

**STATEMENT BY HON. DR. OKOE BOYE BERNARD, MEMBER  
OF PARLIAMENT FOR THE LEDZOKUKU CONSTITUENCY  
ON WORLD HYPERTENSION DAY**

Thank you Rt. Hon. Speaker for giving me the opportunity to make a statement on the most ubiquitous and insidious medical condition in Ghana today, **Hypertension**, also known as **High Blood Pressure** or **BP** For short.

High blood pressure is a condition in which the blood pressure in the individual is higher than the normal level. An elevated blood pressure silently and gradually causes damage to blood vessels in the brain, heart, kidney and eyes, ultimately resulting in stroke, kidney failure, heart disease and consequently early death.

Risk factors that predispose us to hypertension include physical inactivity, obesity/overweight, family history/ hereditary, race-black race, alcohol abuse, drug abuse/steroids, herbal preparations, etc.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, the 17<sup>th</sup> of May every calendar year is dedicated to marking World Hypertension Day so that through the commemoration, the world and for that matter Ghanaians are remind of the fact that High Blood Pressure gives no signs or symptoms to signal its presence. It operates stealthily, causing harm secretly.

The only way to know your blood pressure is to get it checked by a health worker. Thirty (30) percent of all Ghanaian adults have been determined to be hypertensive. What is even more worrying is that only one third 1/3 of this number are aware of their status. By this statistics, approximately ninety two (92) members of this honorable house are supposed to be hypertensive with only thirty (30) out of this number knowing their status.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, doctors in Korle Bu Teaching Hospital estimate that **seventy (70) percent of all deaths at the hospital are caused by hypertensive conditions. Seven (7) times out of ten (10), hypertension is the culprit** when you hear of an adult who lost

his/her life. This is what makes this discussion most urgent, most relevant and most timely.

The message on this day is simple – Get your BP Checked, it is the only way to know and for those on medication, take your medications daily, that is the surest way to a long complication free life. Eat well, sleep sufficiently, exercise adequately and you can avoid Hypertension or minimize its effects on the body.

Mr. Speaker, let me take this opportunity to mention that I have written a book on Hypertension titled-“**High Blood Pressure in Black People**”-, a material with adequate, simple information on how BP Develops, how to manage it and stay alive.

Rt. Hon. Speaker will definitely get a copy from my modest self before the launch next month. Lastly, I announce with great joy that the medical doctors in this honorable house are equipped with Blood Pressure measuring equipment and ready to measure the BP of every member before we exit parliament today. Please get close to a doctor now so hypertension can be exposed and dealt with.

Mr. Speaker, I remain most grateful to you for this opportunity.