

MOE orders clamp-down on illegal varsities

THE Ministry of Education will soon close down all tertiary institutions who are operating without due accreditation by the relevant authorities, Professor Kwesi Yankah, Minister of State in-charge of Tertiary Education, has said.

"As I speak now, the Ministry of Education has directed a clamp-down of all tertiary institutions which are operating illegally and without accreditation from the National Accreditation Board. These are institutions that have given private universities a bad name all these years, and still operate with impunity," he stated.

Prof. Yankah was speaking at the 15th graduation and 24th matriculation of the Catholic University College (CUCG) held at Fiapre near Sunyani last Saturday.

A total of 820 graduated in various degree and post-graduate

diploma programmes while 364 were matriculated.

The minister said the "overnight mushrooming of universities throughout the country with low standards should give way to new and enduring universities which have been well thought through by their founders".

"But there is something even more worrisome. Many universities that are unable to endure the current climate of competition in the tertiary sector have decided to cut corners and cheat the system. They are simply admitting candidates who do not satisfy the minimum requirement for admission to universities," he said.

Yankah called for a holistic approach to reverse the negative perception of private universities in Ghana considering the immense contribution of such institutions toward the human resource devel-

opment of people.

"What is ultimately needed is a holistic agenda to change the negative perception of private universities in Ghana: an agenda that simply prepares students for the job market, and gives them the edge to get jobs."

"Needed is an agenda that does not only reverse the perception, but also that seeks to make private universities, universities of choice, and preferred destinations for students. These then should be universities that are selected because of the quality of faculty and facilities, but also where the quality of courses on offer would have a profound impact on students on the job market," he continued.

The minister called for a paradigm shift to the search

for quality degrees by parents for their wards and that this change required the collective effort of universities, faculty and students in general; adding that "private universities are favorably positioned for this change in paradigm".

The tertiary education minister was worried that private universities were discriminated against and mostly tagged as "university colleges" and operated under fully fledged public universities, even though they had been accredited.

"Unlike new public universities, private counterparts have to seek permission and seek clearance, every step of the way: they are closely shepherded for good measure, but also suffer undue delays and bureaucracies in seeking authorisation for innovative programmes needed for highly competitive job market," the minister observed.

The Vice-Chancellor of the

Catholic University College, Prof Daniels Obeng-Ofori said the university is to set up Entrepreneurship Innovation Centre (EIC) to provide avenues for support and promotion of entrepreneurship and innovation among students within the institution's catchment area.

"The EIC will also build institutional capacities, equip fresh graduates and business leaders with the requisite practical skills and start-ups to enable them to move into innovative businesses, as well as create job opportunities for themselves and others," Prof. Obeng-Ofori explained.

The Vice-Chancellor also announced plans by the university to establish a Law School to be known as Marian Law School which will run LL.M in Transnational Legal Practice to among others train attorney from Ghana and other African countries.