

# MPs eulogise Kaudha, call for better health sector

By Moses Mulondo and Moses Walubiri

A mood of lamentation engulfed Parliament yesterday as legislators eulogised the Iganga Woman MP, Hailat Kaudha Magumba, who passed away last Friday.

Kaudha succumbed to pre-eclampsia, a type of high blood pressure that normally afflicts pregnant women.

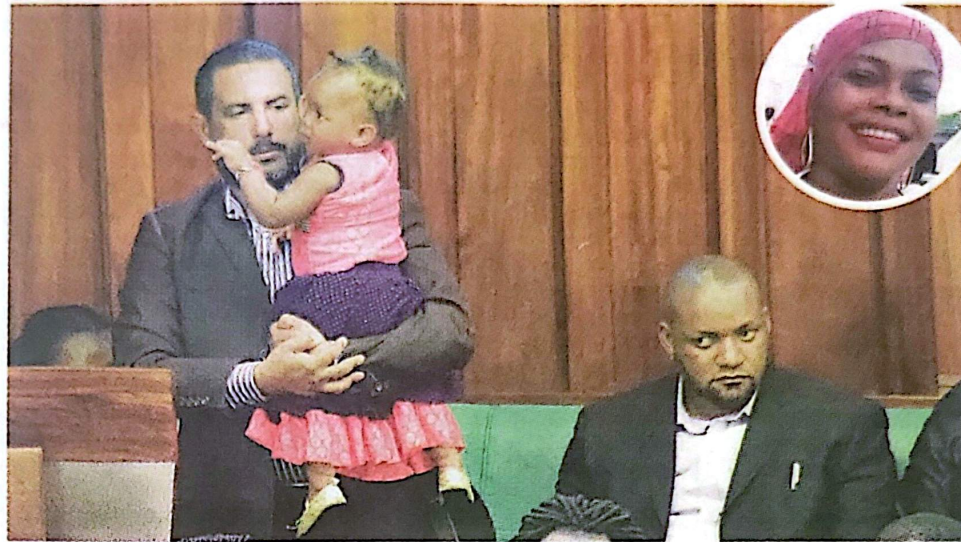
Accounts given by legislators who had been close to her, such as Bugiri Woman MP Agnes Taaka, Kigulu South MP Andrew Kaluya, Kitagwenda County MP Abas Agaba, the state minister for primary healthcare, Joyce Moriku Kaducu and Bukholi Central MP, Solomon Silwany, seemed to generate some consensus that the deceased was not on antenatal care yet she was in the sixth month of her pregnancy.

"A month before her death, she had a severe cough and could not walk properly. I asked her whether she had gone to the hospital and she told me it was not serious. I could see there was a lot of laxity on her side," Kaluya narrated.

Divulging details of what the Government pathologists had found during the post-mortem, Kaducu said there was excessive bleeding in the body organs, a sign that the illness was in its advanced stages.

"Her blood pressure was extremely high. It is clear this was a progressive problem, but because of our busy schedules, we do not spare ample time to look after ourselves," the minister stated.

Expressing dismay over the Government's continued failure to give the health sector priority, the Leader of Opposition, Winnie Kiiza,



**Kaudha's one-and-half year old child Amal Bawazir, being carried by her father, Abdul Ali Bawazir, as legislators pay tribute to her mother yesterday. Inset is Kaudha.**  
Photo by Maria Wamala



**Kaluya**

said: "It is with great pain that I support this resolution. Every time a colleague dies, we have been asking the Government to give priority to the health sector, but our calls have been falling on deaf ears. It is sad that in Uganda giving birth still happens with uncertainty."

She decried the poor state of health facilities in the country and the poor remuneration for health workers.

Whereas in the 2001 Abuja

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Protocol African governments resolved to allocate not less than 15% of their budgets to the health sector, Uganda's budget for the sector is still in the range of 8%.

The Prime Minister, Ruhakana Rugunda, who moved the motion for a resolution for Parliament to pay tribute to the deceased, extolled Kaudha for the services she rendered to the country.

"The death of an MP is bad. It is

even sadder for a young legislator to die. She was set to celebrate her 31st birthday on October 14. It is even more saddening that she died of pregnancy-related causes. This means we have to increase efforts to reduce maternal mortality at all levels. It is important that we boost our antenatal and postnatal services to reduce this human wastage," Rugunda stated.

Kawempe North MP Latif Ssebagala said Kaudha was an aggressive leader, which is why they had elected her as secretary general of the Muslim parliamentary caucus.

The state minister for finance, David Bahati, said: "We remember her as a rising star in the politics of Busoga and Uganda. Although we have registered progress in reducing maternal mortality from 535 to 336 deaths per 100,000 live births, we can ensure that no woman dies of pregnancy-related causes."