Church to plant 15 million trees

By Sarah Nabakooza

The Parliament of Uganda has committed sh50m to support the Church of Uganda's ambitious 15 million tree growing campaign, a flagship initiative unveiled as part of the preparations to celebrate 150 years of evangelism in 2027.

DEPUTY SPEAKER LAUNCHES

The pledge was announced by the Deputy Speaker Thomas Tayebwa at the campaign launch yesterday at Namirembe Cathedral, where he was the chief guest. Under the initiative, each of the Church's 39 dioceses is expected to plant 385,000 trees over the next two years, which is equivalent to 192,000 trees per year and with structured planning, community mobilisation and monitoring mechanisms to ensure a targeted 70% survival rate.

Tayebwa said although the work of Parliament and that of the pulpit may appear distinct, they intersect when it comes to environmental stewardship. He urged church leaders to integrate environmental stewardship into sermons, youth programmes and community outreach initiatives and challenged them to boldly frame environmental degradation as a sin. "Let it be known that wasting water, cutting down a tree without cause, or littering a river is not just a bad habit, it is a violation of our covenant with God," Tayebwa said.

ARCHBISHOP'S MESSAGE

The Archbishop of the Church of Uganda, Samuel Kaziimba Mugalu, said the campaign stems from a resolution of the 27th Provincial Assembly held in August 2024, which declared March as Environment Month for the Church.

He described the 15 million trees campaign as a "living testimony of stewardship and gratitude," symbolising thanksgiving for the past 150 years and a deliberate investment in future generations.

"The planting of 15 million trees is both a spiritual, practical and indeed a theological act," the Archbishop said, adding: "Each tree planted is a symbol of life, restoration and continuity. It represents our commitment to combat climate change, restore degraded land and protect the most vulnerable from environmental destruction," Kaziimba said.

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L-R: Tayebwa launching a tree planting campaign. He was flanked by the chairperson of Parliamentary committee on natural resources, Edmund Ariko, the Bishop of South Ankole Diocese, Nathan Ahimbisibwe, the Bishop Emeritus of Mukono, James William Ssebaggala and Archbishop Kaziimba

