



Xtracts - Ghana - February 2020

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Practice accountable leadership - Akufo-Addo charges Assembly members

President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo has called for transparent and accountable leadership at the local level to propel development.

In that context, he has urged assembly members to work in close collaboration with metropolitan, municipal and district chief executives (MMDCEs) to deliver the leadership that will benefit the people.

At the inauguration of metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies (MMDAs) across the country yesterday, the President, in a goodwill message read on his behalf, said the people at the local level deserved nothing but leadership that would improve their standards of living and assembly members could not afford to fail in that regard.

The inauguration of the assemblies followed the dissolution of the previous assemblies on October 7, 2019, following the expiration of the tenure of assembly members and the subsequent election of new assembly members.

According to the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, 6,272 assembly members were sworn into office to represent electoral areas at the various assemblies for a four-year tenure.

A release made available to the Daily Graphic said an additional 33,500 people who were elected as unit committee members were also sworn in.

Their inauguration was in line with Section (3) of the Local Governance Act 2016, Act 936.

The Minister of Local Government and Local Development, Hajia Alima Mahama, spearheaded the inauguration of the MMDAs, with other government functionaries supervising the event in all the 16 regions.

Automation

Emmanuel Bonney reports from Amanfrom that a Deputy Minister of Communications, Mr George Andah, inaugurated the Ga South Municipal Assembly (GSMA) and the unit committees on behalf of the President.

The President underscored the need for the MMDAs to take advantage of automation and other innovative systems by the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development to improve on their internally generated funds (IGFs).

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That, he said, could be achieved if the street-naming and property-addressing project was pursued vigorously, working hand in hand with the National Digital Property Addressing System and the Ghana Post GPS.

"You are directed to work with the Land Valuation Division of the Lands Commission to have ratable properties in your jurisdictions valued to inform a more effective and transparent property rating," he said.

President Akufo-Addo urged the assembly members to devise special client-sensitive approaches to mobilise property rates, devoid of challenges to the rate payers.

Mr Abdul Wahab Mohamed was elected the Presiding Member of the assembly.

Northern Region

From Tamale, Samuel Duodu writes that the Minister of Local Government and Rural Development represented the President at the inauguration of the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly (TaMA).

The assembly members, made up of 41 elected members and 18 government appointees, were sworn in by a Justice of the High Court, Mr Justice Osei Kwame Gyamfi.

The Assembly Member for Nakpazoo, Mr Mohammed Alhassan, was elected the Presiding Member of the TaMA

Eastern Region

From Koforidua in the Eastern Region, George Folley reports that the 51-member New Juaben South Municipal Assembly was sworn in by a Circuit Court judge, Mrs Mercy Kotei.

One hundred and seventy unit committee members were also sworn into office.

Sunyani

The 49-member Sunyani Municipal Assembly was inaugurated by the Minister for Youth and Sports, Mr Isaac Kwame Asiamah, on behalf of the President, writes Emmanuel Adu-Gyamerah.

In the President's speech, read by the minister, he charged the assembly members to justify their election and appointment by working hard to build upon the achievements of their predecessors,

The assembly members, made up of 34 elected and 15 government appointees, were sworn into office by the Supervising High Court Judge of Sunyani, Mr Justice Patrick Baryeh.

The Member of Parliament for Sunyani, Mr Kwasi Ameyaw-Cheremeh, called on the assembly members to work as a team.

Upper East

Vincent Amenuveve reports from Bongo that the 54-member New Bongo District Assembly was inaugurated by the Bongo District Court Judge, Mr Frederick Kaar.

The assembly members included 16 government appointees and 38 elected members.

The Bongo District Chief Executive, Mr Peter Ayinbisa, reminded them that "the assembly job is purely a sacrificial one", and that it was not for any particular political party.

Tema

At the Tema Metropolitan Assembly, Benjamin Xornam Glover reports that 31 assembly members, made up of 21 elected and 10 government appointees, were sworn in by the Tema Circuit Court Judge, Madam Bertha Anigyei.

