

CHARMAR MAGAZINE

It simply matters

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WHO IS EDGAR WATSON?

*A life built on football
fueled by passion &
driven by ambition*

*When Trump sneezes,
the whole world
catches a cold*

*Where are the strong
men to parent our
generation*

*How Ugandans celebrate
Valentine's day*

EDGAR WATSON



Juliet Nalukenge is a Ugandan footballer who plays for the Uganda women's national team, the Crested Cranes. Follow her via @NalukengeJuliet

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Lawless politics putting Uganda on verge of collapse

For years, the rule of law in Uganda has been on the test, burdened by the mounting pressure exerted on the country's constitution. From amending clauses that the framers of the 1995 constitution considered illegal, undemocratic, unfair, and unjust to now total disregard of court rulings, the country can only worry for the worse.

The continued detaining of Dr. Kizza Besigye and his aide, the rampant arrest of the National Unity Platform leaders and supporters without trial, point to a clear breakdown in the rule of law in the country. It is even more worrying knowing that we are entering an election cycle. If anything was learnt from the last elections, it is that elections in Uganda are a matter of life and death.

Already, the Chief of Defence Forces of Uganda People Defence Forces, Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, has promised to kill Dr. Besigye, Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu aka Bobi Wine, the NUP president, and to deal with NUP supporters. Replying to a Bobi Wine tweet about the recent ransacking of the NUP offices in Kampala by the military, Gen. Muhoozi, in a now-deleted tweet, acknowledged being behind the raid on the Makerere-Kavule and Kamwokya offices.

Gen. Muhoozi, without any hindering from his father, President Museveni, or his friends, quickly uses posts on X to threaten opposition politicians despite being a serving civil servant in the national army. He is untouchable in this country and seems to be above the law.

The illegalities by the security forces under the watch of Gen. Muhoozi and President Museveni render the constitution and the rule of law idle. Laws are established to ensure orderliness and protect the rights of the people. Laws and constitutionalism are a foundation on which a just society is built. In the absence of rule of law, systems fail, people get oppressed, tyranny reigns, and it becomes hard to govern. As things look now, it looks like this is where we're headed as Uganda. A quick soul search, a change of hearts, and making our heads to reason, and returning to constitutionalism can save us from this painful collapse.



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Who is Edgar Watson?

The man focused on developing football into a major sector in Uganda

From the field of play to the boardroom, Edgar Suubi Watson has served Ugandan football right and continues to do so, diligently. Not even a broken leg could stop his pursuit of football, a game that chose him. On the pitch, he stood out, not just for his physical look, but for his dazzling talent that saw him help SC Villa win seven league titles. Now retired, he has taken the same energy and sporting abilities to the boardroom at the Federation of Uganda Football Associations (FUFA). Our reporter Teddy Tracy Nayiga interviewed the former captain of SC Villa and Uganda Cranes. Below are excerpts of the interview.



Edgar Suubi Watson, the CEO of FUFA is a Uganda football legend on and off the pitch



Edgar Watson is the CEO of FUFA

Who is Edgar Watson, and what was your childhood like?

I am a Ugandan who grew up in the heart of Kampala, moving between Mengo, Old Kampala, and Bombo Road before finally settling in Seguku.

I come from a family of six; three boys and three girls. I was fortunate to be raised under the care of my grandfather, a Bishop from Mityana, which gave me an extended family experience.

During school holidays, I traveled to Mityana with my family members, where I spent my days playing football and other games while learning to interact with people from different backgrounds.

I grew up during politically unstable times of the Tito Okello Lutwa and Milton Obote governments, followed by President Museveni's rise to power. Survival instincts were necessary because at any moment, gunfire could erupt in the Capital. You had to stay alert.

But at my core, I'm just a simple man who grew up in Kampala and has always loved football.

Which schools did you attend?

For primary school, I attended Aga Khan Primary School—formerly Kampala Primary School, but I only studied there for a year.

For secondary school, I went to Makerere College School from Senior Two to Senior Four, then moved to Caltec Academy for Senior Five before completing Senior Six at Progressive Secondary School.

At Progressive, I played a key role in introducing football to the school. At the time, there was no football team, so my friends and I took it upon ourselves to attend a school games meeting at Nakivubo Stadium, pretending to be games teachers. We successfully convinced the school to register for football, and I became both the first sports minister and school team captain. After high school, I joined

Makerere University. Initially, I was admitted to study Fine Art, but it was too demanding, and I needed time to focus on football. I later switched to a Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences.

Tell us about your family

I'm a father of six—three boys and three girls. We live on Busabala Road, and we love the place and neighbourhood.

You have a tight schedule. How do you balance work and personal life?

Balance is something I learned early in life. In school, balancing academics and football was always a challenge because many teachers doubted that athletes could be serious students.

However, my mother instilled discipline in us. She played hockey for Uganda's national team, and my uncle Samson Kaaya was a footballer. In fact, he scored the goal that helped KCC FC gain promotion to the top flight.

My parents structured our daily assignments as the afternoons were for home chores, evenings to sports while studying happened later. I carried this discipline into my career. Even when I played for SC Villa, I worked during the day and trained in the evening.

Now, as a professional, I still follow the same principles. No matter how tight my schedule is, I make time for my family, even if it's just a short evening break.

Does your family have a strong sports background?

Yes. My grandfather, Bishop Yokana Mukasa, was a footballer. My mother played hockey, my uncle played football, and I even played volleyball at some point. Beyond sports, our family is full of creatives; artists, drama actors, and musicians.

What are your best and worst moments in life?

One of my worst moments was in primary school when I broke my leg playing football. It was a compound fracture; two bones snapped. I remember students gathering around, whispering, ‘This boy will never play football again.’ At Mulago Hospital, I faced another ordeal as no one wanted to attend to me. A student doctor eventually wrote my prescription on a cigarette pack because the hospital staff refused to provide official forms. That experience stuck with me. Another painful moment was in 2003 when Uganda lost to Rwanda in a crucial AFCON qualifier at Namboole Stadium. I was the captain. After the game, a fan, with tears in his eyes, pointed at me and said, ‘Unless you are dead, Uganda will never qualify.’ That was a heartbreaking moment. But football has also given me incredible highs. I’ve captained teams, traveled across Africa, made connections, and built lifelong friendships. The good moments outweigh the bad.

What sparked your love for football?

I can’t pinpoint a single moment it was just in me. As a child, I slept with a ball in my bed. Before sleeping, I would head the ball against the wall, much to my sisters’ frustration. I juggled the ball late at night, unable to resist the urge to play. Football has always been a part of me. The passion never faded.

How do you relate football to life?

Football mirrors life in many ways. In life, we chase success; in football, we chase the ball. In life, we face obstacles; in football, opponents tackle you.

Just like life, football requires teamwork, training, planning, and execution. The harder you train, the better you perform both on the field and in life.

How did playing for SC Villa shape your approach to administration?

When I joined SC Villa from Miracle FC, I was intimidated. The club had top players, and the expectations were enormous. At first, I ran away from training because I felt overwhelmed. But Villa instilled in me resilience and the mentality of a winner. Mediocrity was not an option. If you played for SC Villa, you had to deliver results. That shaped my mindset for leadership setting high standards, being disciplined, and constantly working towards success.

How did playing for the Uganda Cranes impact you?

Playing for the National team was a completely different experience. The competition was tougher, and the responsibility was greater. Representing your country is like being in the army where you sacrifice for the nation. At the club level, you play every week, but in international football, your chances are limited. The intensity and expectations are much higher. It was an experience that shaped me, not just as a player but as a person.



