

In recent months, a section of self-styled political analysts and commentators has increasingly focused its attention on President Yoweri Museveni's age, attempting to use it as a measure of his leadership capacity and Uganda's current challenges. Some critics, including political commentator Andrew Mwenda, have repeatedly alleged that the President is too old and supposedly no longer mentally or physically capable of steering Uganda forward. Predictably, such voices have also sought to associate persistent national challenges, including corruption, with the President's age.

However, as the President recently observed in his rebuttal to some of these claims, Ugandans must rise above sensational commentary and judge leadership based on facts, achievements, wisdom, experience, and proven capability.

Leadership is not a popularity contest driven by social media narratives; it is measured by results, consistency, vision and the ability to guide a country through both difficult and transformative moments.

THE BIBLICAL GUIDANCE

The Holy Bible, in Job 12:12, reminds us that: "Wisdom belongs to the aged, and understanding to the old." This timeless scripture speaks directly to the value of experience, foresight, patience and tested leadership. Throughout history, societies across the world have relied on elders not because they are youthful in age, but because they possess wisdom accumulated over the years of sacrifice, service and practical experience.

President Museveni's story is not that of an ordinary politician. He is a liberation leader who dedicated his youth to the struggle for Uganda's stability, peace and transformation. Under his stewardship, Uganda has moved from political turmoil, economic collapse, and insecurity to relative peace, macroeconomic stability, expanded access to education, improved infrastructure, and stronger regional influence. Those who argue that age alone determines leadership ability should ask themselves a simple question: if President Museveni were truly incapable, would he still be actively traversing the country, chairing Cabinet meetings, engaging regional and international leaders, and personally supervising government programmes? The answer is self-evident.

One of the clearest demonstrations of the President's continued effectiveness has been his recent Parish Development Model (PDM) assessment tours across the country. These were not merely ceremonial visits. The President personally engaged *wananchi*, assessed implementation gaps, held leaders accountable, and encouraged citizens to embrace commercial agriculture, wealth creation, and participation in

Why President Museveni still deserves Uganda's confidence amid age debate

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the money economy.

The results are gradually becoming visible. National statistics continue to indicate a reduction in the number of Ugandans trapped in subsistence production as more households transition into income-generating activities. This transformation is precisely what President Museveni has consistently advocated for over the years: moving Ugandans from survival to prosperity through production, value addition and enterprise.

A mentally absent or incapable leader cannot conceptualise and sustain such a people-centred economic strategy. Neither can a senile leader maintain the energy, attention to detail, and discipline required to monitor implementation across the entire country. Whenever President Museveni speaks on economics, security, agriculture, geopolitics, or regional integration, his deep understanding of national and global affairs remains evident.

Indeed, corruption remains a challenge in Uganda, as it does in many countries across the world. However, it is both simplistic and dishonest to suggest that corruption exists solely because of the President's age. Corruption is a societal and institutional challenge that requires collective effort, patriotism, integrity, and strong systems to defeat.

Ironically, some of those loudly criticising government shortcomings are themselves members of the elite class with access to resources, influence, and platforms that could be used to strengthen accountability and promote national values.

The President was, therefore, right to remind his critics that leadership is not about endless insults, pessimism, or cynicism, but about offering solutions and contributing positively to nation-building. Uganda belongs to all of us, regardless of political affiliation or ideological persuasion.

It is also important to emphasise that there is no known medical condition affecting President Museveni's judgement or decision-making ability. On the contrary, Ugandans continue to witness a leader who is ageing gracefully while remaining intellectually alert, physically active, disciplined, and spiritually grounded. That, in itself, is a blessing from God and a reflection of personal discipline cultivated over decades.

THE PRESIDENT'S RECORD STILL INTACT

As Africans, we must also resist the growing culture of disrespect towards elders and national leaders. While constructive criticism is healthy in any democracy, it should be expressed with civility, patriotism and respect. Leadership is ordained by God, and disagreements should never descend into personal attacks or ridicule against individuals who have dedicated much of their lives to national service.

At 82, the President continues to demonstrate resilience, wisdom, strategic clarity, and an unwavering commitment to national development.

His age should, therefore, not be viewed as a weakness, but rather as a reservoir of experience from which Uganda can still benefit as the country advances towards greater prosperity, stability, and transformation.



SPEAKER RACE PROVED CONFIDENCE IN PRESIDENT
I take this opportunity to congratulate and thank my fellow MPs upon the successful election of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the 12th Parliament. Special appreciation goes to colleagues who rallied behind the guidance of the party and our national chairperson regarding the choice of leadership in Parliament.

Throughout Uganda's modern political history, President Museveni's guidance on sensitive, national and party matters has consistently been informed by patriotism, experience, and a sincere desire to preserve stability while accelerating national development. Time and again, his decisions have proven to be calculated not for personal gain, but for the broader interests of the country and the cohesion of the National Resistance Movement.

This is why the decision by MPs to respect the party position and rally behind the guidance of the chairperson deserves commendation. The NRM has remained strong and united because of discipline, ideological clarity, and respect for collective positions agreed upon under the stewardship of the party leadership.

It is, therefore, important that party members avoid unnecessary divisions and instead uphold the spirit of unity and consensus that has enabled the Movement to lead Uganda successfully for decades. At a time when Uganda is implementing transformative programmes aimed at improving household incomes, promoting industrialisation, expanding regional trade, and strengthening infrastructure development, the country requires institutional harmony and focused leadership.

The office of the Speaker of Parliament plays a central role in legislative stability and governance.

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