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PUBLIC TRUST IN JUSTICE SYSTEM GROWING-REPORT

Public trust in the justice system remains high and efforts to maintain it at higher levels are under implementation including addressing lead times for delivery of services, opening up of more service points, ensuring certainty in service delivery and making use of online services. This is contained in the Access to Justice sub-programme/JLOS Annual performance report for FY 2022/2023 released this December in Kampala >>P.2



The High Court in Kampala. There has been increased disposal of cases from 52% in 2020 to 63% resulting in a 10% reduction in the proportion of backlog. Also, a 72% conviction rate was registered due to improved investigations and strong coordination, according to the Access to Justice sub-programme/JLOS Annual performance report.

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Trust in justice system growing-report



Deputy Chief Justice Hon. Justice Richard Buteera at the opening ceremony of the two-daty court of appeal special session in Mbarara

Public trust in the justice system remains high and efforts to maintain it at higher levels are under implementation including addressing lead times for delivery of services, opening up of more service points, ensuring certainty in service delivery and making use of online services. This is contained in the Access to Justice sub-programme/JLOS Annual performance report for FY 2022/2023 released on December 1, 2023 in Kampala.

The report says the sub-programme invested in the construction of justice centres, increasing the number of districts with one-stop frontline JLOS points from 90 to 92 out of the targeted 117 districts.

The construction of the Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS) House phase one launched on June 10, 2022 is now over 60% and is expected to be completed in 2024.

The sub-programme registered an increased disposal of cases from 52% in 2020 to 63% resulting in a 10% reduction in the proportion of backlog. Also, a 72% conviction rate was registered due to improved investigations and strong coordination. While the proportion of pretrial detained reduced to 48%, the continued use of correctional approaches in the rehabilitation of inmates led to a 20% reduction in the rate of re-offending to 13.9% compared to the baseline of 17.2% in FY 2017/18.

Public trust in the justice system is 69% according to data collected from the SEMA pilot programme located at 50 frontline JLOS service points. Average satisfaction levels as measured by the SEMA applications at selected JLOS service points stand at 70%.

During the reporting period, Pre-trial detainees reduced from 50.8% at the beginning of the financial year, to 48.5%. This is attributed to increased disposal of cases by the Judiciary, from 55% in FY2021/22 to 63% in FY2022/23. In addition, increased use of non-custodial punishment such as community service has reduced the inflow of convicted persons into prisons. For instance, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) was able to supervise a total number of 14,595 Community Service Orders (13,505 male, 1090 female) against an annual target of 14,000 orders representing 104.25%.

Convicts sentenced to community service increased from 67.8% to 70% in the reporting period. However, the crime rate increased from 457.94 in FY 2021/22 to 524 in FY 2022/23 per 100,000 population. The CCTV surveillance project has revolutionised crime response and prevention with the system being operational (Phase II) in 71 districts, 10 cities, 20 municipalities, 35 towns, 06 border points and all major highways.

The use of the Automated Fingerprint Information system (AFIS) also helped to identify 3,266 repeat offenders, while 219 people with criminal records seeking certificates of good conduct were identified. The plea bargain approach enabled the ODPP to deal with case backlog by fast-tracking cases, resulting in reduced case disposal time. It also improved the conviction rates since it offers 100% conviction rates. A total of 41 legal aid clinics run by JCU, ULS and LDC are fully operational and supported by JLOS. Those reached out to 141,347 vulnerable individuals and communi-

ties.

Automation of case management systems is ongoing in many institutions including the Judiciary, Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB), Directorate for Citizenship and Immigration Control (DCIC), National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA), Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) and Judiciary. Other key areas of focus are streamlining processes, strengthening records management and reforming civil and business registries. The ODPP rolled out the Prosecution Case Management Information System (PROCAMIS) although it was slower than planned. The system has coverage of 42 (30%) out of 136 offices. The scope of automation covers headquarters, regional offices, and field stations.

With regards to national identification and registration which is a key driver for the improvement of service delivery in the country, cumulatively, a total of 16,749,675 cards have been issued to eligible citizens out of 19,761,668 cards printed.

With regards to immigration, 12,354 work permits, 6,888 dependent passes, 12,786 foreign students were facilitated. In addition, 7,030 people were granted special passes, 238,986 entry visas were issued, and 8,154 sought visitor pass extensions.

During the reporting period, Anti-Corruption Agencies registered major progress in strengthening transparency, accountability, and anti-corruption systems. Conviction rates of corruption cases increased from 74% in 2017/18 to 82% in the reporting period due to the use of prosecution let investigation while the clearance

rate of cases increased from 98% to 110% in the review period. This was because of the use of the interagency forum and stronger coordination and collaboration of the agencies involved in the fifth against crime.

UHRC carried out inspections in 163 detention facilities including, 86 Police stations, 31 Prisons, 41 Police posts 3 remand homes and 2 military detention facilities. There were noticed improvements in living conditions, however, congestion remains an eye sore. To address this challenge, UPS constructed four (4) wards that increased the holding/sleeping capacity from 19,986 prisoners (71,949.6M2) to 20,321 prisoners (73,155.6M2). The National Action Plan for Business and Human Rights is being implemented to mainstream human rights norms in the private sector.

In addition, MoJCA mainstreamed the accepted recommendations from the third Universal Periodic Review into the National Action Plan for Human Rights (NAP). The NAP articulates human rights priority actions and interventions for implementation by both State and non-state actors. The program enhanced compliance with the bill of rights, with the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) continuing to maintain an international 'A' status. UHRC conducted Tribunals across the nine (9) Regional offices. As a result, a total number of 143 matters were handled by the tribunal and complaints 93 (32 Male, 61 female) were resolved through mediation.

Challenges in the reporting period that need to be addressed include:- The low staff numbers across the sub-programme institutions. Failure to address staffing has far-reaching implications and may reverse the gains made so far. This is made worse by the disproportionate recruitment in the judiciary as compared to other JLOS institutions.

Increased Prisoners population and congestion in Prisons that exceeds carrying capacity by more than double. This may be addressed partly through expanding carrying capacity and crime prevention measures, in addition to focusing on alternative modes of punishment away from traditional incarceration. The increasing prisoners' population puts pressure on housing, sanitation, medicare, feeding, uniforms, staff numbers and delivery of prisoners to courts. Inadequate facilitation of Attorneys and witnesses, affects the ability of Government to be effectively represented in the courts of law for local and international cases.

69%

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SOLUTIONS ARE WITH NRM – NAMAYANJA TELLS MASAKA YOUTH

By SANDRA CHEBET

The NRM Deputy Secretary General, Rt. Hon. Rose Namayanja has urged young people to work with leadership of the ruling party to find solutions of the problems they face like unemployment.

She revealed today as she opened a 3-day ideological retreat of over 1000 young people from the greater Masaka that is under way at St. Charles Lwanga SS in Kalungu district.

“The NRM party where I belong is ready and willing to work with you to diagnose your challenge so as to provide proper treatment.

We initiated this program to train and mentor you into responsible young people who can benefit your communities too through wealth creation programs from the government,” Hon Namayanja said.

She also challenged them to live responsible lives because the youthful stage is only transitional into adulthood.

“Time management is crucial and so every time and minute that slips away can never be recovered. I implore you to wisely use your time because being a young person is for a short while,” Namayanja added.

She remind young people

that, “you are young and energetic today, and tomorrow you are not. So work extra hard for old age.”

The initiative of youth retreat will run across the country. Meeting all leaders in the youth league, national council, cultural institutions and those in the informal sector.

Hon. Namayanja reiterated the need for the youth to be united and speak one voice for their common cause like economic

empowerment irrespective of their cultural or political diversity.

Self-discipline

Namayanja underscored self-discipline and integrity of youth as a cornerstone to success.

“This enables co-existence and you don’t have to be from the same

political party or religion or tribe to be able to work together. As

a leader, you have to stretch your brain to

achieve your

goals. And you have to be clear with your aspirations,” the NRM ideologue stated.

The Masaka diocese Pastoral Coordinator, Rev. Fr. James Sendege, who represented the Bishop of Masaka Diocese His Lordship Serverus Jjumba said the Catholic Church welcomes everybody irrespective of political affiliation.

“Our problems in the country or the whole world are the same across religious denominations. We as a country and specifically the Buganda region, are endowed with various minerals, food and good climate. So we have to handle these

endowments carefully to benefit from them Rev. Sendege told youths.

He also preached hard work and discouraged people from waiting for handouts from politicians.

The director mobilisation at NRM Secretariat, Hon. Rosemary Seninde said that youth deserve constant reminder of their power to transform society because they are very energetic and knowledgeable with relevant and up-to-date technology.

“It is the reason we are here to fine tune you into the right cadres and advocates of community development,” Seninde said.



NRM concludes first phase of Kiswahili, public speaking program

By OUR REPORTER

The National Resistance Movement (NRM) Party has concluded the first phase of the Kiswahili and Public Speaking programme.

The closing ceremony for semester one, which commenced on September 13, was held on December 13, 2023 at the Party headquarters at Plot 10, Kyadondo Road, Nakasero.

The Kiswahili Language and Public Speaking programme is an initiative of the NRM Party which is being spearheaded by the Party Secretary General, Rt Hon Richard Todwong and sponsored by the Chairman H.E President Yoweri Museveni. President Museveni in particular is keen on the promotion and adoption of Kiswahili as a regional lingua franca.

The East African Community bloc currently boasts a population of over 300million scattered in the eight EAC member states including Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan, DR Congo and recently Somalia, which is the latest addition to the regional bloc. Majority of these countries use Kiswahili.

In his address to the learners at the closure of the semester, Todwong said that the Party has come up with this programme to keep in tandem with the wider matrix of the East African integration process, where Kiswahili is being championed as the regional



lingua-franca.

“We are now fully into the East African integration, and very soon we shall have the East African Federation if all goes well. This means that our people in Uganda have to learn the regional language [Kiswahili] to be more competitive with their counterparts in Kenya, Tanzania, DRC where Kiswahili is the main language,” he said adding, “We as the party in power have come up with a programme of helping our Cadres at all levels including other members of the public who may be interested in learning Kiswahili on top of the languages they

already speak.”

Todwong also revealed that alongside Kiswahili, the Party is sponsoring a short course on Leadership and Public Speaking to its Cadres. Explaining why the party leaders especially the young cadres should undergo this course, the Secretary General said that it’s essential for leaders to learn the art of public speaking as this will build confidence in themselves while interfacing with the public.

“Some of our leaders are wanting when it comes to public speaking and presentation. I have seen them struggling to debate against cadres of other

parties, and we end up getting embarrassed as a party. They go to appear on national media without facts, they don’t know how to organise the logical flow of their thoughts and ideas, and this would diminish their confidence,” Todwong emphasised.

Todwong commended the cadres for finishing the first semester successfully, and urged them to continue to the end. “I have seen that you have been very committed to this programme. I have seen most of you endure the heavy rains and cold weather to come and study, these are signs of people who are determined to achieve at whatever cost,” he stated.

He also assured the cadres that they will be issued with certificates of completion when the programme comes to a conclusion in July 2024, and thereafter commission them to go and train the remaining cadres across the country.

Todwong further stated that the current cadres undergoing the Kiswahili programme will be the pioneers of the Kiswahili graduation in Uganda.

“This is going to be the first graduation ceremony for the Kiswahili teaching programme in Uganda. The NRM Party has chosen to move ahead of everybody else and pioneer this initiative,” he said.

The second semester of the Kiswahili and Public Speaking programme will run from January 3, 2024 and end in July, 2024.

The Kiswahili and Public Speaking programmes run every Wednesday at the NRM National Secretariat from 9am- MIDDAY. The programme, which runs for one year, is open to all cadres of the Party and members of the public who will be issued with certificates of completion at the end of the exercise.

Kiswahili lessons. The 5th session of Kiswahili Training and Art of Public Speaking lessons ongoing at the NRM headquarters at Plot 10, Kyadondo Road, Nakasero.

Why not-for-profit hospitals charge exorbitant fees

By OUR REPORTER

The Uganda Protestant Medical Bureau (UPMB) has spoken out on concerns by the public that Private-not-for-profit-PNFP health facilities continue charging patients highly for services despite receiving an annual grant from the government.

Dr Tonny Tumwesigye, the Executive Director of the bureau says the majority of these hospitals were initially receiving aid from do-

nors who have since pulled out and yet the contribution by the government cannot match the rising number of patients seeking services in such facilities.

Dr Tumwesigye who was speaking to URN on the sidelines of their annual symposium held on Thursday added that most of their facilities including Mengo Hospital in Kampala are operating with very old infrastructure.

According to Dr Tumwesigye, all the money

that is generated is invested back especially now that they are faced with a double dilemma of having to increase the salaries of health workers to match what the government is providing if they are to retain the specialists they have.

Annually, the government provides such facilities including those run by the Catholic Medical Bureau and the Muslim Medical Bureau a grant of about Shs 35 billion, money that has been increased from about Shs

18 billion previously. But, Dr Tumwesigye says this money is only a drop in the ocean with the high costs they incur in providing services.

Dr Tumwesigye was speaking shortly after the presentation of the UPMB annual performance report showing an increase in the number of patients seeking services from their network of hospitals.

According to Dr Hilary Alima, the Director of Health Systems strengthening and Mem-

bership Management, in some areas, the PNFP hospitals are acting as the main hospitals receiving clients rather than those run by the government. He attributes this to the quality of care provided.

Alima adds that to ensure increased access and affordability by especially the rural poor, the network works with community health insurance schemes and sixty-three UPMB-run facilities are offering this insurance.

Mbarara Lab gets international accreditation

By SANYU ROBINAH

Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital Laboratory has been accredited by the South African National Accreditation System to international standards.

The accreditation provides a means of evaluating the competence of laboratories to perform specific types of testing, measurement, and calibration and that the facility has a documented Management System in place to ensure consistent implementation of its processes. It is purposed to ensure that quality laboratory results are given to patients.

The laboratory received accreditation based on its qualified equipment, including the Bio Base that rapidly extracts viral DNA or RNA from various types of body fluids, the Roto Fix incubators used for routine lab applications, and the GeneXpert machine which can detect multi-resistant tuberculosis and anti-biotics resistance in one hour.

The Hospital Director, Dr Celestine Barigye, said that the journey to accreditation started in 2013 with support from the Eastern Africa Public Health Laboratory Network Project under the Stepwise Laboratory Improvement Process Towards Accreditation Program.

Dr. Robert Wagubi the head of clinical laboratories at Mbarara Hospital said that the laboratory will now carry out 11 tests that are categorized under Haematology, Molecular biology, Bacteriology, Serology, and Mycobacteriology, which will be accepted worldwide.

Dr Richard Wanock, the Laboratory Quality Manager says that the accreditation of the laboratory will offer effective services since the results will be released in a short time.

Halson Kagure the Hospital head of Communication said that the accreditation of the laboratory is in line with the National Hospital Policy that aims to provide equitable access to cost-effective hospital services for all people in Uganda.

The other hospital laboratories that have in the past been accredited internationally include Entebbe, Fort Portal, Jinja, Makerere University Microbiology Laboratory, Moroto Regional Referral Hospital Laboratory, and Mulago National Referral Hospital.

SANAS is recognized by the South African Government as the single National Accreditation Body that gives formal recognition that Laboratories, Certification Bodies, Inspection Bodies, Proficiency Testing Scheme Providers, and Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) test facilities are competent to carry out specific tasks.

Research: Women experience lasting health problems after childbirth

By OUR REPORTER

Every year, at least 40 million women are likely to experience a long-term health problem caused by childbirth. This is according to a new study published on Thursday last week in the Lancet Global Health journal.

