

Kadaga warns against mob action. Speaker of Parliament Rebecca Kadaga has urged the public to desist from mob action and use alternative justice structures to access and give justice. Ms Kadaga also called for revival of parenting values and sustenance of family legacies. She was attending St Stephen day prayers and baptism of her granddaughter at Namisambya Church of Uganda in Kamuli on Monday. She regretted that the stoning to death of St Stephen was an act of mob action. [Perez Rumanzi, Monitor]



Pallisa residents trek kilometres for water

Reaping from disaster. Riders have abandoned boda boda business to fetch water because it is lucrative bringing in Shs10,000 to Shs1,5000 for every rider everyday.

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PALLISA. The persistent drought that has hit several districts across the country has led to scarcity of water both in urban centres and rural areas, with several people trekking kilometers in search for water.

The breakdown of Kasodo Water Pump Station years back coupled with the current harsh drought has worsened the situation leaving residents in Pallisa Town Council having to trek several kilometers in search of water.

Mr Yusuf Zomu, the Pallisa Town Council chairperson, confirmed the challenge to *Daily Monitor* that an estimated population of about 42,000, who entirely depend on the Kasodo water supply, are suffering a severe water crisis, the most affected being hospital ward, Nakiseneye, and town council. "Most residents in these villages have stopped drawing water from the nearby wells because they have dried up. This has left many people worried including the children, most of whom are responsible for fetching water for their parents," Mr Zomu said.

He explained that for close to five years, Kasodo water station has been off and on due to various factors including technical break down.

"The government, through the ministry of Water had agreed to install a new pump station and information available is that the contract had been awarded. We have been engaging the ministry officials over the same to address the problem of water," Mr Zomu said.

Early this month, town council officials headed by Mr Zomu and the



Joint operation. Mr Sylvester Okaje (in blue shirt) and some of his clan members show off part of their 66 farm gardens that have dried up in Serere District. PHOTO BY SIMON PETER EMWAMU

commissioner for urban water, Mr Dominic Ouzu, had a meeting concerning the installation of a new water pump station in Kasodo.

The water supply supports several key institutions like schools, hospitals, hotels and restaurants. "The number of domestic consumers depending on the water supply has also increased," Mr Zomu, said adding that an estimated 62,000 residents rely on the water for domestic use.

Operators of eating kiosks within the town have also expressed concern over increasing cost of running business due to water crisis. "Water vendors are now charging Shs500 for a jerrycan [of water]. We have tried to compensate for this by increas-

"It takes several hours for wells to fill up and we have to walk long distances to fetch water from rivers and streams," RICHARD OKURUT, RESIDENT

ing the price charged per plate of a meal but this is sending many of our customers away," Ms Jane Akello, who owns a restaurant in the town said, adding that the crisis has driven most of them to draw water from unsafe water sources.

She said the crisis has driven most of them to draw water from unsafe water sources like ponds at the swamps despite hygiene implications associated with such water points.

Forecast by the meteorological department indicate that the country is headed for a long period of drought, sunny and dry conditions characterised by higher-than normal day time temperatures, would occur across the country and were likely to continue.

Mr Richard Okurut, a resident explained that high day temperatures and strong winds make movements difficult. "The sun is too hot during the day and the blowing winds crack our lips, at night are impossible to sleep inside the house because of the heat."

Pallisa is among the districts with the lowest access to safe water in Uganda" he said