

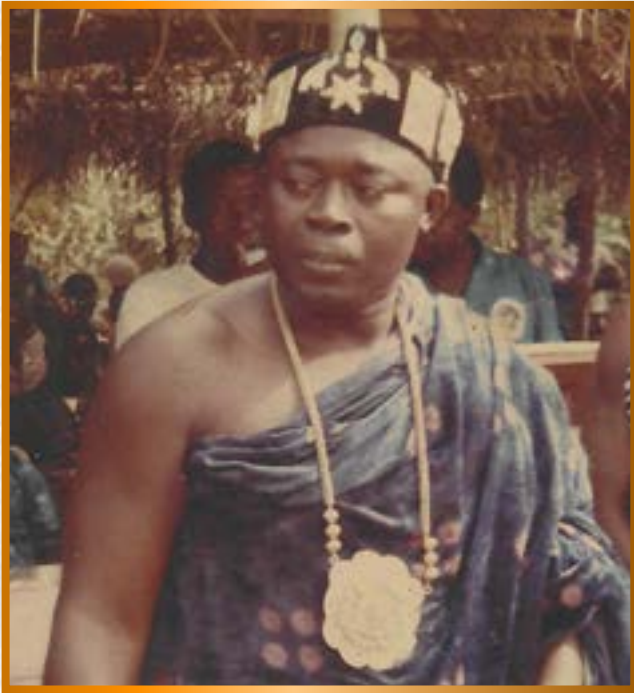


Biography of
Togbega Kwaku
AYIM IV



Biography of His Royal Majesty Togbega Kwaku Ayim IV

Paramount Chief of Ziavi Traditional Area and First President of the Ziavi Traditional Council



Togbega Kwaku Ayim IV was one of the few individuals in the Ziavi community whose life, service, and dedication to duty can be summarized in the words Greatness in Service, and humility in Leadership. He was a leader, one of the most influential and exemplary leaders in post-independence Ziavi, one that the people of Ziavi and the Volta Region will yearn for in a very long time to come.

Togbega Kwaku Ayim IV was born and named as Davidson Siegfried Beloved Kwaku Kuma on a faithful Wednesday, 23 May 1945, at Ziavi Dzogbe in the Ho District of the Volta Region. He was the first child of the late Togbega Emmanuel Yao Alidzo Kuma, one-time Zikpuitor and Regent of the Akpevi Paramount Stool and the beautiful and resilient Madam Christiana Ama Formedi of Torme Clan, both of Ziavi Dzogbe.

Togbega was a true royal. His father and grandfather were both Zikpuitor (Stool Father) of the Akpevi Paramount Stool of Ziavi. His mother,

the beautiful, resilient and knowledgeable lady, was the daughter of Togbega Yohannes Formedi and Mama Akutsa Abra, both of Torme Clan of Ziavi Dzogbe. Togbega was great grandson of the following personalities: Togbega Adza Doh, one-time Dufia of Ho Heve, Mama Yevufe of Amevor Clan also of Ho Heve, Togbega Kleku Kwami Akutsa a renowned Chief of Torme Clan and Mama Ayi Akua from Tsadaviefe Clan, all from Ziavi Dzogbe.

Togbega was the first male child to be born in the Akpevi Paramount Royal Clan when his grandparents moved to settle at their new abode. As was narrated by his late mother, when infant Kwaku was born on that faithful Wednesday evening, he refused to cry as expected of all new borns. After consultations, the parents were told that the newborn was destined as a great man (in fact, that the newborn said he was a king) so before he would cry to symbolize birth and life, he should be adorned as a king. So, the parents tied woven scarf around his head, and lo and behold, baby Togbega cried aloud. This occurrence defined the newborn Togbega throughout his life until his death. He was and has been a great personality, a royal, and a king in his own right and one we would never have again!

Early Life and Education

Seeing the speck in the eyes of young Kwaku, his parents had the best of intentions to educate their son and to prepare him for his destined role ahead, Togbega therefore started his early education early in 1951 at the E.P. Primary School, at Ziavi Dzogbe, and later continued at the Shia E.P. Primary School, where he was sent to stay with his grandmother Mama Maminor (Aurelia Sakyi) who was then staying with her maternal Uncle Amegadze at Shia.