At the Tema West Municipal Assembly, 17 assembly members, made up of 11 elected and six government appointees, were also sworn in by Mr Joseph Mac Ali, a magistrate.

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The Tema Metropolitan Chief Executive, Mr Felix Nii Annang-La, charged the assembly members to bring on board new ideas and strategies to help the assembly generate adequate revenue to complement the efforts of the central government.

A representative of the Tema Traditional Council, Nii Shipi Armah Somponu, urged the members to be abreast of the Local Government Act and the standing orders of the assembly to guide them in their output.

Ashanti

From Maase-Boamang in the Afigya Kwabre North District in the Ashanti Region, Emmanuel Baah writes that 22 assembly members and 72 unit committee members were sworn in.

The Chief of Nkwantakese, Nana Boakye Yam Ababio, was elected the Presiding Member.

A Deputy Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Mr Augustine Collins Ntim, read the President's speech.

The DCE, Mr Karikari Achamfour, charged the elected officers to devise strategic and innovative ways to help the assembly generate enough revenue in order to bring development to the area.

Accountability

Meanwhile, Timothy Ngnenbe reports that the Head of the Office of Local Government Service (OLGS), Nana Dr Ato Arthur, has called for unity of purpose and transparency to promote national development.

He stressed the need for MMDCEs to show accountable leadership for the growth of their assemblies.

In an interview with the Daily Graphic ahead of the inauguration of the assemblies, Nana Arthur said: "The Local Government Service expects the MMDCEs to show leadership and commitment to the growth of their assemblies."

Hajia Alima inaugurates Tamale Metropolitan Assembly

The Minister for Local Government and Rural Development, Hajia Alima Mahama, has charged members of the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly (TaMA) to make Revenue mobilisation cardinal in its deliberations and widen the revenue net through prudent decisions.

She further charged the Assembly to consider critical local level structural developments and introduce stringent measures to halt all unauthorised developments sited in areas prone to natural disasters and posing risks to residents.

The Minister charged the Assembly Members when she inaugurated them to administer the works of the Assembly for the next four years.

The Assembly, which had 41 elected members, 18 government appointees and two Members of Parliament and the Chief Executive Officer as ex-officio members, runs a 62-member Assembly.

There is huge task ahead of the Assembly to mobilise revenue, considering the enormous revenue generation challenges confronting it, having battled revenue collections last year to get the business community to pay rates.

Hajia Mahama advised the Assembly to explore more avenues for revenue generation to offer employable opportunities to the teeming unemployed youth in the Metropolis. "To this end, I invite you to take advantage of automation and other innovative systems developed by the Ministry to improve your IGF. This can be achieved if street naming and property addressing is pursued rigorously."

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She directed the Assembly to work closely with the Land Valuation Division of the Lands Commission to have ratable property in their jurisdiction and devise special client sensitive approaches to mobilise the rates devoid of challenges to the revenue payer. “As you grow your IGF, it should be possible to increase allowances paid to members”, she added.

She conceded that one major challenge confronting Assemblies was the unplanned, haphazard development. “Slums being developed in marshy areas, and houses built on waterways, have become phenomenal with serious implications to national development and public safety”.

She encouraged the Assembly members to be innovative and work with the various town and country planning bodies to streamline the unauthorized siting of structures. “As you are sworn in today, work with your Assembly to ensure compliance with the building rules and regulations on the zoning and development of lands” she added.

She referred the Assembly members to section of the Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936), which enjoins the Assembly to manage and improve on human settlements and the environment, and charged the Assembly to enforce its by-laws on sanitation and the management of the environment to prevent environmental related hazards.

The Local Government Minister urged the Assembly to work in a diversified and commercially oriented agriculture sector with strong linkages to industry and market, to generate employment to address rural poverty in the area.

She encouraged the Assembly Members to actively participate in the deliberations of the house and contribute positively to enhance the welfare of residents in the Metropolis.

The elected and appointed Assembly Members of the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly were sworn in by Mr Justice Osei Kwame Gyemfi, a high court judge in Tamale, after administering them to the oaths of office, secrecy and allegiance.

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