JIRAJINAPOR FOUNDATION:

UNLOCKING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NORTHERN SAVANNAH ECOLOGICAL ZONES OF GHANA

THEME: A CITY WITHIN A CITY

The Taste of Afrika, Cultural Oneness Festival, in collaboration with JiraJinapor Foundation

SPOTLIGHT ON: Opportunities in the Northern Savannah Ecological Zones

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ABOUT
BUIPEWURA ABDULAI JINAPOR II

His Royal Majesty (HRM) **Buipewura Jinapor II** is the President of the Buipe Traditional Council, Overlord of Buipe Traditional Area and currently the Vice President of the National House of Chiefs.
As ordained by God, and by dint of hard work, persistence, humility, nobleness, effective communication, with the greatest of diplomacy, and outstanding leadership skills, and a well cultured sense of humor, His Majesty was honored to serve as a Distinct Aid to Dr. K. AbrefaBusia, former Prime Minister of Ghana in 1969.

Being a distinguish and outstanding royal of the Buipe Traditional Area of the Great Gonja Kingdom, HRM Buipewura Jinapor II had almost everything to his disposal. Nonetheless, he paraded himself with distinguishable and dignified qualities that gave him the clarion-call to serve in the Ghana Police Service without malice for 39 resounding years and served the esteem Ghana Police Service with distinct accolades. In a dignified manner, he retired in the rank of Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) in 2008 to occupy theenviable Buipe skins (throne) as Overlord.

As a dynamic chief, he has five children of whom two are staunched politicians in both the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) thsignifying his unity- Hon. John Abdulai Jinapor (PhD) and Hon. Samuel Abu Jinapor (ESQ) respectively. These two illustrious sons are frontliners in the political parties they serve, signifying Jira Buipewura's sense of unity and collaboration. However, the two ladies, Joyce and Shiela, are thriving in the formal sector.

As a technocrat, Professor Ahmed Jinapor, the first born, is the Director General of Ghana Tertiary Education Commission.
Out of his profound credentials, Buipewura the visionary leader, established the Jira Jinapor Foundation to harness the potential of Northern Ghana and beyond to serve the needs of communities.

Under his leadership, the Buipe Traditional Area has witnessed a strengthening of cultural heritage, peaceful coexistence among ethnic groups, and a renewed focus on youth empowerment and education. As a respected voice among Ghana's traditional rulers, His Royal Majesty continues to use his influence to foster national unity, mediate conflict, and advocate for sustainable development.

As a national traditional figure and the Vice President of the National House of Chiefs, His Royal Majesty Buipewura Jinapor II seeks to fulfill a vision that blends cultural preservation with national development. His focus goes beyond his local domain of Buipe to champion causes of national relevance- a bridge of continental traditional unity.

Today, Buipewura Jinapor II is not only a revered traditional leader but also a bridge between Ghana's storied past and its evolving present into the future–a living embodiment of dignity, wisdom, and service.

ABOUT

BUIPE AND THE PARAMOUNTCY

Buipe is one of the 18 paramountcies in the Great Gonja Kingdom and the capital of Central Gonja District which forms part of the seven, Municipal and District Assemblies (MDAs) in the Savannah Region of Ghana and sits on a bed of rich history and culture. The history of Buipe however, has been limited to the writings of student educational books and left at the mercy of a few online portals, often omitting authenticity and truth.

The people of Buipe (originally called Gbipe) are Gonjas who are said to have migrated from the Mande land to present day Gonja Kingdom. Historically, the founder of the Gonja Kingdom Sumaila Ndewura Jakpa was laid to rest at Buipe.
The Buipewura plays a critical role when the Yagbonwura passes onto eternity as per Gonja custom and tradition. The Head of the Islamic clerics of Gonja is found in Buipe.

SAVANNAH REGION

The Savannah Region was created on the 12th of February, 2019 by a Constitutional Instrument (CI) 115 as a historic milestone tracing back to the determined efforts of the Gonja Traditional Council, led by the revered Yagbonwura Tumtumba Boresa (I).
It stands out not only as the youngest of Ghana's sixteen regions but also as the largest in terms of landmass.