By 1954, Togbega moved to stay with his uncle, the late Ferdinand Foli Kuma (FOK), who was at the time working at Mawuli School, Ho as a Domestic



Bursar, when his parents travelled in search of greener pastures in the Buem areas of present Oti Region. He therefore continued his education at Ho Kpodzi E.P. Primary School up to 1956. He later attended the Ziavi Dzogbe L. A. Middle School and completed successfully in 1962 with peers like the late Dr Akorli, late Ben Adzanyi, late Gustave Debrah (his very closest friends), late Philp Debrah, Benedict Dogbe (aka Kwakuga or BCB), Phaniel Belle, Cecilia Dogbe, Stephen Goglozu, late Ellen Asimadu, Mercy Agbale, Grace Wugah and Christine Appoh (who he would later marry). He was nicknamed Bukari by his school mates for his nuttiness and leadership skills.

During this period, Togbega was a well-known handsome young man, a sports person, full of energy and community spirit. He moved amongst the circles of friends and schoolmates with great verve and ebullience.

In 1968, he entered the E.P. Teacher Training College, Bimbilla in the Northern Region of Ghana, to pursue the 4-year Teacher Certificate “A” Programme and graduated with Distinction in Teaching Practice in 1973. He was posted to E.P. Primary School Ho Dome, where he taught for eight years.

The journey and stay at Bimbilla Training College was not an easy one for young Siegfried. Togbega regularly recounted the journey from Ziavi to Bimbilla in 1968 and how he managed to enroll and stay in school despite the adversities and challenges he had to endure. It was a sheer determination and resilience that led Siegfried through life during those challenging periods. However, he maintained his focus and continued his friendship with some of his mates from Bimbilla, many of whom grew up to become leaders in their own communities, like the current Paramount Chief of Kpedze Togbega Atsridom IV.

He obtained his GCE “O” Level in 1974 and 1975 as a private candidate while teaching. Togbega continued his education journey and enrolled at the Presbyterian Training College, Akropong Akwapim in the Eastern Region, in 1981, for a

Professional Course for Teachers of the Blind. He completed in June 1983 as a Specialist Teacher of the Blind and was posted to the School for the Blind in September 1983.

Between 1990 and 1992, he further pursued a two-year Diploma Programme at the College of Special Education, Mampong Akwapim in the Eastern Region and obtained a Diploma Certificate in Special Education in 1992.

Togbega finally entered the University College of Education, Winneba (UCEW) in 1994, for a Post-Diploma Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) Degree in Special Education and Ghanaian Language (Ewe). He graduated successfully in 1997. Many of his mates still recount the seriousness, leadership, care and friendliness he exhibited while at the North Campus in Winneba. Although he did not get the opportunity like the rest of his siblings to attend secondary school in his early years, his desire and search for knowledge and his love of ensuring the underprivileged and marginalized in society spurred him on to achieve higher laurels in the field of Special Education. This achievement defined much of his professional work and contributions later in life.



Even in his old age, Togbega still went to school, in search of knowledge and new insights. In 2019, Togbega was among some selected Traditional Leaders who completed training in Conflict Resolution and Alternative Dispute Resolution, Traditional Law and Governance at the University of Professional Studies, UPSA, Accra. He graduated in 2022 with a Certificate in Traditional Leadership and Governance.



Professional Life

Togbega Kwaku Ayim IV began his professional life in 1962, immediately after Completing Middle School, when he was recruited by the late Mr. G. R. Norgbe (Master Fu), alongside other very competent and hardworking Form Four leavers at the time, into the teaching profession as pupil teachers. He started as a pupil teacher at the L.A. Primary School, Matse, and later became a Headteacher at Abutia Gbetekpo L.A Primary School. He continued teaching at Dzogbefeme, Avatime and Akoefe Gadza E.P. Primary Schools until 1968.



Having qualified as a trained teacher, Togbega's first posting was to the E. P. Experimental Primary School, Ho Dome, where he taught from 1973 to 1980. He is still fondly remembered and cherished by many of his pupils, such as Alberto Norreti, Steven Adom, for his discipline and frequent use of the cane to ensure his students learnt and performed well in and outside the classroom.

