CAGI

Criticality Analysis of Governance Issues

Center for Economic, Governance and Political Affairs

Policy & Administration | Transparency & Accountability

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Human Rights & Justice | International Relations

IMANI
Center for Policy & Education

March 31 – April 5, 2025

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What is the Criticality Analysis?

The output of good governance is socioeconomic development that has greater impact on the citizens. Government takes the wheels of affairs of the state on the back of the many promises made to the electorates. Yet, it is no easy task when it comes to the processes and mechanisms required for true public services delivery. It must follow policy guidelines religiously, maintain the social contract, avoid excesses and wastages, and be an accountable steward of that which it has been entrusted.

IMANI Centre for Policy and Education in a bid to monitor the processes and mechanisms for public services delivery has devised the Criticality Analysis to evaluate the key actions of the government in this pursuit. The Criticality Analysis follows the major news reports on the key governance issues categorised under the following six (6) themes:

1. Policy and administration.
2. Transparency and accountability.
3. Anti-corruption.
4. Peace, security and stability.
5. Human rights and justice.
6. International relations and development.

The Criticality Analysis assesses the key governance issues by employing rigorous narrative analysis. First, we collect the key governance issues from reliable and credible news sources. A preliminary screening is conducted to filter out low-impact and non-governance-related issues. The issues are then categorised under the 6 main themes. The criticality analysis is not a performance assessment of government actions.

During the assessment, critical attention is paid to the factual accuracy of the reports, relevance and timeliness, and impact and significance. In view of this, the reports are corroborated by analysing same from multiple sources and monitoring the trends and development. In addition, expert opinions on the key issues are analysed to inform the final output of the Criticality Analysis which includes our recommendations for policy and practice to enhance public service delivery and accountable stewardship.

Categorisation of Key Governance Issues

Policy & Administration	Marrying regulatory interests and commercial interests in Ghana's gold export governance; highlights of analyses by IMANI's Vice Presidents.
Transparency & Accountability	Can there be truth in the skies: unravelling the misinformation narrative behind the AirMed controversy. How could they not know about the ECG containers; a board chair who was the majority leader, a minister who would have vice president, and an MD who was as a change agent.
Anti-corruption	The Speaker of Parliament's integrity award; is the vulture a corrupt bird to be named after an award for corrupt public officials?
Peace, Security & Stability	Guarding our sovereignty by tightening loose borders; what challenges do the recent pirate attacks present to border security?



1. Can there be truth in the skies: unravelling the misinformation narrative behind the AirMed controversy.

The controversy surrounding the AirMed aircraft landing in Ghana has unfolded as a multilayered saga that encapsulates the complexities of modern misinformation. Sparked by the claims of Rev. John Ntim Fordjour—a Member of Parliament from Assin South—alleging that the landing was linked to drug trafficking amid a backdrop of recent cocaine busts, the incident quickly evolved into a heated public debate. On one side, political figures and some sections of the media questioned the integrity of airport operations, while on the other, government officials such as spokesperson Felix Kwakye Ofosu emphasized that technical malfunctions, not criminal intent, were behind the landing. This analysis seeks to expose how misinformation has shaped public perception and stirred political debate, offering a detailed examination of the tactics employed, the media's role, and the deeper implications on public discourse.

Misinformation often thrives in environments where complex technical details intersect with high-stakes politics. In the AirMed controversy, the initial spark of doubt was fuelled by selective statements. Rev. Fordjour's assertions—which connected the aircraft's landing to a broader narrative of drug trafficking—leveraged the emotional charge surrounding national security and illicit activities.

By juxtaposing unverified claims with legitimate concerns about drug smuggling, these remarks created an atmosphere of uncertainty and suspicion.

Adding to the confusion were fragments of information shared on social media. For example, posts by political figures and commentators acted as standalone "evidence" that further blurred the line between fact and opinion. Such tactics not only amplify initial allegations but also sidestep the rigorous fact-checking process that traditional investigative journalism typically upholds. When claims are circulated without comprehensive validation, they set the stage for a self-perpetuating cycle of rumour and speculation—one where misinformation can solidify into an accepted narrative before the full picture is revealed.

