



Karimojong elders during the Karamoja cultural gala at Nabilatuk, Nakapiripirit district. Photo by Olandason Wanyama

Karimojong urged to promote peace using culture

NAKAPIRIPIRIT

By Olandason Wanyama

The state minister for minerals, Peter Lokeris, has said culture is significant in promoting peace in Karamoja region, previously characterised by armed conflict and cattle rustling.

"We need to make use of culture to ensure the promotion of peace," he noted.

Lokeris said Karamoja has missed out on several government programmes as a result of conflict that has culminated into destruction of wealth through cattle rustling. He made the call during a cultural gala organised by Karamoja Development Forum under the theme, *"Empowering the people through culture"*.

Presiding over the function held at Acheger'etolim shrine in Arieng'esiep village, Achegereitolim parish, Nabilatuk sub-county, the minister emphasised the need to use culture in the consolidation of peace.

"This will promote peace

BETWEEN THE LINES:

■ The warring clans are identified as Bokora from Napak, Matheniko who hail from Moroto and Pian from Nakapiripirit district.

among the former conflicting clans, hence contributing to peaceful co-existence," Lokeris said.

He advised the Toposa from South Sudan and Turkana in northwestern Kenya to use culture to promote peace among themselves.

Lokeris, however, decried the increasing spread of HIV/AIDS in the region and advised the youth to desist from tendencies that could drive them into catching the disease.

He congratulated the Government on the disarmament that got rid of illegal guns in Karamoja.

The deputy minister for Iteso Cultural Union, Vance Omome, said the conflicts inside Karamoja had extended to the neighbours, creating division.

He asked the Iteso and Karimojong to forget the past, saying both people should now focus on promoting peace.

The head of the Pian clan in Nakapiripirit district, Petero Ny'anga Lomogolia, said the return of peace to Karamoja after decades was a blessing.

Over the weekend, the Karamoja cluster that comprises the Turkana, Karimojong, Toposa from South Sudan and the Ny'angatom embarked on consolidating the peace in Karamoja ushered in by the Government by attending function.

Lomogolia said traditions should be used to unite the clans in the region, including the neighbours in South Sudan and Kenya.

The Nakapiripirit district chairperson, John Nangiro, asked the Karimojong to make use of the opportunity to re-vent oneness.

He encouraged the communities to embrace good cultural practices, saying the move would enhance sustainable peace.