FALL FROM GRACE

Outgoing Speaker of Parliament Annet Anita Among's recent experience and ongoing probe over her alleged involvement in corruption echo those of Egyptian Pharaoh Ramesses II in Percy Bysshe Shelley's Sonnet, *'Ozymandias'*. Once an absolute colossus who had taken on a larger-than-life personality, dictating the fates of millions by virtue of her political seat, Anita Among has now been reduced to a mere cautionary tale. The grand houses, luxury cars and ambition, which are hallmarks of her speakership legacy, have proved no match for the relentless erosion of time, scandal and a section of the public that feels wronged by Among. Her fall was not sudden, but an agonisingly slow unravelling, writes **Dedan Kimathi.**

WAS ANITA AMONG'S DOWNFAL



Among presiding plenary on October 22, 2024

In the eyes of many who served in the 10th Parliament, Anita Among's relationship with the then-Speaker Rebecca Kadaga can best be described as warm, so much so that even as a first timer, she was handed the demanding task of deputising the outgoing Bugweri County Member of Parliament (MP) Abdu Katuntu on the House committee on commissions, statutory authorities and state enterprises (COSASE).

COSASE would later command national attention during the Bank of Uganda (BOU) probe into the collapse of Crane Bank Ltd (CBL).

In a symbolic full circle moment, when Kadaga returned from sick leave in May 2019, Among returned the gesture by presenting her a bouquet of flowers on the floor of the House with much fanfare and song, a touching scene that has recently bounced back into the spotlight.

To this day, many former comrades, including Fred Turyamuhweza, who represented Rujumbura County in the 10th Parliament on Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) ticket, still marvel at what became of the duo's political chemistry.

"We worked with her on COSASE. She had a good working relationship with most of the members. At that time, we didn't notice that there would be frictions that would now manifest in the 11th Parliament. I am not sure where things started going wr Turyamuhweza said.

However, those close to two say the fallout trace to the heated Speakership of 2021, in which Kadag contesting on an indepe ticket, faced off against eventual winner, the late Oulanyah. Oulanyah had the National Resist Movement (NRM) ticket previously served as her d for two terms.

He was strongly backed Among, who went on to be Deputy Speaker, while Ka was appointed Third De Prime Minister and M for East African Com Affairs. Following Oulany tragic demise on March 2022, while undergo treatment in a Seattle Hos Among became the substa Speaker.

AMONG DRAWS FIRST BLOOD

However, tensions betwee two 'iron ladies' would surface on March 16, during a function at Annet Among's matern home in Nalina Zone, E East constituency in Bu district, when the spe vowed to politically en an unnamed opponent, many in attendance unde to be Kadaga.

"There are people g around saying they are g around with cards Namuganza. Both were absent from the gathering.

"Because of the divisions, here in Busoga, you see Namuganza is not here. I spoke to my young sister, Rebecca Kadaga, I said are you going to the meeting? She said she had not been invited. I rang the Speaker (Among). I said why did you not invite Rebecca? Then she said, no, all flag-bearers were invited," Museveni narrated.

"Then, I rang. You know I am always like a mediator, going here, ringing. I rang Rebecca again and said, you were invited as a flag-bearer. She said, how did they invite me on the radio or what? Then, when I got here, I said how did you invite Kadaga?" he added.

Before advising the region to embrace unity, saying poor people must come out of poverty. Arguing that while the quarrelling rich have all amenities, it affects development efforts and leaves natives destitute.

BUSOGA POLITICAL TURF WARS

To many observers, by openly assailing Kadaga, a long-serving NRM cadre who began her political journey as an LC1 chairperson in 1989, Anita Among had started digging her political grave inch by inch.

The other mistake, insiders say, was the attempt to build a political power base in the Busoga region, which comprises 11 districts, by sponsoring candidates against rival politicians some of whom included sitting lawmakers aligned to Kadaga. This was done through high-ranking proxies within the party and exerting undue influence where it mattered.

Some, for instance, Martin Muzaale (Buzaaya county) went through the eye of a needle to retain the party flag in the NRM primaries, which took place on July 17, 2025, and seat in the subsequent General Election, respectively.

