

Man arrested over selling wetland to Chinese

WAKISO

By Job Nantaklika

The Environmental Police have arrested a man for allegedly selling part of Nonve Forest Reserve wetland to Chinese investors.

Muhammad Kyamanywa, a member of the Environmental Police, said they were doing one of their usual patrols on Tuesday in Wakiso district, only to find over five acres of Bugwanya wetland filled with soil.

Kyamanywa said they found the suspect, Ramathan Mudde, a resident of Kakiri in Wakiso district, with other people. However, the others ran away, leaving only Mudde behind.

Mudde who claimed that Nonve Forest Reserve is privately owned land, told the Police that he had sold an acre to some Chinese investors.

"We are taking Mudde to give us more information about the racket of people selling wetlands to foreigners," Kyamanywa said.

He expressed concern at the rate at which people are degrading wetlands, especially in Wakiso district. Kyamanywa said the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) has sensitised the public about the dangers of degrading the environment, but no one has paid attention.

He said NEMA is in the process of prosecuting over 10 people for degrading the Lubigi wetland in parts of Nansana and other

wetlands in Wakiso district.

The Wakiso district wetlands officer, Stella Nalumansi, said wetlands in Wakiso are facing a lot of degradation, especially by developers, which is a big threat to human life and is likely to increase the occurrence of floods and water shortages.

Nalumansi added that a campaign to restore all the wetlands that have been taken over by human activities in the district will

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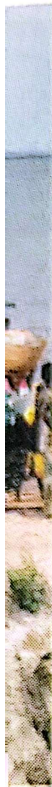
■ Nonve Forest Reserve that covers 738 hectares in Wakiso district was sold off and sub-divided into plots.

have to be put in place to fight the vice.

The Kakiri town council mayor, Muhammad Kisekka, accused Kakiri division Police commander, Henry Kisubi, of providing security to the degraders who work at night.

Kisekka said he wrote to Kisubi twice, requesting him to stop the degraders from filling the wetland with soil, but he was surprised to find Police officers guarding the same as they poured soil into the wetland.

Kisubi, however, said when he contacted the degraders, they claimed to have all the required documents from Kakiri town council and NEMA. He, however, denied providing the degraders with protection.



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