Damongo, a vibrant and culturally rich town, was named the capital of the newly created Savannah Region. Strategically located in northern Ghana, the region is now divided into seven administrative districts:

- Bole District (Capital: Bole)
- East Gonja Municipal (Capital: Salaga)
- West Gonja District (Capital: Damongo)
- Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District (Capital: Sawla)
- Central Gonja District (Capital: Buipe)
- North Gonja District (Capital: Daboya)
- North East Gonja District (Capital: Kpalbe)

Correspondingly, the region also has seven parliamentary constituencies:
Bole/Bamboi, Damongo, Daboya/Mankarigu, Salaga North, Salaga South, Sawla-Tuna-Kalba, and Yapei/Kusawgu.

The birth of the Savannah Region marks more than a political or administrative shift–it symbolizes a new chapter of development, representation, and cultural pride for its people and beyond.

UNTAPPED OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NORTHERN SAVANNAH ECOLOGICAL ZONES OF GHANA

OPPORTUNITIES & BUSINESS LANDSCAPE IN THE SAVANNAH REGION (BUIPE FOCUS)

Buipe is rapidly becoming a strategic economic and commercial hub, attracting both local and international interest. Positioned advantageously at the heart of the Savannah,
along key transport corridors and adjacent to the White Volta River, Buipe connects the south to the north of Ghana and offers rich potential across multiple sectors.

1. AGRICULTURE

Buipe offers a range of agricultural services, including mechanized farming support through centers like Sakfos-Amsec and planned government-run Mechanization & Technology Centres. These services provide equipment, training, and technical support to boost productivity for local farmers. The area also benefits from irrigation initiatives and access to animal-drawn implements, though larger tractors are often sourced from nearby towns.

Agro-processing is active, with local women engaged in shea butter, gari, rice, and groundnut oil production. Additionally, the government is revamping the PBC Shea factory in Buipe to increase value addition and create jobs in the shea industry.
The land is fertile for large-scale cultivation of tubers, tree plants, vegetables, legumes, cereals such as maize, yam, cassava, potatoes, groundnuts, tomatoes, mangoes, cashew, cucumber, rice, and shea. Opportunities exist for out-grower schemes and agro-input businesses.

NOTABLE HIGHLIGHTS:

- High-Value Dry-Land Cash Crops
- Irrigated Horticulture (Dry Season Farming)
- Integrated Aquaculture-Agriculture Systems
- Apiculture (Honey and Beeswax)
- Animal Husbandry etc

2. FINANCIAL SERVICES

Buipe offers essential financial services through institutions like the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB), and Kintampo Rural Bank, providing banking, loans, and savings solutions. Rural banking services are especially accessible through the Kintampo Rural Bank Agency, which supports farmers and small businesses. Informal savings systems like the Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) and localized Micro-Finance institutions also known as SUSU are also common. Additionally, the E-zwich smart card system is available for secure, cashless transactions.

3. OIL AND GAS (PETROLEUM)

The Bulk Oil Storage and Transportation Company (BOST) operates a major petroleum depot in Buipe, making it one of Ghana's northernmost fuel storage facilities. This facility contributes to national fuel security and supports the fuel needs of several northern and landlocked West African countries.

As a result, there are only few oil related companies found in Buipe, leaving a vast space for petroleum business opportunities within the zone.

4. WATERBODIES

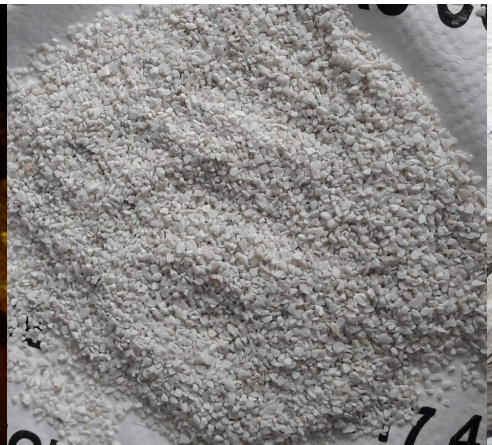
Buipe is strategically located along the Black Volta and near the Volta Lake, presenting several untapped opportunities through its water bodies. These include commercial fish farming (aquaculture), which could thrive due to abundant freshwater and growing demand for fish in Ghana. There's also potential for water transport and ferry services (MV Buipe Queen), connecting nearby towns and reducing transport costs for goods and people.

