

Quarry companies accuse Chinese firm of trespassing

By Musah Yahaya Jafaru, AFIENYA

TWO quarry companies at the Shai Hills in the Greater Accra Region have accused a Chinese company, Greenhouse International Developers (GID), of starting a real estate construction close to the quarry zone at the Shai Hills.

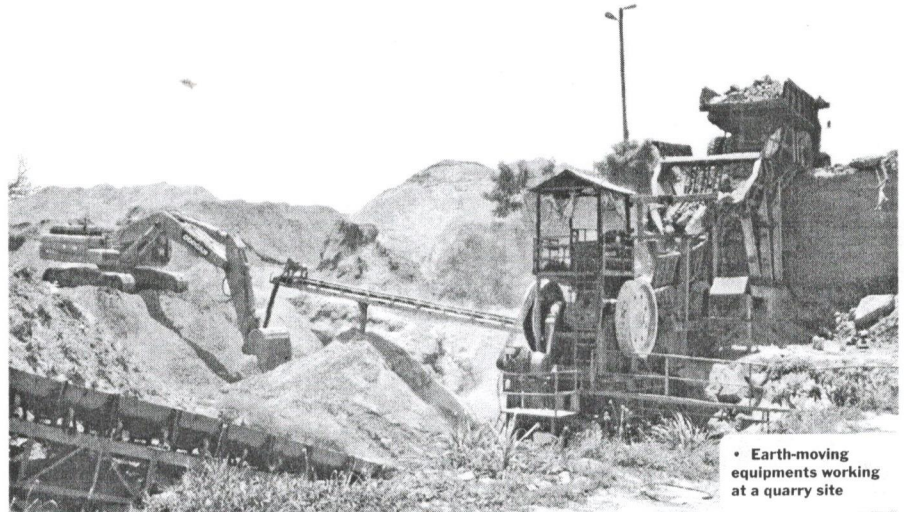
They said the site for the real estate was less than 100 metres away from the quarry zone, which is against the standard requirement for human habitation, which is 500 metres away from a quarry site.

Speaking to journalists on the development in Accra, the Managing Director of Zina Quarry Ghana Limited, Mr Merheb Zakhia, and the Accountant of Cedar Quarry Ghana Limited, Mr Alexander Dagadu, said the closeness of the planned real estate to the quarry zone posed danger to lives and property as flying rocks from the blasting area could land on the houses or on people.

That, they said, could result in injury, loss of lives and destruction of property.

According to them, their respective companies did blasting of rocks two to

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• Earth-moving equipments working at a quarry site

three times weekly, and indicated that the blasting which involved the use of explosive materials shook the grounds.

They said the vibration could, therefore, crack buildings within 500 metres radius.

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Caution letter

Mr Dagadu said Cedar Quarry had sent a letter to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), copied to the Minerals Commission, the Ghana Police Service, the Shai Osudoku District Assembly and the GID, alerting them about the planned construction of the real estate.

Part of the letter, dated May 17, 2017, which was sighted by the *Daily Graphic*

read: "Clearly the activities of these developers pose a danger to our operations as it is impossible to do our blasting activity without causing damage to the fast springing building or injury to persons in the immediate vicinity of those buildings.

"Please kindly use your good offices to stop these developers in order to avert any future incidents that have far-reaching consequences to life and property."

Mr Dagadu said despite warnings by the EPA and the Minerals Commission to the developers to stop work, they were continuing with the project.

He claimed that the GID first secured the land with the plan to use it for the washing of fuel tankers.

However, he said, about two months ago, GID started preparatory works, including an erection of a fence wall

and construction of roads.

GID's reaction

When journalists visited the site, there were heavy duty vehicles levelling the land.

The acting Head of the GID, who gave his name as Andi, explained through an interpreter that he could not grant an interview because the head of the company had travelled to China.

He, however, denied the claim that the site was secured for the washing of fuel tankers.

Mr Andi said it was only the head of the company who knew what the land would be used for.

He said he was only asked to supervise some preparatory works on the land, which included road construction.