

MANY PEOPLE DONATE BLOOD FOR FREE, BUT SOME HEALTH WORKERS REQUEST FOR MONEY FROM PATIENT'S

JINJA

By Donald Kiirya

The Indian community in Jinja and Busoga at large has appealed to health workers not to sell blood to patients, but give it to them free of charge in order to save more lives.

The call was made by the chairperson of the organising committee of the 2017 India Kite Flying Festival, Piyush Kotecha, at Spire Road Primary School playground in Jinja on Sunday.

The Kite Flying Festivals, also known as Makar Sankranti, are celebrated internationally by the Indian community every January 12. Makar Sankranti marks the transition of the sun into the zodiacal sign of Makara (Capricorn) on its celestial path, which is the first change in the Zodiac after the winter solstice.

The festival is celebrated in various parts of the Indian subcontinent to observe the day which marks the shift of the sun into ever-lengthening days.

"People donate blood for free and we wonder why some health workers request for money before giving it to patients. This must stop. We appeal to the Government to continue fighting this vice," Kotecha said.

He added that since many patients die due to lack of blood, they thought that conducting a blood donation

Do not sell blood, Indians appeal to health workers

ABOUT THE KITE FESTIVAL

Kite flying is one festival which has the potential to give far reaching effective messages. It involves a common platform where people from all walks of life can come and display kite flying skills. They can participate in groups or individually. There are many kinds of kites, made from different materials such as paper and cloth.

exercise in conjunction with Uganda Red Cross Society and Uganda Blood Transfusion Services would help collect blood which can be used to save the lives of many in hospitals in the Busoga sub-region.

Kotecha further called on the Indian community to continue



Indians donating blood in the Uganda Red Cross Society tent during the Kite Flying festival at Spire Road Primary School on Sunday

donating blood in order to reduce maternal and infant mortality rates in the health

centres in Busoga. Robert Ndaruzi, a counsellor at Uganda Red Cross Society

and Blood Bank in Jinja, said 35 people donated blood during the festival, adding that the

blood will be screened before being distributed to hospitals.

"This blood will save the lives of the most vulnerable, such as children and women in labour," Ndaruzi said.

He commended the Indian community for the good mobilisation that has enabled Uganda Red Cross and the Uganda Blood Transfusion Services to collect blood.

Ndaruzi added that Busoga does not have enough blood in the bank, but they strive to distribute whatever blood they get to various hospitals.

He requested leaders from Busoga, such as the Speaker of Parliament, Rebecca Kadaga, to spearhead the lobbying for a fully-fledged blood bank in the sub-region, that will be stationed in Jinja, instead of having only a distribution centre.

During the festival, raffles were done, which saw many people win various goodies, such as microwaves, subwoofers, flat irons and fans.