



COCOBOD Bleeds Ghana, Caught in Multi-Million-Dollar Scam



Director of Corporate Affairs, Fifi Bofo told Whatsup News that COCOBOD is preparing to respond to the allegations on Thursday, September 17, 2020.

The internal audit also alleged that the COCOBOD management has developed a curious appetite for doing business with non-registered companies and non-VAT registered companies, contrary to section 183.4 of the Financial Administration Regulation 2004.

This is perhaps to hide the conflict of interest of certain top management of the company.

Meanwhile, information gathered by Whatsup News indicates that COCOBOD has practically phased out the free fertilizer regime of the government as instituted by the erstwhile government administrations and are now selling fertilizers to farmers through fronted companies.

The so-called Fertilizer agents reportedly take the subsidized fertilizers from the COCOBOD and allegedly channel them through private chemical shops who go on to profiteer from them by selling them at high prices to cocoa farmers and also for smuggling to neighboring countries like Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and Cameroon.

The Auditor General's Report has exposed the Joseph Boahen Aidoo-led management and the Hackman Owusu-Agyeman-board of the COCOBOD for the creaming of millions of Ghana cedis in procurements by violating Public Procurement Processes.

For instance, in 2019, internal audits conducted the Auditor-General (AG) shows that the management of Ghana's main cocoa trading company bought Jute bags for packaging raw cocoa beans at GHC 114 million, instead of the budgeted GHC 76 mil-

lion.

According to the AG's report, COCOBOD deliberately eliminated companies that provided affordable bids and opted for those with expensive bids.

Whatsup News gathered that these companies have connections to people within the Akufo Addo administration.

"Officials of COCOBOD colluded with dubious elements in high political circles, to create a fictitious group of companies which bid for the supply of chemicals and knapsack sprayers", the report said.

The document said af-

ter obtaining the best price guide from Public Procurement Authority (PPA), the said officials connived with cronies to eliminate the least bids by writing to COCOBOD to drop them out of the process so as to enable the contract to be awarded to the only remaining firm with the most outrageous bid price outside the approved band.

Local Newspaper, The Herald had first broken the story and for more than 24 hours after the damning indictment on COCOBOD, the company's management has remained virtually mute. When contacted, the



RAWLINGS Welcomes Malian Military Coup Leaders



Ghana's former President Jerry John Rawlings on Tuesday, September 15, 2020, received the new military head of state of Mali and his close lieutenants at his home.

The team was a four-man delegation of military officers that recently stated a Coup d'état in Mali to oust its civilian president, President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita,

The group of revolutionary's soldiers calling themselves the National Committee for the Salvation of the

People (CNSP) led by its Chairman, Colonel Assimi Goïta were cordially received by Mr. Rawlings who is a successful coupist himself.

The Malians apparently made a visit to tap from the vast experience of Jerry Rawlings' dictatorial days. In the meeting, he urged the new leadership in Mali to use the transition period to exhibit exceptional leadership for the country and usher her into a prosperous era

"The level of corruption that has become an

integral part of multiparty democracy has created a general climate of stress and tension that may destabilize some areas in our region. It is unfortunate that the world is being forced into multiparty democracy with corruption and violence rather than other forms of democratic practices with none or minimal corruption. Unfortunately, the West appears to favour corruptible political tendencies in order to continue to dominate our security and economy," the for-

mer President stated.

Former President Rawlings also encouraged the transitional unit to govern with humility and diligence and inspire citizens to fight and defy corruption and injustice.

Already, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) chaired by the Ghanaian President Nana Akufo Addo is uncomfortable with the military takeover in Mali, ordering the military rulers to relinquish power as quickly as possible.

However, the military leadership which appears to be enjoying massive support from the people for ousting the corrupt Keita have said, they will need at least 18 months to organise a rational transition for Mali.

The adventure in Mali has sent worrying signals through Africa, as more and more citizens, are protesting the bare-faced corruption being perpetrated by their elected civilian Presidents.



Akufo-Addo Swears In 16 New Justices For High Court



President Akufo-Addo has today sworn in sixteen justices of the High Court.

The ceremony took place at the Jubilee House.

The President said there would be eight courts and eight bungalows in Greater Accra; eight courts

and eight bungalows in Volta; four courts and eight bungalows in Oti; 12 courts and 10 bungalows in Eastern; and seven courts and eight bungalows in Western.

The judges were reminded that their responsibility is to apply the law without fear or favour, affection or ill-will.

