Minister Balaam cautions Masindi students against drugs, alcohol

By Nelson Kiva

The Youth and Children Affairs State Minister, Balaam Barugahara, has advised students to shun alcoholism and drugs, saying they will harm their health, cloud their judgment and destroy their bright future.

"Protect your dreams by protecting your body and mind. Respect your values and uphold your dignity. Focus on your education and personal growth and avoid distractions that may derail your goals, including premature relationships that may affect your emotional well-being and academic focus. Your time now is for learning, building character and preparing for a strong and successful future," Barugahara said.

The minister made the remarks at St Teresa Girls Secondary School at Nyamigisa Catholic Parish in Masindi municipality on Sunday.

"It fills my heart with hope and pride to speak to you today. Each one of you represents strength, intelligence, creativity and limitless potential. You are not just the leaders of tomorrow, you are powerful change-makers today. Across history, women and girls have shaped nations, advanced science, led movements and transformed communities," Barugahara told the female students.



Minister Barugahara (fifth-right) with Ssewanyana and students of St Teresa Girls Secondary School at Nyamigisa Catholic Parish in Masindi Municipality on Sunday

The minister donated a bull and 200kg of rice to the students to enable them break the fast during this Lent season.

Barugahara's donation was warmly received by school administrators and church leaders.

"We appreciate the minister's support toward our students during this Lenten period. His gesture will go a long way in providing for our students and strengthening our community outreach initiatives," John Fisher Ssewanyana, a priest at the parish, said.

Ssewanyana said the minister's gesture serves as a reminder of the power of faith and community in Uganda.

"Faith-based institutions play a crucial role in shaping the moral fabric of our society. I am pleased to support St Teresa Girls Secondary School and Nyamigisa Catholic Parish in their mission to inspire and nurture the next generation of leaders," Barugahara said.

The Minister commended the local community for its continued support for President Yoweri Museveni, and called upon the congregation to continue praying for peace, unity and prosperity in the nation.

Additionally, the minister pledged to provide a five-year free radio programme to support the church's evangelisation mission. He said faith-based institutions play a crucial role in moral guidance and social transformation.

Church leaders expressed gratitude for the minister's generosity and his commitment to supporting both education and spiritual development within the community.