

# WORKS MINISTRY **EVICTS** ILLEGAL CAR BOND OPERATORS IN NAKAWA

By Stuart Yiga

Business came to a standstill in Nakawa along Kampala-Jinja Road yesterday after a joint security team launched a surprise crackdown on illegal car bond operators occupying the road reserve.

The operation, which started at about 8:00am, involved officials from the Ministry of Works and Transport enforcement unit, Uganda Police and the military. Several operators were evicted as temporary structures and makeshift offices were demolished during the exercise.

Allan Kyobe Ssempebwa, the spokesperson of the Ministry of Works and Transport, said the enforcement followed a directive by State Minister for Works Musa Ecweru aimed

at clearing encroachment on the road reserve along the Nakawa-Kireka-Banda corridor.

"Our teams, supported by security agencies, are undertaking compliance operations to restore and protect the road reserve and pedestrian walkways from illegal occupation and trading activities," Ssempebwa said.

## ROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENT

He explained the exercise was intended to improve road safety, ease mobility and address drainage challenges along the busy corridor. He added that the operation was also aimed at safeguarding the right of way for the planned Kampala-Jinja Expressway project. Ssempebwa dismissed speculation linking the operation to Kampala Capital

## BETWEEN THE LINES

Security raided Nakawa car bonds yesterday, clearing illegal road operators, sparking anger and debates.

City Authority enforcement teams, insisting the exercise was being conducted solely under the Ministry of Works and Transport.

However, the crackdown sparked anger among affected car dealers, some of whom accused authorities of discrimination, bribery and selective enforcement.

Kahima Ampurira, one of the affected dealers, told *New Vision* that operators had only been given a five-day ultimatum to vacate the road reserve, leaving them with little

time to relocate their vehicles and businesses.

"All we know is that one of our competitors is bankrolling this malicious exercise because the enforcement team skipped some sections in favour of certain individuals," Ampurira alleged, accusing businessman Yasin Katwere of influencing the operation.

Katwere dismissed the accusations, saying the eviction was a Government directive sanctioned by Cabinet and the ministry of works.

"I had more cars there than anyone else. There is no way I could shoot myself in the foot," Katwere said.

Katwere said the Government should have considered giving dealers more time or an alternative before carrying out the eviction.

"At least Government would



PHOTO BY STUART YIGA

**Works and Transport Ministry enforcement removing an illegal fence at Jambo Motors in Kyambogo along Kampala-Jinja Road Nakawa during an operation on illegal car bond operators occupying the road reserve**

have thought of another option to enable us survive and perhaps relocate later when actual road construction begins," he added.

Despite the criticism, some members of the public welcomed the operation, due to the risks illegal parking poses. "This exercise was long overdue because in case of an accident or fire outbreak, the

situation could easily turn disastrous," one pedestrian said.

Others questioned how the structures had been allowed to operate for years before authorities suddenly declared them illegal. "When exactly do these structures become illegal?" Ventorino Otto, a resident who witnessed the operation, asked.