

Africa News
April 30, 2004 Friday

Press Set to Discuss Information Bill

BYLINE: New Vision

THE Uganda Parliamentary Press Association (UPPA) is set to discuss the Access to Information Bill.

The bill was tabled in Parliament by information minister Nsaba Buturo recently.

UPPA chairman Henry Mukasa said journalists met at Collin Hotel Mukono on Wednesday to discuss the proposed legislation on access to information. Information was significant to the media fraternity.

"The proposed legislation is significant to the media and a proper understanding of how it's going affect our work is paramount. Experts will dissect the Bill, give regional and international underpinnings to enable scribes make an input when the bill is brought to Parliament," he said.

Mukasa said the discussion will involve experts who will give regional and international underpinnings to enable the scribes make an input when the bill is under scrutiny before the parliamentary legal affairs committee.

UPPA is an association of journalists who cover Parliamentary proceedings.

The association aims at promoting professionalism and ethical conduct among its members through regular training, in form of short courses.

Africa News
May 3, 2004 Monday

'No Ugandan Has Monopoly of Ideas'

BYLINE: The Monitor

No single Ugandan can claim to have a monopoly of ideas, a government minister has said. "Nobody has a monopoly of ideas and governance,"

Information minister Nsaba Buturo said at the weekend in Mukono. "We must have a culture of tolerance. If I don't agree with you, you can still live in this country. We must allow national good to prevail."

He made the remarks at a seminar for Parliamentary journalists at Collin Hotel in Mukono. The seminar focused largely on the recently tabled Access to Information Bill. Buturo was optimistic that once the bill is passed into law, it would enhance good governance in the country.

He took a swipe at the corrupt. He said their evil deeds are about to catch up with them as the law will clamp down on them. Said Buturo: "This bill when passed is another nail in the coffin for those who are accessing resources from the state coffers for selfish reasons."

The minister said that the watchdog work of journalists would be eased, through willingness from government to disseminate information.

"We want to move away from the politics of secrecy to the politics of openness," he said. He also promised that whistleblowers would be protected by the state.

In the bill, a person may lodge a complaint with the Inspector General of Government in case an information officer in a ministry has denied him or her access to information.

Africa News

May 4, 2004 Tuesday

Uganda; Buturo Backs Bill

BYLINE: New Vision

BODY:

Information state minister Nsaba Buturo has said if the Access to Information Bill becomes law, it will end the culture of secrecy in the government.

He was on Friday addressing members of the Parliamentary Press Association who were discussing the Bill at Colline Hotel, Mukono.

"It will end the culture of government by secrecy," Buturo said.

The journalists criticised the minister for not involving them in the bill's formative stage.

They wanted access to cabinet information that is fully protected under section 2 of the bill.