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UGANDA WEEKLY FOCUS

Top highlight

PRESIDENT MUSEVENI HONORS ARCHBISHOP JANANI LUWUM'S MARTYRDOM | PG 4



INFORMING MINDS · INSPIRING CHANGE



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The EDITOR'S NOTE

This week, while so much unfolded across the country, we followed closely the engagements of Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, who has remained active and present in service to the nation. From high-level economic discussions to legislative milestones and international partnerships, the President has continued to set the pace in advancing Uganda's development agenda. We appreciate the leadership and the commitment to national transformation.

We are proud to bring you this edition of Uganda Weekly Focus.

A special thank you goes to our contributors whose dedication makes every issue possible, and to you, our readers, who give us the reason to keep informing minds and inspiring change.

In this edition, here are just a few stories you can expect:

- ✔ President Museveni leads the nation in commemorating the 49th anniversary of the martyrdom of Janani Luwum, calling for justice, unity and leadership grounded in service.
- ✔ Government allocates Shs180 billion for the establishment of Karamoja Peace and Technology University, marking a historic step toward transforming education and opportunity in the sub-region.
- ✔ Uganda and the European Union mark 50 years of partnership, reaffirming deeper cooperation in trade, investment and sustainable growth.

And that is only the beginning.

Do not just read alone. Read and share.

Did you know you can also contribute to this edition? We welcome your feedback, story ideas and perspectives.

Send us your thoughts at: ugandaweeklyfocus@gmail.com

Thank you for being part of the journey.

KITGUM – February 16, 2026

PRESIDENT MUSEVENI HONORS ARCHBISHOP JANANI LUWUM’S MARTYRDOM

Victor Nimusiima, GCIC - Uganda



“Even in conflict, both the cause and the methods must be just.” President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni

President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni on Monday led the nation in commemorating the 49th anniversary of the martyrdom of Janani Luwum, urging leaders to persuade citizens through good service rather than intimidate them through force.

The national commemoration was held in Kitgum District under the theme “Anchored in Christ for Stability, Peace and Unity” drawn from Ephesians 2:14–17. The President was accompanied by the First Lady and Minister

of Education and Sports, Maama Janet Kataaha Museveni. The event began with a main church service before the President and the First Lady laid wreaths at Wii-Gweng in Mucwini, the final resting place of Archbishop Luwum and his wife, Mama Mary Lawil Luwum.

St. Janani Luwum Day is observed annually on February 16 to honor the Archbishop who was killed in 1977 after openly condemning human rights abuses, arbitrary arrests and killings during

President Museveni addressing pilgrims during Archbishop Janani Luwumu Day in Mucwuni Kitgum on 16th February, 2026

the regime of former dictator Idi Amin.

In his address, President Museveni described Amin’s first mistake as imposing himself on the country through the 1971 military coup. He recalled that on January 25, 1971, while serving as a research assistant in the President’s Office, he learned of the coup from his residence in Kireka. After confirming that Amin had taken power,



Former Archbishop Luke Orombi (L) and Archbishop Kazimba Mugalu addressing pilgrims during Archbishop Janani Luwumu day in Kigtum

he contacted student leaders and resolved not to accept the new regime. Within two days, he had withdrawn money from the bank and left for Tanzania with four others to begin organizing resistance.

“Amin ruled me only for a few hours,” President Museveni said, emphasizing that leadership must be based on persuasion and service. Citing biblical teaching, he urged leaders to let their good deeds shine before others, warning that

any leader who relies on intimidation repeats the same mistake.

He further described Amin’s second major

error as using killings to silence opponents. While acknowledging Uganda’s history of armed struggle, the President



President Museveni launching Deputy IGG Dr. Patrocia Okiria's book (2nd L) as First Lady Janet Museveni (R) and Hon Lillian Aber (L) look on during Archbishop Janani Luwumu Day in Mucwuni, Kitgum



President Museveni and First Lady Janet Museveni pose for a photo with Anglican Bishops during Archbishop Janani Luwumu Day in Mucwuni, Kitgum

said he has consistently rejected assassinations outside the battlefield, insisting that both the cause and the methods must be just.

President Museveni noted that the sacrifices of leaders such as Luwum and Ben Kiwanuka were not in vain, as those responsible for atrocities ultimately failed. He also thanked the people of Northern Uganda for their electoral support, attributing it to sustained investments in infrastructure, schools, health centers, clean water systems and poverty reduction programs such as the Parish Development Model. He pledged to

address cattle rustling in East Acholi and fulfilled his Shs60 million pledge to the priests of Kitgum Diocese.

The Archbishop of the Church of Uganda, The Most Rev. Dr. Stephen

Samuel Kaziimba Mugalu, said the celebration was not only about an individual but about faith, justice and reconciliation. He urged believers to remain anchored in Christ for unity, stability and peace.

Other leaders, including Bishop Alfred Olwa and Minister Rose Lilly Akello, called for continued unity and announced plans to develop Luwum’s site into an international pilgrimage center.

Nearly five decades after his death, Archbishop Janani Luwum’s legacy continues to inspire both spiritual reflection and civic responsibility across Uganda.



Some of the pilgrims and visitors who turned up for Archbishop Janani Luwumu memorial Day celebrations in Mucwuni, Kitgum on Monday Feb 16

PRESIDENT MUSEVENI SIGNS THREE KEY HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION LAWS

By Carolyne Muyama, Uganda Media Centre

President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni has assented to three significant pieces of legislation aimed at strengthening regulation, safety and professionalism in Uganda's construction and housing sectors.

The President signed into law the Building Control (Amendment) Act, 2025, the Mortgage Refinance Institutions Act, 2025, and the Valuation Act, 2025 during a ceremony

held at State House Entebbe.

The new laws are expected to tighten oversight in the construction industry,

deepen access to housing finance and professionalise valuation services, in line with Uganda's rapid urbanisation and growing demand for quality housing.

The Building Control (Amendment) Act, 2025 introduces stricter penalties for illegal construction and non-compliance with approved building standards.



President Museveni signs off the Bills

The amendments are designed to curb substandard developments and enhance public safety, particularly in expanding urban centres where concerns over unsafe structures have been rising.

Officials say the strengthened law will reinforce accountability among developers, contractors and property owners, while empowering authorities to take firm action against violators. The move is also expected to restore public confidence in the building sector by ensuring adherence to approved plans and structural standards.

