

Kampala water shortages linked to Katosi shutdown

BY STEPHEN OTAGE

KAMPALA. The National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC) has attributed the continued water shortages in parts of Kampala to the shutdown of the Katosi Water Works two weeks ago.

In an interview yesterday, Mr Samuel Apedel, the NWSC corporate communications manager, described the vandalism of power transmission lines at Nakapinyi Village in Nama Sub-county, Mukono District, as economic sabotage.

The incident, he said, severely affected water supply to factories in Mukono, Namanve, and Ggaba water treatment plants.

"Some people within the security circles have described the vandalism on the power lines as economic sabotage because factories and homes had to be load-shed at night while electricity was

diverted to Katosi to pump water," Mr Apedel said.

He added that NWSC expected the system to stabilise within 24 hours from yesterday after resuming full-capacity pumping on Sunday. The current shortages are mainly affecting residents in hilly areas of the city.

When asked why areas such as Entebbe Road and parts of the city centre, which are not served by Katosi, are also facing shortages, Mr Apedel explained that the Katosi shutdown created a 90 million litre deficit. Ggaba Water Works, which produces 240 million litres daily, had to redistribute water to cover the shortfall, as the combined output of Katosi and Ggaba is 330 million litres per day.

He noted that NWSC's interconnected reservoirs such as the Naguru reservoir, help maintain continuity of supply. Wa-



A man uses a bicycle to transport water in Ntinda, a Kampala suburb. PHOTO/STEPHEN OTAGE

ter from Ggaba was pumped to Naguru to supply areas including Mulago, Buwate, Kamwokya, and Namugongo, increasing overall demand on the system.

For two weeks, residents of Kampala suburbs have gone without piped water following the vandalism of an electricity line at Nakapinyi Village on November 19, which left a suspected vandal dead.

The shortages have been worsened by the current dry spell, which has made November unusually hot and dry. NWSC explained that areas located on hills such as Namugongo, Naalya, Mulago, Buwate, and Kamwokya, are the last to receive water.

Air trapped in pipes during shortages delays system recovery and pressure rebuilding. Other water-stressed areas in-

clude Nakawuka, Kajjansi, and Sisa and Mpigi, where NWSC is building a new reservoir.

Mr Mohammed Lubogo, the corporate communications officer at the Uganda Electricity Transmission Company Limited (UETCL), said vandalism of pylons is a recurring problem.

He cited the recently built Jinja-Tororo line, where vandals reportedly stole cables and angle bars before the line could be powered. In the Nakapinyi case, authorities arrested three suspects after tracing call logs from the phone of the deceased vandal found at the scene.

Meanwhile, private water bowser operators have been supplying affected areas.

Mr Ambrose Mugoya, a bowser driver, said he has been delivering water to Kireka and Kamuli Road estates.

His colleague, Mr Farouq Kajubi, has been supplying Ntinda, Naguru, Kololo, Muyenga, Luzira, Bugolobi, and Mbuya, catering to both residences and factories.

Mr Sam Bagenda, another driver, reported focusing on areas including Bugolobi, Luzira, Mukono, Buziga, Kisasi, Seeta, Nabusungwe, Mulawa, and Namanve Industrial Park.