNE 2023

Please be reminded of the one time registration payment.

Shidaa



PAY YOUR MONTHLY

DUES



MTN NUMBER
053 053 7405

The Momo name is GaDangme Council



THE THREE STRATEGIC PILLARS OF THE GADANGME COUNCIL STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT

Strategic Pillar 1: Capacity Building (GDC as an Organisation)

The first pillar aims at strengthening the foundation of the GaDangme Council (GDC).

Within this pillar, several key areas are identified for intervention, which are as follows:

- i. **Finance & Administration**
- ii. **Public Relations**
- iii. **Human Resources**

Strategic Pillar 2: Empowerment of GaDangme Citizens (Outreach)

The second pillar centres around empowering GaDangme citizens across various spheres of life. Recognising that a strong community relies on the development and support of its people, the GDC identifies the following key areas of focus:

- i. **Heritage**
- ii. **Women's Affairs**
- iii. **Education**
- iv. **Youth Affairs**
- v. **Legal Affairs**
- vi. **Diaspora Affairs**

Strategic Pillar 3: Economic Regeneration of GaDangme Communities

The third pillar aims to ignite economic growth and prosperity within GaDangme communities. Recognising that economic empowerment is vital for sustainable development, the GDC focuses on the following key areas:

- i. **Community Development**
- ii. **Lands (Reclamation)**
- iii. **Investment & Economic Resources Development**

Tribute Corner

CELEBRATING THE FIRST CHAIR OF THE WOMEN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

– MADAM COMFORT MELODY NAA AYELE SLATER

Nyeawokpakpa Comfort Melody Naa Ayele Slater is truly a gift from God to humanity. Her selfless dedication and unwavering enthusiasm to improve the lives of the GaDangme people, especially the GaDangme Tertiary Students from Legon, are remarkable and enduring. Her sacrifices are a source of inspiration—she

supports students by helping pay their fees, assists individuals in securing employment, and provides working capital to help grow GaDangme-owned businesses, among many other acts of kindness. Nyeawokpakpa is a true Guardian Angel among us. She often reaches out with phone calls to check on us, prays for us, and shares profound insights that guide us. She has taught us that while the ways of God may seem mysterious, they are always just. Through this, she challenges us to never give up. Her ultimate desire and greatest joy lie in the success of the GaDangme community.



GADANGME COUNCIL MEETS THE GREATER ACCRA REGIONAL MINISTER



OUR HERITAGE, OUR WORTH; OUR HERITAGE, OUR WEALTH



The Writer

By: Mr Joseph Narh Padi

Introduction

The other day I saw Legon Botanical Gardens on my television, I was amazed at how this ordinary area could be turned into a recreational centre. While searching for a place to visit, I came across a website exhibiting a resort near Adukrom called Safari Valley Resort. I often passed by the junction, never imagining that something so marvellous was hidden there. The paraglide project in the Kwahu mountains also comes readily at hand. It is now clear to me that ordinary places can easily be turned into places of great importance when genius are gathered and great minds are stimulated.

Ga-Dangme land is blessed with numerous heritage and natural resource sites which, if developed would bring socio-economic benefits to Ga-Dangme land. These include traditional settlements that have been abandoned, water bodies including lagoons, wetlands and small streams such as the Odor River at the centre of the city. All these could be turned into recreational and tourist centres with both social and economic benefits. I know permission and money will be needed for the execution of such projects. However, if we could get closer to the

chiefs in the various traditional areas of our land, we may get them to see the need to embark on such developmental projects and therefore release the property for the project.

An incident occurred in the Yilo Krobo area that gives me hope that the majority of these projects can possibly be undertaken by Ga-Dangme citizens. The Yilo Krobo Municipal Chief Executive initiated a non-partisan project which saw citizens from all political divide contributing towards the development of the project. The project was managed by religious leaders, businessmen, chiefs including the Konor himself, and well-meaning citizens of the land. This gave contributors the assurance that they would not be throwing their money away and it was successful.

Reclamation and development of the sites

First of all, the chiefs must be approached with proposals that will make them appreciate the need to protect these properties and put them into good use for the benefit of the people of the land. The reclamation of lagoons, beaches and wetlands must be our concern. These natural resources, though vested in the state, are not taken good care of by the state institutions that are supposed to protect and develop them and are becoming extinct day in day out. Various recreational sites can be developed including sites that will attract migratory birds

and the revitalisation of aquatic life in clear and clean water in the city and its environs. Heritage sites may be developed into both recreational and tourist attraction centres.

