

February 6, 2015

FINDINGS AND RULING OF NMC SETTLEMENT COMMITTEE

The National Media Commission in exercise of the powers conferred on it under Article 167(b) of the 1992 Constitution to “take all appropriate measures to ensure the establishment and maintenance of the highest journalistic standards in the mass media, including the investigation, mediation and settlement of complaints made against or by the press or other mass media” has dealt with the following cases:

1. **Hon(Mrs.) Gifty E Kusi (MP)Tarkwa Nsuaem VS Pure FM**
2. **Nana Akufo Addo VS Daily Post, Ghanaian Lens, The Enquirer, Informer and Al-Hajj Newspapers**

1. Hon (Mrs.) Gifty E Kusi VRS Pure FM

Mrs. Gifty Kusi in her complaint dated 13th November 2014 claimed that Pure FM had carried a story stating that she had paid GH¢10.00 to delegates attending and voting at the NPP Presidential Primaries instead of the GH¢30.00 she had been given and kept the rest. Also that she had refused to give the said amount to the delegates from Simpa. The complainant said the statement was untrue and that the newspaper made no effort to get her side of the story.

Officers representing PURE FM at the Settlement Committee agreed that they had not treated Mrs. Gifty Kusi fairly and admitted the professional lapses in their story. They agreed to retract the story and apologize on air to the MP. The Complainant duly accepted their apology.

2. Nana Akufo-Addo vrs **Daily Post, Ghanaian Lens, The Enquirer, Informer and Al Hajj Newspapers**

On 16th June, 2014 Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo filed a complaint with the Commission against publications in the following newspapers, the Daily Post, Ghanaian Lens, The Enquirer, Informer and Al Hajj newspapers. According to the complainant, the above listed newspapers

in various publications between Monday June 8th, 2014 and 14th June, 2014 wrote stories that were “offensive and derogatory”.

The publications complained of were as follows:

- The Daily Post, Monday 9th June 2014 pages 1,3 and 14 headlined as “AKUFO ADDO BUSTED AT LAST – he attended nocturnal meeting with drug barons to raise funds for his 2012 campaign in the hotel of the drug baron he claims he does not know”.
- The Daily Post, Wednesday 1st June 2014 – pages 1, 3 and 14 headlined as “AKUFO-ADDO GOES DEAF, BLIND AND DUMB ... over publications of his fundraising meeting with drug barons at the Le Baron hotel in January, 2012”.
- The Ghanaian Lens, Monday, June 9, 2014 – pages 1, 2 and 3 headlined as “AKUFO-ADDO’S LINKS WITH DRUG BARONS CONFIRMED”.
- The Enquirer, Monday, 9 June, 2014 – pages 1 and 4 headlined as “After Ken Agyepong’s Revelation on Radio ARRESTED DRUG BARON MET NANA ADDO IN 2012... To plan How to Finance Presidential Campaign”.
- The Informer, Monday, June 09, Tuesday, June 10, 2014 – pages 1 and 4 headlined as “Explosive Evidence Reveals ... AKUFO-ADDO LIES ABOUT HIS ASSOCIATION With Arrested Drug Dealer”.
- The Al-Hajj, Tuesday, 10 June, 2014 – pages 1, 2 and 3 headlined as “Cocaine: Le Baron Owner Begins Singing: NPP MEN FACE EXTRADICTION”.

In the letter of complaint signed by his counsel, Godfred Yeboah Dame, the complainant stated that the “substance of the stories complained of, are in all essentials utterly false, a product of the imagination of the publishers of the newspapers specified above” and sought as relief “severest sanctions to be visited on the newspapers in question in accordance of Act 449” which set up the Commission.

In consonance with procedures of the NMC Settlement Committee, the NMC duly invited the mentioned newspapers to respond to the complaint against them and invited them to several meetings for a possible adjudication and settlement of the complaint against them.

The newspapers failed to respond to any of the invitations and offered no explanation for their failure. They also failed to offer any proof or justification for their stories.

The Complaints Settlement Committee exercising its powers under LI 1587 National Media Commission (Complaints Settlement Procedure) Regulations 1994 to adjudicate on complaints before it, examined the content of the said publications against the ethics of journalism.

The Commission rules that the mentioned newspapers indeed published their allegations against the complainant without adducing verifiable evidence to justify their publication. The

stories do not meet standards and principles outlined in the professional guidelines of the Commission and the Code of Ethics of the Ghana Journalists Association which enjoin journalists to observe core journalistic values such as truthfulness, fairness, accuracy and objectivity.

1. Accordingly in line with Section 15 of the NMC Act 449, the NMC directs the mentioned newspapers-namely Daily Post, Ghanaian Lens, The Enquirer, Informer and Al-Hajj to retract and apologize to the complainant, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo.

The NMC wishes to use the occasion to advise and direct the Ghanaian media to be guided at all times by the Code of the GJA, Code of Conduct of the Ghana Independent Broadcasters Association and the various NMC Guidelines.

Ambassador Kabral Blay-Amihere
Chairman, NMC