In 1981, after completing the Special Education Course, Togbega was posted as Teacher/Resource Person to the School for the Blind, Akropong-Akwapim, where he taught until 1984. There, he worked with colleagues like Messrs Moamere, Lartey, Mr Asiedu Boafo, Asiedu Nketia, Ahiable, Adu Amoah, Asiedu Otoo, Atsu Kamadzi, Adonu, Mad Nancy Kutornu, Lena Akuffo among many teachers and workers, some visually impaired or totally blind. He was very revered and also highly respected.

By 1984, he was posted to Okuapeman Secondary School (OKUASS), Akropong Akwapim as the First Resource Teacher for the Integrated Programme for Visually Impaired Students. He, together with other Special Educationists such as Mr. Dovi and the late Mr. Anyidoho laid the foundation for

inclusive education for the visually impaired in Okuapeman Secondary School and many other second-cycle schools at the time. Togbega excelled in his profession and service at OKUASS..

It was while at Okuapeman that the young teacher was smeared with the white clay and brought home to be enstooled as the Paramount Chief of Ziavi in 1986. It was also during his time at Okuapeman Secondary School that a young son of the late Prof. Mawuse Dake of blessed memory, who was receiving his secondary education in the same school, was enstooled as the late Togbega Beli II, Dusimefia from Deme Clan of Ziavi Dzogbe.



He later returned to the School for the Blind in 1988, as the Braille Specialist, developing teaching and learning materials for the visually impaired students, transcribing textbooks into Braille for teachers and students, and teaching older students how to write in Braille. He went on to become a Resource Person and Facilitator on many special education courses for new teacher trainees at all the Centres of Special Education Training- PTC, Akropong, CSE Mampong, and the School for the Blind at Wa.

In 1997, Togbega, as he was also called by students and teachers in school, became the Head of the Rehabilitation Department at the School for the Blind Akropong Akwapim, having attained the rank of an Assistant Director in the Ghana Education Service. He was to become the Head of the School for the Blind, Akropong, having served there for more than 20 years but a feat he could not achieve



due to the pressures of his traditional leadership role and demands at home.

In 2001, having attained the rank of Assistant Director in the Ghana Education Service, Togbega was transferred to the Ho Municipal Education Office as a Resource Officer for Learners with Disabilities. While in Ho, he moved within the communities in the Ho Municipality, identifying children with disabilities and enrolling them in schools. Despite his traditional role, he did not renege on seeing children and people with disabilities receiving education, better care and attention. These qualities later led him to serve and contribute to the development of many special education and child protection, girl-child and gender related policies and programmes in the Volta Region and Ghana at large.

Togbega retired from active service in the Ghana Education Service in 2005, after giving more than 40 years of his active life to teaching and learning. He was not only an educator for children and pupils but also for the marginalised communities and underprivileged children in particular.

After his retirement, Togbega did not sit at home. His love for educational development and special education in particular continued. He joined the Care and Concern Action Group, a cross-disability Community-based NGO at Sokode Gbogame. Together with the late Mr. Bansah, they assisted this disability resource centre as a Board Member, a Counsellor and Resource Person to actively support and rehabilitate people with disabilities



and children with special needs up until 2015.

During this time, he also pursued a vision of establishing a disability resource centre in his community and the concept “Where Are They” was born, with the purpose of identifying PWDs

in the Ho Municipality and to assist them to have meaningful lives in their various communities. Although the centre could not be built, he continued to drive this vision by working with like-minded agencies such as UNICEF, Save the Children, DOVSSU, Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection, to promote the empowerment of children and persons with disabilities in the Volta Region.

Christian life

Togbega was baptized and confirmed into the E.P. Church, Ghana. He was an active communicant together with his wife at Ho Kpodzi and Klefe Demete. His membership, love and active involvement in the affairs of the E.P. Church locally and nationally continued until his death. He was the founding member of the Akropong E.P. Church in the late 1990s and early 2000s. He was a member of the Women’s Bible Class of the E.P. Church and would wear the union cloth and dresses to Presbytery and Zonal events and celebrations while at Akropong Akwapim. Back home, he continued his membership of the Women’s Bible Class and attended many local, zonal and Presbytery conferences. He was well



known for his favourite song Medeme nye yesu, ahomuwo ava yi.... !!.

