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Dialogue. Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) executive director Jennifer Musisi (left) shares a moment with some of the members of the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda during a meeting at the Kampala Serena Hotel yesterday. Musisi called upon religious leaders to support development in the city, blaming the delayed road projects such as Bakuli-Kasubi road on city politicians who she alleged have told Kasubi Market vendors not to vacate the land to pave way for the construction works. PHOTO: MICHAEL KAKUMIRIZI

Surveyor arrested over fisheries institute land

Forgery. It is reported that the land allocated in 2011 had been earmarked for the construction of aquaculture research and training centre.

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& JALIRA NAMAYALO
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KAMPALA. The commission of inquiry into land matters yesterday ordered the arrest of a private surveyor Mr David Pande, for allegedly telling lies in connection with fraudulent acquisition and leasing out government land in Jinja District.

The land under controversy measuring 25 acres (9.92) had been allocated to National Fisheries Research Institute (NAFIRI) by the Uganda Land Commission as compensation for its land used for construction of the Civil Service College.

It is reported that the land allocated in 2011 had been earmarked towards the construction of aquaculture research and training centre.

However, evidence before the commission indicated that Mr Pande disguised as a customary owner of the same land and sold it to private company, Favourate Enterprises Limited owned by foreigners.

Mr Pande allegedly falsified documents to claim ownership in order to sell it to the investor at a cost of Shs160m in 2012.

Appearing before the commission, Mr Pande told the commission that he turned

the land into a leasehold tenure in the names of the investment firm, Favourate Enterprises Limited, to enable them acquire a title.

"As much as I sold my customary interest to foreigners, I made sure that they acquire a lease and then the district had become the owner of the land because they have authority to grant leases. I passed on my customary interest to the foreigners the way we do it culturally in the (Busoga) region where I just made a sale agreement with them," he said.

He added: "I failed to acquire a land title because the land commission had got interest in my land but again I was going to process a lease because by then Jinja District Land board was granting freehold leases such that I pay premium and yet it was my land and customarily I was owning it."

However, the commission chaired by Justice Catherine Bamugemereire observed that Mr Pande's evidence amounted to lies.

"So you broke the law and against the Constitution and you passed a title to foreigners yet you did not have a title. And they are foreigners who were not entitled to a land title. Do you know that the papers you are holding are null and void, are you worth to be called a surveyor when you mislead people like that?"

Justice Bamugemereire asked before handing him to police detectives for detention.

She directed that Mr Pande be charged with perjury.

Earlier the commission quizzed another surveyor, Mr Charles Mukwaya who was contracted by the fisheries institute to survey the land in 2012 for allegedly conniving with Mr Pande to steal the government land.

Confusion

"You have caused a lot of confusion on land that in a meeting by the district land board the neighbours were questioned. You are mixed up in this land saga. We have evidence that shows that Favourate Enterprises bought from Pande," Justice Bamugemereire observed.

But Mr Mukwaya who is attached to Terrain Consults testified that he was contracted upon recommendation by ULC to survey the land but after the deed plan, he learnt about another survey by Mr Pande and fencing by the company.

Dr Yafeesi Okia, assistant commissioner in the Mapping and Surveys told the commission that the land in question on plot 91 Wairaka Farm School but plot 91 was sub divided to get plots 103/104, a transaction which started in 2006.

The seven member commission sitting at the National Records and Archive Center in Kampala is investigating into the law, processes and procedures in land acquisition, land administration, and management in the country.

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