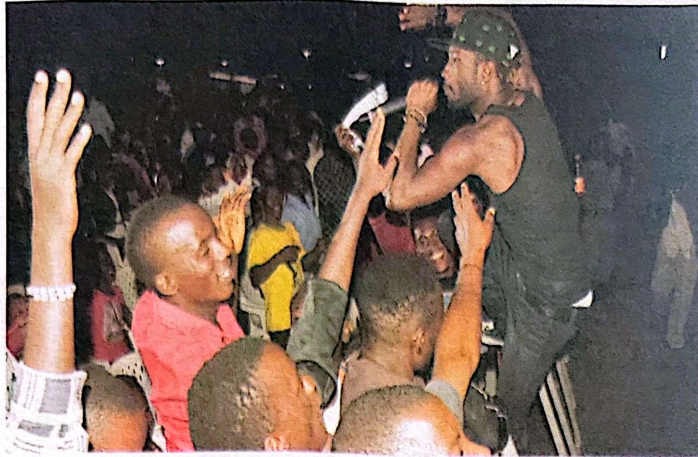


Mukono acquires meter to check noise pollution



Noise. An artiste performs at a concert in Kampala last year. Mukono Municipality authorities have procured a sound level meter device to help curb noise pollution in the town. FILE PHOTO

Evidence. Authorities say the noise metre will provide them with evidence of noise polluters in the municipal court.

BY JESSICA SABANO
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

MUKONO. In an effort to control the increasing noise pollution in Mukono Municipality, authorities have procured a sound level meter to help measure the volume of noise made in the town.

According to Mr George Fred Kagimu, the Mukono Municipality mayor, the noise meter will provide them with evidence of noise polluters in the municipal court.

Shs5m has so far been spent on the noise meter device.

"Acquiring a sound level meter is a good step as we strive to fight noise pollution in the town. Some residents have been complaining that we falsely accuse them of going beyond the permissible noise levels because we lacked the machine, but now we shall have evidence to disprove them," he said during an inter-

view on Wednesday.

Last year, the municipal council passed an ordinance that banned noise at ceremonies such as wedding parties and public gatherings beyond midnight.

The law also bars event organisers from playing loud music beyond the maximum permissible noise levels as they move around the town to publicise their events.

Mr Kagimu said although they have made some progress, noise pollution is still an issue in the municipality since some people have failed to adhere to the guidelines issued to them.

Mr Kagimu said they want to be more vigilant in enforcing both noise and environment pollution laws because many factories have sprung up in the area thus threatening to pollute the nearby water sources where residents draw water for domestic use.

The National Environment (Noise Standards and Control) Regulations 2003, empowers local councils to make laws regulating noise and vibration pollu-

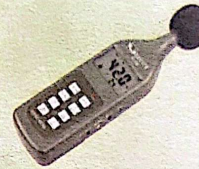
tion in accordance with the Local Governments Act.

The deputy mayor of Mukono Municipality, Mr Jamada Kajjiba, said they have so far arrested two people over noise pollution and they will be charged with producing unnecessary noise in the area.

"We have been sensitising people, including religious leaders, on noise pollution and some have cooperated and installed sound proofing systems," Mr Kajjiba said.

Mr Kajjiba also said during the numerous meetings they have held with religious leaders in the area, the latter gave them assurance that noise emanating from places of worship during night prayers would drastically reduce for those who have not yet installed sound proofing systems.

MEASURING SOUND



Sound is measured in decibels (dB). The range that is safe for a human's ears should be under 85 dB.

In residential areas, the permissible noise levels for discotheques, places of workshop and construction sites are 60 dB during day and 40 dB at night, while in commercial areas, it is 75 dB during day and 50 dB at night. For industrial areas, it is 85 dB during day and 65 dB at night.

Residents speak out

Ms Margaret Nabirye, a businesswoman in Mukono Town, said although controlling noise pollution is good, the authorities will find an uphill task to enforce the ordinance, especially among born-again churches since most of their followers pray throughout the night.

"It is a good idea to get a noise meter for those who mount loud speakers on trucks and move around town because they were overdoing it, but for pentecostal churches, I doubt whether it will work. Many of us get busy during day time and we go to church at night," she said.

Medical doctors have previously warned that getting exposed to excessive noise for more than six hours daily, makes one get health-related problems such as headaches, heart failure, deafness and cancer, among others.

They also warn that constant exposure to loud sound beyond 80 decibels (noise pollution) can affect the ears, thereby causing temporary or permanent hearing loss.

Man public

Permanent Secretary Ith, Dr Diana Atwine, table and positive ilities, saying this nce. Citing an : of rotten blood t Kawempe hospital tative publicity om visiting health ily Monitor in a ently, Dr Atwine hological and when it in the health process delays.

Suspected conman held

KAMPALA. Police in Kampala have arrested a man over allegations of conning Shs18m from a businessman in Kikuubo Market. Addressing the media on Tuesday, police said the suspect had more than five pending cases of fraud at different police stations in Kampala. The suspect allegedly waylaid the businessman outside a banking hall on Jinja Road, where he conned him of the money before he disappeared about three weeks ago. He was on Tuesday arrested from downtown in Kampala while he allegedly tried to con another unsuspecting woman. [Joseph Kato]

Man, girl die in house fire

KAMPALA. Police in Kampala are investigating circumstances under which a 60-year-old man and his four-year-old granddaughter were killed in a fire that gutted the house in which they were sleeping in the wee hours of Tuesday. Ronnie Mutebi and his granddaughter, all residents of Jambula zone in Bwaise, perished in the blaze suspected to have been ignited by arsonists. Locals told police that the deceased had been in property-related wrangles with some of his relatives, something they suspect could be the reason his house was set ablaze. [Joseph Kato]

ISO accused of kidnap

KAMPALA. A family in Kabowa, Rubaga Division in Kampala has accused the Internal Security Organisation (ISO) of kidnapping their relative and extorting money from them. Ms Aisha Kiggundu, flanked by other family members, told Daily Monitor on Tuesday that her son, Mr Hassan Kigazi, was shot in the leg and later kidnapped by suspected ISO operatives on May 18. She said a day after the incident, strangers called her demanding Shs100,000, which they later increased to Shs250,000 to treat him. However, when contacted, the ISO director general, Col Kaka Bagyenda, declined to comment on the matter. [Joseph Kato]