Eco-tourism and resort development around the riverbanks could attract tourists seeking nature, boating, and cultural experiences. Additionally, the water bodies offer great potential for irrigation farming, and support year-round vegetable and rice cultivation to boost food security and incomes.

5. MINERALS

Buipe and its surrounding areas in the Savannah Region are believed to hold untapped mineral resources, presenting significant investment potential. Preliminary geological surveys indicate the presence of gold, limestone, and clay, especially in areas close to the White and Black Volta basins.

While Buipe already hosts cement production using limestone, further exploration could reveal commercial quantities for expansion or export. Gold deposits, though not yet fully exploited, also offer opportunities for regulated small- to medium-scale mining.
Additionally, clay deposits can support the development of local industries such as brick-making, ceramics, and pottery.



6. EDUCATION

Buipe has significant untapped potential in the education sector, particularly in providing specialized and higher learning institutions. While the town has basic and secondary schools, there is a clear gap in tertiary education, such as colleges or satellite university campuses.

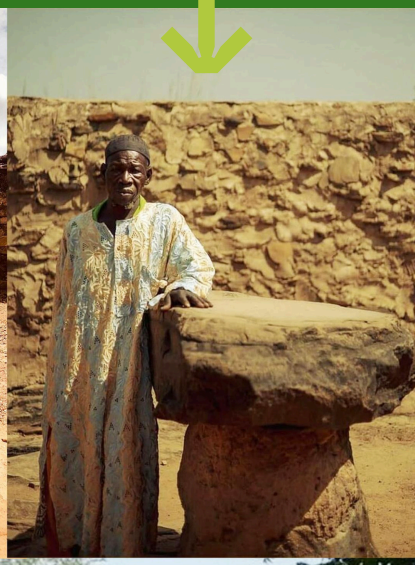
Technical and vocational training is limited, despite the presence of the Buipe Technical and Vocational Institute, which could be expanded or complemented by private institutions to meet demand for practical skills in areas like agriculture, construction, and IT. There is also room for private basic and international-standard schools to serve the growing population and attract professionals. Investing in modern libraries, ICT centers, and teacher training programs can greatly enhance the overall educational infrastructure.

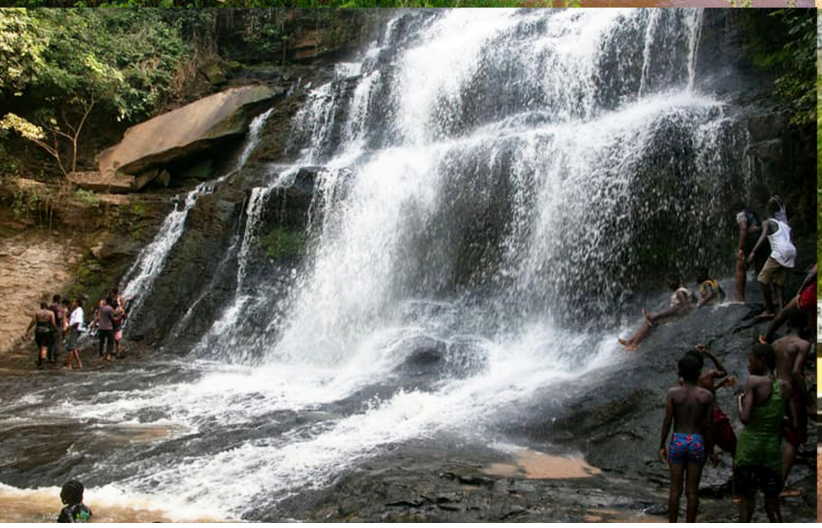
7. TOURISM

The Savannah Region, including Buipe, holds vast untapped tourism potential rooted in its natural beauty, cultural heritage, and historical significance. Buipe's position along the Volta River makes it ideal for eco-tourism, including river cruises, bird watching, and fishing experiences. The broader region boasts attractions like Mole National Park, Larabanga Mosque, and Mystic Stone, yet it lacks developed infrastructure to support large-scale tourism.

