

There is a law called 'Amara's Law' which states that we overestimate the power of technology in the short term and underestimate its impact in the long term. One can also see this principle at work in other areas of life – when we set a goal, it can be a long time before we see the results.

In the development of Artificial Intelligence, the journey started way back in the 1950s with Alan Turing, but the results only became evident more than 50 years later. Many journeys gain momentum over time, but all such journeys start with setting a goal, and if the goal is never set, there will definitely be no result.

This applies to goals set by countries as well as by scientists and individuals. Today, we marvel at the high level of development of Singapore, but when that journey started, no one would have given much for its chances of survival. At independence, after the British left, Singapore was entirely dependent on Malaysia, but suddenly Malaysia pulled out, leaving Singapore as a tiny, unsustainable city-state.

It was not only the strong leadership of Lee Kuan Yew that saved the situation, but also that one of the goals he set was zero tolerance to corruption. In light of the events of last week, with the raid on the outgoing Speaker's house and the support by the Patriotic League of Uganda for Oboth-Oboth, has Uganda finally commenced the

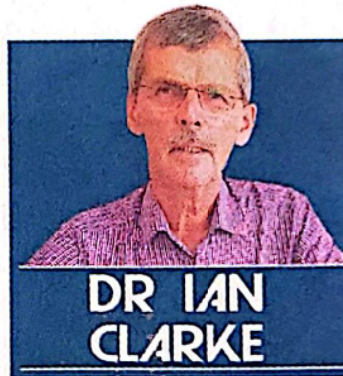
LEADERS MUST SET THE EXAMPLE OF ZERO TOLERANCE TO CORRUPTION

journey to zero corruption?

When the bush war was fought, those involved in the struggle believed that 'the end justifies the means' and when they took power, they outlawed political parties in the belief that politics had been at the root of much of the bloodshed.

Later, the Government changed direction to allow the formation of political parties, but if cash was needed to oil the political machine, it was viewed as a small price to pay compared to violence and extrajudicial killings. Thus, a culture developed of turning a blind eye to a certain level of corruption when it was politically expedient. This attitude may have served the country initially, but corruption thrived at the expense of service delivery and has held back national development. Has it now been decided that it is time to change direction and eliminate corruption root and branch?

Lee Kuan Yew gave the leadership on intolerance to corruption, and was Spartan in his own living, never allowing himself to enjoy the good things of life. He was also harsh on his colleagues if they were ever



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caught in any form of corruption, setting a standard that made no exceptions.

I hear senior Ugandans deploring the rampant corruption that exists today, but many of these people applied different standards when they were in office. Checks and balances have existed for a long time within Government, but these very procedures are often used to manipulate a tender in favour of a bidder working with a government insider. Such corruption is so embedded that it will be hard to root it out.

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of our national airline, Girma Wake, a seasoned veteran, was brought in to sort out the mess, but before he took the job, he obtained a pledge that there would be no government interference. The Umeme franchise was recently terminated, and within a few months, we have turmoil within Uganda Electricity

Distribution Company Limited, with the chief executive officer and chairperson of the board being fired. What does this say about the state of our national enterprises? Does it not reflect the view of some Ugandans that government business is there for rich pickings?

Many people will roundly condemn corruption until they find themselves in a position to enrich themselves, and then they quietly take a different tack.

I once knew a girl whose father retired honourably from the army. But instead of being proud of him, she blamed him for not using his position to enrich himself while he had the opportunity. Yew led by example, but in Uganda, those in high positions expect to reap the benefits of the position, just like the Speaker. So, the question is – who will make the sacrifice to lead by example? Because it is only when those in leadership are prepared to set the direction and continue the policy consistently for many years that the change will work its way throughout society, and the results will become evident in the development of our country.