

HRCU WEEKLY UPDATES: ISSUE NO.10 OF 2021

[March 23, 2021](#)



THE HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE UGANDA (HRCU)

WEEKLY UPDATE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND KEY EMERGING ISSUES WITHIN THE HRD'S WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Issue No.10 of 2021: Week of Monday 15th to Sunday 21st March 2021

INTRODUCTORY PHRASE

We live in changing times but if we must change, let's change for better. Each of us is a human rights defender – we are people who are working individually and in association with others not only to promote but also strive for the protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms. HRCU is committed to see that human rights defenders are informed of their environment so that they can engage in meaningful advocacy initiatives for a better tomorrow.

Some updates from the week of March 15 – 21, 2021

The COVID-19 Situation and Information

At the time of compiling and sharing this update, Uganda had total cumulative cases of COVID-19 standing at 40,671 with deaths remaining at 334 and recoveries of 15,133.

 Uganda

Coronavirus Cases:

40,671

Deaths:

334

Recovered:

15,133

Source: <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/uganda>

The Fight against COVID-19: The Commonwealth lauds Museveni for COVID-19 response

On Tuesday March 16, 2020, the Commonwealth General Secretary Rt. Hon. Patricia Scotland hailed President Yoweri Museveni for the proper response to COVID-19 pandemic in Uganda. She made the remarks when she paid a courtesy call on the President at State House Entebbe. She was accompanied by the Senior Director at Commonwealth Prof. Luis Franceschi and Communication Officer Ms. Temtope Kulajaiye.

President Museveni highlighted a wide range of issues pertaining to strategies laid down by the commonwealth towards implementation of the proposed tool kits covering economic, social and infrastructure sectors in the Commonwealth member countries. He asked her to support Uganda with technical consultancy on research, medical and ICT sectors. The meeting was also attended by the Minister for Foreign Affairs Hon. Sam Kuteesa and the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hon. Okello Oryem, among others.



Commonwealth Secretary General Dr Patricia Scotland (purple dress) and Ugandan president Yoweri Kagame Museveni at State House on March 16, 2021. PHOTO/TFU.

Source: Daily Monitor, Wednesday March 17, 2021:

<https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/national/commonwealth-lauds-museveni-for-covid-19-response-3325576>

See also: State House News, Tuesday March 16, 2021: <https://www.statehouse.go.ug/media/news/2021/03/16/commonwealth-lauds-president-covid-response>

Effect of COVID-19: Six Students Give Birth during UCE Examinations

According to Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEb), six candidates had so far given birth during the ongoing Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) examinations. The six are from Northern and Eastern districts of the country and are among hundreds of learners who conceived during the long holiday that started with the closure of schools in March 2020, as one of the measures taken by the government to control the spread of coronacoronavirus (COVID-19) disease.



Source and more details: The Observer, Monday March 15, 2021: <https://observer.ug/education/68846-6-students-give-birth-during-uce-examinations>

Death of President Magufuli: Museveni Declares 14 Days To Mourn "True Friend" Magufuli

Shocking news of President John Pombe Magufuli were given by the Tanzanian Vice President Samia Suluhu Hassan who noted that the President died as a result of heart complications on Thursday March 18, 2021. Heads of States within the East African Community and beyond read their condolence messages.

In his statement issued on Thursday March 18, President Museveni declared a 14-day period of mourning in honor of the deceased leader. He also proclaimed that the flags of Uganda and that of East African Community shall be flown at half-mast throughout Uganda's missions abroad.

This implies that under in which they comforted the people of Tanzania and prayed for calm to prevail. According to the Tanzanian Constitution, the Vice President, Samia Suluhu Hassan becomes the President and this means that she writes history as the first female leader of the East African nation since its independence from Britain in late 1961.



President Museveni (left) listens as Tanzanian President John Pombe Magufuli (right) gestures during the signing of the key agreement on oil pipeline last year. PHOTO | COURTESY

Source and more details: Daily Monitor Sunday March 21, 2021:
<https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/national/museveni-declares-14-days-to-mourn-true-friend-magufuli-3329898>

Also see: VOA News: Samia Hassan Poised to Become Tanzania's First Woman President www.voanews.com

The 2021 Presidential Election Petition: Justice Kisakye Gives Dissenting Judgment in Kyagulanyi's Case

Minutes after the Supreme Court allowed Robert Kyagulanyi's election petition withdrawal with no costs attached, attempts by Justice Esther Kisakye to deliver a minority judgment ended embarrassingly as her colleagues walked out on her.

Justice Esther Kisakye of the Supreme Court disagreed with eight Justices in their decision on two applications arising from the presidential election petition filed by former presidential candidate Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu.

Kyagulanyi petitioned the Supreme Court to challenge President Museveni's victory in the presidential elections. At the start of the petition hearing, Kyagulanyi first filed an application seeking to be given more time to amend his petition and introduce new grounds. He filed another seeking to file additional affidavits and another seeking to withdraw the whole petition.

