

Minister Lokeris' sons split over minerals cash

By Simon Masaba

The scramble for sh9b that a Chinese company allegedly lost to a local mining firm — Welt Machinen Engineering Limited has split the sons of the state minister for minerals, Peter Lokeris.

Welt Machinen Engineering Limited, owned by the Lokeris sons, Ben Koryang and Felix Apo Oroma, was paid sh9b after it (Welt) sued the China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC) over a rock in Nakapiripirit district.

The sh9b was part of the sh288b Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) owed to the Chinese company. The company is still demanding an additional sh11b that is still held due to disputes.

According to the Police, after the sh9b was withdrawn from Welt's account, one of Lokeris' sons (Koryang) lodged a criminal complaint at the Central Police Station in Kampala against his brother (Oroma), accusing him of theft.

Oroma was subsequently arrested and detained at Najeera Police post in Wakiso district, before he was transferred to CPS. He was detained for four days and later released on Police bond.

In a new twist, on Sunday Welt Machinen Engineering Ltd published a public notice in the media announcing that Oromo is no longer their employee.

"Felix Apo Oroma no longer works for Welt Machinen Engineering Ltd and, therefore, does not represent the company in any official dealings. Anyone who transacts and/or conducts business with him does so at his/her own risk," the notice stated.

Contacted over the issue yesterday, Oroma said the notice was of no consequence. "It (notice) is ill-conceived and made out of ignorance. I have never been an employee of Welt. I am a shareholder and the managing director of the company (Welt)," Oroma told *New Vision* via telephone yesterday.

He said whoever published the notice was malicious. He said he was consulting his lawyers on action to take.

Oroma suspected that his brother (Koryang), who has an oversight role in the company, was behind the publication of the notice. He said in the company, Koryang is in charge of sourcing funding and businesses.

Efforts to get Koryang for comment were futile as calls to his known mobile phones went unanswered by press time.

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