

Implications. The leaders say the suspension has hindered businesses as well as movement of people.

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MASINDI/BULIISA. Leaders and the business community on Lake Albert are concerned that the suspension of the Wanseko-Panyimur ferry is affecting business operations.

The ferry operations that were suspended in March following the reduction in water levels of the lake has since crippled businesses for the last four months.

The leaders say the suspension has threatened the sustainability of businesses and hampering movement of people.

The ferry is a reliable means of transport linking Wanseko in Buliisa District and Panyimur in Nebbi District.

Most traders use the ferry to transport fish and other business merchandise to and from Panyimur Market in Nebbi District.

Members of the business community said the suspended ferry operations have directly affected their businesses.

"There are commercial boats on the same route, but as you know not all water travellers are comfortable with such boats because they are very susceptible to wind compared to the ferry," Mr Mark Bikanga, a businessman said.

Mr Bikanga said some colleagues have suspended their business trips to either Wanseko or Panyimur for fear of using boats.

The businessman said it is even costly using boats whose fares are in a range of Shs5,000 to Shs10,000.

Buliisa District chairman, Mr Simon Agaba Kinene, said many people cannot afford the cost of crossing to and from Nebbi on commercial boats, since they are used to freely crossing with the ferry.

Mr Kinene called on Uganda National Roads Authority (Unra) to devise alternatives for his people to easily cross to either side of the lake.

When contacted, Mr Mark Ssali the head of corporate

Ferry suspension cripples businesses on Lake Albert



Transport. Passengers aboard a ferry recently. The suspension of ferry services on Lake Albert has affected business operations in areas near the lake. PHOTO BY FRED KIVA

communication at Unra, said the water levels had gone down and could not allow movement of the ferry, prompting its suspension.

"Reduced water levels could not allow the movement of the ferry and as a result, the ferry engine got damaged and repairs are being made," Mr Ssali told *Daily Monitor* in a telephone in-

terview. "Reduced water levels could not allow the movement of the ferry and as a result, the ferry engine got damaged and repairs are being made."

MARK SSALI, HEAD OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION AT UNRA

terview.

He added: "But also procurement is on for an alternative site where water levels are deeper."

Mr Ssali, however, did not give details on the procurement process and when the ferry repairs will be complete.

The reduction in Lake Albert water levels is blamed on the dry spell that hit Buliisa areas recently.

Compiled By Fred Kiva, Alex Tumuhimbise & David