



PRESS REVIEW

John Paul II Justice and Peace Centre

"Faith Doing Justice"

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THEMATIC AREAS

- Christian Reflection
- Education
- Health
- Economy
- Religion and Society
- Politics
- Youth

CHRISTIAN REFLECTION

Greed and incompetence causing food insecurity in Uganda

Food insecurity in our country is getting worse and we are informed that almost eleven million Ugandans are affected by it! This is not only worrying but also shameful to a country that the Creator has so richly blessed with all that is needed to feed its citizens and others. In 1986, the Catholic Bishops in Uganda wrote in their pastoral letter saying:

"For those with the eyes of faith, it is clear that the Lord has been generous in a particularly abundant way with our country. We have only to look around us: the breath-taking beauty of our mountains, the great expanses of our lakes, the power and strength of the Nile, which passes through our land. The Lord's glory and love are manifested in these wonders of nature which adorn our country.

And nature not only makes us rejoice because of its beauty, but also because of its outstanding fertility. We know that when we work our work is rewarded by harvest. God has arranged things in such a way that there is no reason, apart from human greed and incompetence, why any Ugandan should go hungry. If we want to, we can produce crops to feed ourselves and others. Our lakes and rivers teem with fish that are good to eat. There is ample grazing land for our cattle...(Celebrating our ancestors in the faith, 15th November 1984)

There is much truth in the remark of the Bishops that *"there is no reason, apart from human greed and incompetence, why any Ugandan should go hungry"*. It is because of human greed that we have destroyed the forests and wetlands causing droughts! It is because of human greed that land is being grabbed leaving others landless! It is

because of human greed that the money which would have been invested in modernising agriculture to benefit the majority of Ugandans is instead invested in less important things profiting only a few. It is because of human greed that we are incompetent in face of challenges coming from climate change.

Gandhi once said that: "*The world has enough for everyone's need, but not enough for everyone's greed.*" Uganda has enough for its people's need but not enough for everyone's greed. So, let us fight against food insecurity in our country by fighting against everyone's greed.

EDUCATION

Government to build 92 primary schools in 28 districts. The government is to construct 92 new primary schools in 28 districts countrywide, under a three-year development project. Dr Daniel Nkaada, the project co-ordinator and commissioner for pre-primary and primary education, said the project is critical in improving efficiency in the education sector.

Govt urged to promote education of girls. The government should put special emphasis on promoting girls education, parents of Igulu girl's secondary school in Dokolo district have advised.

Govt to make ICT mandatory for teachers, students-minister. The government is working out a modality to make the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) compulsory for trainee teachers and students across the country. The UNESCO regional director asked the government to desist from putting pressure on teachers for better results, but rather equip them to do a good job.

Govt stops nursery teaching at public schools. The ministry of education has halted the implementation of early childhood development policy in public schools until they have consolidated the existing free primary and secondary education programme. The education minister advised that nursery school education should remain a private enterprise for now.

Teachers riot over salaries. Over 200 teachers in Mayuge district have demonstrated over delayed and unpaid salaries. Bashir Kayeyera, the district chairperson for UNATU, presented the petition to the RDC, LC5 and Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

Shs 18b education project launched. A new education project that aims to contribute towards the enrolment and retention of 40,000 out of school children in northern Karamoja by 2019 has been launched. The state minister for Karamoja Affairs, Mr Moses Kizige, urged residents to embrace the project for the development of the sector in the region.

Ministry wants 24,000 teachers for secondary schools. The ministry of education and sports wants to recruit 24,000 teachers in the next financial year to fill the existing vacancies in government-aided secondary schools.

Education officer face probe over online PLE registration. Security personnel have launched investigations into reports that some education officers in Lango sub-region have allegedly been overcharging pupils registering electronically to sit Primary Leaving Examination (PLE).

HEALTH

Health ministry warns of water borne diseases. The ministry of health has issued mitigation measures against infectious and non-communicable diseases which are likely to occur during the forthcoming rainy seasons.

Patient's stuck as scanner breaks down. Several patients are stuck at Moroto regional referral hospital following the breakdown of the scanner about two months ago. Dr Filbert Nyeko, the hospital director, confirmed the breakdown of the scanner and said they were working to rectify the problem.

UPDF officials decry poor access to Hepatitis B drugs. A senior UPDF official has observed that the government is losing the battle against Hepatitis B because people in remote areas do not have access to Hepatitis B services. The UPDF health programme operation commander said people who live in rural and remote parts of the country access the least number of health services.

Uganda National Health Lab gets international nod. Results from the Butabika-based Uganda National Health Laboratory Services (UNHLS) are now being accepted as accurate findings of rigorous medical trials worldwide. The ministry of health permanent secretary announced the international accreditation for the second largest laboratory in Africa.

Medical workers advised on how to manage HIV/AIDS. Medical workers managing HIV/AIDS programmes have been encouraged to use data to improve the quality of health care for people living with HIV.

Finance blocks shs8b for hepatitis B vaccines. Ministry of finance officials have blocked a supplementary request for nearly shs8b that is urgently needed to complete vaccination against hepatitis B virus in 39 districts in eastern and northern Uganda.

Trachoma infections drop in Karamoja. Trachoma infections in Karamoja sub-region have significantly dropped, district authorities and health officials have revealed. The Amudat district health director said they have registered progress in the fight against trachoma.

30 inmates dying of TB yearly-prison authorities. As the country joins the rest of the world to mark world tuberculosis day nearly 30 prison inmates die annually as a result of infectious diseases that usually affect the lungs.

