

leaders from Kasese, including clashes in Kasese.

called for the arrest of the masterminded the violence in at Luzira Prison to members

John Mawite

Hoima Road workers accuse bosses, Police of mistreatment

Wilson Asimwe

Workers of a Chinese company contracted to work on the Hoima-Kabweya road have accused their Chinese bosses and the Police of mistreatment.

Meeting the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) executive director, Allen Kagina, on Saturday at their camp in Busimba, the workers said their Chinese bosses connive with the Police to mistreat and cheat them.

Wilberforce Ojore, a lorry driver, said on several occasions, their colleagues have been beaten by the Police and the Chinese bosses while on duty.

He said the managers of Chinese Railway Engineering Company (CREC) also confiscate the driving permits and the national identity cards of the drivers to stop them from

leaving their work stations.

"They confiscated all our driving permits and the national identity cards. They do not give us lunch and they cane us as if we are cows," said Ojore.

Ojore accused the district Police commander for Hoima district, Bernard Akankwasa and the operations commander in the Albertine, Jetu Nuwagaba, of complicity in the mistreatment of the workers.

Sulaiman Mbulamayo, a truck driver, said he was beaten by the Chinese when he asked for his contract documents, driving permit and national identity card.

"There is nowhere we can run for help, whenever we report to the Police, we are detained," Mbulamayo said.

Juma Odong, a machine operator, said he was given 40 strokes of

"They do not give us lunch and they cane us as if we are cows." Worker

the cane by the Police after he was suspected of having stolen a lorry battery.

Sunday Johnson, a fuel distributor, said they registered their complaints at the district labour officer, but got no response.

However, Ma Jack, the commercial manager and officer in charge of human resource for CREC, said the

workers steal their equipment.

He said they only call in the Police whenever there is a case of theft at the site.

He acknowledged having confiscated the driving permits and national identity cards of the drivers.

He said they have lost property worth sh50m and the suspects are always their workers.

When contacted, Akankwasa denied beating the workers.

"It is true, whenever we have an operation with the Chinese, they give us fuel, but we do not participate in beating and torturing their workers," he explained.

Nuwagaba also denied the allegations when contacted.

The Hoima resident district commissioner, Isaac Kawooya, said he had received several complaints from

the community about the Police in the district.

"I even wrote to the commandant of the standards professions unit in the Police and the Uganda Human Rights Commission complaining about the evil acts of the Police in Hoima district," Kawooya said.

Kagina, while addressing the media after the meeting with the workers, said she had discovered a lot of mistreatment of workers by the Chinese and had warned them to stop.

She also directed them to immediately hand back the driving permits and national identity cards of the workers.

On the issues of torture by the Police, Kagina said she was going to report to the relevant administrative units of the officers who were named.