The media landscape in Ghana played a crucial role in both fuelling and attempting to contain the narrative. Traditional outlets, spanning from NewsFile on JoyNews to analytical discussions on Channel One TV, provided platforms for diverse viewpoints but also inadvertently contributed to the fragmentation of the story. On JoyNews, a lively on-air banter involving Rev. Fordjour, host Samson Lardi Ayenini, and panelist Sammy Gyamfi underscored the polarization, as participants traded accusations and evidence in real time. The ensuing social media exchange—marked by rebuttals and the sharing of selective screenshots—only deepened public misperception, turning a technical issue into a battleground for political posturing.

Despite clarifications that the aircraft had landed for mechanical repairs, the persistent echo of the more sensational claim continued to dominate public discourse. In this polarized media environment, the interplay between accountability, political theatrics, and rapid information dissemination highlights how easily misinformation can warp public understanding and destabilize trust in institutional narratives.

A thorough examination of the AirMed controversy reveals a broader addiction to narrative convenience over verifiable fact. Critical analysis shows that while the concerns about national security and illicit activities are legitimate, they are being manipulated by selectively presented data and partisan rhetoric. The deliberate emphasis on uncorroborated information—such as anecdotal evidence and partial transcript screenshots—has sowed discord and confusion.

The government's explanation, pointing to technical malfunctions like damaged landing gear tyres and engine faults, was rooted in operational facts yet was overshadowed by the more sensational claims. This incongruence highlights a recurring challenge: how to reconcile objective technical details with emotionally charged speculations. Furthermore, the willingness of some actors to invoke the role of security agencies, as was suggested on Channel One TV when implying potential arrests, serves to escalate tensions without addressing the core factual issues. Such strategies not only undermine the principles of transparent governance but also contribute to a broader erosion of public trust—an outcome that extends well beyond this single incident. The AirMed controversy is more than a dispute over a technical malfunction; it is a microcosm of a media ecosystem increasingly dominated by misinformation.

Referred trends links

AirMed Flight N823AM indeed landed in Ghana for 5 days - MyJoyOnline

President Mahama orders probe into drug and cash trafficking allegations by Minority - Graphic Online

2 aircraft landed in Ghana for legitimate reasons, no unlawful substances were on them - Kwakye Ofosu - MyJoyOnline

Air Med Aircraft landed at KIA due to technical issues, another aircraft brought damaged parts and engineers – Kwakye Ofosu

Ntim Fordjour unable to prove AirMed flight allegations – Kwakye Ofosu

We stopped at KIA over maintenance issues – AirMed Int'l responds to drug trafficking allegations

Assin South MP Demands Urgent Security Brief

Ntim Fordjour peddled falsehood over aircraft drug claims - Felix Kwakye Ofosu - MyJoyOnline

I didn't walk out of Newsfile – Ntim Fordjour refutes claims by Sammy Gyamfi - MyJoyOnline

Rev Ntim Fordjour must be arrested to substantiate claims - Sammy Gyamfi - MyJoyOnline

2. How could they not know about the ECG containers; a board chair who was the majority leader, a minister who would have vice president, and an MD who was as a change agent.



The disappearance of over 1,300 ECG containers from Tema Port has emerged as one of the most striking scandals in Ghana's energy sector. What makes this case particularly compelling is the involvement of high-profile figures: Hon. Alexander Afenyo-Markin, the ECG Board Chair and Majority Leader in Parliament; Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh (NAPO), the Energy Minister and former Vice Presidential candidate; and Samuel Dubik Mahama, the Managing Director of ECG, celebrated as a change agent during his tenure. This analysis seeks to unravel how such a significant lapse in oversight could occur under the leadership of individuals who wielded considerable influence and were entrusted with safeguarding national assets.

As ECG Board Chair, Hon. Afenyo-Markin was tasked with providing strategic oversight to the company's operations. However, his dual role as Majority Leader in Parliament raises questions about whether his parliamentary responsibilities diluted his focus on ECG's governance. Critics argue that the board's oversight mechanisms under his leadership were insufficient to detect or prevent the disappearance of containers. The lack of proactive measures to address systemic inefficiencies within ECG suggests that the board may have prioritized short-term goals over long-term accountability.

