

MOTHER TONGUE

JAN-MAR
2023

NEWS FROM GILLBT

ISSN 0855-1480



Celebrating 60 years of Excellence in Mother
Tongue Literacy and Bible Translation: Building
a better Nation with Transformed Lives



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MESSAGE FROM THE **Director**

SYLVESTER KWAME NKRUMAH



Celebrating 60 years of Excellence in Mother Tongue Literacy and Bible Translation; Building a Better Nation with Transformed Lives

After what was labelled as a beautiful celebration by both those who attended in-person and the people who followed it online, we sat down with the GILLBT Executive Director to discuss his pre-celebration, during and post-celebration reflections. We asked questions on funding for the anniversary celebration, the celebration activities and the people and institutions that contributed to its success. He also shared some useful lessons. His responses below:

Pre-anniversary celebration thoughts

Sixty years is a special milestone in the journey of any organization. I believe it should be celebrated to honor God for the achievements, take a look at the challenges and most importantly recognise the contribution of all who have played various roles. However, the unavailability of funds to celebrate was a major concern to me. But I had faith in God and I was also determined to put in every work I could, to ensure a befitting celebration.

Finding funds for the celebration

Apart from my faith in God, I also counted on my social network of friends with whom I have established trust over the years and who were willing to support my genuine cause. My friends came through for me and gave generously to fund the anniversary. This underscores the need to create quality partnerships in this industry.

The best part of the entire celebration

I think the highlight of the anniversary celebration was the visit to the Savelugu School for the Deaf. It was a privilege celebrating with the school and letting them know that they would one day have the Bible in Sign Language. Their reception was a joyful one and that programme was indeed the “icing on the cake”. In fact, the impact was highly felt. This was because we were informed that the cash gift we presented to them has been used to start a poultry farm for the school.

The Open Day and Exhibition

Indeed, the opportunity to show the work to young school children was a way to implant the vision of Bible translation into their hearts. I believe that establishing a relationship with the schools to get them to come annually to learn about Bible translation and language development is a good way to secure the future of Bible translation.

Were the anniversary activities worth the money spent?

The essence of the celebration was to thank God for 60 years of transforming lives through the mother tongue Bible translation and not to make any profit from the celebration. So it was in fact, worth every pesewa spent. Moreover, having all our international and local partners represented at the awards night made it all worthwhile.

Which planned activity didn't feature in the programme line-up?

We had planned to have a float in Tamale as part of the celebrations, but we could not have it due to security concerns. News of terrorist attacks and infiltration at the time made it risky for us to do the float. I really would have loved to experience that with the people in Tamale because that was where our work started. But we can revisit the idea for our 70th anniversary, God willing.

Who/what provided needed encouragement, pre-anniversary and during the anniversary?

We encouraged each other because everyone wanted to be a part of the success story. The GILLBT Board was also very supportive. And the funds really motivated us to celebrate this event to the glory of God.

Which people and institutions deserve thanks for making the celebration possible?

First, I would like to thank our international partners. Without their presence, the event would not have been well-graced. We cherish their partnership. I would also like to thank our local partners, especially Theovision, Faith Comes by Hearing, the Church of Pentecost, Apostolic Church Ghana and all our partner church and para-church organizations that joined us in Tamale to celebrate.

Special thanks to the leadership and the entire congregation of the Legon Interdenominational Church (LIC), where our anniversary celebration was launched and the Wind and Fire Assemblies of God Church in Tamale for hosting our Anniversary Thanksgiving Service.

I would also take this opportunity to thank the entire GILLBT staff. Especially the Anniversary Planning Committee, GILLBT Media Team, the Operations Team, and the Finance Team, for prudently managing our resources. Ultimately, I would like to thank the Jeremiah Foundation for funding this event. God bless you all.

Lessons learned from the entire planning, celebration and post anniversary activities

Among the many lessons I gained from the entire process, I want to share these three—first, trust God in all things, second be united and work together as a team, and finally, build and keep quality partnerships. I think these were the three main lessons that made the GILLBT @ 60 celebrations a success.



