New details emerge in Nakapiripirit rock fight

By Vision Reporter

A 2013 record at the district shows that Welt applied for Atumtaok rock, not Kamusalaba

Fresh details in the fight for a sh21.13b rock used to construct Moroto-Nakapiripirit road have emerged, showing that Welt Machinen Engineering Limited, a firm linked to state minister for minerals, Peter Lokeris, applied for a different rock.

According to an application dated June 4, 2013, signed by the then Nakapiripirit district chief administrative officer, Moses Bahemuka Kisembo, Welt applied for a licence to mine granite from Atumtaok rock and not Kamusalaba rock, which is now the subject of contention.

Welt is embroiled in a legal battle with China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC), who insist they secured authorisation to blast Kamusalaba rock in Nakapiripirit for gravel to construct the 93.3km road.

In 2013, CRBC won a contract from Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) to construct the Moroto-Nakapiripirit road at $80m (over sh290b).

Welt, a company owned by two directors; Ben Koriang and Felix Apo Oroma, both Lokeris' children, claims ownership of Kamusalaba rock. But CRBC contests Welt's claim, saying it is misguided and fraudulent. CRBC also said they got gravel, which is not a gazetted mineral.

SH21.13B
The amount spent on the rock used to construct Moroto-Nakapiripirit road

Case in court

Court documents show that Welt's claim to Kamusalaba rock came after CRBC applied to use the rock for gravel.

Justice Henrietta Wolayo, in his ruling dated April 14, 2016, also noted that whereas Welt said Atumtaok and Kamusalaba rocks had separate coordinates, her observation of their applications showed that both rocks had similar coordinates.

Court agreed with CRBC that upon paying sh50m, they secured authorisation from Nakapiripirit district authorities to blast the rock and use its gravel to construct the road. Court also quashed an earlier ruling in which it had awarded Welt sh8.5b.

However, instead of appealing the ruling, Welt filed another case in the High Court in Kampala, seeking to attach the Chinese firm's cash.

It was this Kampala application that resulted in court ordering UNRA to deposit sh21.13b out of sh290b that the roads authority was supposed to pay CRBC for constructing the road, onto the High Court Registrar's account.

The Chinese argue that Welt suspiciously and hastily secured sh9b out of the sh21.13b that UNRA deposited in court, despite an appeal and injunction they lodged stopping the payment.

IGG takes action

CRBC's complaints prompted the Inspector General of Government (IGG) to investigate the matter.

The IGG has since grilled Lokeris and his sons over circumstances under which Welt secured sh9b out of the sh21.13b from court, despite a standing dispute.

CRBC had also petitioned President Yoweri Museveni over the matter.

Sources revealed that Lokeris and his two sons (Koriang and Oroma) were interviewed by investigating officers at the IGG's office regarding their involvement in the matter.

"The minister appeared together with his sons and he was also questioned. His sons were booked for another day to record statements but only Koriang appeared.

Oroma now faces arrest for failing to show up to record a statement," the source stated.

Deputy IGG Mariam Wangadya confirmed that investigations into the matter were going on.

As Welt was pushing for the release of the balance of sh12.13b, court on November 2, halted the payment, pending a ruling in the application by CRBC against the release of the money.

Release of money stopped

Justice Christopher Madrama of the High Court's executions division issued a directive, stopping the release of the money which UNRA deposited on the account of the High Court's registrar.

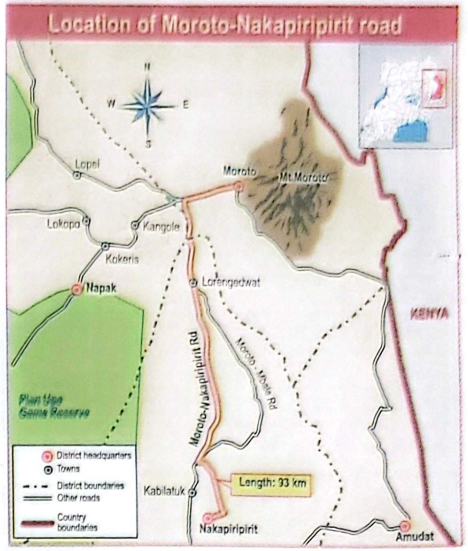
The money was to be paid to CRBC, but it was transferred to court after Welt claimed it. Through their lawyer, George Omunyakol, CRBC asked the High Court to stay the release of the remaining money for safety reasons.

Hearing of the application had dragged on since March this year, when CRBC filed it.

While stopping any further release of the money from the registrar's account, Justice Madrama said: "In the meantime, let us preserve the rights of the applicants. Let us maintain the status quo and the money should remain in court until the application is heard and determined."

The judge asked lawyers of both parties (Welt and CRBC) to file written submissions regarding the Chinese firm's application.

The ruling is expected on December 19.



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A member of the
Leonard Cheshire Disability Global Alliance

CALL FOR PROPOSALS TO CONDUCT END OF PROJECT EVALUATION

Cheshire Services Uganda (CSU) is a Ugandan NGO working in disability and inclusive development.

We implement programmes in five thematic areas of Education, livelihoods, health and rehabilitation, support for everyday living and campaign and advocacy.
We are a member of Leonard Cheshire Disability Global Alliance.

CSU is desirous to procure services of an experienced consultant to conduct the end of project evaluation for the EU funded accessible and sustainable livelihoods for Persons with Disabilities in Adjumani and Moyo districts of West Nile.
The consultancy will be awarded to the consultant that offers a competitive technical and financial proposal demonstrating experience in related assignments.

The detailed Terms of Reference are available at: **www.csuganda.org** or **http://csuganda.org/index.php/news/86-latest-terms-of-reference-for-end-of-term-evaluation-of-the-livelihoods-project**

Submission deadline is Friday, 7th December 2017 by 05:00pm.

Only successful consultants will be contacted. If you do not hear from us within two weeks after submission of your proposals, consider your application unsuccessful.