



REPUBLIC OF GHANA

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BUILDING PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MEDIA TO PROMOTE THE IDEALS OF THE CHIEFTAINCY INSTITUTION

Last week, two important events characterized the Chieftaincy Institution. Though both events were separate and in no way directly connected, they were both geared towards uplifting the image of the Chieftaincy Institution and celebrating the Institution of Chieftaincy in grand style. The major event of the week was the grand celebration of the 15th year reign of His Majesty, the Asantehene, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II. The climax of which was the celebration of a grand colourful durbar to bring the whole event to an end.

The durbar, one of the biggest gatherings of the Asante State in recent times attracted people from all walks of life, both home and abroad and special dignitaries. We salute the Asantehene, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II for coming this far.

The other event of the week relating to the chieftaincy Institution was a series of official working visits to some media Houses in Accra by the Minister for Chieftaincy and Traditional Affairs Dr. Henry Seidu Daanaa.

Though on the surface the visit to these Media Houses was to pay courtesy calls on the Management of these organizations, the main issues at stake were two fold. One, to build effective partnership with the Media with the view to courting the friendship of the Media in promoting the ideals of the chieftaincy Institution.

Secondly, to use the media platform to explain important policies and programmes of the Ministry and for that matter the government on Chieftaincy issues.

Discussions: Acknowledging the significant contribution of the Media in promoting issues of traditional governance and national development, Dr. Daanaa was however hopeful that the Media can still do more. He stated that the important role of the Media as social partners in building a vibrant state cannot be relegated to the background.; The sector Minister emphasized the importance of the registration of chiefs in the National Register of Chiefs.

According to him, many of our chiefs out of ignorance do not know that as soon as they were enstooled/enskined as chiefs, they needed to fill the chieftaincy declaration form 1 (CD) for their names to be entered into the National Register of chiefs as required by law. Dr. Daannaa explained that there is only one National Register (of chiefs) at the National House of Chiefs in Kumasi. He said it is only the chiefs whose names are entered into the National Register that the Ministry recognizes and accords the necessary courtesies. He therefore used the occasion of his visits to appeal to the Media Houses to help educate and sensitize the public on this important legislation in Section 59 of the Chieftaincy Act 759(2008). As he put it “legislation without education is mere hallucination”.

Dr. Daannaa expressed optimism that this particular process when duly followed will go a long way to reduce the incidence of Chieftaincy disputes in the country.

Festivals: The vision of the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Traditional Affairs include the promotion of traditional values and practices of Ghana to accelerate wealth creation and harmony for total national development/ This includes the celebration of festivals to project the rich Culture and tradition of the people.

In contemporary times, the celebration of festivals have been transformed to investment opportunities. Unfortunately however, the celebration of some of these historical and cultural events to promote unity, social cohesion and investment opportunity these days is characterized by violence, leading to the destruction of life and property. The essence of the celebration becomes meaningless. The major cause being Chieftaincy disputes. It was therefore one of the issues for discussion when Dr. Daannaa used the media platform to appeal to traditional authorities and the general public to ensure our festivals are celebrated in unity and peace.

The Chieftaincy Institution: The Chieftaincy Institution according to the sector Minister has come of age. He indicated that the Institution is a source of pride to most Ghanaians because it remains largely the only Cultural heritage today that has survived the influence of western values. The Chieftaincy Institution is a noble and revered one, accorded a lot of esteem and dignity. The 1992 Constitution, recognizing the important role of the Institution in the Country’s democratic governance states that the Institution of Chieftaincy, together with its traditional Councils as established by customary law and usage is hereby guaranteed (Article 270:1) Dr. Daannaa therefore indicated the preparedness of his Ministry to work at all times to carry high the nobility and the values of Institution. He hoped all stakeholders including the Media will support the Ministry in this regard.

It was heartwarming to note that the various media houses acknowledged the efforts of the sector Minister in charting a new course to uplift the image of the chieftaincy Institution in Ghana, and promised to support the programmes and efforts at the Ministry to achieve its objectives.

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