

MUSEVENI UNVEILS AGENDA FOR NEW TERM

PHOTO BY PPU

By Michael Odeng

President Yoweri Museveni has unveiled a comprehensive agenda for his new term, focusing on political, economic and governance reforms.

He said his priorities include intensifying the fight against corruption, especially within the Judiciary, rehabilitating roads across the country and increasing Parish Development Model (PDM) funding to enable more Ugandans to get involved in the money economy.

Museveni also pledged to resolve internal conflicts within the National Resistance Movement (NRM) that affected voter support, promote deeper integration of the East African market, expand access to free education and improve healthcare services nationwide.

He made the promise during the 40th NRM/National Resistance Army liberation anniversary at Kololo Independence Grounds yesterday. The liberation day celebrations were held under the theme, *Tribute to the patriots who ushered in a fundamental change*.

PARISH DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Under PDM, Museveni pledged to increase funding, particularly in urban parishes, where allocations will rise between sh300m to sh400m per parish due to the high number of homesteads. He also promised that within three years, PDM funds will reach all rural households.

The President also announced plans to establish special PDM funds targeting ghetto youth, boda boda riders, cultural and religious leaders, Muslim-majority districts and university graduates who have been unemployed for over two years.

In addition, he proposed allocating sh15m per parish for local leaders, saying his goal is to ensure that every Ugandan gets involved in wealth creation.

The President said the Government will amend PDM guidelines to ensure that every resident is a member of the parish savings and credit cooperative society (SACCOS).

He warned that any parish chief who fails to implement the directive will be arrested and prosecuted.

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He said during his campaign tours, he received reports that in some areas, these officials



From right: Museveni being received by Vice-President Jessica Alupo, NRM party first national vice-chairperson Haji Moses Kigongo, Speaker of Parliament Anita Among, new Chief Justice Flavian Zeija, Deputy Speaker Thomas Tayebwa, Prime Minister Robinah Nabbanja, Babalanda, head of public service and Secretary to Cabinet Lucy Nakyobe and NRM National Women's League chairperson Adrine Kobusingye, as he arrived for the 40th NRM/A liberation anniversary at Kololo Independence Grounds yesterday

were sharing the funds among themselves, calling the practice a "serious problem".

"With PDM, there must be a parish meeting involving everyone aged 18 and above. In that meeting, a committee will decide who receives the PDM funds first," Museveni noted.

The President cited an incident in Buwambo parish in Wakiso district, where a parish chief was arrested after investigations confirmed that he misused PDM funds.

He added that he had also received complaints from the public regarding similar misconduct by parish chiefs in Iganga and Maracha districts.

Museveni, however, directed that implicated committees be dissolved and new ones formed.

He said committee members would not be jailed, but would instead be required to refund the money to the SACCOS, while leaders found to have extorted funds from the public would face imprisonment.

FREE EDUCATION, ROADS

Museveni said once Uganda has sufficient financial resources, the Government will fully implement free education and further strengthen the health sector, noting that immunisation programmes were already in place. He also reaffirmed the Government's commitment to repairing roads across the country, whether tarmac or gravel, stressing that he does not want to see any bad roads in Uganda.

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MEDALS

Harshad Maganbhai Barot, the founder of Tirupati Group, was among the 32 people who received national honours during the celebrations. He was awarded the crested crane (grand officer) medal. Born on January 3, 1959 in India, Barot arrived in the country in 1993, carrying with him a starting capital of \$150 (about sh179,250). From working as a door-to-door hawker selling household items, Barot steadily rose to become one of the biggest entrepreneurs in Uganda.

Others who received medals include Justice Emeritus Ralph Ochan, Lt. Gen. (rtd) Francis Ben Okello, Brig. Gen. Kefa Nangeso, Max Okware Ikokoro, Teddy Naluwu, Nathan Rwamunono, Daka Onesimus Odora Ojul, Dr Stephen Watiti, Dr Francis Paul Mugambe and Violet Kekitanda.

On the issue of corruption, the President said he does not tolerate it within the courts of law. He noted that the new Chief Justice Dr Flavian Zeija is addressing the problem by involving the public in identifying corrupt judicial officers.

"The public will tell you the truth, and that is the best way to know who is corrupt," Museveni said.

EAST AFRICAN MARKETS

Museveni further called for deeper East African regional integration, particularly in markets.

He said as production increases, Uganda must have access to wider markets beyond its borders because the domestic market is not sufficient.

Museveni also revealed that by October last year, Uganda's balance of payments stood at

\$2.37b (approximately sh829 trillion).

DEMOCRACY

On democracy issues, Museveni noted that in May last year, the NRM registered about 18 million people who were eligible to vote. However, when he later reviewed the National Electoral Commission register, only about 14 million had successfully registered in time.

Museveni said out of those, he received eight million votes, prompting him to question why the remaining six million did not turn up to vote.

"If all NRM members had voted, there would be no opposition in Uganda," he observed.

Museveni attributed the low turnout among some NRM supporters to intimidation by the Opposition, alleging that violence and threats

discouraged voters, while the Police failed to take action.

"Why should anyone attack another person because of elections?" he asked.

The President also said some NRM supporters did not vote due to misconduct by certain NRM leaders, who fuel conflicts and divisions among the people, saying such behaviour must stop.

ECONOMY

Responding to critics who say the NRM has done nothing, Museveni said the Ugandan economy has recovered and progressed through five key stages.

He explained that the first stage was minimum economic recovery, which stabilised and lifted the economy. This, Museveni said, was followed by the expansion of the small colonial economy, that had been destroyed during the regime of former president Idi Amin.

The third stage, according to the President, was diversification of the economy, followed by value addition to raw materials.

Museveni said Uganda has now entered the fifth stage, which is the knowledge economy, manufacturing products such as computers and cars.

The President also identified four key sectors driving Uganda's economy — commercial agriculture, fisheries, services and ICT.

A film was screened to highlight the different crops produced in Uganda and to show the growth of the industrial sector and the expansion of industrial parks across the country.

Museveni noted that he had been informed that products made in Uganda now account for over 65% of the merchandise in supermarkets, compared to the past when nearly all products were imported.

He also questioned why Idi Amin expelled Asians and confiscated about 4,000 of their properties, noting that Ugandans now own properties worth billions of shillings.

The President said Uganda's economy was growing at about 7%, and expressed optimism that with oil production expected to begin this year, growth could rise to double digits.

The Minister for the Presidency, Milly Babalanda, congratulated the NRM leaders who emerged victorious in the recent elections and commended all participants for their commitment to democracy.

"To those who did not succeed, we recognise your service and encourage you to continue contributing to national development in other capacities," she said.

Babalanda said as NRM reflects on the 40 years of leadership, Uganda's economy has grown from \$3.9b (sh13.8 trillion) in 1986 to \$ 61.3b (sh217 trillion) as of June 2025.

She said Uganda is now ranked among the fastest-growing economies in the world, driven by strategic leadership, political stability, peace and security secured by the NRM.

The minister stated that the tourism sector, which had collapsed, now generates \$5.99b (sh21 trillion).

Most importantly, she said life expectancy has increased from 47 years in 1986 to 69 years today, supported by sustained government investment in health and education, which has reduced infant and maternal mortality and enhanced the well-being and productivity of the citizens.

"These achievements affirm that the NRM liberation was not merely about political change, but about restoring dignity, expanding opportunities and securing a future of shared prosperity," the presidency minister said.