

Background of Anbariya

Anbariya Sunni Community was established in the 1940s by Sheikh Yusuf Sualih Ajura (Afa Ajura), with the objective of ensuring that Islam was practised according to the "sound" dictates of the Holy Quran and Hadith. This became necessary because he believed the early Islamic scholars in Ghana had introduced new things into the religion, which in his view did not conform to the tenets of the Quran and Hadith.

Afa Ajura started by preaching from village to village and, in 1951, established the Anbariya Islamic School. From the porch of his house at Sakasaka in Tamale, he started the school with only 24 students. He was assisted by a few volunteers who sacrificed everything to realise the dream and vision of a "pure" Islam. With vision, resilience and determination by Afa Ajura, Anbariya has now been developed into the biggest "Islamic Institute" in Ghana. With the student population estimated at over 2000 at the main campus alone at Nyanshegu, Tamale, Anbariya now has over 20 branches across the region.

Sheikh Yusuf Sualih Ajura did not relent in ensuring the propagation of Islam in Tamale. Even though a lot of constraints and challenges impinged on his effort to develop Islam in Tamale, he never reneged. Anbariya which started as a minority Islamic group in Tamale is today the largest Muslim group in Northern Ghana with the "sound" practices in all their endeavours. This is seen as manifesting the founder's statement that "Anbariya has taken off."

Anbariya now connote Sunni Muslims in Ghana, especially in the North. Because of the significant role Afa Ajura played to teach and uphold Islam strictly according to his understanding of the teachings of the Quran and Hadith, his name has been synonymous to Anbariya. Though of blessed memory, his role in the development of Anbariya into a group of disciplined and devout Muslims is not in doubt. His visionary leadership and the spirit of self-denial has resulted into numerous schools, mosques and other properties which need to be managed efficiently for the growth and development of Islam in particular and its membership in Ghana and beyond. Without doubt that Anbariya has taken off; there is the urgent call for Anbariya to experience a transition which will conveniently place it on the path of growth and development. This requires significant restructuring. The generic name, Anbariya, has therefore been developed to be Anbariya Sunni Community (Anbariya). This

name represents all who subscribe to the teachings of Sheikh Yusuf Sualih Ajura, i.e., according to the Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet Mohammed (peace and blessing be upon him). The restructuring has cultivated into a constitution that has been developed to legally place the Anbariya Sunni Community appropriately. This will give more recognition to the role it plays in national and global discourse.