NAPO's tenure as Energy Minister coincided with critical moments in ECG's operations. As the head of the ministry overseeing ECG, his role was pivotal in ensuring transparency and efficiency within the sector. The fact that these issues have surfaced after his tenure raises concerns about the effectiveness of the ministry's oversight mechanisms. His political aspirations as a Vice Presidential candidate further complicate the narrative, as scandals like this one cast a shadow over his legacy and the role he wished to assume.

Mr. Dubik Mahama's tenure as ECG MD was marked by significant achievements, including revenue growth and operational reforms. Yet, the emergence of these issues post-resignation suggests that his leadership may have overlooked deeper systemic flaws. While Mahama has defended his tenure by pointing to pre-existing challenges within ECG, the disappearance of containers under his watch raises questions about the robustness of internal controls and procurement processes during his administration.

The ECG containers scandal is not merely a failure of individual leadership but a reflection of systemic weaknesses within the organization. Fragmented processes, outdated systems, and weak internal controls have long plagued ECG, creating an environment where discrepancies can persist unnoticed. The merging of procurement and estate units, as highlighted by Mr. Mahama, further undermined accountability and transparency. These structural flaws suggest that even high-profile leaders may struggle to effect meaningful change without addressing the root causes of inefficiency.

The delayed detection of the missing containers underlines the need for stronger oversight mechanisms and more rigorous audits. The ECG containers scandal serves as a stark reminder that leadership alone cannot guarantee accountability. The collective inability of

Mr. Dubik Mahama, Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh and Hon. Afenyo-Markin to detect and address these discrepancies highlights the importance of robust systems and processes, aside from leadership.

Referred trends links

Missing ECG containers: Over 1,300 unaccounted for – Minister orders criminal probe

ECG missing containers scandal: What we know so far

Energy Minister demands forensic audit over missing ECG containers - MyJoyOnline

Missing ECG containers from Tema port traced to Kpone, Energy Minister says Indian man arrested

14 arrested over missing ECG containers at port - MyJoyOnline

National Security arrests 8 Chinese, Ghanaian over missing ECG containers at port - MyJoyOnline

40 of missing ECG containers found at warehouse owned by Chinese national – Energy Minister - MyJoyOnline

'Missing' ECG containers may have been auctioned by GRA – Former ECG boss - MyJoyOnline

I'm all for investigation into missing ECG containers – Dubik Mahama

Missing ECG containers: Former MD Dubik Mahama defends Afenyo-Markin, NAPO

3. The Speaker of Parliament's integrity award; is the vulture a corrupt bird to be named after an award for corrupt public officials?



Ghana's ongoing battle against corruption has repeatedly seen the use of bold, symbolic measures aimed at reinvigorating public trust. In this climate, Speaker Alban Bagbin's introduction of an anti-corruption award that bears the stark moniker "Vulture Award" has sparked intense debate. This critical analysis examines how the vulture—a creature that in nature is both indispensable and reviled—has been repurposed as a symbol to expose corrupt practices, and questions whether such symbolic gestures can truly propel a quest for accountability. Does the imagery of scavenging corruption resonate with substantive change, or does it risk reducing complex systemic issues to mere political theatre?

Over the past few years, Ghana has witnessed a palpable shift in its political and institutional approach to corruption. High-profile political actors and watchdogs have pushed for greater oversight and transparency in state-run entities like the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG). Against this backdrop, the Speaker of Parliament recently announced a series of awards aimed at both celebrating integrity and publicly shaming corruption. At the centre of this initiative is the "Vulture Award," a title that immediately conjures the dual nature of vultures—essential scavengers yet often associated with opportunism.

The choice to name such an award in the context of anti-corruption efforts arises at a time when the nation is grappling with issues ranging from missing ECG containers, the NSB and NSS scandals. It is within this contentious atmosphere that the award is both lauded for its bold imagery and critiqued for potentially deepening partisan divides.

In the natural world, vultures serve an essential ecological function by disposing of carrion that, if left unchecked, could lead to health hazards. This vital role, however, is emphasized by an image of opportunism, as vultures are often viewed as preying on the weak. The decision to label a corruption award with this metaphor is neither accidental nor purely provocative. It speaks to an underlying narrative: that within the corridors of power, certain individuals harness opportunities not to repair but to profit from the decay of public trust.

