

Health workers complain of congestion. Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital staff have complained about lack of space, which they said affects service delivery at the health facility. This was on Monday during a function at the hospital to recognise Obstetrics and Gynecology staff for dedicated service delivery. Dr Celestine Barigye, the hospital executive director said the department emerged the best in service delivery in the country last year. [Rajab Mukombozi, Monitor]



Leaders warn wetland encroachers

Resolution. The resolution was reached on Tuesday by members of the district general purpose committee in consultation with other stakeholders.

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KAKUMIRO. As part of efforts to conserve the environment, local leaders in Kakumiro have issued a two-month ultimatum to wetland encroachers in the district to vacate them or face eviction.

The resolution was reached on Tuesday by members of the district general purpose committee in consultation with other stakeholders.

The leaders are facing mounting pressure from numerous concerned citizens to have all encroachers evicted or reprimanded.

Mr Obed Tushabomwe, the committee chairperson, said, "Within the two months, the encroachers

are being advised to harvest their crops and quit".

"The committee has found out from several wetland inspections that rice growers are spraying agro chemicals in swamps, a practice which puts lives of people, animals and aquatic life at stake," he said.

Mr Godfrey Barugahara, the district secretary for production, warned residents against defying the resolutions.

He also said people are continuing to cultivate in wetlands, especially at night.

"We know there are some people who are cultivating in wetlands at night from 7pm to 12am," Mr Barugahara said.

He warned that suspected en-

croachers will face the wrath of the law.

When contacted, the Kakumiro District natural resources officer, Mr Christopher Baguma, said many wetlands have been depleted by locals who have illegally established animal farms, rice plantations and engaging in sand mining.

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**GODFREY BARUGAHARA,
COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON**

He added that many wetland encroachers have already been served

with eviction notices and are being advised to harvest their crops early.

Section 36 (1) of the 1995 National Environment Act of Uganda states that no person shall reclaim or drain any wetland; construct, place, alter, extend, disturb any wetland by drilling or channelling water in a manner that has or is likely to have adverse effect on the wetland.

Ismail Rugwiza, a resident of Kyajawa village in Mpasana Sub-county, Bugangaizi East, attributed the destruction of Mabengere wetland to residents of Mpasana and Kisiita sub-counties and that it has aggravated the water crisis which plunged the area in December last year.

Many residents have welcomed the eviction resolution and restoration of the wetland saying it will help in conserving the water source.