

FDC threatens to sue blood bank over discrimination

By Jeff Andrew Lule

The Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) women's league has threatened to drag the Uganda Blood Transfusion Service (UBTS) to court over negligence and discrimination.

The party says it is unfortunate that UBTS refused to collect blood from FDC members yet there is a shortage of blood in the country.

UBTS is a government body mandated to collect blood from the public.

The party's women's league spokesperson, Sarah Eperu, said the act of refusing the blood from FDC members is discriminatory.

"This was free blood donated by Ugandans. Blood does not change colour because one is FDC, NRM, DP or UPC. Refusing to collect blood based on political affiliations is discriminatory and careless," she noted.

Eperu made the remarks while addressing journalists at the party's weekly press briefing.



Stella Nyanzi addressing journalists as Eperu looks on during a press briefing at FDC's offices in Najjanankumbi. Photo by Nancy Nanyonga

Demand for apology

She noted that as women in FDC, they condemn the act by UBTS and demand an apology from UBTS.

She said the Government must also step forward and give an explanation to Ugandans.

On February 14, last week, FDC

mobilised its party members to donate blood but UBTS failed to show up, yet they had confirmed that they would carry out the exercise.

"We want UBTS to apologise to Ugandans for the shameful act. If not, we are going to sit down with our lawyers and drag them to court

BETWEEN THE LINES:

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for neglecting their work. It is because of their negligence that we have a shortage of blood in the country and more deaths. They are paid to collect blood which they have failed to do," Eperu added.

She said more people, especially women and children, continue to die due to the lack of blood in different parts of the country.

However, Eperu also noted that FDC members are still open to donating blood in case of any other arrangement.

When the *New Vision* contacted, UBTS executive director, Dr Dorothy Kyeyune, she declined to comment

on the matter and referred us to the health ministry.

Efforts to get a comment from the state minister of health in charge of general duties, Sarah Opendi and the ministry's permanent secretary, Dr Diana Atwiine, proved futile as our calls were unanswered.

Monthly contribution

On allegations that some MPs in former party president, Maj. Gen. Mugisha Muntu's camp refused to remit monthly contributions to the sitting leadership, the party's deputy secretary general, Harold Kaija, said it was false.

"I cannot confirm now because the month is still on. Otherwise no member defaulted the past month," he said.

This follows reports that some pro-Muntu MPs had vowed not to remit their monthly contribution to the sitting party leadership led by Patrick Amuriat.

Amuriat took over from Muntu at last year's party delegates' conference.