

**IN THE SECOND SESSION OF THE SIXTH
PARLIAMENT OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC OF GHANA**

**REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND ROADS AND TRANSPORT**

ON

**CHALLENGES RELATING TO ACCESS TO
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA (LEGON CAMPUS)**

JULY 2014

**REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND ROADS AND
TRANSPORT ON CHALLENGES RELATING TO ACCESS TO UNIVERSITY OF
GHANA (LEGON CAMPUS)**

1.0 Background

It would be recalled that at the 28th Sitting of the First Meeting of Parliament on Tuesday, 18th March 2014, the Hon. Member for Asawase and Majority Chief Whip, Alhaji Mubarak Muntaka, by leave of the House, drew attention to challenges relating to access to the University of Ghana Campus by the general public.

The First Deputy Speaker, having regard to the issue raised and comments made thereon, referred the matter to the Joint Committee on Education and Roads and Transport to liaise with the relevant stakeholders to find an amicable solution to the problem and report to the House.

2.0 Methodology

Subsequent to the directive of the Hon. First Deputy Speaker, the Committee invited the underlisted persons to assist in its deliberations:

1. Hon Minister for Education - Prof. Nana Jane Opoku Agyemang;
2. Hon Minister for Roads and Highways – Alhaji Sulemani Amin Iddrisu;
3. Chairman of the University Council - Justice Dr. S.K. Date-Bah
4. Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana - Professor Ernest Aryeetey and other officials of the University; and
5. Representatives of the Concerned Parents of the University Basic School

The Committee also made reference to the following materials:

1. The Constitution of the Republic of Ghana
2. The Standing Orders of Parliament
3. The University of Ghana Act, 2010 (Act 806)
4. Ghana Highway Authority Act, 1997 (Act 540)
5. A Copy of the University for Ghana's Report to the Minister of Education on Restricted Access to the University
6. Petition from Concerned Parents of the University of Ghana Basic School

In addition, the Committee undertook a guided tour of the affected roads of the University.

3.0 Deliberations

3.1 Briefing by University of Ghana

3.1.1 The University Authorities indicated that increased vehicular traffic coupled with lack of major maintenance over the years resulted in the deterioration of the University roads. Repeated attempts by the University to source funding from Government to reconstruct the roads could not yield results. This necessitated the University to seek for an alternative source of funding to reconstruct the deteriorated road network within the University by taking a credit facility of Eight Million Ghana Cedis (GH¢8,000,000.00) for the purpose. Indeed, the University Council was guided by the understanding that the loan would be repaid through the imposition of levies on the road users, a decision the University deemed lawful and in accordance with the University of Ghana Act, 2010 (Act 806).

3.1.2 The University Authorities explained that restricted access of motorists to the Legon Campus is an old policy that had been in existence and complied with as motorists had been required to use designated gates for entry. They

indicated that with the increment in population of the neighbouring communities, motorists from these Communities found it more convenient to use the University Campus as a thoroughfare, a situation further compounded by the construction of the N1 Highway and the rehabilitation of the Madina-Accra Road. Therefore, as an interim measure at easing the congestion thereof, the Ministry of Roads and Highways and the Department of Urban Roads requested the University to allow access to its roads. Furthermore, the University was also impressed upon to cede land along its boundaries for the construction of a bypass to divert the heavy vehicular traffic, to which the University graciously yielded. This subsequently led to the construction of the Legon bypass (the Boundary Road between Legon and GIMPA) and the road from Gulf House to the Boundary Road.

It was therefore the expectation of the University that with the completion of those roads, the drive-through campus traffic would be significantly reduced. However, this was not the case. The authorities indicated that an average of sixteen thousand vehicles plied the Legon campus daily, a development that posed serious challenges for academic work and the safety of the University community.

3.1.3 Indeed, while agreeing that the rationale for introducing the toll was to reduce the volume of traffic on the University campus, they conceded that it was to also generate some revenue for the maintenance of the Campus roads. The authorities disclosed that traffic levels at the University campus declined by 50% with the introduction of road tolls. However, after the suspension of the tolls on 22nd February 2014 as a result of Government's promise to absorb the loan, the traffic situation jumped back to the previous levels, posing challenges to effective academic work, as well as the security and safety of staff and students.

Consequently, the University Council, after a careful consideration of the situation, decided to go back to its policy of vehicle entry restriction to its campus through the use of Stickers. The University authorities indicated that with the exception of the Stadium road (Okponglo Junction) which was open to the general public 24 hours a day, entry through all other points was to be regulated through the use of Stickers to prevent motorists from using the University as a thoroughfare. According to the authorities, the re-introduction of the Sticker system was much publicized, prior to the implementation of the policy. They however bemoaned the uproar generated at the implementation of the policy.