Ghana Institute of Linguistics Literacy and Bible Translation (GILLBT), a Ghanaian Christian non-governmental and mission organization contributing to the Great Commission by means of language development, literacy and Bible translation, have over the past 58 years worked to develop, preserve and publish various literature including the Bible, into 39 Ghanaian languages. GILLBT is also making significant strides in the area of Sign Language.

However, this incredible feat has been achieved predominantly with the help of foreigners. Although an indigenous organisation pursuing a nation-building agenda, only a few Ghanaians have directly contributed to this work.

This narrative is changing. God is raising Ghanaian kingdom-minded professionals who will take ownership of this work.

Do you believe every language group in Ghana must have God's word in their language?

Do you want to be part of the 1000 history makers who are ensuring this happens now?

Here is how:

Sign up to be part of a movement to mobilize at least 1000 under age 40 Christian professionals across Ghana to pray, advocate and creatively raise resources to complete language development and Bible translation in Ghana.

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GILLBT @60 *Celebration*





GILLBT Board Vice Chairperson, Prof Akosua Adomako announcing GILLBT@60 celebration activities

Legon Interdenominational Church is among the Churches in Ghana supporting mother tongue Bible translation.



Launch @ LIC

The anniversary celebration was formally launched on Sunday, June 26, 2022 at the Legon Interdenominational Church. Some staff of GILLBT joined the congregation for the day's service which started at 9:30am. Prof. Akosua Adomako Ampofo (Board Vice Chairperson) addressed the congregation on behalf of GILLBT. She outlined some significant achievements of GILLBT since 1962 then invited the church to join our scheduled activities for the anniversary. With support from Rev. Yaw Boamah, Head Pastor of LIC, the anniversary was duly launched.



LIC's Council of Elders welcomes the team from GILLBT



Staff and members of GILLBT at the 60th anniversary launch

Open Day and Exhibition in Accra and Tamale

As part of the anniversary celebration, GILLBT invited some partner churches and schools in our immediate environs to see our work and ask questions on language development, mother tongue literacy and Bible translation.

In Accra, the Open Day and Exhibition came off at the Accra Business office. The week-long event which started on Monday, September 12 had in attendance pupils from Pentecost Preparatory School, Madina, Brookwood School and Bright School Complex in Adjiringanor.

In Tamale, the event commenced from Monday, December 5 to Friday, December 9, 2022. It was hosted at the John Agamah Hall at the GILLBT office in Kanvilie. Some of the schools in attendance were Abe Halperin School, Naa Iuro International School, PAPS Academy and Tasdra International School.

On display at both exhibitions were copies of mother-tongue Bibles, literacy materials, miniature ancient synagogues and other relevant biblical materials.

Attendees watched a video of the Bible translation process and other impact stories and interacted with some staff of GILLBT. To many of them, the event gave them an up-close experience, was educative and an eye-opener to the work of Bible translation.



GILLBT staff taking Pupils through the translation process



A display of GILLBT's mother tongue primers



Pupils learning some basic mother tongue phonetics



A miniature Biblical tabernacle on display at the exhibition in Tamale

Anniversary Fundraising Dinner in Accra and Kumasi

On Thursday, November 17, 2022, at the Fiesta Royale Hotel in Dzorwulu, the first of two planned fundraising events came off successfully. Chaired by Emeritus Prof. Stephen Adei, the event was to raise funds to commence the translation of the Old Testament into the Birifor language. The Birifor translation project was selected as the anniversary project.

In attendance were dignitaries including Prof. Gilbert Ansre and Apostle Dr. Aaron Ami Narh, President of the Apostolic Church. Attendees gave generously to support the translation project. Joyful Way Incorporated ministered in songs at the event.

