

Soroti City cracks down on illegal structures

BY SUZAN NANJALA

SOROTI. Small business owners in Soroti City are counting losses after the city authorities destroyed over 100 roadside containers on Friday in a bid to restore order.

Last month, Soroti City Council asked vendors to vacate the roadside and relocate to the allocated trading spaces. However, the appeal was largely ignored, and many vendors continued erecting containers along busy roads.

On Friday morning, city authorities moved in and demolished the structures as owners looked on helplessly.

Mr Joseph Mwesigwa, the deputy town clerk, said the operation targeted illegal structures obstructing road reserves, particularly along Soroti-Mbale Road.

"These containers were blocking communication lines and posed serious security risks," Mr Mwesigwa said. "I have repeatedly written to the owners and given them time to vacate because containers are not allowed within the city," he added.

He warned that anyone erecting structures on road reserves would face prosecution.



What they say.

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"This time, we will not just remove the containers; we will ensure accountability," he added. Mr Mwesigwa also called on the Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited (UEDCL) to stop supplying electricity to illegal containers, highlighting the safety risks of connecting power under high-voltage lines.

Affected vendors voiced frustration. Mr Francis Kamyia said he learned about the eviction only a day before the demolition. "I appeared early in the morning, and my container was gone. I worked hard for a year to acquire it. How will I survive now?" he asked.

Mr Samuel Otin said he managed to remove his containers after hearing about the city's plan. "This container has been my source of livelihood for the last four years. The destruction was done without offering alternative sites. Claims that our containers were harbouring thieves are baseless," he added.

The demolition in Soroti comes as Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), with police support, continues to evict street vendors illegally operating in the capital. Other urban centres, including Mbale and Mbarara, have also vowed to enforce similar measures.

City authorities insist that the move is aimed at regulating urban space, ensuring public safety, and preventing illegal trading along road reserves.