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UGANDA WEEKLY FOCUS

Top highlight

TURKISH-BUILT HOIMA CITY STADIUM COMMISSIONED AHEAD OF AFCON 2027



INFORMING MINDS • INSPIRING CHANGE

Thanks to
CONTRIBUTORS

Bill Clinton

Jackie Mayega

Obed K. Katureebe

Kenson Bugembe

Carolynne Muyama

Peace Ankunda

Akena Martin

Ofwono Opondo

Michael Woiria

Desire Amanywa

ASP Faridah Nampiima



The **EDITOR'S NOTE**

As we publish our 9th Edition of Uganda Weekly Focus, our hearts are filled with gratitude to God for how far He has brought us. Just a few days remain before we step into a new year, and we do so with hope, reflection, and expectation. We pray that 2026 will be a beautiful year, marked by peace, progress, and purpose for our nation and for you, our valued readers.

This edition arrives during the festive season, a time when many are resting, reconnecting with family, and taking stock of the year that has been. Yet even in this season, our writers and contributors have gone above and beyond, working diligently to ensure that you receive a timely, well-researched, and insightful publication. To each writer, editor, photographer, and contributor, we say thank you for your dedication and commitment to telling Uganda's story with accuracy and depth.

In this issue, we continue our mission of keeping you informed about what different Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) are doing across the country. From the steady preparations for the 2026 General Elections, including the arrival of critical electoral materials and strengthened safeguards to Uganda's growing confidence on the continental stage through homegrown innovation, highlighted by Kiira Motors' landmark Trans-Africa electric vehicle expedition this edition captures a nation in motion.

We also shine a spotlight on skills development and youth employment, showing how practical skilling programmes are transforming lives, restoring dignity, and driving local economic growth across regions. Complementing this is our coverage of strategic infrastructure investments, including the commissioning of Hoima City Stadium ahead of AFCON 2027, a powerful symbol of partnership, ambition, and national pride.

As you read this edition, we invite you to enjoy it, reflect on it, and share it. Uganda Weekly Focus exists because of you, our readers, partners, and supporters who believe in informed citizenship and constructive national dialogue. Thank you for being part of this journey.

From all of us at Uganda Weekly Focus, we wish you a joyful festive season and a purposeful transition into 2026. We look forward to walking with you into the new year, continuing to tell the stories that matter.

Obed Katureebe
Editor-in-Chief

EC RECEIVES PRESIDENTIAL, PARLIAMENTARY BALLOT PAPERS AHEAD OF 2026 GENERAL ELECTIONS

By Billclinton

“With over 21.6 million registered voters across more than 50,000 polling stations, the 2026 elections will be one of the largest electoral exercises Uganda has undertaken.” Justice Simon Byabakama, Chairperson, Electoral Commission of Uganda



Electoral Commission Chairperson Justice Simon Byabakama inspecting the Consignment at Entebbe International Airport

The Electoral Commission of Uganda has taken a major step in preparations for the 2026 General Elections with the arrival of ballot papers for both the presidential and directly elected Members of Parliament races.

On Tuesday 23rd December, 2025, the Commission, led by its Chairperson Simon Byabakama Mugenyi, officially received a consignment of presidential ballot

papers at Entebbe International Airport. The delivery was witnessed by representatives of presidential candidates, political parties, accredited election observers, and members of the media, underscoring the Commission's stated commitment to transparency and accountability in the electoral process.

According to the Electoral Commission, Uganda currently has

21,681,491 registered voters spread across 50,739 polling stations nationwide. Justice Byabakama explained that the ballot papers were printed in slightly excess numbers to cater for cases where voters may accidentally or intentionally spoil a ballot paper before casting it. Under electoral law, such voters are allowed to return the damaged ballot and receive a replacement.



Electoral Commission officials, stakeholders, and airport personnel witness the reception of presidential ballot papers

In total, the Commission received 193 pallets of presidential ballot papers, which were printed by Al Ghurair Printing and Publishing, a Dubai-based firm, and transported to Uganda by Network Aviation Group. Justice Byabakama officially received the consignment on behalf of the Commission, noting that all handling and verification procedures followed strict electoral guidelines.

The Electoral Commission is also expected to receive ballot papers for directly elected Members

of Parliament and other elective positions as preparations intensify ahead of polling.

In a related development, Norbert Mao, the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, recently announced the signing of the Electoral Commission (Adoption and Manner of Use of the Biometric Voter Verification System) Regulations, 2025. The new regulations are intended to strengthen the integrity of the electoral process by safeguarding the use of Biometric Voter



Verification (BVV) kits.

