FROM A MODEST WEEKLY NEWSPAPER IN 1986 TO A MULTI-PLATFORM MEDIA CONGLOMERATE

NEW VISION'S PRODUCTS, SERVICES

By Alex Balimwikungu

Since its founding in 1986, Vision Group (formerly New Vision Printing and Publishing Company Limited) has evolved from a single newspaper publisher into a diversified multimedia and business solutions company.

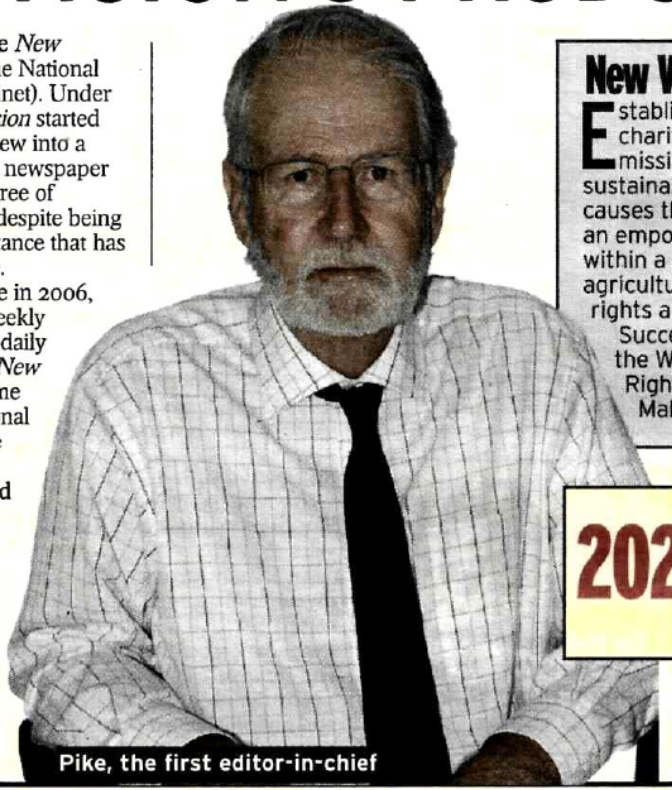
From a modest weekly newspaper in 1986 to a multi-platform media conglomerate, *New Vision*'s story mirrors Uganda's own journey of recovery, growth and modernisation.

Over the past four decades, it has not only survived political transitions and adapted to technological revolutions, but has also expanded in different spheres, making it a symbol of continuity and transformation in Uganda's media landscape.

So the story goes. William Pike was recruited by then information minister Abu Mayanja (RIP) in 1986 to start *The New Vision* as a government newspaper, after being recommended for his work covering the National Resistance Army. As editor-in-chief, Pike, alongside editor James Tumusiime, launched the daily paper from a small, government-owned printing press in Kampala.

The paper was established in March 1986, shortly after the NRM took power, with a team of about 65 employees. The name *New Vision* was chosen by the National Resistance Council (cabinet). Under Pike's tutelage, *New Vision* started from scratch but later grew into a commercially successful newspaper while maintaining a degree of editorial independence despite being government-owned, a stance that has been maintained to date.

Before Pike's departure in 2006, what had started as a weekly paper in 1986 became a daily in 1990. Alongside *The New Vision* flagship daily came the introduction of regional vernacular papers in the ensuing years. These products, which included *Orumuri* (western Uganda), *Etop* (eastern Uganda), *Rupiny* (northern Uganda) and *Bukedde* (central Uganda), bolstered Vision Group's position as a national information provider serving multiple audiences around the country.



Pike, the first editor-in-chief

At the time, *The New Vision* was the pinnacle of print journalism, offering researched and balanced news stories, features, business, agriculture and lifestyle content. Buoyed by a wide, enthusiastic and discerning readership, the numbers told the story. Management thought bigger. The weekend editions, *Saturday Vision* and *Sunday Vision*, were introduced.

2023 Year Vision Outdoor and Kabalega FM were both launched.

New Vision Foundation

Established in September 2024, the *New Vision* Foundation, the charity and enterprise arm of Vision Group, was set up with a mission to mobilise resources and efforts towards creating a sustainable society through quality journalism and by supporting causes that enhance community well-being. In doing so, it envisions an empowered society in which individuals realise their potential within a clean and healthy environment. Priority areas include agriculture, the environment, education, health, democracy, human rights and governance, and talent development.

Successful projects to date include the Green Schools initiative, the Women Achievers project, the Access to Justice and Human Rights project, the Save Lake Victoria project, and the Teachers Making a Difference project.