ECONOMY

Govt starts sh214.9b employment programme. The government has launched a sh214.9b scheme to provide employment opportunities to unskilled workers in northern and eastern Uganda. The permanent secretary in the gender ministry revealed that the money is aimed at boosting vulnerable and poor households.

New trade licensing regime unveiled. The ministry of trade, industry and co-operatives has unveiled the amended trade licensing law to provide an appeal mechanism and to also reduce the cost of doing business. Everest Kayondo, the KACITA chairman, noted that the changes are timely.

Museveni launches Isingiro fruit factory. President Yoweri Museveni has urged Ugandans to engage in modern profit-oriented agriculture to improve family incomes. The president assured Ugandans that peace and security is guaranteed in the country and that Ugandans are free to work in any part of the country without interruption.

Traders urged to exploit sesame seed market. Farmers and traders have been urged to boost production so as to increase Uganda's share of the growing global demand for sesame seeds. UEPB executive director called for stronger partnerships among farmers, producers and buyers to ensure production of good quality sesame seeds.

President Museveni delivers Budaka farmers maize seeds. President Yoweri Museveni has delivered over four tonnes of maize seeds to farmers in Budaka district. The president urged the residents to spare land for cultivating coffee, bananas, fruits and elephant grass.

Govt warned against excessive borrowing. The parliament committee on national economy has cautioned the government against excessive borrowing. Furious committee members told the finance state minister David Bahati that the rate at which the government is borrowing does not make economic sense.

MTN Uganda foundation gives sh5b for social development. MTN Uganda foundation has given sh5b to community development initiatives across Uganda. George Egaddu, the Chairman Board of Trustees MTN Uganda foundation, said MTN Uganda aims to give back to the community where the company does its business.

Govt to boost market for local produce. Government is working towards creating market for local produce as the country moves to achieve middle income status. Under the initiative the ministry of trade, industry and co-operatives has developed a programme to establish grass root drying zones in communities, auction market and border exports zone.

RELIGION AND SOCIETY

Tororo archdiocese drills 52 boreholes. Tororo Archdiocese has launched a campaign to promote food security, improve sanitation and fight poverty. The Archbishop, Dr Emmanuel Obbo, said the archdiocese has so far drilled 52 boreholes in schools and communities to reduce conflicts arising from lack of clean and safe water in the archdiocese.

Cleric calls for review of laws on firearms. As the authorities investigate the grisly killing of the Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIGP), religious leaders, under their umbrella body, Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) said the government needs to review the crime preventer's policy.

Bishop warns on new churches. The Kinkizi diocese bishop Dan Zoreka has warned that up-coming churches could cause disaster to the country if their practices are not checked. Bishop Zokera said there are many self-styled church leaders' countrywide working under the guise of freedom of worship but pursuing self-gains.

Cardinal Wamala urges Christians to shun evil. As Christians begin the 40 days of Lent, Emmanuel cardinal wamala has called on the faithful to abandon evil ways and turn back to God. Wamala added that the key to faithful observance of these practices is to recognise their link to baptism renewal.

POLITICS

Do not fight over parties speaker Kadaga tells MPs. The speaker of parliament, Rebecca Kadaga, has urged MPs to pay more attention to the people who voted for them, instead of fighting over party differences.

Kadaga speaks out on electronic voting system. The speaker of parliament Rebecca Kadaga has dismissed reports by sections of the media alleging that the electronic voting system is dysfunctional. The director of communications and public affairs at parliament said that electronic voting was not in use because of space constraints due to the high number of MPs.

FDC hails Museveni on programmes. A section of leaders subscribing to the Opposition Forum for Democratic change (FDC) party in Kasese district has hailed president Museveni for 'pro-people' programmes but faulted his government for failing to implement them. Kasese district chairman, said president Museveni has a good package for the country but lacks good implementers.

MPs push for law to enforce human rights observance. Members of parliament on the human rights committee have backed a bill which if passed into law will enable various courts in the country to adjudicate on human rights violation cases.

Politicians criticise govt over LC polls. Politicians have slammed government over the decisions to postpone the local council I and II elections, describing the move as 'continued presence of undemocratically filled structures at village and parish levels in Uganda.

MPs want police leaders reshuffled. Calls for new blood in the leadership of the police were sounded in parliament with three MPs saying changes must be made in light of the rising number of unsolved murders. President Museveni publicly criticised the police, which he said has been infiltrated by criminals and asked Gen Kayihura to clean it up.

YOUTH

DP youth split over Kiyingi job. Members of the Democratic Party youth wing in Bukomansimbi district have disagreed over the youth and children affairs state minister, Ms Florence Nakiwala Kiyingi's government job. The Bukomansimbi UYD vice chairperson distanced itself from the petition, urging that it was generated out of ignorance and selfishness.

Youth livelihood boss held over extortion. The police in Katakwi have arrested the district youth livelihood programme focal person, The Resident District Commissioner, Ambrose Mwesigye, said members of some of the seven youth livelihood programme groups from Ongonja sub-county reported the matter to his office.

MPs want govt to lease land to youth. Lawmakers representing youth in parliament have asked the government to lease land in various districts to enable the youth engage in agriculture. The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Gender said government is planning to focus on pursuing sustainable livelihoods, employment promotion and enterprise development.

More Ugandan youth enrol for vocational courses. More Ugandan youth are opting to pursue business, vocational and technical (BTVET) courses highlighting a shift in preference from theoretical to skills-based training. The UBTEB executive secretary, said the increase in enrolment was due to the extensive media campaign to encourage more youth to consider technical courses as their career choices.