

By Nelson Kiya, Simon Masaba
and Nelson Mandela Muhoozi

In May 2021, Anita Among was elected Deputy Speaker of the 11th Parliament, beating two male competitors, Muhammad Nserere and Yusuf Nsubambi. Her win came less than a year after crossing from the Forum for Democratic Change to the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM).

As she celebrated her win, she did not know that she would rise to the office of speaker the following year, following the death of her boss, Jacob Oulanyah. As Speaker, she was in charge of Parliament, controlling a budget of more than sh1 trillion.

Despite presiding over a house that passed a record number of Bills (26) and "swallowing the Opposition," critics accused Among of presiding over grand corruption at Parliament.

In the iron sheets scandal of 2023, Among admitted that she received 500 iron sheets from that consignment, but she had already given them out to communities.

Although she was not arrested over the iron sheets scandal, she came under sanctions from the UK, the US and the United Arab Emirates over corruption. She became the first Ugandan speaker to be sanctioned by foreign countries.

On April 30, the UK deputy foreign secretary, Andrew Mitchell, announced sanctions against Ugandan politicians, including the Speaker, accusing her of corruption charges for stealing from the poorest communities in Uganda. The United Arab Emirates followed the UK by announcing sanctions on May 7.

On May 30, 2024, the US also sanctioned Among, stating that she had been involved in significant corruption tied to her leadership of Uganda's Parliament. She was sanctioned alongside Former Minister of Karamoja Affairs Mary Goretti Kintu, former minister of State for Karamoja Affairs Agnes Nantusi, and the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, David Ssemukuta.

However, Among rejected the accusations, insisting that she was a victim of people who wanted to promote homosexuality in Uganda.

"I am not corrupt. I am being targeted because of my role in passing the Anti-Homosexuality Act," she said during one of the Parliament sessions.

In early 2024, reports that the former Leader of Opposition, Mathias Mpuga, had received sh500m as a service award, endorsed by Among. The service award was cleared by court amidst grumbling.

WEALTH AND LAVISH LIFESTYLE

Despite her denial of the accusations, her public display of wealth raised eyebrows. At public events, she would make donations that were sometimes higher than those of the President.

For example, during the fundraising for the Cancer bunker at St Francis Hospital Nsambya, she donated sh1b.

The lifestyle of Among has lately been under public scrutiny. For instance, during President Yoweri Museveni's swearing-in on Tuesday,

RISE AND FALL OF SPEAKER



Among (right) and her husband Moses Maqogo lead a procession of MPs and religious leader in front of their multi-billion mansion during thanksgiving service ceremony at her home in Aereere village, Kamutur sub-county in Bukedea district on 13, 2023

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Among they accused of breaching the Leadership Code Act. Luzzi, at a press conference at Uganda Media Centre on Friday, confirmed receiving the complaint, which was being processed.

The known properties of Among include: Bukedea Comprehensive Secondary School, a multi-million sh country home in Kamukama, and a home in Kigo, Wakiso district.

RISE IN NRM

Five years after crossing from the Opposition, Among set eyes on the CEC position of second vice-chairperson, national vice-

Among's classy dress became a subject of social media conversations. This was amidst widespread debate around reports that Among had acquired a luxury Rolls-Royce Cullinan valued at more than sh5.5b. This prompted a group of lawyers and activists to petition the Inspector General of Government (IGG), Lady Justice Aisha Naluzze Barah, seeking a comprehensive investigation into

Outgoing speaker of Parliament Anita Among

chairperson (Female) and defence Rebecca Kadaga. Among's resounding defeat of Kadaga showcased her war chest and mobilisation skills.

Kadaga had earlier requested that the position remain ring-fenced for her, but Among declined before taking her on in the elections. Among got 11,680 votes, representing 92.8% of the total ballots cast. Kadaga received 924 votes, equivalent to 7.2%. A total of 12,582 delegates participated in the election.