There's opportunity for resort development, cultural festivals, guided heritage tours, and community-based tourism that showcases Gonja traditions and crafts. With proper investment and promotion, the area could become a major tourism hub in northern Ghana.
Long before colonial borders were drawn, Salaga stood as central trading hubs in what is now northern Ghana. The town is its strategic locations along key trade routes. In Salaga, often referred to as the "Timbuktu of the South," bustling markets once thrived with the exchange of kola nuts, gold, and tragically–human lives. Thousands of enslaved people, captured from across West Africa, were brought here. The Salaga Slave Market became one of the largest in the region, where men, women, and children were sold and marched in chains toward the coast or across the Sahara. Salaga's significance was such that it was a final stop before enslaved individuals were sent off on their devastating journeys.

Eco-lodges and riverfront resorts along the Black and White Volta could attract both local and international visitors seeking adventure and relaxation. Additionally, the region lacks modern conference and event facilities, making it ideal for investment in business tourism infrastructure. Local culinary tourism and cultural experience packages can also be developed to promote the unique heritage of the area.





JIRAJINAPOR FOUNDATION

The JiraJinapor Foundation is a Non-Profit Making Organisation with the primary purpose of empowering communities through advocacy programs such as education, health initiatives, preservation of cultural heritage and livelihood empowerment.

MISSION STATEMENT

"We strive to create opportunities for sustainable growth, promote wellness, and celebrate the rich cultural traditions that define us. Our mission is to inspire, support, and uplift individuals and communities by fostering knowledge, improving health outcomes, and preserving cultural legacies for future generations."

VISION STATEMENT

"To foster a future where every individual has access to quality education, optimal health, and the opportunity to celebrate and sustain their cultural heritage. We envision a world where empowered communities thrive, traditions are honored, and holistic well-being is achieved through the seamless integration of educational, healthcare, and cultural initiatives."

VALUES:

1. Empowerment:

We aim to equip individuals and communities with the knowledge and resources necessary to create lasting positive change.

2. Integrity:

We commit to operating with honesty, transparency, and ethical principles in all our endeavours.

3. Inclusivity:

We celebrate diversity and ensure that our initiatives benefit people of all backgrounds and circumstances.

4. Sustainability:

We promote practices that support long-term growth and the conservation of resources for future generations.

5. Collaboration:

We believe in the power of partnerships and teamwork to amplify our impact and achieve shared goals.

6. Respect for Heritage:

We honour and preserve cultural traditions, recognizing their value in shaping identities and strengthening communities.

7. Compassion:

We approach our mission with empathy, kindness, and a deep commitment to enhancing the well-being of others.

8. Innovation:

We continuously seek new and effective solutions to address challenges and meet the evolving needs of the communities we serve.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THE BOARD CONSISTS OF:

1. Buipewura Abdulai Jinapor II
2. Professor Ahmed Jinapor,
3. Adam Abdul-Rahim,
4. Kapori Abutu (PhD),
5. Joyce Abdulai,
6. George Baah-Danquah, (Ph.D, FCA), and
7. Mohammed Amin Osman, Esq.

CONTACT

0243363707 / 0244692444

Email

jirajinaporfoundation@gmail.com

Website

www.jirajinaporfoundation.org

Facebook & Instagram

jirajinaporfoundation

SPEECH DELIVERED BY HIS ROYAL MAJESTY BUIPEWURA JINAPOR II, PRESIDENT OF BUIPE TRADITIONAL COUNCIL AND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL HOUSE OF CHIEFS OF GHANA, AT THE 2025 HARLEM TOURISM BOARD'S TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY CONFERENCE, HELD AT HARLEM RENAISSANCE MARRIOTT, HARLEM, NEW YORK, USA, ON THURSDAY, 14TH AUGUST, 2025

President of the Harlem Tourism Board, Mr. William Anthony Rogers,
Chief Executive Officer of The Taste Of Afrika Limited, Mr.Tengol K. Kplemani,
Management and Staff of the Harlem Tourism Board and The Taste Of Afrika Limited,
Esteemed Chiefs and Traditional Leaders
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with profound gratitude and a deep sense of honor that I stand before you today, bringing warm greetings from His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, President of the Republic of Ghana, His Majesty Yagbonwura Bii-Kunuto Jewu Soale I, King of the Gonja Kingdom; the National House of Chiefs, the resilient, hospitable people of Buipe, the Savannah Region and the entire people of the Republic of Ghana.
I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Harlem Tourism Board for organizing this significant Tourism and Hospitality Conference, for the exceptional hospitality extended to me and my delegation since our arrival in this vibrant city, and, most importantly, for the gracious invitation to be part of this historic gathering.