By invoking the vulture, the award sends a message that corruption, much like a carcass left to fester, will be exploited if not swiftly and forcefully addressed. Its stark imagery is intended to shock—forcing the public to confront the unsavoury reality of corruption head-on. Yet, such symbolism carries risks. While the metaphor draws a vivid picture, it might also foster an environment of public shaming rather than constructive dialogue. Critics of the award argue that branding individuals as "vultures" might not lead to systemic reform but merely heighten the polarization that pervades political discourse. This has been witnessed in several shaming efforts like that of the corrupt judges, customs officials and police officers.

Globally, symbolic gestures have been both lauded and criticized for their effectiveness in combating corruption. Several nations including Singapore and the Philippines have instituted awards and public shaming mechanisms to deter corrupt practices. However, the success of these measures often hinges on complementary systemic reforms. In Ghana's case, the "Vulture Award" stands at the intersection of symbolic politics and practical governance, raising a critical question: does a metaphor suffice in a complex fight against corruption?

The awards have been heralded as a dual-purpose tool: one that celebrates ethical conduct while simultaneously denouncing those who compromise the public trust. Proponents argue that by spotlighting corrupt behaviour, the award not only serves as a deterrent but also sets a moral benchmark for public office. The symbolism of the vulture is intended to inspire vigilance among citizens and accountability among officials.

Yet, the practical impact of such a symbol is open to debate. While the award guarantees significant media attention—which, in theory, could drive a culture of accountability—the worry is that its confrontational tone may be more theatrical than transformative. Public discourse might focus on the shock value of the title rather than on substantive policy reforms or rigorous investigative action. Thus, questions arise: Can renaming a problem as a "vulture" lead to the dissection of underlying systemic weaknesses in institutions like the ECG, the NSB, the NSS, the Police Service and other public institutions or does it merely produce momentary headlines?

The awards must be evaluated within the context of Ghana's larger anti-corruption framework. Recent audit reports and scandals indicate that symbolic measures belong only to part of the solution. For meaningful change, such initiatives need to be buttressed by concrete reforms that address administrative inefficiencies, enforce accountability mechanisms, and reconfigure oversight structures. In this light, the award serves more as a rallying cry for accountability than as a standalone solution.

The fundamental challenge remains: can an award rooted in symbolic imagery prompt a rigorous overhaul of the institutions it seeks to monitor? The case of ECG, emblematic of broader governance issues in Ghana, suggests that deep-seated institutional weaknesses require more than public shaming. Transparent audits, robust internal controls, and a redefined mandate for regulatory agencies are critical to transforming the symbolism of the vulture into tangible accountability measures.

There is a delicate balance between inspiring public outrage and instilling sustained trust in governmental institutions. While the "Vulture Award" may temporarily galvanize public opinion, there is a risk that its confrontational nature could entrench cynicism instead of fostering collaborative solutions. The public's

ultimate trust will be restored only when symbolic gestures are matched with demonstrable, systemic reforms that ensure transparency and accountability.

For Ghana's anti-corruption narrative to evolve constructively, it is imperative to channel the energy generated by symbolic awards into comprehensive policy action. Combining media attention with legislative reform, capacity building within institutions, and enhanced oversight can transform the vulture motif from a symbol of scavenging into one of renewal and prompt corrective action.

Referred trends links

Speaker Bagbin announces National Integrity Awards to honour anti-corruption champions - MyJoyOnline

National Vulture Award to name and shame citizens with low integrity — Speaker Bagbin

Vulture Awards: 'Focus on fighting corruption in Parliament' — Inusah Fuseini to Speaker Bagbin

4. Guarding our sovereignty by tightening loose borders; what challenges do the recent pirate attacks present to border security?



Ghana's coastal zone, with its strategic position along the Gulf of Guinea, has long been a vital asset for national trade, resource management, and economic prosperity. However, recent pirate attacks—most notably the brazen assault on Ghanaian fishing vessels—have exposed significant vulnerabilities in the nation's maritime border security. These incursions not only threaten the safety of seafarers and local economies but also call into question Ghana's ability to assert full sovereignty over its territorial waters. This analysis examines how these destabilizing events highlight structural weaknesses in border enforcement, challenges long-standing notions of national control, and urge a rethinking of both policy and operational measures to safeguard Ghana's maritime interests.