Edgar Watson playing football for leisure

You have been FUFA CEO for 14 years, which is a remarkable milestone. What makes you most proud of your tenure?

As a CEO, every day comes with its own challenges, and every period brings different waves. But I’m proud that I’ve been able to serve in this role for 14 years. That’s not easy not only in Uganda but across Africa, where stability in such a position is rare. I also want to thank the current FUFA President, Hon. Magogo Moses Hassim, and the former President, Dr. Lawrence Mulindwa, for trusting me with this responsibility. One of my biggest moments of pride was Uganda’s qualification for the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) finals for the first time in 38 years. We worked so hard, and seeing Uganda return to the continental stage was amazing. That sight of the scoreboard at full time reading Uganda 1-0 Comoros in 2016 at Mandela National Stadium is still fresh in my head. Now, qualification has become a bit of a routine, but that first moment after a long time was unforgettable.

Beyond that, FUFA’s vision is to be the number one football nation in Africa on and off the field. We’ve seen signs of progress as we were ranked first in club licensing at some point, and we continue to strive for excellence every day.

FUFA recently marked 100 years. What does this milestone mean for Ugandan football?

Reaching 100 years is a huge achievement. Building an institution that lasts even a decade is difficult, let alone a century. It means FUFA has stood the test of time, overcoming challenges to remain strong from the first FUFA President Sir Daudi Chwa in 1924 to the current leadership. Going forward, the focus is on developing football into a major sector in Uganda one that creates jobs, offers entertainment, and provides economic opportunities. We want football to be seen not just as a sport but as an industry, like healthcare or education, where people can build sustainable careers.

AFCON 2027 is around the corner. What is FUFA doing to ensure Uganda performs well?

First, I want to emphasize that qualifying for AFCON itself is a major achievement. Many countries don’t make it that far. But of course, we don’t want to just participate; we want to compete at the highest level. FUFA is working hard to strengthen the team. We have employed top-quality coaches, developed a Technical Master Plan, and invested in scouting and youth development. We also conduct coaching courses to improve player development at all levels. Additionally, we continue to lobby the government for better



Edgar Watson founded Edgar Soccer Academy in Kampala

funding and resources to ensure the team is well-equipped for the tournament. Remember, what we do for the men’s teams also extends to women football where we have national football teams representing the Country. The Uganda women’s senior team Crested Cranes, under 17 Women ‘Teen Cranes’ and U20 Queen Cranes all have international engagements this year. We also have National leagues for women football competitions.

Looking back, do you have any personal or professional regrets?

One personal regret is that I feel I had more to offer as a football player. Maybe I didn’t push myself enough, and sometimes I wish I had another chance.

But one of the biggest lessons I’ve learned is the importance of the present. People often dwell on past regrets or worry too much about the future. Yet, the only time we truly have is now. I try to make the most

of every moment so that I don’t look back with regrets. Professionally, I wish I had studied marketing. I see how valuable marketing skills are in football management, and I sometimes feel that extra knowledge would have been beneficial.

How do you want people to remember you?

I hope people remember me as a simple, ordinary person with a big passion for football. That’s all I want.

Finally, what is your message to Ugandan football stakeholders?

I’ve seen many people come into football with a mindset of fighting and confrontation. But I believe that era should be behind us. Now is the time for cooperation. Even when we disagree on certain approaches, we must remember that football is bigger than any individual. It belongs to all Ugandans and to the younger generation who will build careers from it. Let’s work together to protect and grow the game for the future.

2026 elections: What are the expectations of Ugandans?

By: Teddy Tracy Nayiga

Photography: INTERNET/UNKNOWN



Bobi Wine (M) continues to challenge Museveni's (L) rule, but the President's son Muhoozi (R) has vowed to stop him at whatever cost ahead of 2026 elections.

With Uganda's 2026 general elections drawing closer, citizens across the country are voicing their hopes, concerns, and expectations for the electoral process.

From issues of governance and transparency to youth participation and economic policies, Ugandans are making it clear what they want to see in the upcoming polls.

Call for free and fair elections

One of the biggest concerns among voters is whether the 2026 elections will be free, fair, and credible. Many Ugandans are calling on the Electoral Commission to ensure transparency and impartiality. "I just want to see an election where every vote truly counts," says Christine Nakitende, a university student in Kampala. "The Electoral Commission must act independently and ensure that the process is not manipulated."

Opposition supporters, on the other hand, remain skeptical about whether the elections will be conducted fairly. Some cite past grievances of alleged vote rigging, security interference, and restricted political space.

"Security agencies must not be used to intimidate voters or opposition candidates," argues Fred Bwambale, a boda boda rider in Kawempe.

"People should be free to express their choice without fear."

Youth and first-time voters

According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2024 population census, youth aged 30 and below make up 72.3% of the total population. Young voters are expected to play a crucial role in 2026. Many are eager to see policies that address employment, education, and economic empowerment.

"I am voting for the first time, and I want leaders who understand our struggles," says Shamim Nakawunde, a recent university graduate.

"We need leaders who will create jobs, not just make promises."

Some youths, however, feel disconnected from politics, believing their votes may not bring real change. "What's the point of voting if the same people stay in power?" asks David Okello, a carpenter in Kawanda. "We need reforms that actually give young people a voice."

Economic concerns take center stage

For many Ugandans, the state of the economy is a top priority. The rising cost of living, inflation, and unemployment are key issues voters want candidates to address.

"Every election season, politicians promise better wages and lower prices, but nothing changes," says Rose Atim, a trader in Gayaza. "We want leaders who will genuinely work to improve our economy."

Farmers are also calling for better agricultural policies, access to credit, and improved market opportunities to boost food security and livelihoods.



Dr. Kizza Besigye remains in prison even after the Supreme Court pronouncements

More inclusion and equal representation

Women’s rights activists are pushing for greater female representation in leadership. While Uganda has made progress in affirmative action, many believe more needs to be done to ensure gender equality in decision-making.

“We want leaders who will prioritize women’s empowerment, health services, and protection from gender-based violence,” says Harriet Kyomuhendo, a teacher in Makindye.

Some Ugandans worry about potential election-related violence, especially given past incidents.

They are urging authorities and political actors to ensure a peaceful electoral process.

“We don’t want violence in 2026,” says Ismael Mugerwa, a shopkeeper in Nakawa. “Elections should not divide us as Ugandans. We need peace before, during, and after voting.”

Security agencies have assured the public of a safe electoral environment, but opposition leaders insist that security forces must remain neutral and professional.

Expectations from political leaders

Ultimately, Ugandans want leaders who are accountable, accessible, and focused on service delivery.

Many voters say they are tired of empty promises and politics of patronage.

“I don’t care about party colors,” says Joseph Ssentamu, a farmer in Wakiso. “I just want leaders who will work for the people, not themselves.”

As the country moves closer to the 2026 elections, one thing is clear: Ugandans want a democratic process that reflects their will, promotes economic development, and ensures lasting stability. Whether these expectations will be met remains to be seen.

Raucous politics puts Uganda's governance under siege

By DAGLOUS BAKINYUMYA
Photography: INTERNET



Daglous Bakinyumya

Uganda's political landscape has always been a complex, but recent events paint an even darker picture of governance overshadowed by a rising tide of what can only be described as raucous politics—a chaotic blend of power struggles, institutional manipulation, and a blatant disregard for democratic principles.

