

International Tobacco Accountability Bulletin

News, Updates and Analyses of Issues Related to International Tobacco

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Uganda: BAT “Rave & Soul” Easter Celebration

On Easter Eve, British American Tobacco sponsored a large “Rave & Soul Street Jam” to promote its Benson & Hedges brand to young urban Ugandans. Izama Angelo, producer of Monitor FM’s Morning Talk Show “The Eye Opener” reports:

The Rave & Soul Street Jam took place yesterday [March 30, 2002] in Kampala. The occasion was organized by one of Kampala’s popular nightclubs, Club Silk.

The event this year was timed to coincide with the Easter Holidays, one of the most celebrated holidays by Uganda’s largely Christian population.

The concert attracted a largely young audience. Despite the club’s official policy of not allowing anyone below the age of 18, the concert was packed with young people, some of them as young as 13 years of age. The concert organizers did not make any attempts to verify the age of anyone attending.

Events at the Street Jam

The artists and performers invited to the concert were a “Who’s Who” of teenage entertainment. The three masters of ceremony were some of the country’s most popular broadcasters. One of them, Collin Serubiri, hosts a pop music show called Jam Agenda, which has been voted (mainly by teenagers) as one of the best entertainment programs on TV. Another presenter, Mitch, is host of a show on a successful radio station that operates an R&B format for a teen and young adult audience.

All the participating artists and dance acts – *Chameleon*, *Baby Cool*, *Kaweesa*, *Tempra Omona*, and *the Obsessions* – are also very popular with the younger population.

Tobacco at the Concert

The venue was heavily decorated with the brand colors of the B&H brand: yellow and black. Several booths were selling cigarettes at 3000 Ugandan shillings, 500 shillings above the market price.

The high price was part of a promotional gimmick. For each packet of cigarettes bought, one was entitled to win a prize. Prizes ranged from B&H lighters to wineglasses and sporty jackets. Customers were required to take the packet of cigarettes purchased to a booth with beautiful girls located at the center of the event venue. The girls let customers pick pieces of paper out of a bowl, redeemable for whatever prize was printed on them.

There was no limit to how many packets of cigarettes one could buy. Several people with boxes slung on their shoulders also sold cigarettes. They would move in the crowd and serve customers. Smoking was encouraged, and young boys and girls were among those seen doing so.

Read Izama Angelo’s full report of the BAT event at: <http://www.essentialaction.org/tobacco/aofm/0204/uganda.html>

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