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Stalled works on Tirinyi-Mbale road irks MPs

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KAMPALA/BUDAKA. The Nakalama-Tirinyi-Mbale road — a key link for trade and commerce between Kampala and the Eastern region, has become a nightmare for motorists, traders and tourists.

Legislators from Bugisu, Teso, and Busoga sub-regions have threatened to march nude today against the abandoned road works on Mbale-Tirinyi road.

Residents say the road is impassable and its condition deteriorated after Dott Services Ltd, a company contracted to work on the road, abandoned it three months ago.

The route has remained incomplete after the company was stopped from continuing with operations over shoddy work and delays.

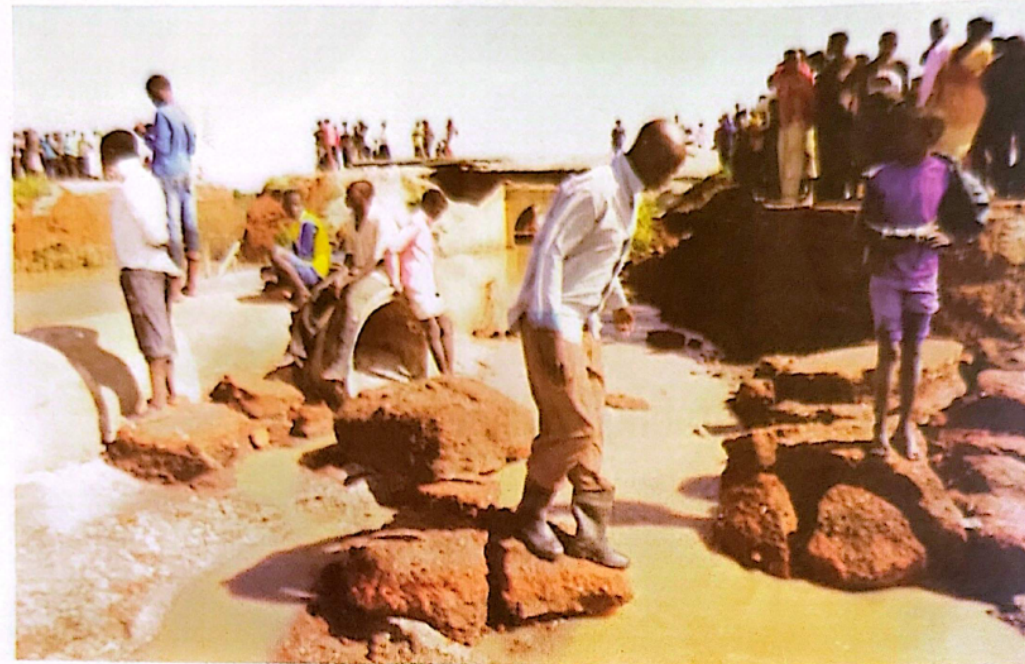
Mr John Baptist Nambeshe, the Manjiya County Member of Parliament, told *Daily Monitor* that the road has led to increased accidents arising from haphazard construction works and has damaged vehicles.

"The costs of doing business on that road are very expensive. Do you know that Shs73 billion has been sunk in that project but we don't see the value for this money?" Mr Nambeshe asked at the weekend.

Fears

Mr Nathan Nandala Mafabi, the Budadiri West Member of Parliament, said the revival of the once thriving industrial areas in the East have been slowed down due to pathetic state of the road, adding that the situation might keep away many potential investors.

"The road is impassable and is only fit for tractors and heavy earth movers. Thousands of people who eke out a living by driving vehicles have



Shoddy. Residents cross through Mbale-Tirinyi road that was cut off after three bridges were destroyed by rain.

PHOTO BY MUDANGHA KOLYANGHA

not been spared as huge potholes are characteristic of the road since it was abandoned," Mr Mafabi said.

Reports from drivers indicate that six out of every 10 vehicles that ply the rugged road, usually make it back with broken springs and bodies.

"Our vehicles usually break down due to the bad road that is now filled up with pot holes and is filled up

everywhere with abandoned sand and stones," Mr Aziz Mugoya, a driver, said. Addressing a press briefing at Parliament last week, the MP for Ngora County, Mr David Abala, said the Uganda National Roads Authority (Unra) executive director, Mr Allen Kagina, should take an on-the-spot inspection of the road to explain why it has remained in a sorry state.

Early this year, Unra terminated their contract with Dott Services on the rehabilitation of the road after a presidential directive to Ms Kagina to stop giving contracts to the company.

The President referred to the company as 'fraudulent'.

However, when reached for a comment, the Unra deputy spokesperson, Mr Allan Ssempebwa,

said the roads authority is in its final stages of introducing another contractor to resume the road works along the Nakalama-Tirinyi-Mbale roads.

"People need to go slow because procurement is a process. We are already finalising this and a contractor will be got to resume the works," Mr Ssempebwa said.

MPS VOW TO PROTEST TODAY OVER ROAD

Legislators from the eastern part of the country have reaffirmed they will protest today against the deteriorating Mbale-Tirinyi-Nakalama road unless Uganda National Roads Authority resumes works.

The Budaka Woman MP, Ms Pamela Nasiyo Kamugo, told *Daily Monitor* at the weekend that they have mobilised residents to protest against Unra for failing to resume road works.

"We are staging a protest this

Monday [today] unless Unra responds to our calls. The entire road section has remained a death trap with little or no attention from the responsible agencies. We have done the mobilisation and people are ready to join the demonstration because they too are tired of the deplorable road," Ms Kamugo said.

"The cost of doing business on this road is becoming too expensive and not viable. The only language this

government listens to is through demonstrations and road users coming knowing that residents will have to demonstrate," she added.

Some of the MPs who made the declaration to demonstrate include: Mr Silas Aogon [Kumi Municipality], Ms Mariam Naigaga [Namutumba], Mr Paul Akamaba [Busiki], Mr Fred Baseke [Ntenjeru], Mr Geoffrey Dhamuzungu [Budiop East], Mr David Abala [Ngora] and Mr Henry Kibalya [Bugabula South].



MP Pamela Nasiyo Kamugo