

"...somebody," the sources added.

John Fitzgerald Magara, is a wealthy businessman based in Hoima.

...keeping me bodies as we make the necessary evaluations on them," Kayima said. Kayima also implored the

...provide us with any information that might be useful in our investigations so that we conclude the inquiries on time," he noted.

So many people have put me to task with telling them which people were shot dead. Therefore, I call on the Police to give us a report detailing the identities of the people who were shot dead, those arrested

later teamed up with Abdur Rahman and they started their own mosque at Usafi. Residents were shocked that the group carried out its activities just next to Usafi Police post.

Maternity leave not a favour, govt tells private employers

By Carol Kasujja

As Uganda joins the rest of the world in commemorating International Labour Day today, the Ministry of Labour, Gender and Social Development has instructed all private companies to grant mothers paid maternity leave.

According to a survey conducted by the labour ministry, most private companies do not observe the law providing for a female employee to take 60 days of maternity leave.

The Employment Act 2006, states that, on top of having a right to maternity leave, a pregnant female employee shall have a right to return to work in the position she held before or a reasonably suitable alternative. She is also entitled to sick leave.

"Working mothers should spend at least 90 days with their newborns. They need these days to rest and also work on their bodies. If a mother is not given time to attend to her baby, she will not deliver because her mind will always be thinking about the baby at

home, but if she is given time with her baby, she will be the best when she is back to work. Employers who do not adhere to such conditions should be reported to the ministry. We shall punish them," Peace Mutuzo, the state minister in for gender and culture, said.

While addressing the media, the minister also instructed all employers of casual labourers to give them contracts stipulating their terms of engagement, so as to stop abusing their rights. She said employers should not just fire people as they wish; they should give their workers leave and always give them days off.

Mutuzo also advised employees to negotiate their working terms and conditions before signing contracts, adding that this would save them from prolonged court fights.

This year's Labour Day celebrations will be held at Sembabule town council playground in Sembabule district, under the theme: 'Promoting the public spirit in the public sector.'

According to the gender

ministry, the theme calls on all public servants, to act in the interest of the public they serve. This means, public officials must perform their official functions and duties, and also exercise any discretionary powers, in ways that promote the public interest.

"Public officials must always act in the best interest of the country. This is because failure to pursue the public interest by public officials, denies the public services and undermines the performance of the private sector which is the key driver of economic growth," Frank Mugabi, a communication officer at the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, said.

Mugabi noted that, public officials should carry out functions fairly and impartially, with integrity and professionalism as well as ensure proper accountability, transparency, expose corruption and maladministration.

According to a cross-section of employees interviewed by New Vision yesterday, most



Acting principal labour officer Onzima Apollo, Peace Mutuzo and Frank Mugabi at the Uganda Media Centre on April 29. Photo by Abou Kisige

employers do not grant the 90-day maternity leave to their female employees as required by law. All employees interviewed requested not to be identified for fear of losing their jobs.

"At our workplace, we do not get 60 days off. According to our contracts, we are supposed to be away for 60 days, but in

reality, we go for about 45 days," said a female radio journalist.

"You are allowed to go for leave, but you are never sure whether, when you come back you will still have your job. So, you cannot even afford to be home for 60 days," another employee in a private company in Kampala said.

"When I was pregnant, everyone started discriminating me. They would not give me assignments and when I was about to give birth, someone was hired to replace me. When I came back from leave, I was made his deputy," another employee working for a pharmacy in Kampala said.