On Thursday March 18, the two applications were dismissed by the eight Justices led by Chief Justice Alfonse Owiny Dollo on grounds that a presidential election petition cannot be amended due to the strict timelines within which it should be determined. However, Justice Kisakye in her

dissenting judgment said that the reasons advanced by Kyagulanyi were more than unusual circumstances and therefore his applications should have all been allowed; that it was not right for the Attorney General to argue the way he did on the strict timelines because the issue of amending petitions has happened before in the presidential election petition of Amama Mbabazi and therefore it cannot be unlawful.



Lady Justice Dr Esther Kisakye. Courtesy photo

Source: The Independent, Friday March 19, 2021:

<https://www.independent.co.ug/justice-kisakye-gives-dissenting-judgement-in-kyagulanyis-case/>

The Quest for Justice: *Bobi Wine petitions Chief of Defence Forces over Detained NUP Members*

Mr. Robert Kyagulanyi alias Bobi Wine, yesterday petitioned the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF), Gen. David Muhoozi, with five demands for release of his party supporters who are in army detention. He also demanded that the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces ceases trying civilians in military courts.

The National Unity Platform leader and former Presidential candidate Robert Kyagulanyi on Wednesday March 16, 2021 wrote to the Chief of Defence Forces Gen. David Muhoozi and the Minister of Defence Adolf Mwesige demanding for answers for the missing party supporters whose number had risen from 423 to 512. The petition was taken by a group of NUP leaders including party spokesperson, Mr. Joel Ssenyonyi but their attempt to deliver it to Gen. Muhoozi's office at Mbuya were futile as they were blocked at the Barracks' Quarter Guard.



Police officers whisk away NUP president Robert Kyagulanyi after he addressed a press conference at the party offices in Kampala, Uganda, on March 16, 2021. PHOTO/ ABUBAKER LUBOWA

Source: Daily Monitor, Wednesday March 17, 2021:

<https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/national/bobi-petitions-cdf-over-detained-nup-members-3325298>

The Fight against Child Abuse: *Abusive Mother Arrested, Child Gets Bursary up to University*

The woman who was captured in a viral video beating her child, was arrested in Bwaise, a city suburb, at a home where she had just got a job to look after children a few days ago.

Ms. Patience Owimana, in her 30s and former convict in an attempted murder of her father, had been on the run after she allegedly beat her child Elvin Ssebandeke in Kyazanga, Lwengo district. The Spokesperson of Criminal Investigations Directorate, Mr. Charles Twiine, said upon getting information that she was wanted by Police, she stole the property of her husband Charles Mawanda in Kyazanga and escaped to Luweero.

Ssebandeke was rescued and a local organization has contacted Police to allow them to treat him and pay his school fees up to University level.



A screen grab from the video that has since gone viral on social media, shows Patience Owimana severely beating the child. Police is yet to arrest the suspect who has since gone into hiding

Source: Daily Monotor, Tuesday March 16, 2021:

<https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/national/abusive-mother-arrested-child-gets-bursary-up-to-varsity-3324812>

The New Face of Traffic Police: Police unveils new traffic uniform

Uganda Police Force de-gazetted four of its 17 uniforms. The de-gazetted ones include the white traffic uniform, brown camouflage won by Anti-stock theft unit, Blue marine police uniform and the dark blue uniform won by aviation police.



AIGP Kasirgya unveils the new police uniforms. PHOTO @PoliceUg

Source: The Independent, Monday March 15, 2021:

<https://www.independent.co.ug/police-unveils-new-traffic-uniform/>

Wins for Uganda: Uganda Airlines Wins World's Youngest Aircraft Fleet Award 2021

The national carrier, Uganda Airlines was announced as the winner of the aviation world's youngest Aircraft fleet award of 2021.

Uganda Airlines which is just a year and about a month old and has a fleet of 6 aircrafts defeated other airlines including Sky Airline and jetSmart from South America, airBaltic from Europe and Asia's Salam Air.



Source: 93.3KFM News, Wednesday March 17, 2021:

<https://www.kfm.co.ug/news/uganda-airlines-wins-worlds-youngest-aircraft-fleet-award-2021.html>

Regional News | East African Community: Samia Suluhu Hassan – Tanzania's New President

On Wednesday March 17, 2021, Samia Suluhu had the task of announcing to Tanzanians that President John Magufuli had died and now she has taken his place as the country's Head of State.

First elected as Magufuli's running mate in 2015, she was re-elected last year along with him and, according to the Constitution; she should serve out the rest of the five-year term in the top job. She becomes Africa's only current female national leader because the Ethiopian presidency is largely a ceremonial role and joins the short list of women on the continent to have run their countries.



Source and details at: BBC World

News/Africa: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-56444575>

CONCLUDING PHRASE

Whoever you are, wherever you are, there is an opportunity for you to stand up for someone's rights today. We all have a great calling to speak about human rights every time everywhere so that as many people as possible can have information and realize the importance of working as one to promote peaceful co-existence.