SECURITY SEARCHES AMONG'S NAKASERO, KIGO, NTINDA PROPERTIES

By Simon Masaba

On Saturday afternoon, security personnel raided the home of the Speaker of the 11th Parliament, Annet Anita Among, in the quiet leafy city suburbs of Nakasero along Mackinnon Road.

More than 15 police vehicles, vans and minibuses delivered investigators, who searched Among's home in what security sources described as a co-ordinated tactical operation.

It began at 2:30pm on Saturday. A truck blocked the road leading to the home. Three uniformed officers stood at the gate while plain-clothed operatives fanned out across the road, watching, waiting, cataloguing.

Before dusk settled over the capital, some black suitcases were seen being loaded into a white police van and driven away from the scene. It is not clear what exactly was picked from Nakasero.

And the operation did not end there. By yesterday afternoon, the security net had widened considerably. Investigators reportedly picked interest in Among's other properties in Kigo, Wakiso district and Ntinda in Nakawa division, Kampala.

Among is being probed over allegations including corruption, money laundering and abuse of office. Sources privy to the probe confirmed that several Parliament staff, including officials linked to her office, have been lined up for questioning as investigators widen the scope of their inquiries.

Also, several Members of Parliament said to be Among's close associates have been lined up for questioning starting today.

PHOTO BY ALFRED OCHWO



Police officers from the Directorate of Fire Prevention and Rescue Services entering Among's residence along Mackinnon Road, Nakasero as security operatives searched her home on Saturday. (Scan picture using the Vision Digital Experience to watch video)

WHY THEY SEARCHED HOMES

In criminal cases, especially of suspected financial crime, the search of a residence is a carefully considered forensic exercise.

"In a case involving corruption, embezzlement, or money laundering, a residence often becomes the most intimate archive of wrongdoing – a place where the suspect, emboldened by the illusion of privacy, stores what they dare not leave in any official space," a source familiar with criminal investigations told *New Vision*.

When investigators execute a search warrant, they conduct a methodical room-by-room sweep, looking for cash, documents, electronic devices, luxury items and concealed spaces.

In Among's case, the source said, security suspected that vast sums of money had been stashed in a hidden bunker inside the Nakasero residence.

The source added that every item removed was tagged, documented and entered into an evidence register under strict chain-of-custody protocols.

"If money is seized, it is not simply confiscated; it is forensically examined and traced," the source said.

By press time, however, it was not clear whether any money was obtained from any of Among's searched properties.

The source, however, said fingerprints were lifted off money safes, document folders, electronic devices, doors and furniture, with an aim of tracing whether some individuals visited the properties or not.

Sources said some of the documents recovered included bank statements, title deeds, contracts and correspondences.

The operation was conducted by detectives from the Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID), the Forensics Directorate and Crime Intelligence.

IT BEGAN WITH NAMEERE

Before investigators turned their attention to Mackinnon Road in Nakasero, the opening act of this operation played out 130km away in Masaka city and it followed a strikingly similar script.

On Friday night, Masaka City Woman MP Justine Nameere was arrested just hours after she had been sworn-in.

She returned home in a convoy of about eight vehicles, including a police pickup truck, as approximately 500 of her supporters lined the streets in jubilation. The procession wound from Matanga trading centre, 20km outside the city, toward the central business area.

ABOUT OPERATION

Yesterday afternoon, the Chief of Defence Forces, Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, who is also the chairperson of the Patriotic League of Uganda, took to the X (formerly Twitter) platform and revealed that the operation to search Among's home had been sanctioned by President Yoweri Museveni.

"The security forces under the direction and instructions of the Commander-in-Chief (President Museveni) launched Operation 'Maliza Ufisadi' (English for 'End corruption') the other day. We shall expand this operation and apprehend all culprits. No one will be spared," Muhoozi wrote.

But as Nameere's convoy approached the Kizungu suburbs, armed security operatives in plain clothes intercepted her car. The police escort vehicle had inexplicably vanished from the procession moments before the ambush.

Her presidential police guards were reportedly disarmed. Gunshots rang out. Nameere, riding in an open-roof Range Rover alongside her husband Hamza Nsubuga, was forcibly bundled into a white Toyota Hiace locally known as a "drone", which sped off towards Kampala.

"We sensed trouble when our police escort vehicle mysteriously disappeared from the convoy. When the captors' vehicle forced ours to halt, they quickly grabbed my wife. In a few minutes, they were driving off towards Kampala," her husband, Nsubuga, told journalists afterwards.

Nsubuga said he leapt from the moving vehicle and fled on foot. He said Nameere attempted to break free and run toward the nearby Brovad Hotel, but she was overpowered.

Ali Kateregga, who described himself as a National Resistance Movement supporter and mobiliser, said the manner in which Nameere was arrested was "harsh and belittling."

What followed has not been fully disclosed publicly. Sources familiar with the operation, however, said a search was subsequently conducted at Nameere's residence, during which a substantial sum of money was reportedly seized.

That recovery, sources indicate, set off a chain of events that led investigators northward to Kampala and directly to the doorstep of Among the following day.

The Masaka resident city commissioner, Ahmed Washaki, said he had not been formally briefed.

Nameere's father, the former defence minister Vincent Ssempijja, issued no public statement, though close relatives said the family convened urgently at his home in Kapere Lukaya on Saturday morning.

By press time yesterday, Nameere had been freed. She later held a press conference where she recounted what transpired on Friday night when she was arrested and praised President Museveni for intervening.

She said eight masked armed men intercepted and picked her up, adding that they first engaged her security detail before she agreed to go with them upon sighting a female officer among them.

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