The hunger strike by opposition leader Dr. Kizza Besigye, the abduction of a National Unity Platform (NUP) leader, the dramatic twists in the Kawempe North by-election, the farcical nature of the latest cabinet, and the Chief of Defence Forces' (CDF) controversial tweets all point to a country teetering on the edge of institutional collapse.

A Nation in Cry: Governance or Political Gamesmanship? Ugandans have long struggled under



Dr. Kizza Besigye remains detained despite a court ruling in his favor.

a governance system where politics takes precedence over service delivery and accountability. However, the latest sequence of events raises a critical question: Is Uganda still being governed, or has politics become the only institution that matters?

Besigye's hunger strike is a bold yet painful reminder of the discontent boiling beneath Uganda's political surface. His act of defiance is not merely personal; it echoes the cries of many Ugandans suffering under economic hardship and political suppression. Meanwhile, the continued abduction of opposition figures exposes a dangerous precedent—where the state, rather than serving its people, sees them as threats to be eliminated. If political opponents can vanish without accountability, what does that say about the rule of law?

The drama surrounding the Kawempe North by-election is yet another indicator of the crumbling democratic process. Elections should be the bedrock of representative governance, yet they are increasingly marred by manipulation, intimidation, and violence. How can Ugandans trust the electoral process when it is treated as a battleground rather than a democratic exercise?

The Comic Cabinet and CDF's Tweets: A Leadership in Crisis

The unveiling of Uganda's latest cabinet has been met with widespread disbelief, as unqualified individuals are rewarded with positions of national importance. Governance should not be reduced to a circus where competence is an afterthought. When mediocrity takes the reins, national progress stalls, and citizens bear the brunt of poor leadership.

Adding to the governance dilemma, the CDF's recent tweets have stirred controversy, bringing the military into an already volatile political discourse. In a functional democracy, security forces must remain apolitical and professional. However, when military leadership begins to engage in political rhetoric, it raises fears of undue influence in civilian affairs, further blurring the line between governance and authoritarianism.

The Cost to the Public: Who Pays the Price?

The Ugandan public stands to lose the most from these power struggles. Raucous politics is not just a threat to democracy—it is a direct attack on the livelihoods, rights, and freedoms of the people. The increasing friction between the judiciary, executive, and parliament only creates room for excuses, delaying meaningful reforms and service delivery. Instead of governing with the people's interests at heart, the state appears more focused on consolidating power and suppressing dissent.

Ugandans must ask: How long can we endure a system where institutions meant to serve us are weaponized against us? The tug-of-war between governance and politics is not just an elite problem; it is a national crisis with far-reaching consequences. If left unchecked, it could dismantle the very fabric of Ugandan democracy, leaving the people at the mercy of unchecked power.

The consequences are dire. Public services continue to deteriorate as resources are



Recently, security forces have turned to abducting NUP leaders

funneled into political battles rather than addressing key issues like healthcare, education, and infrastructure. Corruption thrives under such circumstances, allowing a select few to amass wealth while ordinary citizens bear the economic burden. The divide between the ruling elite and the struggling masses grows wider, setting the stage for greater unrest and disillusionment with the political system.

A Call for Action

The way forward is clear: Uganda must reclaim its governance from the grip of raucous politics. Institutions must function independently, opposition voices must be respected, and elections must serve as the true voice of the people. The judiciary, executive, and parliament must work for national stability rather than political supremacy.

Political maturity and genuine leadership are needed now more than ever. Ugandans must demand accountability at all levels, using

civic engagement, media advocacy, and legal channels to push for reforms. Civil society organizations, religious leaders, and intellectuals must unite in urging transparency, fairness, and justice. Uganda's youth, who represent the nation's future, must not be passive spectators but active participants in shaping a better governance system.

Ugandans cannot afford to be silent spectators. The cost of silence is too high. If governance remains in the shadow of chaotic politics, the future will be one of continued oppression, economic stagnation, and social unrest. The time to demand accountability is now. Will Uganda rise to the challenge, or will we watch as democracy is suffocated under the weight of power-hungry politics?

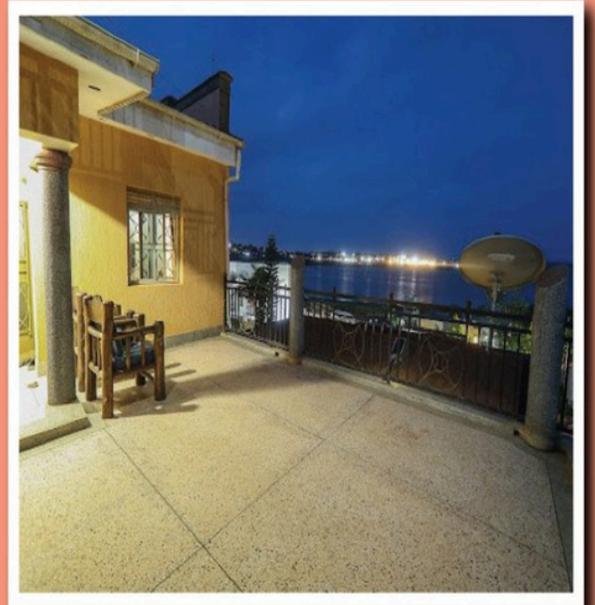
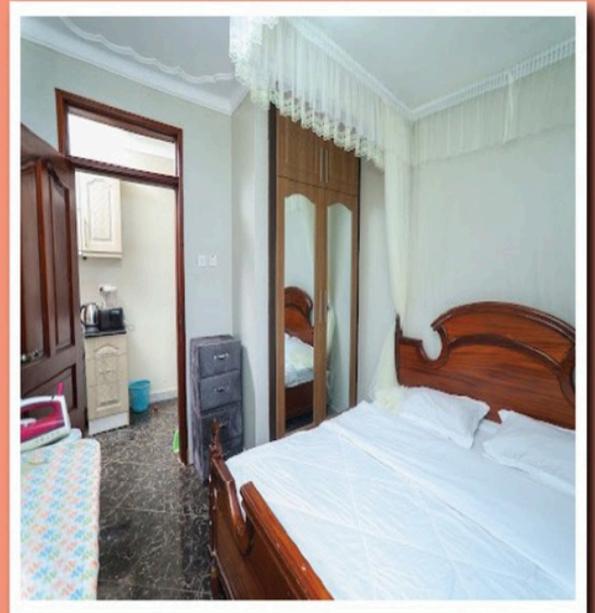
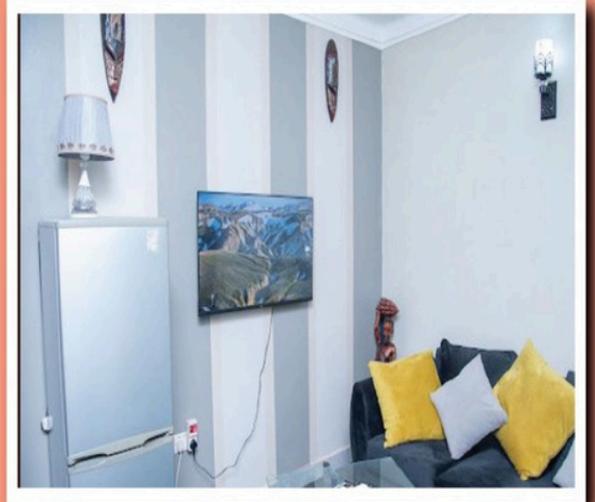
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Because Trump is sneezing, the whole world is catching a cold

Impact of USAID funding freeze on Uganda

By: TEDDY TRACY NAYIGA

Photography: INTERNET



The US government's abrupt halt of almost all foreign assistance delivered through USAID and the State Department has left a severe mark on Uganda, with far-reaching consequences in sectors such as healthcare, education, and civil society programs. Uganda's health and development sectors, which heavily rely on external funding, are now left in uncertainty, especially in the wake of a 90-day freeze on USAID's financial assistance.