Under the Mortgage Refinance Institutions Act, 2025, the Bank of Uganda is mandated to regulate mortgage refinance institutions. The legislation seeks to provide a clear

legal framework for refinancing mechanisms that enable banks and financial institutions to access long-term funds for mortgage lending.

By enhancing regulatory oversight, the government aims to promote stability in the housing finance market and improve access to affordable, long-term mortgage products for Ugandans. The reform is seen as a crucial step toward addressing the country's housing deficit and supporting middle-income earners seeking home ownership.

The Valuation Act, 2025 establishes the Institute of Certified Valuers, a professional body responsible for overseeing standards, registration and regulation of valuers across the country. The new framework is expected to enhance transparency, credibility and consistency in property valuation services, which play a critical role in real estate transactions, mortgage approvals and investment decisions.

Stakeholders in the construction and financial sectors have welcomed the enactment of the three laws, describing them as timely interventions that align with Uganda's broader urban development agenda.

With the signing of the legislation, government officials say the country is better positioned to streamline construction oversight, deepen the mortgage market and promote professionalism in valuation services, ultimately contributing to safer buildings, improved housing access and sustainable urban growth.

Entebbe, Uganda – February 17, 2026

YOWERI KAGUTA MUSEVENI, IMF AFRICAN DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR DISCUSS ECONOMIC GROWTH AND TAX BASE EXPANSION

By David Serumaga, Uganda Media Centre

President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni on Tuesday hosted Mr. Abebe Aemro Selassie, Director of the African Department at the International Monetary Fund, at State House, Entebbe, for high-level discussions focused on Uganda's economic performance and strategies to expand the country's tax base.

During the meeting, President Museveni expressed confidence in Uganda's economic trajectory, noting that the country is currently experiencing steady growth.

"The economy is doing well and will do even



President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni poses for a group photo with Mr. Abebe Aemro Selassie and the delegation from the International Monetary Fund, alongside Uganda's delegation including PSST Ramathan Ggoobi, Hon. Henry Musasizi, and Michael Atingi-Ego, Governor of the Bank of Uganda, following discussions on economic growth and tax base expansion at State House, Entebbe on February 17, 2026

better,” the President said, adding that Uganda’s economy is growing at approximately seven percent annually and holds strong potential for further expansion, particularly through value addition in key sectors.

President Museveni emphasised that sustainable economic transformation must be anchored on strong defence and security

structures. He argued that stability remains a prerequisite for meaningful development across the continent.

“Africa has been messed up by doing things which are not critical. If you are not dealing with defence and security and you have scout movements and you call them an army, what are you doing? Without a strong army, there is no development,” he said.

The President reiterated Uganda’s long-standing policy that wealth creation should be driven primarily by the private sector rather than state-owned enterprises.

“Some people said parastatals or government companies should lead the economy, but we rejected that. We said the main economy should be in the hands of the private sector,” he noted.



President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni chats with the IMF delegation and the Ugandan representatives on Uganda’s economic performance and value addition strategy during a meeting at State House

He underscored the need to create an enabling environment that reduces the cost of doing business. Key priorities highlighted included affordable electricity, reliable internet, competitive fuel prices particularly jet fuel, and improved railway and pipeline infrastructure to support trade and industrialisation.

President Museveni called on the IMF to support measures that strengthen productive sectors, especially manufacturing and agriculture, and to back initiatives aimed at lowering operational costs for businesses.

The President also stressed the importance of affordable financing to manufacturers and farmers, citing the role of the Uganda Development Bank in providing patient capital to support long-term investments.

On market access, he noted that while

Uganda's internal market continues to grow, access to regional and international markets remains critical for sustaining expansion.

“We must add value to what we produce. As the country grows at seven percent, it will grow even more with value addition,” he said.

Mr. Selassie commended Uganda for maintaining consistent economic growth over time, describing it as one of the few African countries to sustain such momentum.

He encouraged continued economic reforms aimed at broadening

the tax base and strengthening domestic revenue mobilisation, emphasising the importance of building fiscal resilience to support long-term development.

The meeting reaffirmed the continued partnership between Uganda and the IMF in advancing macroeconomic stability, expanding the tax base, and promoting sustainable economic development.



GOVERNMENT ALLOCATES SHS180BN FOR KARAMOJA PEACE AND TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY

By David Serumaga,
Uganda Media Centre

Government allocated Shs180 billion in the FY2025/26 national budget to support the establishment of the Karamoja Peace and Technology University, an intervention aimed at addressing decades of structural underdevelopment in the Karamoja sub-region. The allocation followed a special Cabinet sitting held on 16 December 2024, chaired by Yoweri Kaguta Museveni and attended by Jessica Rose Epel Alupo.



The KAPATU President, and also the Bishop of Kotido Catholic Diocese, Rt. Rev. Dominic Eibu MCCJ, together with the Deputy Vice Chancellor-Academic Affairs Prof. Annette Kezaabu, during a visit to Namejio Community Kraal School (NACOKS) and Akurun Akaalam monument in Lomukura village, Kotido Municipality, the site where elders from Karamoja unearthed the pen.

The decision marks a historic step in a region whose complicated relationship with formal education dates back generations. One of the most powerful symbols of that history is the burial of the pen and the book at Lomukura in Kotido Municipality. At

the height of colonial administration, elders in Karamoja were divided over whether to embrace formal schooling. Many associated the pen and book with forced conscription into foreign wars and harsh taxation imposed through written records.

In protest, they buried these symbols, rejecting formal education as an instrument of oppression.

Nearly six decades later, on 5 November 2003, the First Lady and Minister



Rt. Hon. Amama Mbabazi representing H.E. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni as Chief Guest pauses for a group photo with dignitaries and partners after the unveiling of the KAPATU Project on November 23, 2025 in Losilang, Kotido District.

for Education and Sports, Janet Kataaha Museveni, presided over a ceremony at Lomukura during which elders symbolically unearthed the pen and book. That act signaled a profound shift in mindset. A monument now stands at the site, and a community school operates nearby, though it remains without formal government recognition or adequate infrastructure.

Despite growing acceptance of education, Karamoja continues

to face stark realities. The sub-region records the lowest literacy rate in Uganda at 30.4 percent, far below the national average of 76.1 percent. More than half of children aged 6 to 24 have never attended school, and approximately 86 percent of youth lack formal education. Youth unemployment exceeds 40 percent, while poverty levels stand at 74.2 percent, the highest nationally. Large numbers of young people remain

idle, neither in school nor engaged in formal employment or skills training.