At the Lancaster Kumasi City Hotel on Sunday, November 28, 2022, the second and final anniversary fundraising event was held. Apostle Yaw Adjei Kwarteng chaired the event. Rev. Dr. Isaac Quaye who was the emcee for the night shared his personal testimony as he thanked God for saving him from death a few months ago. He went on to encourage the attendees to give generously to support God's work. Cash donations and pledges were made by attendees to ensure that the translation project is commenced as soon as possible.

To God's glory both events were well organised and well attended.



GILLBT Executive Director engaging some dignitaries at the Accra fundraising dinner



Accra fundraising dinner at the Fiesta Royale Hotel



Fundraising dinner in Kumasi at the Lancaster Kumasi City Hotel



Church leaders in Kumasi grace the fundraising dinner



GILLBT Board Chairman, Prof. E. V. O. Dankwa presenting cash and assorted items to the school

Visit to the Savelugu School for the Deaf



GILLBT partners applauding the pupils in sign language



Fun time with pupils

In the early hours of Saturday, December 10, 2022, some GILLBT staff, members and partners visited the staff and pupils of the Savelugu School for the Deaf in Savelugu in the Northern region of Ghana.

The team from GILLBT spent time interacting with the pupils and presented some items and cash to support the running of this special school. Madam Nora Nansu, headmistress of the school, received the donation on behalf of the school and thanked the team from GILLBT for their love and support.

She also shared her joy with GILLBT as we mark 60 years and applauded our work, especially in sign language.



Excited pupils and staff of the school with GILLBT staff and partners

Anniversary Climax – Awards & Recognition Night

It was a beautiful event when long-serving staff, partners and members were recognised and awarded later in the day on Saturday, December 10, 2022, at the Tamale GILLBT office. Amidst merry-making and gratitude to God, the anniversary celebration had come to a successful culmination.

In attendance were some former GILLBT directors, partners from across the world and representatives from each GILLBT translation project.

Partners took turns bringing messages of fraternal greetings and best wishes.



GILLBT Executive Director addressing staff and partners at the GILLBT@60 climax dinner



It was all joy at the GILLBT@60 climax dinner



Some GILLBT staff honoured for long service



GILLBT staff and partners at the dinner



GILLBT Executive Director thanking God for a successful celebration

Anniversary Thanksgiving Service



GILLBT staff and partners expressing their gratitude to God



GILLBT staff and partners expressing their gratitude to God

The Wind and Fire Assemblies of God Church in Tamale, hosted staff, partners and members of GILLBT on Sunday, December 11, 2022, for the anniversary thanksgiving service.

Clad in the GILLBT@60 anniversary cloth, our presence was recognised and acknowledged. Mr. Sylvester Kwame Nkrumah, GILLBT Executive director, led the team from GILLBT to bring our thanksgiving to God.



GILLBT staff and partners at the Thanksgiving Service



Thank You

GILLBT THANKS ALL OUR INDIVIDUAL DONORS, PRAYER PARTNERS, CHURCHES AND INSTITUTIONS INCLUDING;