Mao warned that any individual, including presiding officers, who tampers with BVV kits will face criminal sanctions, including imprisonment,

signaling a tougher stance against electoral malpractice.

With ballot materials

now arriving and electoral safeguards being reinforced, the Electoral Commission

says it remains focused on delivering a credible, transparent, and peaceful election in 2026.



Sealed ballot paper consignments are inspected and verified by Electoral Commission officials



Members of the expedition team, partners, and supporters pose for a group photo in front of the Kayoola E-Coach during a stopover along the Grand Trans-Africa Electric Expedition route

ELECTRIFYING AFRICA'S HORIZONS: KIIRA MOTORS' GRAND TRANS-AFRICA ELECTRIC EXPEDITION

By Jackie Mayega, Public Affairs Assistant, Uganda Media Centre

Uganda's state-owned Kiira Motors Corporation has marked a historic milestone for African innovation after successfully completing the first leg of the Made in Uganda Grand Trans-Africa Electric Expedition, a bold demonstration of homegrown electric mobility across the continent.

Launched on November 21, 2025, the expedition set out to drive the 2025 Kayoola E-Coach from

Kampala to Cape Town and back, covering more than 13,000 kilometres across six countries.

Branded "From the Pearl to the Cape," the 30-day journey sought to prove that African-manufactured electric vehicles can reliably operate across diverse terrains while advancing sustainable transport and intra-African trade under the African Continental Free Trade Area.

The expedition was flagged off in Kampala with support from partners including



The Kayoola E-Coach winds through Cape Town's iconic mountain roads

MTN Uganda, which provided connectivity solutions along the route. Traversing Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, Botswana, Eswatini and South Africa, the Kayoola E-Coach showcased a range of up to 500 kilometres per charge and a quiet, emission-free ride suited to both

highways and rugged roads.

By the time the team reached Livingstone in Zambia, the bus had clocked over 3,000 kilometres, validating its durability and performance. Early data showed that the electric coach had

already avoided more than 2,800 kilogrammes of carbon dioxide emissions, reinforcing the environmental case for electric public transport. Despite uneven charging infrastructure across borders, the vehicle maintained an impressive energy efficiency of about 0.83–0.84 kWh per kilometre.

Beyond engineering performance, the journey carried strong symbolic and diplomatic value. Zambian gospel musician Pompi briefly joined the convoy, highlighting regional enthusiasm for African-led green technology. Actress and content creator Martha Kay documented the journey, sharing cultural



Uganda-manufactured Kayoola E-Coach cruises through rugged terrain en route to Cape Town



encounters and public excitement, particularly in Botswana where communities welcomed the “silent giant” with curiosity and pride.

Arriving in Johannesburg on December 4, the delegation held stakeholder engagements with

industry players, academic institutions and business leaders to discuss research collaboration, telematics and electric vehicle adoption. The expedition reached its climax in Cape Town on December 10 after covering 7,125 kilometres one-way,

where Kiira Motors secured a landmark commercial commitment for 450 electric buses.

As the return leg continued toward Kampala, surpassing 11,000 kilometres by December 22, interest from regional partners grew, with Zambia expressing interest in learning from Uganda’s energy and manufacturing model. More than a road trip, the expedition has positioned Kiira Motors as a continental pioneer, proving that African-made electric solutions can power a cleaner, more connected future.

DISCREDITING THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION IS SHEER OPPORTUNISM

Scholars describe political opportunism as the pursuit of political influence at any cost, a style of politics that seizes every available moment to advance power regardless of principle. Such conduct is often criticized for being short-sighted and narrow-minded. Yet, in many developing democracies, including Uganda, some political actors appear unashamed to exploit every opening for both immediate and long-term gain.

It is therefore puzzling that a presidential candidate like Robert Kyagulanyi of the National Unity Platform would devote considerable time to discrediting the Electoral Commission, the very institution mandated by law to organize elections in which he is a full participant. Kyagulanyi has repeatedly suggested that the Commission, chaired by Simon Byabakama Mugenyi, is poised to act improperly in the 2026 polls.

What makes this stance ironic is that Kyagulanyi, alongside his party's

parliamentary and local council candidates, has duly registered to contest the January 2026 elections and undoubtedly expects a free and fair outcome. In this context, the persistent attacks on the Commission amount to sheer opportunism and political blackmail.

