**Lightning strike on MTN mast sends Rubirizi back to Stone Age setting - Uganda**

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Residents of Rubirizi Town Council are urgently calling on MTN Uganda to restore internet services that have been down since the evening of Sunday, October 20. The outage, which began around 7:30 p.m., has left many across the district disconnected, unable to access essential online services, and increasingly frustrated by the disruption.

The prolonged outage has had a widespread impact, with residents reporting that the lack of internet access has severely affected their daily routines. Lonet Ayebare, a banker at Bunyaruguru Development SACCO, described how the disruption has hindered her ability to work.

“The internet stopped working around 7:30 p.m. on Sunday, and the problem has persisted ever since. This has made it extremely difficult for me to communicate with clients and access online banking services, which are critical for my job,” she explained.

The situation has also taken a toll on local businesses, many of which depend heavily on internet connectivity to run daily operations. Edwin Anyijukire, a small business owner in Rubirizi Town Council, shared how her livelihood has been directly affected by the outage.

“My business relies on MTN internet to run mobile money services and connect with suppliers. Since Sunday, I haven’t been able to make any transactions online, which has cost me money every day. We need the internet back as soon as possible,” she said.

In a rural district like Rubirizi, where access to physical banking and other essential services can be limited, reliable internet has become a necessity. Residents have highlighted the critical role the internet plays in communication, education, and business transactions. Schools, healthcare providers, and small enterprises rely on it for everything from online learning and telemedicine to essential financial services.

An internet Cafe owner in the town, Adriano Kamugisha, emphasised the growing dependence on internet connectivity in the community.

“Internet access isn’t a luxury anymore. We use it for teaching, downloading study materials, and staying informed. Without it, students and teachers are completely cut off from important resources,” he said.

The Nile Post visited Ndekye Town in Rubirizi Town Council to verify reports of the disruption. It was confirmed that the internet outage is real, with phones unable to connect to MTN services, although other internet service providers appear to be functioning normally.

As the outage continues, residents are demanding an update from MTN Uganda, calling for immediate action to resolve the issue. The ongoing lack of internet access has disrupted the lives of many in Rubirizi, who are hoping for a swift resolution to restore the connectivity they now rely on for work, education, and communication.

So far, MTN Uganda has not issued a statement regarding the cause of the outage or a timeline for restoration. However, residents remain hopeful that the services will be restored soon, recognising how essential the internet has become to their daily lives.