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Ghana: Gov Promises to Complete Child & Maternity Ward At KATH

BY ISSAH ALHASSAN, KUMASI, 1 MARCH 2012

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The Minister of Health, Alban Bagbin, has given assurance that the government would see to the completion of the almost 37-year-old Maternity and Child Healthcare Centre at the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (KATH) in Kumasi.

The Minister stated that the government had allocated an amount of GH¢11 million, and secured an additional \$240 million loan to complete the project, as part of efforts to ease congestion at the hospital.

Bagbin made the disclosure when he paid a day's familiarisation tour to the hospital last Monday to acquaint himself with challenges and problems confronting the management and staff of the hospital.

The Minister emphasised that one of the major priorities of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) government was to ensure that the people are healthy and able to contribute meaningfully to the social and economic development of the nation, which he said, can only be achieved through the provision of logistics and infrastructure.

He said for this reason, the government had pledged to ensure the completion of the Maternity and Children's Health Centre to facilitate the delivery of quality healthcare of the people, stressing that the geographical location of the hospital, being at the centre of the country and serving over eight regions, required adequate assistance.

The multimillion dollar project, which comprises three separate blocks made up of 995 bed capacity Children and Maternity, 10 Operating Theatres, and two other blocks to house the gynecology and obstetrics departments, was started way back in 1974 under the Acheampong regime, and has since cried for completion.

Bagbin, therefore, assured CYMAIN Construction Limited, the Chinese construction firm in charge of the project, that funds would soon be made available to enable them speed up the progress of work.

The Minister further disclosed that plans were far afoot to construct a regional and another teaching hospital at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), while upgrading all district hospitals in the country.

He said, amongst other things, that the government would soon distribute 161 health ambulances to handle emergency cases, with another 600 more to be delivered next year.

On the issue of the contractual agreement regarding the Accident & Emergency Centre, which bars management of the hospital from attending to machines at the Intensive Care unit, Bagbin promised to discuss the matter with the foreign partners, GERTECH Company, to resolve all anomalies, in order to ensure the smooth operation of the centre.

On his general impression about the tour, Mr. Bagbin said he had been confronted with the realities of the problems the management and staff at the hospital were going through, especially as a result of the congestion at the old Children and Maternity Ward, and indicated that the situation required urgent attention.

He, therefore, commended staff of the hospital for their commitment to duty under strenuous circumstances, and encouraged them to continue with their hard work, in order to ensure the provision of quality health care to patients who visit the hospital.

Among the areas the Minister visited include the Accident & Emergency Centre, the Pediatric Emergency Unit, the Mother and Baby Unit, the Surgical Ward, and the Magnetic Resonance and Imaging (MRI) Department.

The Chief Executive Officer of KATH, Prof. Ohene Adjei, expressed the optimism that the government would live up to its promise, so that the hospital would be able to meet the challenges confronting them, to enhance quality delivery of healthcare to the people.

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