The same Electoral Commission now under sustained criticism is the body that declared 57 Members of Parliament from NUP in the 2021 General Election, elevating the party to the position of the largest opposition



**BY OBED K. KATUREEBE,
UGANDA MEDIA CENTRE**

group in Uganda. It is also the institution that announced Kyagulanyi's legitimately earned 3,631,437 votes in that election. One is therefore left to ask why an institution that presided over such outcomes is suddenly deemed untrustworthy.

These attacks appear calculated to undermine the Commission's credibility in advance, creating a convenient narrative should electoral results fall short of expectations. Yet the Commission's standing as an independent arbiter is underscored by the fact that hundreds of thousands of candidates from across the political

spectrum are contesting as independents after unsatisfactory party primaries. This reflects a broad confidence in the Commission's ability to manage the electoral process impartially.

Ugandans may at times be portrayed as naïve, but they are far from gullible. Time and again, they have rejected parochial attempts by political leaders to mislead them for selfish ends. Persistent delegitimization of electoral institutions risks portraying those who engage in it as poor losers unwilling to accept outcomes that do not favor them. Such a posture could alienate moderate Ugandans who value peaceful coexistence regardless of electoral outcomes.

Elections are not a zero-sum contest. Irrespective of political affiliation, citizens must tolerate one another, live and work together, and place reasonable trust in institutions mandated to serve the public interest. Mistrust and incitement

invite instability and anarchy, conditions in which everyone loses. Mature politics demands respect for institutions entrusted with critical national responsibilities. Deliberate efforts to undermine them can only lead to outcomes we may all regret.

Political tolerance and mutual respect are central tenets of liberal democracy. They require basic civility toward both political actors and the institutions that manage democratic processes. Casting persistent doubt on the Electoral Commission's impartiality is not only politically unsound but potentially dangerous.

The Commission has taken concrete steps to enhance transparency and integrity, including open voter registration, public display of voter registers at parish level,

the introduction of biometric verification to curb multiple voting, and transparent voting and tallying at polling stations. These measures, among others, are designed to deliver a credible electoral process. Building and sustaining public trust in democratic institutions is a global challenge, and it calls for restraint, responsibility, and maturity from all stakeholders.

Ultimately, continued attempts to pressure or blackmail the Electoral Commission are futile. Notably, many NUP supporters themselves are reasonable citizens who have demonstrated faith in the electoral process by participating in large numbers. They reject incitement against institutions meant to govern them and appreciate the value of an inclusive society where people of differing political views can coexist and work together for the common good.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOCUS

WEST BUGANDA: GOVERNMENT INVESTMENTS TRANSFORMING SERVICE DELIVERY AND LIVELIHOODS (2021–2025)

By Kenson Bugembe, Public Affairs Assistant, Uganda Media Centre

Government programmes implemented between 2021 and 2025 have delivered measurable improvements in service delivery, infrastructure, and household incomes across the West Buganda sub-region. Districts including Mubende, Kyankwanzi, Kiboga, Mityana, and Kassanda have benefited from sustained public investment aligned to national development priorities.

Education and Skills Development

The education sector has recorded expanded access and improved infrastructure across the region.

Mubende District currently hosts:

- ✓ 118 UPE schools
- ✓ 15 government-aided secondary schools
- ✓ 4 seed secondary schools
- ✓ 2 technical institutes

A major milestone is the Presidential Industrial Skilling Hub in Kitenga Sub-county, which has trained 929 learners



in carpentry, tailoring, bakery, welding, and value addition. The hub is equipped with grain value-addition machinery to support agro-processing.

Across the region, Government constructed and equipped multiple seed schools, including:

- ✓ Mugungulu Seed School
- ✓ Butologo Seed School
- ✓ Bagezza Seed School
- ✓ Ntwetwe, Nsambya, and Bananywa Seed Schools in Kyankwanzi
- ✓ Katoma and Lwamata Seed Schools in Kiboga
- ✓ Namungo and Seeta Seed Schools in Mityana
- ✓ Manyogaseka and Makokoto Seed Schools in Kassanda

Additional investments include classroom blocks, laboratories, staff houses, and administration blocks across primary and secondary schools.

- ✓ 8 HC IIIs
- ✓ 11 HC IIs

Mityana District has:

- ✓ 1 General Hospital
- ✓ 3 HC IVs
- ✓ 14 HC IIIs
- ✓ 15 HC IIs

Kassanda District has:

- ✓ 3 HC IVs
- ✓ 10 HC IIIs
- ✓ 8 HC IIs, several under upgrade

Investments include maternity wards, theatres, staff housing, and utilities, strengthening maternal health and emergency care.