Security, once a major obstacle due to cattle rustling, has significantly improved. The relative peace presents an opportunity for long-term investment in education and skills development.



A National Council For Higher Education (NCHE) official addresses the KAPATU Project team during the NCHE's visit to assess KAPATU's readiness to start academic programs at the Main Campus in Losilang, Kotido District. December 16, 2025.

It is within this context that the Karamoja Peace and Technology University was conceived. Officially unveiled on 23 November 2025 at Losilang, Kotido Municipality, the project was launched by the President, represented by Amama Mbabazi. Earlier, on 29 April 2023, the project had been operationalised at Nsambya by the Vice President on behalf of the President.

KAPATU is a tripartite initiative involving the Catholic Lawyers' Society International, the Kotido Catholic Diocese led by Rt. Rev. Dominic Eibu MCCJ, and the

Government of Uganda. Conceived in 2014 after research revealed a widening socio-economic gap between Karamoja and the rest of the country, the university is envisioned as a nucleus national public institution dedicated to peace-building, technology, and sustainable development.

On 16 December 2025, the National Council for Higher Education conducted an inspection of

KAPATU's main campus at Losilang to assess its readiness to commence academic programmes. The process toward securing a provisional licence is underway.

The Shs180 billion government allocation provides critical momentum for infrastructure development, academic programming, and institutional establishment. For Karamoja, KAPATU represents more than a university. It is a strategic anchor institution designed to unlock human potential, foster peace, and drive socio-economic transformation in a region long defined by marginalisation.



Kampala, February 18, 2026

IGG UNVEILS FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN TO STRENGTHEN ANTI-CORRUPTION FIGHT

By Michael Woira, GCIC
-Uganda

The Inspectorate of Government (IG), Uganda's constitutional anti-corruption body established under Article 223 of the 1995 Constitution, yesterday officially launched its new five-year Strategic Plan for FY 2025/2026–2029/2030 at Hotel Africana.



The plan, which covers the financial years 2025/26 to 2029/30 and is often summarized as 2026–2030, was unveiled alongside two key supporting documents: the Client Charter 2025, outlining the institution's service commitments to the public, and the Human Resource Policy and Procedures Manual 2026, aimed at strengthening internal efficiency and staff

capacity.

The event was presided over by Inspector General of Government, Lady Justice Naluzze Aisha Batala, who described the new Strategic Plan as both a bold institutional commitment and a transformative roadmap.

“The Strategic Plan we are launching today is deliberately designed to make a significant contribution to

addressing corruption and is fully aligned with Uganda Vision 2040, the Tenfold Growth Strategy, the Fourth National Development Plan, and the NRM Manifesto 2026–2031,” Lady Justice Batala said.

She added, “This Plan is not merely a policy document; it is a bold declaration of intent and a firm institutional commitment to act with independence and precision in the fight against corruption and



maladministration.”

According to the IGG, the new strategy marks a shift from a predominantly reactive, complaint-driven approach to a more proactive, intelligence-led model capable of detecting and dismantling syndicated and high-level corruption within public service systems.

“This Plan sets a clear and uncompromising direction to strengthen institutional resilience, enforce accountability without fear or

favour, restore and sustain public trust in government systems, and deliver measurable anti-corruption outcomes,” Lady Justice Batala emphasized.

Among the dignitaries in attendance was Brig. Gen. Henry Isoke, Head of the State House Anti-Corruption Unit, who joined fellow

anti-corruption agency heads in demonstrating inter-agency solidarity in the fight against graft.

Ms. Jane Kyarisima Mwesigwa, Deputy Head of Public Service in charge of Performance and Service Delivery, reaffirmed the Inspectorate’s constitutional mandate to combat corruption and enforce the Leadership Code.



/// The new Strategic Plan advances prevention and detection of corruption, investigation and prosecution, citizen engagement, institutional strengthening, and multi-stakeholder collaboration, anchored on the vision of ‘A just and corruption-free Uganda,’ she said.

She further noted that the accompanying Client Charter and HR Policy Manual will enhance service delivery standards and professionalize the institution’s internal operations.

The Strategic Plan outlines measurable targets, including

improved corruption perception standings, higher conviction and asset recovery rates, stronger compliance within local governments, and enhanced digital, forensic, and investigative capacity.

With the launch of these guiding documents

on February 18, 2026, the Inspectorate has signaled a renewed and coordinated push to safeguard public resources, enforce accountability, and promote integrity in public office as Uganda advances toward its long-term national development goals.



Entebbe, Uganda | February 17, 2026

UGANDA, SAUDI ARABIA STRENGTHEN INVESTMENT TIES WITH FOCUS ON COFFEE INDUSTRIALISATION

By Solomon Male Grace – GCIC, Uganda

“We have been working together for a long time, but we have not fully engaged to maximise our investment opportunities.”
Yoweri Kaguta Museveni



Yoweri Kaguta Museveni on Tuesday hosted a high-level delegation from the Saudi Arabia at State House, Entebbe, in a meeting aimed at strengthening bilateral economic cooperation and unlocking new commercial opportunities between the two countries.

The delegation, led by Mr. Ali O Alswayeh, reaffirmed the Kingdom’s commitment to expanding investment in Uganda, with particular

interest in agriculture and agro-industrial development. Coffee value addition emerged as a priority area during the discussions.

Mr. Alswayeh expressed appreciation to President Museveni for the audience and underscored Saudi Arabia’s readiness

to support Uganda’s industrial transformation through strategic partnerships.



President Museveni addresses the Saudi delegation at State House



President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni poses with Ugandan and Saudi delegations at State House, Entebbe

President Museveni welcomed the delegation and commended Saudi investors for recognising Uganda's untapped potential. He noted that while the two nations have enjoyed cordial relations for years, there remains significant room to expand economic engagement.

“We have been working together for a long time, but we have not fully engaged to maximise our investment opportunities,” the President said, emphasising the need for deliberate efforts to grow trade and industrial collaboration.

A key highlight of the meeting was the Value at Source Coffee Project, an agro-industrial initiative spearheaded by Nonda Coffee. The project seeks to transition Uganda from exporting raw coffee beans to exporting branded, high-value finished coffee products.

