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Agogo plantation owners go to court

 Ghanaian Chronicle

<https://www.modernghana.com/news/407653/Agogo-plantation-Downers-go-to-court.html>

By Ivy Benson

Some one hundred and twenty-three plantain plantation owners at Boumfoum forest on the Agogo Stool land have taken legal action at the Kumasi High Court against Anicol Micro Company Limited, a company involved in reforestation at certain part of the area in the Asante Akim district, and three of its officials, for destroying a thousand and two hundred acres of plantation without any just cause.

The plaintiffs, led by Fred Wiafe, have described the actions of the defendants as unlawful and a violation of their human rights.

Defendants cited in the suit include Anicol Micro Company Limited, Bernard Barnes, Hugo Slabber, both directors of the company, and Joseph Anyan Amoako, a foreman working with the company.

According to the plaintiffs, they have been rendered unemployed and could not support their children through school as a result of defendants' action, which had made GH¢1,680,000 from the total 1200 acres per annum with an average total amount of GH¢1,400 per acre per annum, gone down the drain.

Plaintiffs are, therefore, requesting the court to jointly and severally declare the action of the defendants as unlawful and a breach of the human rights as well as a recovery of special damages in the sum of GH¢1,680,000, which they could have realized from their 1,200 acres of farms.

Plaintiffs are also claiming general damages for trespassing on their land, cost as well as interest.

In their statement of case, plaintiffs noted that 10 years ago, the plantation owners constituted themselves into groups and approached some individuals, who had been granted concession of some part of the Boumfoum degraded forest land to undertake plantain plantation, while the concessioners planted the teak seedlings by way of re-forestation.

Plaintiffs pointed out that each plantation owner had made payment for the number of acreage cultivated, stressing that the fee was a token since the plantation provides shade to the teak seedlings planted by the concessioners.

They also asserted that because the area of operation is a farming community, they accepted the terms provided by the concessioners and heavily invested in the plantain plantation as their sole source of livelihood.

Plaintiff indicated that by December 2011, they had 1,200 acres of plantain and over 70% of the farms had reached maturity and about to be harvested, since the degraded forest of Boufoum had saved them from the menace and atrocities of the Fulani herdsmen and their cattle, who have taken over fertile lands at Kowireso, Abrewapom, Bebome, Pataban, Magyeda, Mpesepe, Kwame Addo's village and surrounding areas.

It is, therefore, the view of the plaintiff that late December 2011 and early January 2012, they were shocked to see the defendants cutting down all the plantations and their request and pleas for time to harvest their crops were refused.

They have described defendants' action in destroying their plantations without recourse to law and social economic repercussions as irresponsible, reprehensible and a violation of plaintiffs' property rights as well as their human rights.

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