Health Sector Expansion

Health infrastructure has expanded significantly.

Mubende District now has:

- ✓ 1 Regional Referral Hospital
- ✓ 2 Health Centre IVs
- ✓ 13 Health Centre IIIs
- ✓ 17 Health Centre IIs

Government is constructing 200-bed general and private wards at Mubende Regional Referral Hospital and upgrading several lower-level health facilities to improve access.

Kyankwanzi District has:

- ✓ 17 health facilities, including 1 HC IV, 11 HC IIIs, and 5 HC IIs

Kiboga District hosts:

- ✓ 1 Referral Hospital
- ✓ 1 HC IV

Transport and Road Infrastructure



Road infrastructure has received sustained funding across the region.

Key interventions include:

- ✓ 107 km tarmacking of Mubende–Kakumiro–Kibaale–Kagadi Road
- ✓ 86 km rehabilitation of Mubende–Mityana Road

- ✓ 18 km of tarmacked municipal roads with solar street lighting in Mubende Municipality

Kyankwanzi District has:

- ✓ 378.9 km of national roads
- ✓ 1,494 km of district roads
- ✓ Annual UGX 1 billion Road Fund support for maintenance

Kiboga District has rehabilitated 139.4 km of roads using Road Fund allocations.

Kassanda District has received UGX 3.17 billion under the Road Fund since 2021.

Energy, Water, and Sanitation

Electricity access has expanded steadily:

- ✓ Mubende: 16 of 19 sub-counties connected
- ✓ Kyankwanzi: 62% electricity coverage
- ✓ Kiboga: 12 of 14 sub-counties connected
- ✓ Mityana: 100% sub-county grid coverage



- ✓ Kassanda: 12 of 15 sub-counties connected

Water access has also improved:

- ✓ Mubende: piped water extended to 16 of 19 sub-counties
- ✓ Kyankwanzi: 55% safe water coverage, 91% functionality
- ✓ Kiboga: 78% safe water coverage
- ✓ Kassanda: clean water access improved from 39% (2020) to 57% (2025)

Agriculture, Irrigation, and Value Addition



Government has invested heavily in agricultural productivity.

Across the region:

- ✓ Over 50 farmers in Mubende accessed micro-scale irrigation
- ✓ 65 acres in Kassanda under solar-powered irrigation
- ✓ 5 ACDP storage facilities constructed in Kassanda benefiting over 9,000 farmers

Production statistics include:

- ✓ 886,000 tonnes of coffee

annually in Mubende

- ✓ 6.6 million litres of milk per year supported by 18 milk coolers
- ✓ 420,000 metric tonnes of maize annually in Mubende

Wealth and Job Creation

Government wealth programmes have disbursed significant funds:

Parish Development Model (PDM):

- ✓ Mubende: UGX 29.77bn to 97 SACCOs, benefiting 29,779 people
- ✓ Kyankwanzi: UGX 36.84bn, benefiting 33,740 people
- ✓ Kiboga: UGX 18.07bn, benefiting 18,000 people
- ✓ Mityana: UGX 28.41bn, benefiting 28,371 people
- ✓ Kassanda: UGX 27.7bn, benefiting 27,702 people

Emyooga Programme:

- ✓ Mubende District & Municipality: UGX 3.08bn
- ✓ Kyankwanzi: UGX 1.78bn
- ✓ Kiboga: UGX 1.24bn
- ✓ Mityana: UGX 1.15bn
- ✓ Kassanda: UGX 2.16bn

Additional programmes include UWEP, YLP, GROW, SAGE, and PWD grants, supporting women, youth, elderly, and special interest groups.

With continued investment in education, health, infrastructure, agriculture, and wealth creation, West Buganda is steadily transitioning from subsistence livelihoods toward a diversified, monetised regional economy.



SKILLS AT THE CENTRE OF UGANDA'S YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SOLUTION

One of the key strategies the Government of Uganda is using to transform the country from a peasant-based economy into a modern and prosperous nation is strengthening economic fundamentals and addressing major development bottlenecks, as outlined in Vision 2040. Central to this effort is tackling youth unemployment through practical, market-relevant skills that enable young people to earn sustainable livelihoods in both urban and rural communities.

Over the past few years, the Government has significantly expanded youth skilling through programmes such as the Youth Livelihood Programme, the Presidential Initiative on Skilling the Youth, industrial training centres, and deliberate efforts to link skills development with industrial parks and local enterprise growth. These interventions are already delivering tangible results, moving thousands of young Ugandans from

unemployment and dependency into the money economy.

