

I warned against revival of Komenda Sugar Factory but people didn't understand me - Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu

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Majority Leader and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu

The Majority Leader and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu, has explained why successive governments have failed to operationalise the Komenda Sugar Factory.

According to him, the main challenge of making the Komenda Sugar Factory work is that there are no longer arable lands in the Komenda area to produce the sugarcane needed to feed the factory because of human settlement and the devastation done to water bodies in the area by the activities of illegal small-scale miners (galamseyers).

He explained that because the main source of water in the area, the River Pra, has been polluted by galamsey activities, the water from it has to be first purified before it can be used to cultivate the sugarcane needed for the factory, which comes at a very huge cost.

Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu, who made these remarks in an Oyerepa TV interview aired on Thursday and monitored by GhanaWeb, said that he warned that it would be impossible to revive the factory during the era of the late former President John Evans Atta Mills, but he was ignored.



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"During the era of President Mills, I raised an issue about the feasibility of the Komenda Sugar Factory in parliament, but some people did not understand me because they had a sentimental attachment to the revival of the factory due to it being established by Kwame Nkrumah.

"I said reviving the factory will not work and that we should look for an alternative in order not to waste our money, but people did not understand," he said in Twi.

Background

Though the erstwhile John Dramani Mahama administration recommissioned the factory on May 30, 2016, in a bid to get it functioning once again and offer employment for the youth, the move hit a snag as the Akufo-Addo-led government took office shortly thereafter in 2017.

The Komenda Sugar Factory was expected to create some 7,300 direct and indirect jobs at full operational capacity. The factory is said to be able to crush 1,250 metric tons of sugar cane daily.

The sugar-producing factory was first established in 1964 by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah but became defunct over the years due to technical difficulties and setbacks.

The birth of the factory was based on the premise of producing sugar locally to reduce importation and for commercial purposes.