

Take it, own it!

...Pres unveils 1m digital jobs for youth

BY JULIUS YAO PETETSI

PRESIDENT John Dramani Mahama has launched the 'One Million Coders Programme' with a call on the youth to take advantage of the initiative to acquire digital skills relevant for the 21st century life and job market.

"To the youth of Ghana, I say this programme is for you. Take it and own it. Let this be your launchpad into innovation, entrepreneurship, and global relevance.

"Let this be the bridge between your dreams and opportunities of the digital age. You are not just participants in this initiative; you are the architects of Ghana's digital age," the President urged.

The initiative, another of President Mahama's social contract with Ghanaian voters to be delivered in his first 120 days in office, is expected to create one million jobs in the digital space.

The programme which

opened with the first cohort of 560 trainees across four centres; Accra, Kumasi, Sunyani and Bolgatanga, seeks to train one million youth in digital skills across the country in various aspects of coding.

Launching the programme in Accra yesterday, President Mahama said the initiative was an essential move to build a knowledge-based youthful population and innovation-driven economy.

According to President Mahama, at the heart of the initiative is government's support for the potential of the Ghanaian youth because "we believe in your creativity, your resilience, and your boundless potential. This programme is an investment in our youth".

Emphasizing the job-creation potentials of the programme, President Mahama said the global business process outsourcing market, valued at US\$410 billion as of this year is projected to hit US\$500 billion by 2029 and Ghana must tap into that

resource.

He said with Ghana's unique location, language and a vibrant tech-savvy youthful population, the country possessed the potential to be Africa's premier business processing outsourcing hub.

President Mahama noted that the initiative would produce entrepreneurs and innovators to create apps, launch startups, develop digital solutions to local problems, be it in agriculture, healthcare, education, or governance.

Through the programme, he stated that Ghana was not only scaling its youth, but reshaping its national approach to learning, revealing that the ministries of communication and education were working closely to integrate digital literacy and coding into university and technical school curriculum.

With more than 90,000 registrations within 48 hours of opening of applications, President Mahama said the interest shown so far was a testa-

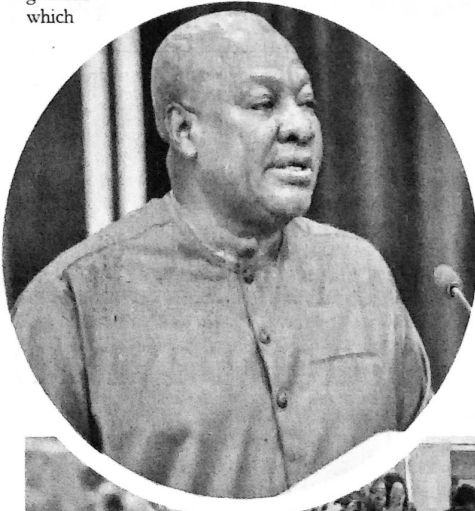
ment of the hunger for opportunity by the Ghanaian youth.

He indicated that in the next phase of the Programme, training centres would be activated at community information centres across all metropolitan, municipal, and district assemblies to ensure that no one was left behind.

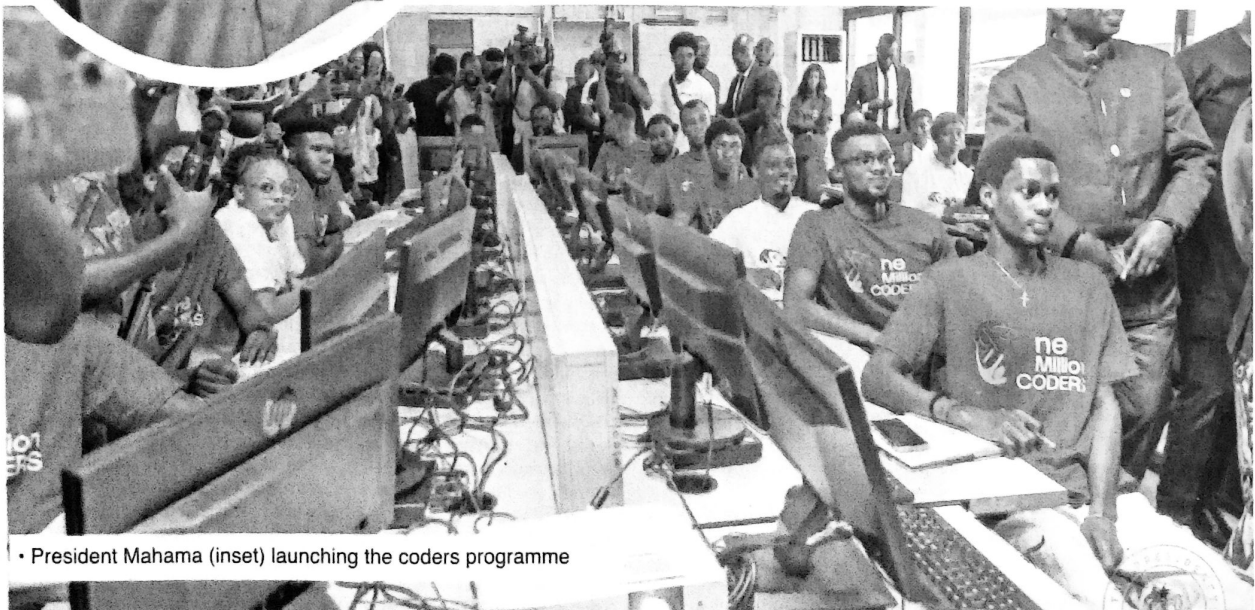
The infrastructure required to support the initiative, from broadband expansion to the provision of devices and learning platforms, has been put in place to ensure the project was a success.

Mr Samuel Nartey George, the Minister for Communication, Digital Technology and Innovation, said disciplines had been developed for beginners, intermediate and advance levels of the training programme to create a uniform training ecosystem for all Ghanaians.

The initial courses for the pilot include Certified Cyber Security Professional, Certified Network Support Technician, Certified Data Protection Manager, Certified Data Protection Expert, Certified Data Protection Officer, Certified Data Protection Professional, and Data Analyst Associate. Mr George enumerated.



• President John Dramani Mahama (middle) arriving at the programme. With him is Mr Samuel Nartey George (second from right)



• President Mahama (inset) launching the coders programme