

Tuesday January 10, 2012

ACTION YEAR HAS BEEN FULFILLED - DR. JOE ABBEY

Dr. Joe Abbey of the Centre for Policy Analysis (CEPA) called on the government to provide support for Small and Medium scale Enterprises (SMEs) and the private sector to improve upon their businesses in order to create jobs for the youth.

He said though much had been achieved, a lot more needed to be done to improve the lives of Ghanaians especially the rural poor.

Dr. Abbey stated this on Saturday when he gave an assessment of President Mills' administration performance for 2011 which was declared an action year.

He called on the Ghana Revenue Authority to intensify their efforts by mobilising more revenue this year for development.

The Minister of Information, Mr. John Tia Akologu said President Mills's declaration of 2011 as an action year has been fulfilled as the country witnessed tremendous infrastructural development.

He said the agriculture sector stood tall in the country's strive to attain food sufficiency adding that "though there had been a shortfall in maize production, the release of maize that was stock piled by the Buffer Stock Company into the market had stabilised prices."

Mr. Akologu said the importation of tractors, combine harvesters and other agricultural implements for distribution to farmers and pragmatic policies such as the youth in agriculture programme and the block farming concept, all contributed significantly to increased agricultural productivity.

On the road sector the Minister said a number of road projects were executed while others were ongoing to enhance movement of goods and services.

He said the energy sector also witnessed much improvement and that Ghanaians had enjoyed regular power supply except on a few occasions where power was disrupted for purposes of carrying out maintenance works.

Mr. Akologu said that much was attained in the education sector

during the year under review leading to many schools under trees replaced with classroom blocks and most Senior High Schools throughout the country provided with additional classroom blocks and accommodation facilities to improve teaching and learning.

Touching on health he said Ghana was at the edge of eradicating the guinea worm disease as no case was recorded last year.

That he said was attained through government's commitment to quality health care and the hard work of health personnel.

Mr. Akologu said the provision of portable water service delivery to guinea worm endemic communities by the government had contributed immensely toward the eradication of the disease.

He said various regional hospital projects have been initiated to enhance quality health care delivery services to the people especially those at the rural community level.

Turning to the Ministry of Information in particular, he said the Ministry had achieved its set target for the year explaining that regional meet the press series had been organised in all the ten regions of the country where exhibitions were mounted alongside to showcase development achievement of Metropolitan, Municipal and District assemblies at the local community level.

Additionally he said all policy fairs planned for the year had been successful organised and well patronised.

He said the Ministry had also periodically briefed the media on national policies as well as created a platform for other Ministries and agencies to brief the media on their activities in line with President Mills's vision of operating a transparent and accountable government.

Mr. Akologu said government will accelerate its efforts at improving the living conditions of the people this year in line with its "better Ghana agenda."

Mr. Bernard Mornah, General-Secretary of the People's National Convention (PNC) rated the government's performance as average and urged it to do more to improve the lives of the people.

He however lauded the government for efforts in the agricultural sector adding "the government had reduced rice importation."

Mr. Mornah said the rice bill could further be reduced and eventually halted if the right agricultural policies were instituted adding "the country had the potential to produce enough rice for consumption and export."

He called on the government to work towards ensuring food sufficient and job creation to give employment to the youth.

Source: Ghanaian Times