Her star continued to rise when she won the Bukedea Woman MP seat unopposed and went on to accompany the president on his countrywide campaigns. After the January 15, general election, she was sure of retaining her seat, especially after the NRM central executive committee and later the Patriotic League of Uganda (PLU) endorsed her.

"I am going nowhere. I will serve for another five years before I hand over to my brother [Deputy Speaker Thomas Tayebwa]," she said during one of the public functions.

However, things took a wrong turn when justice and constitutional affairs minister Norbert Mao declared his candidature for the speakership position.

Mao launched a scathing attack on Among, forcing her to respond during the recent National Resistance Movement MPs' retreat at the National Leadership Institute in Kyankwanzi.

"We do co-operate with other political parties, but the co-operation doesn't mean that you come up to my bedroom, you remain in the compound."

Mao, who had publicly described Among as an "accidental Speaker," fought back in equal measure.

"This is not just bad politics. It is bad manners! Only the head of the family has the final word on who can access which room in the home. He does not need lectures from a recently adopted child! Above all, when you insult your father's visitors, you've insulted your father," Mao, who is the outgoing justice minister, hit back.

Museveni, while addressing the NRM MPs at the retreat, concluded the matter, but left it hanging. He confirmed the endorsement, but clarified that it was the mandate of the party's Parliamentary Caucus to decide on the candidates for the Parliamentary leadership.

On Tuesday, things began to change. PLU withdrew their earlier endorsement of Among and her deputy, Thomas Tayebwa, from the speakership. In the statement, signed by

ANNET ANITA AMONG

Kasambiya County MP, David Kabanda, on behalf of PLU chairperson Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, the organisation announced that it had withdrawn the endorsement it had earlier issued in March backing Among and Tayebwa for the top parliamentary offices.

"On March 11, 2026, the chairman of the Patriotic League of Uganda (PLU), Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba guided that all PLU leaning Members elect should support Deputy Speaker for Speaker."

The PLU announcement was followed by a security raid on the homes of Among in the upscale suburb of Nakasero, Kololo and Nunda in Kampala, as well as Kigo in Wakiso district.

As security raided Among's residences, Gen. Muhoozi endorsed West Budama Central MP Jacob Oboth-Oboth for speakership.

During this period, Among's lieutenant and Masaka City Woman MP Justine Nameere were arrested, but later released.

After the release, Nameere addressed a press conference, indicating that she was ready to support Oboth-Oboth.

Nameere was not the only MP to make a U-turn. During the thanksgiving ceremony of Oboth-Oboth, over 300 MPs, who had earlier endorsed Among, were seen lining up to congratulate the new endorsee.

On Saturday, Among had organised a dinner for MPs in Munyonyo, but it was cancelled at the last minute. On May 15, the Inspectorate of Government confirmed it was formally processing a complaint filed by lawyers led by advocate Andrew Karamagi, accusing Among of failing to declare or deliberately under-declaring her wealth under the Leadership Code Act.

At the moment, Among appears isolated, being investigated by security agencies and facing mounting uncertainty about her future within the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party, where she is third in command.

As to what happens to Among this week or term remains a matter of wait-and-see.

ANALYSTS SPEAK

Speaking about Among's political journey, former Leader of Opposition Prof. Morris Ogenga Latigo, says the former banker and lecturer saw an opportunity to make money in politics.

Ogenga, who was with Among in FDC, said Among did not join FDC or politics out of ideological commitment, but because the opposition party offered her a good political platform.

"The joining was not because this is a principled person. It was about somebody who had something to destroy, that is, FDC."

On the question of whether ongoing actions against corruption signal a genuine political shift, Latigo said: "It could be an action that has been provoked out of anger or a fundamental process pushed by the President's son (Gen Kainerugaba)."

According to Solome Nakawezi, the chairperson of the board of Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE), the controversy surrounding the former speaker demonstrates how leadership that is not grounded in ethical values, transparency, merit, constituency accountability, and institutional integrity can quickly shift from public admiration to intense public scrutiny.

