

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Democratic Party president at full speed to the finishing line about fixing Parliament and

EDITORIAL

It takes action, not mere talk, to end culture of celebrating death

On Wednesday, the Minister of ICT and National Guidance, Dr Chris Baryomunsi, decried what he described as a growing culture among Ugandans of celebrating the death of leaders on mostly social media. The minister called for what he described as a return to "Ugandaness", probably referring to the culture of communal grieving and a show of empathy whenever death would visit.

Dr Baryomunsi is right. Celebrating death is very disturbing. That is not who we really are, but simply calling for an end to it will not end.

We need to interrogate what has precipitated this very strange behaviour. That calls for introspection and changes to the way leaders conduct themselves and how they manage public affairs.

The issue:

Celebrating death

Our view:

As things stand, only expeditious strategic interventions and actions, and not lamentations, will draw a line under that absurd culture. The leaders will, however, need to lead from the front.

We may want to continue hiding our heads in the sand, but the truth is that large sections of the population are hurting. Matters are not helped when overstretched taxpayers, who are contemplating how they will be dealing with the tax regime that will come into force next financial year, see public officials who live off the national coffers brag about the hundreds of millions they have splashed out on a fuel guzzler that will be dropping off their five-year-old child to school.

That hurt turns into frustration when the citizenry has nowhere to seek justice or recompense. They do not petition Parliament or the courts of law because they will neither be heard nor get justice.

So many developments have come up in the political landscape. Many people are yet to recover from the effects and fallout from the 2021 and 2026 elections. That too has fed into that culture.

The leadership needs to consult widely if it is to arrive at what it is that is fast turning entire sections of the population into an insensitive lot.

In December 2018, President Museveni launched the process of the national dialogue. The Inter-Religious Council of Uganda, The Elders Forum of Uganda, Women Situation Room, Citizens Coalition for Electoral Democracy, National Consultative Forum, and Inter-party Organisation for Dialogue were meant to work with the Office of the Prime Minister in arranging a series of dialogues starting in March 2019. Those were meant to culminate in a national conference later that year, but none of the planned activities was conducted. The situation requires that the idea be revisited as soon as yesterday.

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Managing Director
Suzan Nsibirwa

Ag. General Manager Editorial Allan Ch
Editor Weekend Monitor Robert Mador