

Second Lady commissions solar plant for Nyakrom SHS

By James Esuon, GNA

The second phase of the solar plant donated to Nyakrom Secondary Technical School (NYSTECH) has been inaugurated by the Second Lady, Hajia Samira Bawumia at a ceremony at Nyakrom.



It would cover the girl's dormitory and other buildings of NYASTECH and help reduce huge monthly payment of electricity bills by the school.

Dr Sam Kwesi Essiamah, Ghanaian scientist, based in Germany and President of Association of School Forest for West Africa, and co-initiator of the Project, sought funding for the first phase of the solar plant.

Hajia Samiria Bawumia said it is the intention of President Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo's to ensure that adequate structures are provided to all Senior High Schools (SHS).

She said the implementation of the Free SHS policy by the Akuffo-Addo's government last year was to give equal opportunity for all Ghanaian children to gain access to secondary education.

The Second Lady said the old secondary education system deprived many who passed with excellent aggregates from gaining admission into Senior High Schools.

She urged the female students who have gained admission into secondary schools through free SHS education policy to study hard and become responsible adults.

The Second Lady assured the authorities of NYASTECH that government is committed to provide the needed infrastructures that would enhance quality teaching and learning.

Hajia Bawumia commended the donor of the solar plant for the kind gesture which would reduce payment of electricity bills by the school.

Ms Kate Wilberforce, Headmistress of Nyakrom Secondary Technical School, praised Dr Essiamah and the donors for the kind gesture which has come not only to reduce the bills but also halt any possible power outage.

She said the school is facing other challenges including inadequate classroom blocks, dormitories and teachers accommodations; and this can be attributed to the increasing population of the students as a result of the free SHS policy.

Mr Kwamina Duncan, Central Regional Minister, said government is committed to provide infrastructures that would enhance effective teaching and learning.

He said the implementation of Free SHS which began last year was bold decision which has led to the education of many Ghanaian children.

Dr Sam Essiamah thanked the “Youth and Environment Club “, especially the Chairman, Nana Odom Panin VII, and the Secretary, Mr Henry Bondzie for their efforts in ensuring the success of the project.

He said the Solar Plant Project which we are commissioning today is only the Second Phase of the main Project commissioned in 2013, adding that the subject matter is not in my specialized area but a by-product of my tree planting activities in the country.

Dr Essiamah said in Ghana, for instance, the Rain Forest decreased from 8 million to 1, 4 million hectares just within a decade with an enormous pressure on forest and other natural resources adding that irreparable destruction of the forests continues to advance unabated and this has direct consequences for rural forest dwelling communities and particularly school children in these areas.

The Ghanaian-born Forest Research scientist said reforestation or tree planting is necessary if children and the people living in the country side are to have a secured future.

He said “as a Forest Research Scientist based in Germany, I initiated in 1995 a Project “Tree Planting on Ghanaian school compounds” with 4 schools here in Nyakrom but as at now there are 75 schools mainly in the Central Region (Agona, Breman Asikuma, Ajumako, Awutu) whose children are planting beautiful trees on their compounds under the supervision of their teachers”.

He said with the support of German school children the aim was to change the negative attitude of children towards trees or rain forest so as to slow down the degradation or stop it in future.

Dr Essiamah said since 2007 solar lamps have been distributed to serve as incentives to sustain to the project saying that a child gets a free solar lamp when he/she plants 6 trees and caters for them for six months.

A modern tree nursery has just been completed in September 2016 at Agona Nyakrom where 10,000 tree seedlings have already been nursed and distributed to schools in the Agona West Municipality.

He said the project is being financed by our Association in Germany “School Forests for West Africa and supervised by our partner organisation in Ghana “Youth and Environment Club.

Dr Essiamah said Mr Tobias Klaus, who was working with an International Solar Energy Research Centre but now a Research Scientist at the University of Paderborn, assisted to bring the first phase of the solar plant to Nyakrom SHS. The second phase of the project was sponsored by the following German Organisations:

- **Lower Saxony Bingo Environmental Foundation**
- **German Environmental Aid Foundation**
- **Afrisolar e. V.**

The Ghanaian-born Scientist therefore appealed to the Ministry of Education, Science and Environment and the Ministry of Lands & Natural Resources to encourage tree planting and Environmental Education in schools and reward schools which dedicate themselves to these environmental activities.