Part of a special Series on maternal health, the study shows a high burden of postnatal conditions that persist in the months or even years after giving birth. These include pain during sexual intercourse (dyspareunia), affecting more than a third (35%) of postpartum women, low back pain (32%), anal incontinence (19%), urinary incontinence (8-31%), anxiety (9-24%), depression (11-17%), perineal pain (11%), fear of childbirth (tokophobia) (6-15%) and secondary infertility (11%).

The authors of the paper call for greater recognition within the healthcare system of these common problems, many of which occur beyond the point where women typically have access to postnatal services. Effective care throughout pregnancy and childbirth is also a critical preventive factor, they argue, to detect risks and avert complications that can lead to lasting health issues after birth.

“Many postpartum conditions cause considerable suffering in women’s daily life long after birth, both emotionally and physically, and yet they are largely underappreciated, under-recognized, and underreported,” said Dr Pascale Allotey, Director of Sexual and Reproductive Health and

Research at the World Health Organization (WHO).

The doctor notes that throughout their life and beyond motherhood, women need access to a range of services from healthcare providers who listen to their concerns and meet their needs so they not only survive childbirth but can enjoy good health and quality of life.

This paper shows that despite their prevalence, these conditions have been largely neglected in clinical research, practice, and policy.

Reviewing literature spanning the last 12 years, the authors identified no recent high-quality guidelines to support effective treatment for 40% of the 32 priority conditions analyzed in their study and found not a single high-quality guideline from a low- or middle-income country. They also found that there were no nationally representative or global studies for any of the conditions identified through the research.

Taken as a whole, the Series, titled, ‘Maternal Health in the perinatal period and Beyond’, calls for greater attention to the long-term health of women and girls after and also before pregnancy.

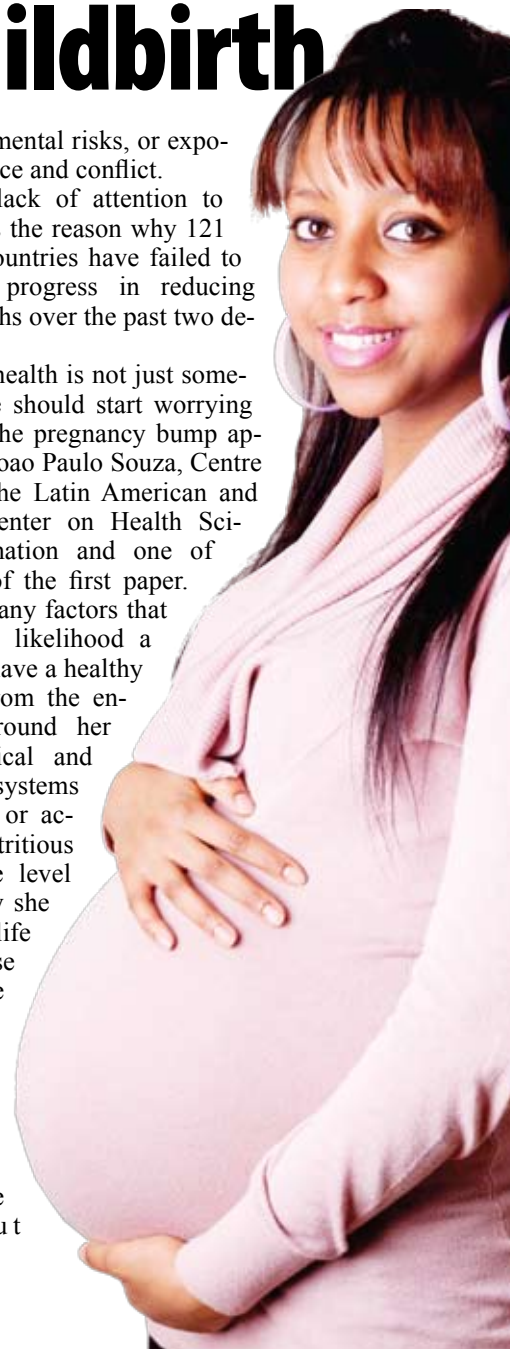
In their recommendations authors call for a holistic approach to reduce maternal deaths, focusing not only on their immediate biomedical causes but also on the complex interplay of broader social, economic, and environmental conditions that affect women’s health. These include factors like racial and gender inequities as well as economic context, nutrition, sanita-

tion, environmental risks, or exposure to violence and conflict.

They say lack of attention to such issues is the reason why 121 out of 185 countries have failed to significantly progress in reducing maternal deaths over the past two decades.

“Maternal health is not just something that we should start worrying about when the pregnancy bump appears,” said Joao Paulo Souza, Centre Director of the Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information and one of the authors of the first paper. “There are many factors that influence the likelihood a woman will have a healthy pregnancy, from the environment around her to the political and economic systems she lives in, or access to nutritious food and the level of the agency she has over her life – all of these need to be addressed to improve her health, alongside access to high-quality healthcare throughout life.”

–URN





COP28: \$400m green funds for Uganda

By OUR REPORTER

Over \$400 million in green investment commitments have been announced for Uganda at the climate change conference (COP28) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The green investment commitments, current and future, are for the next four years in the areas of renewable energy, water filtration and forestry, Uganda Investment Authority (UIA) said in a statement.

The commitments, by Mandulis Energy, Spouts International, IMTN and Nexus Green, were announced at the Uganda Investment Authority's (UIA) green investment session in the Green Investment Room at the Uganda Pavilion.

All four green investors are UIA-licensed and have commenced operations and are at different stages of green project development and execution.

The green investors provided testimonies to an audience of prospective investors and other actors regarding the status of their investments, experiences and a broader overview of the investment environment in Uganda.

The co-founder of Mandulis Energy, Peter Nyeko, said their company develops renewable energy infrastructure using innovative technology that converts agricultural waste into low carbon electricity and biogas for households and small businesses.

Mandulis Energy is developing over 24 off-grid power systems across rural Uganda, each

0.5 megawatt, and to be scaled to two megawatts. They will power agricultural processing facilities and serve over 120,000 farmers in low-income communities.

The chief executive of Spouts international, Daniel Yin, said they have invested around over 10 million dollars and, in the next four years, will invest an addition 80 to 100 million dollars.

Spouts International is the largest manufacturer of ceramic water filters in Africa. It produces Purifaaya, a ceramic water filter made from clay and other locally sourced materials. Currently, it has reached 200,000 households, aiming to reach six million households by 2030.

"We make sure that all people have access to safe clean drinking water for the lowest price pos-

sible, and this empowers communities and also saves trees from being burnt to boil water for drinking", said Yin.

The co-founder and chief executive of IMTN, Christian Raude, said they have so far invested 1.5 million dollars and plan to invest another 100 million dollars in the next four years.

The IMTN is a high-quality nature-based carbon removal project developer in Africa. Its mission is to restore one million hectares of degraded land by 2030 through the planting of polyculture native bamboo with an emphasis on biodiversity management.

"There is a lot of bamboo in Uganda and East Africa and not only does it make good investment sense but is also good for the environment and does not need

too much water", said Raude.

Nexus Green is a solar energy company that manufactures and supplies affordable solar-powered solutions designed for hundreds of millions of people (estimated at 458 million) in east and central Africa without access to reliable energy.

Its founder and chief executive, Rikki Verma, said they have, with financing from United Kingdom Export Fund, invested 100 million dollars in the factory and employ 200 people directly and over 1,000 people indirectly.

Verma said investing in Uganda has been made easy since UIA is now a one-stop centre for key investment and business support services.

COP28: African and Mideast leaders welcome \$10b food security SAFE initiative

By OUR REPORTER

Leaders from Africa and the Middle East launched a \$10 billion public-private-partnership initiative during COP28 to transform food systems for millions of people facing climate-induced food insecurity.

The climate crisis is already having real impacts on communities in Africa and the Middle East, with impacts including severe weather events, droughts and floods, air pollution, and agricultural disruptions.

The SAFE Initiative of the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) will mobilise at least \$10 billion to implement proven climate-smart agricultural practices such as regenerative agriculture, integrated soil fertility management, and solar-powered irrigation. SAFE aims to mobilise strategic investments from public and private investors to address food security is-

suces, improve livelihoods, and create green jobs.

Ahead of the launch, Ban Ki-moon, president of the GGGI and former UN Secretary-General said: "By placing food security at the heart of COP28 discussions, we can foster sustainable development and resilience in Africa. This requires collaboration on among nations, organisations, and stakeholders to enact comprehensive strategies that tackle these intertwined issues holistically. The Africa and Middle East SAFE Initiative between Africa and the Middle East is an example of collaboration to address the challenges of food security, climate change, and rural livelihood vulnerability."

At the launch event on the fourth day of the COP28 United Nations' climate change conference in Dubai, government and institutional representatives expressed strong support



Climate change is creating agricultural disruptions

for the initiative.

"There is an urgent need to ease access for developing countries to climate finance and technology, and in particular taking into account the current levels of internal and external debt of the African countries. It is therefore important that we offer these countries investment opportunities. We capitalise on the Africa SAFE

initiative as an approach to improve the lives of people in Africa in a sustainable and climate-resilient manner," said Hala Helmy el-Said, Egypt's Minister of Planning and Economic Development.

Côte d'Ivoire's Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development and Food Production, Mr Kobenan Kouassi Adjoumani, said:

"With food security and agriculture production at the heart of the economic sector of Côte d'Ivoire, this initiative will support particularly youth and women. On behalf of H.E. Alassane Ouattara, the country is happy to provide support to the SAFE initiative."

Dr Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank, also welcomed the initiative.

"Africa, which holds 65% of the uncultivated arable land left in the world, holds the key for the future of food in the world. That is why all efforts must be made to support the continent to fully unlock the potential of its agriculture sector," Dr Adesina said.

Dr Adesina said Africa's abundant land and natural resources means it has the potential to become a breadbasket to feed the Middle East.

"Africa can be a food solutions provider for the Middle East, where water stress poses immense challenges for food production, and where the cost of water desalination is prohibitive for competitive food production to assure food security," he said.

The African Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development are co-investing

\$1.6 billion for the development of Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zones (SAPZs) in Africa. Dr Adesina invited investment by Middle Eastern countries in the development of SAPZs in Africa to support the success of the SAFE initiative.

"I would like to ask that the Middle Eastern countries work closely with the African Development Bank and its partners to co-invest in development of these SAPZs. They are the platforms that will support the success of the Africa and Middle East SAFE initiative," he said.

President Adesina's engagement with the SAFE initiative follows on from a strategic outreach last June that included the Arab Co-ordination Group, comprising 10 regional organizations. Among them are the Islamic Development Bank, the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, and the OPEC Fund for International Development.

The COP is the single largest global platform for nations to negotiate an agreed way forward to tackle climate change. The gathering also brings together major stakeholders engaged in climate change: governments, the private sector, youth and civil society. The theme of this year's conference is Unite, Act, Deliver.

Uganda Gazette digitized to increase accessibility

The Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation (UPPC) has officially digitized the Uganda Gazette. This aims to enhance both accessibility and affordability in response to the requirements of the digital age.

For years, the Uganda Gazette, serving as the official repository for legal documents and government records, has been exclusively available in print. However, acknowledging the increasing preference towards digital platforms, the Gazette is now embracing a transformative shift.

Prof Sudi Nangoli, UPPC managing director, says the shift from traditional hardcopy to the online platform aims to enhance accessibility and convenience for all Ugandans.

“We made initial efforts to go digital and scaled back, but now we are officially launching the e-gazette. We must keep up with trends as the world moves towards digital, and we cannot remain confined to traditional hard copy,” said Prof Nangoli.

Nangoli adds that the e-version of the Gazette is not only affordable compared to the hardcopy but also eliminates the burden of dealing with physical papers that may go missing or misplaced.

“The annual subscription fee for the hardcopy Gazette is Shs 1.4 million, while the e-gazette is only Shs 800,000. This means that for just an additional 100,000, one can subscribe to the Gazette for two years. For a nominal fee of Shs 3,000, users

can now have the entire Gazette at their fingertips than paying Shs 5,000 for the hard copy,” says Nangoli.

The Uganda Gazette, issued weekly by the UPPC and is usually available on Fridays. Nonetheless, an extraordinary Gazette may be issued on any day as required. This publication consistently includes vital information such as legal notifications, statutory instruments, electoral notices, and private legal announcements.

The latter covers a range of topics, including bankruptcies, company registrations and closures, probate proceedings, company by-laws, and changes in names (deed polls), among other significant updates.

Despite its rich content, the Uganda Gazette experiences limited circulation as a result of a constrained number of outlets. This limitation restricts access to this

publication, which should ideally be essential to the general audience.

Rebecca Nyakairu, spokesperson of UPPC, says the e-gazette will overcome limitations by extending its reach into the public domain. She adds that through the digitalization process, the Gazette transforms into a globally accessible resource with just a click on digital devices, catering to a broader audience.

“People now have the convenience of accessing the Gazette online, whether at home using laptops, phones, or any preferred devices,” said Nyakairu.

However, Nyakairu stressed that the digital transition doesn't mark the demise of the

hard copy version.

“Embracing the digital frontier with the e-gazette doesn't mean saying farewell to the traditional hardcopy. We understand that some still cherish the experience of a hard copy. Rest assured, the hard copy will still be available,” she said.

To access the e-gazette, individuals need to subscribe by opening an account on the UPPC website and navigating to the ‘e.resources’ option.

The e-gazette aligns with UPPC's recently revealed five-year strategic plan, wherein the chief government printer aims to leverage technology to enhance its products. During the launch of the strategic plan in September this year, Nangoli assured that 80 per cent of their product offerings will be digitized by 2026.

“As we navigate an increasingly digital landscape, we will harness the power of technology to enhance our products and services for the convenience of our stakeholders,” Nangoli stated, emphasizing that this move is one of their objectives to protect the environment and improve operational efficiency.

Around the world, a growing number of countries have embraced digitalization by transitioning their official gazettes from traditional print formats to online platforms. The move towards online gazettes aligns with the global trend of leveraging technology to make official publications more accessible and user-friendly in the digital age.



Unlike the hardcopy, the digital edition is cheaper & convenient

Energy Ministry seeks more Shs128 billion to connect 200,000 households

By OUR REPORTER

The Ministry of Energy and Minerals Development is seeking a supplementary budget amounting to Shs128 billion to connect 200,000 households in the running financial year. This is part of Shs318 billion that the Ministry presented before the House Committee on the Budget.

“This amount is external financing from the World Bank for the Electricity Access Scale Up Project (EASP) that was suppressed during appropriation, given that the project had not achieved effectiveness,” said Sidronius Okaasai, the Minister of

State for Energy.

The Budget Committee is processing a supplementary budget of Shs3.5 trillion for the financial year 2022/2023 tabled before the committee by the State Minister for Finance, Henry Musasizi.

The supplementary budget includes among others Shs197 billion towards road construction, Shs47 billion to facilitate the deployment of medical interns and their allowances and Shs37 billion for renovating Speke Resort Munyonyo ahead of the Non-Aligned Movement and the G77 Summits next year.

Okaasai assured Members of Parliament, that

once the money is provided the Ministry will be able to connect most households that have already installed electric poles, for free.

“By connecting more people to electricity, the unit cost is likely to come down because more people will be paying. Give me the money and you will start seeing the connections by next month,” he said.

Okaasai noted that the EASP has since July 2023 been operational but requires additional funding to operationalize some of the activities.

The Ministry's supplementary request includes Shs30 billion to cover start-up costs for Karuma Hydro

Power Plant, such as plant insurance, permits, service contracts, and specialized tools.

“This funding is intended to support the project's implementation, with the goal of commencing commercial operations in November 2023,” Okaasai said.

He also requested for Shs58 billion to cater for shortfalls on the contractual obligations for deemed energy, under the Lira-Agago transmission line for the Achwa-Agago dam.

Members of Parliament okayed the supplementary request as they cautioned the Ministry to deliver on their promise, by connecting mostly the rural-based

households.

