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Constant jams hitting business hard, tourism players tell authorities

BY MATHIAS RINGA

Tourism players at the Coast have complained about constant traffic jams on Makupa Causeway to Airport road.

Last Friday, travellers heading to Nairobi were caught up in a jam for three hours near Kibarani and Changamwe roundabout on the Mombasa-Nairobi road.

Kenya Coast Tourism Association branch chairperson Monika Solanki said travelling to Moi International Airport was a nightmare be-

cause of "intolerable traffic congestion" caused by heavy trucks.

She added that the trucks heading to Mombasa port for cargo were parked on the highway between Changamwe roundabout, Airport road and Jomvu, leading to jams.

The Kato official said local and international tourists departing or arriving at Moi Airport face delays of between one and three hours.

"We urge county chiefs and the national government to address jams to save locals and tourists from missing flights," she said.

Pollman's Tours and Safaris MD Khalid Shapi said visitors heading to Tsavo East National Park spent many hours on the Mombasa-Nairobi road than in game drives due to the jams.

The tour operator said animal enthusiasts spent between four and five hours to travel from Mombasa to Tsavo.

The Pollman's chief urged the county and national governments to address the problem ahead of the high tourist season that begins next month.

"From mid-July, we expect international tourist

arrivals to increase. A solution must be found to make visitors travel comfortably," he said.

Transport Executive Taufiq Balala attributed the snarl-ups to trucks heading to the port for goods.

He said although the county government had attempted to address the problem, port officials still determined the movement of the lorries.

However, KPA communications officer Haji Masemo said the county government's lack of a parking yard was to blame for the traffic congestion.