At its core, national sovereignty relates to a state's supreme authority within its territorial borders. In the maritime realm, this authority is defined by internationally recognized frameworks—most notably the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Effective border security, therefore, becomes a critical component of exerting sovereign control, ensuring that state resources are managed sustainably and that illegal operations, such as unapproved vessel incursions and piracy, are kept at bay.

Modern maritime security relies on a blend of advanced technology, strategic patrolling, legal frameworks, and regional collaboration. Robust systems such as offshore patrol vessels (OPVs), Vessel Traffic Management Information Systems (VTMIS), and coordinated intelligence sharing are essential for monitoring Ghana's extensive coastline. Such measures are not merely about warding off immediate threats; they are crucial for maintaining long-term political legitimacy and economic stability by affirming that the state has control over its resources and trade routes.

Recent high-profile pirate incidents have underscored the risks posed by inadequate maritime security. For instance, an attack on a Ghanaian fishing vessel disrupted operations and led to the seizure of critical staff and equipment. These events were

not isolated attacks; they are symptomatic of a broader security gap that enables criminal elements to operate with relative impunity. The fact that armed pirates can breach Ghana's defensive perimeter indicates that the nation's border control measures are insufficient, allowing for both economic exploitation and outright criminal behaviour in areas that should be under strict state control.

While the physical act of piracy dramatically illustrates the break in security, the parallel issue of illegal fishing further compounds the threat. Foreign vessels, operating without timely oversight, not only deplete fish stocks but also inflict considerable economic damage on local communities. These simultaneous challenges reveal that lapses in border security can have cascading effects: undermining economic stability, damaging environmental sustainability, and reducing the efficacy of sovereign governance over crucial maritime resources.

At the heart of these challenges are significant deficiencies within Ghana's current maritime enforcement infrastructure. The delayed procurement of modern OPVs, coupled with limited surveillance capacities, creates vast areas within Ghana's territorial waters that are effectively "loose borders." This operational gap provides a window of opportunity for criminal networks to operate, whether through piracy or the unauthorized appropriation of marine resources. The current reactive posture of security agencies means that responses to ongoing threats are often delayed, further emboldening potential offenders.

These shortcomings are compounded by broader issues of governance and resource allocation. While symbolic gestures and public campaigns have garnered media attention in response to these attacks, they often lack the substance required for long-term solutions. Policies that focus primarily on reactive measures (such as temporary boosts in patrolling efforts) may generate headlines; however, without systemic institutional reforms and sustained investment in advanced maritime technology, the core issues remain unaddressed.

The security challenges faced by Ghana reflect broader themes in international relations where secure borders are indispensable to the exercise of national power. In the case of Ghana, the inability to contain pirate activities not only affects the economic domain but also undermines legitimacy in the eyes of domestic and international observers. Drawing parallels with other coastal nations that have successfully repatriated stronger security paradigms, it becomes clear that a comprehensive policy overhaul is necessary for Ghana to reclaim its lost ground.

Referred trends links

Pirates attack Ghanaian-registered fishing vessel, MENGXIN – Rainbow Radio Online

Ghana Navy probes suspected pirate attack on fishing vessel - MyJoyOnline

Ghana Navy investigates suspected pirate attack, 3 crew members feared kidnapped - Graphic Online

Minority urges gov't to strengthen maritime security after pirate attack - MyJoyOnline

Piracy can have serious national and economic consequences – GITA

Assin South MP Demands Urgent Security Brief

5. Marrying regulatory interests and commercial interests in Ghana's gold export governance; highlights of analyses by IMANI's Vice Presidents.



Ghana's gold export sector remains one of the country's crown jewels—vital to national revenue and economic identity. In a bid to consolidate the sector and maximize value capture, the government introduced the Goldbod model. This initiative consolidates regulatory oversight and commercial operational functions into one entity. However, this "one-stop shop" has sparked significant debate and concern among governance experts. Leading the critical discourse are IMANI's Vice Presidents, including Kofi Bentil, and the influential voice of Bright Simons, Honorary Vice President of the IMANI Center for Policy and Education. Their analyses underscore the inherent risks of marrying regulatory and commercial interests—a design that many fear may lead to conflicts of interest, regulatory capture, and inefficient governance.