“One of the reasons some of us supported the disbandment of Rural Electrification Agency was their way of operation, connecting power with segregation. I generate electricity in my constituency, but I do not have power; I would like to see that when this money is given, we shall have electricity in my constituency for once,” said Wilfred Niwagaba, the Ndoorwa County East legislator.

Sheema Municipality MP, Dicksons Kateshumbwa, expressed concern over vast sums of money spent on deemed energy and urged the Ministry to utilize the supplementary

and start using the energy.

“We are tired of deemed energy, we need an assurance that when this balance is finally paid, this country will continue paying vast sums of money because we have paid huge sums at the expense of connections. We do not want to hear you coming next year bringing requests on deemed energy,” Kateshumbwa said.

He asked the ministry to share the road map for implementation of the 200,000 connections, saying, “now that the World Bank funding was approved, and that we are going to approve this supplementary, can we start seeing the road map?” asked Kateshumbwa.



GOVT CLEARED TO ACQUIRE FUNDS TO MODERNISE AGRICULTURE

By OUR REPORTER

Parliament has authorised government to borrow up to US\$325 million (Shs1.23 trillion) from the International Development Association of the World Bank, to finance the Uganda Climate Smart Agricultural Transformation Project.

The loan will be topped up with a grant worth US\$25 million (Shs94.5billion).

The House approved the loan request in a plenary sitting held days ago.

The project seeks to modernise Uganda’s agricultural sector in a bid to increase productivity, and promote

value addition through agro-processing in line with the Uganda Vision 2040 prospect of establishing economic lifeline industries.

While presenting a report on the loan, the Deputy Chairperson of the National Economy Committee, Robert Migadde, said the loan disbursements will be triggered only when government has prepared and adopted the legal covenants required by the World Bank.

No withdrawal of funds will be made for components like clean energy equipment, harvesting machinery and infrastructure as well as production input

grants, unless government has prepared and adopted the grants manual in form and substance acceptable to the World Bank.

“The Committee recommends that the Ministry of Agriculture should ensure that the loan disbursement conditions are fulfilled in order to trigger timely release of the loan credit for the project objectives to be met as planned,” Migadde said.

He added that it is essential for government to establish incentives to strengthen private sector involvement that will enable the agriculture sector to effectively and efficiently contribute to

strengthening resilience of agricultural households and ecosystems.

The Committee also noted low absorption of funds for loan-financed projects in the agricultural sector, attributed to slow pace by government to fulfill loan conditions, costly land compensation claims and inadequate project preparedness among other factors.

“The Committee recommends that Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Agriculture should ensure that all inefficiencies that affect absorption of funds for debt-financed projects in the agriculture sector are mitigated,”

Migadde added.

Milton Muwuma, the Kigulu County South MP made proposals to ensure effective utilisation of the loan for its intended purpose, including clear synergies between the involved government ministries and departments, and availing extension workers.

“We have so many programmes being implemented but the technical people supposed to advise and guide beneficiaries are thin on ground. I encourage government to address this by lifting the ban on recruitment to ensure that we have the necessary extension workers on

the ground,” said Muwuma. Naome Kabasharira, the Rushenyi County legislator urged government to provide more support to agricultural research.

“Agencies that do a lot of work to develop our agriculture like National Agricultural Research Organisation and National Animal Genetic Resources Centre have been left underfunded. If we invested more money there, the country can benefit,” said Kabasharira.

She also reiterated the need to effectively implement the loan in a timely manner.

House approves loan to digitalise country

By OUR REPORTER

Government is on course to digitalise the entire country, with every individual able to access the internet, the Minister of Information, Communication Technology and National Guidance, Chris Baryomunsi, has said.

This plan will be achieved following Parliament’s approval of a government request to borrow US\$150 million from the Export-Import Bank of China aimed at connecting all the districts that are not yet connected to the national internet fiber.

“Government has been laying fiber for us to access internet and has covered 50 percent of the country. This loan is to enable us to extend internet to the remaining 62 districts,” said Baryomunsi during the plenary sitting chaired by Speaker, Anita Among, on Wednesday, 06 December 2023.

Baryomunsi said that the loan will be focused on connecting government service infrastructures such as schools, health centres, district headquarters, and sub-counties.

Government will also build data banks known as ‘clouds’ where its entities will store their data, he said.

The State Minister of Finance (General Duties), Henry Musasizi, explained that the loan covers a period of 20 years, at two percent interest.

The Chairperson of the Committee on National Economy, Bosco Ikojo, said they supported the loan approval and recommended that the cost of internet be lowered to increase accessibility.

“The committee noted that although there had been relative investment in



this sector, access to Internet remains inadequate and highly priced by Government and individual users. The committee was informed that the cost of internet had reduced from US\$ 97 per month per mega bite per second in 2016 to US\$70 per month in 2018,” Ikojo said.

The effect of the high costs of internet, Ikojo said has been observed in schools that have failed to teach ICT subjects despite the government policy to integrate such subjects in all learning institutions.

“Some schools have failed to utilise computers due to inadequate internet connectivity effectively. The committee found out that most local govern-

ments are not connected to the internet despite government policy to digitise most of the services,” said Ikojo.

The committee also urged government to urgently implement rural electrification programme, saying the loan will not achieve its end if there is no electricity as it is in most rural areas.

Several members supported the loan request. Timothy Batuwa, MP Jinja South Division West said the loan allows him to introduce a motion urging government to consider telemedicine.

“Telemedicine is the technology that would enable us to have a doctor in Kampala treating patients in the most rural parts of the country. This would

Goint countrywide. The government has been laying fiber for people to access the internet and has covered 50 percent of the country. This loan is to enable the government to extend internet to the remaining 62 districts.

sort out staffing levels. One needs to install equipment even in the smallest health center, which would be read by the doctor in Kampala,” he said.

Elijah Mushemeza, the Sheema County South said the loan has the potential to boost economic growth, noting that several businesses are operated online.

Moses Ogwal, the Dokolo North County, prayed that the government put ‘internet bars’ in every local government at a much lower cost, targeting the youth.

It was also the desire of the House that the Government does not rationalise NITA-U which they said was well aligned to implement the loan.



Oil: Govt seeks court order to evict land owners

The government has applied to the court seeking an order to evict landowners in Buliisa and Hoima who have refused compensation to enable the development of the Tilenga Oil project.

The last move by the Attorney General followed a long-standing disagreement with 42 households in Buliisa who have rejected compensation offered by the government. The refusal by the households has stalled some of the developments under the project being developed by TotalEnergies.

The Ministry of Energy represented by the Attorney General filed suit on December 4, 2023, seeking to deposit over 945 million Shillings in court to enable it to take over close to 60 acres of land located in Hoima and Buliisa districts. Some of those to be removed from the land are located in areas where the government plans to put up the refinery.

The suit was filed as per Article 262 of the 1995 constitution as amended. Court documents indicate that the government wants to be granted an eviction order against 35 landowners in Kirama Village, Kigwera Sub County in Buliisa district. It is also seeking to be discharged of any liabilities resulting from any claim follow-

ing after the money is deposited to court and after an eviction order is granted.

The households in the dispute rejected the compensation because it was low and unfair. Among those targeted for eviction is Fred Balikenda from Kirama Village, Kigwera Sub-county in Buliisa District who is demanding 200 million Shillings for his house and pigs.

Balikenda is one of the nine Project Affected Persons (PAPs) under the second Resettlement Action Plan (RAP2). Balikenda has refused to be physically relocated before Total compensates him for the damages and loss in income suffered owing to Total fencing off and isolating the family before compensating the household.

It is said that TotalEnergies compensated for his 6 acres but has refused to vacate the land. The court documents indicate that the refusal by Balikenda others to vacate has affected the Tilenga project.

Jealousy Mugisa

Mulimba, one of the respondents said the suit was filed against then at the Hoima High Court on December 4, 2023 and a hearing date was set on December 8, 2023. He said some of the 42 respondents were informed of the case on Thursday and that most of the respondents were not unaware that the government had sued them.

Aminah Acola, with the Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO), wondered why the court is in a hurry to dispose of the suit “Every Ugandan has a right to be given adequate time and opportunity to defend themselves. We expect the court to be alive to the fact that most of the households in the case are illiterate, financially constrained, and do not understand court processes. They therefore should have been given ample time within which to engage a lawyer and put in a response to the case,” she said

Meanwhile,

Dickens Kamugisha, the CEO of AFIEGO in a statement said “The judiciary is on trial” AFIEGO supported the oil refinery-affected people to file a case against the government of Uganda over low, inadequate, and unfair compensation in March 2014. Nearly ten years later, a hearing of the case is yet to be concluded. Yet the case filed by the MEMD against 42 poor households is set to be quickly heard. Rushing the case is perhaps aimed at frustrating efforts by the affected people to get a lawyer, and to file the necessary documents before court. This will see the affected persons losing the case.”

Kamugisha added no law provides that project-affected persons’ compensation can be deposited in court. Despite this, in 2020, the government sued nine Tilenga project-affected households who refused the low compensation that was being given under Resettlement Action Plan 1.

In 2021, the judiciary illegally allowed the government to deposit the households’ compensation in court. This set a bad precedent that should never be repeated. It is also sad that the government has continued to use and misuse

courts to destroy citizens’ right to own property and/or get adequate compensation.”

Frank Muramuzi, the Executive Director of the National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) says, “This kind of quick fixing of cases without adequate notice to households has no place in the world. Further, any kind of investments that do not prioritize the rights of project-affected persons are useless and should be fought at all costs.”

Abdul Musinguzi of Tasha Africa Research Institute says, “The Ministry of Energy’s actions are tainted with ill intentions and are aimed at denying the project-affected persons justice. Laymen should not be ambushed and rushed to courts without being given adequate time to prepare. The judiciary should avoid being used.”

— URN

Oil project. The Kingfisher oil field on the shores of Lake Albert, Uganda, which is planned to link up to the East African Crude Oil Pipeline.



Warriors turn guns on wildlife in Kidepo National Game Park

By OUR REPORTER

Armed Karamojong warriors have sought refuge in Kidepo National Park, resorting to killing wild animals for sustenance, raising concerns about their impact on the park’s ecosystem. Security has confirmed that these warriors, previously active in terrorizing Kaabong and Kotido districts, have relocated to Karenga District, using the game park as a hideout.

In a meeting with local officials, Maj Gen Don Nabasa, the UPDF 3rd Division commander said that warriors are utilising firearms to hunt wild animals for both sustenance and profit. Their actions include theft of food from locals and hunting wild animals for consumption before conducting cattle raids.

He, however, noted that increased pressure from security forces has restricted

their movement with firearms. Nabasa revealed that plans are underway by security to eject the warriors from the game park.

Richard Muhabwe, the Chief Warden of Kidepo Valley National Park, acknowledged the escalating challenge of safeguarding wildlife from significant poaching by armed Karamojong and poachers from South Sudan.

Despite ongoing efforts to combat illegal poach-

ing, Muhabwe highlighted an increase in Wildlife killings along the Uganda-South Sudan border, particularly targeting buffaloes for consumption in areas like Kawanakol and Lobalangit. Joint security operations are being coordinated to address these threats within and around the park.

Felix Lochale, the Karenga District LC 5 chairperson, emphasized the warriors’ intrusion into gardens for food and their refusal to

relinquish firearms, citing their use for hunting and community threats. Lochale urged swift action by security forces to safeguard residents and eliminate the armed criminals.

Filbert Ocailap, the Karenga Resident District Commissioner, highlighted the desertion of some security officers, potentially aiding the armed warriors’ activities. Ocailap called for thorough investigations into desertion cases,

emphasizing the need for caution during operations in the park due to the deserters’ knowledge of operational strategies.

In response to the warriors’ refusal to surrender illegal firearms within the stipulated two-week period, security forces have initiated an operational plan to apprehend these individuals.

— URN



BoU maintains key lending rate at 9.5%, Economy projected to grow at 6%

By WILLIAM SENYONYI

The Bank of Uganda (BoU) has maintained the Central Bank Rate (CBR), a benchmark lending rate for commercial banks, at 9.5% so as to keep inflation within the Central Bank's target of 5%.

While issuing the Monetary Policy Statement for December 2023 at BoU headquarters in Kampala on Wednesday, December

6, 2023, BoU Deputy Governor, Michael Atingi-Ego, said although the outlook for both inflation and economic growth is favourable, BoU's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) noted that inflation has bottomed out, with significant uncertainties on the horizon.

"Therefore, keeping the CBR unchanged is necessary to anchor inflation around the target in the medium

term, while at the same time supporting growth in the private sector investment and socio-economic transformation," Atingi-Ego said.

He added that economic growth is projected at 6% in FY 2023/24 and increase to between 6% and 7% in the medium term.

"The growth outlook is, however, subject to uncertainties, including slower than expected global and re-

gional growth; a resurgence of supply chain distortions if the geopolitical tensions escalate; tighter fiscal policy in part due to unfavourable global financial markets, which could restrict government development expenditure, tight credit conditions constraining household consumption and private sector investments," Atingi-Ego said.

Inflation continues to

moderate reflecting tight monetary and fiscal policies, good crop harvests due to improved weather conditions, relative exchange rate stability as well as the declining global inflation.

Headline inflation increased slightly in November 2023 to 2.6% from 2.4% in October 2023, while core inflation remained unchanged at 2.0%.



BoU Deputy Governor Michael Atingi-Ego

Stanbic Bank donates PDM SACCOs Flexipay smartphones

By GEORGE MANGULA

Stanbic Bank Uganda has rolled out a new initiative aimed at enabling Parish Development Model [PDM] Savings and Credit Co-operative Organization [SACCO] access their money with ease.

The intervention comes on board to solve endless frustrations by PDM money beneficiaries who have consistently been citing challenges of a laborious process of accessing funds, long journeys, account requirements, and crowded banks among others.

In a quest to offer a solution to these problems, Stanbic Bank has introduced, and distributed 100 FlexiPay integrated Smartphones to PDM Verified SACCOs. The Smartphones will benefit SACCOs in the districts of Namayingo Kapchorwa, Bukwo, Tororo, Mbale, Kwen, Iganga, Busia, and Mayuge, all in Eastern Uganda.

Speaking on behalf of the Chief Executive Director, Anne Jjuuko in Namayingo district, John Tumwine the Head of Public Sector Banking at Stanbic said the initiative will move countrywide in order to simplify the government's efforts ushering the 39 percent of Ugandans into the cash economy.

"The objective of the smartphones is not only to give back to the PDM SACCOs banking with us, but to also build the groups' digital capacity and

boost their efficiency by way of using FlexiPay to manage its transactions with SACCO members.

Tumwine added that FlexiPay will enable PDM SACCOs to improve accountability, bookkeeping, and transparency in member transactions.

"In this specific campaign Over 500 PDM SACCOs banking with Stanbic across the country will receive the gadgets. We are doing this because it falls under our purpose, 'Uganda is our Home, we drive her growth'. It's within our interest to move this journey with everyone," he said.

Speaking on behalf of the guest of honour, Lukia Isanga Nakadama, the 3rd Deputy Prime Minister, the Namayingo LV chairperson, Robert Sanya, hailed Stanbic for championing the move to digitalise PDM money operations, citing that the general public appreciates the bank's impactful interventions in transforming Uganda into a better place.

He said removing physical cash distribution from the circle is saving the government from unnecessary delays and corruption that had started eating up the great initiative at a tender stage.

"I want to call upon all district leaders and Resident District Commissioners to keenly monitor the operations of all the people in the chain of money so it can reach the last person. Stanbic has played its part, the moni-



toring role is ours and we have PDM as a vehicle aimed at bringing the 39% of the poor Ugandans into the money economy," Sanya said.

Irene Muwanguzi the Deputy Enterprise Director PDM Secretariat said that the Stanbic Bank initiative has given hope to Ugandans and the government at large that the program will no longer fail as some people had started claiming.