“When a citizen falls foul of the law, that citizen, high or low, must be dealt with accordingly, and the law enforcement agencies, including you, our new judges, must ensure this is done. That is the true meaning of the concept of equality before the law,” the President said.

Meanwhile, the President announced that government has decided to build 98 new courts and judges bungalows around the 16 regions of the country.

He said the government is building the courts through the administrator of the District Assembly Common Fund.



We'll Show NPP! - Angry Kumasi Residents Charge

Some angry residents of Kumasi, the Ashanti Regional capital have vowed to teach the governing New Patriotic Party (NPP) a lesson in the December elections on account of what they say is the NPP's neglectful attitude towards Kumasi.

This warning should be a concern to the governing party because the Ashanti Region is its main political stronghold and a voter defection from the region will surely have a significant impact on the party's electoral fortunes.

Today the angry residents took to the streets in protest, with sights and sounds from the protest including a near mob attack on a car which had a poster of President Akufo-Addo on it.

"NPP claims Ashanti is their stronghold; over the years because we have voted like zombies for them, they think they can take us for granted. Just take a look



at the road on which I am standing. They stay in Accra there and brag that Ashanti is their stronghold, but they take us for granted, they ignore us like we are corpses. This December we will teach them a bitter lesson, we will show them that a corpse can wink," lamented one of the demonstrators.

Clad in red, the demonstrators flooded the streets amidst the

chanting of war songs interspersed with loud Azonto music from what appears to be a hired jam service provider.

As the demonstrators went about protesting Ashanti's unrequited, "zombie" love for the NPP, a commercial vehicle came along and reportedly had a poster of President Akufo-Addo on it. The demonstrators are seen in a video footage reacting to the site

with expletives. It is not clear whether the driver replied but soon, people were pelting the vehicle with sachets of water.

Others opened and banged the vehicle's doors several times. Eventually, however, the vehicle managed to escape the irate crowd.

The demonstration against the NPP government in the NPP stronghold is coming barely three months to the 2020 elections in December. It is also coming at a time that the NPP's manifesto has been outclassed by the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC)'s own.

Recently, some chiefs in the Ashanti Region have expressed disgust at the sheer neglect of the NPP and have lamented that the Akufo Addo administration has not undertaken any significant infrastructural development in the region in comparison to that of the erstwhile administration of the National Democratic Congress (NDC).



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NPP Campaign Vehicle Attacked At Fomena



A campaign vehicle of the governing New Patriotic Party (NPP) was attacked by angry town people of Fomena, capital of the Adansi North district in the Ashanti Region.

The vehicle, a Nissan pickup, which had the posters of President Akufo-Addo and a Parliamentary aspirant of the NPP splashed on it, was closed in by an angry mob and banged several times.

Other angry townsfolk swept the ground on which the car was travelling, to symbolize that Fomena feels kicking out the NPP in the December elections will be good riddance.

Amidst hooting, some kept shouting, "Thieves!" In reference to the NPP administration which has been dogged by countless corruption scandals in its four-year tenure.

Fomena, as part of the Ashanti Region is

a stronghold of the NPP. In recent times, a vibe has developed among Ashantis that the Akufo-Addo government has neglected the Ashanti Region.

Also, the President and his so-called "Akyem Mafia" are perceived to have gone after prominent Ashanti businessmen, including former Finance Minister, Dr. Kwabena Duffour, as part of a plan to make Akyems command the political

and economic heights of the country.

The NPP has increasingly become unpopular in its stronghold. Earlier, before the incident at Fomena, some angry "Kumasianos" had also demonstrated against the Akufo-Addo government in Kumasi, capital of Ashanti, vowing to teach the party a bitter lesson in December for neglecting Kumasi's developmental needs.



Bawumia Worsens NPP's Comedy of Errors Over Okada – Says NPP Will Not Legalize It

The awkward hasty retreat that the Akufo-Addo government beat on the matter of the legalization of the commercial motorcycle transportation business, popularly known as “Okada,” has degenerated into a pure comedy of errors, courtesy Vice President Mahamudu Bawumia.

Dr. Bawumia, against the tide of the rat race by the Ministry of Transport and other government appointees to hold “consultations” to legalise Okada, has announced that the NPP will not legalize it after all.

According to the Vice President, his government will rather provide a better alternative for Okada riders, in the form of loans, for riders to purchase vehicles instead.

“(Okada riders) need to graduate from this risky and less risky Okada riding to a safer



means of transportation,” said His Excellency Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia.

