

Shs500m pledge kicks off Cancer Run

Delivert. Speaker Among also revealed that President Yoweri Museveni had pledged Shs3 billion towards the campaign to support ongoing treatment.

BY GEORGE KATONGOLE

Rotary Cancer Run 2026

By the Numbers

15: Number of years the Rotary

Cancer Run has been held

60,000: Participants in the 2025 edition

Shs3.5 billion: Funds raised in 2025

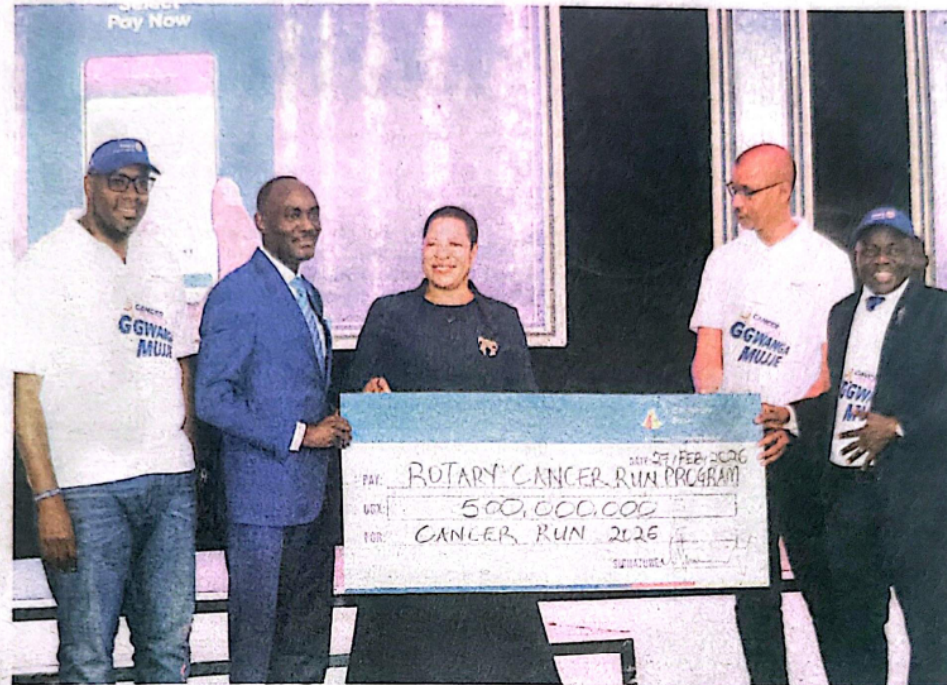
Shs3 billion: Total contributed by Centenary Bank over 13 years

30 August 2026: Date of this year's run

Uganda's fight against cancer has received fresh political and corporate backing, with leaders warning that the disease remains one of the country's fastest-growing public health and economic challenges.

The 2026 Cancer Run, organised by Rotary District 9213, will be held on August 30, 2026, with Anita Among, the Speaker of Parliament, calling on Ugandans to treat the campaign as both a humanitarian and national responsibility.

The campaign was launched in Kampala with Centenary Bank pledging Shs500 million towards cancer treatment infrastructure and awareness programs at St. Francis Hospital Nsambya. Among warned that cancer con-



Time to check-in. Centenary Bank Executive Director Joseph Balikuddembe (2nd L) with Speaker of Parliament Anita Among and other Rotary officials during the launch of the 2026 Rotary Cancer Run. PHOTO/GEORGE KATONGOLE

tinues to exert pressure on Uganda's health system, citing rising new cases and high mortality rates linked to late diagnosis and expensive treatment. "Cancer remains a significant and rapidly rising public health burden. It causes about 34 to 36 new cases and between 23,000 and 25,000 deaths annually," she said.

She added that treatment costs continue to push many families into financial hardship. "A patient may spend between Shs300,000 and Shs800,000 per hospital visit. For village families, that can take about 40 per cent of household income, leaving little for food, educa-

tion and other needs," Among said.

She noted that survival rates remain low, saying three out of every five cancer patients in Uganda do not survive, largely because of late diagnosis and limited access to specialized treatment.

Running to restore hope

The 2026 Cancer Run is themed "Let's Run to Restore Hope," which organisers said reflects the need for emotional, social and medical support for cancer patients. Among said cancer fundraising initiatives should be viewed as humanitarian efforts rather than occasional charity events. "When we hold offices that allow us to support humanity, we must give back to communities through corporate social responsibility and public service," she said.

Support

Among also revealed that President Yoweri Museveni had pledged Shs3 billion towards the campaign to support ongoing cancer treatment infrastructure projects.

"President Museveni has contributed to help us complete the treatment infrastructure projects. This is not the last contribution; we will continue supporting this noble cause," she said.

She also praised Parliament's long-standing partnership with the Cancer Run, noting that the legislature has previously contributed about Shs4 billion towards cancer-related health projects. Centenary Bank has supported the Cancer Run for 15 years, contributing more than Shs3 billion to health and community programs.

The bank said it continues to allocate 2 per cent of its annual profits to community development projects covering health, education, financial literacy and environmental conservation.

Officials said the partnership helped finance construction of cancer treatment facilities at Nsambya Hospital, including chemotherapy, surgery, palliative care and radiotherapy.

THIS IS HOW IT STARTED

The Rotary Cancer Run is an annual, major fundraising event organized by Rotary Uganda District 9213/9214 since 2016 to fight cancer. It raises funds to construct and equip cancer centers, specifically for building bunkers and purchasing linear accelerator machines at Nsambya Hospital, Kampala, to improve cancer diagnosis and treatment. Last year, thousands of Ugandans and friends of Rotary from across the world gathered at the Independence Grounds in Kololo for the 2025 Rotary Cancer Run. What began as a vision more than a decade ago has grown into one of the largest gatherings of its kind in Rotary International. This year's event was nothing short of historic. Up to 60,000 runners took part and the number is expected to rise even further.

BY A-NASSER SSEMIIGARI

major European event in Catania in 18