Across the country, success stories continue to emerge. In Kibuku District, a 22-year-old graduate of the Bukedi Industrial Hub completed training in tailoring and bakery, accessed start-up capital, and opened a small bakery that now supplies bread and pastries to local markets on a daily basis. In Karamoja, a former street youth trained in welding and metal fabrication has established a workshop



CAROLYN MUYAMA
UGANDA MEDIA CENTRE

repairing motorcycle frames and metal gates. His enterprise now employs two additional youths, transforming idleness into productive work and community service.

Similar progress is evident among single mothers who have pooled their skills after training to establish ventures in tailoring, salon services, baking, and handcrafted shoe production, opportunities that were previously beyond their reach.

Under the National Skilling Programme coordinated by State House, 19 zonal and industrial skilling hubs are operational across the country, targeting regions with

high unemployment and limited access to technical training. Each hub trains about 600 youths annually, translating to 12,600 trainees nationwide every year. By the end of 2023, more than 2,500 trainees had graduated since the programme's inception. To support enterprise creation, Government has injected UGX 8.8 billion into SACCOs linked to these hubs, providing start-up capital to graduates.

The programmes offer a wide range of vocational skills, including carpentry, welding, tailoring, hairdressing, bakery, leatherwork, construction, and agribusiness under initiatives such as the Four-Acre Model. These efforts signal a clear shift away from reliance on scarce salaried jobs toward enterprise creation, skills utilisation, and local economic transformation.

Beyond improving individual livelihoods, youth skilling contributes to import substitution, strengthens local industry, restores dignity, and promotes social cohesion. Looking ahead, sustaining long-term impact will require stronger linkages between training, markets, and supply chains, alongside expanded mentoring, financial literacy, and business development support.



TURKISH-BUILT HOIMA CITY STADIUM COMMISSIONED AHEAD OF AFCON 2027

By Peace Ankunda, Public Affairs Assistant, Uganda Media Centre

“The commissioning of Hoima City Stadium as we prepare to host AFCON 2027 is a moment of great pride for our country.”
President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni



The Turkish Ambassador to Uganda, Mehmet Fatih, hailed Hoima City Stadium as a powerful symbol of ambition, partnership, and a shared vision for the future between Uganda and Türkiye.

Speaking on Wednesday 24th December, 2025, during the commissioning of the stadium, Ambassador Fatih described the facility as “more than steel and concrete,” noting that it reflects the depth of Turkish–Ugandan relations and the professionalism of Turkish construction

firms operating in the country. He emphasized that the project demonstrates what can be achieved through cooperation anchored in mutual respect and shared development goals.

Hoima City Stadium was constructed by SUMMA International Construction Company Inc., whose work, the Ambassador said, extends beyond infrastructure delivery to include meaningful economic and human capital development. Thousands of Ugandans were employed

during construction, working alongside Turkish engineers and specialists, enabling significant transfer of skills, technology, and expertise.

Addressing the ceremony, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni welcomed skeptics of Uganda’s development approach to witness the progress being made across the country.

“I welcome the doubters of our revolutionary methods to Hoima, to Lira, and to different corners of Uganda to see for themselves the results and opportunities being created. Recently,

I heard that the electric buses manufactured by Kiira EV travelled by road all the way to South Africa and have already secured an initial order of 450 units. This is precisely the kind of progress we have been talking about,” President Museveni said.

He added that such industrial advances, combined with strategic investments in sports infrastructure, are a source of national pride.

“Such developments, together with the commissioning of Hoima City Stadium, one of the ten facilities Uganda is putting in place as we prepare to host the Africa Cup of Nations in 2027 alongside Kenya and Tanzania, are moments of great pride for our country,” he noted.

The President also commended the Turkish contractors behind the project.

■ I join Maama Janet to congratulate the Turkish company Summa for the good work done. We shall continue to work



together and do even more,” Museveni said.

Summa Construction Chairman Selim Bora revealed that the stadium was completed in just 12 months through disciplined planning and extraordinary dedication, despite more than 150

days of heavy rainfall during construction. “More than 2,500 people contributed to this project, 80 percent of them Ugandans. This is not just infrastructure. It is capacity building and human capital development,” he said.

State Minister for Sports, Peter Ogwang, described Hoima City Stadium as one of the best-executed government projects in recent years.

He traced its origins to early 2023, when Summa was introduced to the Ministry of Education and Sports to support phased sports infrastructure development, initially focusing on Lugogo Sports Complex. He explained that priorities shifted in September 2023 after the Confederation of African Football awarded Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania

the rights to host the Africa Cup of Nations 2027, making Hoima City Stadium the starting point.

