IGG PROBES SH14B KIREKA MARKET CONSTRUCTION

By Charles Etukuri

The Inspectorate General of Government (IGG) is probing allegations of impropriety surrounding the construction of Kireka main market.

The probe followed a petition to her officer by vendors, who cited a number of irregularities in the market construction.

The vendors also petitioned the World Bank, who are the main funders of the market, calling for halting of any further development until a proper investigation is conducted.

New Vision has learnt that the matter is currently being handled by Deputy IGG Anne Twinomugisha Muhairwe, who is expected to meet with the vendors and Kira Municipality officials in an effort to get to the bottom of the matter.

PHOTO BY MADINAH NALWANGA



Vendors operating inside Kireka main market in Kira municipality. Market operators have petitioned the IGG citing a number of irregularities in its construction processes

VENDORS' QUERIES

Kireka Market is among the 17 markets in the Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area set to be upgraded with support from the World Bank.

On March 3, 2025, Muhairwe wrote to the Kira Municipality Town Clerk asking him to answer a number of queries and allegations that some council officials were attempting to withdraw money and that the market land is privately owned.

In their petition, the vendors alleged that the Kira Municipality officials has secured space of 32 decimals for the market, which is far less than the space required for a market that befits World Bank standards.

They said a standard market should sit on four acres, including another acre of parking space.

"Markets should be put in commercial centres close to public transport services. Each market should have its own parking yard, must have sectors for lock-up shops, butchers, fish-mongers, stalls for selling fresh fruits, chicken stalls, restaurants among others. Each market should have public toilet facilities," the vendors said, doubting whether all these facilities can fit on 32 decimals.

The vendors, therefore, requested the World Bank to suspend funding to the project until investigations by the IGG are completed.

WORLD BANK REQUESTED

"The purpose of this letter is to request the World Bank to suspend the project because it does not meet the required standards," the vendors stated. The vendors accused Kira Municipality officials of dodging meetings organised to respond to the queries raised.

They requested the Government and World Bank to help them buy more land from their neighbours to construct a standard market.

"As Kireka main market vendors, we would like to have proper development of our market and a very clearly defined boundary that takes care of the interests of all our neighbours and ourselves, whereby we should all participate in the project survey process. Such a participatory process shall ensure non-discrimination of all the project stakeholders, which will in turn enable us all to live in harmony with our neighbours," the letter stated.

AUTHORITIES COMMENT

Monica Edemachu Ejua, the Under-secretary Ministry of Kampala City and Metropolitan Affairs, said they were aware of the vendors' complaint but noted that the project had not yet been approved and no money would be lost.

"We have a number of factors that we consider when doing market designs. The land must be registered in the [illegible]es of the entity and if the land is not registered in the names of the entity, we cannot start developing the project. We also carry out pre-feasibility, feasibility and design studies and vendor engagement. If we deem such land as improperly registered, we don't invest in such a venture," Edemachu said.

She insisted that they always involve vendors in their designs."We don't want to develop markets that are going to be white elephants. We do a lot of engagement and then do vendor registration, and during designing, we allow them to participate," Edemachu added.