In 2007, the E.P. Church Ziavi Dzogbe, now Edem Congregation, celebrated its Centenary Anniversary under the leadership of Togbega. The Centenary Anniversary celebration marked a defining moment in the history of the E.P. Church and religious activity in the Ziavi Traditional Area. He was also appointed in 2008 to serve on the Board of the Shepherds Centre for the Aged, a centre for older members of the E.P. Church, established under the moderatorship of the Late Very Rev Dr. Seth Agidi. Togbega constantly graced



many church occasions and celebrations- Synods, Rallies, Conferences and Commissioning services of the E.P. Church.

Under his watch, the Roman Catholic Church celebrated its first Holy Sacramento in Ziavi the Ho District in 1990, characterised with a heavy rain of blessings. Togbega guided and supported the development and growth of all churches in Ziavi, including both Protestant and Pentecostal Churches, and facilitated the formation of the Ziavi Council of Local Churches in 2017, with Pastor



Arthur of the Church of Pentecost as its First President.

He was also awarded with many citations and Certificates of Honour, from the Roman Catholic Church in 2011, the Ho East Presbytery Hadzihaga in 2012, the Ho East Presbytery Synod in 2014 and 2018 respectively during the Synod sitting.

Hobbies and Social Life.

Siegfried, the handsome-looking young man, was a footballer and a good sportsman. His love for community work endeared him to many of his peers and the ladies. Even in his mature stage, he would host many of his friends, families, relatives, and colleagues, and guests who visited him found it difficult to leave. He kept people's interest alive with all kinds of conversations. Indeed, he was very sociable. He was also known as someone who would do what it takes to achieve what was necessary, a mark of leadership he was clothed with from birth.

In 1972, he married his school and classmate, the beautiful Christine Akua Appoh, and they have lived happily ever since. He describes his wife as a very supportive lady without whom his reign and

leadership would have been a tougher challenge. Together they raised and nurtured many children, both biological and adopted. Even at his very last days, many more came wanting to be fathered by Togbega – both young and old, pastors, chiefs and queen mothers.

Because his professional life took him to many places during his youthful years, he began building his family in several of those locations. Divine was born first in Ziavi, followed by Vida while he was teaching at Matse. Judith came next, and then Sitsofe at Abutia. Alfred was born after he finally settled with his wife, and the last child, Selorm, was born at Akropong.

Chieftaincy and Traditional Leadership

As happened in previous times, there came a time when the people of Ziavi demanded for a Chief to be enstooled for them. The elders of the Akpevi Paramount Royal Clan tasked their young men and women living outside Ziavi to help the cause.



Siegfried was a leader of the group, unaware that the final axe would fall on him.

His kinsmen invited him to one of their meetings in Accra and it was there he was smeared with the white clay as the selected candidate by the elders of Akpevi and Chiefs of Ziavi to be their Paramount Chief. On June 8, 1986, he was outdoored as the Paramount Chief of Ziavi Traditional Area, with pomp and pageantry, with the Stool name



Togbega Kwaku Ayim IV, counting from Togbega Ayim I in Glime. He was enstooled together with Asafo Anagli II and Asafonyonufia Tamtasi II, all of blessed memory.

As a newly installed Chief, Togbega had only one vision: to see Ziavi develop in unity and peace. His



installation rekindled a communal spirit among the people, and with this oneness of purpose, Ziavi witnessed many successes during his reign.

As a traditional ruler, Togbega's commitment to duty was unsurpassed among his peers. He would say a chief does not go on leave. The day you die is the day to go on leave and this attitude he carried until the very last day of his reign.

In 1987, Togbega became a member of the Asogli Traditional Council just like his predecessors. where he played very active role in the affairs of the Council and member communities. He represented the Council on all major events and acted on behalf of the President of the Asogli Traditional Council on many occasions. He was the mouthpiece and elderly voice among the Council Chiefs. Togbega's knowledge and experience led him to be appointed to serve on the Council's Standing, Judicial and Research Committees of the Asogli Traditional Council somewhere around 1994 to 2018. During this time, Togbega served on many arbitration panels and led many deliberations in the Council.

