

Illegal sand winning at Ashifla — court orders arrest of MD for contempt

By Francis Xah

An Accra High Court (Human Rights Division) Presided over by Mr Nicholas M.C. Abodakpl on January 30, 2020, issued an arrest warrant, for Mr Laryea Conad, Chief Executive Officer of Conad Estates for refusing to attend court in an illegal sand winning case.

Mr Laryea Conad and Nii Oblidja Quaye (Respondents) are standing trial at the court for illegally winning sand, at Ashifla, near Obom, thereby destroying pineapple farms and food crops valued at over GH¢150,000.

The day the judge issued the arrest warrant (January 30, 2020), was the very day Mr Laryea Conad and his assigns went to Ashifla again to destroy over 19 acres of pineapple farms belonging to one Mr Afla Quaye, and other food crops belonging to over 100 other farmers.

A true certified copy of the arrest warrant read "whereas this case, having come before this honourable court for hearing and determination and the

matter being quasi criminal: it is hereby ORDERED that, Bench Warrant be issued for the arrest of the 2nd Respondent, Mr Laryea, CEO of Conad Estates, Amasaman, Accra, for him to be brought to court as soon as he is arrested."

The Spectator over the past four years, published the constant destruction of food crops and pineapple farms at Ashifla through the illegal sand winning of Mr Laryea Conad and Nii Oblidja Quaye, the Chief of Ashifla in the Ga South District.

Apart from food crops, water bodies were also destroyed, which made life miserable for the farmers in the area.

Mr Laryea Conad was on record telling owners of the destroyed farms that, he was only winning the sand, and not to own the lands.

Mr Afla Quaye told The Spectator on Monday that on January 30, 2020, Mr Laryea Conad brought in about 30 tipper trucks and three bulldozers to destroy his 19 acre pineapple farm before winning the sand.

He and another farmer, Mr Felix Tsifoaka said they were

helpless, as the illegal sand winners were armed to the teeth with powerful guns and other dangerous weapons.

The farmers said numerous complaints to the Ga South Municipal Assembly did not yield any positive results, because the assembly also complained of logistics and personnel and the danger of fighting the illegal sand winners who operated mostly in the night, and always armed with guns.

"No assembly worker was prepared to risk his or her life, fighting illegal sand winners, in the night, without any proper logistics," Mr Afla Quaye and Felix Tsifoaka, said.

A very reliable senior officer at the Ga South Municipal Assembly, who pleaded anonymity confirmed the problems and havoc the illegal sand winners were causing to the environment.

He said the assembly was very happy the law courts were now taking keen interest in illegal sand winning, adding that, stiffer punishment from the courts could serve as a deterrent.



• A destroyed water body in the destroyed farm



• A portion of the remaining destroyed 19-acre pineapple plantation



• Mr Afla Quaye showing the 19-acre destroyed pineapple farm