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- Akrofi-Christaller Institute of Theology, Mission and Culture
- Anagkazo Bible Seminary
- Anglican Diocese of Accra
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- Apostolic Church Kumasi Area
- Asante Presbytery, Presby. Church
- Asbury Dunwell Church
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- Assemblies of God, Bohyen-Kumasi, Abundant life
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- Assemblies Of God, Ghana, Ashanti North
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- Christ The King Anglican Church Sakumono
- Christ Worship Centre
- Christian Council Of Ghana
- Christian Faith Church, Int.
- Christian Family Chapel, AG
- Christian Mission
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- Church Of Pentecost - Asokwa Area
- Church Of Pentecost - Kotei Worship Centre
- Church Of Pentecost - Mckeown Temple
- Church of Pentecost Anyaa Ablekuma
- Covenant Family Community Church
- COP Kasoa Area
- Deeper Christian Life Ministry Int.
- Deeper Christian Life Ministry Int. - Haatso
- Deeper Life Bible Church - Kumasi North
- Deeper Life Bible Church - Kumasi South
- E.P. Church
- Elim Int Family Church
- Emeth Chapel, Tamale
- End-time Assemblies of God Adenta
- Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana
- Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana - Santrokofi
- Faith Comes By Hearing - Ghana
- Faith Presbyterian Church, Madina Estates
- Family Bible Church (Tower of Favour)
- Family Chapel International
- Footworks International
- Fountain Gate Chapel
- Foursquare Gospel Church
- Foursquare Gospel Church - Anyaa
- Foursquare Gospel Church - Kasoa Toll Boot
- Foursquare Gospel Church - Matheheko
- Foursquare Gospel Church - Nii Okaima
- Foursquare Gospel Church- Dote, Kumasi
- Foursquare Gospel Church, Mataheko
- Full Gospel Church Int.
- GEC - Ghana Evangelism Committee
- Ghana Baptist Convention
- Ghana Baptist Convention (GBC)
- Ghana Evangelical Missions Association (GEMA)
- Ghana Fellowship of Evangelical Students (GHAFES)
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- Global Evangelical Church, La
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- Grace Baptist Church, Amakom -Kumasi
- Grace Baptist Church, Sakumon, Accra
- Grace Cathedral Ministry
- Grace Chapel, Assemblies of God, Ghana
- Great Commission Church Int.
- Harvesters Evangelistic Ministry
- House Of Faith Ministries
- International Central Gospel Church(ICGC)- Christ Temple
- International Central Gospel Church(ICGC)- Open Heavens, Adjiringanor
- International Central Gospel Church(ICGC)- Tamale
- International Charismatic Church, Fadama
- Jesus Generation Church
- Jesus Prayer Camp
- Jesus Prayer Ministry
- Korle-bu Community Chapel
- Kumasi Spiritual Renewal Conference
- Presbyterian Church Of Ghana, La Nativity
- Larteh Local Council of Churches
- Legon Interdenominational Church (LIC)
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- Light house Chapel Int. HQ.
- Living Faith, Assemblies Of God, Obuasi Central
- Living Springs AGM
- Living Word, Assemblies Of God, Anyinam, Obuasi
- Love Community Chapel
- Manna Mission Church HQ
- Meaningful Life International
- Methodist Church-Kumasi Diocese
- Mount Calvary Cross Ministry
- Mount Zion Methodist Church
- National Association of Charismatic Christian Churches (NACCC)
- National Catholic Secretariat
- National Union Of Anglican Students- (KNUST)
- Noble Life Assemblies of God
- Oasis Of Love Int. Worship Centre
- One More for Jesus
- Perez Chapel International HQ.
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- Presbyterian Church Of Ghana, Kwadaso Congregation
- Presbyterian Church Of Ghana, Ramseyer Congregation
- Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Trinity Congregation, Bomso
- Presbyterian Church Of Ghana, Victory Congregation, Oforikrom
- Presbyterian Church of Ghana. HQ
- Presbyterian Church, Asante Presbytery
- Presbyterian Church, Knust Congregation
- Presbyterian Church, Rose Of Sharon Congregation
- Presbyterian Church, Suame Congregation
- Presbyterian Church, Yennyawso Congregation
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- Redeemed Christian Church of God
- Assemblies Of God - Redemption
- Assemblies of God - Revival
- Royalhouse Chapel Int.
- Salt & Light Ministries
- St. Georges' Church, Adum-Kumasi
- Straight Way Chapel Int.
- Assemblies of God, Strong Tower Chapel
- Assemblies of God Church, Tamale Central
- Tema Joint Church
- The Apostles Continuation Church Int.
- The Apostolic Church-Ghana
- Assemblies of God, Ghana HQ
- The Bible Society of Ghana
- The Church Of Pentecost - Headquarters
- The Church of Pentecost, Bompata Area
- The Church of Pentecost, Kwadaso
- The Divine Healers Church
- The Ghana Police Church
- The Grace Gate Chapel
- The Lord Pentecostal Church Int.
- The Mega Church, Bantama
- The Salvation Army Church, Kumasi Corps
- Theovision International
- Trinity United Church, Legon
- Triumphant Chapel, Tamale
- Ultimate Power Assemblies of God
- United Church - Teshie Nungua
- Unity Assemblies of God
- Voice of Christ Mission of Ghana
- Wind and Fire A/G Church
- Women Ministers' International Kumasi
- Word of Faith Outreach



1000under40

Our Time is Now!

