

Divert tear gas money to health, govt urged

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MPIGI. Buganda Kingdom Katikkiro Charles Peter Mayiga has asked government to inject sufficient funds into the country's ailing health sector rather than use it to buy tear gas.

Mr Mayiga said although tear gas is needed to quell rioters, sectors such as health and education are supposed to be well-funded because they are key for any country to attain meaningful social-economic transformation.

"Uganda needs less politics and more social services. All resources geared towards propagating political agendas, should be channeled to the extension of health services. I think there will be less conflict in the country because the citizens will be happy," he said during the Platinum Jubilee celebrations of Our Lady Health of the Sick, Nkozi Hospital in Mpigi District at the weekend.

This financial year, police earmarked at least Shs44 billion to buy tear gas and other relevant riot equipment to quell riots and keep public order in the country.

This is almost three times what the Forces spent on tear gas (Shs14b) in the 2014/15 fiscal year.

Mr Mayiga also unveiled a foundation stone for the construction of a Shs3b Rotary-



Milestone. Katikkiro Peter Mayiga is welcomed by a doctor at Nkozi Hospital during Platinum Jubilee celebrations of the health facility in Mpigi District at the weekend. PHOTO BY SADAT MBOGO

Nkozi Hospital accident and trauma centre.

He commended the Catholic Church for being instrumental in providing social services.

"Anyone who claims to understand God must first love humanity. I commended the Catholic Church for having understood this and that is why we see many of their health centres and schools across the country," Mr Mayiga said.

Currently, government averagely spends 8-9 per cent of its national budget on improving the health sector, contrary to the Abuja Declaration which requires each country to allocate at least 15 per cent of their national budgets to the sector.

Archbishop of Kampala Diocese Cyprian Kizito Lwanga warned the government against introducing the use of contraceptives to children under the age of 15 years,

especially condoms.

"We understand that the government is continuing with plans to give out condoms to our

HEALTH ON CITIZEN

Recent findings in the National Health Accounts survey, an international technique for tracking financial flows in a country's health sector, showed that Uganda's annual spending on each citizen's health is about one-third of its own target – of \$28 (about Shs102,101) – far below international minimum thresholds. Uganda's annual per capita health expenditure stands at \$11 (about Shs40,111) or roughly about \$1 a month, an equivalent of Shs3,646.

children. That is very sad and the outcomes shall be negative for our society. Contraceptives should not be distributed to young girls because the contraceptive mentality has failed to prevent unwanted pregnancies," he said.

"Let us think about the 10 commandments of God and remember the sixth one in this plan. If you give child condoms, it is a mark that shows that he or she is sent to commit prostitution. I ask the government that instead of giving our children condoms; So, what the teenagers need is a value, moral-based sex education and parental guidance," Archbishop Lwanga said.

The East African Legislative Assembly (Eala) early this year drafted a Bill seeking to introduce contraceptives for children and teenagers aged between 10 and 19. The Bill also seeks to legalise abortion.