Historically, Ghana's gold export governance was fragmented, with disparate agencies managing regulatory functions and commercial trade. This disjointed structure often led to potential revenue losses amidst increased production in recent years and missed opportunities for national value capture. The introduction of the Goldbod model is meant to address these inefficiencies by consolidating activities under one institution. The intention, therefore, was to streamline processes and bolster transparency in the legal small-scale mining sector.

Central to the debate is the concept of regulatory capture. Traditionally, the separation of regulatory functions from commercial operations is seen as essential to maintain impartial oversight. When a single entity is charged with both enforcing compliance and pursuing commercial ventures, there is an inherent risk that profit motives will interfere with objective regulation. This issue of conflict of interest is not new; it is frequently cited as a governance pitfall in sectors such as mining, banking, and even the cocoa industry. By examining these theoretical concerns, one can appreciate why melding these functions within the Goldbod is viewed with considerable scepticism.

Bright Simons, in his article "All that glitters is not gold," alongside IMANI Vice President Kofi Bentil, have been explicit in their reservations. They argue that the Goldbod model, while innovative on paper, risks transforming a vibrant regulatory framework into a mechanism prone to mismanagement and opacity. Their insights form the backbone of this analysis, inviting a closer look at whether the potential benefits outweigh the significant risks.

Goldbod is expected to enforce strict compliance standards in the small-scale mining sector, ensuring that every transaction, export, and assay adheres to nationally prescribed norms. This includes robust monitoring, transparent recordkeeping, and stringent audit processes. At the same time, Goldbod has been entrusted with the commercial responsibilities of buying, assaying, selling, and exporting gold. These functions are designed to cement Ghana's position as a dominant player in the global gold market, aimed at maximizing state revenue from gold exports.

Bright Simons and Kofi Bentil have convincingly argued that when one institution must balance the dual imperatives of regulation and market operation, the risk of regulatory capture escalates. Commercial objectives, which are intrinsically profit-driven, may begin to overshadow the imperative of impartial

oversight. This imbalance can lead to decisions that prioritize short-term commercial gains over long-term regulatory integrity—thereby compromising the system's credibility.

A particular point of contention is the Act's provision that entrusts Goldbod's Board with appointing mediators for the dispute resolution mechanism (DRM). This setup raises concerns about the independence of the mediators and the overall fairness of conflict resolution. Critics argue that if mediators are selected by the same body that has commercial stakes, their decisions could inadvertently serve to protect the institution's economic interests rather than ensuring equitable redress.

The cautionary narratives drawn from past institutional arrangements—such as the "botched" Agyapa Royalties deal—highlight a recurring pattern where well-intentioned consolidation ultimately led to mismanagement. In these cases, unmitigated overlaps between commercial and regulatory functions resulted in opaque operations and diminished public trust. Such precedents underscore IMANI's warning that the Goldbod, without structural firewalls, might similarly falter.

An instructive parallel can be drawn from the governance model employed in the cocoa sector. The Ghana Cocoa Board, while also a powerful state institution, has traditionally maintained a clearer demarcation between direct market operations and regulatory oversight. This separation has allowed for greater accountability and reduced instances of regulatory capture. Comparisons with such models indicate that a strictly segregated framework yields better outcomes for national value capture and long-term sustainability.

Looking beyond Ghana, several international regulatory frameworks in the mining sector stress the importance of independent oversight mechanisms. Countries that have successfully balanced these dual roles tend to establish separate bodies or institute independent committees to oversee regulatory functions while the commercial arm operates autonomously under clearly defined parameters. These international examples reinforce the caution expressed by IMANI's experts regarding the risks of merging these roles without robust safeguards.

While the Goldbod model for Ghana's gold export governance aspires to consolidate and streamline operations for enhanced national value capture, its dual role poses significant risks. The merging of regulatory and commercial mandates can lead to conflicts of interest and potential regulatory capture, as emphasized by IMANI's Vice Presidents and Bright Simons. Drawing lessons from both historical precedents and international best practices, it is clear that unless systematic safeguards are put in place, the potential benefits of this reform could be undermined by governance challenges and mismanagement.

