

COMMERCIAL COURT TO CLEAR 320 BANKING CASES IN TWO WEEKS

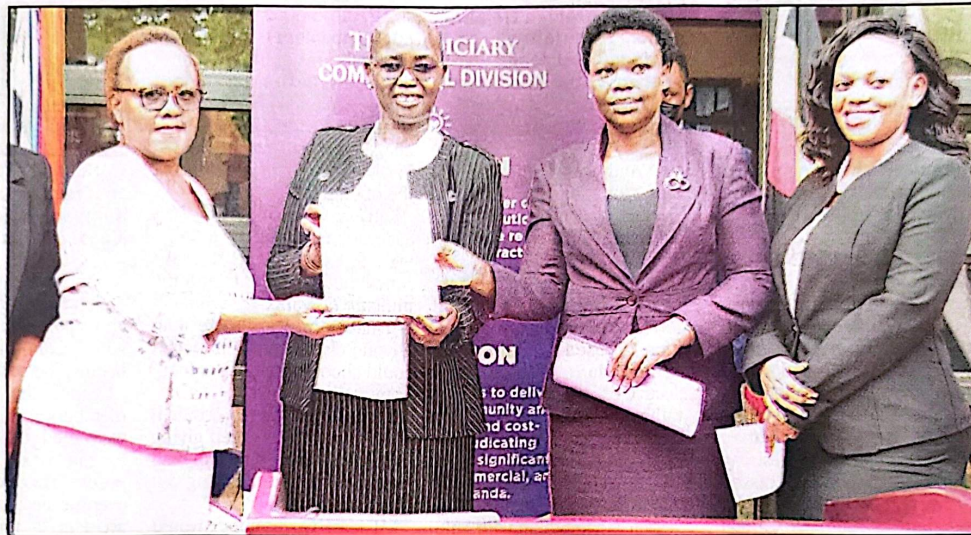
By Farooq Kasule

The Commercial Division of the High Court has embarked on an intensive mediation exercise aimed at clearing at least 320 banking-related cases within two weeks as part of broader efforts to tackle case backlog and unlock billions of shillings tied up in litigation.

The initiative, conducted under the judiciary's quarterly mediation, comes amid concern over a growing pile of unresolved commercial disputes, particularly in the banking loans and credits cluster.

Launching the initiative at the commercial court yesterday, the Principal Judge Jane Frances Abodo said the mediation is designed to accelerate the resolution of commercial disputes through the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism with special emphasis on court-annexed mediation. "This launch is both timely and significant. For too long, our commercial courts have witnessed a steady rise in the volume and complexity of disputes, particularly those emanating from the banking

From left: Mugenyi Bitature, Abodo, Lady Justice Susan Abinyo and Lady Justice Patricia Mutesi during the launch of the Fortnight Commercial Court Mediation exercise at the Commercial Court, Nakasero, yesterday



and financial sector," Abodo noted. "We have all come to appreciate that a dispute that drags on for years through multiple layers of litigation often leaves all parties exhausted, financially depleted and dissatisfied. In many cases, the formal court decision arrives too late to salvage the underlying commercial objectives."

Abodo noted that the initiative builds firmly upon the progressive Judicature (Court Annexed Mediation) Rules, 2026, which introduced a robust and innovative framework for commercial dispute resolution.

These Rules establish a clear and structured 60-day mandatory timeline for the conclusion of mediation from

the date of referral. They also remove previous financial obstacles by ensuring that the judiciary now remunerates accredited court-annexed mediators, thereby allowing parties to concentrate fully on achieving fair, sustainable and mutually acceptable settlements," Abodo noted.

She said that any settlement agreement reached under the

framework is immediately enforceable as an order of the court, providing the certainty and finality that parties require.

High Court judge Anna Mugenyi, also the head of the commercial court, revealed that as of May 6, this year, the Commercial Court had 1,730 cases in banking and credit cases pending and out of those, 326 cases were extracted for

PENDING CASES

"We ask that our litigators embrace compromise. Commercial disputes resolved today will cost less than years of litigation. We also ask that our stakeholders comply promptly with the agreed settlement terms, which will strengthen ADR culture," Justice Mugenyi said.

"Out of the 326 cases, we are optimistic that we shall settle 50% of them by the end of the mediation period. The remaining 50% will be set in motion and the negotiations will continue."

Joseph Sevuma, the legal adviser of Kampala City Traders Association commended the judiciary for the initiative saying it will boost the economy.

this fortnight's mediation.

"The value of the 1,730 cases is about sh552b. The estimation value for the 326 cases set for mediation is sh200b. We expect that at the end of the mediation period, sh200b would have been unlocked into the economy. I know that by resolving these cases, we would have unlocked a substantial amount of money into the economy. We shall reduce the long backlog in banking," she said.

Justice Mugenyi said the overall pending cases at the commercial court are over 8,000 cases.

By Michael Odeng