One of the most devastating impacts of this freeze is felt in the realm of HIV/AIDS treatment. Through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), over 700,000 Ugandans receive

life-saving antiretroviral therapy (ART), without which many would face dire consequences.

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receive life-saving antiretroviral therapy (ART), without which many would face dire consequences. The freeze, alongside the US government's "America First" agenda, threatens to unravel years of progress in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Uganda. USAID's annual budget for Uganda amounted to US\$950 million, a significant portion of which funded critical healthcare programs, malaria vaccination, and other health-related projects. Now, with the suspension of this funding, Uganda finds itself in a precarious position. The ministry of health is struggling to manage outbreaks such as the recent Ebola and the ongoing battle against Mpox, all while facing a gap in funding that exacerbates the crisis.

Diana Atwine, the Permanent Secretary of Uganda's Ministry of Health, highlighted the need for the country to re-evaluate its priorities, stating that despite the challenges, this moment presents an opportunity to examine which programs are critical and cannot be delayed. However, the immediate effects of the freeze are already being felt by those relying on essential health services.

Joyce Nannozi, the medical superintendent at Mukono Church of Uganda Hospital, said, “We can no longer give HIV/ART services to patients promptly because we are not in a position to take on the dropped staff.” This crisis has put over a million people at risk of losing access to the medications they need for survival.

Similarly, the Makerere University Medical School, which plays a pivotal role in Uganda’s health research and education, has been forced to suspend multiple programs and lay off over 200 staff members. The university’s vice-chancellor, Barnabas Nawangwe, stated that the freeze has paralyzed several research and health initiatives, including those related to HIV treatment. The Infectious Diseases Institute at Makerere supports a significant portion of ART services for Ugandans, and its suspension threatens critical treatment for thousands.

One of the most immediate concerns is the malaria vaccination program, which was set to begin in April 2025.

USAID had donated three million doses of the malaria vaccine, a key step in reducing malaria rates in Uganda.

Without these vaccines, up to 1.5 million children could remain at risk.

The freeze also casts a dark shadow over Uganda’s broader economy.

Many Ugandans employed by USAID-funded projects are already feeling the financial strain of the disruption. Most NGOs and implementing partners (IPs) working on USAID-funded health initiatives operate with one-year contracts, from January to December or October to September. With the freeze in place, staff members are on forced leave, leading to financial uncertainty.

This uncertainty ripples across the economy. People employed in the NGO sector, who typically earn higher-than-average salaries, now face the stress of potentially losing their jobs or, at the very least, experiencing a prolonged period of unemployment. These individuals often make substantial contributions to Uganda’s economy through bank loans, mortgages, and social security contributions.

The impact also extends to sectors such as insurance, where NGOs provide health insurance to staff members. With funding pulled, many of these insurance premiums are in jeopardy, leading to financial instability in the insurance industry.

The Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) industry, which depends on NGO activity, faces similar challenges. The loss of USAID funding will force many of these businesses to find alternative sources of revenue or face closure

As the freeze continues, it is also feared that the humanitarian sector will experience significant setbacks. In times of crisis, such as floods in Kasese or droughts in Karamoja, USAID funding has played a vital role in providing emergency aid, food, shelter, and medical supplies. Without this assistance, Uganda’s most vulnerable populations especially those living in remote regions will be left exposed and unprepared for future disasters.

This funding freeze also has devastating implications for Uganda’s civil society organizations. Many of these organizations, which advocate for issues like child protection, gender equality, and good governance, rely heavily on USAID support to sustain their work. The withdrawal of these funds threatens to stall progress on these critical issues, undermining the efforts of local activists and organizations dedicated to improving the country’s social and political landscape.

Despite the daunting challenges, some believe that this moment of disruption may prompt the Ugandan government to reassess its priorities and strategies. The government will have to engage in difficult conversations with international partners, financial institutions, and stakeholders to find ways to mitigate the negative impact of the aid freeze.

For now, the world watches as Uganda struggles to survive America’s sneeze.

Parents struggle to understand new curriculum results

By: TEDDY TRACY NAYIGA

Photography: INTERNET

The release of results under Uganda's new lower secondary curriculum has left many parents confused, with some questioning how their children's performance was assessed. Unlike previous years, where students were graded based on scores in individual subjects, this year's results only indicate "Result One" or "Result Two," a major shift that many parents say was not well explained to them.

According to the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB), 98.5% of students qualified for the Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE), receiving "Result One" on their transcripts, confirming that they met the required competency level.

However, those who failed to sit for all required subjects or missed compulsory assessments were given "Result Two."

For parents like Janet Nakyobe, whose son received "Result One," the lack of subject-specific grades is unsettling. "I don't understand what this means for my child's future. Does 'Result One' mean he passed everything?"

Similarly, James Musoke, a father of a UCE candidate, said the system feels vague. "Before, we could see marks for each subject and know where to help our children improve. Now, I just see 'Result One,' but what does that really mean?" he wondered.

On the other hand, students who received "Result Two" are facing a tough time explaining to their parents why they did not qualify. Olivia



A teacher at [Namungoona Parents Secondary School](#) conducting a lesson

Namagembe, a 17-year-old student, said her father was furious when he saw her transcript. "He thought I had failed everything, yet I only missed one assessment due to illness. I tried to explain, but he doesn't understand this new system," she said.

The competency-based curriculum was introduced in 2020 to replace the traditional knowledge-based system, which focused heavily on memorization and exam performance. Under the new system, students are assessed based on their ability to apply knowledge in real-life situations rather than just recalling facts.

The Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) released the 2024 UCE results, marking a historic shift as the first cohort to be assessed under this new system. The traditional division rankings were replaced with a grading scale based on achievement levels,

using letter grades A, B, C, D, and E. Grade A is described as exceptional, awarded to candidates who demonstrate extraordinary competency by applying knowledge innovatively and creatively. It is equivalent to the traditional D1 and D2 grades. Grade B represents outstanding performance, indicating a high level of competency in applying acquired knowledge effectively, and is equivalent to C3 and C4. Grade C is classified as satisfactory, meaning the candidate has an adequate level of competency, equivalent to C5 and C6. Grade D is considered basic, showing the candidate meets the minimum competency level, and corresponds to P7 and P8. Grade E is elementary, indicating performance below the basic competency level, equivalent to F9.

A candidate qualifies for the UCE certificate if they achieve at least a Grade D in one subject, with students taking a minimum of eight and a maximum of nine subjects. Final UCE grades are determined by combining 20% continuous assessment scores from school-based evaluations and 80% final examination scores from UNEB's end-of-cycle exam. This blended approach aims to integrate classroom performance with standardized testing, giving a more balanced view of students' abilities.

UNEB Executive Director Dan Odong emphasized that significant preparations were made for this transition. These included developing student identification formats to track continuous assessment scores, training 63,041 teachers on digital assessment tools and competency-based evaluation, creating the Assessment Management Information System (ARMIS) to streamline assessments, conducting benchmarking exercises to adopt best practices, and sensitizing key education stakeholders about the new grading system. Despite these efforts, many parents feel left out of the process.

“We needed more sensitization,” said Steven Katongole, a school headteacher. “The curriculum was changed, but parents were not adequately involved in understanding how assessment works. That’s why we are seeing all this confusion.”