In 1988, Togbega became a member of the Regional House of Chiefs as a rotatory member from the Asogli Traditional Council in Group J. He continued to advocate for increasing the representation of Fiagawo in the House and in 2015, he became one

of forty-nine permanent members of the House by LI 194.

Togbega's deep knowledge of chieftaincy affairs, customary law and practices in Eweme, and experience in Alternative Dispute Resolution and Arbitration was put to very extensive use at the Regional House of Chiefs. He also represented the House on various occasions and events, including on national assignments, commemoration days and events and many local governance, security, health and education programmes and workshops.

In the Regional House of Chiefs, Togbega again was appointed and served on the following committees:

- Member of the House Research Committee
- Member of the House Judicial Committee
- Chairman of the House Education Committee

In 2010, under the Presidency of Togbega Afede XIV, the House decided to form a Permanent Mediation/Arbitration Committee in the House.



Togbega Kwaku Ayim IV was selected as one of the members with other peers such as Nana Mprah Besemuna III, Nana Soglo Alloh IV, Togbega Tepre Hodo IV, Osie Adza Tekpor VII and others.

As a member of this Committee and the Research and Judicial Committees of the Regional House, Togbega served on many mediation and arbitration panels that sought to resolve numerous chieftaincy disputes brought before the House including being the Chairman of the Committee of Experts that led the peaceful resolution of the over 40 year Kpando Chieftaincy dispute, which culminated in the enstoolment of Togbega Dagadu in 2023.

He represented the President of the House on many occasions and was ready to serve even without prior notice. He represented the President on the



Launch of research findings on Ghana Traditional Authorities in Governance and Development by IDEG on 3rd Aug 2011. He also chaired the sod cutting ceremony for the Construction of the National Fibre-Optic Broadband Backbone for the Eastern Corridor on 2nd Oct 2012. He inaugurated the Volta Regional Peace Council and laid a Wreath on behalf of the President on Remembrance Days of Ghana Armed Forces, known as 11/11 in the Volta Region on many occasions.

Togbega was the chosen one from the House Education Committee to represent the Committee



for the establishment of the University of Health and Allied Science in Ho, as the first public University in the Volta Region. He worked within the sub-committee focusing on securing land for the project.

In 2016, he contested for the position of President of the Volta Region House of Chiefs, and although he did not win, he was applauded for the effort and courage he exhibited. Again in 2017, Togbega, together with other prominent chiefs such as Togbega Gabusu IV, Paramount Chief of Gbi Traditional Area; Nana Addo K. Cheddere II, Paramount Chief of Challa Traditional Area; Togbega Noagbesenu III, Fiaga of Awate Todzi Traditional Area; Togbega Binah Lawlavi of Ziopé, Mama Attratoh II, the Queen Mother of Ho Dome, were among the twenty-one aspirants who contested to represent the Volta Region at the Council of State. These courageous attempts earned him the respect and admiration from his colleagues and prominent citizens from the Volta Region.

A regular chairman for major regional and local programmes and conferences, Togbega always brought his vast experience, wisdom and leadership to bear, much to the admiration of many, leaving a taste and desire of many to seek after him. His Palace is a constant place to many Heads of Institutions, Directors, Programme Managers and Mission delegations, Chiefs and religious leaders who thronged for advice, wisdom and fatherly steer.

Togbega Kwaku Ayim IV, Paramount Chief of Ziavi, supported efforts to involve female traditional leaders in the Volta Region House of Chiefs (VRHC).

Togbega Kwaku Ayim IV was the Chairman of the four-member Committee formed by the House, which began work on 8th March 2017, that brought peace to the Akpini State after years of protracted chieftaincy dispute.

At the Ho Municipal Assembly - Togbega was appointed by the then President HE John Agyekum Kufour as a government appointee to the Ho Municipal Assembly in 2009. As a member of the Assembly, he served in the Assembly's Education Committee, becoming the Committee Chairman between 2010 and 2012. Here too, his educational expertise, traditional knowledge and wisdom were put to great use within the Ho Municipality. He was unfailing in his service and duty.

Some achievements of Togbega locally within the Ziavi Traditional Area

Togbega Kwaku Ayim IV, Gbedegbleme's 38 years on the Paramount Stool has brought a tremendous forward leap in the social, economic, political and religious development of the people of Ziavi.

