

# Joint Committee of Victims of the Ejura Incidents

Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2022  
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The Municipal Chief Executive  
Ejua-Sekyedumase  
Ejura

Sir,

## **RE: ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY DUA'A PRAYERS FOR VICTIMS OF EJURA INCIDENTS**

We write in reply to your letter dated 23 June 2022, and in connection with the recent Meeting held at your request on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2022, concerning our planned DUA'A event commemorating victims of the Ejura incidents.

As you are aware, in your letter, you informed us that the Management of the Municipal Assembly "has special interest in the activities outlined" and that the purpose of the meeting was to "discuss in detail the activities intended" for the commemoration of the victims of the Ejura Incidents.

From our recollection, the following persons were at the meeting, you the Municipal Chief Executive, the Municipal Coordinating Director, the NADMO coordinator for the District, the Nifahene, the Police Divisional Commander, the Ejura Police Station Crime Officer, Chairpersons of the NPP and NDC political parties, representatives of the Fire Service and the National Investigations Bureau.

During the meeting, we were made to understand that your team wanted to fully appreciate the purpose of the event. Our team took the time to explain to you that our event was intended to commemorate the loss of lives and the pain inflicted on our families and to provide an avenue for the reconciliation and healing of the affected families as well as members of the community who wanted to commiserate with us.

We also explained that the Dua'a event is being organized by our families in accordance with Islamic faith and the dictates of our faith, to observe the one year anniversary of the deaths of our loved ones. We also stressed to you that we have invited relevant persons including the Chief Imam, the Zongo chiefs, the Ejurahene, and even the Ghana Police Service who are stakeholders in the quest for justice and true reconciliation in Ejura.

We note also that at the event, you asked and confirmed from us whether we were aware that the Ejurahene was holding an event commemorating the unfortunate incidents that took place at Ejura. We note also that you proposed that since the Ejurahene was organizing his event, it might be opportune for us to cancel the event our families have come together to organize in commemoration of our lost relatives. We note further that at the meeting, a member of your team – the Nifahene - expressed, as we understand, the strange position of the Ejurahene that if we insist that we want to go ahead with the

ceremony, our families should go back to “our hometowns” because we are not ethnically Asantes.

Kindly note, with all due respect to you and the management of the Municipal Assembly that after deliberations our families are grateful for your special interest in our event and thank you for your support for the peacebuilding process in Ejura. However, we are concerned that the Municipal Assembly mis-appreciates the religious importance of this event to our families and perhaps its own mandate.

We consider that our religious obligation to hold various activities in connection with the death of our loved ones; including such events as wake-keeping; funerals; one year anniversary commemorations or any other such public events in connection with mourning our loved ones; keeping their memories alive; seeking healing and reconciliation or justice for them are not activities that are subject to the veto of the Municipal Assembly.

We consider further that there is no basis to suggest or conclude that our event endangers or runs the risk of endangering public peace. In this regard, we would appreciate further clarity as to the interest of Municipal Assembly in stopping the holding of this event.

We find the comment by the Nifahene that our families should go back to “our hometowns” because we are not ethnically Asantes particularly distasteful. We would like to reiterate that our families have no interest in becoming mired in unnecessary partisan politics, ethnic contestations or in engaging in activities that detract from our efforts to seek healing and reconciliation. For this reason, we have chosen not to take any action regarding the threats which were issued by the Nifahene with the apparent endorsement of your team. We think however that from where we sit, the Municipal Assembly by not denouncing that statement appears to be lending its institutional support to such a comment, which we believe stems from ethnic bigotry.

Our families, having reached a decision that we are unable to cancel our event which is the expression of our religious duty to our departed family members, deem it important to restate the context of our event and its history. It is our hope that such context will help your management to better appreciate the importance of the event to our families and that this would help you know how to better support it to come off successfully.

Sometime in May this year, our families started discussing the possibility of planning a family event to commemorate the death of our loved ones. As part of those discussions, we started consulting religious leaders regarding the event and seeking their input. We also reached out to the Ejurahene and informed him about what we were discussing.

The Ejurahene on hearing the news of the events we were planning as a family received it joyously and indicated to us that he wanted to be part of the event and wanted to support us to make it even bigger than we were contemplating at the time. He proposed to offer accommodation to invited dignitaries and to offer a cow to be sacrificed by the Imam.

The Ejurahene then went on to propose the forming of a committee with Alhaji Inusah Mohammed Bawa the leader of our family delegation, to head his new committee initiative. A couple of meetings were held between members of the Committee and Alhaji Bawa. Invitation letters to bring guests were prepared and we were only waiting for the signature of the Eurahene for over a week.

After about two weeks to the event, we were informed by the Ejurahene that he had decided to scale the activities down completely and to organize it in a manner that differed significantly from how the families wanted to organize it. The families then informed Ejurahene that our families were unable to organize the event in the new format he was proposing and begged him to reconsider. Even though we were surprised and disappointed by the Ejurahene's change of mind regarding the programme, we took it in stride and informed him that we will proceed to organize the event differently, to which he agreed.

We later found out from the Ejurahene, that he intended to still organize his event in a format we understand would be a secular format, and not necessary in line with our Islamic faith owing to the fact that the Ejurahene's position is not an Islamic institution. We informed him that we intended to organize our event, in consultation with our religious leaders and he wished us well.

We have continued in all our public facing events continued to praise the Ejurahene for his leadership. We have at no point undermined nor sought to impugn his initiative.

At the meeting, we reiterated our indication to confer with our family and revert. Despite this, your team told us that you were issuing an order to us to suspend our programming. We have also received phone calls from the Crime Officer of the Police and the Divisional Police Commander which we consider to be unnecessarily raising tensions around our event.

We note also the fact that several zongo chiefs have been dissuaded from attending our event. We cannot fathom why state institutions and individuals who must be interested in helping us organize a successful event have taken the route of intimidation, ethnic bigotry and stoking ethnic tensions in our community, only because we took a decision to commemorate the loss of our family members. We consider these several incidents and conduct undemocratic and not reflective of the values of freedom and liberty that is enshrined in our nation's creed; as well as in violation of our rights as citizens. We are also concerned that your actions are undermining faith in your credibility, impartiality and resolve to uphold the rule of law.

Despite our concerns over the conduct we have witnessed, we reiterate our invitation to you and your management. We consider you as partners towards building peace in Ejura. We hope that you will become interested in playing your role as such partners.

Sincerely,



Alhaji Inusah Mohammed Bawa (Chair of the Joint Committee of Victims of the Ejura Incidents)

Digitally signed by Inusah

Bawah

Date: 2022.05.27.11:31:37 Z