SUPPORTING TRIBUTE TO PARLIAMENT ON THE DEMISE OF THE THREE FORMER COACHES OF OUR NATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAMS BY HONOURABLE ISAAC KWAME ASIAMAH, MINISTER FOR YOUTH AND SPORTS AND MP FOR ATWIMA MPOUNGA BY HON OSEI KYEIME-SENSE-BONDS, MP FOR SUAME - 22 FEBRUARY, 2017

Mr Speaker, my greatest thanks for the opportunity to say a few words. The Statement is about the demise of coaches Osam Duodu, Afranie and Sam Arday.

Mr Speaker, as has been said by the immediate past Hon Minister for Youth and Sports, Hon Nii Lantey Vandepuye, these three together with C. K. Gyamfi and Jones Attuquayefio by any measure would qualify as the best football tacticians that this nation has produced. Mr Speaker, that is why we must, on the occasion of their transition, express our deepest felt condolences to the immediate families and all stakeholders in the sporting fraternity.

Mr Speaker, these were not mere coaches. The five of them, C. K. Gyamfi, Jones Attuquayefio, Osam Duodu, Akwasi Afranie and Sam Arday were talent spotters. As the Nigerians would say, many of them were sweat merchants in the sense that many of them were sports coaches themselves, physical trainers and then they became football coaches. So, they combined their own antecedents with their new profession that they assumed — coaching football teams.

So, they combined the physical development of our players with the infusion of their own technical and tactical competences. They were team managers and player managers at the same time. They took these players on as if they were their own children or nephews. Wherever these coaches went to, they left their foot marks in any team that they handled, be it club football or any of the national teams.

The trademarks were similar. You could see a team playing as a collective and playing for one another. You could see the smooth, harmonious, melodious and free flowing football exhibited by the teams that they handled. They were arrow headed by sharp shooting and not what we are seeing lately.

Mr Speaker, the Hon Member mentioned in particular the spotting by Sam Addy of Thomas Boakye, Frank Amankwah, Isaac Boakye, Joe Debrah, Shamo Quaye, Robert Eshun and Ablade Kumah of yesteryears. Mr Speaker, these were the people whom they spotted and brought into the national teams and we could see the ball-play, the technical competencies and the tactical abilities of these players; but it is not so any longer. Mr Speaker, they sacrificed for the country.

When Coach Afranie was handling the national team and was given the equivalent of US$300, when Burkhard Ziese came, he was given US$5,000. A national team coach was making do with the equivalent of US$300, and Burkhard Ziese, at the time was given the equivalent of US$5,000. I have always insisted that if we relied on such quality material, we would be able to re-generate and re-invent our Black Stars than the recent acquisitions that we are doing, procurement of these coaches who come to add little value to our ball play and are disintegrating our national teams.
Mr Speaker, if we have to step out and even look for football coaches, then, we have to look for the upcoming ones. At the time that Burkhard Ziese was managing Ghana, we had Clemens Westerhof in Nigeria and he was receiving US$5,000. He took Nigeria to their first World Cup and he was succeeded by Jo Bonfrere who took them to Olympics and won gold.

Ghana had just four years earlier won bronze and we were the highest priced country on the continent, but Nigeria surpassed us under Jo Bonfrere and he was given just US$4,500. When Nepomianchi took Cameroon to the World Cup and there was so much shown, he was given US$3,500 and we are paying US$70,000 with little results — [ Interruption] — Mr Speaker, it included everything; US$50,000 cash to him and all others included the US$20,000 — housing, we provided a vehicle to him — US$70,000 per month and what result have we attained? Let us look out for the upcoming ones who are purposed to achieve for themselves.

When Nepomianchi finished with the World Cup, Ukraine poached him and they paid him US$20,000 — From US$ 3,500 to US$ 20,000 but we paid US$50,000 and did not attain any result and we are happy with it. Mr Speaker, so, we had these people who really sacrificed for us as a nation, and that is why I believe in this concept of providing some insurance for them. At the end of every month, if we are able to give such coaches the equivalent of about GH¢2,000, they would be happy with it. This is because they were earning nothing that should serve as a recognition for their efforts. When other countries needed their services and they decided to stay, is the price that they have to pay be that of negligence when they also need to fall on the nation?

Mr Speaker, so, we would extend our condolences to the immediate family and the sporting fraternity. Let us be more proactive in our dealings with them and also resolve to assist them in various ways. The Hon Member mentioned Kwasi Owusu, John Eshun and the others and those who left not too long ago, and when you see them the wretchedness — About 10 years ago, Amusa Gbadamoshie who had done so well for this country was pushing truck at Kwame Nkrumah Circle. He ended up as a truck pusher and this cannot be good.

So, let us devise a better scale to take care of our football coaches and the former Black Stars players who played for nothing but for the love of the country.

Mr Speaker, I thank you.