

NEMC confirms water safety in Mtwara

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The confirmation came two months after the Deputy Minister in the Vice President's Office (Union and Environment), Luhaga Mpina had queried over the safety of water supplied by SBS.

In July last year, Mpina directed NEMC authorities in the southern zone to make a scientific assessment of the water in the dam around the factory after receiving series of complaints from some residents of Mdenga ward of the Mtwara Region that the factory was emitting water with chemicals that was subjecting their health at risk.

Speaking during a meeting of the environment committee that brought together several members, SBS chief manager, Wayne Summerhayes said that after a thorough scientific research assessment, the water was found not to have any poisonous substances that were alleged to have been caused by the industry, adding that there were also species living in the dam including fish and birds.

According to him, each year, the company's management was convening meetings that involve several members from various government institutions and representatives of area citizens so as to give them the reports on the factory's activities.

"It is normal for the company to hold meetings every year, and if you can remember, there was a directive to make a scientific test on water in the Mdenga dam and the assessment shows that the dam has not been affected by our operations and that the environment is friendly, that is why you can see other species including fish surviving in that dam," said Summerhayes.

Likonde Ward Councillor whose ward is closer to the factory Muksin Komba expressed his dismay over some experts from different government institutions for issuing contradicting information concerning the factory, adding that they now wants a fresh information from the Chief Government Chemist in order to get out of confusion.

"I fail to understand these experts because SBS was given a permit from NEMC and that is why the municipality issued a permit for construction of the industry...how should they state today that the operations at the factory should stop," he queried adding: NEMC headquarters is working well with SBS but NEMC in the Southern Zone are not in good terms with the factory."

A businessman based in Mtwara Region, Abdallah urged the government to intervene so that the truth can be known. "The minister came here and asked the area to be improved, while today we are told they are destroying environment, where were they all this time," he said.

According to the factory's management, a maiden grand project for recycling solid dusts is in pipeline for Mtwara residents.

According to Summerhayes, already the company had put measures in place and that his company will use high-tech measures in the collection of garbage.