

Former minister Omara dies at 70



Yafes Otim Omara. PHOTO/COURTESY

Omara, an accountant by profession, served in government after his election to Parliament in 1996.

BY SIMON PETER EMWAMU

Former State Minister for Tourism Yafes Otim Omara has died in Nairobi, Kenya, at the age of 70.

His death was confirmed by his younger brother, Mr Charles Joshua Otoka.

Omara passed away at about 4am on Sunday at his son's home in Kiambu County, where he had been staying while undergoing treatment at Karen Hospital in Nairobi.

Omara served as Member of Parliament for Labwor County after his election in 1996. He was subsequently appointed State Minister for Tourism by President Museveni. He also served as the National Resistance Movement (NRM) chairperson for Abim District.

Family members said the deceased had been battling health complications following a stroke he suffered in January last year. He had been admitted to various health facilities, including Mulago National Referral Hospital, and later transferred to Nairobi for specialised treatment.

According to Mr Otoka, the government and the NRM party supported the family in

clearing medical bills during his treatment.

"He became better after undergoing several operations, but in January last year, while in Abim, he suffered a stroke which affected his health," Mr Otoka said.

He added that the body is currently at a funeral home in Nairobi and will be repatriated to Alerik Village in Abim District for burial.

Earlier in his life, Omara underwent a kidney transplant in New Delhi, India, in 2009, followed by heart-related surgeries both in India and Nairobi. He also received specialised treatment at Nakasero Hospital in Kampala.

Friends and relatives described him as a unifying figure among the Ethur-speaking community in Abim District.

Mr Dickson Koreya Ogira, a retired teacher and resident of Aengekitohoe Village, said the late Omara was a humble leader who prioritised education.

"He cherished education and always encouraged children in Abim to go to school. His death is a big loss to the community," Mr Ogira said.

The deceased is also remembered for supporting students from his Ethur community. In Kampala, he built a hostel in Nakawa where students, particularly those studying at Makerere Business School, stayed free of charge to ease the financial burden on their families.

His home in Mukono also served as a refuge for relatives and vulnerable members of the community.

Mr Omara is credited with strengthening support for the

CAREER IN BRIEF

- Born: 1956.
- Former State Minister for Tourism.
- Member of Parliament for Labwor County (1996).
- NRM Chairperson, Abim District.

Education

- Alerik and Kiru Primary Schools (Abim).
- Moroto High School.
- Nyakasura School.
- Bachelor of Commerce, Makerere University.

Notable Contributions:

- Promoted education in Abim District.
- Built a hostel in Nakawa for students from his community.
- Supported vulnerable families within the Ethur community.

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Deadline Extension for Licensing of Large Registered Societies or Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies under the Microfinance Deposit-Taking Institutions Act Cap.58 and Micro Finance Deposit-Taking Institutions (Registered Societies) Regulations 2023

The Bank of Uganda informs the public that the deadline previously issued to Regulated Financial Service Providers (RFSPs) to update their Know Your Customer (KYC) practices and transact only with licensed Registered Societies/Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOs) has been extended from 31 March 2026 to 30 September 2026.

This extension is intended to:

1. Enable the Bank of Uganda to undertake a stakeholder engagement including further sensitization and public awareness on its role in licensing and regulatory oversight of eligible SACCOs. These engagements will inform changes to existing regulatory oversight, if necessary.
2. Provide eligible SACCOs—those with voluntary savings exceeding UGX 1,500,000,000 and institutional capital exceeding UGX 500,000,000—with additional time to prepare and submit the required licensing documentation.

During this period of extension, all RFSPs are encouraged to continue with the support being offered to registered societies or SACCOs in the process of obtaining requisite licenses. The Bank of Uganda does not expect any RFSP to deny financial services to the eligible SACCOs until the expiry of this period.

For further information regarding the licensing and regulation of large SACCOs, please contact the Director, Non-Bank Financial Institutions Department, Bank of Uganda, on +256 414 234652.

MANAGEMENT

23 February 2026

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