

and enabling cattle to resist infestation from within, the NAROVAC-ATV1 vaccine, which is expected to retail at about sh10,000, provides a more sustainable and effective

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**Y**esterday, our dear President, Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, presided over the last Cabinet meeting of the 2021-2026 political term. This meeting effectively marked the end of the current Cabinet as we prepare for the President's swearing-in for a new term, scheduled for next Tuesday (May 12).

As we transition into another term, it is both fitting and necessary to reflect on the leadership that has guided our nation through this important period. I write with deep gratitude to His Excellency the President for his visionary, deliberate and transformative approach to leadership — one that has redefined governance by drawing strength from ordinary Ugandans.

Fellow Ugandans will recall that during his address at the presentation of the 2021/22 national budget on June 10, 2021, the President shared that he had followed the example of our Lord, Jesus Christ, in selecting his Cabinet, which he announced two days earlier. Just as Jesus chose fishermen like Simon Peter instead of the learned elites of the time — such as the Pharisees, Sadducees and Levites — the President also chose to give chance to individuals with a proven track record of hard work despite coming from humble and grassroots backgrounds.

#### A BOLD DECISION VINDICATED

As we conclude this term, it is clear that this bold decision has been one of the most remarkable aspects of his leadership. The inclusion of "fishermen and fisherwomen" in governance was not merely symbolic; it was both practical and meaningful. The President identified leaders from the grassroots and nurtured them into capable national figures.

Being among the President's "fisherwomen," I consider

# Exiting 'fishermen Cabinet' hails President's leadership

**MILLY B. BABALANDA**

it a great honour to have been entrusted with such responsibility. My journey, like that of many others, began with grassroots mobilisation and service to the people of Busoga. Through mentorship, guidance and opportunity, the President elevated us to positions where we could contribute more effectively to national development. This approach to leadership has proven both inclusive and effective.

Indeed, the results speak for themselves. Many of the so-called "fisherwomen," myself included,

have carried out our duties with diligence and integrity. We have largely remained free from the corruption and mismanagement that often affect public service. This is not by chance — it reflects the President's practical and values-based approach to leadership selection and mentorship.

The January elections further confirmed the strength of this model. With over 71% of the vote, the improved performance of the President and the National Resistance Movement, compared to the previous term, shows how effectively these leaders mobilised Ugandans. The "fishermen and fisherwomen" did not just hold

office — they actively engaged communities, listened to citizens and strengthened the connection between leadership and the people.

This also helps explain the success of the Parish Development Model, especially when compared to earlier government programmes that struggled due to weak sensitisation and limited community mobilisation.

#### A TOKEN OF GRATITUDE

I also extend my sincere appreciation to the First Lady, Mrs Janet Museveni, whose discipline, grace, and commitment to national service continue to inspire many of us — especially women in leadership. She demonstrates that it is possible to serve the nation diligently while upholding strong family values.

In the same spirit, I commend the Chief of Defence Forces, Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, for his leadership of the Uganda People's Defence Forces. The peace and

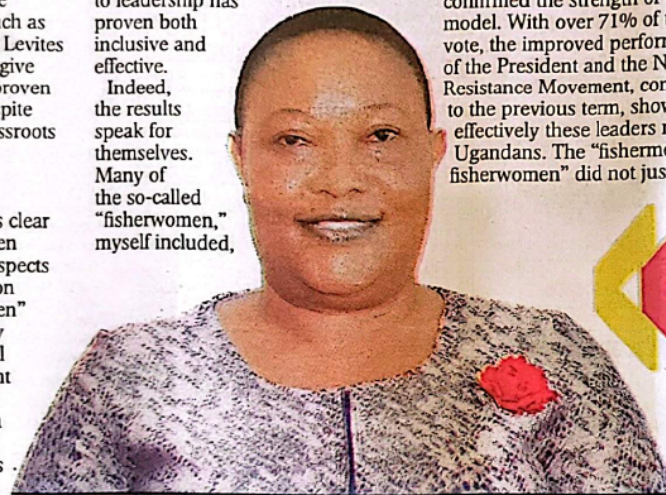
stability we enjoy today are the result of a professional and vigilant force that has protected our country and supported government programmes. This has been key to ensuring smooth service delivery across sectors.

As we look ahead to the swearing-in ceremony, I wish President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni continued strength, wisdom and success in the coming term. Uganda stands at a moment of great opportunity, especially as we move closer to realising our oil potential and achieving upper middle-income status. These goals require clear vision, discipline and unity — qualities that this leadership has consistently demonstrated.

In the spirit of the fishermen who were called to serve a higher purpose, may we continue to cast our nets wider — for unity, prosperity and the continued progress of our beloved country. Some of us, including myself, now also have the opportunity to serve in the 12th Parliament, which strengthens our ability to defend and explain government positions.

Let us remain ready to serve, should it be the wish of the President and the people of Uganda. Service to our nation is both a duty and an honour — one we must always value as we work to protect and advance the gains we have made.

**The author is the outgoing Minister for the Presidency**



**The President identified leaders from the grassroots and nurtured them into capable national figures.**