

Ultimatum. Forcible eviction follows the expiry of a six-month grace period that the government had granted to the encroachers.

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KIBUKU. The government has evicted more than 7,000 encroachers from wetlands in Kibuku District.

The forcible eviction follows the expiry of a six-month grace period that the government had granted to the encroachers.

The Minister of Water and Environment, Mr Sam Cheptoris, National Environment Management Authority (Nema) officials and the district leaders headed by the LC5 chairman, Mr Charles Kadyama, witnessed the eviction of encroachers from Limoto wetland recently.

Limoto wetland is a catchment area for River Mpologoma that drains into Lake Kyoga. The 35sq kilometre wetland has been heavily degraded by residents who cultivate rice on it.

"These evictions follow President Museveni's concerns over the worsening degradation of wetlands and is the reasons the ministry has taken the lead to enforce the directive and it's to be launched in Kibuku District before turning to other wetlands across the country," Mr Cheptoris said.

Nema evicts 7,000 wetland encroachers



On duty. Minister of Water and Environment Sam Cheptoris (centre) tours Limoto wetland in Kibuku last Friday in the company of Nema officials and Kibuku District officers. PHOTO BY MUDANGHA KOLYANGHA

He added: "We need to protect these wetlands because the current trend of massive destruction has caused them to dry up, but because this government is for the people that is why we agreed and gave them ample time to harvest their rice and vacate in a period of six months."

Nema and the police carried out an operation to evict the farmers from the wetlands in February, but politicians—mainly MPs, condemned the

manner in which they were handled, forcing the halting of the exercise.

DEMARCATION

Mr Deo Kabali, the eastern Uganda regional wetland coordinator, said upon evicting all wetland encroachers, demarcation and planting of boundary pillars will start.

A stakeholder's meeting involving the affected farmers, district leaders, Nema officials and the minister of Water and Environment was held in Buseta following a request from the MPs to allow their people harvest their rice.

"The MPs request was granted with condition that there would be no fresh cultivation and whoever defies the directive will definitely be forced out from the wetland without further notice," he said.

Fuel theft Sembabuli

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BUKOMANSII company contract to build the Kanorule-Villa Maria road pressed concerns over cases of theft of fuel for the roadwork.

The 110-kilometre road which is under construction Railway No. 1 Group, links Sembabule and districts.

Mr Allan human resources of the company said every day many lose fuel to theft.

"We are further done, but phone our boss during Mr came in. So more fuel that from the company."