

Together, we can end the HIV/Aids scourge

Thousands of people on Sunday participated in the 13th Kabaka Birthday Run. The event, which is held in major urban centres across the country annually, is aimed at sensitising the populace about the HIV/Aids pandemic and securing funds to combat the scourge.

The event that commemorates the birthday of the king of Buganda, Kabaka Ronald Mutebi II, is organised by the Buganda Kingdom in conjunction with government agencies, private sector organisations, business entities, and the general public.

Proceeds from the event have, over the years, contributed tremendously towards efforts to fight HIV/Aids, a major health challenge that has claimed thousands of lives.

Great strides have been made ever since the war against the HIV/Aids scourge was launched in 1986. This progress is in a large part due to the government's sustained effort to educate people about the pandemic in order to reduce its spread.

In this life-saving goal, the government has, over the years, received support from its development partners, non-governmental organisations, religious organisations, business entities, and cultural organisations.

The Issue:

HIV/Aids fight

Our view:

With the foreign funding greatly reduced, the onus is on the Government of Uganda to find other sources of revenue locally to maintain the fight against HIV/Aids.

According to the Uganda Aids Commission, annual Aids-related deaths reduced from 56,000 in 2010 to 20,000 in 2024. There was a fall in new HIV infections from 96,000 to 37,000 over the same period.

Impressive headway has also been made in increasing the number of people enrolled onto antiretroviral treatment.

However, the fight against HIV/Aids has been heavily reliant on foreign funding, largely from the United States government.

This key revenue source was abruptly disrupted following the United States government's reduction in the amount of money allocated to Uganda to fight HIV/Aids.

This has disrupted Uganda's war against HIV/Aids, including the provision of antiretroviral treatment to 1.4 million citizens living with the virus.

With the foreign funding greatly reduced, the onus is on the Government of Uganda to find other sources of revenue locally to maintain the fight against HIV/Aids. The Buganda Kingdom initiative is playing a key role in filling the financial gap that the government is currently struggling to close.

We commend Kabaka Mutebi II, the Buganda Kingdom, and its partners, and the general public for taking part in the Kabaka Birthday Run, an event that provides much-needed funds for the anti-HIV/Aids fight.

Other cultural institutions, religious organisations, and non-governmental organisations should emulate the Buganda Kingdom and organise fundraising events to secure funds for the war against HIV/Aids.

We also call upon business entities to consider the anti-HIV/Aids fight as a key corporate social responsibility and donate generously towards the cause.

To the public, we say every individual should take responsibility for his or her health. Do not engage in risky behaviour that can expose you to HIV/Aids.

Those who are already infected should seek treatment and live positively. Do not intentionally infect other people with the virus.

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