As the Fiaga of Ziavi, Togbega rallied the chiefs and people of Ziavi to undertake many development projects and activities. As an educationist, Togbega left no stone unturned in convincing his sub-chiefs and elders to change many of the negative customary practices within the Ziavi Traditional Area. Ziavi was the first community to introduce mass burial services to reduce the cost and drain of funerals in the Ho area. He introduced Community Gathering on every second Sunday of each month as a public forum to inform and listen to the voices



and feedback of his people and would attend those meetings not only in Dzogbe but also in Lume and Adukofe, sometimes at Bamefedo. The dawn meetings of the Council of Chiefs and Queen Mothers was a regular occurrence.

In 2001, on his 15th Anniversary on the Stool, one of his sub-chiefs of Ziavi wrote: *“Fifteen years ago, the Kingmakers of Ziavi made the right decision by choosing you to lead the people of Ziavi. It was a time that youthful exuberance and dynamism was needed in the leadership core, for a blend with experience, with hindsight, we could say with all gratification that Togbega Ayim IV proved equal to the task”*. That was only fifteen years in your 38-year reign. What came another fifteen or more years, those alive are well informed to say it better. We cannot recount your numerous achievements as each day was historic and memorable during your reign as you touched every aspect of life within Ziavi in the last 38 years.

The Ziavi Dututudo Za (Development Festival)

Together with his sub-Chiefs, elders and the Ziavi Community Development Association (ZICODA), Ziavi introduced the annual Dututudo Za in 2001, a development festival purposely to raise funds for development activities in the Ziavi Traditional Area. This laudable initiative, which has become the cultural and developmental melting point for Ziavi, has been celebrated eighteen times, as the climax of the annual yam festival each year. The Dututudo Festivals have become another community leadership and development structure, a tremendous source of funds for development projects and activities within all of Ziavi, thanks to the leadership and service of Togbega.

Community Development

Togbega was also highly instrumental in the Ziavi Electrification Project. Many would remember his personal involvement in the cutting and haulage of huge teak trees from the top of the Galenkui Mountains down to the valley so that Ziavi can have electricity. Through his leadership, the Ho-Ziavi Road was rehabilitated and tarred under the supervision of the late Prof Mawuse Dake, a prominent son of Ziavi. Again, it was during his reign that Ziavi also benefited from the potable water project that brought water from Kpeve

to Ho. These have laid the foundation for good health and vibrant economic activity in the Ziavi community.

Togbega’s leadership and mobilization spirits and skills are unmatched in the current history of Ziavi. Through his leadership, the Ziavi Health Clinic Project was completed. This community health post, once managed by the Salvation Army, is now a GHS Community Health Centre with qualified health personnel serving Ziavi and adjoining communities with essential health services.

Very early in his reign, Togbega instituted a local governance system that ensured the participation of all key stakeholders in local decision-making and administration. He instituted the Ziavi Traditional Area meetings, where pertinent issues and community development plans were discussed and agreed. This has enshrined traditional leadership



and administration in Ziavi, paving the way for the establishment of the Ziavi Traditional Council, which was approved by the Government of Ghana and commissioned on 22nd Nov 2018 by the then Minister of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs, Hon Kofi Dzamesi.

The Reformation of Ziavi Community Development Association (ZICODA)

Togbega led the efforts that revamped the then-defunct Ziavi Community Development Association in 1998. This association of Ziavi citizens resident outside Ziavi would later become another community leadership and governance structure in Ziavi. Under its current National Chairman, Dr. Siegfried Kofi Debrah, ZICODA supported the mobilization for and execution of



many development projects and the organization of major events and celebrations over the years. ZICODA continued to be the forum for harnessing both human and material resources, leadership and talent for Ziavi's development.

Education

Perhaps, Togbega Kwaku Ayim IV's greatest achievement in his lifetime is the fulfillment of his vision - the establishment of a Secondary School



for Ziavi. Being an educationist himself and having experienced the difficulties of secondary education as a young student, his proposal to convert the Ziavi L.A. Middle School into a Secondary School was wholly accepted at a Traditional Council meeting in 1994.

