

UPDF starts eviction of nomads in West Nile region

ARUA

By Robert Ariaka

Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) has begun evicting nomadic pastoralists in the West Nile region.

While briefing UPDF, Police, resident district commissioners and intelligence officers from West Nile, Brig. Emmanuel Kanyesigye, the 4th Division commander in charge of northern region, gave orders to the officers to start evicting nomadic pastoralists, commonly known as *balaalo*.

Kanyesigye said the operation code-named *Rudi Nyumbani* (go back home), will last two weeks and end on April 22.

The guidelines for the eviction include protecting people and their property, not allowing any one to take the law into their hands and ensuring that residents do not take advantage of the eviction to cause violence.

The Police will enforce law and order and ensure the process is peaceful. The officers will also ensure cattle keepers do not lose their animals during the eviction exercise.

The movement of animals will only be undertaken during the day and the cattle will be escorted by the security officers from the various districts to Karuma.

Kanyesigye said pastoralists should not be allowed to load animals onto trucks past 6:00pm. They are supposed to do so in the morning, in the presence of the security team and be escorted.

The orders also stipulated that animals infected with foot and mouth disease be quarantined and guarded by security personnel until they are vaccinated to avoid spreading the disease to other areas.

The district veterinary officers (DVOs) are to declare the sick



Stick-wielding residents in Obongi evicting nomads from their land. Photos by Robert Ariaka

BETWEEN THE LINES:

The operation follows a presidential directive to the UPDF to evict the pastoralists, after residents complained that their crops were being destroyed by the animals, causing conflict between the them and the pastoralists.

animals so that they are guarded along with their owners. This will prevent people from staying behind on the pretext that their animals are sick.

Richard Akudo, the DVO of Moyo,

said the pastoralists were in three sub-counties in the district. These are Lefori, Gimara and Itula sub-counties. He, however, said some of them had crossed into South Sudan after the directive from the President.

In Yumbe, the pastoralists are in Kululu, Ariwa, Kei, Romogy and Kochi sub-counties.

In Pakwach district, the officials discovered pastoralists from 49 households living with 3,699 long-horned Ankole cattle, while in Nebbi, they discovered 3,000 head of cattle belonging to 37 households.

Dr Willy Nguma, the DVO of Arua, said some of the cattle keepers had started moving back, while others are crossing into eastern Democratic

Republic of Congo, which is a loss for Uganda's economy.

The district has over 15,000 head of cattle belonging to the pastoralists from 77 households.

The operation follows a presidential directive to the UPDF to evict the pastoralists, after residents complained that their crops were being destroyed by the animals, causing conflict between the them and the pastoralists.

Museveni's letter dated October 24, 2017, addressed to Vincent Ssempijja, the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries directs the army and Police to help in the peaceful evacuation of the cattle keepers.

Veterans urged to form co-operative society

The state minister for veteran affairs, Lt. Col. Bright Rwamirama, has directed all veterans across the country to form a co-operative society that will act as a base for their transformation and empowerment. Rwamirama urged veterans that co-operatives would help them increase marketing and the bargaining power for their products.

Minister's vehicle knocks man dead

The vehicle belonging to the Moroto District Woman MP, Stella Atyang, on Tuesday night knocked dead a 65-year-old man in Katakwi district. The Police in Katakwi have identified the deceased as Emmanuel Ojakol, a resident of Akwaradada village in Odoot parish. The vehicle was a grey Toyota Land Cruiser TX, registration number UBA049X.

Kigezi veterans ask for more govt support

Veterans from Kigezi region have asked the Government to give them more support and reward them for services rendered to the country. They made the appeal while meeting the Minister of State for Veteran Dr Bright Rwamirama, at Kabale District Rukiko Hall on Wednesday. Sgt. Caleb Turyamutunga, the co-ordinator of veterans in Kigezi, said they suffer while trying to make ends meet despite government's commitment to improve their livelihoods.