

Merge smaller universities

• To boost global visibility — Prof. Alabi

By Dennis Agyei Boateng, Accra

A former Vice Chancellor of the University of Professional Studies, Professor Joshua Alabi, has proposed to the government to merge the smaller public universities in the country to boost their global visibility and reduce the cost of university education.

For instance, he said, tertiary institutions such as the Ghana Institute of Languages (GIL), the Ghana Institute of Journalism (GIJ) and the National Film and Television Institute

(NAFTI) could be merged into one unique university to strengthen their research and academic activities.

Prof. Alabi made the proposal at the third anniversary lecture of the Baraka Policy Institute (BPI) in Accra last Thursday.

The theme of the lecture was: "Ensuring Inclusive and Equitable Quality Tertiary Education in Ghana: The Key Issues"

The programme was organised to draw the attention of the government and authorities to some inequalities in the system of the country.

The BPI is a social development think tank with a special focus on the promotion of social justice in the

context of national development.

Quality academic staff

Prof. Alabi submitted that quality education and quality staff were key to developing tertiary education and, therefore, when smaller universities were merged, it would enable them to engage more qualified lecturers to produce quality students.

"Do we want employable graduates or graduates with employability skills?", he asked.

Equal opportunity

Expressing keen interest in education, Prof. Alabi said access to

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The 3rd Baraka Policy Institute (BPI) anniversary lecture was held in Accra yesterday with a call on the government to merge the smaller public universities in the country.

tertiary education was the right of everyone, and appealed to universities to review their entry requirements in order to admit more students from less-endowed senior high schools.

"The dynamics of tertiary education have changed and, therefore, Ghana has to follow duly," he said.

He said the learning process and the content of learning in tertiary education should change to produce quality students who could compete with international students.

The Executive Director of BPI, Mr Haruna Zagoon-Sayeed, said most students who were able to enter tertiary institutions were those who went to well-endowed schools, while students from the less-endowed schools were usually left behind.

He underscored the need for people in Zongo communities, rural areas and deprived communities to be given equal opportunities as those in urban and well-developed communities.



• Prof. Joshua Alabi (left) addressing the guests. With them are Mr Alhassan Andani (middle), MD, Stanbic Bank Ghana, and Mr Cephas Adjei Mensah (right), acting Director, Tertiary Education. Picture: INNOCENT K. OWUSU

Ghanaians are safe in South Africa — Ayorkor Botchwey

By Severious Kale-Dery,
PARLIAMENT HOUSE

THE Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration Minister, Mrs Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, has given an assurance that all Ghanaians and Ghanaian businesses in South Africa are safe, despite the current xenophobic attacks in that country.

"No Ghanaian has been affected. Our mission has done a tour of Ghanaian businesses that we are aware of and they are all intact. No Ghanaian business or Ghanaian national has been attacked," she said.

Mrs Ayorkor Botchwey was addressing the parliamentary press corps after briefing Parliament on the emergence of xenophobic attacks in South Africa.

There has been a number

of xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals in South Africa, resulting in brutalities and the burning down of some houses belonging to foreigners.

The attacks were said to be targeting Nigerians, Somalians, Zimbabweans and Pakistanis.

There is a planned widespread anti-foreigners demonstrations in South Africa, and Ghana's mission in South Africa is advising all Ghanaians living or operating around where the demonstrations will be taking place to stay indoors.

Ghana on alert

"We are monitoring the situation, we are watching carefully what is happening and we will ensure that if there are any threats on any Ghanaian, the mission will quickly move in and ensure

the safety of our nationals," Mrs Botchwey stated.

She added that Ghana's Mission had been summoned to come home to assure Ghanaians that "our nationals are all safe."

Mrs Botchwey said Ghana had also contacted the South African Ministry of Internal Affairs to assure Ghana that its nationals would be safe.

She said there had been widespread condemnations of the attacks by identified bodies, including the South African Catholic Bishops Conference.

Attacks unfortunate

According to her, the attacks were not targeted at foreign nationals generally, but at some foreigners alleged to have been operating brothels and drug dens.

Mrs Botchwey said the

attacks were unfortunate, coming especially at a time when there were moves to get the African continent united.

She said it was sad that at the time of the anti-apartheid struggle, all Africans were in solidarity with the South Africans and added that it was unfortunate that the foreigners were victims of xenophobic attacks in South Africa.

Boycott

Though not ruling out completely the suggestions of boycotting South African products in protest against the attacks, Mrs Botchwey said that should be decided at a very high level.

"Boycotting South African products should be the very last resort. It should not be an issue to discuss now," the Foreign Affairs Minister told journalists.



• Mrs Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey