



Rubanda District residents wade through River Hamurwa recently. The only bridge across the river was submerged following heavy rain two months ago. PHOTO BY ROBERT MUHEREZA

Kanungu, Rubanda leaders ask govt to fix collapsed bridge

Effects. The sinking of the bridge has impeded movement of people and goods in the two districts. Travellers are now compelled to use the longer and costlier alternative route of Nyamasizi.

BY ROBERT MUHEREZA
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

RUBANDA. Authorities in Kanungu and Rubanda districts have appealed to the central government to speedily fix the Hamurwa floating bridge that was submerged two months following heavy rains.

The Rubanda District vice chairman, Mr Silver Baguma, and the vice chairman of Kanungu District, Mr Gad Byomuhangi, in separate interviews on Monday said government should consider constructing a bridge suspended from anchored piers, saying the floating bridge is not sustainable.

"Ten years ago, this very bridge collapsed and the technocrats opted to use the floating bridge technology to fix it and now it is down again," Mr Baguma said.

Mr Byomuhangi said three weeks ago, executive members of Kanungu council went to Kampala and met Uganda National Roads Authority, Uganda Road Fund and the Ministry of Works officials over the submerged bridge and were promised that it would be fixed soon, but up to now there is no development.

He added that the Prime Minister, Dr Ruhakana Rugunda, had promised when he visited Kanungu District a month ago, that the bridge would be worked on.

Mr Byomuhangi called upon local leaders and Members of Parliament from Kanungu and Rubanda districts to jointly push for the fixing of the bridge before the Christmas festival.

The sinking of the bridge has impeded movement of people and goods

PAST INCIDENT

Hamurwa floating bridge connecting Kabale to Kanungu district sank in 2008 and was reconstructed in 2009.

The bridge that crosses over River Hamurwa, collapsed due to poor maintenance.

in the two districts.

Travellers are now compelled to use the longer and costlier alternative route of Nyamasizi.

Lumbering in Mafuga and Kerere forests, which are accessed through the sunken bridge, has been hindered.

The Rubanda District Engineer, Mr Nobert Zungu, said they have agreed with Uganda National Roads Authority to make comprehensive designs before importing geo-textile materials to fix the submerged floating bridge.

"The Hamurwa floating bridge is the short cut to Kanungu district from Rubanda district and now that it has been washed away, some passenger and cargo vehicles use the long route that passes through Nyamasizi before crossing to Kanungu district. The destroyed floating bridge requires comprehensive designs and

CONTINUES TO PAGE 10

briefly

Concern over violence

KAGADI. The Kagadi Grade One Magistrate, Mr Simon Toloko, said domestic violence is largely to blame for the increased murder cases in the district. He was on Tuesday speaking to stakeholders in Kagadi Town Council about resolving family conflicts outside court. Mr Toloko urged people to follow the right procedures of resolving family conflicts. He called upon leaders at all levels to sensitise people on the value of using court, local councils and leaders in resolving domestic dispute [Alex Tumuhimbise]

Residents want health centre

KABALE. Residents of Katuna Town Council in Kabale District have asked government to build a health facility in the area to enable them get health services conveniently. The LC3 chairperson, Mr Nels Nshangabasheja, said on Monday the town council has a population of 30,000 people but despite the population the area has no health centre. The residents have to travel more than two kilometres to seek services at Kamugaguzi Health Centre in the neighbouring Karamoja Sub-county. [Robert Muh]

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FROM PAGE 9

Voices

"The Hamurwa floating bridge is the short cut to Kanungu district from Rubanda district and now that it has been washed away, some passenger and cargo vehicles use the long route that passes through Nyamasizi before crossing to Kanungu district. The destroyed floating bridge requires comprehensive designs and importation of geo-textile materials to have it fixed."

NOBERT ZUNGU,
RUBANDA DISTRICT
ENGINEER

importation of geo-textile materials to have it fixed. People using this short cut must be a little patient because the process of fixing it also requires lots of money," said Mr Zungu.

Youth in the area have capitalised on the situation to make money.

They carry people on their shoulders across the river at a cost raging between Shs2,000 and Shs5,000 depending on the weight of the individual.

"We earn about Shs30,000 per day. If the crisis persists, we shall be very rich by Christmas," Mr Wilson Wensi, a resident, said.

Hamurwa floating bridge connecting Kabale to Kanungu District sank in 2008 and was reconstructed in 2009.

The bridge collapsed due to poor maintenance.

The Ministry of Works and Transport allocated Shs270 million for the reconstruction works.

Floating bridge

A floating (pontoon) bridge is a collection of specialised, shallow draft boats or floats, connected together to cross a river or canal, with a track or deck attached on top.

The water buoyancy supports the boats, limiting the maximum load to the total and point buoyancy of the pontoons or boats.

The supporting boats or floats can be open or closed, temporary or permanent in installation, and made of rubber, metal, wood, or concrete.

The decking may be temporary or permanent, and constructed out of wood, modular metal, or asphalt or concrete over a metal frame.