

Lubigi wetland being restored

By Job Nantakiika

The water ministry together with the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) have resumed efforts to restore 40 hectares of encroached-on wetlands in Wakiso and Kampala districts.

The move was revealed by the commissioner for wetlands in the water ministry, Collins Oloya, during an operation in which crops and illegal structures in the wetlands were demolished yesterday.

During the operation, Oloya said evicting encroachers on River Mayanja and Lubigi wetland was within the law.

"The Constitution obliges the Government to protect the environment. Encroachment on wetlands is only permitted after an environmental impact assessment is done," Oloya said.

Over 10 people were arrested and their houses demolished during the operation that will last four days.

Oloya said encroachers were given notice to vacate the wetland two years ago, but they ignored it.

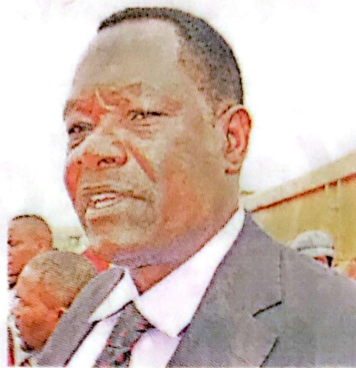
NEMA communications manager Naomi Namara Karekaho said wetland demarcations were made and several warnings passed.

She added that efforts were made to allow encroachers to leave the wetlands, but to no avail.

Namara said those who were arrested would be prosecuted.

Wakiso district wetlands

ON THE GROUND



"The Constitution obliges the Government to protect the environment. Encroachment on wetlands is only permitted after an environmental impact assessment is done," commissioner Collins Oloya said.

officer Stella Nalumansi said over 600 people would be affected in the operation, and they expect families, businesses and churches in the wetlands to be affected.

She added that Wakiso district would penalise those arrested because they had ignored the eviction notice.

Nalumansi appealed to the public to vacate wetlands because they were not meant for human settlement.

A group of youth who had planned to block the operation diverted their energies to looting items destroyed by the officials.

