



Risky. Pupils, board canoes from Wanseko Landing Site in Bulisa District to Panyimur in Nebbi District recently. PHOTO BY FRANCIS MUGERWA.

UNRA to construct new landing site on L. Albert

Aim. The landing site precedes the resumption of ferry services which were suspended last year due to docking problems.

BY MISAIRI THEMBO KAHUNGU
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

KAMPALA. The Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) has confirmed that the construction of a new landing site for the Wanseko-Panyimur ferry services on Lake Albert will commence before the end of this year.

The ferry services aid traders from Bunyoro sub-region to cross with their merchandise from Wanseko Landing Site in Buliisa District to the famous Panyimur Market in Nebbi District.

However, the ferry procured by government last year was grounded early this year after struggling with landing at Wanseko for a number of times



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due to low water levels in the lake.

Mr Mark Ssali, the UNRA communications officer, told *Daily Monitor* in a telephone interview yesterday that the procurement process for a contractor to work on the new landing site is ongoing and will be completed in two months' time.

"UNRA is now carrying out

a procurement process to find a contractor who will work on a new landing site to allow the ferry to dock safely.

We expect construction works to start when a contractor is announced," Mr Ssali said.

Citing fear of compromising the procurement process, Mr Ssali declined to reveal how much UNRA would spend on the construction of the new landing site in an area with deep waters to allow free landing of the ferry.

The revelation comes at a time when the traders affected by the suspended ferry services are demanding for an alternative landing site.

The traders say they have lost a lot of money through hiring engine boats to be able to access the market that is known to attract buyers from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Mr Richard Orieda, a busi-

nessman at Panyamur Market, said he has lost touch with his suppliers of goods from Buliisa District because they can no longer cross freely.

"This time, I cannot get in touch with my business partners from the other side of the lake. The supply chain is broken because they cannot easily cross since the ferry is not on the lake," Mr Orieda said.

Mr Orieda said government should at least relocate the ferry services to Songa Landing Site to allow for the construction of a new site near Wanseko.

Buliisa District chairperson Simon Kinene has been blaming government over failure to take quick action to fix the ferry because it touches the livelihood of the local people.

Currently, traders say they pay Shs10,000 per head for a round ticket and between Shs10,000 and 20,000 for the luggage, which they find very expensive.

But Mr Ssali said he was not aware of the suitability of Songa Landing Site for the ferry to dock without any trouble.

Currently, financially able traders have been going through the Pakwach-Parra route to cross the River Nile on the ferry used by tourists in the Murchison Falls National Park.