He reportedly made the announcement at an MoU signing event with German carmaker, Volkswagen and another automobile manufacturer called Blacklvy, in Accra.

Now, Bawumia’s announcement confuses matters even more and appears to indicate that the

Akufo-Addo government is not too sure of what to do with the Okada business question after the administration has strangely announced it was in “consultations” to legalise Okada after the flagbearer of the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC) had announced that if voted into power in December, he will legalise the booming commercial business.

Dr. Bawumia’s statement therefore contradicts statements from his own government which has been accused of fearing the promise made by the NDC flagbearer, John Dramani Mahama.

A recent release by the Ministry said its engagement with Okada riders is actually entering its second phase, and that former President Mahama’s announcement of his intent to legalize the trade upon his re-election was inconsequential.

Now, the puzzle is who to believe from the NPP government on the question of the legalization. The Transport Ministry, which says it is engaging with Okada riders on legalization, and the Deputy sector Minister, says he is all for legalization, but the Vice President says the government has decided it will not legalize it after all.



NPP Implementing Our Manifesto After Mocking Us - MAHAMA



The 2020 Flagbearer of the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC), former President John Mahama has mocked the Akufo-Addo government over what he says is the NPP's sudden turn around to attempt implementing the manifesto promises of the NDC.

At a town hall meet-

ing in Kumasi, the Ashanti Regional capital, the former President said the NPP's back-arching moves after the NDC launched the "People's Manifesto" is testament to the superiority of the NDC manifesto, compared to the NPP's.

"Today, after taunting that the NDC was going to the people because

we did not know what to offer Ghanaians, they are now planning and implementing our proposals and promises, which are what the Ghanaian people want," the former President said.

According to him, the popularity of the "People's Manifesto" is due to the fact that the NDC consulted the people before it put the document

together.

He called on Ghanaians to reject the NPP and vote for the NDC which has amply demonstrated that it is better in touch with the people's needs.

In attendance were chiefs, traditional leaders, market women. The Townhall meeting was specially thronged by okada riders.



Ghana Economy In Worst Mess In 37 Years-Reuters

International news-wire, Reuters is reporting that Ghana's economy actually declined for the first time in almost four decades by some 3.2%.

According to Reuters, the global Covid-19 Outbreak could partly be responsible for the economic mess.

"Even after the restrictions have been lifted, many businesses across sectors have continued to close down," government statistician Samuel Kobina Annim told a news conference.

"For the first time in 37 years, Ghana's economy has seen a contraction of 3.2%, compared with a growth rate of 5.7% in the same quarter in 2019."

The fall in output was mostly felt in manufacturing and in the services sector, where hotels and restaurants were shuttered to stop the virus spreading.

Ghana's finance minister has said in July that the economy was expected to grow at its



slowest rate in 40 years, at around 0.9% this year compared with a previous forecast of 6.8%.

The verdict on Ghana's latest economic forecast is coming barely a day after the global rating agency, Standards and Poors' (S&P) downgraded Ghana's creditworthiness to one of the lowest in recent history.

S&P dropped the country's credit ratings to B Negative, making the country vulnerable to shunning from foreign

investors who would regard the potential of them gaining any better returns on their investments as extremely high risk.

Incidentally, the Akufo Addo administration appear unperturbed as it keeps guzzling public debt and has increased its appetite for more loans despite its bad credit position.

One of the latest questionable attempts at securing foreign funds is through the question-

able Agyapa Royalties deal.

The deal intends to provide Ghana some US\$ 500 loans routed through a notorious tax haven in Jersey on the British Channel Islands, in what has created a massive outrage in Ghana and has earned the President and his lieutenants the derogatory tag as "Akyem Sakawa Boys".

Policy think-tank, ASE-PA had earlier warned that the Agyapa deal could attract a bad credit rap to Ghana.

The Finance Ministry also recently hinted at borrowing a staggering GHC 22.7 billion within the next three months through domestic bonds in what the government rationalises as a result of its fiscal challenges.

Even amidst the so-called fiscal challenges amidst Covid-19, the Akufo Addo administration is being accused of reckless expenditure and lack of transparency in how these public funds are expended.



Talented Ghanaians Abroad Run Away From Black Stars Over Juju



Ghana”

“There are a lot of perceptions about how Ghanaian footballers play the game. Reckless tackles, destructive tendencies in the Ghanaian game and talks of juju put them off”.

Mr. George Amoako is also the head of the Black Stars management committee.

