

30 Hospitalized from Gold Mine Chemical Leakage

By **Marcus Malayea** - October 4, 2017

Some MNG-Gold officials in a meeting with residents

Thirty persons were admitted at the Phebe Hospital for exposure to a chemical spill-over from MNG-Gold reservoir in Bong County over the weekend. The incident took place on Friday, September 29, at one of the mining sites of MNG-Gold in Sayeweta Kokoyah Statutory District after a heavy downpour of rain.

Hospital sources told this newspaper that twenty of those affected were discharged based on the gravity of their conditions. However, the other ten persons are expected to remain in the hospital for further medical examinations for few days.

Some of the chemical victims who spoke to this newspaper complained of stomach ache, skin rash, multiple body pain and constant vomiting and other strange symptoms.

MNG-Gold is a Turkish Mining company working in several parts of Kokoyah District in Bong County. The company took over from the American-Liberian Mining Company (Amlib) in 2013 following a mutual agreement between the two companies.

The polluted creek in Sayeweta

MNG-Gold Public Relations Officer, Lloyd Nwegyah told journalists that the accident occurred after a reservoir facility containing a diluted chemical overflowed with rainwater and later spilled over into a nearby creek in Sayeweta.

Nwegyah said after the incident, MNG-Gold took the affected residents to a nearby clinic in the district and later forwarded them to the Phebe Hospital for further examination.

He noted that as part of its corporate social responsibility, MNG-Gold has supplied the town with 44 bags of rice and other food items, including water tanks with safe drinking water for the townspeople.

Mr. Nwegyah indicated that MNG-Gold earlier constructed three hand pumps in the affected town but the residents have been strongly advised not to drink from the pumps until the government through the Environmental Protection Agency and the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy can conclude investigations into the chemical spillage.

A team from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Ministry of Lands, Mines, and Energy recently visited the affected town and collected several samples from the contaminated creek and took them to Monrovia.

Even though the Phebe Hospital is yet to release medical reports on the affected persons, some of the residents of Kokoyah District told journalists at the hospital on Monday that some of the citizens still complain about running stomach, rashes on the body, body pain, and weakness, among others.

It may be recalled that in 2016 a truck belonging to the company carrying similar chemicals to its site in Kokoyah District fell in a creek which contaminated the water affecting scores of rural residents in the district.

Meanwhile, in 2016, the MNG Company erected a police depot in David Dean Town.

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