

Mixed reactions as Jinja enforces trade order

BY DENISE EDEMA

JINJA. Residents of Jinja City have expressed mixed reactions following the enforcement of a trade order aimed at improving urban organisation and business operations.

A section of residents and business owners welcomed the initiative, describing it as a timely move that will enhance order, fairness, and professionalism in the city's commercial sector.

However, other sections of the community have strongly criticised the operations, arguing that Jinja City Council did not adequately sensitise traders before enforcing the directive or provide clear relocation alternatives.

Mr Badru Nabugo, the LC1 chairperson of Main Street West, said many traders are being evicted from areas now labelled as illegal or road reserves, despite having originally been allocated those same spaces by the authorities.

"We also want development, but it should be implemented in a fair and organised manner, not by forcing people off the streets without providing alternatives," Mr Nabugo said.

He added that the abrupt enforcement, carried out without sufficient public sensitisation, has contributed to rising insecurity in the area.

He added that his office now re-

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Mr Richard Gulume, the Resident City Commissioner of Jinja City, urged residents and the business community to embrace the trade order, saying it is essential for creating a more organised and attractive urban environment.

ceives daily reports of theft and house break-ins, which he attributes to the loss of livelihoods among youth who were engaged in small-scale businesses.

Mr Daniel Gabula Kyankone, the executive director of the Busoga Business Community, also criticised the manner in which street vendors were removed, saying the process was improperly handled. He said the fact that many of the affected traders had been contributing revenue to the council was not put into consideration.

Mr Kyankone said while every businessperson desires to operate in a clean and well-organised environment, such reforms should be implemented through proper consultation with stakeholders.

However, Ms Christine Unzia, a produce retailer in Jinja City, said the government's decision to elevate municipalities into cities

was aimed at improving service delivery in line with the needs of residents and businesses.

City authorities have also defended the new trade order, emphasising that a more structured business environment will enhance revenue collection and support sustainable urban development.

Mr Rajab Kito, the Jinja City Council spokesperson, said the council has, for the past two and a half years, been issuing notices to individuals operating illegal structures on roads and streets, urging them to remove them, but many failed to comply.

Mr Kito added that the operation is not only targeting the business community, but also individuals constructing structures without council approval.

He emphasised that the city has a clear physical development plan that guides what should be built and where, adding that individual land ownership does not permit unregulated construction.

Mr Stephen Wante, the former LC3 chairperson of the defunct Bugembe Town Council, said the move to remove illegal structures is a positive step toward reorganising business operations in the city. However, he criticised the use of force by enforcement teams, describing it as unfriendly and suggesting that affected traders should have been given more time to prepare.