Speaking to *New Vision* on Wednesday, Muzaale said: "It started with the primaries, because I was number one with 17,500 votes. But they declared someone with 2,700 votes who was actually number five. I had to battle it out through the tribunal, which had been set up and equally, even my colleague, the honourable John Teira." He accused some NRM electoral commission official of being Among's puppet.

However, the political cold war, many of those who were known to be close to Among also bore the brunt of angry voters.

"First and foremost, as a Speaker, you wield influence on your MPs. In the last elections, many of our colleagues lost. Simply because they had that personal attachment. They could not distance themselves from her. Ultimately, they lost their election," Muzaale said.

KA, NAMUGANZA RETALIATE

These statements, coupled with Among's attempt to adopt the 'Mama Busoga' moniker, long associated with Kadaga due to her extended service to the region, reportedly unsettled sections of the Busoga political elite.

When Kadaga lost the coveted ruling party NRM central executive committee seat in August last year, the already simmering cold war between the two camps did not ease. Instead, it escalated.

These divisions came to a head during a high-level NRM meeting on January 9, 2026, in Iganga where President Yoweri Museveni, personally, was compelled to inquire about the whereabouts of Kadaga and lands state minister Persis Namuganza. Both were absent from the gathering.

"Because of the divisions, here in Busoga, you see Namuganza is not here. I spoke to my young sister, Rebecca Kadaga, I said are you going to the meeting? She said she had not been invited. I rang the Speaker

FORMER FDC MP SPEAKS OUT

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a western Uganda-hailing politician who has since decamped to NRM but rose through Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) ranks with Among, says she ought to have been wiser.

"The way the NRM system operates, when you are fortunate enough to be in such a position, you must be very careful with the way you do things. Even if you have a lot of money, you don't lavishly spend it. Take an example, where the President would go and give sh20m and Among comes and gives sh100m at the same function. So, you raise that suspicion and call it for yourself."

However, having known her for quite some time, he said questions about Among's credibility, especially regarding financial matters, have long been an open secret.

He disclosed that during their time in the FDC, Among was once questioned over suspicious funds entering the party, which had been traced back to a known NRM leader.

"They were questioning the source and it was not clear," the source said.

However, according to political analyst Charles Rwomushana, the current situation lends credence to the analogy that the majority of political actors in the country, no matter how powerful, are merely pawns in the larger scheme of things and, therefore, disposable when it matters.



INEVITABLE?

time we chase away those old women because they want to cause us problems, they want us to remain poor, whereas for them, Kamuli is developed. Don't you want to develop here? We are going to develop you," Among added.

After this, a group of local women broke out in a Lusoga folk song *Ekyalo ekitakula, kily gukuna nkwe*, which is loosely translated as 'a village which doesn't want to develop promotes intrigue.'

Interestingly, earlier the same day, while addressing a mammoth crowd that had turned up to enrol in the NRM register at Apopong Primary School in Kelir sub-county, Bukedea district, she had made her unsettling statements.

"There are people who are saying they want to reclaim their seat. They want to reclaim the Speaker's seat. What did they leave there?" Among asked.

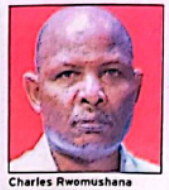
Among further quipped "what haven't we done? You mean in Teso, we don't need a Speaker? In Bukedea, we don't need a Speaker?"

However, Among who prides in being protected by the blood of Jesus, warned that their plot will not materialise.

"Maybe I am a better asset than them and I want to tell you we are still there. By the grace of God, those who think they are going to continue fighting us will be put to shame," she said.



Anita Among



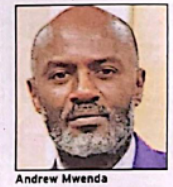
Charles Rwomushana



Rebecca Kadaga



Persis Namuganza



Andrew Mwenda

A classic example is Stephen Bakka Mugabi, who, despite being ordered by outgoing Speaker Anita Annet Among to kneel like an offending child and ask for forgiveness from the electorate during a rally, still lost to National Unity Platform's (NUP) Jamal Mukuve Ayagalaki.

"Of course, there are a few of those that managed to make it through and certainly her departure from that top position, of course, cools down the atmosphere in Busoga," Muzaale said.

CEC CONTEST

To Muzaale, Among did not spontaneously fall from grace like a ripe jackfruit, but rather, the writing had been on the wall for some time.