Central to the initiative is the proposed Luwero Coffee Park, an integrated industrial complex to be established in Luwero District. The facility is projected to process 42,000 metric tons of coffee annually and

generate an estimated USD 850 million in annual revenue.

The Coffee Park will manage the entire value chain, including cleaning, grading, roasting, grinding, production of soluble and specialty coffee, packaging, branding, and export of finished products.

Officials indicated that the project is expected to create approximately 1,500 direct jobs and an additional 3,000 indirect jobs in logistics, retail, and auxiliary services. More than 100,000 coffee



President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni poses with Ugandan and Saudi delegations at State House, Entebbe, to unveil the proposed Luwero Coffee Park project

farming households are anticipated to be integrated into a structured and reliable supply chain.

The Saudi market is viewed as a strategic gateway to the broader Middle East, one of the fastest-growing coffee consumption regions globally. Increased access to this market is expected to boost demand for premium Ugandan coffee and strengthen bilateral trade ties.

If successfully implemented, the initiative could provide sustainable downstream markets for farmers

while enhancing export earnings through finished product sales rather than raw commodity exports.

The meeting underscored a shared commitment

to investment-led growth, private sector development, and value addition as critical drivers of economic transformation.

President Museveni has consistently maintained that exporting finished goods instead of raw materials is essential to increasing national income, creating employment opportunities, and accelerating industrialisation.

The discussions concluded with renewed commitment from both sides to deepen cooperation in agro-processing, industrial development, and market expansion.



The Ugandan and Saudi delegations during high-level discussions

Kampala, February 18, 2026

NITA-U WARNS OF 10-YEAR JAIL TERM FOR ILLEGAL USE OF PERSONAL DATA

By Joellah Anshemeza,
GCIC – Uganda

The National Information Technology Authority – Uganda (NITA-U), through its Personal Data Protection Office (PDPO), has warned that individuals and institutions found illegally collecting, publishing or sharing personal data without consent risk facing severe penalties, including up to 10 years in prison.



Mr. Baker Birikujja - National Director of PDPO making his remarks at the conference

The warning was issued during a high-level conference held at the National Conference Centre in Naguru under the theme “From Awareness to Action: Strengthening Uganda’s Cybersecurity and Data Protection Readiness.” The event also marked the official conclusion of the nationwide cybersecurity and privacy awareness campaign dubbed “Beera Ku Guard.”

Speaking at the conference, PDPO Director Baker Birikujja emphasized that misuse of personal information remains widespread despite the existence of legal safeguards.

“It is illegal for anyone or any institution to publish or distribute personal information belonging to others without their knowledge or approval. The law is clear, and the penalties are serious,” he

said.

He cited disturbing cases where personal documents, including academic papers, identification records and medical information, have been discarded carelessly, used to wrap food items or publicly exposed without the owners’ consent. Such actions, he noted, amount to grave violations of privacy and dignity.

Uganda’s Data Protection and Privacy



Team poses for a group photo after the conference

Act, Cap. 97, provides a comprehensive legal framework governing how personal information is collected, processed, stored and shared. The law applies to both public and private entities and requires that personal data be handled lawfully, fairly and transparently.

“PDPO only protects individual personal data. The Data Protection and Privacy Act protects the privacy of the individual and personal data, and

regulates the collection and processing of personal information,” Birikujja clarified. He added that digital infrastructure must be secure, resilient and privacy-by-design. “If your information is not used well, your reputation can be destroyed.”

The rapid expansion of digital technologies, mobile applications and online services has significantly increased the volume of personal

data generated by citizens. With more Ugandans transacting, studying and socialising online, regulators warn that the risk of data breaches and exploitation has equally grown.

Chairman of the National Information Security Advisory Group (NISAG), Noah Baalessanvu, stressed that awareness alone is no longer enough. “Today marks both a reflection



Mr. Arnold Mangeni, Director Information Security at NITA-U makes his remarks at the conference on 18th February, 2026

point and a turning point. While awareness is essential, it is not sufficient. Awareness must translate into structured compliance frameworks, coordinated incident response systems, strengthened enforcement, and measurable institutional accountability,” he said.

He further cautioned that cyber threats are becoming more sophisticated. “A good hacker does not need your password. We need to make cyber security hygiene as easy as washing our hands,” Baalessanvu noted.

The “Beera Ku Guard” campaign has, over the past months, sensitised citizens, organisations and public institutions across regions on responsible digital behaviour and regulatory obligations. The initiative included community outreach programmes, media engagements and partnerships with public and private sector actors to promote compliance with data protection standards.

The conference brought together government institutions, regulators, law enforcement agencies, financial institutions, internet

service providers and civil society actors to reflect on Uganda’s progress and define practical next steps toward enhanced national digital resilience.

Authorities say enforcement efforts are being intensified. Organisations found in breach of the law may face heavy fines, suspension of operations or criminal prosecution, depending on the severity of the violation.

Barijuka stressed that safeguarding personal data requires collective vigilance.

■ Data protection is everyone’s responsibility. Institutions must comply with the law, and citizens must remain alert. When personal data is mishandled, the consequences can be devastating, from financial loss to identity theft and reputational damage,” he said.

NITA-U reaffirmed its commitment to building a secure, resilient and trusted digital environment that supports inclusive national development.

Kampala, February 20, 2026

UGANDA, EUROPEAN UNION MARK 50 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP

By Victor Nimusiima, GCIC -Uganda

Uganda and the European Union today celebrated 50 years of diplomatic and development partnership, with leaders from both sides reaffirming their commitment to deeper trade, investment and sustainable growth.

infrastructure projects are strengthening integration and boosting cross-border trade within East Africa and beyond.

“Connectivity is opportunity,” he said. “This partnership



Speaking at the Golden Jubilee launch in Kampala, Uganda’s Ambassador, Mr. John Leonard Mugerwa emphasized the country’s strategic

position in the region, declaring that “Uganda is not land-locked; we are land-linked.”

Amb. Mugerwa said Uganda’s expanding road corridors and regional

spreads across our country, creating jobs and opportunities for our young population, and supporting climate resilience and sustainable development.”



The celebrations marked 50 years since the European Union Delegation to Uganda opened in Kampala in 1976. Over the decades, both Uganda and Europe have undergone significant transformation. The European Union has grown into a bloc of 27 Member States, while Uganda has emerged as a regional leader and currently chairs the Non-Aligned Movement.

Throughout that period, officials noted, dialogue, trust and continuity have anchored the relationship.

