

The fallen MP is credited for lobbying and pursuing unity through sports in the House.

BY BUSEIN SAMILU

A section of legislators yesterday called for a deep probe into the death of their Kalangala Woman counterpart, Helen Nakimuli, who died on Sunday after a failed surgery at Alexandra Medical Centre.

The MPs, during a special sitting that was convened to honour the deceased, said their colleague's death raises questions about how she was handled.

Lwemiyaga County MP Theodore Ssekikubo wondered how the entire exercise was conducted. "Even in our health centres, you don't just walk into the theatre. There must be measures. What are the qualifications of these doctors? Look at the qualifications of those handling our lives; we have lost so many people. The investigation should look into these people."

The Leader of Opposition in Parliament (LoP), Mr Joel Ssenyonyi, wondered how Nakimuli, 41, who drove herself to the facility and even spoke to him on the phone, ended up being declared dead just hours later.

"This is not just a moment of grief; it is a moment of profound concern. We hope that all answers will be provided. This is not about apportioning blame prematurely; it is about restoring public confidence," he said.

The LoP added: "As we pursue these answers, we must also confront the broader realities of our health sec-

MPs demand answers over Nakimuli's death

tor. For many Ugandans, access to safe and quality healthcare remains uncertain. Incidents such as this deepen public anxiety... If this can happen in a controlled medical environment, then we ought to ask ourselves what safeguards exist for the ordinary Ugandan in less resourced settings."

The Speaker of Parliament, Ms Anita Among, assured the legislators that the questions being raised would be answered.

"All those questions are going to be answered. We are asking those questions. We have had a series of meetings... and we have questions that we want them to answer," she said.

The concerns came less than 24 hours after Alexandra Medical Centre called for calm over the issue.

MPs pay tribute

Legislators from the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party and their Opposition colleagues read from the same script while eulogising their fallen comrade.

They included Vice President Jessica Alupo, Works minister Katumba Wamala, Balaam Barugahara (Youth and Children Affairs).

Legislators led by Ms Among, her deputy Thomas Tayebwa, the LoP who al-



Helen Nakimuli.

so doubles as the spokesperson of the National Unity Platform (NUP) party, to which the deceased subscribed, Mr Ssenyonyi, among others, yesterday received a cortege carrying Nakimuli's remains at 11am ahead of public viewing of the body at Parliament.

"...It is particularly painful that her young life has been cut short at a time when she was just about to begin a renewed chapter of service under her second term," Ms Among said, adding, "She had more to offer, more to build, and more to contribute to this nation."

She was just blossoming, several MPs said of Nakimuli whose name, when directly translated from Luganda, means flower.

The House held a special sitting to pay tribute to her works at 2pm. The Leader of Government Business and Prime Minister Robinah Nabbanja moved a motion for the House to pay tribute to Nakimuli, who will be buried today in Luwero District.

"Hon Nakimuli was widely known among her constituents as 'Mama Kalangala' a testament to her enthusiastic leadership spirit and passion for closeness to the people she represented," Ms Nabbanja said.

The premier added: "She was a passionate sportswoman who was at the time of her death the captain of the parliamentary volleyball team... She utilised sports as a platform to promote teamwork, mentorship, discipline, solidarity, and service."

Ms Alupo said: "She didn't have a lot of time for trivialities; she would reach out to any leader, but with a reason for solving problems of her people."

Mr Ssenyonyi described her as a dedicated leader who served her people with diligence.

"Kalangala District, which she represented, is one of the most unique constituencies in our country, an archipelago of over 80 islands spread across Lake Victoria, commonly known as the

Ssesse islands. Representing such a constituency requires exceptional commitment. It demands navigating geographical isolation, limited infrastructure, and the distinct socio-economic challenges faced by island communities. Yet, Hon Nakimuli embraced this responsibility with quiet strength and consistency. She ensured that the voices of her people, often physically distant and politically marginalised, were heard within this House."

Ms Among asked legislators to aspire to leave a legacy like that of Hon Nakimuli, who recorded several achievements in five years. "Since her death, the public has been sharing some of Hon Nakimuli's iconic works, and it is evident that she was a very impactful leader in various aspects, notably politics, community development, advocacy, sports, livelihoods, and gender issues, among others."

She added that most of the trophies that the Parliament of Uganda won at the EAC Inter-Parliamentary Games over the last five years are attributed to the efforts of Nakimuli, who played volleyball, basketball, and netball.

Government Chief Whip Hamson Obua, and Sports State minister Peter Ogwang reiterated that indeed Nakimuli was a utility sportswoman who excelled in almost all sports disciplines. Kassanda Woman MP Flavia Kalule Nabagabe said she studied with Nakimuli from Senior One to Senior Four at Our Lady of Good Counsel SSS Gayaza, where the deceased's talents were nurtured. She credited Nakimuli for her active participation in sports and compassion for the people, especially the girl child.

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