

Journalists cautioned on misuse of AI

BY KHALIL I. MANZI

KAMPALA. Journalists across Uganda yesterday joined the rest of the world to mark World Press Freedom Day, renewing calls to safeguard media independence, uphold professionalism, and address persistent challenges in the industry.

The commemoration, held in Kampala under the theme "Shaping a future at peace: Promoting press freedom for human rights, development and security," brought together media practitioners, government officials, and civil society actors. Participants reflected on the state of journalism and the pressures facing newsrooms.

A key concern raised was the growing misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) in news production. Mr Godfrey Baluku Kabbyanga, State Minister for National Security, warned that while AI tools are increasingly used to generate content, they can produce misleading or inaccurate information if not properly supervised.

"Many people are now getting information from AI, but some of it is inaccurate at times, so editors must exercise caution and ensure human oversight," he said.

Another issue highlighted was the low or non-payment of journalists in some media houses. Mr Kabbyanga said authorities continue to receive complaints from practitioners who go unpaid and urged them to report such cases to the Uganda Media Council for action.

He acknowledged financial strain in Uganda's competitive media landscape, with more than 300 radio stations competing for limited advertising revenue, but stressed that this should not justify failure to pay journalists.

Mr Lamex Omara Apitta of the Uganda Human Rights Commission described the event as a show of unity, emphasizing the media's role in informing citizens and shaping national debate.