She said that PDM is aimed towards a social economic Change of lifting 39 percent [about 3.5 million people] of households from the subsistence to a money economy.

FlexiPay integrated smartphones. Irene Muwanguzi, the Deputy Enterprise Development Director PDM, handing over a mobile phone to one of the beneficiary SACCO members

Muwanguzi revealed that over One Trillion Uganda Shillings has so far been earmarked to benefit the PDM SACCOs and much more is to be disbursed.

"We have a lot of faith that PDM will eventually contribute to the Uganda Vision 2040 which envisages "a transformed Ugandan society from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country" and hence the realization of the third National Development Plan [NDP III] which prioritizes inclusive growth, employment and sustainable wealth creation at household level. And now with partners like Stanbic Bank on board, all we see is success," Muwanguzi said.

Richard Othieno, a PDM SACCO beneficiary from Kigulu Island said some of this Initiative saved them the burden and risk associated with carrying liquidity.

"I know of people that were robbed and others even misused the money because it was liquidity. People had never held One Million in their hands, they ended up missing it due to excitement. This initiative enables us to access money through our mobile phones, and this is saving us a lot of problems."

He added that his SACCO chose to bank with Stanbic not because they anticipated Mobile phone support, but because they were assured of getting their money because of the availability of more bank branches in the region compared to other banks.

Jackie Abwol, the Stanbic Bank Flexi Pay Manager said the platform is an inclusive portal that supports both internet and USSD Code [*291#] transactions.

"The advantage our people are going to get is that FlexiPay operates beyond PDM money transactions. The same app can be used to make bill payments like electricity, water, TV subscription at no charges. Basically, FlexiPay is an all-in-one digital solution that allows one to live free by making financial transactions convenient, safe, quick, secure, affordable and easy," Abwol said.



UN to strengthen support for refugees



South Sudanese refugees queue for food at a reception centre in Arua, northern Uganda.

By OUR REPORTER

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Uganda announced the signing of a joint strategic framework to strengthen their collaboration in support of refugees and host communities in the country.

The framework outlines joint FAO and UNHCR country-level activities and interventions in displacement settings. It aims to support comprehensive and integrated approaches to assisting forcibly displaced persons and host communities in rebuilding and re-establishing their lives and livelihoods through sustainable humanitarian and development support that fosters recovery, resilience and self-reliance.

The framework focuses on three main areas: Coordination for durable solutions in refugee livelihoods, Cooperation for immediate needs and long-term self-reliance, and Collaboration for addressing environmental and energy issues in refugee-hosting areas.

“FAO and UNHCR have a longstanding partnership in Uganda, and this new framework will further enhance our cooperation to provide life-saving assistance, but more importantly to support the development partner’s transition to more durable solutions and livelihoods for refugees and host communities,” said Antonio Querido, FAO Representative in Uganda.

The collaboration is based on the fundamental principle that the Government of Uganda has the primary role and responsibility for leading and coordinating the protection and as-

sistance response for refugees on its territory, with the support of UNHCR, as set out in relevant UN and UNHCR Executive Committee conclusions.

“The collaborative spirit, exemplified in UNHCR’s partnership with FAO, aims not only to assist the government in the refugee response but also to foster resilience and self-reliance of refugees in Uganda. Our heightened focus on this aspect is driven by the understanding that refugees require these capabilities to lead more dignified lives in Uganda and upon their eventual return home” said

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Uganda today announced the signing of a joint strategic framework to strengthen their collaboration in support of refugees and host communities in the country.

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This collaboration follows a global Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by FAO and UNHCR in 2019, which aims to promote coordinated action in areas of common interest such as combatting poverty, hunger, and malnutrition in displacement settings, achieving inclusive local economic development, and strengthening the sustainability of natural resources management in host countries. This partnership demonstrates, in practice, the UN Country

Team’s recently endorsed the UN Common Pledge which includes specific commitments by 11 UN agencies, including FAO and UNHCR, to support critical elements of refugee inclusion to build and achieve collective impact in Uganda.

“Uganda is home to over 1.5 million refugees, and we know that refugees in displaced settings tend to stay an average of 20 years. This is certainly the case in Uganda with many having stayed longer in subsistence conditions dependent on external aid. Partnerships such as the one between UNHCR and FAO are crucial if we are to help the Government in its goal of refugee self-reliance and integration without leaving host communities behind” added Mr Jason Hepp, UNHCR Deputy Country Representative.

Through its emergency and livelihoods programme, FAO is providing aid to households in refugee settlements and host communities in Kiryandongo, Nakivale, Palabek, Bidibidi and Kyangwali settlements. The assistance includes technical training, support to sustainable and inclusive value chains, the provision of access to quality agro-inputs, capacity building, and cash assistance in some cases, aimed at easing the pressures on host communities, enhancing refugee self-reliance, and supporting lasting solutions particularly enhancing opportunities for refugee inclusion in Uganda. FAO’s refugee programme aims to reach circa 126 000 refugees and 37 000 host community households over the next four years through its humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

Recognizing that relying on emergency assistance is not a long-term solution, Ms Priya Gujadhur, Deputy Representative for FAO in Uganda emphasized, “FAO is uniquely positioned to complement UNHCR in providing the skills and tools to refugees to become self-reliant in a way that also protects and even enhances the fragile ecosystems that most of the refugee and host communities must rely on. It is our sincere wish that this partnership between FAO and UNHCR in Uganda goes a long way in making this goal of self-reliance a reality.”

Through this collaboration, FAO and UNHCR will provide technical support and guidance on agriculture and natural resource management for refugee and humanitarian responses, coordinate efforts geared towards household food and nutrition security programming and encourage climate-smart and nature-based solutions while promoting sustainable and climate-smart management of natural resources around settlements.

37000

**HOST
COMMUNITY
HOUSEHOLDS.**

FAO’s refugee programme aims to reach circa 126 000 refugees and 37 000 host community households over the next four years through its humanitarian-development-peace nexus.



EAC leads in share of NEPAD Infrastructure funded projects

By OUR REPORTER

The East African Community (EAC) has the largest share of projects financed by the NEPAD Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility (NEPAD IPPF).

The EAC Secretary General, Dr. Peter Mathuki, attributed this achievement to the comprehensive governance framework for projects management that has been put in place by the Community.

In a speech read on his behalf by the Principal Civil Engineer at the EAC Secretariat, Eng. Godfrey Enzama, during the opening session of a four-day Joint Meeting of the High Level Standing Committee of the East African Trade and Transport Facilitation Project (EATTFP) and the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) on East African

Multinational Roads Project in Mombasa, Kenya, Dr. Mathuki hailed the cooperation and support extended by Partner States in the implementation of regional projects and programmes.

Dr. Mathuki said that well prepared development projects attract investment funding and that is why the Secretariat is keen on maintaining a compendium of bankable projects which we can showcase at funding negotiations.

The Secretary General further disclosed that the EAC boasts the highest number of OSBPs in Africa and is the only region with a harmonised axle load control regime, even as he added that a lot more remains to be done, including the upgrading of 15 more borders to OSBPs, construction of smart weighbridges in all

Partner States, addressing Road User Charges, implementing the EAC Road Safety Action Plan, and the domestication of the instruments agreed by the Tripartite RECs of COMESA, EAC and SADC among other programmes.

Mathuki attributed the high number of OSBPs to the High-Level Standing Committee for the EATTFP that was established by Council of Ministers in 2005 to oversee matters of soft infrastructure that facilitate trade, including one stop border posts, vehicle load control, harmonisation of laws, policies and standards, road safety, non-tariff barriers among other things.

He Mathuki further revealed that several articles in the Treaty remain unimplemented, which makes the region lag behind in the chang-

ing technological world.

“These articles include, among others, accepting to interconnections, granting of special access to Landlocked Countries, Cabotage. We also note that only three EAC Partner States are implementing vehicle load controls as required by the EAC Vehicle Load Control Act of 2016. We urge the other Partner States to apply the provisions of the Act and set up weighbridges so that we can better protect our road assets,” he said.

“Further, the region’s road fatality rates remain among the highest in the world. We need to address this scenario if we expect to remain competitive in Continent. Every road fatality robs us of the economic development we strive so much to attain. Therefore, we urge you to implement the EAC

Road Safety Action Plan which you were involved in developing and which if implemented will help reduce the carnage on our roads,” added Dr. Mathuki.

The Secretary General urged Partner States to provide us with adequate information on the status of their borders to enable the Secretariat source for funds jointly for rehabilitation of existing OSBPs and construction of new ones.

He called for closer collaboration support among Partner States’ institutions that support infrastructure development including the lead agencies for OSBPs and other border control institutions, ministries of finance and the Ministries of EAC Affairs.

“Our collaboration is essential in delivering facilities that address the needs

of the population while also meeting world class standards,” said Mathuki.

The High-Level Standing Committee for the East African Trade and Transport Facilitation Project (EATTFP) was established by the EAC Council of Ministers in 2005 to oversee matters of soft infrastructure that facilitate trade, including one stop border posts, vehicle load control, harmonisation of laws, policies and standards, road safety, non-tariff barriers among other matters.

The Regional Steering Committee (RSC) on East African Multinational Roads Project is a sub-committee of the Sectoral Council of Ministers of Transport, Communication and Meteorology and is responsible for overseeing regional programmes and projects in the roads sub-sector.

Uganda secures Shs958b loan for rural transport

By OUR REPORTER

Uganda has secured a US\$252bn (about Shs 958bn) loan from the African Development Bank to fund the construction of the Laropi-Moyo-Afoji and Katuna-Muko-Kamuganguzi road. The lender’s board of directors approved the loan on December 1, 2023.

The financial support consists of two loans: US\$179.68 million from the African Development Bank and \$73.15 million from the African Development Fund, the Bank Group’s concessional loan window.

“The Laropi-Moyo-Afoji/Katuna-Muko-Kamuganguzi road project is intended to improve rural transport connectivity and facilitate regional integration in the districts of Kabale, Rubanda, and Moyo, in Uganda. It will boost incomes, deepen regional integration, and facilitate trade while opening up an alternative transport corridor linking Uganda with South Sudan,” said Augustine Ngafuan, the African Development Bank’s Country Manager in Uganda.

“Building this infrastructure will enable economic operators along this route to reduce costs and lead times while improving the efficiency of transport logistics,” added Ngafuan.

In addition to the two main roads, the project will also support the following social complementary initiative: 5 kilometres of roads in small towns and non-motorized traffic facilities (walkways and cycle tracks) within Moyo and Laropi in northwestern Uganda to improve mobility; street lighting to improve the business environment for traders, and regional bus terminus in Moyo.

The project also provides for the construction of market stalls complete with cold storage facilities in Kasha-Katuna, Moyo and Laropi to support women traders who currently operate on the roadsides, to improve earnings from perishable products such as fish and vegetables.

There will also be flood protection works in Laropi to strengthen resilience to the effects of climate change and reduce disruptions to commercial activities. Lastly, a one-stop border post will be constructed in Afoji/Jale



on the Uganda-South Sudan border to boost trade and transport activities and facilitate the harmonization of customs and coordination of the border-crossing operations and supply chains.

The Laropi-Moyo-Afoji road is located in northwestern Uganda, in the district of Moyo, which has a population of about 140,000. The road starts at Laropi and traverses through several vil-

Fixing rural infrastructure. The Kabale-Kisoro road in Hamurwa sub-county, Rubanda district that was damaged by the May rains.

lages before terminating at the Uganda-Sudan border in Afoji. This road is part of the Atiak-Moyo-Afoji regional, national and international route connecting the remote north-western region of Uganda and Southern Sudan to the Ugandan capital at Kampala via the Regional capital at Gulu.

The River Nile divides the road into two sections, which are currently connected by the Umi-Laropi ferry. The Western Nile sub-region currently hosts more than 500,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan.

The completion of this road will be a huge relief to the residents and the nearby communities that had decried the poor state of roads for years hurting businesses and livelihoods.

The Katuna-Muko-Kamuganguzi road will provide vital access to several refugee camps and support agricultural communities in Kabale and Rubanda districts, with a combined population of about 460,000 inhabitants.

Currently, the gravel Katuna-Muko (66km), Muko-Kachwekano-Kamuganguzi (38km) road is in poor condition characterized by a narrow worn out carriageway and inadequate drainage with old pipe and concrete culverts yet it services a very rich agricultural hinterland and links spectacular potential tourism sites most especially Lake Bunyonyi, Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park, Mgahinga National Park, Queen Elizabeth National Park among other sites in Kabale, Rukigira, Kanungu, Rubanda districts and beyond the boundaries of Uganda to DRC and Rwanda.



By
**OWEYEGHA-
AFUNADUULA**

INDEPENDENCE

THE CURSE OF PALM TREE PLANTATION IN UGANDA

Iwrote the article below way back in 2019. I am sure many of you never read it. It is still relevant culturally, socio-politically, socio-ecologically, socio-economically and environmentally.

In 2012, while officer in charge of Research at National Association of Professional Environment (NAPE), I was directed by the Executive Director of the environmental organisation, Mr. Frank Muramuzi, to lead a team to carry out research on the proposed oil palm growing project throughout Uganda.

I embarked on the exercise. I started by reading about the enterprise. What struck me was that the NRM government, the International Foundation for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Bank were working together by 2002 to see that the whole of Northern Uganda and three quarters of Eastern Uganda are turned into extensive plantations of the false tree, oil palm. Indeed, that year IFAD produced a report in which there was a map of Uganda showing that all the islands of Lake Victoria, the whole of Northern Uganda three quarters of Eastern Uganda would be converted into Oil Palm territory.

Clearly Western Uganda would be spared from the enterprise. I thought that the reason was that the cattle grazing corridor lies in that region. However, by 2012, the region was already known to be oil rich and government was already talking of beginning to exploit it. Cattle grazing and oil mining are diametrically toppled to oil palm growing. They all require very extensive expanses of land. Besides they are all allergic to other land resource uses, including human settlements. For example, where you have oil mining you have to forego human settlements, food growing, forestry and fisheries in lakes and rivers due to land uptake and pollution.

Meanwhile the life-threatening activities of oil mining and oil palm growing are being pursued, our politicians that should be asking questions are either emersed in personal pursuits of power, wealth and glory or are totally ignorant of what is going on. Even our intellectuals at our numerous university campuses who would be articulating and clarifying issues for society in the wake of these activities have coiled themselves in a conspiracy

of silence.

I would not be writing this article if I did not see a picture of the Ambassador of Sweden to Uganda, a representative of IFAD in Uganda and the Executive Director of NAPE visiting Kalangala in connection with oil palm growing. The article accompanying the picture emphasised that the enterprise will be spread to other districts of Uganda. By other districts we should understand it to mean districts of the whole of Northern Uganda and three quarters of Eastern Uganda.

Because I relocated to Busoga I did not know or was not aware that 17 years later government, IFAD and World Bank were determined to turn Northern Uganda and Eastern Uganda into oil palm territory. But as soon as I saw NAPE Executive Director, IFAD and the Swedish envoy together, I started to research and get to understand what was going on.

I read New Vision of July 24th 2017 and found NAPE was expressing concern that extending oil palm growing to the other islands of Kalangala would destroy the fragile ecosystems and biodiversity of the district. NAPE could have added that it would also destroy the integrity and productivity of Lake Victoria, and undermine environmental, climate and food sustainability in the district and beyond. Besides people would be force to move and become internal refugees, with serious sociopolitical consequences.

Then I read The Observer of March 24, 2018. Although not surprising, I read that government was in advanced discussions with IFAD to extend oil palm project to other districts. Of course, I understood this to mean Northern Uganda and Eastern Uganda.

What perturbs my mind is that despite the potential of the project to disrupt our environmental, Climate and food sustainability over a large part of Uganda, and produce millions of internal refugees, let alone generate long-term human exploitation, poverty, suffering of people with no more foothold on land, silence reigns as more and more politicking goes on about who should or should not rule Uganda. Who will rule a country full of internal refugees and social chaos and succeed?

