

## Daily Monitor

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**Patients buy drugs.** Patients in Nebbi Hospital are being forced to spend more to buy drugs expensively from private clinics. This is after drug shortage has hit the hospital that serves both locals and patients from neighboring DR Congo. The patients are only receiving prescription from the medical personnel who later refer them to private clinics. The hospital administrator, Mr Gilbert Onencan, confirmed to *Daily Monitor* at the weekend that the last consignment of drugs they received was in December and they are waiting until March for another consignment. [Ibrahim Adubango, Monitor]



## Lango losers asked to concede

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**LIRA.** The Lango Cultural Foundation (LCF) has asked their sons and daughters that lost in the just concluded parliamentary and local council elections to concede defeat.

Dr Richard Nam, the Foundation prime minister, said all the poll losers should concede defeat and work with the victors for the betterment of Lango sub-region. Lango Cultural Foundation is a body that governs Lango tribal groups. A total of 101 candidates contested for 22 parliamentary seats in Kole, Oyam, Lira, Amolatar, Alebtong, Otuke, Dokolo and Apac districts, while 34 contested for eight district LC5 seats.

# Gulu hit by anti-malaria drugs shortage

**Call.** Officials say drug stocking should be done soon to avoid more deaths.

BY JULIUS OCUNGI  
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**GULU.** An acute shortage of malaria drugs has hit Gulu District following an increase in cases of malaria reported according to records from the district health department.

Currently, the district is registering 17,000 cases of malaria every week, 10 times higher than in April last year when the epidemic first hit the district killing more than 72 people, mostly children and expectant mothers.

Following the upsurge of malaria in the district last December, the

National Medical Store (NMS) dispatched 50,000 emergency dosages of anti-malarial drugs in January for mass fever treatment in the communities. However, two months down the road, health officials are now

worried of the escalating numbers of children and expectant mothers getting infected with malaria yet treatment drugs have run out of stock for more than a week.

The acting Gulu District health officer, Mr Robert Ongom, told *Daily Monitor* at the weekend that health centres in the villages have run out of anti-malaria drugs adding that village health officials were now sending patients to public hospitals. "It is true the drugs that were sent by National Medical Store (NMS) are now out of stock. This is really posing a health risk for patients in villages," Mr Ongom said. He added that health officials at the health centres have now embarked on massive sensitisation as they wait for deliveries from NMS but noted if emergency responses are not taken by the Health ministry, many lives could be at risk. "We are looking at a region that is registering the highest cases of malaria ever in the country, drug stocking needs to be handled fast to avoid casualties," Mr Ongom noted.

## WORRYING UPSURGE

Latest statistics released last week by the district health department show an upsurge in Malaria cases by more than 17,000 in the last one week alone. The figure indicates that Malaria cases increased from 321,967 in week six to 339,614 in week seven since the year begun.

This means 86 health facilities in Gulu District alone registered 17,647 cases of malaria within just seven days.

According to Yoweri Idiba, the Gulu District health department biostatistician, the

positivity rate currently stands at 83 per cent. Mr Idiba noted that the most burdened by the disease are children ranging from the ages of 5-14 years who make up 21 per cent of the most affected population.

The Health ministry since April last year put up a spirited fight in combatting malaria in the region including recently dispatching 70 health workers of the 374 sent to the North to fight malaria but the trend has been growing.