



BUSIA INSTITUTE FOR RURAL AND DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT

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PRESS RELEASE: COMMEMORATION OF THE 42ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE PASSING OF DR K A BUSIA

LET'S REMEMBER HIS VISION AND IDEALS

The Busia Institute marks the 42nd anniversary of the passing of Dr Kofi Abrefa Busia, Ghana's prime minister during the Second Republic (1969 – 1972) by reflecting on the vision and ideals of the late Ghanaian leader. He died in exile in London, United Kingdom, on 28 August 1978 following the ousting of his government on 13 January 1972, by a group of self-seeking individuals led by Ignatius Kutu Acheampong, who messed up the Ghanaian economy thereafter for nearly a decade.

Had Busia completed at least the first term of his administration, Ghana would have galloped in development as the few interventions of the Progress Party Government proved to be successful and essential in various spheres of life including education, health, water and sanitation, agriculture and good governance.

One of the best ways to analyse the life and times of Busia is to see Busia primarily as an ethical leader who appealed to the conscience and psyche of the Ghanaian. This leadership style reflected in his approach to the fight against social cankers, such as corruption, wastefulness, unproductivity and destruction to the environment.

The key plank of the Busia administration was rural development, a policy that was anchored on his vision of industrialising the rural areas of Ghana for a holistic national development. Amongst the notable programmes within the rural development programme was agriculture. The administration aimed at ensuring food security for Ghana and to use agro processing as a vehicle for ensuring Ghana's balance of payment deficit.

As a result of the cogent agricultural plans that the government rolled out, there was bumper harvest for rice and many other foods produces in the first two years after the overthrow of the government. The military administration that usurped the Busia government tried to ride on the success story of the erstwhile administration's agricultural intervention but due to lack of ideas Ghana slumped into untold hardship and hunger in the years thereafter.

As we commemorate the passing of Dr Busia, it is pertinent to focus on the legacy he bequeathed to us and to strive to protect and uphold his ideals. Amongst the key ideals of

Busia was his approach of soft weapons as a means of tackling challenges. He believed in dialogue rather than the use of weapons in the erstwhile apartheid system in Africa. Contrary to Busia's approach, a good number of Africa leaders called for the use of arms. The motive for Busia's call for dialogue premised on the adage that no hard matter is ever resolved with machete. Dialogue, in Busia's estimation, was a weapon that could be remodeled to suit any challenge and to resolve it amicably.

It is sad that the usurpers cut short the numerous plans of Busia that aimed at catapulting the country to a higher pedestal. Thankfully, more than four decades after the passing of Busia, his idea of rural industrialisation is being pursued vigorously by the Akufo-Addo government through policies like One Village One Dam, Planting for and Jobs and One District One Factory amongst others.

The Busia Institute wishes to encourage the government to remain focus on these human-centered policies that have the potential of bringing about the democratic welfare society that Busia envisioned for Ghana. We wish to request every Ghanaian everywhere also to support the government in any way possible to succeed for the greater good not only of the present generation but also those to come later.



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(Executive Director)