

Profiles of EALA contestants

News

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As contestants for the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) await a decision in the East African Court of Justice, politicians are already jostling for the nine coveted slots.

On May 10, the regional court will make a ruling on a petition filed by DP legal advisor Mukasa Mbidde challenging the rules of procedure for electing members to EALA to allow small parties represented in Parliament to also send at least a representative to the regional assembly. Today Emma Mutaizibwa profile's some of the aspiring candidates.



Sarah Kagingo

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In 1997, Kagingo became only the second female Guild President (after Norah Njuba) at Makerere University.

She says she was only 14 and at Trinity College Nabbingo when she was inspired into leadership by the late UPDF officer Brig. Noble Mayombo.

“My priority is going to be on agriculture. Our comparative advantage is the arable land. We have an East African Common market, we should take advantage of and deliver finished products.

If we do add value, we can become the food basket for the region,” argues Kagingo, who has been working as a research and development manager for an agricultural association, Akiba.

Kwame Rugunda

If ICT minister Dr Ruhakana Rugunda plans to keep an aristocratic legacy, then his son Kwame Rugunda is the anointed heir. Kwame runs a global broadcasting and telecommunications business in Uganda.

He will rely on his eloquence and clout of his father who is at the forefront of his campaign to win a seat in Arusha. However Gen Elly Tumwine thinks Kwame stands a better chance in the Kigezi sub-region in 2016.



Daniel Omara Atubo

Former Lands minister Omara Atubo lost his Otuke seat in the 2011 parliamentary elections.

Once, an avowed critic of the regime in his UPC heyday, Atubo is seeking the Speakership of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) on the NRM ticket.

His appointment could placate the sentiments of NRM supporters in Lango, after Museveni won there for the first time during the 2011 polls.

It will be Uganda’s chance to appoint a Speaker at the assembly, after AbdiRahin Abd’s reign comes to an end later this year.

Abbas Agaba

The NRM's former national youth leader is trying to realign himself within the NRM politburo after falling out with Hassan Basajjabalala, the chairperson of the NRM Entrepreneurship league.

Insiders believe he will likely seek support from his new ally, Prime Minister and NRM Secretary General, Amama Mbabazi.

Dora Byamukama

Former Mwenge South MP Dora Byamukama has a cerebral legal mind with an admirable track-record at the EALA seat in Arusha. However, she will have to emerge out of a crowded pool of NRM contestants if she wants to return to Arusha.



Hope Mwesigye

seasoned politician, canny operator and often ruffles feathers at the political pulpit. Though there is still a deadlock over parity in regard to party representation, she will likely be a top contender for the seat.

Suzan Nampijja Lukyamuzi (CP)

Nampijja, daughter to maverick lawmaker Ken Lukyamuzi, is standing on the Conservative Party ticket. However, she will only be eligible if the regional court allows the Mbidde petition.

Maj John Kazoora

A former liberation struggle army officer, Kazoora is Defence secretary of the FDC party. He was a founder of the Parliamentary Advocacy Forum (Pafo) in the Seventh Parliament, and agitated for reform in the ruling NRM party.

Pafo would later dovetail its interests with other regime critics to combine with Reform Agenda under Dr Kizza Besigye to form FDC.

Anita Among

It's a candidacy that has deeply polarized the FDC. Anita Among is loved and loathed in nearly equal measure. There have been complaints from her party colleagues that she got hefty funding from controversial businessman Hassan Basajjabalaba of NRM.

Mukasa Mbidde (DP)

The flamboyant DP legal advisor secured an injunction at the East African Court of Justice, challenging the election of Uganda's representatives to EALA.

Previously, representation was premised on the numerical strength of each party. The NRM often had the lion's share with seven seats while the FDC would take the other two seats.

But Mbidde will be awaiting the ruling to see if the regional court will change the rules of electing representatives to the assembly.

Ingrid Turinawe

This FDC iron lady is a rabble-rousing character, who always keeps television viewers on the edge of their seats. She engages the police in cat-and-mouse chases and was recently the victim of the infamous breast-attack by the police.

Ben Wacha (Independent)

Many political commentators agree that the former Oyam North MP should have been Speaker but the NRM juggernaut in Parliament always dented his chances.

Standing on the Independent ticket, Wacha, a conscientious, moderate and experienced legal mind, will for the umpteenth time attempt to become Speaker but this time at the regional Parliament.

Hope Mwesigye

If there is anyone likely to give Atubo a run for his money on becoming EALA Speaker, it will be former Agriculture minister Hope Mwesigye.

Mwesigye will tap into the leverage of her in-law, Premier Amama Mbabazi. It's not clear yet who Museveni will pick amongst Atubo and Mwesigye in case the two are elected by the 9th Parliament.

Capt Ruhinda Maguru

He is a former aide of the President, who attempted to unseat his boss during the 2011 NRM primaries. However, many dismissed him as a jester.

Ruhinda joined the NRA rebellion at 17, but returned to school later. Today, he holds a bachelor's degree in Law and Master's degree in Economic Policy Management from Makerere University.

Lydia Wanyoto

Wanyoto, who is seeking a third term, faces a tall order if she is to return to EALA. However she is a persuasive campaigner and is, apparently, not ruling herself out of the race for Speakership, if she is elected.

Salaamu Musumba

A former Bugabula South MP and now FDC vice president, Salaamu Musumba is a