“Even when we face acute issues, we engage constructively in dialogue,” Amb. Mugerwa affirmed, underscoring the resilience of the partnership even during challenging moments.

According to figures shared at the event, the European Union has committed more than €5 billion in development cooperation to Uganda, alongside nearly €5 billion in private investment. These investments have supported critical sectors including infrastructure, energy, health and education areas seen as foundational to building a

resilient and competitive economy.

With one of the world’s youngest populations, Uganda is increasingly prioritizing youth entrepreneurship, women-led enterprises and green growth initiatives. Amb. Mugerwa noted that these priorities are being advanced through EU-backed partnerships and business fora aimed at unlocking private sector potential.

“At 50, the Uganda–EU partnership looks ahead toward investment, tourism and shared prosperity,” he said. “The next chapter is ours to



write.”

H.E. Amb. Jan Sadek reflected on the journey, saying half a century of cooperation demonstrates the tangible impact of sustained collaboration.

“Half a century is long enough for big changes, and long enough to show one simple truth: partnerships matter not just in numbers, but in people and results,” he said.

Leaders reaffirmed that

long-term partnerships remain essential in navigating global challenges, including climate change, economic uncertainty and geopolitical shifts.



As Uganda and the European Union step into the next phase of cooperation, officials expressed confidence that expanded trade, strategic investments and people-centered development will continue to define the relationship.



Officials of the Ministry of Finance pose during the launch

GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES A FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN TO DRIVE ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

By Michael Woira, GCIC -Uganda

The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Matia Kasaija, has launched the Ministry’s Strategic Plan for FY2025/26–2029/30, alongside its Service Delivery Standards and Client Charter, reaffirming government’s commitment to professionalism, integrity and accountability in public financial management.

Kasaija said the three instruments form the backbone of the

Ministry’s next phase of reform and economic stewardship, positioning



Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Matia Kasaija, addresses stakeholders during the launch of the Ministry’s Strategic Plan for FY2025/26–2029/30



Permanent Secretary Ramathan Ggoobi outlines the Ministry's five-year roadmap

it to drive Uganda's ambition of building a US\$500 billion economy by 2040.

At the heart of this transformation agenda is fiscal credibility. By maintaining disciplined fiscal management, strengthening domestic revenue mobilisation, and ensuring our public investments deliver measurable returns, we lay the foundation for the tenfold economic growth ambition," Kasaija said.

The Minister, who was flanked by the Minister of State for General Duties, Henry Musasizi, emphasized that fiscal credibility is not merely a technical

goal but the bedrock of investor confidence, macroeconomic stability and public trust. He noted that the Client Charter and Service Delivery Standards signal

the Ministry's readiness to lead by example in service excellence across government.

Representing the Head of Public Service and Secretary to Cabinet, Lucy Nakyobe, the Deputy Head of Public Service and Deputy Secretary to Cabinet, Dr. Theopista Wenene, congratulated the Ministry for developing what she described as critical guiding documents for the implementation of the Fourth National Development Plan.

In her remarks delivered on behalf of Nakyobe,



Dr. Theopista Wenene, Deputy Head of Public Service and Deputy Secretary to Cabinet, delivers remarks on behalf of the Head of Public Service, Lucy Nakyobe



The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Matia Kasajja, unveils the Ministry's Strategic Plan for FY2025/26–2029/30, alongside the Service Delivery Standards and Client Charter, during a ceremony at the Ministry

she underscored that MoFPED is one of the most critical institutions in government and is expected to provide leadership by example in conforming to set service delivery standards. She added that the Ministry has a central responsibility to support other Ministries, Departments and Agencies, as well as Local Governments, in executing NDP IV priorities effectively.

The Permanent Secretary and Secretary to the Treasury, Ramathan Ggoobi, described the Strategic Plan as a bold

and practical roadmap anchored on the theme, “Fostering Strategic Investments for Rapid and Inclusive Economic Growth.”

“Our goal over the next five years is to establish and sustain fiscal policy credibility, efficient public investment, and coordinated development financing as the foundation for tenfold economic growth,” Ggoobi said.

He explained that the Plan is structured around six pillars: strengthening macroeconomic and fiscal policy credibility; mobilising and

coordinating financing instruments to reduce the cost of capital and crowd in private investment; expanding and diversifying sustainable financing while preserving debt sustainability; strengthening public investment management; improving the efficiency and development impact of public expenditure; and building institutional capacity, systems and data infrastructure.

■ Our agenda is ambitious: to achieve average economic growth of at least 8 percent, reduce poverty, create new jobs, and sustain macroeconomic stability,” Ggoobi added.

He noted that priority interventions will include financing oil and gas commercialisation, capitalising government development banks and financing schemes, supporting industrial transformation, empowering women entrepreneurs, and enhancing the efficiency of the Parish Development Model to transition households into the money economy.

MENTAL HEALTH: UGANDA'S SILENT EMERGENCY THREATENING THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND

By Kenson Bugembe,
Uganda Media Centre

Uganda stands at a defining moment in its development journey. With a population projected at 48.2 million and more than 73 percent below the age of 30, the country holds one of the youngest populations in the world. This youth bulge has long been described as Uganda's greatest opportunity, a potential demographic dividend capable of accelerating economic transformation under the Fourth National Development Plan and the Ten-Fold Growth Strategy.

Yet beneath this promise lies a quieter crisis that threatens to undermine it.

The State of Uganda Population Report 2025, released under the theme "Mental Health:



A Silent Emergency," warns that rising mental health conditions now pose a serious risk to Uganda's human capital and long-term economic ambitions. Facility-reported mental health

cases increased by 71 percent between 2021 and 2024, rising from 494,326 to 843,295 cases. Population-based estimates suggest that nearly one in four adults and children experiences a mental health condition.

Depression, anxiety disorders, trauma-related conditions, substance misuse, and psychosocial distress are affecting millions.

Adolescents and young people are particularly vulnerable as they navigate unemployment, academic pressure, rapid urbanisation, and social uncertainty. The report shows that 50.9 percent of young people aged 18–30 are not in employment, education, or training. Exclusion from opportunity often deepens hopelessness and psychological strain.

Despite the growing burden, fewer than one in ten Ugandans who need mental health care receive appropriate treatment. Services remain heavily concentrated at facilities such as Butabika National Referral Mental Hospital, while primary and community

systems remain underdeveloped. The country requires nearly 9,661 mental health workers, yet more than 5,300 positions remain vacant.

