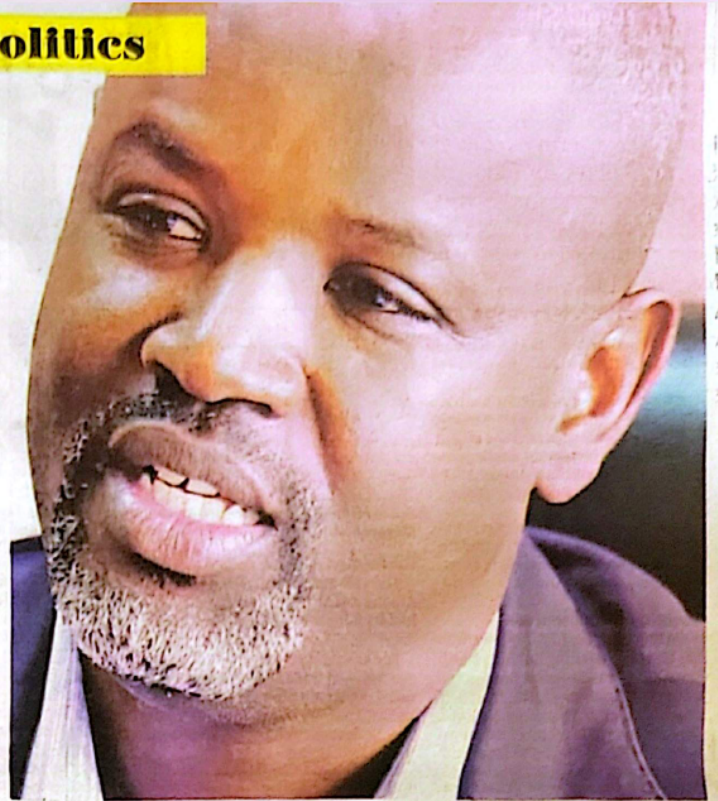


Weekly Politics



Outgoing Speaker of Parliament Anita Among (left) and her deputy Thomas Tayebwa. PHOTOS/FILE

The two contrasting worlds of Among, Tayebwa

Different. Mr Thomas Tayebwa, who the NRM tapped from the Opposition years ago, has always been touted as the future of the ruling party. Now, with the outgoing Speaker of Parliament Anita Annet Among entangled in potentially damaging corruption scandals, we explore the treatment that Tayebwa has received thus far.

BY DERRICK KIYONGA

When the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF), Gen Muhoozi Kainerugaba, was endorsing Jacob Oboth-Oboth for the speakership in the 12th Parliament, in the process ousting Anita Among from the same position on grounds of alleged graft, he indicated that her deputy, Thomas Tayebwa, was protected.

While Gen Muhoozi also withdrew his endorsement for Tayebwa's bid to retain the deputy speakership, a few days later, Muhoozi re-endorsed Tayebwa, saying he had been guided by President Museveni, who is also his father.

By the time Mr Tayebwa received the crucial endorsement from Gen Muhoozi to retain his position as Deputy Speaker in the 12th Parliament, his colleague Among, whom he refers to as his "sister", was facing serious issues.

Her homes in Nakasero, Ntinda, Kigo, and Buk

edebe were turned upside down by numerous security forces, searching for evidence to charge her with corruption and illicit enrichment. Her top-of-the-range cars were loaded onto police hauliers and seized to aid in investigations.

Detectives, speaking on condition of anonymity, told this writer that unspecified amounts of money were among the items recovered from separate residences of the Speaker of the 11th Parliament. We understand that the aforesaid charges have the support of both Museveni and his son.

While Parliament has been accused of being entrenched with corruption and shady deals, Mr Tayebwa's houses have not been searched. This has created an impression—real or imagined—that the Deputy Speaker of the 11th Parliament has been treated under a different framework.

"Tayebwa can't be handled like Among... They were always going to be handled differently," Mr Ibrahim Ssemujju Nganda, the Kira Municipality legislator in the 11th Parliament, told *Weekly Politics*.

Contrasting fortunes

It's not the first time this has happened because when Ms Among and Mr Tayebwa assumed the roles of Speaker and Deputy Speaker in 2022, respectively, it appeared like they had suffered con-

trasting fortunes.

In the years she has been Speaker, Ms Among jumped from one corruption allegation to another. This triggered not only sanctions from the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US), but also letters from President Museveni to anti-corruption agencies to investigate her.

While Ms Among is getting consumed in these allegations, Mr Tayebwa, on the other hand, is presumed to have a clean sheet. Both Ms Among and Mr Tayebwa reclaimed their parliamentary seats unopposed, with their opponents accusing them of using underhand methods to ensure they faced no challenge at the ballot.

Possible challengers to Ms Among's seat in Bukedea, who included Marion Mercy Alupo (National Unity Platform or NUP), Hellen Odeke Akol (Independent), and Susan Norma Otai (Forum for Democratic Change or FDC), were removed from the voters' register.

What some observers have widely described as a "scheme" came to the fore when Zipporah Akol, who works at Parliament, dragged Ms Alupo, Ms Odeke and Ms Otai to court, saying they should be barred from being nominated as candidates

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