Despite initial failures, with the assiduousness of the then Education Committee led by Togbega himself, a community-based SHS was started on 14th Sept 2014 at the premises of the late Prof. Mawuse Dake, under Mad Stella Afesogbor and the first set of volunteer teachers and NSS personnel. This School has since been managed by the Chiefs and people until 2021.

Togbega worked tirelessly with his Chiefs and Queen Mothers, prominent citizens both in and outside Ziavi, ZICODA, and the entire community to develop the infant School through hard work and perseverance to become a fully-fledged SHS. He led a delegation of Chiefs and Queen Mothers to the Jubilee House on 12th Feb 2020 to advocate for the absorption of the school by the government. This was fulfilled on 1st Jan 2021. The absorption ceremony was a defining and emotional moment for Togbega and all the chiefs and people who

contributed to this great community-led initiative. Ziavi also witnessed the completion of many other education infrastructure projects under the leadership of Togbega Kwaku Ayim IV such as:

- Renovation of Ziavi Dzogbe L.A Middle School Block for JSS Programme in 1988,
- Ziavi Lume JSS Block
- Ziavi Dzogbe E.P Primary School Block in 1992
- Methodist Primary School Block with EU Assistance in 1995
- Ziavi Lume JSS Block with EU Assistance
- Ziavi Adukope Junior High School Block in 2004
- Ziavi Adukofe Primary School Block in 2008

Indeed, your service to Ziavi deserves the loudest of applause.

The Reformation of the Avazorli Union.

Since 1986 when the Avazorli Union was rebirthed, Togbega again was instrumental in the rejuvenation and reformation of this historic union between the group of communities that journeyed together from Notsie among the Ewes to their present settlements. The first Avazorli Union Celebration was hosted by Ziavi in 1990. This initial bond and history between Ziavi, Botoku, and Etordome grew to enfold Mepe, Kpedze Todze, Kpando



Fesi, and later Ando, culminating in the historic cultural renaissance and social development that have become the symbol of Avazorli among its communities. No wonder he became the spiritual father and President of the union since 1990 until his transition.

The Ziavi Traditional Council

Between 1987 and 2018, Togbega served in the Asogli Traditional Council and the Volta Regional House of Chiefs. Seeing the benefits of having a



traditional council, he, together with other Chiefs in the House, advocated to be granted Traditional Council status. It was not an easy journey, but Togbega persisted. He participated in all meetings, engaged all stakeholders and officials, and mobilized all the resources necessary until this



was also achieved. When the going got tough, his Chiefs and selected community members stepped up to move this up to the final lap and on 22nd Nov 2018, the Ziavi Traditional Council was inaugurated by Hon. Kofi Dzamesi, Minister of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs and dedicated by the late Very Rev Japhet Yao Ledo, former Moderator of the E.P. Church, Ghana.

Togbega Gbedegbleme was the longest-reigning Paramount Chief of Ziavi in the post-independence era and served as the first President of the Ziavi Traditional Council from 2018 to 2024. He was also a member of the Asogli Traditional Council and the first Paramount Chief of Ziavi to serve as a permanent member of the Volta Regional House of Chiefs (2015–2024). Notably, he was the first Chief of Ziavi to contest the Presidency of the Volta Regional House of Chiefs and to seek representation at the National House of Chiefs. During his reign, many of the current generation of Chiefs and Queen Mothers within the Ziavi Traditional Area were enstooled, helping to establish a more structured and stable system of traditional leadership in Ziavi.

And it was during his reign that Ziavi installed its Paramount Queen Mother from the Akpevi Royal Clan, Mamaga Mawuedi II, in 2005 after Mamaga Ametawu, a maternal relative from from Gboxome Clan of Ziavi Dzogbe. Her installation brought renewed dynamism and visibility to women's leadership and development within the traditional area. Sadly, Mamaga Mawuedi II also joined the

ancestors just a few months before Togbega's own passing. We cannot mourn you both enough. Other areas where Togbega provided leadership and service included:

- Chairman, Board of Directors, School of Hygiene, Ho, Volta Region (2010 – 2019) It was during his tenure that the 12 Unit Classroom Block was built for the School at Dave, its new and present location in the Ho Municipality.
- Chairman, Board of Directors ZISTECH, Ziavi Dzogbe – (2014-2021)
- Chairman, Board of Directors Shepherds Centre for the Aged (2008- 2018)
- Board Member - Care and Concern Action Group (2012- 2016)
- Board Member of Taviefe Secondary School (2008-2015)
- Member of the Delegation of Chiefs, Businessmen and Political leaders who visited Ningxia Province in the People's Republic of China to sign an MOU for Inter-Regional Development between Volta Region of Ghana and Ningxia Province of China.

