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Former workers in Italy battle for pension arrears

Story: Naa Lamiley Bentil

MORE than 1,000 Ghanaians who worked in Italy are still struggling to get arrears of their social security refund paid to them years after they had returned to Ghana.

The battle, which started in 1998, following mass exodus of Ghanaian immigrants from Italy, is yet to yield any fruitful outcome as the Italian government, according to the leadership of Association of Former Ghanaian Workers in Italy (AFGWI), has failed to heed the cry of its former workers.

Members of the association are, however, adamant and insist that their demand is backed by Italian laws, which bind its employers to pay those monies running into many thousands of Euros to them.

The National Organiser of the AFGWI, Mr Clement Z. Kunge, at a press briefing in Accra, stated that members of the association were determined to recover every amount due them, especially when most of them had received just about 30 per cent of the total amount.

They cited Article 3, Page 13 of Law 335/95 of the Refund of Contributions to Extra-European Commission (EC) Citizens Department From Italy, which states, "This rule can be applied to extra-EC workers who have stopped their working activities in Italy and left the country. The workers can apply for the IVS contributions which have been paid by employees through obligatory securities".

The LI was passed to give legal backing to the then government.

Ghana discovers more mineral deposits

GHANA has made more discoveries of mineral deposits which are expected to boost the country's economy and development.

The deposits include copper, phosphate, nickel, chromium and uranium.

The government has, therefore, invited the investor community to partner it to develop the country's enormous natural resources in an efficient, economic and environmentally sustainable manner that would ensure the sustainable development of the country.

The Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, Mr Collins Dauda, who extended the invitation, said there were bright prospects for mining in Ghana.

He was speaking in Accra on Monday at the opening of the 3rd West and Central Africa Mining Summit.

The two-day summit which brought together key players in the mining sector in West and Central Africa, focused on a wide-range of issues, such as policy development and investment opportunities in the mining sector of the two sub-regions.

Ghana is endowed with enormous mineral resources but for a long time gold, diamond, manganese and bauxite, have been the notable minerals that have attracted foreign investment.

The latest discovery of new minerals is the result of the Mining Sector Support Programme initiative funded by the European Commission.

Mr Dauda said over the past two and half decades, the mining sector in Ghana had undergone policy and legislative reviews geared towards improving the industry, adding that

several macro-economic policies were developed resulting in increased investment in the mining sector.

He said the investment inflows brought about increases in production of virtually all the major minerals with gold, for instance, increasing to 3.13 million ounces in 2009, a record high for any single year for Ghana.

Mr Dauda said the mining sector also made significant contribution to the country's economy and attributed the positive showing to the country's political stability, availability of geo-scientific data, favourable legal and fiscal regimes, and improvement in governance.

On the continental front, Mr Dauda observed that Africa had become a favoured destination for major foreign multinational companies over the past two decades due to the attractive policies adopt-

ed by governments and favourable mineral prices on the world market.

"While experiencing these favourable mineral prices, it is instructive to recognise that all mining booms are temporary, and the good times will not always be with us", he cautioned.

In a contribution, the Chief Executive Officer of Modern Gold Refinery in Ghana, Dr Lorinda Liang, said her company had plans to establish a recycling plant in Ghana in August, 2011 for the production of sim cards and other products.

She said the plant, to be sited in Takoradi in the Western Region, would generate about 25,000 jobs, but indicated that the realisation of that ambition would largely depend on the stabilisation of the cedi and the economy.

Dr Liang urged government agencies to lend their support in order to ensure the success of the project.

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Story: Seth J. Bokpe

THE National Pharmacovigilance Cen

