

Muyembe-Nakapiripirit road to open up Karamoja, Amudat, boost access

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MBALE – Transport in Karamoja sub-region, which serves a large portion of the Eastern Uganda population, is all set for a major boost, thanks to a major road project.

The road which starts at Muyembe at the end of the tarmac road from Mbale is meant to connect to the Nakapiripirit-Moroto road which is already paved.

The construction works being funded through a loan from the Islamic Development Bank to a tune of sh399.9bn kicked off in March this year and is expected to take three years up to 30 March, 2023 is already relieving transporters in this area.

A Turkish construction firm, Polat Yol Yapi, signed a contract with the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) in November 2019 to tarmac the 92.2km route of Muyembe to Nakapiripirit has already set up a camp and is mobilising to start the work anytime from now.

The chairman LCV Bulambuli district Mr Simon Wananzofu said even as main works on the all-important 92.2KM Muyembe-Nakapiripirit road is in the final stages of kicking off, the road has been made motor able, bush clearing has taken place, bridges have been made and that trucks loaded with food harvested in farms in the region are already using it to access markets.

When PML Daily visited the place where the site is supposed to be, there was a site without a camp but the work along the road by local companies who have been contracted for bush clearing and construction of minor bridges along main streams was going on.

Although this was Polat Yol Yapi's first contract in eastern Africa, the company has a global presence having executed similar contracts in the Middle East, Southern Africa and North America.

"And we are using Uganda as an entry point into Africa, we have done roads across with no faults and this one is going to be a road with value for money," said Mr Edip Yenen, the project manager of the Polat Tol Yapi construction company.

When contacted for a comment about the construction progress Mr Pius Bagaza, a local representative of the company confirmed his firm won the contract to construct the road and that they were on ground to start the work although they have been held up by Covid 19.

"We are supposed to get a letter of approval from Ministry of Gender and Works to establish our camp which we are waiting for but so far we have done bush clearing and constructed minor bridges along the road and we are within time to kick start the road which we even estimate that we might complete before the contract time in 2023," said Bagaza 9 July.

Mr Bagaza who came to Mbale en route to the camp site along the road in question said his company; Polat Yol Yapi, a Turkish company that is located in Naguru won the contract and that they have already shown their presence on ground to start work.

He explained that although he is aware that the company is still doing forward maintenance, he is also aware that they are mobilising equipment and waiting for a letter of approval from the Ministry of Gender to establish their camp on.

"And we are on the ground, we have done bush clearing and are also making the road motor able for our people," added Mr Bagaza.

According to UNRA the road upgrading of Muyembe-Nakapiripirit road will assist in the administrative and social coverage in the region, reduce vehicle operating costs and improve social services and opportunities.

The existing road will be upgraded to class II standard paved road consisting of a certain carriageway with a width of 7.0M and a shoulder width general of 2.0M and that the carriageway and shoulder will both have asphalt concrete.

The UNRA Mbale station manager Mr George Sonko said the contract was won by Polat Yol Yapi, a Turkish company that is located in Naguru and that works are being supervised by **Scet Tunisie** in joint venture with MBW consulting Ltd.

Mr Titus Aleper, the project manager Muyembe-Nakapiripirit road said the contract awarded to Polat Yol, a Turkish construction firm was the Civil Works for the Upgrading of 92km Muyembe - Nakapiripirit Road and 25km Secondary Link Roads.

He revealed that the contractor is on ground and that the contractor is expected to finish the physical construction of works on time, within budget and meeting the required engineering specifications, environment and social safeguards.