With 98.5% of students qualifying for the UCE certificate, the majority of transcripts will now read “Result One,” confirming the required competency level.

Those who didn’t meet the criteria—by missing compulsory assessments or not sitting for all required subjects—received “Result Two.”

As parents grapple with this new reality, education officials may need to intensify efforts to explain how these results impact future education and career opportunities. Until then, many parents remain uncertain about what their children’s “Result One” or “Result Two” truly mean for their academic future.



Minister of Education and Sports Janet Museveni



Many parents are struggling to interpret the new curriculum



Dan Odongo, Executive Secretary of UNEB

What you need to know about the Competency-Based Curriculum and its relevance

By NYAGO BOSCO

Photography: INTERNET/UNKNOWN



Nyago Bosco is a teacher

The Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Uganda is designed to address the challenges of the traditional education system by focusing on practical skills, problem-solving, and real-world application of knowledge.

Its relevance and importance in the Ugandan context include: Skills-Oriented Learning – unlike the old content-heavy curriculum, CBC emphasizes hands-on skills, preparing learners for employment and entrepreneurship; Alignment with National Development Goals – the CBC supports Uganda's Vision 2040 by producing a skilled workforce for economic growth and industrialization; Enhancing Critical Thinking – it encourages learners to analyze problems, think creatively, and develop innovative solutions, which is crucial for national

development; and bridging the Skills Gap – Many Ugandan graduates face unemployment due to a lack of practical skills. CBC ensures students acquire relevant competencies required in the job market.

Others are Promoting Inclusivity and Adaptability – the curriculum is designed to accommodate diverse learning needs and abilities, making education more accessible and relevant to all learners; Integration of ICT and Digital Literacy – as Uganda moves toward digital transformation, CBC incorporates ICT skills, preparing students for the evolving job market; Continuous Assessment Over Exams – The shift from exam-based evaluation to continuous assessment helps track students' progress in a more holistic way; and Encouraging Lifelong Learning – By focusing on adaptability and problem-solving, CBC prepares students to continue learning beyond school.

Challenges so far encountered

The implementation of Uganda's Competency-Based Curriculum has encountered several challenges, but also achieved notable successes. The challenges include Inadequate Teacher Training: Many educators have not received sufficient training to effectively deliver the CBC, leading to difficulties in adopting new teaching methodologies; and

Resource Constraints: Schools often lack essential materials and infrastructure to support competency-based learning, hindering effective implementation. Other challenges are Assessment Limitations: Traditional assessment methods focusing on rote memorization are misaligned with the CBC's emphasis on critical thinking and problem-solving; and Stakeholder Resistance: Some educators and parents exhibit reluctance towards the CBC due to unfamiliarity or skepticism about its effectiveness.

Possible solutions to these challenges

The challenges facing the new curriculum can be addressed through Enhanced Teacher Professional Development: Implement comprehensive training programs to equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge for CBC delivery; Provision of Adequate Resources: Ensure schools are supplied with the required materials and infrastructure to facilitate competency-based learning; Reform of Assessment Strategies: Develop and adopt assessment methods that evaluate students' competencies in critical thinking and problem-solving; and Stakeholder Engagement: Conduct awareness campaigns and workshops to inform and involve all stakeholders in the CBC implementation process.

Success Stories:

Teacher Training Initiatives: The government has trained a significant number of teachers to facilitate the CBC, enhancing their ability to deliver the new curriculum effectively.

Positive Student Outcomes: Early reports indicate that students are developing improved critical thinking and problem-solving skills under the CBC. Also the recently released O Level UNEB examination for the first cohort show significant improvement in performance.

These developments suggest that, despite challenges, the CBC is making strides in transforming Uganda's education system.

Teachers and CBC

The implementation of Uganda's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) has presented both opportunities and challenges for teachers. While the shift aims to enhance educational outcomes by focusing on practical skills and learner-centered approaches, educators have encountered several obstacles.

These include

Insufficient Training: Many teachers feel inadequately prepared to deliver the CBC due to limited training opportunities. The initial government strategy trained 35% of in-service teachers, who were then expected to train their peers through a cascade model. This approach has proven less effective, leaving a significant number of teachers without proper guidance.

Resource Limitations: The successful implementation of CBC



Nyago Bosco implementing the CBC at Naminyagwe Muslim Secondary School

requires adequate teaching materials and infrastructure. However, many schools lack these essential resources, hindering effective curriculum delivery.

Assessment Challenges: Transitioning from traditional examination methods to continuous assessment has been difficult. Teachers often struggle with developing and administering assessments that accurately measure competencies.

Resistance to Change: Some educators are accustomed to traditional teaching methods and exhibit reluctance toward adopting the new learner-centered approaches mandated by the CBC.

Positive Developments

Despite these challenges, there have been encouraging signs:

Enhanced Student Engagement: Teachers have observed increased student participation and interest in learning activities, attributed to the practical and interactive nature of the CBC.

Professional Growth: The shift to CBC has prompted teachers to pursue further professional development, enhancing their instructional skills and adaptability.

Recommendations:

To support teachers in effectively implementing the CBC, the following measures should be adopted:

- **Comprehensive Training Programs:** Establish ongoing professional development initiatives to equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge for CBC delivery.
- **Provision of Adequate Resources:** Ensure that schools are supplied with the required materials and infrastructure to facilitate competency-based learning.
- **Assessment Support:** Develop clear guidelines and tools to assist teachers in creating and implementing effective competency-based assessments.
- **Change Management Strategies:** Implement programs to help teachers transition from traditional methods to the CBC approach, addressing resistance and fostering acceptance.

By addressing these areas, the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Uganda can be strengthened, leading to improved educational outcomes.

Parents' support

Parents play a crucial role in ensuring their children effectively benefit from the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). Here are key ways they can provide support:

Understanding the CBC Approach

- Parents should familiarize themselves with the CBC to understand its goals, methods, and expectations.
- Attend school meetings, workshops, and training sessions on CBC.

Encouraging Practical Learning at Home

- Provide opportunities for hands-on learning, such as cooking, gardening, or simple science experiments.
- Encourage creativity through arts, storytelling, and problem-solving activities.

Supporting Homework and Assignments

- Help children with research-based and practical assignments without doing the work for them.
- Provide a conducive environment for study and exploration.

Instilling a Positive Attitude Towards Learning

- Encourage curiosity, critical thinking, and self-directed learning.
- Praise effort and improvement rather than just focusing on grades.

Enhancing Communication with Teachers

- Regularly engage with teachers to track the child's progress and address any challenges.
- Seek guidance on how to reinforce learning at home.

