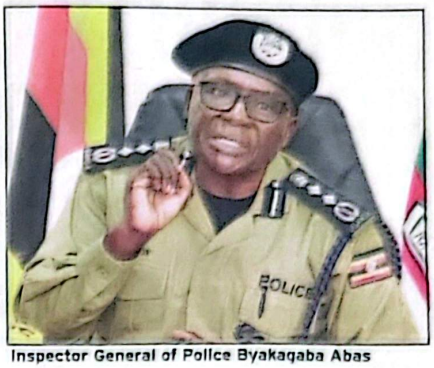
# ANNUAL CRIME RATE DROPS

BY SIMON MASABA



Police motorcycle patrols have been key in easing the movement of Police officers to fight crime



Inspector General of Police Byakagaba Abas

Uganda is safer. That is the overarching message delivered by the Uganda Police Force Annual Crime Report 2025, which records a historic 10.2% reduction in reported criminal cases compared to the previous year. The country registered 196,405 cases in 2025, down from 218,715 in 2024.

It is the continuation of a downward trend that spans several years, and its significance cannot be overstated: Uganda is becoming one of the most effectively policed nations in sub-Saharan Africa.

The decline builds on a multi-year trend. From 231,653 cases in 2022, crime fell to 228,074 in 2023, then to 218,715 in 2024, and now to 196,405 in 2025.

The sustained, year-on-year reduction signals that the Uganda Police Force's strategies are not short-term interventions but structural transformations that are permanently reshaping the security landscape of the country.

Security analysts and criminologists who have tracked Uganda's crime data have described the 2025 figures as a watershed moment – evidence that co-ordinated, intelligence-led policing grounded in community engagement genuinely works. The crime rate, which measures crimes per 100,000 of the population, now stands at 427.8 based on Uganda's official population of 45,905,417.

This compares favourably to the much higher rates recorded in previous years and reflects the long-term impact of deliberate policing reforms. For context, Uganda recorded a crime rate of 742 per 100,000 in 2015. The journey from 742 to 427.8 in a decade represents one of the most dramatic crime rate reductions in the region.

## CRIME ACROSS CATEGORIES

Theft remained the single largest category of reported crime in 2025, accounting for 26,510 cases. This was followed by common assault with 20,704 cases, domestic violence with 12,361, threatening violence with 8,848, obtaining by false pretences with 8,455, and theft of cash with 7,364.

The dominance of property-related crime and interpersonal violence in the crime landscape highlights the continuing importance of community-based early intervention, social welfare programmes, and mediation services.

Homicides – always the most closely watched category – recorded 4,238 cases in 2025, down from 4,329 in 2024, a decrease of 2.1%.

This decline in violent crime is particularly significant because homicide rates are widely regarded as the most reliable indicator of overall societal security.

The Rwizi Region recorded the highest number of homicide cases with 408, followed by North Kyoga with 274 and Rwenzori West with 264. At the district level, Kyegegwa registered the highest with 67, followed by Mubende and Kyenjojo with 58 each.

## PROSECUTION, CONVICTION

The report reveals a robust prosecution pipeline. Of the 196,405 cases reported, 115,301 were submitted to the Resident State Attorneys and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions for legal guidance. Of these, 79,291 were taken to court with 99,004 accused persons.

The conviction rate stood at 40%, with 31,732 persons convicted and sentenced, 1,244 acquitted and 11,340 cases discharged. The remaining cases continue through the justice system.

The case backlog – a chronic challenge in Uganda's justice system – is being systematically addressed.

The Uganda Police Force has invested in investigative capacity, training, and case management systems to reduce the number of pending files. The collaboration with the ODPP, the judiciary, and JLOS institutions have been critical in accelerating case resolution. Officers have been directed to focus on criminal matters and leave civil disputes to the courts, streamlining the workload of both police and the judiciary.

A total of 99,004 suspects were arrested and charged in court, comprising 89,511 adults and 9,493 juveniles. The high proportion of youth offenders underscores the importance of youth-centred intervention programmes, vocational training, and rehabilitation.

Police has recognised that addressing the root causes of youth criminality – unemployment, substance abuse, and social exclusion – is as critical as enforcement.

## MONTHLY CRIME TRENDS

Monthly analysis of 2025 crime data reveals seasonal patterns that the Uganda Police Force has used to inform targeted deployment strategies. Higher crime incidents were recorded in certain months, correlated with market days, public holidays and periods of economic activity such as harvest seasons.

The Force has used predictive analysis to pre-position resources during these peak periods, an approach that has contributed to the overall reduction in reported crime.

The Crime Data Analysis Centre, operating alongside the Crime Incident Tracking and Analysis System, has been instrumental in enabling real-time analysis of emerging crime hotspots. These systems allow regional commanders to redirect resources swiftly, ensuring that crime does not consolidate in any single area before a response is mounted.

The 32 Regional Police Commanders are now equipped with data dashboards that give them instant visibility of crime trends in their jurisdictions.

## INTELLIGENCE-LED OPERATIONS: THE ANATOMY OF SYNDICATE DISRUPTIONS

**The disruption of organised criminal syndicates – one of the Uganda Police Force's most important operational priorities – requires intelligence that crosses institutional boundaries.**

**Criminal networks do not respect jurisdictions; their members may include individuals with records held by different agencies, using vehicles stolen in one region and stored in another, operating across borders with contacts in foreign networks.**

**The co-ordinated intelligence sharing through inter-agency architecture is essential to penetrating these networks.**

**In 2025, the Force documented numerous major syndicate disruptions across multiple regions. These included operations against highway robbery gangs in Bigasa, Masaka and Kalungu; panga-wielding motorcycle gangs in the Kampala Metropolitan area; aggravated robbery syndicates in Kyenjojo, Nsangi, Wamala and Mukono; motor vehicle theft rings linked to the DRC; a coffee robbery gang in the Greater Masaka area; and motorcycle theft rings in North Kyoga.**

**In each case, the successful disruption required co-ordinated intelligence from multiple sources and joint operational execution.**

**The Integrated Ballistic Identification System – a forensic tool that links recovered firearms to specific criminal incidents through ballistic analysis – exemplifies the technological dimension of inter-agency co-operation.**

**In 2025, 31 firearms recovered were linked to 88 aggravated robberies and murders, leading to the arrest of suspects who had evaded detection for extended periods.**

**This level of forensic precision requires not only the technology itself but also the interagency data-sharing protocols that make it possible to connect a weapon to incidents recorded by different units in different regions.**

**To reinforce capacity, Police have rolled out 1,275 counter phone lines at operational and sub-county police stations across the country in a major effort to improve response time to crime and emergencies.**

**Addressing journalists at police headquarters in Naguru on Monday, April 20, 2026, police spokesperson Rusoke Kituuma said the initiative is designed to eliminate delays caused by informal communication channels.**

**"We encourage the public to utilise our dedicated counter phone lines for timely reporting. These contact numbers are accessible on our official website," Kituuma said.**

**He cautioned the public against contacting individual officers personally known to them for assistance, warning that such practices often delay official response and undermine co-ordinated Police action.**

**"During investigations, we have realised that a lot of time is lost when victims do not have direct police contacts. They instead go through friends, and by the time information reaches police, valuable time has been lost," he added.**

**Kituuma urged citizens, especially property owners, business operators and farmers, to proactively obtain and store contact numbers for police units in areas where they live or have interests.**

**He said community liaison officers (CLOs) and public relations officers (PROs) have been asked to popularise the use of these numbers within communities.**

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