"Her trajectory also exposes how patronage politics operates in Uganda, particularly how power is negotiated, protected, and withdrawn within political systems. It reveals the dynamics of inner-circle and outer-circle politics, and how individuals who are perceived to threaten entrenched power structures are often politically isolated or managed," Nakawezi said. She added: "More importantly, it highlights that corruption in Uganda

Who is Among?

Born on November 23, 1973, in Bukedea district in eastern Uganda, Among grew up in modest circumstances in a large family. She has often spoken publicly about hardship and poverty shaping her determination to succeed.

"I refused to be defined by adversity," she once said in a media interview.

After attending local schools, she enrolled at Makerere University, graduating in 2005 with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration before later earning a Master of Business Administration. She subsequently pursued a bachelor's of law degree at Kampala International University.

Before joining politics, Among worked at Centenary Bank and later as a lecturer at Makerere University Business School (MUBS).

is not simply an individual failing or a gender issue; it is often a symptom of deeper governance weaknesses, weak oversight systems, patronage networks, and concentrated unchecked power."

Lydia Wanyoto, the Mbale City Woman MP, who is seeking NRM endorsement for the deputy speaker seat, said the allegations about Among risk undermining the progress women have made in the politics of Uganda.

"What is happening? What we are reading about the former Speaker of Parliament is very unfortunate, especially that it is a woman," she said.

However, she stressed that women leaders should not allow one individual's alleged mistakes to define the broader struggle for women's representation and leadership in the country.

Habib Ssemakula, a leader of the Common Man's Party, said Among's rise

to the top was abrupt and accidental.

He said the unfolding controversy should be a warning to other politicians about the importance of exercising caution and responsibility once entrusted with leadership.

"It is a lesson to many other politicians. They have to be careful when they happen to get any political leadership," Ssemakula said.

He, however, called for consistency in the fight against corruption.

"The way they are going to handle Among should be the same way we do when handling other politicians who are suspected of corruption," Ssemakula said.

POLITICAL BREAKTHROUGH

Among's political breakthrough came in 2016 when she contested for the Bukedea district woman

MP seat on the Forum for Democratic Change ticket.

In a major political upset, she defeated longtime

legislator Rose Akol, who had represented the constituency for years and was considered politically entrenched.

The victory was immediately announced Among as a rising political force in Teso sub-region.

She projected herself as a youthful and energetic alternative to the old guard. However, her rise within Parliament was unusually swift.

While many first-term legislators spend years trying to build visibility, Among quickly became active within parliamentary committees, heading the Committee on Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises (COSASE) in the 10th Parliament.

She cultivated relationships across political divides and steadily built influence within both the opposition and the ruling establishment.

Back home in Bukedea, she was controversially returned unopposed as Woman MP ahead of the 2026 elections, securing her time to attend almost every re-election rally of Museveni across the country.

Critics and opposition activists alleged that some potential challengers in Bukedea had either been intimidated or financially induced to withdraw from the race.

BUKEDEA VIOLENCE

The Bukedea LCS by-election of 2023 established a precedent worth recalling.

During the contest, aspirant David Steven Omagor was brutally attacked and prevented from being nominated. Then Bukedea resident district commissioner Wilberforce Tukei, district Police commander Charles Okoto, and the area Gombolola Internal Security Officer all failed to intervene.

In July 2023, following a direct presidential directive, all three were arrested by the State House Anti-Corruption Unit and remanded to prison on charges of neglect to prevent a felony. The message from Museveni was unambiguous: officials who weaponise or abandon their institutional responsibilities would answer personally. That posture appears consistent with the current moment.

Unconfirmed sources say Museveni personally ordered the investigations into Among, a claim aligned with his recent public declarations of zero tolerance for corruption in his new term.

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Mbale City Woman MP Wanyoto

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