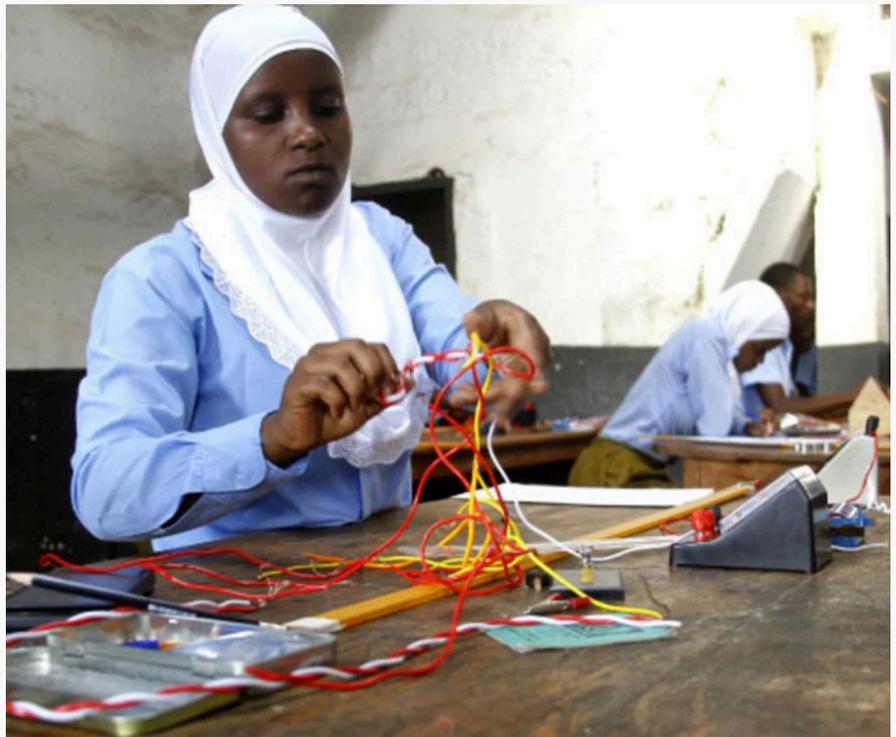
Providing Necessary Learning Resources

- Equip children with basic materials such as books, internet access, and educational tools.

If possible, enroll them in extracurricular activities that complement CBC skills.

Promoting Social and Life Skills

- Teach children communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills at home.



- Encourage participation in community activities, chores, and leadership opportunities.

Encouraging Digital Literacy

- Introduce children to safe and productive use of technology, as CBC integrates ICT in learning.
- Monitor their internet usage to ensure they access appropriate educational content.

Being Role Models

- Demonstrate a love for learning by reading, exploring new skills, and showing curiosity.
- Encourage discipline, responsibility, and a growth mindset.
- Advocating for Better CBC Implementation

Work with schools and policymakers to ensure adequate resources and teacher training for CBC.

- Join parents' associations and participate in discussions about curriculum improvements.

By actively engaging in their children's education, parents can maximize the benefits of CBC, making learning more meaningful and applicable to real-life situations.

In our next articles we shall explore some ways on how a teacher can leverage on ICT to efficiently and effectively deliver in the Competency-Based Curriculum.

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Redefining the future for Uganda's children

By Aggie Patricia Turwomwe
Photography: INTERNET



Aggie Patricia Turwomwe

Today, children's rights and education stand as pillars of societal advancement and stability. Uganda, with its rich culture and vibrant youth population, is at a pivotal moment in nurturing these principles.

I had a conversation with Ruth Namara, a passionate advocate and communications lead at Unbounded Associates. Today, children's rights and education stand as pillars of societal advancement and stability. Uganda, with its rich culture and vibrant youth population, is at a pivotal moment in nurturing these principles. I gained fascinating insights into the critical issues surrounding children's rights in Uganda and beyond.

Ruth Namara addresses the substantial issue of corruption within Uganda. She emphasizes that the funds crucial for service delivery often end up misappropriated, stalling progress in essential areas like health and education.

This backdrop of corruption affects not only the government's ability to adequately fund and support children's welfare but also dampens the trust and motivation of citizens to engage in civic responsibilities, such as tax payments.

Looking towards 2040, one of the focal ambitions is to elevate Uganda into a burgeoning middle-class economy.

Yet, as Ruth articulates, this can only be achieved by tackling systemic issues of corruption and promoting transparency.

Uganda can create an environment where education and children's rights are prioritized, ultimately nurturing a skilled and literate workforce by ensuring that taxes and resources are ethically channeled into development.

This is what you can also take out;

Transformative Advocacy Strategies.

Advocating for children's rights necessitates the collective voice and effort of various stakeholders.

Ruth highlights the importance of partnerships and collaborations, from international donors to local communities. She discusses how advocacy campaigns, like those she's been involved in, mobilize diverse resources and expertise, creating a unified demand for improved policies and actions concerning children's rights.

Children's Voices at the Forefront.

One significant shift in advocacy is moving from speaking for children to empowering them to speak for themselves. Ruth stresses the importance of platforms that allow children to express their needs and experiences. Nurturing environments that encourage dialogue between children, parents, and policymakers, communities can better address the needs of their youth.

The Role of Education.

Education remains a cornerstone in developing a thriving economy and society.





Advocating for children's rights necessitates the collective voice and effort of various stakeholders.

According to Ruth, investing in children's education promises substantial returns, as educated youths contribute significantly to both economic growth and societal well-being. Recent campaigns have focused on universal access to quality education, irrespective of a child's background, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to learn and grow.

Safeguarding and Storytelling.

She speaks about the nuanced process of storytelling in advocacy. Ensuring children's privacy and dignity is paramount, shifting from exploitative imagery to narratives that highlight potential and positivity. This approach garners empathetic support and also respects the children's dignity and builds a genuine case for their cause.

Digital Age and Children's Rights.

The digital revolution offers both opportunities and challenges. While it has expanded educational access and resources, it also necessitates vigilant guardianship over children's digital consumption. As Ruth outlines, understanding and regulating the digital engagement of children can protect them and enhance learning experiences.

The role of effective advocacy in transforming the landscape of children's rights is crucial. Uganda's journey towards a middle-class economy rooted in equity and fairness holds widespread implications for global advocacy efforts.

As we navigate these complexities, one thing remains clear; passion, commitment, and collaborative action are indispensable in empowering our future generations.

Engaging in these conversations and supporting advocacy efforts can drive meaningful change, ensuring that children's rights are not just ideals, but realities. Embrace this challenge with optimism and determination, and forge a path for a brighter, more equitable future for all children.

What do you think it will take for Uganda to achieve a middle class economy?

Ms. Aggie Patricia Turwomwe is a communication expert, podcast host and Strategist at Agile Media Africa.



Where are the **strong men** to parent our generation?

By Cynthia Mpanga

Photography: INTERNET/UNKNOWN

Africa was once led by grounded men of unshakeable resolve: warriors, protectors, providers, and leaders who understood that the strength of a man was absolute and his family was his kingdom that he guarded jealously.

Those forefathers, whose names still echo through history, did not flinch in the face of adversity, did not escape duty when times got tough, or fail to control and lead their wives. They authoritatively commanded their homes, ensuring that their families and communities thrived under their leadership.

Yet today, we face a crisis of abandonment from a weaker crop of men raised mostly from women-led families, and its consequences are devastating. As a country, we are witnessing a disturbing rise in cases of children taking their own lives.

These are young souls, burdened by despair, confused, lost by several factors, and choosing to end their suffering in tragic ways—burning themselves, jumping from rooftops, or silently succumbing to the weight of their struggles.



Ms. Cynthia Mpanga

What is driving our children to such extremes?

The answers are complex, but at the heart of it lies a deep-seated crisis in the family unit. Too often, when we discuss abandonment, fingers are pointed solely at men. And yes, there are men who walk away from their families, choosing personal peace over responsibility. But the truth is, abandonment is not always one-sided. Many men are not just leaving; they are fleeing in droves.

Fleeing from toxic and chaotic environments created by empowered and emancipated women. Fleeing from partners who demean them and belittle their efforts and make the home a battlefield instead of a sanctuary.

In the same way that a child who feels unloved may choose to leave this world, many men who feel unwanted, unappreciated, and constantly at war in their own homes choose to walk away, unfortunately.

