

Mbale businessman named in land grabbing

By Paul Watala

A businessman in Mbale town, Hussein Wasike, has accused the former chairperson of industrial division in Mbale municipality, Musa Mansa and businessman, Mubarak Londa, of conniving to grab his property.

Londa is a proprietor of BAM Shopping Centre in Mbale. The building is located along Naboa Road on plot 6 industrial division in Mbale municipality.

Wasike, 57, was testifying before the Lands Commission of inquiry chaired by Catherine Bamugemereire that started holding public hearings at Mbale Resort Hotel yesterday.

Wasike said the duo early this year demolished his two storeyed building claiming ownership of the property.

Wasike also told the committee that the duo forged documents claiming ownership of the property that was given to him by his parents as a caretaker before passing on in 2004.

Wasike said the property in question was given to his parents by Asians in 1973 following the expulsion of Asians by former president Idi Amin. He was 11 years old at the time.

At the time the property was given to his father Almazani Wasike, it housed the Lohana Night Club and later it was co-managed by his uncles in the names of George Situma and John Wayau.

Wasike argued that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry later issued them with a certificate allowing them to take care of the property. In 1984, they applied for change of use of the property, which was accepted.

He said he was surprised to receive documents telling them to vacate the property and the building was demolished. During the eviction, property worth sh1b was destroyed.

Wasike also told the commission that Mansa and Londa used one Robert Mulindwa from Kampala to claim the ownership of the property.

Wasike said through his lawyer Nabende and Advocates, he tried to seek court intervention. The duo was served with a court order restraining them from going



Land probe commission boss Catherine Bamugemereire

Wasike told the commission that Mansa and Londa used one Robert Mulindwa from Kampala to claim ownership

ahead with destruction of property, but the order was ignored.

He said the Departed Asians Custodian Board and Land Commission office in Mbale have not helped the affected people. Wasike said he suspects that the officials in the land office are conniving with land grabbers to evict the poor from their land.

Wasike also accused the former chairperson of Industrial division of conniving with land grabbers.

He also alleged that Londa, commonly

known as BAM, and Mansa were involved in grabbing land at Lorry Park, Uhuru Park, Busoga lane among others.

Wasike also asked the commission to help him recover his property and compensation for the property destroyed.

Mbale district acting Police commander, Stephen Ahweera, appearing before the commission, confirmed to have received a court order, but refused to act before verifying the facts of the court order.

Ahweera said he was surprised to see that the demolition of the property was carried out without him being notified.

He said he ordered the arrest of the bailiff, who was sent to Maluku Prison, but was later set free by court.

Bamugemereire vowed to have all the land grabbers brought to book.

The commission team comprising seven commissioners headed by Bamugemereire started hearings under tight security.

The commission will handle cases from six districts including Mbale, Manafwa, Bulambuli, Sironko, Namisindwa and Bududa.