Our heritage includes our music, yet much of our traditional music is disappearing. We rarely hear it anymore, as many believe that embracing Christianity means abandoning what is considered 'fetish' music. Ironically, great efforts are being made by others, including Western scholars, to learn and preserve this very music and dance. If we do not act to protect and value it ourselves, future generations may find themselves paying others to rediscover and teach them what was once their own.

As a non-governmental association, we may take this task upon us to spot some of these sites, write proposals for their development and approach the traditional authorities who own the land (Some might have been taken over by the state, but that could also be dealt with), convince them of the viability of the projects and

the need to reclaim the site and have it developed. We may do that as individuals as well. Over the years, we have looked up to the government to initiate every project in our communities (or is it the governments that have made us believe that every community development project is their responsibility and that we must sit down and watch them execute them?).

Community development, which hitherto had been the responsibility of community members, has now become the sole responsibility of the central government such that we expect government to clean gutters in front of our stores and houses. Community development must be a collaborative effort of both the central government and the members of the community. We too have a major role to play in the development of our communities and must contribute immensely towards their development and the preservation of our heritage for posterity. If we sit down unconcerned, our children and children's



The Krobo Mountain showing access road to the Yilo Krobo side of the mountain



Front view of the mountain, viewed from the top of the mountain

children will come and never hear of us let alone hear of our grand and great grandparents. It is our duty to preserve what we came to meet and pass it on to the next generation.

Community mobilisation for most of the projects

Most of the resources needed for the development of these facilities may be provided free of charge by citizens or at a moderate cost if the youth in the area can be mobilised for the project execution. Tree planting and care and the initial clearance of the place and maintenance of sanitation can be done through communal mobilisation. All citizens including businessmen, religious leaders, chiefs, artisans, etc, could be mobilised to support as investors, management team, supervisors, etc. Also, international organisations such as UNESCO International Fund for Cultural Diversity, African Cultural Fund, African World Heritage Fund, etc could be invited to support through well written proposals.

The Krobo Mountains in focus

The focus of this article is on the Krobo Mountain, the ancestral home of the two Krobo

states, the Yilo and the Manya states. This heritage had been abandoned since 1892 when governor Griffiths evicted our forefathers from the mountain. It was the Manya Krobos who first made the pilgrimage to the mountain as part of the celebration of their Ngmayemi Festival which was established in 1944 by Nene Azu Mate Kole to replace the "Yeliyem" (Hi yemi or Yam) Festival which was adopted from their neighbours. However, the actual date for the introduction of the pilgrimage to the festival has not been indicated. In 1992, exactly one hundred (100) years after the eviction, the ninth paramount chief of the Yilo state, Nene Narh Dautey Ologo VI, also initiated the annual pilgrimage to the mountain dubbed "Kloyosikplemi", the descent from the Krobo Mountain, as an attempt by the Yilo side to reunite with their ancestral home.

After the eviction of the Krobos from their ancestral home on the mountain, the land was declared state land, although the chiefs claimed the documents purporting to vest the land in the state were not signed by the Krobo chiefs – the current Yilo Krobo chief was emphatic about that. Under various guises (people posing as

chiefs or government officials), the land is being sold to private developers who have taken over the foot of the mountain and are getting closer to the very seat of the mount. Since authority over the area is not vested in the chiefs, it has become very difficult for them to protect the place. Herdsmen use the place for pasture and always burn the bushes during the dry season for fresh grass for their cattle.

Reclaiming the site

The first step is to restore the area and ensure the site is well-protected. I am aware efforts are being made for the country to restore the site back to the Krobos. An online publication by Obed Ansah of Star FM on the 29th of October 2023 quoted the paramount chief of the Manya Krobo appealing to the president of the country, Nana Akuffo Addo, to return the land to the Krobos. Also, some time in 2024, a group of chiefs from the Yilo state went on a fact finding mission to ascertain the state of the land, especially, at the front view of the foot of the mountain, which led to their encounter with developers at the site.

Well-meaning citizens and groups in Dangme land must join in this fight for ownership of this heritage and other heritage and natural resource sites in government or individual possession. The vigilance of Kloma Hengme and other associations in Dangme land which led to some of these fact-finding missions and their involvement in the quest to reclaim the heritage must be commended. The attitudes of government officials, especially those at the land commission, who think that whatever belongs to the state must be disposed of and their accomplice chiefs who connive with these officials to sell the land at the foot of the mountain must be condemned and their activities halted and reversed so that the land there may be put into viable socio-economic use to benefit the citizenry.

