



PRESS REVIEW

John Paul II Justice and Peace Centre

"Faith Doing Justice"

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THEMATIC AREAS

- Education
- Environment
- Health
- Economy
- Religion and Society
- Politics
- Youth

EDUCATION

UNEB hikes examination fees. All parents and guardians, whose children are set to sit national examinations this year, will have to part with more money to pay for the national examination charges. The education ministry's undersecretary, Aggrey Kibenge, said the registration fees hikes were approved by the ministry's top management.

Cash crisis hits govt schools. Several government aided schools across the country have not received school capitation grants three weeks to the end of first term, although government admits that some schools have not received the money, it insists it is not a countrywide problem.

Clubs to help children stay in school longer. The government has moved in to revive popular school clubs aimed at enhancing access, participation and completion rates of school children in Karamoja. The Napak district education officer in Napak, encouraged children to form and join clubs saying extracurricular activities are useful.

Medical students call off strike. Intern medical students at Mulago hospital have called off the strike after receiving their monthly allowances. The president of the medical interns confirmed that all the medical intern students have received their allowances and that they are ready to continue with their assignments.

Public universities are understaffed-ministry. Uganda's public universities have fewer than 50 per cent of the academic staff they need, the Education ministry says. According to the education ministry, Makerere University has 140 unfilled slots.

Karamoja gets sh28b to keep children in school. The Irish government has provided Euros7.2m (about sh28b) to UNICEF to support the education ministry in order to improve

quality education for the most vulnerable children and adolescent girls in Karamoja region.

Students to use national ID numbers for exams. School-going children whose parents do not possess national identity cards will not be registered under an enrolment exercise targeting children that starts next month. The education ministry's spokesperson confirmed that the ministry was part of the interagency team to support the exercise

ENVIRONMENT

Dry spell drives food prices up. Food prices in Kabarole district continue to rise due to the prolonged dry spell that has led to poor harvests which hit most parts of the district since last year.

Karimojong slaughter dying cattle as drought bites hard. As Karamoja experiences prolonged drought, food shortage is evident in all families as most homes are living off sun-dried meat. Jackson Angella, an elder from Rupa sub-county in Moroto district, said life has not been easy for people living in Karamoja.

Relief as Nebbi district gets rain. Farmers were increasingly getting frustrated by the prolonged dry spell coupled with skyrocketing food prices in the district. The Nebbi district acting agricultural officer said the heavy downpour was a blessing that farmers should take advantage of by growing annual crops.

Gulu district in tree-planting drive. Gulu district local government in partnership with Community Empowerment Education Development (CEED) an NGO working in the area has distributed 15,000 tree seedlings to the people who participated in the Gulu go-green marathon. Gulu district chairperson Martin Ojara Mapenduzi said the marathon was meant to promote environmental conservation and mobilise crowds against deforestation.

Oyo takes environmental campaign to Kamwenge. The Omukama of Toro, Oyo Nyimba Kabamba Iguru, has decried the rate of environmental degradation in his kingdom.

Minister directs district authorities to plant trees. The State Minister for Water and Environment has directed officials from the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) to supply Teso sub-region with 100,000 trees and immediately supervise their distribution and planting in a bid to promote reforestation

HEALTH

NSSF moves to support health facilities. The National Social Security Fund (NSSF) is dedicating this year's customers connect week to improvement of healthcare services in selected health centres across the country.

Ministry wants sh30b for health extension workers. The ministry of health is seeking sh30b for the recruitment of community health extension workers to sensitise and educate communities on diseases and link them to health services.

Govt to import 100,000 litres of pesticides to fight armyworm. The government is set to procure at least 100,000 litres of pesticides to fight the army worms which are ravaging maize farms in 60 districts.

TB cases double in Busoga sub-region, say medics. Cases of people diagnosed with tuberculosis (TB) in Busoga sub-region are highest in Jinja district. The hospital senior nursing officer and in charge of the TB ward attributed the increase to prevalence of HIV/Aids, lack of awareness among the public, and poor sanitation.

UNAIDS, Buganda in joint HIV/AIDS fight. The United Nations programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) in conjunction with Buganda Kingdom have embarked on a campaign to reinvigorate the fight against the AIDS epidemic in the central region.

Mental illness cases' rise-medics. The number of people with psychiatric disorders in Busoga sub-region has increased. The senior nursing officer at Jinja Regional Referral hospital (mental department), said: "we used to receive between 20 and 30 out-patients daily. This number has since increased to not less than 40 cases per day.

Govt amends health insurance bill. Ministry of health has written to finance ministry seeking a certificate of financial implications after it amended some of the controversial clauses in the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS).

Early pregnancies causing congestion in hospital-authorities. Local leaders and health officials in Mpigi district have raised concern over the rising rate of early pregnancies in both villages and towns thus causing congestion in many health centres in the area.

Govt tasked on health service delivery in rural areas. Government has been asked to improve health service delivery in rural areas where majority of those who cannot afford health care services live.

ECONOMY

Lack of access to information affecting businesses. Failure by government to implement the access to information act has been cited among the major impediments to effective business operations in the country. The committee chairperson attributed the challenge to gaps in the law as well as the environment within which people operate.

AFDB sets shs910b for roads. The African Development Bank group (AFDB) has approved \$253m (shs910b) of loans to Uganda and Kenya for upgrading roads linking the two countries.

Stop giving farmers free inputs-envoy. The government should stop providing free farm inputs to farmers and instead focus on bigger ventures, including carrying out research and securing markets for the farm produce the Netherland ambassador, said by providing free inputs the government is creating a "dependent" citizenry.

Government bans importing fish nets. The trade ministry has slapped a 12-month importation ban on fishing nets, hoping to curb illegal small size nets that catch young fish and deplete the stocks in the water bodies.

