

**ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER FOR LANDS AND NATURAL
RESOURCES, HON. SAMUEL A. JINAPOR, MP, AT THE
COMMISSIONING OF A WEIGHBRIDGE AT APEMANIM
IN THE AHANTA WEST MUNICIPALITY ON TUESDAY
26TH JULY, 2022**

Nana Chair;

Western Regional Minister;

Deputy Minister for Lands and Natural Resources;

Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives;

Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Commission;

Managing Directors of the Ghana Manganese Company

Ltd. and the Ghana Bauxite Company Ltd.;

Officials of the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources
and the Minerals Commission;

Western Regional Chairman of the NPP

Presiding Member and Assembly Members;

Nananom;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Manganese and Bauxite form a substantial component of Ghana's mineral inventory. Since their discovery, we have exploited these minerals, mainly from Nsuta and Awaso in the Western and Western North Regions, respectively, and they have contributed immensely to our socio-economic development.

Historically, Ghana Manganese Company (GMC) and Ghana Bauxite Company (GBC), the two companies involved in the exploitation of these minerals, relied on rail for the transportation of the minerals to the Takoradi Port for export. Over the years, however, the downward trend in Ghana Railways Company's capacity to provide the required services have compelled the companies to transport the minerals they produce by road.

Apart from the longer distances and the cost involved, transportation of these minerals by road has other consequences such as road traffic, safety challenges to communities along the haulage corridor, and rapid deterioration of the road network due to a mismatch between the road's capacity and haulage vehicle axle loads.

Most of these challenges, as well as allegations of inaccurate reporting of figures, are as a result of lack of enforcement and poor monitoring of bulk hauling activities.

To address these issues, the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources and the Minerals Commission engaged stakeholders and undertook site visits to the operational areas of the mining companies and the Takoradi port, to assess the facilities in place for the haulage of these minerals. It was revealed after these engagements that, the country lacked tracking mechanisms to track and audit actual volumes of bauxite and manganese produced and exported. This weak monitoring mechanism results in huge loss of revenue to the State.

It, therefore, became necessary to put in place a robust system that will help us determine, accurately, at each given time, the actual volumes of these minerals transported, and the amount due the State. This requires that we repair faulty weighbridges, construct additional ones and properly calibrate them to provide accurate results.

Consequently, the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources took the decision to construct two (2) weighbridges, one here in Apemanim, which we commission today, and another in Awaso in the Bibiani-Anhwiaso-Bekwai Municipality of the Western North Region. These bridges will help us track and confirm actual volumes hauled from the mines to the Takoradi Port.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, in the absence of a functioning refinery to add value to these minerals, the tracking of their export is very crucial, as it is the main source of revenue generated from their production. The Ministry will therefore collaborate with all relevant agencies, including the Ghana Highway Authority, to ensure accurate reportage of minerals transported and exported.

In the medium to long term, however, Government is committed to ensuring that we add value to these minerals in order to reap their full benefits. Through its Four Project Agenda, the Ghana Integrated Aluminium Development Corporation (GIADEC), is working to add value to our bauxite and build, here in Ghana, an integrated aluminium industry. This will see to the expansion of the Awaso bauxite mine together with a refinery, the development of new mines in Nyinahini and Kyebi together with refineries, and the modernisation and expansion of the Volta Aluminium Company (VALCO) to smelt alumina refined here in Ghana.

The Ghana Integrated Iron and Steel Development Corporation (GIISDEC), is also working to add value to our manganese deposits to build an integrated iron and steel industry.

Pending these far-reaching measures, we must ensure that we get value for what we produce. This bridge we commission today, does not only inure to the benefit of Government, but also the mining companies and the communities in the catchment areas of the mine; for an accurate, industry proven and reliable weighing system, is essential for operational efficiency, cost control, regulatory compliance, and profit management.

We are grateful to all who have supported us to come this far, particularly the Minerals Commission, the Ghana Highway Authority, the Ghana Manganese Company, the Ghana Bauxite Company, the Mineral Haulers Association and the host communities. My particular appreciation goes to Nananom and the land owners who made the land available for this project.

To those who will be manning the facility, I implore you to exhibit the highest sense of professionalism and accountability, to ensure accurate recording of data.

Hon. Ministers, Deputy Minister, Nananom, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, the mineral resources of our country remain the property of the people of Ghana, and the Government of President Akufo-Addo, is committed to a proper and efficient utilisation and management of these resources for the benefit of the people of Ghana.

The vision of the President is to make Ghana the mining hub of Africa, and the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources will continue to adopt and implement policies necessary to achieve this goal.

I thank you for your attention.