

Two businessmen arrested over illegal sand mining

MUKONO

By Henry Nsubuga

The environmental protection unit of the Police has arrested a businessman who has allegedly been illegally quarrying sand at Wansinga village in Mpunge sub-county, Mukono district.

The Police identified the suspect as Charles Mutumba, who has for long defied orders from Mukono district council and Mukono Police Station to stop illegal sand mining activities.

Mutumba was arrested with David Kamukama alias Mukiga, a resident of Entebbe municipality.

Mutumba was also charged with illegal diversion of Nsanja-Mpunge public road as he quarried sand from the area where the road used to pass.

Mukono division Police commander Rogers Sseguya confirmed the arrests. Mutumba and Kamukama, who were arrested on Monday,

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are in custody at Mukono Police Station pending prosecution.

They were charged with commencing a project without approval from the National Environment Management Authority. The council meeting, which was



Kamukama and Mutumba in Mukono. Photo by Henry Nsubuga

held on May 29, chaired by Emmanuel Mbonye, the Mukono district speaker, resolved that the quarrying at Wansinga village be stopped immediately because the process was

threatening the lives of the road users. However, the Police which was tasked with stopping the sand quarrying and arresting Mutumba, had failed to execute the council's orders.

The Mukono resident district commissioner, Maj. David Matovu, who is the chairman of the district security committee, also wrote to Sseguya, ordering him to execute the council resolutions.

When contacted, Mbonye showed *New Vision* a letter of September 8, in which Mutumba admitted having destroyed the road in question.

"This act was out of ignorance. After realising this mistake, I chose to write this request to your office and write council to be kind to me and give me a chance to restore this part of the road at my own expense," Mutumba wrote.

However, Mbonye said that they were dismayed that the Police had failed to arrest Mutumba and stop the illegal sand mining.

"Since he is now under arrest, let him face the law. Court could grant him a chance to restore the destroyed road after giving him a befitting sentence," Mbonye said.