It is important that the place be protected while the quest to have it handed over to the

traditional authorities goes on, after all the government will not come and take the mountain away. Community members must be mobilised to create fire belt around the mountain. This will need the coming together of both traditional leaders and the mobilisation of people from the communities in the two states. A kind of community watchdog may be created either from the security personnel or from voluntary groups who would see to it that trespassers are prevented from destroying the ecosystem both on and around the mountain.

Development of the area

There must be a vigorous effort to reclaim the vegetation on and around the mountain. Serious efforts must be made to plant fast growing tall trees as well as fire-resistant trees and cover trees that will help to regain the forest and prepare the place for reintroduction of wildlife and plants that will make the place a biodiverse area. Play grounds may be created around the mountain including bicycle, motorbike or horse race courses. Children's park and sports fields for games, pools for swimming could be created, some at the foot of the mountain while others could be done on the mountain. Developments on the mountain must be done in collaboration with archaeologists and the Environmental Protection Agency since the site houses diverse cultural relics which must be protected and preserved. Every single digging on the mountain and even around the mountain must be supervised by archaeologists and the Environmental Protection Agency to ensure the safety and preservation of the cultural deposit at the site.

Tracks could also be created up the mountain. These could include winding up stairways from the bottom of the mountain to the top, using cement and stones. Slides made of plastic that may take people from the top of the mountain to the bottom, open or enclosed (plastic tube slides), swings hung from tree

branches or artificial heights (as k), etc, could be created. Some of these things could be constructed by local artisans with expert input for durability and safety. A whole lot could be done to bring life into this mountain for recreational purposes and for tourist attraction.

Major traditional sites including the chiefs' palaces, banks, shrines, playgrounds, markets and any remarkable sites on the mountain could be excavated, recreated and the relics displayed in the reconstructed structure. Materials to be used may simulate ancient structures on the outside but modern material and improved structures for durability and space for visitors. Archaeological sites could be created to study life on the mountain. Discoveries may add to the understanding of the people instead of the little we hear from writers who are mainly whites with prejudiced motives. The display of discovered artefacts could add more excitement to visitors' experiences and create more traffic to the site.

Commercial projects may be established by the two traditional authorities, investors from these two communities or a partnership between the traditional authorities and community investors or outsider. These could be in the areas of restaurants, hotels and a market for trading in artefacts from these traditional areas such as beads, art work and pottery. These could create jobs for the people in the area.

Funding the project

As mentioned earlier, funding of these project could begin with the mobilisation of local resources through communal labour and communal contributions as well as the involvement of local investors including joint investment between the traditional authority and the local businessmen. International organisations such as UNESCO International Fund for Cultural Diversity, African Cultural Fund, African World Heritage Fund, etc, offer assistance either wholly or in partnership with



Remains of settlements



Rocks that could be equipped with rock climbing facilities such as the one below



Rock climbing facilities that could create excitement at the site

the community. While some of them may require the community to channel their application through the central government, most of them deal directly with the communities involved in the form of non-governmental organisation and local governments. Each year, requests for application from interested institutions involved in the development of heritage projects including all forms of tangible and intangible cultural materials are made. Last year for example, the UNESCO International Fund for Cultural Diversity granted assistance to about 350 institutions, many of which were NGOs in countries such as Uganda, South Africa, etc with funding ranging from 10,000 to 100,000 US dollars for cultural projects. The proposal may include the project, its purpose and its importance to the community, the budget, management capacity and time frame for the execution of the project. Letters of support from relevant stakeholders including the local government, cultural institutions, etc may also be required.

Another major source of funding this project will be from the British government mainly in connection with their role in the eviction of the Krobos from their mountain home. Existing laws and conventions may be assessed to find those that may be appropriate through lawful or bilateral means that can bring the British government on board the development of the area.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I sincerely hope that as citizens of Ga-Dangme land, we will actively engage in preserving our heritage, rather than standing by as it is eroded, especially when others are making significant efforts to protect theirs for future generations and create opportunities for their children and grandchildren. While the central government has a role to play, we cannot rely solely on them to address these issues. It is therefore imperative that we come together, both individually and collectively, to safeguard and develop our resources for the benefit of our people and future generations.





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