

Caravan reaches Northern Uganda, residents want alcohol and drug abuse addressed

Lira residents have raised concern over the increasing cases of mental illness among the youth. Shamim Atim a youth who works in a Bakery welcomed the manifesto but noted that the most critical problem is mental illness.” Many of the youth here are drug addicts which makes them mentally unstable but if our leaders come up with stringent measures to eliminate use of drugs, and treat those who are already affected, it can help youth get better and concentrate on meaningful activities”, said Atim.



Meanwhile, the Regional Police Commander Lira, John Emetu decried the level of hooliganism amongst the youth in Lira. “There is a lot of hooliganism here, especially the Youth, so you should think of coming back because Kyoga has about eight districts and you people are covering only Lira”, said Emetu. He appreciated the manifesto but noted that one day alone was not enough to sensitize the young people.



And the Youth Councilor Lira Central Division, Geoffrey Okot used this opportunity to encourage the young people to continue applying for the Youth Livelihoods Programme. He also cautioned them against misusing the fund so as to reduce on the rates of unemployment among youth. The caravan in Lira municipality attracted an estimated 2,000 people and it was held in the Main Market.

In Gulu, the event attracted an estimated 2,500 people with a call on youth to desist from alcohol abuse. The Officer in Charge of Gulu Police station said that such behaviors hinder youth from making informed decisions and this means they cannot contribute to the development of the country. But Okaka James who is unemployed blamed the leaders for leaving youth issues not attended to. “As far as am concerned the manifesto raises critical issues. Leaders are aware that these challenges do exist but just pay a deaf ear to youth needs”, said Okaka.



And in Bweyale, men who are found defiling school girls will soon face serious consequences following a plan by the police in the area to introduce community policing. The revelation was made by Inspector Florence Timbigamba who addressed over 1,000 people who attended the caravan in Bweyale. She also warned youth against engaging in electoral violence saying it would lead them straight to prison.



On her part, the Officer in charge of family and children affairs, Agnes Akeny advised youth not to focus on white collar jobs but to also venture in other income generating activities including agriculture, tailoring, carpentry among others. “Getting little from your effort is better than stealing or being paid by politicians to attack others”, said Akeny.



The National Youth Manifesto Van

The manifesto has five thematic areas which include jobs, health care for all, education, sports and creative arts and participation. To view the document, visit: www.upfya.or.ug/nym2016