This is not an attempt to absolve men of their responsibility or the weakness exhibited in this choice. Rather, it is a call to look at the bigger picture. If we are to rebuild strong families, we must acknowledge that both men and women have a role to play. A man cannot protect a home where he is treated as an outsider or an unworthy servant.

A woman cannot also nurture a family while tearing down its foundation. Peace and resolve within the home must be a shared responsibility, and respect must be unconditional.

But even in the face of difficulty, true warriors do not flee from the battlefield of life. Real men stay. They fight. They protect. They rebuild. They don't rule by seeking comfort. He stands firm and faces challenges head-on. They understand that the power of a man is measured not by how easily they escape, but by how steadfastly they hold their ground and guard their territory.

This is a call for the rebirth of the strong African man, and it's commendable that there are men like Godfrey Kuteesa who have taken the bull by the horns and are helping society remedy this situation through male mentorship. We need the strong African man back! Men who do not run but remain rooted. Men who provide and protect, not out of obligation but out of honor. We must recognise that today's men need support tailored to meet their modern challenges; for instance, we cannot demand that they stay strong while offering them no refuge, no encouragement, no guidance, and no space to breathe. Just as we fight for women's empowerment, we must also fight for a culture that values men, respects their struggles, and creates an environment where they, too, can thrive. Because when men stand firm, families are strengthened, children are protected, and society flourishes.

To the men of today:

- Where are the men who will choose family over fleeting peace?
- Where are the men who understand that their strength is not in escaping, but in enduring?

Africa and Uganda specifically need their youth to man up. Our families need strong men at the helm. Our children need them. Our future depends on them.

6th Business Trendsetters' Forum and Expo launched

Business Trends Galore recently launched the 6th Business Trendsetters' Forum & Trends Expo 2025 at Das Berliner Hotel, Bulenga in Kampala, under the theme 'Innovations with Hyper Business Intelligence and Environmental Social Governance.'. Pace Setter, Eng. Joseph Kitamirike, the founder of ALTX Africa Group, noted that sustainability is possible if all business trendsetters embrace technology with intelligence. Joanita Mukasa Menya, the first female Managing Director of Vivo Energy Uganda Ltd, said trendsetters must brace themselves for transformative business ventures tailored for the future.



Love in many forms

How Ugandans celebrate Valentine's Day

By: Teddy Tracy Nayiga

Photography: INTERNET/UNKNOWN

Valentine's Day in Uganda is a mix of romance, friendship, and unique cultural expressions of love. From extravagant dinners to quiet acts of kindness, different people mark the day in their own way. But did you know that Valentine's Day was never really about love? The history behind this day is not as romantic as we think. It actually has a dark and surprising past that many people don't know.

A dark beginning in ancient Rome

Valentine's Day is believed to have started in ancient Rome, but not as a day of love. Instead, it was linked to a brutal festival called Lupercalia. This festival took place from 13th to 15th February and involved shocking events. Men would sacrifice animals and use their skins to whip women, believing it would make them fertile. There was also a matchmaking tradition where men and women were paired randomly for the festival. The festival was wild and had nothing to do with romance as we know it today. However, as time passed, some parts of this festival influenced the Valentine's Day we now celebrate.

How Valentine was created



There are different stories about Saint Valentine, but the most famous one is about a Christian priest named Valentine. \During the time of Emperor Claudius II, marriages were banned for young soldiers because the emperor believed that single men made better warriors. Valentine, however, secretly performed weddings for couples who wanted to be together.

When the emperor found out, he ordered Valentine to be arrested. While in prison, Valentine is said to have healed a blind girl, and before he was executed, he wrote her a note signed "From your Valentine". This is believed to be the first-ever Valentine's message. Valentine was killed on 14th February, 269 AD, and later, the Catholic Church made him a saint.

From tragedy to romance

Even after Valentine's tragic death, people still remembered him. In the Middle Ages, poets like Geoffrey Chaucer helped shape the idea of Valentine's Day as a day for romance. He wrote a poem about birds finding their mates in mid-February, linking love and Valentine's Day for the first time.

Later, people started writing love letters, and by the 1800s, Valentine's Day cards became popular. Over time, businesses saw an opportunity to sell chocolates, flowers, and gifts, making it the commercial holiday we know today.

So, how did this dark and brutal history turn into the modern celebration of love and romance? Let's see how Ugandans mark the day in their own way.



Lovebirds and romantic getaways

For couples, February 14th is all about celebrating love in grand style. Restaurants, hotels, and beaches are packed with lovers eager to make memories.

Some couples book romantic getaways at lakeside resorts, while others settle for intimate home-cooked dinners.

Surprise proposals

Valentine’s Day has become a prime date for engagements and weddings. Many people choose the occasion to propose, while some couples exchange vows, believing the date symbolizes eternal love.

Singles and friendship celebrations

Not everyone spends the day in romantic bliss. Many single people celebrate friendships instead, going out in groups, exchanging gifts, or treating themselves to a relaxing day.

Acts of kindness and charity

Beyond romance, some Ugandans use the day to spread love in other ways.

Charity organizations, religious groups, and individuals visit orphanages, hospitals, and the elderly, donating food and gifts.

Religious observances

For the deeply religious, Valentine’s Day is a time for spiritual reflection. Churches hold relationship seminars to strengthen marriages, reminding youth about commitment and respect in relationships.

The commercial side of love

Businesses thrive on Valentine’s Day, with florists, gift shops, and restaurants making big sales. Social media influencers and brands run promotions, offering discounts on everything from romantic getaways to customized gifts.

Boda boda riders also benefit, delivering flowers and surprise packages across the country.

Heartbreaks and social media drama

While the day is full of love, not everyone ends it happily. Social media often exposes lovers with multiple partners, leading to heartbreaks and online drama.

Memes and jokes about ‘side chicks’ and fake love flood timelines, adding a humorous yet painful side to Valentine’s in Uganda.

Whether through romantic gestures, acts of kindness, or self-love, Ugandans celebrate Valentine’s in ways that suit them. Love takes different forms, and on February 14th, it is expressed in ways both big and small.

But behind all the chocolates, flowers, and gifts, few remember the dark origins of this day—proof that love, like history, is always evolving.





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Alien Skin's blasphemous concert startles Christians

Like Jesus Christ on the cross in the Bible, Alien Skin's Lugogo concert entrance with a giant cross has sparked mixed reactions among fans and critics alike. Some people are hailing it as a bold artistic symbol and others are condemning it as blasphemous. With Alien's cross written "KIMENKE" at the top, many have interpreted this word as an equaliser to "INRI," a word Paul wrote at the top of Jesus' cross. Because of this, some people described it as mocking God.

Elvis Freeman, in his comment on social media, asked the chaotic singer to respect 'the Lord Jesus before it is too late.' "How could you mock our Lord and saviour's pain like that? May God guide you in your repentance," he commented. One social media user said, "You can't mock God and expect to prosper."



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Muhoozi and Byanyima's war of words overshadows efforts to free Besigye



Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba



Ms. Winnie Byanyima

What started as a political discussion has turned into an all-out digital brawl, with Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba and Winnie Byanyima exchanging bitter words in a public spat that has left Ugandans both stunned and distracted. The controversy erupted after journalist Andrew Mwenda casually reignited discussions about Byanyima's past relationship with President Yoweri Museveni during an NBS TV talk show. What followed was an avalanche of accusations, threats, and deep-seated personal grievances aired out in the open. During the show, Byanyima tried to brush off the topic, stating that her relationship with Museveni had been "normal" and was no longer relevant to political discussions.

