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"Our economy has experienced a

president or Ugandan Students in China, welcomed the initiative.

"On people-to-people exchanges, education is the biggest thing because if you

ries to a Chinese and diverse diaspora community. We are trying to tell them about Uganda, and promote our tourism," he said.

approach to bilateral relations largely for its non-involvement in its internal politics.

that knowledge and experience, I managed to get where I am," she said.

China and Uganda boast of decades-long relations, starting in 1962.

Sugar Council to consider Namayingo factory licence

BY PHILIP WAFULA

KAMPALA. The Sugar Council is to consider operationalising CN Sugar Limited in Kifuyo Village, Bukooli South Constituency, Namayingo District, after several farmers had started feeling the brunt of the delays in granting the factory a licence.

In August 2024, the Vice President, Ms Jessica Alupo, was represented by Third Deputy Prime Minister, Ms Lukia Nakadema, at the groundbreaking ceremony of the factory, which was expected to process the sugarcane of farmers with whom they had signed contracts.

The Chairperson of the Uganda Sugar Industry Stakeholder Council, Mr Rajbir Singh Rai, said they would consider CN Sugar Factory at their next meeting.

"Their application was only submitted by them and received by the Coun-

cil in the last meeting and a team was formed to visit them and verify; we will now consider it in the next meeting," Mr Rai said on Monday.

Mr Rai, who is also the director of Kinyara Sugar Works, was, however, non-committal on when the next meeting will be convened.

"I don't have the dates off-head; you will have to check with the secretariat," he added.

Busoga region's representative on the Sugar Council Isa Budhugo, said they inspected CN Sugar Factory on January 29 to assess whether it meets the requirements for licensing, and that the Council was scheduled to meet yesterday to deliberate on the findings and determine the next course of action.

Last November, the government inaugurated and swore in the inaugural Uganda Sugar Industry Stakehold-



CN Sugar Factory Ltd in Namayingo District, whose groundbreaking was in August 2024, is yet to receive a license to operate. PHOTO/FILE

er Council, a nine-member body to regulate the country's sugar sector, which was established under the Sugar (Amendment) Act, 2020.

Under the Sugar Act, to qualify for a licence, a new sugar factory must have at least 500 hectares of sugarcane, valid land titles, and formal contracts.

Mr Rai's assurance comes amid reports that the delay to issue CN Sugar Factory with a licence has left farmers in Namayingo District on edge and staring at a bleak future. Subsequent-

ly, some of the farmers' mature cane is drying up in the fields, while others are cutting it down.

Busoga, which encompasses parts of Namayingo District, has often been ranked among the poorest sub-regions in the country, according to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, and the factory's failure to secure a licence to commence operations has only worsened matters.

Mr Musa Osinya, a farmer from Buyinja, who claimed to have planted more than 15 acres of sugarcane, said the con-

tinued delay to operationalise CN Sugar Factory means the farmers have to transport their cane to other mills sprawled across Busoga Sub-region.

These include Kakira Sugar Works Limited in Jinja District, Sugar and Allied Industries Limited (Kaliro), Mayuge Sugar (Mayuge), Bugiri Sugar (Bugiri) and Kamuli Sugar (Kamuli).

The Sugar Act requires a 25-kilometre radius between millers.

The sugarcane outgrowers are further constrained in selling their cane elsewhere due to a memorandum of understanding they signed with CN Sugar.

The Namayingo RDC, Ms Eva Kwesiga, previously assured the farmers that the issue had been forwarded to the Sugar Council for review in line with the Sugar Act.

Price issue

Recently, the Sugarcane farmers in the Busoga accused millers of defying the government's directive on the minimum price of sugarcane, noting that the practice is pushing growers into losses despite rising production costs.

The government recently set a temporary minimum price of Shs125,000 per tonne to protect farmers, but many say it remains too low and some millers are still buying it Shs105,000. The *Monitor* has seen receipts from some factories confirming the low payments.