The commissioning ceremony was attended by Deputy Speaker of Parliament Thomas Tayebwa, Prime Minister Robinah Nabbanja, cabinet ministers, Members of Parliament, cultural leaders, and thousands of football fans from across the country.



UGANDA DEPLOYS MOBILE TB CLINICS AND AI X-RAY TECHNOLOGY TO REACH UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

By Akena Martin, GCIC
Uganda

“By taking TB services directly to communities and harnessing AI-powered diagnostics, we are ensuring that no Ugandan is left behind in the fight against tuberculosis, regardless of where they live.”

Dr. Diana Atwine,
Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health



Dr. Diana Atwine, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Health, hands over ultra-portable AI-powered digital X-ray equipment to a district health official during the flag-off of mobile TB clinics

The Government of Uganda has taken a major step in strengthening its fight against tuberculosis (TB) with the launch of mobile TB clinic trucks and the introduction of ultra-portable, artificial intelligence-powered digital X-ray machines aimed at improving early detection and treatment across the country.

The initiative was officially flagged off by the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry

of Health Uganda, Diana Atwine, who described the move as a milestone in ensuring equitable access to TB services, particularly for communities in remote and hard-to-reach areas.

The fleet of mobile TB clinic trucks is fully equipped with trained medical personnel, diagnostic tools, and essential TB medicines. Designed to operate beyond conventional

health facilities, the trucks will provide on-site testing, diagnosis, treatment, and counseling services, helping to close long-standing gaps in TB care in underserved regions.

Alongside the mobile clinics, Uganda has received ultra-portable, AI-powered digital X-ray machines donated by the



Dr. Diana Atwine addresses guests during the launch of mobile TB clinic trucks and AI-powered X-ray machine

United States Embassy in Uganda. These advanced devices are capable of analyzing chest X-ray images in real time using artificial intelligence, allowing health workers to detect TB faster and with greater accuracy, even in early stages of the disease.

Speaking at the launch, Dr. Atwine emphasized the importance of technology in transforming public health delivery. She noted that combining mobile clinics with AI-enabled diagnostics would ensure that no Ugandan is left behind due to geography or limited health infrastructure. According

to the Ministry, the approach is expected to significantly reduce delays in diagnosis and treatment, which are key drivers of TB transmission.

The United States Government, through its mission in Uganda, reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Uganda's health sector. Officials said the partnership reflects shared priorities in tackling major public health challenges using innovation and sustainable healthcare solutions.

Uganda remains among the high TB-burden countries globally, according to the World

Health Organization, with many cases still going undiagnosed each year. Health experts say that improving outreach and diagnostic capacity is critical to reversing this trend.

Dr. Atwine concluded by urging communities to embrace early testing and treatment, stressing that TB is preventable and curable when detected in time. As the mobile clinic trucks begin their nationwide rollout, Uganda is positioning itself to make meaningful progress toward TB elimination through technology, partnerships, and community engagement.

THE NUP–KYAGULANYI CHARADE AND AN INEVITABLE ELECTORAL DEFEAT

Christmas has passed, and as Ugandans look ahead to 2026, it is a season that should naturally be marked by goodwill and sober reflection. The past three months have been dominated by campaigns for the presidential and general elections, from Members of Parliament down to local government leaders at sub-county level.

Yet, listening to public discourse and reading media snippets, one would be forgiven for thinking that the presidential race alone defines the entire electoral process. This narrow focus has created fertile ground for exaggerated and, in some cases, absurd claims that the National Unity Platform (NUP) and its presidential candidate, Robert Kyagulanyi, popularly known as Bobi Wine, could somehow miraculously upstage the National Resistance Movement (NRM) and President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni.

As a long-standing

observer of Uganda's political landscape, I state without hesitation that, on the basis of solid achievements, sustained stability, and visible socio-economic transformation efforts across the country, the NRM and its candidate will win this election by a margin not seen in the previous three electoral cycles. This is not conjecture. It is grounded in political reality. Beyond the noise, the NRM remains the only political organisation that has fielded credible and viable candidates at virtually every level of the electoral process. Other parties, including the NUP, simply have not



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matched this depth or breadth.

This reality also explains why several candidates from opposition parties and independents have openly campaigned for President Museveni. It further explains why, so far, close to twenty NUP parliamentary candidates have voluntarily withdrawn from their races in favour of the NRM and its presidential candidate, having recognised that their political journeys lacked viability.