The economic cost is staggering. In 2021 alone, Uganda spent UGX 137.3 billion on direct mental health care, while indirect productivity losses reached UGX 696.6 billion, bringing the total annual cost to UGX 833.9 billion. The monetary value of Disability-Adjusted Life Years lost to mental disorders has risen from UGX 283 billion in 2000 to UGX 2.96 trillion in 2023. Under a business-as-usual scenario, losses could reach US\$4.5 billion by 2040. The cost of inaction clearly exceeds the cost of investment.

Speaking at the report's launch, Health Minister Jane Ruth Aceng emphasized that no single ministry can

address the crisis alone. She called for a whole-of-government and whole-of-society response integrating mental health into primary health care, schools, sexual and reproductive health services, and gender-based violence response systems.

“Mental health is both a silent emergency and a development emergency,” she noted, adding that Uganda's demographic dividend depends on protecting the wellbeing of its people.

Uganda's youthful population remains a powerful asset. But transforming demographic potential into sustained economic growth requires more than infrastructure and industrialisation. It requires deliberate investment in emotional resilience, community-based care, and a strengthened mental health workforce.

Mental health may be silent, but its consequences are not.

GOVERNMENT, POLICE RALLY PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR TRADE ORDER RESTORATION

“Beyond enforcement, we ask the public to appreciate that we need trade order before they are forced to comply.” ACP Rusoke Kituuma



Government has intensified efforts to restore trade order through a coordinated multi-agency operation aimed at improving safety, accessibility, and compliance within designated trading areas.

Addressing the press at the Uganda Media Centre on 19th February 2026, the Minister of State for Kampala Capital City and Metropolitan Affairs, Kyofatogabye Kabuye, reaffirmed government’s commitment to ensuring that the ongoing exercise benefits both traders and consumers through improved market organization and equitable allocation of vendor spaces.

“This exercise is intended to create order, fairness, and safety within our trading spaces,” Hon. Kabuye said. “We call upon all stakeholders to cooperate with implementing agencies so that the process is carried out peacefully and effectively for the good of the entire community.”

He emphasized that the restoration of trade order is a deliberate government position aimed at creating safer and more accessible trading environments across markets.

Speaking at the same briefing, ACP Rusoke Kituuma, Spokesperson of the Uganda Police



**ASP FARIDAH NAMPIIMA,
HEAD MEDIA MONITORING
UNIT, UGANDA POLICE
FORCE**

Force noted that the ongoing exercise is a government-led initiative intended to bring structure and efficiency to trading environments.

“The Uganda Police is here to support this government exercise, and it is the responsibility of the relevant agencies to ensure its successful implementation,” Afande Rusoke said. “We have a constitutional mandate to support civilian authorities, and this is a multi-agency approach to restoring trade order.”

He appealed to members of the public, particularly those directly affected

by the reorganization, to cooperate with enforcement teams to ensure a smooth implementation process.

“Everything will go well as long as the people, especially those affected by this government action, comply,” he noted. “Since government has already taken this position, people should not be tempted to think that it will be reversed.”

Afande Rusoke further urged traders and the general public not to resist the initiative, stressing that the goal is to create a more organized and safer trading environment before stricter enforcement becomes necessary.

“Beyond enforcement, we ask the public to appreciate that we need trade order before they are forced to comply,” he added. “The Uganda Police is ready and fully committed to implement and execute these orders in support of our partner agencies.”

Officials maintain



Minister of State for Kampala Capital City and Metropolitan Affairs, Hon. Kyofatogabye Kabuye, speaking to members of the press

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that restoring trade order will enhance public confidence, improve mobility within commercial zones, and support sustainable economic activity across the country’s markets.



Members of the public and media practitioners attending the government press briefing on the Trade Order Restoration initiative at the Uganda Media Centre on February 19, 2026

UGANDA MOVES TO EXPAND NATIONAL PARKS AS CABINET CLEARS FIVE WILDLIFE RESERVES FOR UPGRADE

By David Serumaga,
Uganda Media Centre

“Expanding our protected areas is not just about conservation; it is about securing Uganda’s biodiversity, strengthening our tourism competitiveness, and driving sustainable economic growth for generations to come.” Tom Butime



The Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities (MTWA) has secured Cabinet approval to elevate five wildlife reserves to full national park status, marking a major step in Uganda’s push to strengthen conservation and drive tourism-led economic growth.

The decision, announced on February 18, 2026, is now awaiting parliamentary approval to formalize the changes

through amendments and gazettelement under the Uganda Wildlife Authority framework.

Tourism Minister Tom Butime confirmed that Cabinet passed the ministry’s policy paper and cleared the proposed upgrades.

“Cabinet did pass our

paper and we are now waiting for Parliament to finalise the business. Katonga and Toro-Semuliki Wildlife Reserves will become national parks,” Butime said.

The five wildlife reserves approved for elevation are:

- ✓ Katonga Wildlife Reserve – Located in Kyenjojo and Kamwenge districts along the Katonga River, this wetland ecosystem is known for papyrus swamps and migratory bird routes. Upgrading



The Kyambura Gorge, famously known as the “Valley of the Apes”

it is expected to strengthen legal protections against encroachment and poaching while promoting eco-tourism in central-western Uganda.

- ✔ Toro-Semliki Wildlife Reserve – Situated in the Albertine Rift region in Bundibugyo and Ntoroko districts, this savannah and forest landscape protects Uganda kob migration corridors, primates and diverse birdlife. Established in 1926, its elevation is expected to boost anti-poaching enforcement

and visitor infrastructure.

- ✔ Echuya Wildlife Reserve – Bordering Kisoro and Rubanda districts, this montane bamboo forest habitat is vital for endangered species and watershed protection in southwestern Uganda.
- ✔ Kigezi Wildlife Reserve – Known for its open savannah landscapes and wildlife corridors linking to other protected areas in southwestern Uganda.
- ✔ Kyambura Wildlife Reserve – Adjacent

to Queen Elizabeth National Park in Rubirizi District, this reserve includes the dramatic Kyambura Gorge, often referred to as the “Valley of the Apes,” and is home to chimpanzees, hippos and elephants.

Butime described the approvals as “real achievements,” noting that expanding protected areas will enhance biodiversity conservation, strengthen ecosystem management and increase Uganda’s competitiveness as a tourism destination.

