

Black box thinking in Uganda's political and education systems

One day, Adolf Hitler, the Austrian-born German politician who was the dictator of Germany during the Nazi era, went for a Cabinet meeting carrying a chicken.

He held the chicken's head tightly under his arm. As he walked, he began plucking its feathers one by one. The chicken screamed in agony, struggling desperately to escape from Hitler's grip. But Hitler did not let go, nor did he pay any attention to its cries—he just kept plucking.

The Cabinet members said to him: "Don't torture that poor creature like this. Let it go." But Hitler refused to listen to anyone.

Finally, after plucking all its feathers, he threw the chicken to the ground. Then he took some grains out of his pocket and began feeding them to the chicken. In that state, the chicken, desperate for food, started looking toward Hitler's hand again.

Hitler called it closer, offering the grains. After a while, the chicken came and sat near him, eating those few grains. The same chicken that had been struggling to escape from Hitler all this time now sat beside him again—for just a handful of grains.

The Cabinet members asked in astonishment: "What is this?" Hitler replied: "Voters are just like this. For four and a half years, we pluck their feathers. And then, in the last six months, we throw them a few grains. For those few grains, the voters forget all the injustices we committed over four and a half years—and they vote for us again."

We are yet to witness many politicians in Opposition, crawling for grains. However, after all that, all we need is peace.

Election-related conflict and violence have

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caused political unrest, partisan hatred, mistrust of political leadership, and societal divisions. This undermines social cohesion, national unity, political stability, and economic progress.

I argue to all citizens who went and cast their votes for their favourite candidates, to remain calm and peaceful because in an election, we get winners and losers.

A few months ago, I learned a concept called "Black Box Thinking", which is a system that defines how entire industries respond to failure.

In aviation, when a plane crashes, they don't just look for who to blame. They find a device called a Black Box, retrieve the data, and then ask "what went wrong with the system". And there is a reason for this.

To explain this, there is a famous story of a crash involving an Asian airline years ago. When investigators listened to the recording from the black box, they found that the engine didn't just fail on its own; the junior pilot

actually noticed a mistake. But because of a cultural hierarchy in Asia that demanded absolute respect for elders, he didn't question his senior pilot. Instead, he hinted and spoke softly, and the plane crashed.

That tragedy changed aviation safety forever. It moved the focus from "Who made the mistake?" to "Why did the system allow the mistake?" I want you to adopt this strategy: Black Box Thinking.

Most of us look at the failures and accuse one another. We hide the crash and blame the economy, government, or something that does not exist. But Black Box thinking demands a harder question:

How did I contribute to this problem?

Did I stay silent when I should have spoken up?

Did I rely on motivation instead of a system?

Did I ignore the data because of my ego?

Let us protect our gains together.

Do you have your own gains that you are protecting? If yes or no, you need to work harder.

If you paid school fees on time, you have gains to protect.

If you have kids in UPE and USE schools, you have gains to protect.

If you visit government hospitals for treatment, you have gains to protect.

If you have a job and get a salary, you have gains to protect.

For God and My Country

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