The early phase of the campaign season, from October through November, was relatively calm and orderly.

However, December ushered in a sharp turn. The month has been characterised by frequent skirmishes and, at times, ugly and violent confrontations, particularly involving Kyagulanyi and the police, with the Uganda People's Defence Force occasionally called in. Notably, no other presidential candidate has attracted comparable levels of confrontation with law enforcement, nor have there been significant violent clashes among rival parliamentary candidates elsewhere.

Kyagulanyi has deliberately modelled his campaign around what can best be described as a protest-vote strategy, one that thrives on defiance, provocation, and disregard for jointly agreed campaign guidelines. His daily verbal attacks on President Museveni and on institutions he imagines to be propping up the state have largely gone unanswered. This silence appears to have emboldened him into the

dangerous and misguided belief that he is above the law. The routine brandishing of the national flag as a shield against lawful authority is not patriotism; it is political theatre.

A presidential candidate who enjoys the protection of state security but repeatedly chooses physical confrontation with law enforcement officers demonstrates poor judgment. Such conduct raises serious questions about temperament, discipline, and suitability for the office of commander-in-chief. On this basis alone, such leadership should be firmly rejected at the ballot box.

That said, the involvement of the UPDF at this stage of the campaign, however well-intentioned, presents its own challenges. It risks portraying the police as incapable of managing crowds and maintaining public order, while also casting unnecessary shadows over the electoral process. Knowing

that Kyagulanyi's strategy relies heavily on provocation and spectacle to attract both local and international media attention, law enforcement agencies, led by the Uganda Police Force, would be better served by adopting a more tactical, de-escalatory approach.

Such an approach would deny him the attention he seeks while preserving public calm. It would not amount to weakness or cowardice. Rather, it would reflect strategic restraint and professional maturity during this sensitive period. Any violations by candidates can be carefully documented and addressed through lawful processes after the elections.

As the year draws to a close, the overriding priority should be peace, order, and respect for the democratic process. In that spirit, I wish all Ugandans a calm festive season and a peaceful transition into the new year.

WHAT HAPPENS BETWEEN NOW AND POLLING DAY

By Michael Woirra, GCICUganda

As Uganda enters the final 17 days before polling day, it is natural for anxiety, speculation, and misinformation to increase. Many voters begin to notice heightened activity by political actors, election officials, and security agencies, often without clear understanding of what is normal and what is not.

This period is not one of uncertainty, but of structured preparation. Uganda's electoral process follows a defined sequence of activities designed to ensure that polling is orderly, transparent, and credible. Understanding what happens between now and polling day helps voters remain calm, confident, and focused on their civic duty.

The Final Campaign Days and Campaign Silence

The first phase of this period is marked by the

conclusion of active campaigning. Candidates and political parties are required by law to conduct campaigns only within the timeframes set by the Electoral Commission. As polling day approaches, campaign activities reduce and eventually stop altogether.

Campaign silence is intentional. It gives voters space to reflect, evaluate messages they have heard, and make independent decisions without pressure, rallies, or political noise. Voters should not be alarmed when campaign events disappear from public spaces. This is a lawful

and necessary step in protecting the freedom of choice.

Security Deployment and Public Order

One of the most visible changes in the final weeks is the increased presence of security personnel. Police and other security agencies are deployed to support election officials, protect voters, and maintain public order.

Security deployment is preventive, not punitive. Its purpose is to deter violence, safeguard election materials, and ensure that polling day proceeds peacefully. The presence of security officers at polling stations, tally centres, and along transport routes should reassure voters rather than intimidate them.

Voters are encouraged to cooperate with security personnel and to follow lawful instructions issued for crowd control, access to polling stations, and general safety.



MINISTRY OF ICT AND
NATIONAL GUIDANCE

**Check and confirm your
polling station using your NIN
in the link below**

www.ec.or.ug/register

Voter Information Search

National ID/Application ID

Personal Details

PERNO / NATIONAL ID / APPLICATION ID

Enter your PERNO, National ID or Application ID

Distribution of Election Materials

In the days leading to polling, the Electoral Commission undertakes nationwide distribution of election materials. These include ballot papers,

ballot boxes, voters' registers, biometric verification kits, and other polling-day essentials.

The movement of sealed vehicles, escorted convoys, and election officials handling

materials is a routine logistical process. It is carefully planned and monitored to ensure that every polling station is adequately supplied before polls open.

Voters should not be alarmed by the visibility

of this process or by reports of materials being delivered at different times in different areas. Distribution follows regional logistics and does not indicate irregularity.