The work of Bible translation in Ghana and Africa has mainly been financed by non-Africans. After 60 years of GILLBT's work in Ghana, many Christians in Ghana neither know about the work nor support it financially.

Upon assuming the role of GILLBT Executive Director in 2019, Mr. Sylvester Kwame Nkrumah outlined a number of strategies to increase local resource mobilization for the work of GILLBT. Among his ideas was the mobilization of Christian professionals under age 40 to begin a movement to support, own and complete the work in Ghana.

The mobilization drive which will include even GILLBT staff under the age of 40 was fraught with COVID-19 restrictions at its inception. However, since December 2022, two separate events have been organised successfully to share the vision and invite eligible professionals to join the movement.

On Thursday, 8 December 2022, at the GILLBT office in Tamale, GILLBT project and office staff under age 40 had the maiden GILLBT staff under 40 meeting. The plan to contribute at least GH¢1,000 annually to support the work of GILLBT was warmly received. The strategy to introduce friends and family members under the age of 40 to this movement was welcomed.

At the GILLBT guest house in Cantonments, 25 Christian professionals under age 40 attended the maiden Young Professionals Hangout. It was a time of worship, prayer and the sharing of ideas to support the work of GILLBT. All the young professionals present pledged to give at least GH¢1,000 annually, pray for the work of GILLBT and invite their colleagues to the next hangout scheduled for Friday, March 31, 2023.



GILLBT staff under age 40 meeting in Tamale



1000U40 end-of-month hangout at the GILLBT Accra Guesthouse



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WORKS IN

40 LANGUAGES INCLUDING
SIGN LANGUAGE TRANSLATION

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GILLBT begins Oral Bible Translation



Spoken Worldwide Consultant/Trainer, Tim Hunter with some translators-in-training at Larteh

GILLBT has partnered with Spoken Worldwide to start oral translation of the Bible in the Larteh (Lɛtɛ) language area of the Benkum Division of the Akuapem Traditional Council in the Eastern Region, and the Chakali language area in the Upper West Region.

The partnership, signed in the year 2021, allows Spoken Worldwide and GILLBT to collaborate on the development and implementation of Oral Bible Translation (OBT) projects from 2021 to 2025, as agreed by both parties.

This partnership aims to train GILLBT staff and local speakers in oral Bible translation practices and theories, resulting in a team of residents in each area capable of continuously producing oral versions of Old and New Testament books, including Proverbs and Psalms in the languages involved in the partnership. The project envisions that completed sections of oral scripture will be used in community discussion groups facilitated by trained native speakers of each language.

GILLBT worked with the Larteh Local Council of Churches and the Larteh Traditional Authorities to assess the need for an oral Bible

translation project. Rev. Peter Atta Adjei, who served as the minister in charge of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) and was also the chairman of the Larteh Local Council of Churches, played a key role in these efforts. As a result, the Larteh Oral Bible Translation (OBT) Project was established. In February 2022, the Larteh OBT Project initiated the translation process with a training programme, during which 17 individuals selected by the Larteh Local Council of Churches from various church denominations participated, and eight of them were chosen as translators.

In March 2022, the Larteh OBT Project began to translate the Easter Story portion of scripture based on Mark chapters 14 to 16. Larteh OBT Project has so far translated 813 verses from various portions of the four Gospels, comprising approximately 10.82% of the New Testament.

The Chakali Oral Bible Translation (OBT) Project began their translation effort with a training programme for their translators in December 2022. They started by translating the Easter story, based on the Gospel of Mark, from the New Testament.



