

Tuesday, January 17, 2012 - Rights So Divine by Youngbee Dale



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**WASHINGTON**, January 17, 2011 – Human trafficking often involves prostitution and forced labor of victims in many cases. But in Uganda, many traffickers buy and sell children against their wills to use their genitals, heads, and blood for ritual sacrifice.

The U.S. Department of States recently reported 9000 children missing in Uganda over the last four years. Traffickers transport children both inside Uganda and to other countries for use in ritual sacrifices.

In 2008, police arrested a witchdoctor couple and a real estate mogul, Godfrey Kajubi, for trafficking 12 year old Joseph for ritual sacrifice. According to the police, Kajubi promised the witchdoctor couple \$4021 in exchange for the heads of four children, which he planned to use for ritual. Kajubi paid \$127 for Joseph's head, and told the couple that he would pay the rest of the promised amount when the couple brought him three more human heads.

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The witchdoctor later testified that Kajubi and his employee murdered Joseph, mutilated his body, cut off his head and genitals, drained the body of all blood and dumped the torso in a local swamp.

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Police found Joseph's head buried under Godfrey's new construction site. Many wealthy Ugandans believe burial of children's body parts under construction sites will bring prosperity and wealth to their building sites. Traffickers take children and cut off their body parts to profit from wealthy customers.

In some cases, family members traffick children.

In 2010, ABC news reported a horrific story of a father killing his 17 month old son for ritual sacrifice. The father said he wanted money to set up a business fixing bicycles, so he and his friend beheaded his infant son and sold his head to a wealthy businessman for \$2000. According to the report, the businessman believed that the head of the child would bring him more wealth.

In other cases, exploiters traffic children to countries like the UK for blood ritual. According to a BBC report, ECPAT-UK, an anti-child trafficking organization, and British authorities say that traffickers smuggled at least 400 children from Africa over the past four years for ritual purposes. After authorities rescued the children, the children said that traffickers subjected them to degrading treatment and forcibly extracted blood from them. Many children wanted to speak anonymously out of fear of retribution by their traffickers.

Many argue that child sacrifice is a relatively new phenomenon in Uganda. One Ugandan witchdoctor attributes to the influence of

Tanzanian witches for the rising number of child sacrifice. He argues that many Tanzanian witches taught Ugandan witches to perform child sacrifices.

Others say the recent economic development in Uganda is the cause behind increasing number of child sacrifice in the country. Pastor Peter Sewakiryaga, the founder of the Kyampisi Childcare Ministries church, told the BBC :

Child sacrifice has risen because people have become lovers of money. They want to get richer.

"They have a belief that when you sacrifice a child you get wealth, and there are people who are willing to buy these children for a price. So they have become a commodity of exchange, child sacrifice has become a commercial business."

In response to the rising number of ritual murders, the Ugandan government established an Anti-Human Sacrifice Police Task Force, equipped in part by the U.S. government. Since its establishment, the Ugandan authorities say that the rate of ritual murder has slowed down.

Many nonprofits and advocates disagree. Pastor Sewakiryaga, the founder of anti-child sacrifice organization, Kyampisi Ministries, told BBC report that there are more child victims from "his parish than the official statistics for the entire country."

During the email interview with the Washington Times Communities, Pastor Sewakiryaga said he's planning on taking one boy to Australia to reattach his genitals which were removed during a ritual sacrifice.

Jubilee Campaign, a UK based organization, criticized the Ugandan government for its failure to

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fight the crime. In its report, the Jubilee Campaign says that Ugandan authorities fail to investigate hundreds of ritual murder cases because of corruption and lack of resources.

The Jubilee Campaign and Pastor Sewakiryaga are working together to obtain international support for better anti-child sacrifice legislation through a petition. They are hoping the petition will show international support to move the Ugandan government to fight child sacrifice more rigorously.

January is National Human Trafficking Awareness Month. As he spoke to the Washington Times Communities, Pastor Sewakiryaga expressed his wishes that more people in the U.S. would sign the petition to show their support for the victims.

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Read more about child sacrifice in Uganda:

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