

Regional News

Busega-Mpigi roadworks resume after funding boost

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BY SADAT MBOGO

Construction on the long-stalled Busega-Mpigi Expressway has resumed following the government's securing of substantial additional funding.

Late last year, the African Development Bank approved an extra €217 million (about Shs909 billion) to facilitate completion of the 23.7-kilometre expressway, aimed at easing the persistent traffic congestion along the busy Kampala-Masaka highway.

Like many other ongoing road works, the project had stalled early last year due to funding challenges. But at Interchange III, the Kyengera-Wakimese connection, activity has visibly resumed. The contractors, China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) and China Railway 19th Bureau Group Company Limited, are actively filling and compacting embankments to reach the required formation level.

This phase is critical for stabilising the road base, particularly in swampy sections, and preparing for ramps and pavement. The renewed activity marks a tangible step forward after years of interruptions.

Mr Allan Ssempebwa, a senior communications officer at the Ministry of Works and Transport, confirmed the resumption.

"The contractor is fully mobilised and has resumed embankment fills and swamp treatments in low-lying areas. This solid foundation work at Interchange III and similar points is crucial for the project's long-term durability," he told the *Daily Monitor* on Monday.

He said the project cost has now risen to Shs1.35 trillion from the origi-



The roadworks at a swampy section of the Busega-Mpigi Expressway in Kyengera Town Council. The resumption of works on the road marks a tangible step forward after years of interruptions. PHOTO/ SADAT MBOGO

nal 547.5 billion, due to an expanded scope that includes five new interchanges at Busega, Nabbingo, Maya, Lungala, and Mpigi, additional bridges, toll plazas, service lanes, and connections to key routes like the Kampala-Entebbe Expressway.

"Once completed, this expressway will transform connectivity along the Kampala-Masaka corridor. We remain grateful for the AfDB's partnership and the patience of communities affected by the works," Mr Ssempebwa added.

The expressway, whose construction began in May 2020, had faced multiple challenges, including land acquisition disputes, the Covid-19 pandemic, funding delays, and scope expansions. With these changes, the contractor is now expected to hand over the project in

2030, rather than the original December 2026 target.

As embankments rise at Kyengera-

BACKGROUND

The new road starts at Busega in Kampala and runs southwest to Mpigi Town, passing through 21 villages across two town councils—Kyengera and Mpigi—and two sub-counties, Kiringete and Wakiso.

It connects to the existing Kampala-Masaka-Mbarara highway at Lungala Village, a key route leading to Rwanda via Mirama Hills and Kagitumba.

Wakimese, motorists weary of chronic gridlock are optimistic.

"We appreciate the work being done and appeal to the contractors and government to speed up the process. We're hopeful this expressway will greatly improve travel, and my wife's property business in the area is already benefiting," Mr Mansoor Nsubuga, a coaster driver along the route, said.

According to the Ministry of Works, the highway sees an average of 20,908 vehicles daily.

In January 2024, a section of the Kampala-Masaka highway was temporarily closed for construction of the Mpigi interchange, with motorists diverted through a 3.7km route via Mpigi Township to rejoin the main highway at Kalagala Village.