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# District officials accused of defying court order

**KAMAPALA.** Serere District Local Government has been accused of defying a lawful court order by expanding an existing road on contested land whose dispute is under suit in the court.

The contested 200 acre piece of land is in Kasilo village, Bugondo Sub-county.

The contestation over ownership of the land is between Mr Moses Omiat, the heir to the estate of the late George William Amollo and Serere District Local Government.

According to Mr Omiat, Mr Joseph Okojo Opit, the district chairperson and Mr George Okonopesa, the Resident District Commissioner, allegedly ordered the clearance of 15 metres on the disputed land between January 25 and 26, defying an existing court order that maintains a status quo.

"The district leaders under the influence of the duo deployed graders to clear the land," said Mr Omiat in an interview yesterday.

He added: "Mr Opit was served with the court order but he deliberately defied it."

He also accused Mr Opit of threatening the tenants on the land with a gun.

Mr Omiat in 2016 sued civil servants, Stephen Ejanyu, Sositine Okoja, Collins Olinga, Joseph Atingu

and the district local government over what he called illegal occupation of the family estate.

A court order was then issued by the then Registrar of the High Court in Soroti, Mr Ayebale Tumwebaze, in May 2016 asking the defendants to temporarily stop operating on the land until the case is disposed of.

The matter has since 2016 not been heard but *Daily Monitor* has learnt that Justice David Batema, the Soroti resident Judge, will begin hearing the case on February 14.

When contacted, Mr Opit said the work has only affected 15 metres of the road reserve and not the contested land.

"There is no trespass on any land and we also do recognise the existing court order. This is an old road that was opened by Semei Kakungulu many years ago and we are working within the law to put tarmac," Mr Opit said.

He accused Mr Omiat of being influenced by the political opponents in the district to "sabotage" a government development project by dragging the disputed land issues in the ongoing works on the road.

"We shall stop the road works even if my brother Omiat secures another court order purposely stopping us from clearing the road reserve," Mr



## THE SUIT

**Estate.** Mr Omiat in 2016 sued civil servants, Stephen Ejanyu, Sositine Okoja, Collins Olinga, Joseph Atingu and the district local government over what he called illegal occupation of the family estate.

**Contested.** An excavator clears a section of Kasilo road in Serere District last week.

COURTESY PHOTO

Opit added. Mr Okonopesa threatened to drag Mr Omiat to court for defamation if he continues accusing him of trespass while supervising a government project.

He noted that the construction of the road that connects to Kasilo Trading Centre, one of the biggest cattle markets in Teso sub-region, will cost Shs300m.