

A fresh public spat between the two vying for the post of Speaker comes barely a day after Mr Museveni told the MPs-elect that the earlier decision by the NRM Central Executive Committee (CEC) to endorse Ms Among and her deputy, Mr Thomas Tayebwa, for another five-year term would be subject to further discussion.

BY BUSEIN SAMILU & ELIZABETH KAMURUNGI

The fight to become the Speaker of the 12th Parliament yesterday descended into an open war of words when incumbent Anita Among tore into her presumptive archrival Norbert Mao, saying he had invaded her political privacy and dominion.

Ms Among, who is also the Bukedea District Woman MP while addressing newly elected MPs at the ongoing retreat for the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party Parliamentary Caucus, obliquely accused Mr Mao, whose Democratic Party (DP) signed a cooperation agreement with the NRM, of not respecting political limits. "We do cooperate with different political parties, but the cooperation does not mean that if we are cooperating, you come up to my bedroom, you remain in the compound," a visibly vexed Among said in a video that has been widely shared on social media platforms.

She added: "And I'm saying we don't come to the bedroom, and the bedroom this time round is the Speakership, you cannot cooperate for Speakership."

A year after the 2021 General Election, Mr Mao signed a 42-clause cooperation agreement with Mr Museveni in July 2022, where the two parties not only agreed to share political power but also foster constitutionalism and the respect of human rights. The DP agreed to cooperate with NRM in supporting the overall governance agenda in the sixth elective term of the President that runs from 2021 to 2026.

But Mr Mao, who now serves as Justice and Constitutional Affairs minister in the NRM-led government and is also extending the retreat after being invited by the NRM party National Chairman, Yoweri Museveni, immediately shot back at Ms Among on his official X-platform.

He described Speaker Among as a recently adopted child who is insulting her father.

"This is not just bad politics. It is bad manners," Mr Mao, who is also the Laro-Pecco MP-elect, posted.

He added: "Only the head of the family has the final word on who can access which rooms in the home. He doesn't child! Above all, a recently adopted child! Above all, when you insult your father's visitors, you've insulted your father."

This fresh public spat between the two vying for the post of Speaker comes barely a day after Mr Museveni told the MPs-elect that the earlier decision by

Mao vs Among: Who will



Guests attend the ongoing NRM Parliamentary Caucus at the National Leadership Institute, Kyankwanda. PHOTO: NRM/ONLINE X HANDLE/FILE

They say...



Hamson Obusa, Govt Chief Whip

This matter is guided by Rule 9 of the Rules of Procedure of NRM Parliamentary Caucus, which states among others, that all persons elected to Parliament as NRM members shall be eligible.



Abdu Katuntu, Bugweri County MP

The incumbents seem to have popular support among the MPs-elect. The best way is to generate consensus and avoid competition. It polarises the party and the institution of Parliament.



Yusuf Kirulunta, Kallungu East MP-elect

The Speaker battle is facing challenges due to the wrong decisions by the 10th Parliament led by ex-Speaker Rebecca Kadaga, by scrapping the presidential age limit in 2017.



Ssemujju Nganda, Kira Municipality MP

The Speaker is determined by President Museveni. Mao would be a good speaker, but he has zero chances of becoming one. I thank Mao that he is raising dust so that the outsiders can enjoy it.



George Musisi, Kira Mun. MP-elect

Aspirants have the right to campaign, but the way they are going about it might affect the institution, like in the 10th Parliament where there were camps for the winners and losers.



Yoweri Museveni, NRM chairman

...If Odria wants to be Speaker, we shall discuss that at the right time, and all others who want to be Speaker, we will weigh our decision of CEC.

RESPONSE



This is not just bad politics. It is bad manners! ... Only the head of the family has the final word on who can access which room in the home. He doesn't need lectures from a recently adopted child! Above all, when you insult your father's visitors, you've insulted your father," Norbert Mao, Laro-Pecco MP-elect.

...If Odria wants to be Speaker, we shall discuss that at the right time, and all others who want to be Speaker, we will weigh our decision of CEC.

Compiled by David Walugembe & Busein Samilu

the NRM Central Executive Committee (CEC) to endorse Ms Among and her deputy Mr Thomas Tayebwa, for another five-year term would be subject to

further discussion. Mr Museveni, while opening the retreat, said: "We shall discuss that matter at the right time, because the NRM CEC had recommended that we maintain the two because it had become a tradition, but this was our recommendation (because) it is not us who decide, we [just] recommend."

"We shall discuss (the matter) since we recommend, and we always support our recommendation with valid reasons, and if Odria wants to be Speaker, we shall discuss that at the right time, and all others who want to be Speaker, we will weigh our decision of CEC," he said.

The President's response was triggered by a question from the Aringa South MP, Mr Alioni Yoke Odria, who had asked him to clarify on the matter of the election of Speaker following rumours that CEC had bypassed the prescribed internal party processes and endorsed incumbent Speaker Anita Among and her deputy Thomas Tayebwa for another five-year term.

Mr Museveni's remarks have thrown the door wide open for the various aspirants to seek the NRM party backing, which had been thinned because of the decision by CEC, an apex decision-making organ responsible for top-level policy formulation, strategic leadership and supervising party activities, and normally gets automatic backing from the Parliamentary Caucus.

