

BY SYLVIA KATUSHABE

KAMPALA. The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development has cancelled at least 156 land titles that were illegally issued in gazetted forest reserves across Mukono, Wakiso, Mpigi and Masindi districts.

In a March 30 letter to the respective district land boards, the Permanent Secretary, Ms Dorcas Okalany, said the affected titles fall within protected forest reserves and are, therefore, null and void.

The titles are located in Lwamunda, Buvuma, Nonve, Kifu, Luleka, Kahurukobwire and Kajjansi Central Forest Reserve.

"As you are aware, forest reserves are held in public trust and are expressly excluded from allocation or privatisation under the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (Article 237), Sections 44 and 45 of the Land Act, and the National Forestry and Tree Planting Act," Ms Okalany said.

"Any allocation or approval of land interest within forest reserves is consequently null and void and incapable of

Govt cancels 150 land titles in forest reserves

conferring lawful proprietary rights," she added.

She directed district land boards to review and harmonise their records to reflect the protected status of the affected land, and to withdraw any decisions that purported to allocate land within forest reserves.

Ms Okalany said the move is intended to ensure consistency between district land records and the national land register, and to prevent disputes, litigation and further administrative reversals arising from illegal allocations.

A report by the Acting Commissioner for Surveys and Mapping, Mr Ibrahim Magemeso, confirmed that the titles were issued within forest reserves in Lwamunda, Buvuma, Nonve and Kajjansi, while some could not be traced in the national cadastre.

"We have analysed the information and found that a number of titles encroach on forest reserves," part of the report reads.

According to the findings, 156 titles were fully located within forest reserves, seven partially overlapped,

while 24 could not be verified.

Mr Magemeso said the ministry has initiated measures to cleanse the

AFFECTED RESERVES

MPIGI MZO

Lwamunda Forest Reserve

Block 41: Plots 302, 303

Block 43: Plots 1921-1932

Buvuma Forest Reserve

-Block 45: Plot 551

-Block 47: Plot 396

-Blocks 83, 84

-Block 89: Plot 109

-Blocks 90, 91

-Plots: 266-278, 315-320, 345

MUKONO MZO

Kifu Forest Reserve

-Block 132: Plot 2

*Plots: 55, 59, 61-63, 74-75, 96-

102, 105, 107, 175, 535

Luleka Forest Reserve

Plots: 36-48, 547, 562

Additional Plots: 4, 6-10

MASINDI MZO

Kahurukobwire Forest Reserve

Block 19: Plots 175-189

WAKISO (BUSIRO MZO)

Kajjansi Forest Reserve

-Block G537: Plot 322

-Plots: 313, 314-320

-Plots: 265, 266-278

-Plots: 1332, 1334-1354

-Plot: 345

Nonve Forest Reserve

Block 226: Plot 16

Plots: 18, 21, 24, 26-28, 30-54

land registry of such encroachments through technical and administrative interventions aimed at protecting ecologically sensitive areas.

The ministry's spokesperson, Mr Denis Obbo, confirmed the development.

"They were issued in error and must be cancelled. Cabinet has already taken a decision to protect all critical ecological systems in the country," Mr Obbo said.

He, however, noted that titles issued before 1995 may require a different approach, although the overall objective remains environmental protection.

To prevent a recurrence, the ministry is planning to adopt emerging technologies, including blockchain and artificial intelligence, to strengthen land registration systems.

"Over the next three years, we intend to implement blockchain and AI interventions to ensure such errors do not happen again," Mr Obbo said.

Mr Magemeso added that the ministry is updating forest reserve boundary data within the Uganda National Land Information System (UgNLIS) to flag protected areas and eliminate overlaps in the cadastre.