



# MINISTRY OF LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

**P. O. Box M212 Ministries - Accra**  
**Digital Address: GA-110-0371**

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24<sup>th</sup> January, 2022.

## PRESS RELEASE

### MINISTRY OF LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES, ACCRA

#### **SITUATIONAL REPORT ON THE ASANKRAGWA ILLEGAL MINING ARRESTS ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2022.**

The Ministry's attention has been drawn to some audio recordings, photos and videos circulating on social media, concerning the arrest and brutalization of illegal mining taskforce by some military men. In an effort to fight illegal mining, popularly known as "galamsey", the Ministry has established a taskforce to assist with arrests. The team has been immensely supporting the Ministry's endeavours to clamp down illegal mining activities across the country. As part of their responsibilities, the taskforce is mandated to apprehend illegal miners on and near waterbodies and hand them over to any nearby police station. Under no circumstance should any of the taskforce members extort money in the line of their duties.

Details of the recent operations are as follows:

1. The Ministry has realized that it would be difficult for the security agencies alone to fight the illegal mining battle and hence, needed a concerted effort across the value chain.
2. The Ministry subsequently established a taskforce to assist the security forces in tightening the illegal mining fight.
3. The Ministry recently received an alert on illegal mining activities around Enchi in the Western-North Region.

Tel: +233(0)303 943 078  
+233(0)303 941 563  
Email: [info@mlnr.gov.gh](mailto:info@mlnr.gov.gh)  
Website: [www.mlnr.gov.gh](http://www.mlnr.gov.gh)

4. On Wednesday January 19, 2022, the Deputy Minister in Charge of Mining directed the Taskforce to report to the Western-North Regional Minister and the Police Commander to assist them with security personnel for the operations.
5. The team complied with the directives, contacted the Regional Minister and the Police Commander and duly executed the mandate assigned.
6. On their way back to Accra, the taskforce identified an illegal mining site along the road around Manso-Amenfi and arrested two persons seen on the field.
7. The Deputy Minister in Charge of Mining was duly informed and they were advised to contact the DCE for the conveyance of the two excavators from the site to Amenfi Central District Assembly.
8. A Chinese national and a Ghanaian were arrested during the operation and they were handed over to Manso-Amenfi police.
9. On their way back to Accra, after the arrest, some military personnel met them around Wassa Akropong, accosted and purported to have brutalized the team and sent them to Obuasi Central Police Station.
10. Investigations are ongoing to find out what really ensued between the military and the Taskforce.
11. The ministry is therefore encouraging the public to provide evidence of any form of extortion and the appropriate action will be taken to enhance the fight against illegal mining in the industry.



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**Hon. George Mireku Duker, MP.**

**(Deputy Minister in Charge of Mines)**