In addition, Bukaleba



Forest Reserve in Mayuge District has been approved for conversion into a wildlife reserve, further widening the country's conservation footprint.

If Parliament endorses the upgrades, Uganda's number of national parks, currently 10 under UWA management, will increase. The move aligns with Uganda's Vision 2040 and the broader ambition to use tourism as a catalyst for structural economic transformation.

Higher protection status will allow stricter enforcement against illegal activities, improve habitat preservation amid pressures from population growth and climate change, and

enhance conservation financing mechanisms.

Tourism has been identified as one of Uganda's strategic growth sectors, with government targeting significant revenue expansion in the coming years. The addition of lesser-visited but ecologically rich areas to the national park network is expected to diversify Uganda's tourism offerings beyond established icons such as Bwindi Impenetrable National Park and Murchison Falls National Park.

However, Cabinet did not approve proposals to elevate Pian Upe Wildlife Reserve and Bugoma Central Forest Reserve.

“We did not succeed with Pian Upe and Bugoma Central Forest Reserve, but I can assure you the struggle will continue,” Butime said, adding that efforts to secure national park status for the two areas will persist.

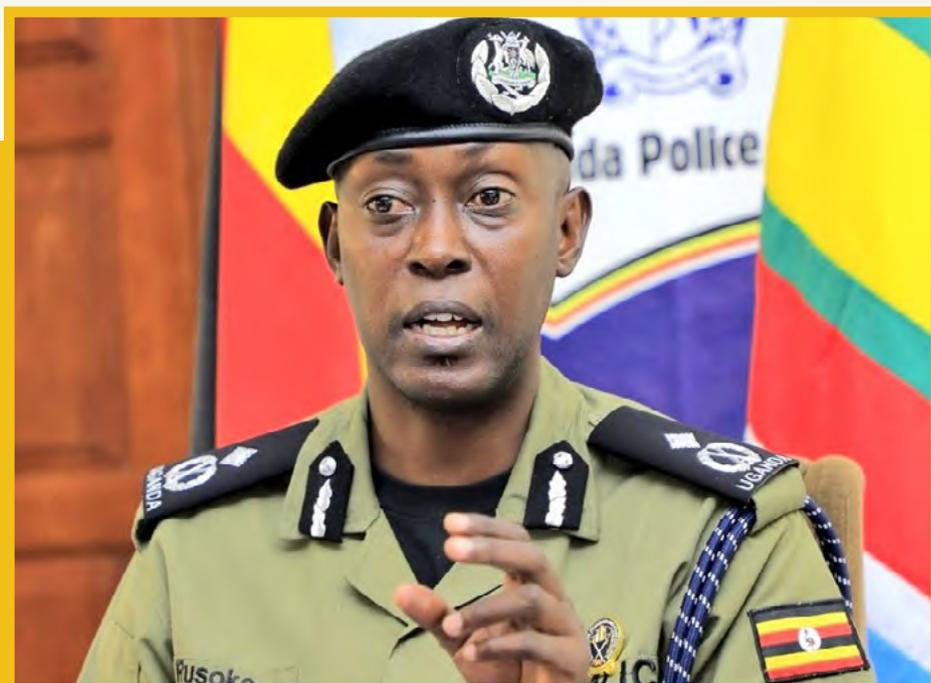
He urged leadership at UWA and the Uganda Tourism Board to accelerate implementation of the National Development Plan IV and position Uganda competitively in the global tourism market.

If Parliament grants final approval, the expansion of national parks will further entrench Uganda's standing as the “Pearl of Africa,” leveraging its biodiversity and protected landscapes to attract higher-value visitors and support sustainable development in surrounding communities.

UGANDA POLICE FORCE REASSURES PUBLIC AS CRIME TRENDS SHOW IMPROVEMENT

By Asp Faridah Nampiima, Head Media Monitoring

KAMPALA – The Uganda Police Force has assured the public that security is under control, citing major operational breakthroughs that have disrupted criminal networks and reduced violent crime in key areas.



In a statement issued from Police Headquarters on 18th February, 2026, the Force acknowledged public concern over recent criminal incidents but emphasized that intelligence-led operations have already produced tangible results.

“We are fully committed to protecting citizens and their property,” said Police Spokesperson ACP Rusoke. “Every report is treated seriously, and our

operations are showing clear results in keeping communities safe.”

Police reported significant progress in combating armed robberies, particularly in the Kampala Metropolitan Policing area. Between January 20 and 24, 2026, officers recovered four sub-machine guns and arrested nine suspects linked to more than a dozen crime scenes.

“These arrests have had

an immediate impact,” ACP Rusoke said. “Since the operation, reports of armed robbery in these areas have significantly declined.”

Since early February, over 440 suspects including muggers, burglars, and narcotics offenders have been arrested through a series of targeted, intelligence-driven operations. The majority have already been presented before courts.

“These operations are deliberate and strategic,”



ACP Rusoke said. “We are dismantling criminal cells and reinforcing law and order to protect citizens.”

Police also reported progress in complex investigations that have drawn public attention in recent years, including murder cases in Kyanja, at Uganda Christian University, and in Lungujja. “Our teams have made important breakthroughs, and justice is moving forward,” said Afande Rusoke.

Authorities urged the public to remain calm

and maintain close communication with the police, including reporting suspicious activity through official hotlines and emergency lines 112 and 999.

“The fight against crime is a shared responsibility,” ACP Rusoke said. “Timely information from citizens strengthens our response and helps prevent incidents before they escalate.”

The Uganda Police Force emphasized that intelligence-led operations will continue nationwide, assuring the public that law enforcement remains proactive, responsive, and fully in control.

Kampala, 20th February 2026

UGANDA MARKS INTERNATIONAL MOTHER LANGUAGE DAY, LAUNCHES LUSOGA AT MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

By David Serumaga – Uganda Media Centre

“Our languages are a source of pride, unity, and intergenerational knowledge transfer,” Hon. Dr. Mutuuzo Peace Regis



Uganda successfully marked International Mother Language Day with a celebration at Makerere University Main Hall, bringing together scholars, cultural leaders, policymakers, and educators to promote the country’s linguistic diversity and cultural heritage. This year’s theme, “Languages Matter: Harnessing Technology to Document and Develop Uganda’s Indigenous Languages,” highlighted the role of innovation in preserving and developing Uganda’s mother tongues.

