

Mr. Henry Ford Kamel, Deputy Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, at the weekend spoke against the misapplication of proceeds from royalties paid through the extraction of natural resources. He said as a result, government is fine-tuning a legislation and policy guidelines to make the payment of royalties devoid of abuse. Mr. Kamel was speaking at the inauguration of the Volta Forest Products Limited (VFP) Mobile Clinic, under the auspices of CareNet Ghana, a Hohoe-based development-oriented non-governmental organisation in the Volta Region. An initial amount of GH¢40,000 has been expended on the project expected to bring healthcare delivery to the doorstep of communities in Hohoe Municipality, Jasikan, Kadjebi and Biakoye districts.

Mr. Kamel, also Member of Parliament for Buem in the Volta Region said government will review the payment of the royalties and publish the proceeds in the media to inject transparency into the process.

He said currently royalties are proportioned in percentages with 55 per cent going to the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies, 25 per cent to Stools and 20 per cent to the traditional areas.

Mr. Kamel said government is charting a roadmap towards reversing the dwindling fortunes of forests cover, which has nosedived to 1.4 million hectares from 8.4 million hectares from the beginning of the century.

He called on chiefs, communities, schools and other identifiable groups to help rejuvenate the environment by planting more trees. Mr. Joseph Z. Amenowode, Regional Minister gave the assurance that government will not renege on its responsibilities to the people and asked the people to lend their support to facilitate accelerated development. He commended the partnership between VFP and CareNet Ghana, which he said aims at complementing efforts of government in bringing healthcare delivery to the doorsteps of the vulnerable and the deprived.

Mr. Amenowode entreated the people to register with the National Health Insurance Scheme to derive the many affordable benefits it entailed. Mr. Thomas Amewu-Duglu, Administrative Manager of VFP, Hohoe-based manufacturers of plywood said the Mobile Clinic concept is the corporate social responsibility of the company to communities in its area of operation.

Mr. Patrick Ahumah-Ocansey, Executive Director of CareNet Ghana said the Mobile Clinic is to provide prompt diagnostics, treatment and referrals to clients in inaccessible and deprived communities, who lack the financial wherewithal to seek and fund their healthcare services. Nana Kumessy Bonsy, Jasikan District Chief Executive on behalf of beneficiary districts pledged

their co-operation and that of stakeholders towards the realisation of the objectives of the project.

Nana Akwasi Oprah Akuamoah VIII, Nifahene of Buem, who presided, described the initiative as visionary and pledged the support of the chiefs for the success of the good course.

Source: GNA