

National news

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PLU dissatisfied with 17 ministerial posts



Adonai Ayebare



Jonard Asimwe



Balaam Barugahare



Dr Charles Ayume



Desire Muhooza



Frank Tumwebaze



Grace Akifeza Ngabirano



Haruna Kasolo Kyeyune



Jane Ruth Aceng



Kiwanuka Kiroowa



Lawrence Muganga



Mercy Faith Lakisa

The pressure group was disgruntled that some ministers are in positions where they can hardly advance PLU's cause.

BY ANDREW BAGALA

The Patriotic League of Uganda (PLU) has expressed dissatisfaction with the positions they secured in the new Cabinet, arguing that the ministerial posts allotted to them appear to be a Trojan horse intended to weaken their civic organisation.

PLU said their members and allies got at least 17 ministerial posts in the



Phiona Nyamutooro



Sharts Kutesa Muherure



Lilian Aber



Peter Ogwang

83-member Cabinet, an increase from the eight they held in the previous government. Mr David Kabanda, the Secretary General of PLU, noted that although the number of posts had risen, their key figures were dispatched to ministries where they would be "dead in the water." "We are unhappy as PLU. Our members were largely demoted or literally put on Katebe," Mr Kabanda said yesterday in an interview.

PLU, a civic organisation led by the First Son and Chief of Defence Forces, Gen Muhoozi Kainerugaba, has been pushing for his succession to President Museveni. His supporters have fielded several political candidates under the National Resistance Movement (NRM) banner, hoping to build momentum.

Mr Kabanda pointed to the redeploy-

ment of former Attorney General Kiroowa Kiwanuka, now Minister of Defence and Veterans Affairs, and Mr Haruna Kasolo, previously State Minister of Micro Finance.

He stressed that both ministers had been instrumental in financing and mobilisation, yet were now fish out of water in ministries where they could hardly advance the PLU cause.

Mr Kabanda reiterated that he had no appetite for a ministerial post, having already informed Gen Kainerugaba in writing.

"I wrote to him that I wasn't interested in a ministerial position because I was holding the post of General Secretary in PLU. I even wrote to him about it," Mr Kabanda said.

Earlier, Gen Kainerugaba had promised Mr Kabanda a ministerial role via his social media account.

Gen Kainerugaba's posts on X, formerly Twitter, yesterday mirrored Mr Kabanda's dissatisfaction.

He said they aren't interested in posi-

Disgruntled
Sending Mr Kasolo to the Ministry of State for Foreign Affairs, Regional Affairs, is like a *katebe*, -

Mr David Kabanda, Secretary General, PLU

tions.

"I refused to join Parliament so that I would not take more money from the people of Uganda. I have dedicated all my allowances as CDF to the people of my country. All those who are interested in jobs and positions have not understood the gospel of PLU," he said.

Gen Kainerugaba also sought to reassure Mr Kabanda in a series of posts.

"My young brother Hon Kabanda is the General Secretary of the Patriotic League of Uganda, a much more important position than being a Cabinet minister. His job is to organise and mobilise the millions of young people in our country. Kabanda will get a ministerial job when [NRM Secretary General Richard] Toddwong gets one," he posted on X yesterday.

Despite his assurances, some individuals Gen Kainerugaba had promised would not receive posts were appointed, while others he had pledged to include

in Cabinet were left out.

These included Dr Chris Baryomunsi and Maj Gen Kahinda Otalire, who returned to Cabinet.

Meanwhile, Mr Henry Okello Oryem, whom Gen Muhoozi had promised a full ministerial post in Foreign Affairs, was dropped. Mr Adonia Ayebare, who was promised a junior role, was instead elevated to full Foreign Affairs Minister.

The new Cabinet list features PLU members such as Mr Jonard Asimwe (Science, Technology and Innovation), Mr Frank Tumwebaze (Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries), Mr Kiroowa Kiwanuka (Defence and Veterans Affairs), Mr Adonia Ayebare (Foreign Affairs), Dr Jane Ruth Aceng Otero (ICT and National Guidance), Mr Balaam Barugahara (Local Government), and Ms Lilian Aber (Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees).

Other PLU appointees include Ms Desire Muhooza (State Minister for Agriculture), Ms Grace Akifeza Ngabirano (State Minister for Defence), Mr Peter Ogwang (State Minister for Sports), Ms Phiona Nyamutooro (State Minister for Minerals), Ms Sharts Kutesa Muherure (State Minister for Micro-Finance), Mr Haruna Kyeyune Kasolo (State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Regional Affairs), Dr Charles Ayume (State Minister for Primary Health Care), Mr Tom Aza (State Minister for Trade), Dr Lawrence Muganga (State Minister for Internal Affairs), and Ms Mercy Faith Lakisa (State Minister for Youth and Children Affairs). Mr Kabanda claimed the Cabinet bore the fingerprints of Gen Caleb Akandwanaho, alias Salim Saleh.

"To me, we are going the Cuba way. It is a Gen Salim Saleh cabinet," he said.

We were unable to reach Gen Saleh by press time for a comment.

Mr Kabanda drew parallels with Cuba, where Fidel Castro was succeeded by his brother Raúl Castro, who later stepped down.

In Uganda, Gen Kainerugaba and PLU paused their mobilisation for his presidential bid after Mr Museveni appointed him Commander of the Defence Forces two years ago.

At the handover, Gen Saleh hinted at Gen Kainerugaba's political ambitions, saying he had "jumped out of the bag," and bringing him back into the army was meant to keep him under wraps.