Busoga seems to have been pre-

pared well for embracing oil palm growing. Most of the subregion's land has been converted to sugarcane growing. People have cut most of their trees to establish sugarcane plantations. They no longer want to grow coffee. There is every likelihood that prices of sugarcane will fall meteorically, leading to further poverty. The subregion is now the second poorest in Uganda, although in the 1960s it was rich enough to compete with Buganda.

When the sugarcane growing collapses and leaves only the historical sugarcane farmer, Madhivan, in business government is likely to swing in and convince former sugarcane farmers to turn to oil palm farming. BIDCO, the oil firm with nearly 10,000 hectares of oil palm plantations in Kalangala, already has its headquarters in Busoga. Like it has done in Kalangala, impoverishing many who were lured to establish oil palm plantations on their land, it will extend loans to them. But like those in Kalangala who fell on the bait, many of them will fall to pay the loans back and will lose their land to BIDCO. Another problem they are likely to face is lack of human labour. Oil palm growing is heavily labour intensive. Many elderly men in Kalangala, who thought when they established oil palm plantations, their grown-up children would provide the necessary labour, were shocked when their children decided to leave the island of Bugala for other activities. Some decided to stay on the island but engage in fishing, among other things. Failure to harvest and pay loans back has meant they are vulnerable to BIDCO. They are or are likely to lose their land to BIDCO.

In summary the government of Uganda and IFAD, most likely with the backing of World Bank, want to establish oil palm growing over the whole of Northern Uganda and most of Eastern Uganda. Virtually all Ugandans are unaware of this creeping thief that will take all the land, destroy all the trees, interfere with the water cycle, displace them from their land and turn them into internal refugees and a cheap labour force that can be easily hired and fired. The leaders in the two regions must wake up. They too will be victims of the gigantic land grab.

– The writer is a senior citizen

EDITORIAL

Everybody should fight poverty, unemployment

President Yoweri Museveni earlt this year embarked on a nationwide drive to assess the progress of his wealth creation campaign based on the four-acre model. The President kicked off his tour starting with the north, particularly Acholi sub-region where he was impressed by some individuals who had heeded his message.

Wealth creation is the main pre-occupation of President Museveni who is emphasizing household incomes and poverty eradication at household level. This has been the President's message since 1995 where he would travel around with a blackboard teaching people to generate income.

The Government has come up with a plethora of interventions aimed at lifting people out of poverty including the Entandikwa scheme; Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture; Naads; Poverty Alleviation Plan; Poverty Eradication Action Plan; Operation Wealth Creation; Youth Livelihood Program; etc. Most of these projected interventions haven't yielded much in terms of poverty reduction as official statistics show that the poverty levels have increased from 19 per cent to 25 per cent. Research also shows that three out of every five people who would get out of poverty are at the brink of falling back into the same poverty trap. Part of the problem is corruption and poor implementation on the part of officials in government who are tasked with such multi-billion shilling projects. Only little would trickle to the intended beneficiaries at the grassroots.

The Government is currently implementing the Parish Development Model which is a coordinated effort to eradicate poverty, household incomes, boost production and productivity and spur socio-economic transformation at parish level. Whereas this is a well-intentioned programme if well implemented and managed with reduced cases of corruption, there are huge odds that sooner than later it may go down the same way as the previous initiatives.

We commend Government and President Museveni for the tireless efforts in seeing to it that Ugandans get out of poverty. There is a glimmer of hope after witnessing a new trajectory to the effect that the proportion of households at subsistence level trapped in a cashless economy has fallen from 68 per cent to now 39 per cent.

So, what should we do? Everybody including leaders at all levels and family heads should join the President in this poverty fight. The whole country should join in the war against poverty, and consider poverty as the country's number one enemy.

Government, alongside the ongoing anti-poverty efforts, should come up with a deliberate scheme of identifying and empowering selected entrepreneurs and business people in each district or Zone and partner with them through MoU to deliver the following: employ, mentor or train a given number of youth in that locality. Assuming each entrepreneur employs about 100 youth, multiply this by the total number of districts in the country, how many youth would be employed at the end of the day? Another idea would be to identify 500,000 youth who have specialised in different lines of trade. And assuming each of these enterprising youth were tasked with employing at least 10 youth, this would translate to five million youth being employed. What all this means is that Government should start thinking out of the box and devise a mixture of both conventional and non-conventional methods in eradicating poverty.

Most importantly, we need to change the mindset of young people when it comes to work ethics. Our young people, with all the qualifications they have attained at universities, colleges, etc, are simply unemployable. They don't have skills to talk about, and worst of all their attitude is wanting.

Mindset change shouldn't only be a function of government, but other stakeholders especially the private sector, religious and cultural institutions need to come in. The fight against poverty starts with you and me.

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ENERGY

By
ALI SSEKATAWA

COP 28: UGANDA AND AFRICA'S QUEST FOR A JUST ENERGY TRANSITION

Uganda & Masdar make strides in renewable energy with a 150MW Solar PV project



Participants
United Nations
Climate
Change
Conference

We do not usually think of history as being shaped by silence. All that is necessary for evil to prevail is for a few good men to do nothing.

The United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) kicked off in earnest on November 30 in the United Arab Emirates city of Dubai. It marked a pivotal moment with the agreement of over 200 nations to establish a fund aimed at assisting countries affected by the impacts of global warming — a landmark decision hailed as “historic.”

During the inauguration, the Emirati host underscored the necessity of fossil fuels as an integral component of any forthcoming climate agreements over the following two weeks. This gathering represents a promising start, emphasising a commitment to addressing loss and damage while maintaining momentum for a just transition.

Unlike the approach of COP26, which advocated for phasing out fossil fuels, COP28 acknowledges the imperative to ensure an inclusive debate on energy transition. The recent tumultuous global landscape shaped by the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the enduring Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the need to re-evaluate the energy transition strategy, which

previously advocated for a complete cessation of fossil fuel usage.

The unprecedented surge in energy prices significantly impacted the global North, underscoring the immediate necessity for energy security across both developed and developing nations.

This paradigm shifts within the global North, historically championing energy transition discussions despite being leading greenhouse emitters, has unveiled new realities. In late July 2023, British prime minister Rish Sunak announced plans for numerous exploration licenses in the North Sea, drawing criticism from environmental activists.

This move emphasised the pressing need for energy security amidst mounting opposition to fossil fuels. Consequently, the discourse has evolved, pivoting towards exploring technologies capable of substantially reducing greenhouse gas emissions and decarbonising the oil and gas sector. This shift presents an opportune moment for Africa to reinforce its stance on a just energy transition.

Fortunately, Uganda has already embarked on a trajectory to decarbonise its projects. The Uganda projects not only create economic prosperity but also showcase the country's commitment to long-term sustainability by

putting people, and the planet, at the forefront.

Uganda, like most developing countries, is a low-carbon emitter, and is committed to decarbonising its oil and gas projects. Decarbonisation is lowering or eliminating carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gas emissions related to oil and gas extraction, production, and usage.

The East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP), the Kingfisher Development Area, and the Tilenga projects have been meticulously designed with cutting-edge technology aimed at significantly curtailing greenhouse gas emissions.

Uganda, among several emerging oil and gas producers, has encountered opposition from ‘ideologically bankrupt’ activists advocating for developing nations to entirely halt their project development.

However, the stance at COP28 appears more nuanced, suggesting a shift towards a potentially more sustainable approach to energy transition, one that acknowledges the unique challenges faced by the global south, particularly grappling with energy poverty. In Dubai, Uganda and other African nations aim to forge collaborations with countries that have recognised the paramount importance of prioritising energy security.

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PEOPLE AND PLANET, AT THE FOREFRONT.

Uganda has already embarked on a trajectory to decarbonise its projects. The Uganda projects not only create economic prosperity but also showcase the country's commitment to long-term sustainability by putting people, and the planet, at the forefront.

This perspective underscores the notion that any discourse pertaining to energy transition must holistically consider ending energy poverty through reparations for loss and damage, while championing a just energy transition.

COP28 signifies a departure from a one-size-fits-all approach, signalling a willingness to factor in the diverse needs of countries in the global South still combating the pervasive challenges of energy poverty. This evolving discourse emphasises the necessity of a balanced, inclusive strategy that doesn't merely advocate cessation but aligns with the imperative of equitable access to sustainable energy resources.

This platform serves as an opportunity for Uganda and other African nations to advocate for a model that integrates the aspirations of energy security with responsible environmental stewardship.

As I join the African negotiation team in Dubai, we shall advocate for an inclusive approach to energy transition based on the unique circumstances of each country. History will judge us fairly.

– Ali Ssekatawa is the director, Legal and Corporate Affairs at the Petroleum Authority of Uganda.

ENERGY

By
DERRICK NAHUMUZA

THE HITS AND MISSES IN THE PETROLEUM SUPPLY ACT 2023

Minister Ruth Nankabirwa

President Museveni has been very intent and categorical on ensuring that Uganda meets its target of first oil output and production in 2025.

To him, it appears, the oil drilling and subsequent refining, are Uganda's leeway to achieving the much-revered Vision 2040 and its accompanying ambitions of economic independence and attaining middle-income status. This explains the rushed -albeit haphazard - enactment of several laws that affect not only the oil and gas sector, but also the energy sector at large.

On November 23, for example, the president assented to the Petroleum Supply (Amendment) bill of 2023, which had only been tabled by the minister of Energy and Mineral Development on October 31, 2023. The same has already been published in the December 1, 2023, Uganda Gazette.

This indicates that the bill was tabled, debated, presented to the parliamentary committee on National Resources, passed by parliament and signed by the president in less than three months!

As a justification to the enactment of the bill, President Museveni made a pronouncement on November 5, where he questioned the erstwhile mode of operation where middlemen exaggerated oil prices and increased the cost of supply of petroleum products in Uganda.

The astronomical speed at which the bill was signed notwithstanding, the bill seems to have been well-intentioned with capacity to make a paradigm shift in the country's energy regime. According to its long title, the Act was passed for various reasons among which include the need to enable the Uganda National Oil Company (UNOC) to be the sole supplier of all imports to licensed marketing companies of petroleum products for the Ugandan market.

UNOC, to which this mandate has been bestowed, is a limited liability company owned by the Government of Uganda with an overall function of handling Uganda's commercial interests in the petroleum sector and ensuring its efficient exploitation in a sustainable manner.

With the enactment of this law, UNOC's mandate has been enhanced as it will now be charged with the

role of importing petroleum products and distributing them to oil marketing companies. The act is also aimed at guaranteeing security of supply of petroleum products, improving petroleum product stock holding levels within the country and contributing to the competitiveness of consumer and retail pump prices, among other reasons.

Economically, there is a high likelihood of archiving a high stability of prices in the energy sector. This is because there will be a shift in the forces of demand and supply as all companies licensed to market oil products will purchase the petroleum products from one sourcing point without influence of external economic factors.

This will inevitably reduce the effects of asymmetric pricing that is synonymous with petroleum products. Asymmetric pricing is a phenomenon that relates to petroleum product prices rising akin to rockets whenever crude oil prices rise but only falling slowly like feathers when crude oil prices drop.

In other words, whereas an increase in the price of crude oil, as purchased from foreign producers, ordinarily leads to a quick increase in pump

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AT A GLANCE.

UNOC is a limited liability company owned by the Government, with an overall function of handling Uganda's commercial interests in the petroleum sector and ensuring its efficient exploitation in a sustainable manner. With the enactment of this law, UNOC's mandate has been enhanced as it will now be charged with the role of importing petroleum products and distributing them to oil marketing companies.

One of the earlier oil testing exercises done in Uganda

prices, a decrease in crude prices does not simultaneously lead to an equal decrease in pump prices. Simply put, oil companies are quick to increase pump prices in times of high crude oil prices but slow to reduce pump prices when there is a reduction in crude prices since they need to maximize profits in periods of increased crude prices.

With UNOC overseeing selling of petroleum products to intermediary marketing companies like Vivo energy and Stabex, the effects of asymmetric pricing will be minimized. Other economic benefits include consistency in supply of petroleum products whereby marketing companies will no longer decide how much fuel is in the market at a given period.

There will also be a diversification in the supply routes of the market hence shielding Ugandans from fuel cartels and other intermediaries that decide fuel prices according to their whims. The downside of the act is that there will be a reduction in the import duty paid by fuel companies whereby taxes initially paid by licensed marketing companies at the importation of petroleum products will no longer be paid.

The act is not clear as to whether UNOC will take over the tax obligations of importation of petroleum products or whether these obligations will be retained by marketing companies. Legally, on the other hand, the enactment of the Petroleum Supply (Amendment) Act might contradict provisions of the Competition bill.

On September 1, 2023, parliament passed the Competition Bill that had been returned by President Museveni on July 24, 2023. Much as the Bill is pending the president's assent, the Petroleum Supply Act contravenes its provisions by creating a monopoly of importation of petroleum products. This undermines tenets of fair competition that are provided in the bill and contradicts one of reasons indicated in the act's long title.

In order to reconcile the two laws, there is need to specifically provide for UNOC as an exception to provisions of the competition bill. The minister should come up with clear Regulations to put in effect the provisions of the act, whilst addressing these salient concerns.

—The writer is an advocate of the High court.



ENERGY

By
NJ AYUKAFRICA-DO AS WE SAY, NOT AS WE DO:
WEALTHY NATIONS' EXPECTATIONS FOR AFRICA

When examining how fossil fuel exploration, production, and usage differ between African and more developed nations, the contrast is so stark that it essentially defines the core mission of the African Energy Chamber (AEC).

We exist not to bring these rates on par with each other but to amplify Africa's standing in the global energy industry such that it results in massive improvements in the quality of life across the continent.

Consider this: While Africa holds roughly 13% of global natural gas stores and 7% of its oil, when it comes to per capita use of these hydrocarbons for energy, Africa's consumption rate is the world's lowest.

Or this: While we're under pressure to adopt renewable energy resources, Africa already relies on renewables more than any other continent, but this refers to the wood and cow dung that fuel the cooking fires, which account for essentially half of Africa's energy consumption. Of course, both are linked to hazardous indoor air quality, adding to the already long list of vexing issues that many Africans must deal with daily.

In total, nearly one billion Africans have no access to clean cooking fuels. Another 600 million, with a majority living in the sub-Saharan regions, survive without access to electricity from any source. Africa deserves relief from such difficulties.

As much as the African people stand to benefit from access to their own fossil-fuel resources, Africa's hydrocarbon-bearing nations possess a vast wealth they're willing and ready to share with the world.

The prospect of forging development partnerships with foreign nations and international oil companies would offer much of Africa a path toward modernization, advancement, and prosperity while at the same time providing much-needed energy security to its business allies abroad.

We've been waiting for Africa to take its place alongside the equally resource-rich yet developed regions of the globe for far too long. However, Africa's readiness for this overdue transformation comes at a strange time in modern history. Just as we've observed increases in GDP per capita and average life expectancy parallel the proliferation of fossil fuels, we've also seen the rise of a small but vocal and influential minority that has set out to obstruct their continued extraction.

Activists and ill-informed ideologues mainly comprise this opposing faction. And either knowingly or as a result of having been taken in by false promises, they propose alternative energy solutions which are still far too expensive



Fossil fuel exploration in Africa

for Africa to implement effectively.

Africa needs affordable, readily available energy, but this group has steadily garnered sway over individuals, financial institutions, and world governments, convincing them that, for the sake of the planet's health, Africa's untapped resources must indefinitely remain right where they are today. Over the years, these activists brought many to their side, ratifying their intentions through measures like the Paris Agreement of 2015 and the Glasgow Climate Pact of 2021 that require signatories to commit to green energy initiatives at home and abroad.

