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gave a nod to revitalisation
lks whose preparations
ed yesterday.

Faulted. President Salva Kiir

Govt to revalue Buliisa oil land

Change. This comes after oil firm Total E&P insisted on earlier valuation rates, contrary to what locals want.

BY FREDERIC MUSISI
musisif@ug.nationmedia.com

KAMPALA. The Ministry of Lands is back to the drawing board on the valuation of land in Ngwedo Sub-county, Buliisa District, after residents early this month blocked French oil company Total E&P officials from proceeding with any development until the prices offered have been revised.

Sources familiar with the matter told *Daily Monitor* that Lands minister Betty Amongi last week convened a "crisis meeting" with the revaluation proposal.

A follow-up meeting was scheduled yesterday but it was unclear whether it happened against the backdrop of the age limit debate.

Ms Amongi was not available for comment on the matter by press time.

The land in question in Buliisa measures about 700 acres. It was mapped to accommodate one of the two proposed Central Processing Facilities, where oil will be stored first for stabilisation and treatment before being fed into either the proposed refinery or pipeline.

The facility is also planned to generate 150 megawatts of electricity from gas.

A group of 500 project affected persons early this month chased away Total E&P officials from the land before they are fully compensated.

According to the Lands ministry, Total E&P earlier engaged a private surveyor who valued, among others, an acre of land at Shs2.1m which was later revised to Shs3m. The Shs3m was premised on the fact that this was a very remote area.

However, locals this year changed their mind and demanded Shs30m which a senior official described as "outrageous" but "understandable" given the significance of the planned projects on the said land.

Following discussions between the ministry and Buliisa local leaders, the Shs30m was reduced to Shs21m which residents are demanding but Total E&P is insisting on the earlier valuation rates.

"It is true the area was remote when Total first conducted its surveys but market price for land in the Albertine, whether remote or not, has since changed; so we think we should be offering a fair value for land," a Lands official, who preferred anonymity, said.

"Fair value considers many attributes like the value of property now, tomorrow and the next 50 years or so," the source said.

COMPANY'S TAKE

Total E&P officials in an email to this newspaper said Ugandan laws state that the compensation process (in cash or in kind) can only start after approval of the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) report by the authorities and this was done. "Total E&P Uganda, which is responsible for delivering the compensation package to the project affected persons on behalf of government, will now mobilise the RAP implementation contractor team and proceed with the disclosure process as per the approved RAP1 implementation," it stated. The firm did not respond whether it was going to display Shs3m or Shs2.1m.