

MAD DASH FOR GOLD

Children join mines

Children crush rocks in search of gold in Moroto District recently. Many children in Moroto and Nakapiripit districts have dropped out of school to join their parents in mining for gold.

PHOTO BY STEVEN ARIONG



Namutumba officials work under trees for lack of offices

Concern. The district has not had an administration block since it was carved out of Iganga in 2006.

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NAMUTUMBA. Namutumba District officials have resorted to conducting business under tree shades over lack of an administration block.

The district chairperson, Mr Saleh Kumbuga, says since he took office 16 months ago, he has endured several service delivery problems, mainly the lack of district administration offices.

"Whereas the electorates see me driving the district double cabin pickup truck, since Namutumba became a district, it has been grappling with a Shs600 million deficit to complete the multi-billion administration block, which has since taken

seven years, making civil servants and politicians share the few available offices," Mr Kumbuga says.

Namutumba was carved out of Iganga District in 2006.

"Despite being in existence for more than 10 years, the district is also characterised by poor road networks, declining education standards, poor healthcare and political infighting," Mr Kumbuga adds.

During the 2016 presidential election campaigns, President Museveni promised to, among others, contribute towards the construction of the district administration block but the chairperson says the pledge has not been fulfilled.

"President Museveni, while addressing locals of Namutumba on December 20, 2015, at Kibaale Primary School and on December 21, 2015, at Kisiki College, promised to facilitate the completion of the administration block and to construct

FACTS

Namutumba District was created by the Act of Parliament in 2005 and became operational on July 1, 2006. Prior to that, it was part of Iganga District and was known as Busiki County.

the bridges of Kisiro-Tororo and Namakoko-Pallisa, which he has not fulfilled," he says.

"Because of the poor service delivery in the district, public servants are using tree shades as offices and records are getting lost because of lack of offices where they can be kept safely," he adds.

According to Mr Kumbuga, the congestion due to sharing of offices by politicians and civil servants is accelerating political infighting in the district which is frustrating joint efforts to push for development.

"We have actually been denied our district resource envelope because of such political infightings. The administration block is our home which unites Busiki and Bukono constituencies," he said.

Mr Kumbuga says the district

briefly

Elders asked to register

MAYUGE: Mayuge District community development officer Paul Mukooli has urged elders in Busoga Sub-region to register with the ministry of Gender so that they can access their Shs25,000 monthly stipend under the Social Assistance Grant Empowerment (SAGE) programme. Speaking at a meeting to update leaders on the implementation of SAGE last week, Mr Mukooli asked those who had registered to be patient, saying officials would soon reach them. Mr Christopher Sozi, a district councillor, asked the ministry to extend service points to parish level. [Moses Okeya]

Lawyers' office ransacked

IGANGA: Unidentified thugs at the weekend raided an office belonging to Zinsanze and Company Advocates on Nabadongha Road in Iganga Municipality and made off with computers containing vital information. Mr Sadam Mugoya, one of the office owners, said the thugs, who were travelling on a motorcycle, invaded the office at about 4am. Busoga East police spokesperson James Mubi said they are hunting for the thugs. [Abubaker Kirunda]

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Officials conduct business under trees

Voices

"Since lack of offices has become an issue of security concern in district and is resulting in the loss of district records, we are appealing to the President to help us with Shs600m to complete the administrative block," ELIJAH MADOI, RDC

"We are worried because rain has started pouring heavily; anytime the foundation may sink and the building collapses," Mr Nakola says.

WAKO KALYOWA,
IVUKULA SUB-COUNTY
COUNCILLOR

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managed to collect Shs800m and started construction work but that the money was not enough to complete the work.

He adds that the administration block is being constructed using locally generated revenue, which he says has reduced over the years.

"Since we broke off from the mother district (Iganga), government has for all these years given us only Shs100m, which we used to renovate the old buildings that are working as offices," he says.

The resident district commissioner, Mr Elijah Madoi, says lack of administrative offices has become an excuse for the poor performers in the district.

Appeal

"Since lack of offices has become an issue of security concern in district and is resulting in the loss of district records, we are appealing to the President to help us with Shs600m to complete the administrative block," he adds.

Mr Wako Kalyowa, a councillor representing Ivukula Sub-county, says failure of the district to complete the administration block is fuelling poor service delivery because technocrats complain that they don't have privacy in their offices.

He notes the number of councillors has also increased after the creation of more administrative units (sub-counties) in the district.

"We used to sit in the court hall during council sittings but the size of the court hall is too small to accommodate all councillors," he said.

A district civil servant, who spoke *Daily Monitor* on condition of anonymity, said: "It is of great shame for a district which has operated for more than 10 years to lack offices for its public servants."

"Even the law does not allow civil servants to share offices with politicians because they do different work," he added.

briefly

Cyclist knocked dead

LC5 boss wari