3.2 Briefing by Representatives of Concerned Parents of the UG Basic School

3.2.1 The Concerned Parents expressed frustration at the policy on Restricted Access. They indicated that accessing the University Basic School only through the Okponglo Entry and Exit point has created a lot of inconvenience for parents residing at the western suburbs of the University. This is in view of the heavy traffic they have to go through every morning before dropping off their wards at the Basic School. The Western Gate near GIMPA, according to them, offers the most convenient route for both parents and children coming from the GIMPA end of the University.

3.2.2 Indeed, the parents are not entirely against the decision that parents purchase Stickers as a condition for accessing the Western Gate to drop off and pick their wards from University Basic School. They were however of the opinion that the current cost of the Sticker- GHc400.00 per annum, is too high, given that parents already contribute towards the development of the Basic school by way of PTA dues and other development levies. According to the parents, the issue is not about the offer of a concessionary staggered payment of GHc400.00 for the sticker, but that it was unfair for

them to pay such a huge sum (on behalf of their wards) whilst students of the University, who are adults, pay only GHc50.00 for the same UG Sticker. They have therefore proposed to pay an amount of hundred Ghana Cedis (GHc100.00) per annum instead of the four hundred Ghana Cedis (GHc400.00) being charged by the University.

3.2.3 Another issue of concern to the Concerned Parents related to the question of the number of stickers that parents who share the responsibility of dropping off and picking their wards from Basic School are required to purchase. The Sticker system, as being operated now imposes the obligation for such parents to acquire two Stickers per ward.

Thus, to overcome this challenge and facilitate the entry and exit of a child being chauffeured by either parents or a responsible adult at the restricted entry point, the University should consider issuing a form of identification (Special Pass) to each child of the Basic School.

3.2.4 The parents were of the view that in formulating and implementing the policy, it was important for the University to pay attention to the peculiar needs/interest of children who live outside its Campus, for which reason parents of such group of children should be given convenient and affordable access to the University Campus. They intimated that this group of children is unfortunately classified as "Outsiders" whereas by virtue of their admission to the University Basic School, they are an integral part of the University community.

4.0 Observations and Recommendations

4.1 The Hon. Minister for Education informed the Committee that government was making arrangements to absorb the loan facility sourced by the University of Ghana to reconstruct its roads. The Committee urges Government, as a matter of urgency, to honour its commitment to pay back

the loan contracted by the University within the stipulated time to relieve the University of the debt incurred in the reconstruction of its roads.

- 4.2 The Committee was informed during a visit to the University Campus to assess the traffic situation, that a link road from the University Teaching Hospital Junction to the Shiashie Road would be constructed. The Committee notes that the early construction of this alternative route will minimize the volume of traffic flow to the main University Campus.

The Committee is also of the view that the construction of the link road from the University Teaching Hospital Junction to the Shiashie road will help address the inconvenience parents who reside at the GIMPA end of the University go through (due to the policy of restricted entry), weaving round N1 Highway to access the Okponglo main entrance before dropping their wards off at the University Basic School. The Committee therefore calls on the Ministry of Roads and Highways to provide the needed support to the University in the construction of this important link road.

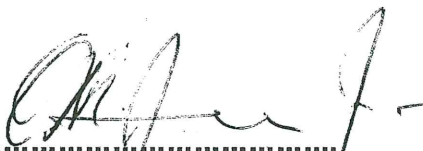
- 4.3 The Committee observed that the primary concern of the parents is the cost of the Sticker which they consider very high. It came to the Committee's attention that commercial drivers who ply the University roads several times a day and generate revenue from their operations, pay the same rate as parents who only drop off their wards in the mornings and pick them after classes. The Committee is of the view that the One Hundred Ghana Cedis (GH100.00) proposed by the Concerned Parents is reasonable and therefore calls on the University authorities to consider the offer made by the Parents.

With regard to the Parents' call for the use of an identification system for children as a possible alternative, the Committee is of the opinion that the proposal stands to provide more flexibility in the implementation of the restricted entry policy and thus urges the University authorities to consider the adoption of the proposal.

5.0 Conclusion

The Committee acknowledges that the University of Ghana, like every academic institution, ought to maintain security and provide a congenial atmosphere to promote effective teaching and learning. However, in pursuance of this, it is important for the University to recognise that it operates within a community which invariably becomes a key stakeholder in matters that affects its development. In the light of this, the University should, as much as possible, engage stakeholders in a manner that carries the community along the vision and aspirations of the institution.

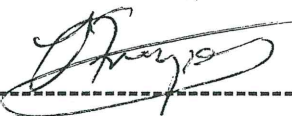
Respectfully submitted



.....
HON MATHIAS PUOZAA
CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE
ON EDUCATION



.....
HON. MICHAEL C. BOAMPONG
CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON
ROADS & TRANSPORT



.....
JANET FRIMPONG
CLERK, COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION



.....
MATTHEW ABREFA TAWIAH
CLERK, COMMITTEE ON
ROADS AND TRANSPORT