This movement proved effective in achieving its own goals and was allowed to carry on with its agenda unimpeded for many years. However, recent global events have rather suddenly forced both participants and onlookers to reconsider the merits of its claims and the value of any allegiance to it.

Eastern Aggression, Western Hypocrisy

When then-U.S. President Donald Trump, speaking before the United Nations General Assembly in 2018, warned Germany against their dependence on Russian energy, the German delegation in attendance famously snickered at his concerns. After Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the European Union's sanctions against the Russian energy sector that followed, and the subsequent sabotage of the Nord Stream pipelines, Trump's remarks appear more prescient in retrospect than they did at the time.

The war in Ukraine and the supply chain disruptions and fuel price spikes it induced sent world leaders scrambling to secure new energy sources for their countries.

Spring 2022 saw a frenzy of energy industry activity as Italy's foreign min-

ister brokered new liquid natural gas (LNG) deals with Angola and the Congo, Germany engaged in gas talks with Senegal, and the energy ministers of Algeria, Niger, and Nigeria pledged to accelerate their work on the long-delayed Trans-Saharan gas pipeline project.

Even President Joe Biden, who notably vowed to end the United States' involvement with fossil fuels during his campaign, reached out to Saudi Arabia, urging the nation to increase oil production.

Coal: Don't Call It a Comeback

The 2021-2023 global energy crisis also led many nations to continue or increase their reliance on coal — the fossil fuel even conventional oil and gas companies are quick to disparage due to its negative impacts on human health and its history of environmental harm.

With their own power generation capacities in peril thanks to war shortages, below-average winter temperatures, overcast skies, and a wind drought that still threatens to starve turbines across Europe, the countries often most critical of Africa's modernization ambitions rushed to refill their stores of the very fuel they had scheduled for phase-out years before.

According to the International Energy Agency's mid-year Coal Market Update, global coal consumption grew by 3.3% in 2022, reaching an all-time high of 8.3 billion tons. While 2023 and 2024 might show a slight decrease in coal-fired power generation, the 1.5% rise in industrial coal use expected with improving economic conditions during the same period will likely negate this drop.

Putting a pause on an initiative begun in 2015 to shutter all its coal-fired power stations, the United Kingdom relaxed permitting conditions in July 2022,

keeping its remaining plants operational albeit on standby into 2024.

Around this same time, the EU imported roughly 11 times more coal than usual from Australia, South Africa, and Indonesia.

In August of 2023, in a move highlighted by opponents of the green agenda, German energy firm RWE began dismantling its wind farm in North Rhine-Westphalia to allow for the expansion of its Garzweiler II lignite coal mine.

Had these nations engaged in more earnest development negotiations with African oil and gas producers when we suggested they should, perhaps they would have found a better footing for dealing with unforeseen climate-related events, natural or political.

Gas Gets the Greenlight

In a move that helped to lessen the stigma cast upon a fuel much cleaner burning than coal, the EU voted in 2022 to officially recognize natural gas as a "green" or "sustainable" energy source. Unsurprisingly, this decision angered environmental activists. At the AEC, though, we support this development; we regard natural gas as crucial to Africa's battle against energy poverty and key to its future success as a sizeable supplier for the international market.

While the EU was at one point one of the loudest voices calling for full-scale decarbonization, we applaud this concession as this more positive classification will likely encourage European investment in African natural gas projects. And, as the AEC has always suggested, it will support our eventual transition to an emissions-free, fully renewables-based energy economy.

Our critics breathlessly warn us that future price drops could render African natural gas suppliers unable to compete against larger, established producers. Naysayers suggest that renewable energy technology will get up to speed and become widely adopted before any new African natural gas outfits can get underway. While these cynics regard oil and gas as merely trends in danger of falling out of fashion by next season, we remain confident that we are on the best course for Africa's future.

And while the wealthy, developed nations of the world have much to say about appropriate energy solutions for Africa, even as they flout the rules they've set for their own, we know we are in pursuit of the most beneficial gains for our people.

Just as the fuels that supported humanity progressed from wood to coal to oil as economies and technological needs evolved, so too will Africa's — naturally, and never as a consequence of dictated policy.

– NJ Ayuk is Executive Chairman, African Energy Chamber

**AFRICA'S UNTAPPED RESOURCES.**

Africa needs affordable, readily available energy, but this group has steadily garnered sway over individuals, financial institutions, and world governments, convincing them that, for the sake of the planet's health, Africa's untapped resources must indefinitely remain right where they are today. to commit to green energy initiatives at home and abroad.

ENERGY

By
AKINWUMI ADESINA & FATIH BIROL

How access to modern stoves could be a game-changer for Africa's economic development – and help tackle climate change

There are many glaring injustices in the world. But what is most appalling is when an injustice is ignored for decades and brings needless hardship to billions of people—even more so when the solutions are right in front of us. That's the case today with cooking.

Few things are more routine in our daily lives than preparing a meal. But for more than 2 billion people around the world, half of them in Africa, the simple act of cooking shapes their entire lives: from spending hours each day collecting firewood or dung to cook, missing out on education and work opportunities, and serious health complications from the inhalation of toxic fumes. Women and girls are by far the worst affected.

Today, nearly four in five Africans still cook meals over open fires or on basic stoves. And this number is climbing every year. On average, households spend five hours a day gathering firewood and cooking over rudimentary stoves.

What's shocking is that the tools to improve this situation are readily available and affordable. All it requires is political will—and some money. To put things in perspective, annual investments needed are roughly the amount wealthy economies spend on coffee in a week.

By burning wood over basic stoves for hours a day in poorly ventilated close quarters, millions of African women inhale harmful toxic fumes and smoke from charcoal, firewood, coal, agricultural waste, and animal dung. As such, a lack of clean cooking contributes to 3.7 million premature deaths annually around the world, with women and children most at risk.

The inhalation of toxic fumes is the second biggest killer in Africa and contributes up to 60% of early deaths due to respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. Under-representation of women in voting and governance means the availability of clean cooking options remains a low priority on the political agenda, even though it would lead to healthier lives and greater choices.

While billions of people stand to benefit from a switch to clean cooking technologies and methods, so too does the climate and local ecosystems. A switch to any of the major clean cook-



The Ecoa Wood modern cooking stove which uses less wood

ing technologies including liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) fired stoves, will reduce emissions and deforestation. It would cut global carbon dioxide emissions by 1.5 billion tonnes, the same amount generated by all planes and ships worldwide today.

The clean cooking challenge is not a technical problem. It is a policy and finance issue.

Based on International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates of \$4 billion a year between now and 2030, stoves and infrastructure needed to provide universal access to clean cooking in sub-Saharan Africa, can easily be deployed. It will require strong national leadership and programmes underpinned by financial support from development institutions and the private sector. The cost of reaching this goal is relatively small, but its impacts will be transformative in the lives of many Africans and communities.

Domestic clean cooking stove production, sales and delivery, marketing, and public awareness campaigns could create 1.5 million jobs, increase education opportunities and improve

the quality of life of many millions of people.

However, without help to deal with the upfront costs of a new stove—whether electric or LPG—consumers have little incentive to switch.

For low-income households, a new cooking stove can swallow up to three-quarters of monthly income, depending on the technology. Yet, making this necessary switch will pay back as much as four times the upfront investment within a year, due to the higher efficiencies of modern solutions.

In these turbulent economic and geopolitical times, concessional finance from the African Development Bank Group and other international institutions has a crucial role to play in ensuring that the world doesn't slide backwards on issues such as poverty, public health, and well-being—including clean cooking.

This is why we are calling on the international community to work with African countries and make available the capital required to address this solvable problem with the participation of governments, development



TOXIC FUMES.

By burning wood over basic stoves for hours a day in poorly ventilated close quarters, millions of African women inhale harmful toxic fumes and smoke from charcoal, firewood, coal, agricultural waste, and animal dung.

banks, global climate funds, NGOs, and the private sector, including energy majors who have also been vocal on this issue. Governments and funders then need to follow through to ensure enough people and resources are deployed on the ground and are empowered to put these efforts into action.

The benefits that universal access to clean cooking would bring for health, gender equality, and economic development, the protection of forests, reduction of carbon dioxide emissions, and the prevention of biodiversity loss are huge. Efforts to make progress on these, and other issues, as well as tackling climate change, will remain futile if the demand for clean cooking remains ignored.

We can make a real difference and bring about tangible change. Now is the time to do so.

— Akinwumi Adesina is the President of the African Development Bank Group, while Fatih Birol, Executive Director of the International Energy Agency



Access to Justice (JLOS) Sub-Programme Annual Review

**Empowering the People.
Building Trust.
Upholding Rights**





PART I

JLOS and how it has worked to improve service delivery

Developing appropriate infrastructure to enhance access to justice

The JLOS institutions continued to enhance access to justice through the establishment of permanent infrastructure across the country. These include construction of:

- The Justice, Law and Order Service House. The construction works in Naguru stand at 60 percent and are expected to be completed in 2024. This phase shall provide purpose-built office accommodation for JLOS institutions including Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (MoJCA), the Judiciary (High Court), the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), Uganda Prisons (UPS), Judicial Service Commission (JSC), Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC), Uganda Law Reform Commission (ULRC), Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP), Tax Appeals Tribunal (TAT), among others.

- DCIC Suam One Stop Border Post (OSBP) in Bukwo and the construction of Gulu Regional Office (Phase were completed).

- Modification of the building for the Printing and Publishing Section at LDC is ongoing.

- The ODPP Regional Office blocks in Soroti, Mbarara and Mbale are at the roofing stage, and the Jinja & Fort Portal Regional Offices were at groundbreaking stage. Justice Centers at Kyotera for Court, DPP & Police were at 85% completion.

Construction of service points in Refugee settlements and host districts including one stop justice centres in Adjumani, 3 police posts in Rhino Camp, Imvepi and Palabek; ODPP office in Madi Okollo, and a female prisons ward in Lamwo.

Service delivery (JLOS service points) Deconcentrated

According to the report, The JLOS House project is a key flag-

ship project intended to improve institutional coordination and the working environment of the staff involved in the administration of justice and reduce government expenditure burden of UGX 30Bn per year on rent. Construction of JLOS House, Naguru project at an estimated cost of UGX 256bn was at 54% completion at the end of the reporting period and by the time of publishing this report construction of phase one was at 71%.

This project will house institutions including:-

MoJCA, MIA, UPS, ULRC, JSC, ODPP, UHRC and TAT, among others.

In a bid to extend services closer to the people, the report says Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration Control (DCIC) completed phase II of the construction of regional office in Gulu City. The project shall be finalized in the current financial year 2023/24.

To strengthen border control, the DCIC gazetted and operationalized 6 new border points in the reporting period, registering an increase from 61 to 67. With support from Trademark East Africa, In a bid to extend services closer to the people, DCIC completed phase II of the construction of regional office in Gulu City. The project shall be finalized in the current financial, 2023/24. DCIC completed the construction of One-Stop Border Posts (OSBP) at Mpondwe and Goli as well as commenced construction of Suam One-Stop Border Post (OSBP) in Bukwo works are ongoing and this will improve service delivery in the area.

“The existence of the OSBPs reduces the time taken to clear travellers since immigration formalities are handled and completed on one side of the country. The construction of the OSBP in Suam is ongoing, left is a pictorial presentation of the works so far. In preparation for the establishment of a printery,



Justice minister Norbert Mao launches the report

the LDC continued to modify the building that is going to house the printing and publishing section. This is expected to reduce the cost of publication as well as generate revenue,” says the report, produced by JLOS Secretariat.

In the spirit of taking services closer to the community, ODPP continued with the construction of Regional Offices. Construction is ongoing in three Regional Offices of Soroti, Mbale and Mbarara. At the time of preparing this report, roofing was complete in Soroti and Mbale regional offices while Mbarara regional office was at the roofing stage. The procurement process for the construction of Jinja and Fort Portal Regional Offices and Resident State Attorney’s offices at Pallisa, Kira, Alebtong, Kamwenge and Amuria was in the advanced stages.

The ODPP established and operationalized three Regional Offices in Luwero, Moroto and Tororo to ensure effective and timely review of cases arising from the decision of Resident State Attorneys and State Prosecutors under their respective regions. The ODPP further renovated and elevated two Resident State prosecutor offices of Serere and Katakwi to Resident State Attorney Offices. The creation of these offices will result in a more effective prosecutorial service to the public.

The new regional offices will ensure effective and timely prosecution of capital cases in the new regions created due to a considerable reduction in workload and this will lead to increased disposal of cases and delivery of justice. Secondly, the supervision and monitoring of the performance of Resident State Attorneys and

Resident State prosecutors will be more effective. Regarding the Justice Centers, construction works resumed at the Kyotera justice centres (Court, DPP and Police) sites. Status of completion is at 90%. Construction works are in their final phase with external works and painting ongoing.

Additionally, the sub program is enhancing service delivery within refugee settlements and host communities through renovations under the EU SUPREME Project. This is through establishing physical presence and accessibility of JLOS frontline actors, furnishing and JLOS service points, At Ofua IV in Rhino camp (Madi-Okollo), the project is at 80% level of completion. The plumbing works are ongoing. Remaining with plastering, shuttering and finishes. the project enhanced. Three 3 police posts were constructed in Kato-Imvepi, Terego; Ofua IV, Rhino camp in Madi-Okollo; and Palabek in Lamwo refugee settlements which are all at 80% completion. It is expected that upon completion, these police posts will augment the efforts of already existing police establishments to extend policing services to the refugee population and host communities. Construction of the police posts is at different stages.

Also, the construction of a JLOS one-stop point centre in Adjumani, ODPP office in Madi Okollo as well as female inmate’s ward in Lamwo prison are also ongoing. The construction of the Adjumani Justice Centre consists of a court building, police building and ODPP and staff residences for the Judiciary and ODPP. The Court

building and residence are at the roofing stage, while the police building is at ring beam level. This Mini-JLOS Centre will enhance access to Justice for refugees and refugee hosting communities in and around Palorinya, Pagrinya and Nyumanzi Refugee settlements among other neighbouring settlements. Under the EU- SUPREME Project the Mini JLOS Centre is going to be furnished; and equipped with computers and Court Recording and Transcription Equipment.

Functional Presence Strengthened (Equipping, furnishing, transport)

Under the strategy of enhancing and strengthening functional presence, various activities were planned. Some of the activities were facilitated.

Under the EU SUPREME, the capacity of frontline actors was enhanced through retooling to enable them to respond to the justice needs of refugees and host communities in the target districts through several planned activities. Justice Center Uganda established a service point in Yumbe district. The sub program acquired 7 Motor Vehicles and 11 motorcycles for UPF, UPS, UHRC, Judiciary and ODPP as well as 30 computers for the frontline actors. These were handed over to the JLOS actors. The UPF procured assorted office furniture, filing cabinets and 08 counter telephone sets for police posts to facilitate service delivery.

To offer more accessible forensic, analytical and advisory services to stakeholders at the regional level, DGAL, established four



ciently. In addition, the Ministry acquired 3 motor vehicles.

Gazetting of more border points was implemented, registering an increase of 67 from 61 in the reporting period. This included The Director-LDC receiving the two newly procured Omnibuses for LDC Mbarara and Lira. The construction of Mpondwe and Goli One Stop Border Post (OSBP) with support from Trademark East Africa. The existence of the OSBPs reduces the time taken to clear travellers since immigration

100%

PLEA BARGAIN.

The plea bargain approach enabled the ODPP to deal with case backlog by fast-tracking cases, resulting in reduced case disposal time. It also improved the conviction rates since it offers 100% conviction rates. The plea bargain approach has also helped to weed out cases that are poorly investigated and have no sufficient evidence.

formalities are handled and completed on one side of the country. They were officially opened and are now operational and this goes a long way to strengthening border control. The newly constructed One Stop Border Post at Mpondwe.

