

Kadaga supports Museveni on creation of new ministries

By Prossy Nandudu

The Speaker of Parliament, Rebecca Kadaga, has defended the creation of the Ministry of Science and Technology, saying it will help advance innovations.

"On many occasions, enterprising people would come to me with new innovations, but I did not know where to send them. We did not have an appropriate ministry where to send them, which forced the Ninth Parliament to demand such a ministry," Kadaga said.

She said a fully facilitated and dedicated ministry to deal with issues of science and technology would help promote innovation and development and address the challenges the country is facing.

Kadaga said the parliamentary committee on science and technology visited technical institutions and discovered that they were in bad shape.

"The report's findings showed that science and technology had been ignored. We requested the Government to establish a ministry to take charge," Kadaga explained.

She also said the presidency ministry got crowded and this was affecting KCCA work. Therefore, she added, the creation of KCCA ministry would ensure effective delivery of services," said Kadaga.

She was responding to fears expressed by Deborah Osiya from FIDA Uganda, who said that the big number of MPs in the 10th Parliament was



Kadaga (left), Justice David Batema, Patricia Munabi and Tezira Jamwa interact after the dialogue. Photo by Shamim Saad

responsible for the big number of ministers, an indicator that legislators are not mindful of the burden a bloated cabinet imposes on the taxpayer.

"We do not see financial responsibility in our legislators. One key example, which we are already afraid of, is going to happen through the big number of ministers in Cabinet, yet they have not yet started business," said Osiya.

This was during a dialogue on "Celebrating Heroines: Strategising for the Future" organised by the Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE).

ON THE GROUND

Kadaga said the presidency ministry got crowded and this was affecting KCCA's work. Therefore, the creation of KCCA ministry would ensure effective delivery of services.

Patricia Munabi, the executive director of FOWODE, said the meeting focused on new women political leaders in the

context of gender issues which need to be addressed in the sustainable development goals framework.

"Many times civil society and the Government have good policies on paper, but we do not see them translated into the transformation of women who some of our organisations advocate for," she said.

One of the ways of promoting the agenda, according to Munabi is to form clusters which will come up with critical issues to be fed into the broader civil society organisation process headed by the National NGO Forum.

Persons with disabilities want ministerial post

By Cecilia Okoth

Persons with disabilities (PWDs) are up in arms over Cabinet appointments which they said left the disability movement out, a move they said does 'not empower and promote' rights of PWDs.

In a press briefing held at the National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda (NUDIPU) offices in Kampala yesterday, PWDs observed that their increasing population in Uganda cannot be undermined, saying their non-representation only serves to crush their hopes and entrenches the community negative attitude towards them.

Statistics from the recently concluded 2014 census puts PWDs at 12.5% of 34.6 million Ugandans.

"The last time PWDs were considered for high-level government positions was in 1998-2006, when the President appointed Florence Nayiga Sekabira, the former Minister of State for Elderly and Disability Affairs. Since then, no other PWD has ever been appointed minister, permanent secretary, ambassador or RDC," said Yona Wasswa, who read a statement on behalf of Henry Nyombi, the NUDIPU chairman.

Wasswa further stated that the recent ministerial appointments were highly discriminative and violate the Rights of PWDs enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of PWDs under article 29 (a), providing for the right of PWDs to effectively hold office and perform all public functions at all levels of Government.

"We demand to know what criteria the President

followed while appointing his Cabinet. Was it about academic qualifications or just party membership because if that was the case, then PWDs have all these qualities," Wasswa wondered.

"We demand that the President accords us the same treatment he gives other special groups." Kyoziira

Esther Kyoziira, the programme manager for human rights at NUDIPU, was concerned that whereas the new Cabinet has over 13 women in the latest ministerial appointments, no single woman with disability was appointed, yet the 10th Parliament has three women with disabilities, who sailed through unopposed.

She added that the newly appointed Minister of State for the Elderly and Disability, Adrian Tibaleka, would not ably address PWD's concerns, saying she would require a lot of sensitisation and orientation.

"We demand that the President accords us the same treatment he gives other special interest groups," Kyoziira said.

Akena's UPC to finalise political marriage with NRM

By David Lumu

The Uganda People's Congress (UPC) cabinet has resolved to create a negotiation team to craft the roadmap that will seal the political marriage between the Opposition party and the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party.

According to UPC party president Jimmy Akena, who is also the Lira Municipality MP, part of the job description of the negotiation team, which will be named next week, is to draw a memorandum of understanding with NRM.

"It is important to have these interactions with the NRM, even if it means walking on fire to achieve dialogue," Akena said yesterday during an interaction with the media at the UPC party headquarters in



Jimmy Akena

Kampala. Asked why UPC is forging an alliance with NRM, Akena fronted two pillars

BETWEEN THE LINES:

President Museveni recently appointed UPC's Betty Amongi Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and Ruth Achieng state for fisheries.

— national integration and transition from President Yoweri Museveni and his generation to a new and younger generation.

"This is Museveni's last term. It is even constitutional that this is his last term. So, we are preparing for a transition from Museveni to a new generation. There is no deal yet, but we are working out the parameters of negotiation with the NRM. Even if there is a clear possibility that talks

will fail, it is more risky not to talk at all," he said.

Akena explained that there is no time limit pegged to the talks between UPC and NRM.

"Negotiations will take place until we conclude. There is no deadline. We are going into these talks," he said.

Akena said the UPC cabinet retreat also gave leeway to two key party officials, Betty Amongi and Ruth Achieng, to work with Museveni as plans for a major alliance with the ruling NRM party are being crafted.

Museveni recently appointed UPC's Betty Amongi Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and Ruth Achieng state for fisheries.

"Following the consideration of the appointment of Amongi and Achieng to positions of minister and state minister respectively, the UPC cabinet,

during their retreat over the weekend, resolved to approve the appointments and guide the national council on the matter during the forthcoming sitting," he said.

Museveni's appointment of key Opposition figures in Cabinet such as Amongi, Achieng, the Uganda Federal Alliance president Beti Kanya (Minister for Kampala) and DP's Florence Nakiwala Kiyingi (state minister for youth and children Affairs), has drawn mixed reactions from both the Opposition and NRM.

Some Opposition actors said Museveni's move is meant to divide the Opposition, while some NRM members say there was no need for Museveni's appointing hand to stretch outside the party confines and leave out party cadres for the sake of appeasing the Opposition.