

**ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER FOR LANDS AND NATURAL
RESOURCES, HON. SAMUEL A. JINAPOR, MP, AT THE
COMMISSIONING OF CARDINAL NAMDINI
RESETTLEMENT PROJECT FOR NEW BIUNG AND NEW
ACCRA COMMUNITIES IN THE TALENSI DISTRICT OF
THE UPPER EAST REGION, HELD ON FRIDAY, AUGUST
4, 2022 AT NEW BIUNG**

Representative of the Upper East Region Regional Minister;

Deputy Minister for Lands and Natural Resources;

Tongo-rana, Paramount Chief of Talensi Traditional Area and
Member of the Council of State;

Chiefs and Elders of Datuku and Biung;

District Chief Executive of Talensi District;

Chief Executive Officer of the Minerals Commission;

Officials of the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources;

Chairman of Cardinal Namdini Mining Ltd;

Chief Executive Officer of Cardinal Namdini Mining Ltd;

Members of the Resettlement Committee

Tindaanas;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen

On 6th October last year, as part of my working tour to the Upper East Region, I visited the Field Office of Cardinal Namdini Mining Limited, to acquaint myself with the operations of the company and assess the impact of their operations on host communities, particularly, Biung and Accra.

I was pleased to learn that, after several years of exploration, large scale mining activities were going to commence in this Region. My excitement was as a result of the potential jobs this mining operation is going to create for the people of the Region, its impact on the socio-economic development of the area, and the country at large.

I was happy to learn that even before the first gold is poured, Cardinal Namdini Mining Limited had already factored local content in their employment policy, including senior management, like the company's secretary and head of legal, who hails from this very Region. This is, indeed, a sign that the operations of the mine, will bring many more jobs to the people of this Region, and Talensi in particular.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, the conventional wisdom that gold was only found in the southern part of our country no longer holds. Today, active mining operations are ongoing in almost every part of the country, including northern Ghana.

Before any mining operation commences, the laws of our country, particularly the Minerals and Mining Act, 2006 (Act 703) and the Minerals and Mining (Compensation and Resettlement) Regulations, 2012 (L.I. 2175) enjoin mining companies to resettle persons who will be affected by their mining operations, and the Minister is empowered to ensure that the resettlement is done on a suitable alternate land, paying particular attention to the well-being and social and cultural values of the people.

Having realised that the operations of Cardinal will affect the people of Biung and Accra, it was incumbent on us to work with the company to ensure that all affected families are relocated to a suitable alternate land. Together with the Minerals Commission and the company, we have worked tirelessly to reach this important milestone, where new Biung and New Accra communities have been constructed, to resettle the inhabitants of these two communities, and ensure the highest standards of health and safety for the mine and the host communities.

These two new resettlements, were constructed in accordance with the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) approved by the District Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority (LUSPA) and the Minerals Commission and conforms to the International Finance Corporation's (IFC) Performance Standards on Social and Environmental Sustainability.

Having gone through this rigorous process, I have no doubt about the suitability, integrity and the fitness for purpose of these two new communities. I am told, for instance, that the facilities include

- concrete residential buildings, fitted with kitchen and washrooms;
- a healthcare facility;
- two schools with accommodation for teachers;
- three places of worship;
- electricity to all residential and public buildings as well as street-lighting;
- potable water; and
- gravel roads connecting buildings.

I want to thank the company for sticking to the Resettlement Plan and providing improved infrastructure in these communities. Indeed, Government did not expect anything less; for any resettlement should not make the community worse off, but rather improve their conditions of living. Let me plead with all beneficiaries of these new communities, to take very good care of the facilities, maintain and manage them responsibly, so that your children and grandchildren will also benefit from them.

Tongo-rana, Distinguished Guests, the processes leading to the construction of these new communities have been seamless, due to the cooperation of all stakeholders, including the chiefs and elders of Biung and Accra and the entire Talensi Traditional Area. I want to commend them, highly, for their cooperation and support which have brought us this far.

As mining operations commence very soon, this cooperation is even needed the most. This is crucial for the sustainability of the mine, and the enormous benefits it will eventually bring to these communities. It is my hope that you will continue to keep good and cordial relationship with the company throughout their operations.

I must, however, add that building a cordial relationship with host communities requires a credible participatory process to establish the requisite boundaries and framework within the confines of the prevailing law, under the supervision of regulatory agencies like the Minerals Commission, the Environmental Protection, and the Ministry. To this end, I call on Cardinal Namdini, not to neglect the communities after this resettlement, but continue to engage and support them to settle-in at their new environment.

It is also important that the company provides them with sustainable livelihood initiatives to sustain the cordial relations existing between the company and the communities.

Hon. Regional Minister, Deputy Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, Tongo-rana, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, the natural resources of our country are, by article 257 of our national constitution, the property of the people of Ghana. As managers of these resources, we are committed to ensure that their exploitation inure to the benefit of the actual owners, the people of Ghana, including the communities where these resources are located.

It is for this reason that we established the Minerals Development Fund (MDF), to provide financial resources for the benefit of mining communities. Through this Fund, we have drilled, constructed and installed five (5) boreholes and hand pumps in Gbani, Datuko, Yalle, Tolla, and Bung. With the commencement of mining operations by Cardinal in the coming days, we expect to receive more royalties, and provide more financial resources for the benefit of people of this District.

I am informed, however, that the Local Management Committee, established under the Minerals Development Fund Act, 2016 (Act 912), to manage the funds allocated to this District, is non-functional, due to some disagreements about its composition.

I want to use this opportunity to plead with you, particularly our revered chiefs, to come together, and resolve these issues, and constitute a functional Local Management Committee to ensure the development of the District.

Government is, also, committed to ensuring that Ghanaians benefit from our natural resources, through policies such as value addition, local content and local participation. In the next few weeks, we will commission the first state-owned gold refinery, established through a public private partnership, to add value to our gold resources.

Our commitment, the commitment of the President of the Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, is to make Ghana the mining hub of Africa, and see to the proper and efficient utilisation and management of our natural resources for the benefit of the people of Ghana. We are determined not to repeat the mistakes of the past, but negotiate, and exploit these minerals for the benefit of the good people of our country, and the host communities. The Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, will continue to work with all stakeholders, particularly mining companies and mining communities to ensure that we realise this goal.

On this note, it is my singular honour and privilege to declare the new Biung Resettlement Community, duly commissioned.

I thank you for your attention.