Customer Care & Information desks strengthened at JLOS service points

DCIC continued to support the newly set up Call Centre and carried out awareness campaigns to enlighten the public on the immigration facilities. In addition, it held a student pass sensitization meant to harmonize business processes. This includes handling foreigners who access education in Uganda, highlighting the importance of legal stay in the country and building the capacity of education institutions to handle foreign students in Uganda's education institutions. The President of Uganda, H.E Yoweri K. Museveni inspected the DCIC information desk during the National Youth Day celebration in August 2022.

DCIC through its Public Relations Office, made numerous appearances on different media

houses to explain to the public the cause of delays in passport issuance in the first quarter of the year and carried out sensitization on other immigration facilities. These Public Relations engagements were undertaken by the DCIC to improve immigration service delivery. These include 10

TV talk shows done in the reporting period to sensitize the public on immigration services and 12 Radio talk shows were conducted create awareness of immigration issues.

Others were 4 press conferences held on: Passport issuance delays, Operations of the Inspection Section, Students Pass Sensitization, and Gulu Regional Passport Office operations. Social media presence was increased with over 4,000 followers across our social media handles. UPS opened 75 Customer care desks and trained 100 staff in Customer care from the Mid-Western, Mid-Eastern, Kooki and Eastern regions. Community engagements were conducted in 90 Prison settings including the regions of North-Central; and Central and Communities were sensitized on key Government interventions in Prisons and their achievements. Other work plan activities implemented include the following.

Chain-linked Initiatives implemented

The sub-programme continues to foster communication and collaboration in the criminal justice chain. This enhanced a very good working relationship among the relevant criminal justice stakeholders i.e. the police, ODPP, ULS, LACs, MoGSLD, prisons and Judiciary. Coordination meetings are held once every quarter for every high court circuit and pre-session meetings are held before the start of every session. Community service officers were brought on board to identify placement areas and supervise accused persons convicted and sentenced to community service in petty offences. This was employed in magistrate courts.

ODPP participated in the ODPP-Police CID coordination meetings at headquarters, regions and district levels aimed at improving and ironing out issues affecting the management and prosecution of criminal matters and cases and thus fostering communication and collaboration in the criminal justice chain. During FY 2022/23, the ODPP made 52 referrals for witness protection in various cases.

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tection in various cases.

The plea bargain approach enabled the ODPP to deal with case backlog by fast-tracking cases, resulting in reduced case disposal time. It also improved the conviction rates since it offers 100% conviction rates. The plea bargain approach has also helped to weed out cases that are poorly investigated and have no sufficient evidence.

Unlike before, the focus was on capital cases, which helped both magistrates and prosecutors to adopt proper procedures for the plea bargain process. Another good practice adopted for the prosecution is to ensure the police file has at least two plea bargain agreements as sometimes these documents go missing from the court file and to tender in court all relevant documentation evidence to give the court a clear picture of the nature of crime committed. This would help in maintaining sentences during appeal.

It was observed that there were improved conviction rates in normal high court sessions; the number of convicted cases were more than the number of cases dismissed. This is attributed to weeding out old cases that resulted in high rates of dismissals in the financial 2021-22 following the COVID-19 period were most of the witnesses had changed location.

An effort was made to summon victims to participate in plea bargain activities intended to keep the victims up-to-date with their cases and to cater for their interests.

The victims who were fully involved in plea-bargain appreciated this initiative as it helps resolve cases expeditiously, promotes reconciliation and brings out the victim's impact statement were the impact of the offence on the victim is known and interests are taken into consideration.

Where victims were summoned, the use of probation and social welfare officers in securing victim impact statements was employed during the sessions and this enabled the courts to assess the impact of the crime on both the victim, the family and the community.

The ODPP participated in 07 International meetings/ engagements in criminal matters both physical and online/virtual meetings. Some of these include; the third session of the United Nations Ad hoc Committee on Cybercrime in New York, USA; meeting of the Regional High Level meeting of Heads of Prosecuting and Investigating Authorities on Combating Terrorism, Violent Extremism and its Financing in Maputo, Mozam-

Regional Laboratories in Mbale, Mbarara, Moroto and Gulu. Presently, all four regional forensic laboratories are supported with basic facilities for the preservation, proper storage, collection and transportation of exhibits collected in the respective regions before analysis. An operationalization plan was developed for Regional Forensic Laboratories to methodologically guide the development of the regional laboratories.

At full operation, the regional laboratories are expected to mirror the services offered by the main laboratories at DGAL. The operation of the regional laboratories has been constrained by inadequate analytical capacity – the unavailability of requisite scientific equipment, staff, operative funding and other requirements.

The strategic and systematic operationalization of the regional laboratories is pertinent in easing access to services for users at the regional level and relieving the main laboratory of the high burden of cases and ensuing backlogs currently experienced. This will also drive the realization of the planned objectives in the Development Plan.

URSB relocated to its premises at the Uganda Business Facilitation Centre (UBFC) located at Plot 1 Baskerville Avenue, Kololo. The Centre whose construction was funded by the World Bank and the GoU, houses URSB, Uganda Investment Authority (UIA), and Capital Market Authority (CMA).

The Uganda Business Facilitation Centre is to serve as a central hub and one-stop center for the formalization of businesses, and related services.

The ODPP established and op-

erationalized Luwero, Moroto and Tororo Regional Offices to ensure effective and timely review of cases arising from the decision of Resident State Attorneys and State Prosecutors under their respective regions. The new regional offices will ensure effective and timely prosecution of capital cases in the new regions created due to a considerable reduction in workload and this will lead to increased disposal of cases and delivery of justice. Secondly, the supervision and monitoring of the performance will be more effective.

UPS continued to use e-justice mechanisms that is the Video Conferencing Systems/Virtual courts. In the FY2022/2023, the UPS installed three (3) virtual court systems in 3 prisons at Masaka, Kaweri and Soroti raising the number of prisons with virtual courts to 19 hence increasing the ease of access to justice for inmates. The UPS also Procured 08 vehicles, and 10 motorcycles raising the fleet to 305 vehicles to facilitate the delivery of prisoners to court services. Within the reporting period, LDC procured and set up 200 chairs and desks for students, 50 desks and 5 chairs for staff; procured 2 omnibus vehicles for Mbarara and Lira campuses to ease transportation of staff and students within the regional campuses and set up a biometric system for staff and students.

MoJCA procured furniture, 43 Laptops for State Attorneys and 10 newly recruited Attorneys.

Furniture was also procured for the regional offices of Soroti (4), Arua (5), Gulu (5), Mbale (5),

Mbarara (5) and Moroti (5) to support officers in performing their duties effectively and effi-



bique; Online coordination with the Head Rule of Law Governance and Peace Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat, meeting of the EAAP Focal Points of the Executive Committee in Nairobi, Meeting of Focal Points for the Regional High-Level Heads of Prosecutions and Investigating Authorities on combating Terrorism, violent extremism and its financing; and the Eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, Vienna, Austria.

In addition, the ODPP participated in other inter-agency engagements including 18 case conferencing meetings; 15 meetings or online, webinars, workshops, conferences held with partners such as UN Agencies of UNODC, IOM, ILO, MGLSD, Ministry of Internal Affairs (COPTIP), and the CSO umbrella organization of UCATIP. Operation Under Ground availed 10 laptops to ODPP.

In FY 2022-2023, the ODPP inspected 105 out of a target of 136 ODPP offices as well as 13 out of 22 Agencies with a delegated prosecutorial function that adhered to set minimum performance standards. However, only 14 agencies were licensed to carry out delegated prosecutorial functions. Of these, only 13 were inspected and one could not be inspected since it got licensed after the inspection exercise. This performance is attributed to understaffing. Four reports were generated and presented to Top management. It is hoped that the exercise will improve adherence to set prosecution standards at all levels of prosecution.

These inspections were carried out in the regions of Gulu, Mubende, Arua, Soroti, Mbale, Mbarara, Kabale, Fort portal and Karamoja; and Agencies with a delegated prosecutorial function in and around Kampala.

Promote equitable access to justice

Through various interventions, the subprogram prioritized the provision of legal aid services to the vulnerable, strengthening of justice for children, family justice, gender equality and stakeholders' empowerment and enhanced access to legal information.

Functional legal aid services and probono schemes enhanced

The legal aid service providers including JCU, LDC Legal Aid Clinic, ULS, J4C, ULRC provide legal aid through community sensitizations and court representation through which awareness is increased as well as supporting

reducing court case backlog.

JCU established and operationalized one additional JLOS point/Centre at Yumbe Chief Magistrate's Court to make a total of 13 legal aid clinics. Overall, a total of 41 legal aid clinics run by JCU, ULS and LDC are fully operational and supported by JLOS. These reached out to 141,347 vulnerable individuals and communities in the reporting period.

The LDC Legal Aid Clinic (LAC) reached and impacted 19,186 persons, 13,450 male and 5,736 female. The number reached includes Bar Course Students, children in conflict with the law, prisoners, indigent accused persons and litigants and community members seeking access to justice. LAC impacted the above categories of persons through Alternative Disputes Resolution mechanisms such as reconciliation, mediation and diversion, legal services including legal advice, counselling, representation, coaching for self-representation, police and prison outreaches, services of our community structures-fit persons and social services to children in conflict with the law and their parents to participate in the dispensation of justice. 5,648 clients (4,770 male and 878 female) received legal aid services, as well as 809 children in conflict with the law (721 boys and 88 girls). 1,805 juvenile offenders (1,591 boys and 214 girls) were diverted, counselled and prepared for Court sessions by LAC. 8,089 persons, 4CU conducted 32 mobile legal aid clinics reaching 2,706 (1,288-M, 1,418-F) citizens from which 283 (137-M, 146-F) cases were registered and 232 (119-M, 113-F) clients were provided with Legal Advice. The MLACs saw 72 (54-M, 18-F) stakeholders coming through and being a part of the While You Wait (WyW) sessions.

094 male (inclusive of 2232 boys) and 3995 female (inclusive of 2513 girls) were reached through outreaches geared toward legal awareness at Police Stations, Prisons, schools and in the communities.

At the LDC-LAC, 1366 cases were resolved through mediation and plea-bargaining. Of these, 1241 were male and 125 females. Plea Bargaining: A total of 1,152 cases, 1,105 male and 47 female were handled by LAC through plea bargaining. 1,040 were successfully handled while 109 case is ongoing and 3 failed.

Under Mediation: 141 cases, 76 male 65 Female were handled through mediation. 73 were completed, 64 were pending and 4 failed. Reconciliation: LAC was able to handle 73 cases, consist-

ing of 60 males and 13 females through reconciliation. 61 cases were completed while 12 cases are ongoing.

During the reporting period, LAC handled a total of 365 people, 217 males and 148 females with special needs.

Lawyers

A team of five advocates were facilitated by LDC to travel to the districts of Lira, Mbarara, Kamuli and around Kampala to interact with stakeholders within the justice system including prisons warders, Magistrates, State Attorneys, Probation and Social Welfare Officers, juvenile offenders, accused persons on remand among other person to capture voices of the vulnerable persons accessing the justice needs. A report was generated capturing stories of the vulnerable persons and key recommendations were made to improve service delivery to the vulnerable persons within the justice system.

Outreaches at Police: - A total of 216 suspects, 138 male and 33 female, were reached during the police outreach conducted by advocates and Bar Course Interns in Masindi district. They were all eventually helped to secure police bond. Remand Homes 177 child offenders, 174 male and 3 girls were reached through the various Remand Homes by the LAC stations and sensitized about dispute resolution mechanisms. As a result of these outreaches to secure court bond and police bond for detainees who had overstayed on remand and suspects who had stayed in police custody beyond 48 hours. Prisons on remand were encouraged to use Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms. This has also increased stakeholder engagement and networking. Three sets of radio jingles relating to three functions of the Legal Aid Clinic of Legal Aid Service Provision, Mediation and Reconciliation and child justice diversion were developed and are ready for airing.

No of children diverted from the criminal justice system

The ULRC transcribed the Children Act in braille and the copies were made and disseminated to the respective stakeholders and institutions for the visually impaired persons.

During the reporting period, 35,444 child-related cases were identified in the system. Of which 9,228 (4885M, 4,343F) criminal and 5,270(2,046M, 3,224F) Civil in nature were disposed of leading to 40% disposal rate. Out of the 4,343 cases involving female child cases, 3,258 were SGBV Cases.

A total of 2,539 criminal-re-



Some of the officials at the launch of the report in Kampala

lated child cases were fast-tracked (1,196 capital cases and 1,343 petty cases). Out of these, 9,228 cases were disposed of. This represents 27% of child-related cases resolved before clocking the mandatory period.

Further, a total of 3,232(2,357M, 891F) were registered as divertible cases. Out of which, 2,282 (1586M, 696F) juvenile offenders were successfully diverted, which is a 71% diversion rate.

The program registered a 4% increase in the number of non-cus-

todial orders issued, a total number of 1,902 (1554M: 348F) child-offenders received non-cus-

todial orders while 696 (604M: 92F) children received custodial orders. This is due to the continuous promotion of child-friendly sentencing by programme coordinators together with advocates representing juvenile offenders.

LDC developed a Social Workers manual to facilitate the social workers and advocates to effectively handle child justice in and out of the justice system. This en-

hanced diversion and provision of child-friendly legal aid services. The eight (8) social workers and eight (8) legal assistants under LDC were facilitated to provide legal aid in six (6) districts of Kampala, Mbarara, Kabarole, Masindi, Adjumani and Lira in eleven (11) various courts where LAC has presence. They were able to provide legal aid and social counselling services to 2,614 child offenders including 2,312 boys and 302 girls. Of these, 1,987 cases were completed within the reporting period.

Further, a total of 240 fit persons in the districts of Kampala, Lira, Mbarara, Kabarole, Masindi and Adjumani were mobilized and supported to divert child offenders from the justice system. As a result, 350 juveniles, 301 boys and 49 girls were diverted from the formal justice system. However, failure to release funds for the fit persons greatly affected the mobilisation of juveniles in the six districts.

In addition, to equip and support the maintenance of 26 child reception centers under UPF, 4,250 pieces of sanitary pads, 255 jerry cans of liquid soap and 300 blankets were procured and distributed to 17 UPF child reception centres of Hoima, Bundibugyo, Kabarole, Masaka, CPS Kampala, Jinja Road, Lira, Mbale, Alebtong, Nwoya, Buyende, Kamuli, Mukono, Tororo, Busia, Pallisa and Nateete.

The MoGLSD resettled 1,700 juveniles in the various Regional Remand Homes, Reception Centre and Kampirigisa National Rehabilitation Centre (Naguru, Mbale, Fortportal, Maindi, Kabale, Arua and Gulu, in addition to Kampirigisa National Rehabilitation Centre and Naguru Reception Centre).

Preparation and submission of Victim Impact Assessment Reports for child victims

During the reporting period, 363 cases of victims of crime were identified for victim impact assessment reports. Only 172 cases had reports attached. The low number of cases handled was due to the low number of High Court sessions conducted and the limited participation of Probation and Welfare Officers in the management of child-related cases. LAC through concerted efforts of social workers and the legal assistants were able to provide legal aid and social counselling services to 2,614 (302 girls) child offenders.

The construction of Moroto Remand Home started in the FY 2018/2019 under the funding of JLOS Access to justice sub-programme. The total project cost was



Minister Mao chats with a guest at the launch of the report

UGX: 4,743,938,138 out of which 53% of the funds were received and utilized to achieve construction works validated at 68% by the Ministry of Works and Transport. The original scope of works included the construction of a girls' dormitory, a boys' dormitory, 2 staff houses, a sick-bay, a kitchen, an administration block and 4 number drainable pit latrines.