However, her attempt at diplomacy was met with a searing response from Muhoozi, Museveni's son and an increasingly influential political figure. In an explosive tweet, Muhoozi lashed out at Byanyima, accusing her of trying to 'wreck' his father's home before she was allegedly kicked out in December 1986, dragged to a car while crying, and sent back to her parents.

Byanyima, a veteran politician and human rights advocate, was not about to take the attack lying down. She clapped back with a measured but firm response, warning Muhoozi against peddling a "false narrative" and suggesting that she had "HARD evidence" that could be revealed if pushed further.

Despite her efforts to take the high road, Muhoozi escalated the feud, culminating in a profane tweet that left Ugandans stunned:

"Winnie F OFF!"**

The war of words quickly took over social media, with Ugandans expressing mixed reactions—some shocked at the crude and personal nature of the exchange, others entertained by the unexpected drama. But beneath the social media spectacle, the bitter history between Museveni, Byanyima, and her husband, opposition leader Kizza Besigye, has reawakened political tensions that have simmered for decades.

A Scuffle to Save Besigye, Overshadowed by a Personal Feud

While the online scuffle unfolds, Besigye,



Winnie Byanyima and President Museveni grew up together

Byanyima’s longtime political and life partner remains behind bars, detained amid his latest activism against the Museveni government. The timing of this explosive revelation could not have been more ironic: just as opposition voices are rallying for Besigye’s release, the discourse is being hijacked by a resurfacing of Museveni’s past romantic entanglements.

For years, Besigye and Museveni were not only close allies but also doctor and patient, comrades in the liberation struggle before becoming bitter political enemies. Their falling-out defined Uganda’s opposition politics, with Besigye repeatedly jailed, harassed and blocked from running a successful presidential campaign.

Now, with their shared past with Byanyima being dragged into public discourse, many are wondering: is personal history influencing

Uganda’s political landscape more than previously thought?

Going Bare-Knuckles in Public

Byanyima’s retort that Muhoozi “needs medical care” added fuel to the fire, triggering Muhoozi’s expletive-laden response.

As the exchange raged on, political observers noted the irony—Muhoozi, a general with

presidential ambitions, appeared deeply rattled by discussions of his father’s love life decades ago. Ugandans have been left divided, with some questioning why deeply personal matters are being aired so publicly, while others see the drama as a convenient distraction from pressing national issues.

Skeletons Out of the Closet

The sudden resurfacing of Museveni’s romantic past and Muhoozi’s unfiltered reaction have raised new concerns about the role of personal grievances in shaping national politics. For years, whispers about the Museveni-Byanyima-Besigye triangle lingered in political circles, but it was largely kept in the shadows—until now.

As Muhoozi aggressively builds his political profile and Byanyima fiercely asserts her own legacy, one thing is clear: Uganda’s political history is far from settled, and the ghosts of the past are coming back to haunt the present. Whether this social media scuffle will further deepen political rifts or simply remain a moment of public spectacle remains to be seen.



Winnie Byanyima is currently married to Dr. Kizza Besigye

Kiplimo eyes London marathon after breaking record



Uganda's Jacob Kiplimo set a stunning world half marathon record of 56:42 at the eDreams Mitja Marató Barcelona by Brooks, a World Athletics Gold Label road race

Uganda's Jacob Kiplimo set a stunning world half marathon record of 56:42 at the eDreams Mitja Marató Barcelona by Brooks, a World Athletics Gold Label road race, on Sunday 16th February 2025. With that impressive performance, the 24-year-old two-time world cross country champion improved on Yomif Kejelcha's previous world record of 57:30 by 48 seconds – the greatest single improvement on the men's world half marathon record.

Racing in ideal weather conditions of 13°C with no wind, Kiplimo became the first athlete to break 57 minutes for the distance and also set a world best of 40:07 for 15km en route to his world half marathon record.

During the technical meeting held a day before the race a 2:45/km rhythm was agreed to be set by Kenya's Edwin Kimosong for the opening kilometres, yet that 58-minute final pace proved too easy for Kiplimo as the Ugandan, eager to regain the world record he set in Lisbon back in 2021, took full command of the race some eight minutes into the event.

From then on Kiplimo offered an incredible display of strength, going faster and faster to reach 5km in 13:34, already on world record pace. By then, Kenyans Geoffrey Kamworor and Samwel Mailu travelled together some 19 seconds in arrears, while Italy's European champion Yemaneberhan Crippa was a lonesome fourth in 14:02. Kiplimo began to cover the following kilometres in the 2:40-

2:42 range to go through the 10km checkpoint in 26:46, clearly inside the world record pace of 27:15, while Kamworor and Mailu clocked a still quick 27:39 to Crippa's 28:02.

The Ugandan ace didn't falter over the closing kilometres and was timed at 53:42 for the 20km mark to complete another 26:46 10km section. He finished in a blistering 56:42 - a 'beaumesque' performance as the previous world record stood at 57:30.

"It has been the perfect race," said Kiplimo. "Ideal temperature, no wind at all, fantastic circuit - everything went better than expected. The pacemaker set the agreed 2:45 pace but I found myself full of energy and decided to inject a brisker rhythm from the third kilometre, but I never imagined to perform under the 57 minute barrier, that's astonishing.

"I won't compete any more until my marathon debut in London on 27 April."

Cubs sets goals ahead of U17 Afcon in Morocco



Uganda Cubs are the CECAFA U17 champions



The Final Draw for the TotalEnergies CAF U17 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) Morocco 2025 took place on Thursday, February 13, in Cairo, placing Uganda in Group A alongside hosts Morocco, Tanzania and Zambia. The tournament is scheduled to run from March 30 to April 19, 2025. The Cubs Head Coach Brian Ssenyondo expressed that his boys will be committed despite being placed in what he terms as the group of death. ‘Our target is the World Cup. It is not a draw you would welcome but one you would take. Having the host Morocco is a hard one’ said Ssenyondo. I have not read so much about Zambia but I know they have played AFCON three consecutive times which makes them a tough

opponent’ added the CECAFA U17 winning coach. ‘The draw divided the 16 qualified teams into four groups of four, with Morocco automatically assigned position A1 in Group A as the host nation. This marks Uganda’s third appearance at the U17 AFCON, having previously qualified for 2019 in Tanzania and then the 2021 edition, which was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Uganda U17 team ‘Cubs’ secured their spot in this year’s tournament by winning the CECAFA U17 Qualifiers, defeating Tanzania 2-1 in the final held at Hamz Stadium, Nakivubo in Kampala. Uganda receives 2 similar opponents – Zambia and Morocco like the ones battled in the same tournament in 2021 but was canceled due to COVID 19 pandemic.



Gazelles go to AfroBasket in Ivory Coast



Uganda's national women's basketball team, the Gazelles, secured their place at the 2025 FIBA Women's AfroBasket after defeating Egypt 74-63 in the Zone V Qualifiers final at the Hassan Mostafa Arena in Cairo. The Gazelles appearance at tournament in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, will be Uganda's fourth appearance at the Women's AfroBasket, having previously competed in 1997, 2015, and 2023.

The FIBA Women's AfroBasket is Africa's premier women's basketball competition, organized by FIBA's Africa Regional Office.

Held every two years, the tournament features 16 national teams, divided into four groups of four. Twelve teams earn their spots through a qualification process that includes regional qualifiers taking place in February and November 2024, culminating in the final qualification phase in February 2025.

The 2025 edition will be hosted by Côte d'Ivoire for the first time in the tournament's history. The competition is scheduled to run from 27 July to 3 August 2025.





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