



11 October 2022

PRESS RELEASE:
REPRESENTATION OF CHINESE AND VIETNAMESE NATIONALS ACCUSED OF ILLEGAL MINING

We release this statement in reference to our representation of four (4) foreign nationals (three (3) Chinese and one (1) Vietnamese) who were arraigned on October 11, 2022 at the Criminal High Court 5, before Justice Lydia Osei Marfo in Accra. It has come to our attention that there have been some misconceptions and a deliberate misconstruction of our decision to represent our clients. In the case of the **Republic vs Shi Yang, Shi Meizhi, Li Wei Zuo, and another**, (our "**Clients**"), we as a firm would like to clarify these issues. To us, it would seem that our Clients are collateral victims of a matter that is of great national concern.

We understand the deep-seated anger and sentiments any story on illegal mining evokes in Ghanaians. Even worse is when those accused are foreign nationals because of the extensive degradation and pollution of water bodies laid at their doorstep.

At Blay and Associates however, we believe in the inviolability of the judicial system. Blay & Associates is a firm that seeks to promote justice, ensures a fair trial, and seeks to give fair representation. We, as firm believers in our great 1992 Constitution of Ghana ("**Constitution**"), agreed to defend these Clients, having in mind these principles.

Our defence of the accused is steeped in our belief that they are innocent of the charges preferred against them. The facts of the case as we know to be true are as follows.

1. The 1st to 3rd accused are legally resident, law-abiding persons in Ghana. Our Clients operate a supermarket business that stocks regular goods and some specific Chinese groceries making them a reliable shop for Chinese and Asian patronage. A supermarket no matter how vibrant it is does not ripen into an illegal mining activity.
2. Our clients have no business relationship with Aisha Huang except the fact of purchasing the supermarket from her in 2017 when she was first repatriated to China. Aisha Huang has had no further business dealings with our clients upon her return to Ghana. For the avoidance of doubt, Aisha Huang was arrested at a different time and place to our Clients who were minding their business at home when they were picked up in the early hours on 14 September 2022. It would appear that our Clients are collateral victims of the pursuit for Aisha Huang and the campaign against illegal mining.
3. The names of persons that some media platforms have reported that we are defending are completely false. We have **no engagement** with Gao Jin Cheng, Lu Qi Jun, Haibin Go, or Zhang Zhipeng who are noted as Aisha Huang's associates. We also do not have any engagement with Aisha Huang.

As earlier intimated, we are extremely conscious of the sensitive nature of the "Aisha Huang matter", and the current devastating effects of illegal mining on our environment. We, along with all citizens of Ghana are very concerned about this and look forward to the resolution of these matters.

Blay & Associates, as officers of the courts in the pursuit of a fair trial and the right to representation of all persons whether locals or foreign nationals and the guaranteed provisions of our constitution accepted to defend the accused in the supreme interest of justice.

We trust that the National Security apparatus will carry out a thorough investigation that is cognizant of our great Constitution and the rights enshrined therein, including the right for all accused persons (including foreign nationals) to be represented by Counsel in order that the ends of justice is served in a fit sense.

Yours sincerely

~~BLAY & ASSOCIATES
CLIENT REPRESENTATIVE
P O BOX GP 115, ACCRA
BARRISTERS & SOLICITORS~~