

Nigeria to host conference on albinism intervention in Africa

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APA, Abuja (Nigeria) The 4th National Conference on Albinism is scheduled to open in Sokoto, north-west Nigeria on Monday to generate strategies that will establish an international intervention for people living with albinism in Africa.

The founder of the Albino Foundation of Nigeria, Mr Jake Epelle, said in Sokoto on Sunday that the conference would also look into various aspects of albinism, especially skin cancer.

The theme of the two-day conference, Epelle said is "That Albinos May Live Free of Skin Cancer."

According to Epelle, several top federal, state and local government officials from across the country, including four cabinet ministers are expected to grace the occasion.

Similarly, the over two million albinos in Nigeria would be represented by a horde of delegates at the event which is being hosted by the Sokoto State government in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Health as well as the Albino Foundation.

"The overriding decision to move the conference to Sokoto in the north of Nigeria for the first time in four years is on account of the role the traditional institutions can play in driving awareness among communities in the region.

"There is no doubt that traditional institutions could drive the change for proper understanding of albinism and the challenges associated with it," Epelle explained.

This, he said they could do by being partners in rural awareness on sun safety campaigns and educate the people on albinism.

"Such ignorance about what albinism is and what it is not has given rise to myths which manifest in killings, social discrimination, rejections, rights denials and abuse of albinos.

"These challenges hinder the social development of albinos, especially the young ones and limit their ability to contribute meaningfully to national development," he decried.

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