The Role of Electoral Commission Officials

Electoral Commission officials play a central role throughout the countdown period. Their responsibilities include final verification of polling stations, briefing and deployment of polling officials, coordination with security agencies, and public communication.

Presiding Officers, Polling Assistants, and supervisors are trained and assigned ahead of polling day. Their presence at polling stations before voting begins is part of preparation, not campaigning.

Voters should rely on instructions issued by these officials, who are mandated to guide the voting process impartially.

What Voters Should Not Be Alarmed By

As polling day approaches, voters may encounter rumours, social media posts, or informal claims suggesting manipulation, shortages, or impending chaos. Many of these are unfounded.

Voters should not be alarmed by:

- ✔ Increased security presence
- ✔ Early delivery or late-night movement of election materials
- ✔ Closure of campaigns before polling day
- ✔ Polling officials setting up stations in advance
- ✔ Delays in unofficial results circulating

online

Official information comes from the Electoral Commission through accredited channels. Responsible voters are encouraged to verify information before sharing it and to avoid spreading panic.

The period before polling day is designed to prepare, not to confuse. When voters understand the sequence of events, they are less vulnerable to fear and manipulation. Calm, informed participation strengthens trust in the electoral process and contributes to peaceful elections.

As Uganda counts down to polling day, the responsibility of every voter is simple but vital: stay informed, remain calm, follow lawful guidance, and turn out to vote peacefully. Democracy works best when citizens understand the process and trust it enough to participate responsibly.

Kampala, 29 December 2025

POLICE ASSURE PUBLIC OF SECURITY, ISSUE NEW YEAR SAFETY GUIDELINES

By Desire Amany, GCICUganda

The Uganda Police Force has confirmed that the country remained largely peaceful during the Christmas festivities and has issued a comprehensive public safety advisory ahead of New Year 2026 celebrations.

Addressing the media, Police spokesperson ACP Kituuma Rusoke said there were no major security breaches reported across the country during Christmas, save for a few isolated criminal cases and a tragic road accident that claimed the lives of seven members of one family.

“Overall, the security situation during the Christmas period remained calm and peaceful countrywide. We did not register any major security incidents, although we unfortunately recorded a fatal road accident that claimed seven lives from one family,” ACP Rusoke

said.

He conveyed condolences to the bereaved family and urged road users to remain cautious as travel increases after the New Year.

With only days left to usher in 2026, the police extended goodwill messages to the public, calling for unity and responsible celebrations.

“As we approach the New Year 2026, we wish all Ugandans peace, joy, and unity. We appeal to everyone to celebrate responsibly and in a manner that safeguards life and property,” Rusoke added.



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

The police reminded the public that guidelines regulating entertainment events, shows, and prayer gatherings were issued on 15 December 2025 and remain in force. Overnight prayers are expected to draw large crowds on New Year's Eve.

“We call upon all organizers of overnight prayers and entertainment events to strictly adhere to the issued guidelines and to work closely with the police and other authorities to ensure the safety of all participants,” he said.

On fireworks displays, Rusoke emphasized that only licensed blasters acting on behalf of approved applicants are permitted to conduct fireworks, and each display must not exceed five minutes.

“All fireworks displays must be supervised by Counter Terrorism Police officers in coordination with District Police Commanders. Any display that does not comply with the guidelines will be stopped immediately,” he warned.

He further cautioned the public against burning tyres and celebratory gunfire.

“Burning tyres destroys our road infrastructure, while firing shots into the air poses serious risks to public safety. These practices will not be tolerated,” Rusoke said.

The police also expressed concern over circulating videos in which some political actors are allegedly inciting violence against security agencies.

“Such utterances are reckless, unacceptable, and criminal. Even during political competition, there must be limits. Those involved should not be surprised when legal action is taken,” Rusoke cautioned.

Addressing the misuse of the national flag, Rusoke reminded citizens that its use is regulated by law.

“The national flag is a symbol of our unity and sovereignty. Its improper use or undignified display is an offence, and we appeal to all citizens to treat it with the respect it deserves,” he said.

Police urged the public to remain vigilant and report emergencies through the official toll-free lines, reaffirming their commitment to a safe, peaceful, and orderly transition into the New Year.



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A large, circular stadium with a colorful, illuminated facade of red, yellow, and black diamond patterns. The stadium is surrounded by a road and some greenery. The text 'HOIMA CITY STADIUM' is overlaid in white capital letters on the lower part of the stadium's facade.

HOIMA CITY STADIUM