The construction works for the current reporting period stands at 68% with the boys' and girls' dormitories already roofed, one Staff house roofed as well as the sick-bay. The chain-link fence is complete. The Administration block, kitchen and the second staff house are at the ring beam levels. One of the staff houses blocks.

Legal aid services for children in conflict with the law

The LDC Legal Aid Clinic (LAC) reached and impacted 809 children in conflict with the law (721 boys and 88 girls) in Kampala, Jinja, Iganga, Masindi, Mbarara, Kabarole, Lira and Adjumani. 676 of the cases were completed within the reporting period while 133 cases are ongoing.

Also, 1,805 juvenile offenders (1,591 boys and 214 girls) were diverted, counselled and prepared for Court sessions by LAC. 8,089 persons, 4094 male (inclusive of 2232 boys) and 3995 female (inclusive of 2513 girls) were reached through outreaches geared toward legal awareness at Police Stations, Prisons, schools and in the communities.

Diversion of child offenders by social workers and legal assistants

LDC-LAC through the social workers and the legal assistants interfaced with and diverted 1,805 child offenders from the formal justice system to the communities in the districts of Kampala, Adjumani, Masindi, Kabarole,

and Mbarara, Iganga and Jinja at the various police stations. Of these 1,591 were boys and 214 girls. 1,191 cases were successfully diverted while 611 cases are still ongoing with the child offenders reporting to police on bond.

The cause of juvenile offenders is still largely due to the failure of parents to shoulder their responsibilities. Cases of theft are the most common offences committed by children. Findings reveal that the offenders were not getting enough food at home. Others were coming from broken homes. Mostly, the mothers were the breadwinners and the Covid restrictions made them close their evening small businesses. Left: Table showing statistics for the cases diverted by social workers and legal assistants.

Diversion of child offenders by fit persons

In a bid to promote diversion of juveniles at the grassroots community level, LAC trained 136 fit persons in 6 districts (Kampala, Masindi, Kabarole, Adjumani, Lira and Wakiso) consisting of 72 males and 64 females. The trained fit persons from the above-mentioned 6 districts handled a total of 186 cases including 108 boys and 78 girls.

Capacity of UPF Child and Family protection services strengthened

To enable the mobility of CFPU officers, UPF procured 10 motorcycles for the districts of Pallisa, Kyankwanzi, Kibaale, Kagadi, Buliisa, Ntungamo, Kabarole, Kumi, Manafwa and Ssembabule. This enables follow-up on child-related cases and conduct outreach activities in communities. Delivery of these motorcycles will now bring the total coverage of Policing Districts/Divisions with CFPU motorcycles to 57%.

Child-friendly rooms

established & equipped in all JLOS Service Points

ODPP embraced the use of available child-friendly rooms, court audio/visual facilities, and traumaminimizing approaches in handling Trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. To promote awareness of the provisions of the Children Act for visually impaired persons, ULRC transcribed the Children Act Cap. 59 into Braille. Article 21 (1) of the Constitution provides for the equality of all persons before and under the law and Article 21(2) protects disabled people, including the visually impaired, from discrimination. The right to equality and freedom from discrimination can only be enjoyed by visually impaired persons when given aspects of the law are transcribed into the Braille version.

Child reception centres established at UPF police stations

Child & SGBV victims as well as Witnesses Interview rooms/spaces established at police stations. UPF established 01 new child reception center at Natete Police Station.

Capacity of JLOS Actors in child-friendly procedures and handling cases enhanced

UPF successfully investigated 7,614 SGBV cases and forwarded them to courts and rescued 64 victims of SGBV involved in sexual abuses, torture, defilement and Human trafficking. Additionally, UPF provided psycho-social support to victims, transferred victims to different homes and referred others to various shelters for further management.

Strengthen family justice

Family arbitrations and mediations conducted

The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs under the Administrator General conducted a total of 362 mediations and arbitrations in a way to promote equitable access to justice. From these family arbitrations and mediations, justice was brought closer to the people.

Administration of properties of the deceased and those of unsound mind enhanced

The ULRC produced a User Guide on Succession aimed at creating awareness of the amendments and relevant topics of succession

78.1%

BIRTH REGISTRATION.
In the reporting period, a 78.1% achievement on birth registration was recorded as 999,633 births (489,820 males and 509,823 females) were registered out of the planned 1,280,000.

in Uganda. In its preparation of the User Guide, the Commission adopted the use of easy-to-understand words. Legal terms were applied only where it was deemed necessary, and the rest of the terms were explained in the glossary to the said guide. The User Guide provides the reader with information on writing a will, management of an estate where there is a will, administration of an estate without a will, how property is to be distributed and who is entitled to a share in the deceased's estate. The User Guide further covers some of the offences and penalties under the Succession (Amendment) Act, No.3 of 2022, changes introduced by the Succession (Amendment) Act, No.3 of 2022 and concludes with commonly asked questions.

Letters of Administration issued and Land transfers made

The Administrator General administered 12 letters of Administration and made 28 land transfers successfully through the FY 2022/23. Concerning the administration of estates, 8302 estates of deceased persons and persons of unsound mind were registered, inspected and administered.

Promote Gender Equality

In the reporting period, a 78.1% achievement on birth registration was recorded as 999,633 births (489,820 males and 509,823 females) were registered out of the planned 1,280,000. On death registration, a total of 72,336 (39,061 males & 33,275 females) were registered out of the planned 340,000; this represented a 23.3% achievement in the financial year. KCCA contributed a total of 20,688 (9,693 males and 10,955 females) births registered 490 (304 males and 186 females) deaths registered during the year. Despite the improvement in death registration, more sensitization is required as communities lack motivation to notify and register deaths especially when there are no benefits associated with the deceased's death like estates. In addition, there is need to decentralize BDR further from District to Parish level. Additionally, the MoJCA was able to conduct 250 searches to verify the authenticity of information presented to the office of the Administrator General in the succession registers.

Stakeholders' empowerment and enhanced access to legal information

During the period under review, out of the 65 languages in the Third Schedule of the Uganda Constitution, the ULRC translated the Uganda Constitution into 21 languages bringing it to a cumulative total of 33. The languages that were undertaken during the year included: Lunyole, Kumam,

Italy and Juventus legend retires at 39

Italy legend Giorgio Chiellini has announced his retirement, describing his career as “the most beautiful and intense journey of my life”.

The 39-year-old, who captained the Azzurri to their Euro 2020 win, has called time on playing after 23 years.

The defender made his name at Juventus and since June 2022 has been playing in Major League Soccer (MLS) with Los Angeles FC.

LAFC were beaten 2-1 by Columbus Crew in the MLS Cup final on Saturday.

Posting on X, Chiellini added: “You have been my everything. With you I have travelled a unique and unforgettable path.

“But now it is time to start new chapters, face new chal-

lenges and write further important and exciting pages of life.”

Chiellini began his career with Livorno in 2000 before cementing his status as a Serie A icon in Turin.

The centre-half helped Juventus win nine consecutive Serie A titles from 2011 and 2020 and the Coppa Italia five times.

Chiellini, who retired from international football in 2022, won 117 Italy caps, scoring eight goals.

Juventus paid tribute to their former player, saying: “For Juventus fans, for 17 seasons, the number three stood for one thing, and one thing only: Giorgio Chiellini.

“You were always by our side, like a superhero ready to intervene if necessary.”



117

Italy caps won. Chiellini, who retired from international football in 2022, won 117 Italy caps, scoring eight goals.



Giorgio Chiellini was a key part of the Italy side that beat England in the final of Euro 2020



Scott McTominay, who netted both goals against Chelsea, says the Manchester United team is firmly behind manager Ten Hag (pictured below).

Past was 'toxic' but we are firmly behind Ten Hag, say McTominay

It has been “toxic at times” at Manchester United under former managers but the players are “firmly behind” Erik ten Hag, says midfielder Scott McTominay.

Saturday’s 3-0 Premier League loss to Bournemouth was their 11th defeat in 23 games in all competitions this season.

They must beat Bayern Munich at Old Trafford on Tuesday to have any chance of staying in the Champions League.

“It is the players’ responsibility, first and foremost,” McTominay said.

“We have had many amazing players and right now we are at the stage where we have big characters in the dressing room.

“It is not just a case of like [with] some of the other managers where it has been a little bit toxic at times - the boys are firmly behind the manager.

“We’ve got amazing coaching staff. We just want to do well for the football club and it’s as simple as that.”

Midfielder McTominay, 27, made his Manchester United debut in 2017 under Jose Mourinho.

Last week, Ten Hag, in his second season at Old Trafford, dismissed suggestions he has a split dressing room, saying he and his squad are “together”.

The reigns of predecessors David Moyes, Louis van Gaal, Mourinho and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, as well as interim boss Ralf Rangnick, were all plagued, to varying extents, by rumours of player unrest.

In an interview in September, Solskjaer criticised the behaviour of some players during his time in charge.

United are sixth in the Premier League and bottom of their Champions League group, needing to beat Bayern and relying on other results going their way to qualify for the last 16.

“We are inconsistent as a team, we have not been naive to that,” McTominay added.

“We have spoken with the coaching staff about it. The schedule has been relentless, but we can’t use that as an excuse. As a group we have to come together and find out the answers to that.

“We have spoken with the coaching staff about it. The schedule has been relentless, but we can’t use that as an excuse. As a group we have to come together and find out the answers to that.

“In the Premier League, every team is super athletic, every team in the Champions League can run, we need to match

that and more when you play for this club.

“The manager can’t do too much from the sidelines, it needs to come from the players.”

What Man Utd need to qualify for last 16 of the Champions League

Ten Hag, meanwhile, pointed to injury issues as one of the reasons behind his side’s inconsistencies compared with last season’s encouraging third-placed finish.

“We had a regular team [last season], not so many changes, especially in our backline - we had a regular formation and that helps you,” the Dutchman said.

“When we get back to a regular base, we will play better and there is a better chance you are consistent.

“I know this team can perform

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE DREAMS.

Manchester United must beat Bayern Munich at Old Trafford on Tuesday to have any chance of staying in the Champions League.

at really high levels. It is not like we did it three months ago - no, we did it last week. It starts with the right attitude.”

Analysis

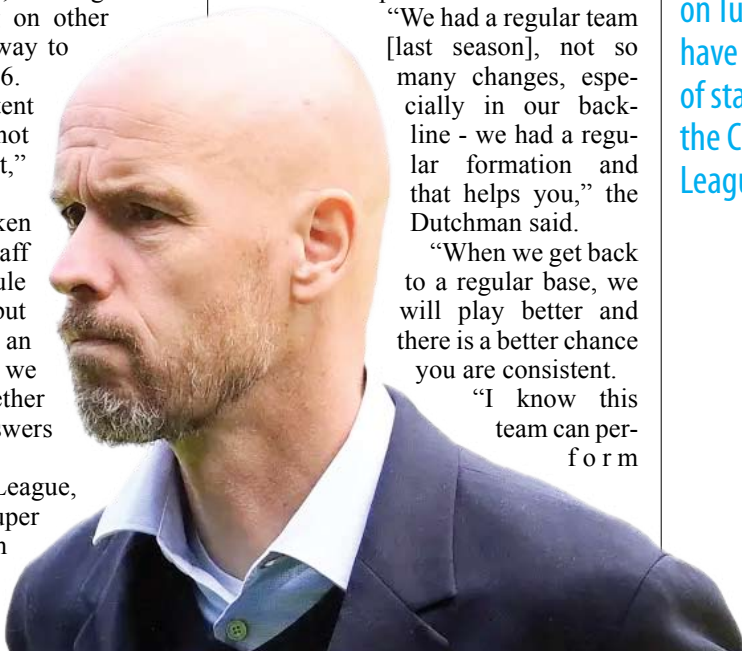
It was the final answer of the news conference when Scott McTominay used the word “toxic”. In defending the current United manager, he admitted the dressing room had turned against previous ones.

The assumption must be if it has happened before, it can happen again.

Manchester United have an enormous week ahead of them. Bayern Munich, followed by Liverpool on Sunday. The difference in mood between two victories and two defeats is vast.

Sadly for Ten Hag, his solution for the maddening inconsistency that has blighted United this season, the return of personnel, will not be solved in days. Lisandro Martinez, in particular, is not expected to be back before Christmas.

For all the positive elements of their performance against Galatasaray, they did not win, and the triumph against Chelsea last week has been put into perspective by the Blues’ dismal display at Goodison Park on Sunday.





Uefa boss trying to change his rule to remain in power

FOOTBALL: Uefa president Aleksander Ceferin is trying to change his own rule to remain in power until 2031. He was elected in 2016, replacing Michel Platini, and one of reforms he put in place was a three-term limit for all executive appointments. He is due to step down in 2027 but the his supporters are working on a plan to amend the rule.

SPORTS

PUBLICLENS
SIEVING FACTS FROM FICTION

December 2023
– January 2024

Thrilling victory

The Uganda U18 National Team etched their name in history, securing a heart-stopping 2-1 win against Kenya in the CECAFA U18 Boys Championship in a riveting final held at the Jomo Kenyatta International Stadium, Kisumu on Friday afternoon. The stadium pulsated with fervour, filled to the brim with passionate Kenyan plus a pick of Ugandan fans, amplifying the intensity of the match.

Despite Kenya taking the lead with an early second-half goal, the Uganda team showcased unwavering determination. Abasi Kyeyune's electrifying equalizer moments before the final whistle pushed the game into extra time, setting the stage for a nerve-wracking climax.

In a defining moment, Mutebi Hakim, hailed as the tournament's Most Valuable Player, rose to prominence by slotting in Uganda's winning goal during extra time. His stellar performance throughout the championship culminated in this pivotal moment of triumph.

Post-match, Uganda's head coach, Morley Byekwaso, acknowledged the intense challenge his side faced during a compelling interview. He lauded his team's resilience, acknowledging the sheer difficulty of the game and praising their steadfast determination.

Adding to the jubilation, the President of the Federation of Uganda Football Associations (FUFA) through EXCOM Member Rogers Byamukama honored the team's

monumental achievement by awarding each member with a generous sum of 1000 USD. This gesture of appreciation and recognition highlighted the nation's pride in their young athletes.

Uganda's victory in the CECAFA U18 Boys Championship stands as a testament to their exceptional teamwork, unwavering spirit, and remarkable talent. The players' prowess on the field, coupled with their resilience under pressure, captivated audiences and secured their place in the annals of Ugandan football history.

As celebrations reverberate across the nation, Uganda proudly embraces these young champions, celebrating their hard-earned victory that brought glory to the country.

Uganda's U18 national team celebrates victory



SPORTS ROUND-UP

FORMULA 1

Hamilton self-doubt during difficult times of the season

LONDON: Lewis Hamilton admits there have been times he has doubted himself during the 2023 Formula 1 season. "Ultimately," Hamilton says, "when you have difficult seasons like this, there are always going to be moments when you're like: 'Is it me, or is it the car? Do you still have it? Has it gone?' It has been a long, tough season for a driver and team previously so accustomed to success, and his second in a row without a victory.



TENNIS

Tennis legend Evert says cancer has returned

NEW YORK: Tennis legend Chris Evert says her cancer has returned, two years after being diagnosed with ovarian cancer. American Evert, 68, was first diagnosed in December 2021 after a preventative hysterectomy and said in January 2023 she was "cancer-free". The 18-time Grand Slam singles champion says she will now undergo another round of chemotherapy. "While this is a diagnosis I never wanted to hear, I again feel fortunate it was caught early," Evert said.



GOLF

Blind cyclists now searching for glory in Paralympics

LONDON: When she was a student studying psychology at Royal Holloway, University of London, Chris Jordan, then 19, contracted a rare strain of E. coli bacteria through food poisoning. It left her in a coma, and when she woke, she was blind. But after hitting what she describes as "rock bottom" Jordan has set herself new challenges and is aiming to be part of the GB Para-cycling team at next year's Paris Paralympics.