Referred trends links

Gold Board will revolutionize Ghana's gold sector — Finance Minister

Ghana lost $1.2billion to gold smuggling in 2022 – Finance Minister - Graphic Online

"All that glitters is not gold" - initial comments on Ghana's Gold Board - THE SCARAB

Ghana Gold Board Bill Read

GoldBod will maximize Ghana's gold earnings — Mahama

Parliament passes Ghana Gold Board Bill - Graphic Online

President Mahama signs Ghana Gold Board Bill into law

Chamber of Licensed Gold Buyers hails enactment of GoldBod Act - MyJoyOnline

Recommendation

1. To restore public trust, it is crucial to initiate a thorough investigation into the allegations surrounding the AirMed's flight involvement in drug trafficking. This should involve collaboration between Ghana's security agencies, aviation authorities, and international partners and the Hon. Ntim Fordjour who alleged the case to determine the full scope of the incident. Findings must be made public to ensure transparency.

2. The issue of missing ECG containers at the port highlights a breakdown in logistical controls and oversight. To combat this, the introduction of robust tracking systems using technologies like RFID or GPS after offloading is recommended in order to monitor container movements in real time. Equally important is the strengthening of internal controls; this involves revising standard operating procedures around container handling and storage, ensuring that every step is documented and auditable. Process transparency should be enhanced by publishing regular audit and performance reports and by establishing a secure whistleblowing system that encourages employees to report irregularities without fear. Enhanced coordination between logistics, supply chain, and finance departments will further reduce the risk of administrative lapses that could lead to such losses in the future.

3. Regarding the Speaker's Vulture Award, designed to expose corruption, the primary recommendation is to couple its symbolic impact with substantive, reformative measures. Rather than relying solely on public shaming, this award should be integrated with rigorous, evidence-based investigations and a follow-up mechanism that drives policy reform. It is crucial to clearly define and publicly disclose the criteria for issuing the award, thereby minimizing perceptions of arbitrariness or partiality. Establishing an independent oversight committee to verify allegations before the award is made public could further help in preserving its credibility. IMANI CPE recommends strongly CSO collaboration and engagements in this regard. Hitherto, IMANI CPE had launched its IPSLA which Parliament can emulate. Additionally, by linking the award to concrete remedial actions and ongoing accountability initiatives, the process can contribute constructively to anti-corruption measures rather than merely creating polarizing statements.

4. To combat piracy and illegal fishing—which threaten both the economic well-being and national sovereignty of Ghana—there is a strong need to modernize maritime security infrastructure. This includes rapidly procuring advanced offshore patrol vessels and integrating aerial and satellite surveillance systems into efforts like the Vessel Traffic Management Information System (VTMIS) to ensure comprehensive coverage of Ghana's territorial waters. On a broader level, strengthening regional cooperation by establishing alliances with neighbouring nations and engaging international bodies such as ECOWAS could facilitate joint security operations and intelligence sharing. At the local level, involving coastal communities through maritime watch programs, as well as creating public–private partnerships, will harness local knowledge and technology in the fight against offshore criminal activities. Finally, updating maritime laws and enforcing strict penalties for piracy and illegal fishing will serve as effective deterrents.

5. The Goldbod initiative's attempt to combine regulatory and commercial roles within one entity carries significant risks. To mitigate these, it is recommended that internal firewalls be established to clearly separate regulatory functions from commercial operations. This could be achieved by setting up independent oversight committees or separate departments that report directly to an external body such as Parliament. Regular external audits by impartial experts should be mandated, with their findings made public to ensure transparency.

Moreover, the dispute resolution mechanism should be reformed by appointing independent mediators from outside the Goldbod structure, ensuring that conflicts are resolved fairly and without internal influence. Continuous stakeholder engagement is also vital; involving local communities, industry experts, and civil society groups will help refine operations and ensure that reforms are responsive to all perspectives. Gradual implementation with extensive, data-driven evaluations can help identify and rectify emerging challenges before they become entrenched.

IMANI
Center for Policy & Education

IMANI Center for Policy & Education is a Think Tank of considerable local and international repute based in Ghana. Founded on the 9th of March 2004, IMANI has carved a niche in Ghana's policy environment for putting out objective, independent analysis and critique on many issues, using tried and tested techniques that apply across different disciplines.

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