

National COVID-19 fund gets more donations

PHOTO BY ABOU KISIGE

CENTRAL

By Nelson Kiva

A day after the National Response to COVID-19 Fund made a fresh appeal for support, several individuals and corporate organisations flocked the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) in Kampala to donate cash and non-cash items.

"We remain committed to accord any necessary assistance to fellow Ugandans and towards Government's efforts to combat the coronavirus pandemic," Sharon Kalakiire remarked while handing over a consignment of items donated by SBC Uganda Limited to the Minister of General Duties, Mary Karoro Okurut.

Karoro, who is also the political advisor to the COVID-19 Fund, was accompanied by Dorothy Kisaka, the fund's secretary and administrator.

SBC is undertaking the construction of Hoima International Airport at Kabaale in Hoima district.

The company donated four tonnes of maize flour, 1.3 tonnes of beans and 359kg of sugar.

TARGET

The COVID-19 Fund leadership



Minister Karoro Okurut (right) receiving relief items from employees of SBC Uganda

on Sunday indicated that they had received donations worth sh21b.

However, the plan is to collect sh170b to be utilized by the health ministry to procure test kits, Personal Protection Equipment and other needs of the ministry.

This means the members have a task of mobilising sh149b.

"If every Ugandan contributed sh10,000, it will go a long way," Emmanuel Katongole, the

chairperson of the fund, said.

NutriFish project donated 2.5 tonnes of *mkene* and amaranth (*doodo*) seeds and enriched maize flour worth sh22m.

Dr Jackson Efitre, the principal investigator of NutriFish project, handed over the donations.

The Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERA) staff contributed part of their salaries and six tonnes of maize flour.

ERA communication manager, Julius Wandera, requested that their support goes to the National Union of the Disabled Persons of Uganda (NUDIPU).

The general manger of Chick Stax, Christine Nambarirwa, donated 500kg of sliver fish powder for the COVID-19 frontline health workers in Wakiso district. The lockdown was extended for two weeks.

Kasese medics ask for support to fight COVID-19

WEST

By John Thawite

Health workers at the Uganda-DR Congo border Bwera Hospital in Kasese district say they are determined to fight the coronavirus despite challenges.

Their administrator, Pedison Buthala, said the medics face inadequate accommodation, personal protection equipment and staff transport.

Buthala said only 8% of the hospital's 250 staff are accommodated at the facility.

"The 92% reside outside the hospital and we have to transport them every day," Buthala said.

Some staff live in Kasese town (60km away), while others reside in Kisinga and the mountainous areas of Kitholhu, he added.

OPM AIDS HOSPITAL

Buthala was briefing the media shortly after receiving relief food

from the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM).

The food items delivered by the Kasese deputy Resident District Commissioner, Joshua Masereka, comprised 250kg maize flour, beans, salt, sugar and milk.

The donation is meant for the hospital staff and patients in critical need.

Masereka also delivered matooke from some communities of Busongora North constituency.

Buthala said the screening points set up along various border points also require more logistics, noting that the health workers screen scores of truck drivers there.

42 TRUCK DRIVERS ISOLATED

He revealed that since the pandemic broke out, 42 out of the 56 people isolated at Bwera Secondary School were truck drivers.

"The samples taken from the truck drivers have all tested negative," Buthala said.



Masereka handing over matooke to the hospital staff

Mpondwe border post, about 10km from the 150-bed capacity hospital, is a high-volume transit point for truck drivers from Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and the DR Congo.

He said the health workers were also facing challenges of residents who keep crossing the borders.

PROTECTIVE GEAR IS NOT EVERYTHING

Dr Kapuru of Kagando Hospital cautioned medical workers against over-dramatising the demand for personal protection equipment.

"It is not the amount and even type of gear that counts. What is

more critical is the skills in using the equipment," he said.

Kilembe Hospital medical superintendent, Dr Edward Wefula, underscores the need for capacity training besides the provision of protective gear. He said the hospital had reserved a ward for COVID-19 cases.

"So long as we all abide by the prevention guidelines by the health ministry, we shall overcome this pandemic," Wefula said.

He hailed the health ministry for training a response team at the hospital and power-generating firm, EMS Nyamwamba, for various medical logistics.

Former Lango Foundation prime minister sues boss

NORTH

The Lango paramount chief, Yosam Ebii Odur, has been dragged to court by his former prime minister, Dr Richard Nam, challenging him for appointing Eng. James Ajal as the new premier.

Nam filed the notice to sue the Lango Cultural Foundation over irregularities in his dismissal from the position of prime minister by the paramount chief.

Through his lawyer, Emmanuvel Egaru, Nam claims he was dismissed from office without following legal procedures. He argues that Chapter (4), Article 5 of the Lango Cultural Foundation constitution state that the prime minister can only be dismissed if he is implicated in abuse of office or if he is mentally incapacitated.

MP Basalirwa hands over sh20m to COVID-19 team

EAST

The Bugiri Municipality MP, Asuman Basalirwa, has instructed district officials to use the sh20m handed to the COVID-19 task force to buy maize for people affected by the current lockdown.

While handing over the sh20m that was given to all Members of Parliament, Basalirwa said he has received numerous phone calls from his constituents saying they do not have food to eat.

"People are hungry and urgently need food aid. I expect the task force to give me accountability of all the money that has been given to them," Basalirwa said.

Mbarara journalists get COVID-19 food relief

WEST

Journalists in Mbarara have received COVID-19 food relief from the Youth for Development Uganda (YOPEU) to help them during the lockdown.

Edgar Buryahika, a senior sub-editor with *Orumuri* newspaper, and Abdulkarim Ssengendo, a journalist with *New Vision*, through their organisation, YOPEU, donated 400kg of maize flour to help in the fight against COVID-19.

The two handed over the donation to Mbarara COVID-19 task force chairman, Lt. Col. James Mwesigye, at his office in Mbarara on Friday.

Their donation was directed towards supporting journalists who have been rendered jobless due to the lockdown.

"We have realised the challenges our fellow journalists are going through and decided to stand with freelancers, who earn per story published," Buryahika explained.