

OPINION

## Take action on waste management

**M**ajor players in the plastic manufacturing industry have called on the Government to come up with, and strictly enforce, a clear policy on recycling in order to address the effect of the polythene paper bag and other plastics on the environment.

Members of the Natural Resources Committee of Parliament a few days carried out a fact-finding tour of four plastic manufacturing and recycling industries; namely, Gentex Industries in Matugga, Teeffe Industries in Kawempe, Luuka Plastics in Kawempe Tuula and Pipeline Design and Foam Industries in Kabanyoro.

According to a report received by the committee, the country has 45 industries under the Uganda Plastic Manufacturing and Recycling Association. However, only 25 industries or about 55%, carry out recycling. The rest of the industries have no recycling facilities.

The major players in the plastic manufacturing industry have, therefore, called for all the players in the industry to be compelled to establish recycling facilities.

**T**hey have further called for clear policies on waste management. They proposed that sanctions should be imposed against those firms that do not recycle their plastics.

For many years, the country has been grappling with the problem of the disposal of polythene and plastics. Efforts by the Government to prohibit the manufacture of some categories of polythene have been so far unsuccessful.

There has been a view that the players in the plastics and polythene industry were frustrating all efforts to control or mitigate the harmful effects of these products. It is now clear that the major players in the plastics industry do support these efforts. This is extremely commendable.

The Government should move and enforce the laws relating to the manufacture of polythene and plastics as well as waste management by all the manufacturing industries. There should also be a review of these laws to plug any loopholes.

Many industries in various parts of the country, no doubt, have no system of waste management and disposal. They are polluting our water bodies, putting lives of communities at risk. Urgent action should be taken now to avert looming environment disaster.

**New Vision**

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