GILLBT's OBT Coordinator, Emmanuel Adarkwa, addressing translators at Larteh



Chakali Oral Bible Translation Training at Wa



Translators at work in Larteh

What is OBT?

Oral Bible Translation is a method of translating the Bible into a spoken language that utilizes oral methods, such as storytelling, song, and poetry, to transmit the Bible's message to communities with a strong oral tradition but little or no written language. The goal of OBT is to make the Bible accessible in the audience's own language and culture in a way that is easily understood and retained. This approach helps to overcome barriers of illiteracy, poverty, and isolation that often prevent people from accessing the Bible in written form.

Who is Spoken Worldwide?

Spoken Worldwide exists to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 18-20) by making disciples of all nations.

Spoken Worldwide was established in 2005 under the name MPReach and T4 Global, with the goal of evangelism and discipleship for oral learners. In 2007, the two organizations merged and became T4 Global, with a main programme

focused on evangelism and discipleship. They later moved their headquarters to Dallas, Texas. T4 Global added a pastor development model to their original ministry model, aimed at equipping emerging ministry leaders to reach more oral learners. T4 Global started a coaching ministry, which equips ministry partners with oral methodology gained through years of experience.

In 2017, T4 Global became Spoken Worldwide and began offering oral Bible translation programmes, in which local leaders are trained to translate the Bible and produce Scripture as a resource for ministry in their oral communities.

In partnership with the Baptist Church of Egypt, Spoken Worldwide completed the first Oral New Testament in Sudanese Arabic and launched it in August 2021. This is the first Oral New Testament Bible to be translated in the world in a span of just three years.

The dedicated short code *887*2# which is active on MTN, Vodafone and AirtelTigo have been introduced to primarily create a convenient, quick and effective channel to give and support mother tongue Bible translation and literacy in Ghana.

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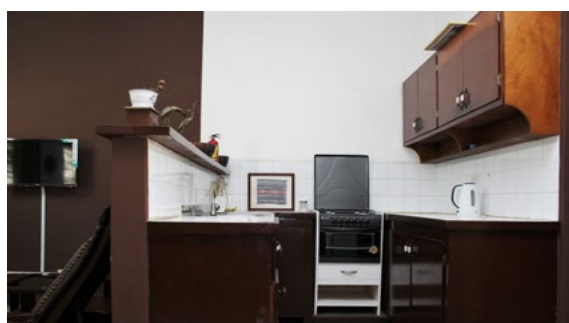
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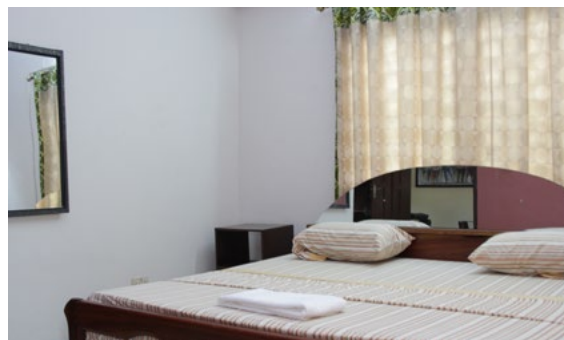
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GILLBT Day of PRAYER

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of
the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

HABAKKUK 2:14 (ESV)

The GILLBT Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving, is a permanent feature on GILLBT's institutional calendar. The day has a dual purpose. Firstly, to pause, take stock, give thanks to God for his faithfulness and sustenance, and for what he has accomplished through GILLBT.

Secondly, it is to introduce the work of GILLBT to the Churches throughout the country and to bring to the knowledge of all Christians the importance of mother tongue Bible translation. We also implore your fervent prayers and invite you to partner with us to provide every language group in Ghana with the Word of God in their heart language.

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER

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- 4** Enter Amount
- 5** Select Frequency
- 6** Select Duration
- 7** Authorize payment



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