officers can get a tent, chairs, put

EDITORIAL

Stop noise pollution by Pentecostal churches

The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda guarantees religious freedom. Article 29 (1)(c) states: "Every person shall have the right to freedom to practice any religion and manifest such practice which shall include the right to belong to and participate in the practice of any religious body or organisation in a manner consistent with the Constitution."

The law stipulates that rights to freedom of worship must be enjoyed without infringing on the rights of other people.

Unfortunately, many Pentecostal churches wantonly disregard this by engaging in religious activities that tantamount to noise pollution.

These churches, some of which are located in residential areas, conduct night prayer and worship sessions that include extremely loud singing, playing of music instruments, shouting.

These ear-splitting noises deprive people in the vicinity of these churches of a quiet environment that is needed for a good night sleep.

Some members of these churches engage in street preaching at day time using public address systems. The extremely loud shouting, chants, and singing inconveniences people going about their businesses.

Owners of shops and other businesses complain that these churches and street preachers disrupt trade by causing noise pollution.

Institutions of learning have also on several occasions expressed displeasure, saying the cacophony emanating from these churches hinder their efforts to teach pupils and students.

Uganda has excellent anti-noise pollution laws. However, implementation of these laws is inadequate.

The issue:

Noise pollution

Our view:

The enforcers of these laws must pull up their socks to restore sanity in communities and on the streets.

All violators of noise pollution laws must be subjected to just punishment.

Churches, especially those in residential areas, should be compelled to install sound proofing devices to eliminate noise pollution.

The authorities must also rein in errant street preachers who currently infringe on the rights of other people in urban areas across the country.

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Noise pollution is a serious matter that should be treated with utmost urgency because it endangers the health of the public.

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