The race for the Speaker of the 12th Parliament has so far attracted six candidates, including four from NRM, one Independent but NRM-leaning, and Mr Mao from the Opposition.

Besides Ms Among and Mao, the other aspirants are Alioni Yoke Odria (Aringa South), Lydia Wanyoto (Mbale City Woman MP-elect), and Masindi District Woman MP Florence Asimwe Akiki. The others are Bukono County MP and junior Housing minister Persia Namuganza (Independent).

Mr Odria, who raised the matter before the President, told *Monitor* yesterday

control the 'bedroom'?



Anita Among, Bukedea Woman MP and incumbent House Speaker.



Norbert Mao, Laro-Pecco MP-elect and Justice minister (DP)



Persia Namuganza, Bukono County MP (Independent)



Lydia Wanyoto, Mbale City Woman MP-elect (NRM)



Mr Yoke Odria Alioni, Aringa South MP (NRM)



Dr Florence Asimwe Akiki, Masindi District Woman MP

day that he is optimistic that the matter will be reviewed.

"They have to review it because it was illegal, so the race is open for all of us, and secondly, the decision is before the members to decide," he said.

Mao also said: "The President's clarification means that the CEC decision is not a fait accompli. The NRM Caucus has the final say on the question of who becomes Speaker. I expect that the Caucus will address all issues and will grant all candidates an opportunity to be heard."

"There's a lot at stake in the next five

years. Above all, the tradition of automatically guaranteeing two terms to a Speaker of Parliament lowers standards of performance and encourages impunity. Where an incumbent Speaker has serious cases of abuse of office, corruption, misconduct, and moral turpitude, an additional term will create a moral hazard," he added.

Dr Asimwe said the President's position notwithstanding, the rules of the party should be followed. "When he said we shall talk about it, does he mean that the race is now open for everyone to participate? Does he mean that CEC decided in error? We can interpret what he said in many ways. The bottom line is that CEC just recommends," he said.

The NRM party rules state that all members of the party are eligible to express interest in the position of Speaker and Deputy Speaker through the party's Electoral Commission.

From these, CEC can recommend more than one candidate for the positions of Speaker and Deputy Speaker, and from these, the party caucus then

elects the flag bearers for the two positions.

Dr Asimwe, who said she will continue her campaign for the position of Speaker, said: "I have been campaigning across the different platforms, and will return to the NRM caucus to utilise those two days. Then I will wait for the party caucus for the open campaigns."

Ms Wanyoto, sources said, has mounted a vigorous campaign at the retreat, moving from one dormitory to another, engaging with the new MPs.

Reacting to the President's remarks, Ms Wanyoto said: "The rules must be followed. No ring fencing. It should be on merit and competitive as always. All

AMONG JOINING NRM

Ms Anita Among formally joined the ruling NRM party in 2020, crossing from the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC).

She was a long-time member of the FDC and ran as an independent in 2016 after losing in the NRM-dominated district in 2007 and 2011.

Ms Among left the party, joined the NRM in 2020 and subsequently won the party primaries before being elected unopposed as the Bukedea District Woman MP in the 2021 General Election.

She has also been elected unopposed for the same seat in the just-concluded 2025 polls.

past Speakers went through the rules."

But the NRM party spokesperson, Mr Emmanuel Dombi, by way of clarification yesterday said the President said the NRM party parliamentary caucus will discuss the matter further when the time is ripe, and only then will he (President) explain why the NRM CEC decided to back the two incumbents.

Although discussions around the selection of the party's preferred candidate for Speaker do not feature anywhere on the Kyankwanda retreat programme, *Daily Monitor* has learnt that lobbying over the issue has become intense at the retreat.

editorial@uganationmedia.com

GITTOES Pharmaceuticals Limited

PUBLIC NOTICE



CHALLA SIVAKOTIREDDY

TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC, please take note that CHALLA SIVAKOTIREDDY is no longer an employee of Gittoes Pharmaceuticals Ltd and the company is not responsible for any actions done by or on his behalf or in any capacity related to the Company.

For more information please contact us:
Plot 9 Gittoes Road, Off Luthuli Avenue, Industrial Area, Bugolobi, Kampala P.O. Box 23584
Email: gittoes@infocom.co.ug, gp@infocom.co.ug
T: +25675878678 F: +256758786013 T: +25675879989

MANAGEMENT

UGAFODE Microfinance Limited (MDI)

CUSTOMER NOTICE CHANGES IN TARIFF GUIDE

Dear Esteemed Customer,

This is to inform you that the tariff guide for our products and services has been updated.

Tariff changes will take effect from 10th May 2026.

The revised tariff will be displayed in all the branches and on our website: www.ugafode.co.ug

Thank you for choosing UGAFODE Microfinance Limited (MDI).

For more information, please visit the nearest branch or call our toll free helpline: 0800396396, WhatsApp: 0753119107 or email us on admin@ugafode.co.ug

UGAFODE Microfinance Limited - MDI is regulated by Bank of Uganda. Customer Deposits are protected by the Deposit Protection Fund of Uganda up to UGX 10,000,000. Terms and conditions apply.