Many did not know that Togbega was also an entrepreneur. He ventured into crop farming, fish farming, animal rearing and later started a mushroom farm shortly before his passing. Animal rearing was his passion, and his flock of sheep was well known in Ziavi (Togbega fe alewo).

Togbega Kwaku Ayim IV 's life, service and leadership were characteristic of his persona and destiny. The words Greatness in Service, Humility in Leadership best describe who he was and has been. He was an embodiment of service, responsibility, culture and tradition, development and stability, all exhibited in humility. He was the spirit of Ziavi in the last 38 years. He was a great leader, one of the most influential and exemplary leaders in Ziavi in the post-independence era, one that the people of Ziavi and the Volta Region yearn for. A mature, firm, yet calm and knowledgeable voice among his peers, a majestic and august host of events and ceremonies, a good public speaker at programmes and workshops. Indeed, Togbega was great in service to his people and Ghana. We pray that the good Lord will give Ziavi another Chief like him.

He was a true son of Ziavi, a community which he



represented with the best of his ability. His love for peace, justice and fairness made him swallow many bitter pills for the greater good. He was religious and strong in faith. His love and devotion for God and family, his compassion for humanity, cannot be fathomed. The people of Ziavi shall forever remember you for your demonstrable advice: *“amesiame nedo tsinofe na edokui”*. Literally meaning “everyone should find a place



called home to serve him/her water for the sake of the D-day”. Or in another sense, everyone should do good while alive.

As if to crown your reign, the Chiefs and People of Ziavi for these reasons, honoured you with a citation in 2021, listing all your major achievements. Togbega, you have done your best.

Final days

Just like stages in life, Togbega, youthful and matured stages as a Chief and leader were remarkable. Although his health deteriorated during his old age, his leadership did not diminish as some would have expected.

In 2022, Togbega suffered a terrible illness and all hope was lost. Even his death was announced when he was still on his hospital bed. We knew this was not ordinary and although we lost all hope, he survived and came back to life, even stronger. We suggested to Your Majesty to take things easy and relax. But Togbega’s famous words were that, a Chief never retires. A Chief is a Chief of his people until his last breath and it is only at death that a Chief stops serving and working for his people.

He remained unfaced in all tribulations and challenges and continued to serve till the very last end. Even on the very last day, he exhibited his leadership and service and saw to it that the

People of Ziavi duly honoured the invitation and participated in the funeral rites of Togbega Tomadofodoe V of Tsyome Afedo. He sent forth the Ziavi Asafo Contingent to do what Ziavi does best- exhibited history and culture and above all showed solidarity, unity and responsibility. Little did his Warlords and Asafoviwo knew that was his last command. They came back hoping to give him a good report on their performance, but there was silence, silence no one could explain or understood. His departure remains a mystery



because he was not sick. And it was too quick and sudden to be true. But as there are seasons and times, that was the end, an epoch and a reign nerve to be forgotten. He exited the stage still very actively leading. Togbega was indeed great in his service to God, humankind and Ziavi.

Reflection

The life of Togbega Kwaku Ayim IV teaches enduring lessons of service, humility, resilience, and visionary leadership. He showed that true leadership is not rooted in privilege, but in sacrifice—spending one’s life uplifting others, protecting tradition, and building pathways for future generations. His commitment to education, peace, and community development reveals that lasting legacy is not measured by titles, but by lives transformed. He thought us that true reputation built in silence lasts longer than loud applause in the day. Togbega exemplified that a great leader listens, unites, and mediates rather than divides. He balanced tradition with modern progress, proving that culture and development can walk hand in hand. Above all, his life teaches that leadership is stewardship, and stewardship demands integrity, courage, and unwavering dedication to the