His revelation comes in the wake of Black Stars coach, Charles K. Akunor, failing to woo Jeremy Doku, who recently made a debut appearance for Belgium. Doku scored in his sophomore match for the Belgians.

Meanwhile, C.K. Akunor says he has his eyes set on Arsenal’s Eddie Nketiah and Brighton’s Tariq Lamptey. The Black Stars coach says he has already contacted them.

An Executive of the Ghana Footballers Association (GFA) has revealed that the senior national team, Black Stars, is finding it difficult to attract talented Ghanaian players born abroad because a number of factors, including juju.

In an interview on

Nhyira FM, George Amoako, who is a member of the GFA’s Executive Council said, it is not only the players themselves who are scared of what is derogatorily referred to as ‘African electronics’ but that even the parents of potential players advise them against playing for

Ghana.

“Most of the [Ghanaian] players born in Europe, if you want to entice them to come and play for Ghana, it is very difficult. They mostly aspire to play for their country of birth or host countries. Even their parents don’t opt for their children playing for



Heads Of Private SHS Welcome NDC Promise To Extend Free SHS To Private Schools



Heads of private second cycle schools across the country have welcomed the promise by the Flag-bearer of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), John Mahama, to extend the coverage of the Free Senior High School (Free SHS) program to private schools.

At the moment Free SHS is implemented in only government schools.

"The Conference of Heads of Private Second-Cycle Schools (CHOPSS) welcomes the NDC manifesto, especially, the promise by the flag bearer to include private high schools in the imple-

mentation of the Free SHS policy. We are particularly glad that this was captured as part of the manifesto promises of the NDC. We believe that this is the only way the problem of access to secondary education, which gave rise to the double-track system of education can be solved.

"We believe that a public-private partnership of this nature is a win-win for the Ghanaian government, Ghanaian children, and Ghanaian educational entrepreneurs," a statement from the CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF PRIVATE SECOND-CYCLE SCHOOLS (CHOPSS) said.

It said the extension will protect many of the 335 private senior high schools in the country and protect over 10,000 jobs in the private secondary educational sector. "It will give more options to Ghanaian children as they can choose to attend a private school near them or a public school."

The statement refuted the governing New Patriotic Party (NPP)'s claim that extending Free SHS to private schools will be illegal, pointing out that the National Health Insurance Scheme has been extended to cover private hospitals.

"We reject the sugges-

tion that all mainstream private high schools or all private schools that do not charge fees in dollars are substandard schools. We have private schools that have better facilities than public schools and that have over the years outperformed public schools.

"We also reject the attempt to suggest that it is unconstitutional for government to partner with private schools to provide educational access to Ghanaian children. We believe that there are common grounds that are absolutely constitutional that can be reached to allow for partnerships with Private Senior High Schools.

"We therefore call on the NPP Government and all other political parties to commit to working with CHOPSS to ensure that private schools are not collapsed in Ghana but allowed to partner with government(s) to provide access and quality education to all Ghanaian children," the statement said.

It was signed by Naph-tali Kyei Baffour, Public Relations Officer of CHOPSS) and Joseph K. Dzamesi, General Secretary.



President Packs High Court With Partisan Judge

President Akufo Addo today appointed an openly partisan lawyer to the High Court as a judge, in what reinforcing accusations that the President is packing the judiciary with compromised judges who would protect him and his party loyalists.

The President today swore in 16 judges into the High Court and among them is a lawyer called Ernest Yao Gaewo.

Whatsup News is finding out that Justice Gaewo is a dye-in-the-wool loyalist of the governing New Patriotic Party (NPP) and had on several occasions contested parliamentary seats on the ticket of the NPP.

In 2016, Justice Gaewo, whose certificate number at the Bar is VR 09586/15, contested as the parliamentary candidate for Ho Central in the Volta Region.

Earlier, he had con-



tested the Ho West seat under the NPP but on both occasions, he lost to his rivals.

Whatsup News has seen his political posters showing his picture placed beside that of President Akufo Addo.

Critics, are warning that the adamant behaviour of the President to pack the judiciary with perceived party loyalists is compromising judicial independence in Ghana.

Indeed, this trend was demonstrated recently when the NPP Member of Parliament for Assin Central, Kennedy Agyapong launched a serious verbal attack at a trial judge currently sitting on a case involving Ken Agyapong.

Insiders tell of how President Akufo Addo had stepped in to manipulate the Chief Justice Anim Yeboah, to ensure that Ken Agyapong walks free from the serious case of judicial contempt.