The event was graced by His Majesty the Kyabazinga of Busoga, William Gabula Nadiope IV, who served as Guest

of Honour. In her remarks, Hon. Dr. Mutuuzo Peace Regis, Minister of State for Gender and Culture Affairs, underscored the importance of mother tongue education in fostering quality learning and cultural preservation. “Education in the first language is essential for quality learning and cultural preservation. Our government policy ensures that pupils are taught in their mother tongue until Primary Four, and we encourage the teaching

of indigenous languages at all levels of learning,” she said.

A key highlight of the celebration was the official launch of Lusoga as a course at Makerere University, a milestone that strengthens Uganda’s commitment to preserving and promoting its indigenous languages. Dr. Mutuuzo explained, “Through this initiative, we aim



to showcase research outputs and publications on Uganda’s languages, and to encourage discussions among linguists, educators, and policymakers on critical issues of language preservation and cultural continuity.”

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, in collaboration with the School of Languages, Literature, and Communication at Makerere University, emphasized the integration of technology in documenting Uganda’s over 40 indigenous languages. “Language development is not just

about communication; it is about cultural identity, social cohesion, and inclusive national development,” Dr. Mutuuzo added.

Participants engaged in discussions on language education, translation, and technological innovation, while cultural performances highlighted the richness of Uganda’s linguistic heritage. The event reinforced the Ministry’s commitment to working with regional and continental partners, including ACALAN under the African Union, to harmonize orthographies, develop terminology, and increase the use

of African languages in education, governance, and public life.

Dr. Mutuuzo reaffirmed the Ministry’s dedication to preserving Uganda’s linguistic diversity for future generations.

“Our languages are a source of pride, unity, and intergenerational knowledge transfer. Today, we celebrate not only our mother tongues but also our shared cultural heritage and identity,” she said.

UGANDA AIRLINES MESS SORTED; THE REAL KISANJA HAKUNA MCHEZO HAS BEGUN

By Obed K. Katureebe

While being sworn in for the 2016–2021 term, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni declared the slogan “Kisanja Hakuna Mchezo,” loosely translated as “a term of no jokes.” The message signaled seriousness in governance. It emphasized faster job creation, improved security, and more efficient service delivery, while warning against bureaucratic inefficiency and complacency in public institutions.

Although notable progress was registered during that period, many Ugandans felt that inefficiency within some government institutions persisted. Service delivery in certain sectors remained slow, and corruption continued to undermine public confidence.

Recent developments, however, particularly in the renewed fight against corruption, suggest a shift in tone and approach. When concerns were raised about alleged corruption

and mismanagement at Uganda Airlines, President Museveni intervened decisively. He dismissed the Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Jennipher Bamuturaki, and appointed an experienced aviation professional to steer the airline on an interim basis as the government searches for a substantive head.

The President appointed Girma Wake, a respected Ethiopian aviation veteran, as Acting CEO and Consultant for Uganda Airlines,



**BY OBED K. KATUREEBE,
AG. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
UGANDA MEDIA CENTRE**

effective February 13, 2026. The move was widely interpreted as a signal that the government intends to restore confidence, professionalism, and accountability within the national carrier.

The ruling National Resistance Movement manifesto for the 2026–2031 period prioritizes industrialization, job creation, and structural transformation of the economy. Among its key commitments are commercialization of agriculture, value addition to minerals, improved remuneration

for lower-paid public servants, infrastructure upgrades, and, crucially, strengthened anti-corruption measures.

As President Museveni enters his seventh term, observers believe the focus will be on consolidating past achievements and safeguarding his legacy. His record in maintaining peace and driving socio-economic transformation is widely acknowledged. Yet persistent corruption within parts of the public sector has threatened to erode these gains.



The President has pledged to confront this challenge more firmly in the new term.

Firm enforcement actions by the Ministry for Kampala and Kampala Capital City Authority during implementation of the Kampala trade order were also widely noted. Many saw these actions as a revival of the “no jokes” posture first articulated in 2016.

Similarly, the Chief of Defence Forces, Muhoozi Kainerugaba, who has been vocal about restoring order in Kampala and addressing concerns

at Uganda Airlines, has emphasized that Kampala, as the nation’s capital, should reflect Uganda’s aspirations. He has argued that the city cannot remain disorganized regardless of political leadership, and that discipline and coordination are necessary for national progress.

Across the political divide, many Ugandans acknowledge that intense political rivalry has slowed progress in Kampala. Renewed calls for order, efficiency, and accountability have therefore been welcomed by sections of the public.

Effective leadership in urgent situations requires swift and

decisive action. It demands clear communication, coordination among institutions, and adaptability to emerging realities. When such measures are taken promptly, they can restore public trust and demonstrate resolve.

The coming term is likely to maintain that sense of urgency. Those serving in government may need to embrace a more results-oriented and accountable leadership culture. Early indicators suggest a reawakening of the original spirit of “Kisanja Hakuna Mchezo.”

Combating corruption in the seventh term is expected to involve stronger legal, administrative, and technological interventions. Agencies mandated to fight corruption, including the Criminal Investigations Directorate, the Directorate of Public Prosecutions, the Inspectorate of Government, the Auditor General’s Office, and the Judiciary, have undergone reforms

aimed at enhancing effectiveness.

A longstanding challenge has been limited funding for oversight institutions. Government officials have indicated that improved financing, including anticipated oil revenues expected to expand the national budget, will strengthen operational capacity, logistics, and remuneration within key agencies.

Strong enforcement, strict adherence to the law, and meaningful penalties remain central to any credible anti-corruption strategy. President Museveni has declared “zero tolerance” for corruption and emphasized that there will be no return to business as usual. In 2025, he ordered investigations and arrests of several officials, including legislators and State House staff, over alleged graft. He described the system as being “clogged by parasites” and committed to acting on intelligence reports concerning extortion,

inflated procurement costs, and entrenched corruption networks.

The message from State House is clear. The 2026–2031 term is intended to emphasize discipline, accountability, and consolidation of earlier achievements. Those entrusted with public office will be expected to align with this renewed sense of urgency and responsibility. As President Museveni has repeatedly stated, defeating corruption is achievable with political will, institutional reform, and collective commitment.

The real test of Kisanja Hakuna Mchezo may well lie in whether these promises translate into sustained institutional change that strengthens governance and delivers tangible results for the Ugandan people.



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Progress of Construction Works for the New Uganda Police Headquarters