Traders urged to insure against risk. Despite playing a critical role in Uganda's economy and employing majority of Ugandans, many small businesses are exposed to various risks arising from both the external and internal business environment that can lead to collapse.

New sms system to catch non-compliant employers. Employers who do not remit NSSF contributions are going to be exposed by a new sms alert system. The executive director of Federation of Uganda employers said some employers fail to remit their employees' contribution to NSSF in time due to poor cash flow and failure to pay their employees on time.

Dairy processors must train farmers, says expert. Milk processors have been urged to form strong partnerships with dairy farmers to ensure a more sustainable and efficient milk production to support sector growth and sustainability.

Liberalise pension sector, private sector tells govt. Stakeholders in the private pension schemes under their umbrella body, the Association of Uganda Retirement Benefits and Pension Schemes (URBPS), have called on government to liberalise pension sector. The managing director NSSF, said liberalisation of the pension's schemes would be gradual as there is need to ensure safety of the pension money.

Govt seeks to produce 20 million coffee bags annually by 2020. Government has started an initiative to woo farmers who have utilised land to allocate it to coffee growing in a move meant to achieve social economic transformation. The deputy chief coordinator of operation wealth creation (OWC) said the farmers will be required to form groups and register their land allocated for coffee growing.

RELIGION AND SOCIETY

Clerics ask govt to strengthen security. With the continuous gruesome killings in different parts of the country the clerics said the government needs to inject more resources into the investigations arm and community policing to easily detect crime and the agents.

Ankole bishop tips on saving. The bishop of Ankole diocese has challenged Christians to save some of their income in the existing savings and credit cooperative organisation societies (SACCOS) so that they can later be able to invest in long-term assets like land.

Mukono diocese starts pension scheme for clergy. Mukono diocese has introduced a pension scheme for its clergy through which the church is to help them save money as their retirement.

Church leader's call for peace in Easter message. Church leaders under their platform of UJCC have asked government to strengthen the criminal investigation arm of the police in order to detect and fight illegal activities in the country.

KCCA Bans Street preaching. All preachers operating on Kampala city streets risk being arrested if they continue with the exercise. The Kampala Capital City Authority director of operations confirmed the ban but revealed that they have preferred to first engage the affected parties so that they are not caught unawares.

Lack of religious values fuelling crime-bishop. The retired Ankole Bishop Emeritus George has attributed the increasing crime rate in society to lack of religious values.

Lumumba pledges support for Catholic Church projects. The National resistance movement (NRM) secretary general has pledged continued government support for development projects initiated by the Catholic Church. She cited Agago district, where the government has already made a contribution towards the construction of the Paimul shrines allocated in the home area of the two catholic martyrs.

POLITICS

Muntu warns leaders against intolerance. Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) party president Maj. Gen. Mugisha Muntu has called for tolerance of others views within the political spectrum. Muntu said this is the only way a country can become a liberal democracy.

Politicians urged to embrace defeat. The Bishop of central Busoga diocese the Rt. Rev. Patrick Wakula has urged politicians to accept defeat after polls in order to avoid unnecessary expenditure. According to Wakula, the option by some to pursue redress in courts of law only worsens the drain on their already reduced resources that could otherwise be put to better use.

Opposition is weak-Mao. The Democratic Party (DP) president Norbert Mao has taken a swipe at the opposition as feeble in offering the country alternative leadership and a sense of direction in the face of a visibly failed government. Mao urged that as the said talks are just about power-sharing, national dialogue will be an audit on all previous disputed elections.

Museveni, Besigye campaigns in Kamuli. President Museveni and the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) leader's camped in Kamuli Municipality to gather support for their candidates. The Kamuli Municipality MP seat sit fell vacant after the incumbent MP academic papers were challenged in courts of law.

MPs oppose sh23b tax holiday. A proposal to give private companies tax exemption has been opposed by members of parliament on the budget committee.

Govt allots sh25b for LC1 elections. The finance ministry has set aside sh25b in the 2017/18 financial year budget for the elections of local council I and II. The president of the Uganda Local government Association (ULGA) chairperson informed the legislators that the delay to conduct the local council elections had caused a serious setback to good governance and local democracy.

We are in talks with Museveni, says Besigye. Opposition leader Dr Kizza Besigye has shed more light on a possible dialogue with President Museveni telling party members that he is agreeable to the idea which he said came from state house.

Besigye links insecurity to lack of LCs. The former Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) col. Dr Kizza Besigye has attributed the increasing insecurity in the country to lack of legitimate local council structure.

YOUTH

Govt relaxes repayment schedule for youth funds. The government has relaxed the loan repayment schedule for the youth livelihood funds due to the prolonged dry spell in many parts of the country. Janet Mukwaya, the gender minister, made the revelations in Moroto district.

Buikwe joins fight against teen pregnancy. Buikwe has partnered with Programme for Accessible Health Communication and Education (PACE) to fight teenage pregnancy in the district. The executive director of PACE, Dr Dorothy Balaba said teenage pregnancies in the district have gone up.

National youth council asks government to increase its budget. The Uganda National Youth Council has asked the government to make it an independent vote and increase its annual budget from sh1b to sh5b.

Sh15b youth ICT fund for july. The government is set to roll out an ICT fund and park to provide free wi-fi, working space and grants for talented youth in a bid to spur innovation as well as create jobs and wealth. The minister of ICT and national guidance has revealed.

New plan to fight youth unemployment to roll out. A new strategy to fight Ugandans high unemployment is being mooted by the government and will be directly run by President Yoweri Museveni. The permanent secretary explained that, "the new initiative was after the president realised that there are increasingly more unemployed graduates, save for the fact that they are highly trained."