This year, as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Harlem Renaissance, we honor the extraordinary contributions of luminaries such as Zora Neale Hurston, Effie Lee Newsome, and Countee Cullen, whose literary works stirred the soul; Aaron Douglas and Augusta Savage, whose artistry captured the essence of a people; and Louis Armstrong, Cab Calloway, and Duke Ellington, whose music resonated with the heartbeat of Harlem. Their collective legacy not only shaped this community but also inspired generations across the globe. In the Gonja language, we say, "Asankushun"–thank you–to the Harlem Tourism Board and its distinguished President, Mr. William Anthony Rogers, for keeping this movement alive and vibrant.

Distinguished guest,
Ghana, particularly Northern Ghana has a lot of historical ties with the city of Harlem. Not far from where we stand lies the African Burial Ground, a sacred site that serves as the final resting place for many enslaved Africans. Their journey to this place began in distant lands, including the Salaga Slave Market in the heart of the Gonja Kingdom, the largest slave market in Northern part of Ghana withing the West African block in the 18th century. From Salaga, countless souls were forcibly transported to coastal cities like Accra and Cape Coast, embarking on the harrowing "Journey of No Return." For many, that journey ended here, at the Harlem African Burial Ground and the African Burial Ground National Monument in Lower Manhattan.

It is a profound privilege to have visited these sites during this visit, to offer my blessings, and to honor the memory of those who rest here–our ancestors, and our people. Their spirits remind us of the unbreakable bond between Africa and its diaspora, a bond we are here to strengthen today.

This city of Harlem also holds a special place in Ghanaian history. It was here that Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first President, lived when he arrived in the United States. In Harlem, he encountered intellectual giants like W.E.B. Du Bois, who later made Ghana his home, and Marcus Garvey, both of whom profoundly influenced his pan-Africanist ideals. These ideals became the cornerstone of Ghana's foreign policy under Dr. Nkrumah's leadership, fostering a vision of unity that continues to inspire us today. Harlem, therefore, is not just a place—it is a global symbol of culture, creativity, and resilience, resonating deeply with Ghanaians and Africans worldwide.

Distinguished Guests,
This conference is more than a tourism festival; it is a celebration of our shared spirit and enduring connections. It is in this spirit that I am delighted to formally announce the Harlem-Northern Ghana Partnership, a visionary collaboration between the Harlem Tourism Board, The Taste Of Afrika Limited, and key stakeholders in Ghana and Africa, including the African Tourism Board, the Ghana Tourism Authority, the Northern Development Authority, and the National Commission on Culture. This partnership is a bold step toward fostering cultural exchange, promoting sustainable tourism, and creating economic opportunities that uplift communities on both sides of the Atlantic.

Northern Ghana is a land of ancient traditions, vibrant festivals, and untapped tourism potential. From the colorful Damba Festival to the historic sites of the Gonja Kingdom, our region offers an authentic experience for those seeking to immerse themselves in the beauty and heritage of West Africa. The Cultural Oneness Festival, organized by The Taste Of Afrika Limited, is the cornerstone of this partnership. Launched in 2023 with over 2,500 attendees, this festival is more than an event—it is a movement that echoes the Harlem Renaissance, uniting diverse communities through music, dance, art, and dialogue.

