



# OFFICE OF THE MINORITY LEADER

Parliament House - Accra (Ghana)

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For Immediate Release:

## **RE: QUESTION ON EXPENDITURE RETURNS OF GH¢280.3 MILLION COVID-19 MONIES YET TO COME TO PARLIAMENT**

The attention of the Minority Caucus in Parliament has been drawn to a Press Release dated 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020 on the above matter and issued by the Directorate of Public Affairs of the Parliamentary Service and wish to respond as follows:

1. The said Press Release alleged that the Hon. Member for Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam, Mr. Cassiel Ato Forson, speaking on a Joy FM's evening news programme on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020, alleged that a Question on the expenditure returns of an amount of Gh¢280.3 million allocated for the fight against Covid-19 during the lockdown period was yet to receive an answer, three weeks after the Question was filed.
2. The Press Release further indicated that neither the Hon. Ato Forson nor any Member of the Minority Caucus had filed a Question on the said matter.
3. For the record, the Hon. Ato Forson never indicated that he or any Member of the Minority Caucus had filed a Question on "the expenditure returns of an amount of 280.3 million Ghana Cedis allocated for the fight against the Corona Virus during the lockdown period".
4. The Minority Caucus at a Press Conference on Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 called on the Auditor-General to conduct a special audit into the expenditure of the amount of Gh¢280.3 million allocated for the provision of food, water and sanitation under the Corona Virus Alleviation Programme (CAP).

5. The Hon. Ato Forson in reading the Statement from the Minority Caucus specifically demanded an audit into the following expenditures:
  - i. The amount of Gh₵40 million allocated for the procurement and distribution of food packages and hot meals to the vulnerable in the lockdown areas;
  - ii. The amount of Gh₵40.3 million allocated to the Ghana National Buffer Stock Company for the procurement and distribution of dry food to the vulnerable in lockdown areas; and
  - iii. The amount of Gh₵200 million allocated for the provision of water and sanitation.
6. It was in response to questions from the media that the Hon. Ato Forson indicated that the Minority had filed Questions in relation to the utilization of monies under the CAP and these were yet to be answered in Parliament.
7. For the record, on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2020 the Hon. Ranking Member for Health, Mr. Kwabena Minta Akando filed the following Urgent Question in relation to expenditures under the CAP which is yet to be answered by the Hon. Minister for Health: *"To ask the Minister of Health what emergency preparedness and response plan the Ministry has put in place to help contain the spread of Covid-19 Virus and the details of how the 100 million dollars announced by the President will be spent"*.
8. The Statement by the Directorate of Public Affairs did confirm that the Hon. Akando indeed asked the said Question and this is confirmed by the records of the House.
9. It is therefore factually inaccurate for the Directorate of Public Affairs to suggest that the Hon. Ato Forson alleged that there was a specific Question on the expenditure returns amounting to Gh₵280.3 Million.
10. The import of the response to the question from the media was to draw attention to efforts by the Minority to ensure accountability of all monies voted under CAP.

11. The Release from the Public Affairs Directorate also indicated that in a related matter, the Majority Leader was alleged to have alluded to the creation of new constituencies on Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020 in his presentation of the Business Statement for the ensuing week.
12. It must be indicated that the matter relating to the creation of new constituencies was never discussed at the said Press Conference.
13. It is the view of the Caucus that the Public Affairs Directorate did read the Press Statement by the Minority nor listen to the said news item by Joy FM. One would have thought that the Head of the Directorate would have requested for the record either from the Leadership of the Minority Caucus or Joy FM to apprise itself of the full content of what was discussed and what was attributable to the Hon. Ato Forson before going to Press.
14. While recognizing the role of the Directorate as the mouthpiece of Parliament and the Parliamentary Service as an Institution, the Department should endeavour to maintain balance in their reportage on matters concerning the House and the two Caucuses and not project the views of only one side of the divide.
15. We therefore urge the Head of the Directorate to seek the opinion of the Leadership of the Minority Caucus on matters of similar nature before going to Press.

Signed

**HON. HARUNA IDDRISU (Hon.)**  
**Minority Leader**