

Govt to block pornography websites

By Carol Kasujja

The Ministry of Ethics and Integrity together with Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) are planning to block pornography sites, especially those hosting child porn. The plan is to begin by creating a list of pornography sites, and then forward it to UCC.

This was revealed during a stakeholders meeting organised by the recently appointed Pornography Control Committee in Kampala on Monday.

"Pornography is a moral disease that is eating up so many people, including our politicians. When I arrested 49 people in Bakuuli who were having group sex, I was shocked to find my fellow politicians. We are going to work with internet service providers (ISPs) to block pornography, so that we can save our young generation. If porn was blocked in Dubai and India, even in Uganda we can block it.

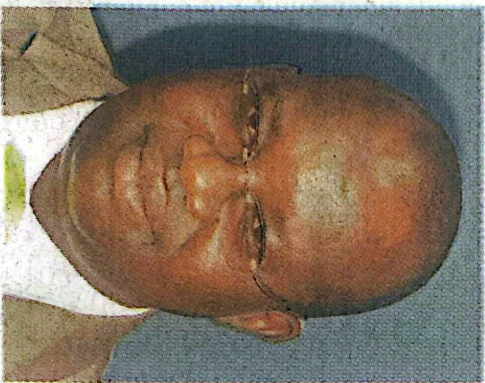
There is nothing impossible if the will is there," ethics state minister Simon Lokodo said.

The minister warned all media houses and film makers who play pornographic videos and run nude pictures to watch out, lest they are closed.

In her speech, Dr Annette Kezabuu, the chairperson of the Pornography Control Committee, challenged those who are trivialising pornography as a privacy issue, saying the vice has far-reaching consequences, including addiction, objectification of women and the urge to practise what is acted.

"Pornography is scripted in a subtle way that it is meant to keep the consumer expectant and addicted. It is a cancer of the soul that is always discovered in its advanced stage with grave consequences," Kezabuu, who is also vice-chancellor at Kampala International University, revealed.

According to Kezabuu, too much exposure to pornographic acts



Ethics minister Simon Lokodo

psychologically affects the way in which men sexually treat women. "It is because of pornography that we are experiencing an increase in cases defilement, rape and murder of women," she said.

"We might be few who are fighting this but God does not make mistakes, we shall end this vice. We are going to get telecommunication companies and get a software that filters what kind of content people watch on their phones. No one will access porn on his/her phone."

Addressing journalists, former ethics minister Nsaba Buturo cautioned the newly-constituted committee against half-hearted responses from government agencies that should ideally be supporting its work.

"Our country is in trouble and the kind of trouble that has not attracted attention. Time will come when our country is not taken seriously because of decay in value system. Pornography started in 2000 but there has been total silence.

"The few voices that were against it have been timid, incapable of salvaging our values. They have been compromised by donor aid from the foreign countries," he said.

The Government also suggested that churches, teachers and other organisations will have to play a big role in creating awareness and sensitising the ill-effects of porn.

"We found out that some people were using sex education in schools to promote porn but we are going to include (anti-pornography) materials in our curriculum so that our children learn the causes and dangers of porn at an early stage," Sarah Nantunga, the curriculum specialist in religious education at the National Curriculum Development Centre, said.

Kampala metropolitan Police spokesperson Emilian Kayima called on parents to go back to the basics and have open discussions with their children about pornography.

"Parents need to have quality time with their children. Children know what we do not know. As parents, let us talk to them and advise them. Keeping silent will not help us," Kayima noted.