

# NDA directive will send Ugandan pharmacists out of business – MPs

By Moses Mulondo  
and Nicolas Wassajja

Members of Parliament have accused the National Drug Authority (NDA) of conniving with Indians and Chinese to drive indigenous Ugandans out of the business of selling drugs.

The MPs made the remarks in response to a presentation from Entebbe Municipality MP Rosemary Tumusiime opposing the directive given to the drug shops in municipalities and towns to either upgrade into pharmacies or shut down in the next one year.

At the beginning of January, NDA announced it would not renew the licences of drug shops in urban areas unless they accept to relocate to rural areas. The move according to the authority is aimed at extending health services closer to those in rural areas. NDA also promised to give incentives to pharmacies that will be relocating to rural areas.

MP Nandala Mafabi said NDA's decisions are mostly influenced by Indians and Chinese because they want to edge Ugandans out of the business of selling drugs so that they can dominate it.

**NDA  
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Tumusiime said the directive is not only unrealistic, but also has negative consequences of limited access to drugs.

"There are 11,000 drug shops in the country employing 22,000 Ugandans. Pharmacies are only 474. The people running drugs shops have no capacity to upgrade them to pharmacies," she explained.

The Speaker of Parliament, Rebecca Kadaga, added weight to the concerns when she reported that she recently

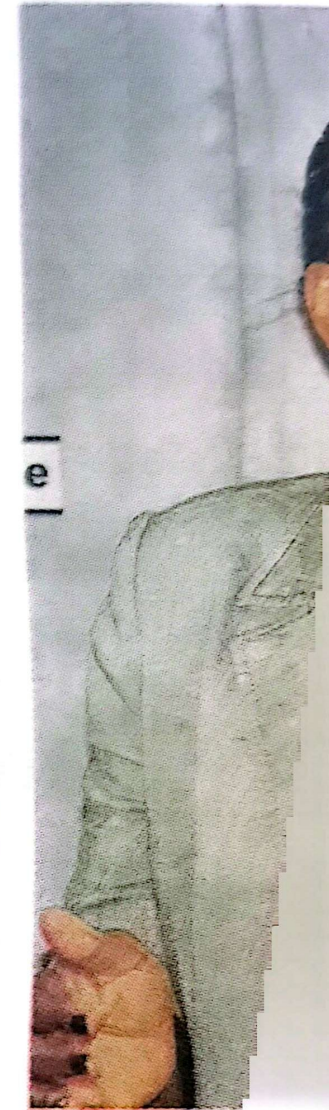
received a petition from a group of pharmacists on the directives by the NDA which are aimed at eliminating them from the business.

"They told me they have been given unrealistic conditions by the NDA like not owning many pharmacies. This matter is very alarming," Kadaga argued.

Former Leader of Opposition and Budairi West MP Nathan Nandala Mafabi said: "When you go to the offices of the NDA, you find mostly, Indians and Chinese. These are the people influencing the NDA to edge Ugandans out of the business of selling drugs so that they can dominate it."

Nandala proposed that the Parliament needs to task the parliamentary committee on health with investigating the matter.

Reporting that there are Panadol tablets on the market, which instead of reducing pain increase it, the vocal legislator said there were so many fake



**NDA's Donna at the Ugand issued a wari**