As I declared at the festival's launch in 2024, "The best way to predict the future is to create it." The Cultural Oneness Festival embodies this philosophy, celebrating African heritage while embracing our collective identity as one people. In 2024, we were honored to host Mr. William Anthony Rogers, who remarked, "This was my first trip to Ghana, but it will definitely not be my last." His words reflect the transformative power of this festival and the connections it fosters.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
I warmly invite you all to the 2025 edition of the Cultural Oneness Festival, scheduled for December in Tamale and other parts of Northern Ghana. This year's festival promises to be a spectacular celebration, featuring a Grand Durbar of Chiefs, a fusion of traditional and contemporary performances, and a dynamic fashion show themed "The Strength of the Strands," showcasing the artistry of Northern Ghana's designers. Visitors will also experience the vibrant Amaraba Street Carnival and curated tours of historic sites, such as the Larabanga Mosque, one of Africa's oldest mosques built in 1421, and the Mole National Park, home to over 742 plant species, 93 mammal species, and a rich diversity of birds, reptiles, and butterflies.

Through the Harlem-Northern Ghana Partnership, we envision Harlem's vibrant community playing a pivotal role in this festival. We invite Harlem's artists, entrepreneurs, and cultural ambassadors to join us in Tamale to share your talents, learn from our traditions, and co-create a festival that resonates across continents. Together, we will make the Cultural Oneness Festival a global stage for African heritage, as envisioned by Mr. Tengol K. Kplemani, CEO of The Taste Of Afrika Limited, whose leadership has championed unity in diversity.

This partnership also seeks to create pathways for the African Diaspora to reconnect with their roots. By fostering cultural exchanges, educational programs, and business opportunities, we aim to strengthen the historical ties between the Gonja people and the African-American community, forged through a shared history that includes the painful legacy of the slave trade. Together, we will build a future where our shared heritage is a source of pride, innovation, and prosperity.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,
I call upon all stakeholders–governments, private sector organizations, development partners, and individuals–to join us in this transformative journey. To the Harlem Tourism Board, your commitment to cultural tourism inspires us. To the African Diaspora, your presence here reaffirms our shared destiny. And to the people of Northern Ghana, let us seize this opportunity to showcase our heritage and welcome the world to our home.
Distinguished guest it is with the utmost joy to announce that the JIRAJINAPOR FOUNDATION is poised to partner and collaborate with all stakeholders in this extraordinary journey of our forebears.

I extend my deepest gratitude to the Harlem Tourism Board for the opportunity to be part of this celebration. I also thank The Taste of Afrika Limited for their visionary leadership in organizing The Cultural Oneness Festival and all our partners, the African Tourism Board, the Ghana Tourism Authority, the Northern Development Authority, and the National Commission on Culture for their unwavering support.

As we prepare for the Cultural Oneness Festival in December 2025, let us heed the words of Peter Drucker: “The best way to predict the future is to create it.” Today, we are creating a future where Harlem and Northern Ghana stand hand in hand, united by culture, driven by purpose, and bound by love.

Long live Harlem!
Long live Ghana!
Long live the Harlem-Northern Ghana Partnership!
Thank you for your kind attention.

ORGANISING PARTNERS

Today heralds Harlem–Northern Ghana partnership among Harlem Tourism Board, The Taste Of Afrika, the African Tourism Board, Ghana Tourism Authority, Northern Development Authority, and National Commission on Culture. It fosters cultural exchange, tourism, and economic opportunities across the Atlantic. Northern Ghana's heritage–from Damba Festival to Gonja Kingdom sites–will be showcased globally. In collaboration with Taste of Afrika, the partnership will promote investment and dialogue, centered on the Cultural Oneness Festival in December 2025, building on its 2023 debut with 2,500 attendees. Featuring a Grand Durbar, fusion performances, and a fashion show "Strength of Strands," it reconnects the African Diaspora through exchanges, education, and business initiatives.

PRODUCTON TEAM

rhelo.ltd@gmail.com
jimmydin@msn.com
+233 (0) 550870131/+233 (0) 530558169

Msmmediaafrica@gmail.com
www.msmmediaafrica.com / www.mystorymagazine.com
+233 (0) 20 942 3757

info@thetasteofafrika.com
www.thetasteofafrika.com
+233244349954

kapori@84@gmail.com
+233-246476640/ 203262674

www.growvalueconsult.com
baahdanquah@gmail.com
+233 (0) 244290162

www.culturaloneness.com
tengol@thetasteofafrika.com
+233244349954