

## **COVID 19 : KARAMOJA LEADERS EXPRESS WORRY OVER POROUS KENYA**

### **UGANDA AND UGANDA- SOUTH SUDAN BORDER.**

**By Joseph Orisa Kotido 5/5/2020. 0772579170**

Leaders in Karamoja have expressed worry over the porous borders between Karamoja and Kenya and Karamoja and south Sudan saying that it is a hot spot where COVID 19 infection will pass into Uganda without detection.

The Kotido district chairperson Ambros Lotukei says there are uncontrolled movements between Nakitongo and Lodwar settlements in Kenya and between Kotido , Moroto and Kaabong districts in Karamoja all neighboring Kenya and Karenga district that neighbors south Sudan via Kitgum district. .

Lokukei was Monday 4<sup>th</sup> afternoon Speaking in a meeting where the Kotido district woman member of parliament Hon Margret Aleper and the Jie County MP Hon Moses Adome Bildard each returned the controversial 20,000,000= to the district task force.

“ Business across this borders are booming especially Nakitongo ,and Lodwar in Kenya bordering Karamoja in Uganda. The boarders are so porous and deserted and are a hot spot where COVID 19 infection will pass into Uganda.” Lotukei said.

He told the meeting that although the Uganda Peoples defense forces (UPDF) have deployed in the official border points, there are several Panya -routes where both Kenyans and Ugandans enter either countries using motorcycles.

He urges government to extensively deploy in these places to avert the risk of silent infection.

The Kotido Resident District commissioner Peter Logiro told the district task force meeting that a total of 86 cows and three trucks were last week arrested in Kotido en-route to south Sudan by security forces.

He said 12 suspects were arraigned before the Kotido chief magistrate's court with charges of illegal transportation of animals.

He says he was dismayed by the court ruling which cautioned, fined and released the 12 convicts plus all their trucks and cows after pleading guilty.

“ I am not happy with the ruling on the basis that Kotido district is under animal quarantine and secondly we are under the threat of COVID 19” Logiro lamented.

He says there is increased cattle trade among the I teso and karimojong who buy cows from Karamoja and transport them to south Sudan hence disobeying the Presidential directive and putting the people in risk of contracting COVID19.

Cerino Achar, the Kotido District Health officer says four south sudan nationals who were found in the district and were quarantined in Kotido Army school were released after mandatory 14 days.

The Kotido district woman member of parliament also donated seven temperature Guns and asset of sanitizers al worth over 5m= While The Jie County MP officially handed over an Ambulance to the district task force together with cash worth 40,000,000= for the two MPs.

The Kotido chief Administrative officer Joseph Lomongin ceremonially received the cash but handed it back to the MPs to deposit it in an account in Bank of Uganda and only return a deposit slip as directed by Ministry of Finance.

According to the Ministry of health web portal [covid19.gou.go.ug](https://covid19.gou.go.ug) ; Uganda has 97 confirmed COVID 19 cases and 18,128 high risk travellers including those from Kenya and south Sudan.

***Ends.***