"From the day she started contesting to become a member of NRM CEC, I am sure that marked her downfall. To others who are politically blind, all they could see is someone climbing. But some of us who have been in this game for some years could tell that she had stepped on a landmine. It was just a matter of time," Muzaale said.

BUSOGA MPS RUE NIGHTMARE EXPERIENCE

While Muzaale at least managed to sail through, those who did not, such as Busiki county's Paul Akamba, say they are yet to recover from what they describe as a nightmare experience. Despite winning an NRM tribunal verdict that saw him compete as the party flag-bearer in the recent polls, he lost his seat to Joel Azalwa Waiswa, an independent allegedly close to the outgoing Speaker.

Akamba traced his woes to the 2021 Speakership elections and subsequent race that followed Oulanyah's death, where he and Among found themselves on a collision course.

"After that Kadaga campaign, you know what happened and then when Oulanyah passed on, I am the one who went to nominate Oboth-Oboth at Kyadondo to contest against her," he said.

Akamba says he believes Among's exit from the third-ranked position in the country shall help stabilise Busoga politics.

PLOT TWIST

To those who believe in natural laws of karma, the adage "he who laughs last, laughs best" is beginning to make sense.

Critics have argued that Among's latest predicament, which has seen joint security forces for close to a week now, comb her plush residences on Mackinnon Road, Kampala and Wakiso district-based Kigo, as well as impound several of her posh vehicles, including a Rolls-Royce Cullinan believed to be worth over sh3.4b and search her parliamentary chambers, boils down to alleged high-calibre corruption.

GRAFT OR INVISIBLE PLOT

However, according to another school of thought that includes former Coordinator of Intelligence Services, Gen. (rtd) David Sejusa, the situation at hand suggests more than meets the eye.

"My argument was that, despite the hidden intent, the Casus Beli [trigger] was corruption. In cases of corruption, especially of politicians, there is always, like in war, a specific act or event that a state uses to justify its actions, reality notwithstanding. So, for Anita, it was corruption," Sejusa posted on X (formerly Twitter) on Wednesday.

"Yes, AAA's fall was about her money and nothing else! Why? Because she was politically inept, just behaving like a village girl excited about a mirage of power (*waringa*). There is nothing to fear from someone who does that! Totally clueless and, therefore, safe to have around those with power!"

While others have hypothesised that, in her display of opulent wealth and raw power, Among may have violated first rule of Robert Greene's 48 laws of Power, which stipulates: Never outshine your master.

Presidential ambitions?

Some analysts say Among used her office's over sh1Bb budget to gain significant independent influence, and it is through these deep pockets, built a deep and wide web of connections in NRM, Parliament, the Judiciary and churches, among others. It is this base that some believe was being built to be used to catapult herself to the highest office in the land.

According to journalist Andrew Mwenda, Among's alleged presidential ambitions are a point of contention within NRM and that her immense financial influence and political machinery were perceived as political threats.

While Among vehemently denied having an interest in occupying the topmost political seat, sections of the public believe that, indeed, it is these ambitions, which she has been allegedly incubating, that have contributed to the current state of affairs.

Among, as recently as last month publicly dismissed speculation that she harbours presidential ambitions, saying she will retire from elective politics by 2031 and support a successor endorsed by President Museveni.

"Even being an MP is too much... I don't even know how to cock a gun. I don't have the patience to be President," she said as she donated sh100m towards the MK (Muhoozi Kainerugaba) Birthday Run. The run was organised by the Patriotic League of Uganda (PLU), a civic-political outfit chaired by Kainerugaba.

"I will always do what President Museveni says," she said after the donation.

However, political observers believe that for some, these statements were a smokescreen meant to hoodwink unsuspecting observers, a strategy that wasn't bought by some of the powerful in certain political circles.

A day after Among's Nakasero residence was raided by security operatives, for instance, youth and children affairs state minister Balaam Barugahara took to social media saying: "Presidential ambitions crushed once and for all. Next! Anyone obstructing the tsunami wave will be hit politically by the will of the people".

He thanked President Museveni for 'authorising the recovery of all funds meant for our government that were hidden in people's homes'.

To many, this is in reference to the recovery of several items, which, according to sources, included cash and billions worth of luxury vehicles from Among's Kigo residence.

The forces on Wednesday also raided Among's Nakasero residence and recovered four vehicles.

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