

# [***Uganda's president appoints son as top commander of the army, raising succession concerns***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BKY-T6T1-JC5B-G2XF-00000-00&context=1516831)

The Associated Press

March 21, 2024 Thursday 10:10 PM GMT

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**Section:** INTERNATIONAL NEWS

**Length:** 436 words

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**Dateline:** KAMPALA, Uganda

**Body**

KAMPALA, Uganda — Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni on Thursday appointed his son as top commander of the military, a controversial move in a country where many have long believed Museveni is grooming his eldest child for the presidency.

Museveni's son, [*Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba*](https://apnews.com/article/uganda-president-museveni-son-politics-twitter-8255f03ff4714906803eb5248b60141e), has recently been holding rallies around the country, in violation of a law barring serving army officers from engaging in partisan ***politics***. But Kainerugaba says his activities — including the recent launch of an activist group known as the Patriotic League of Uganda — are nonpartisan and aimed at encouraging patriotism among Ugandans.

Kainerugaba was promoted to his new post late Thursday, according to a military statement. Two of his closest advisors have been given ministerial posts in a reshuffle of government ministers, also announced late Thursday, fueling speculation that Museveni supports Kainerugaba's political activities.

Museveni, who first took power by force in 1986 and has been elected six times, has not said when he would retire. He has no rivals within the ruling National Resistance Movement party — the reason many believe the military will have a say in choosing his successor. Kainerugaba's allies are strategically deployed in command positions across the security services, according to observers.

Uganda's next presidential election will be held in 2026.

Kainerugaba’s supporters say he offers Uganda the opportunity of a peaceful transfer of power in a country that has not had one since independence from British colonial rule in 1962. But opposition leaders, critics and others eager for change say his rise is leading the East African country toward hereditary rule.

Kainerugaba joined the army in the late 1990s, and his rise to the top of the armed forces has been controversial, with critics dubbing it the “Muhoozi Project” to prepare him for the presidency.

Museveni and Kainerugaba have long denied the existence of such a scheme, but it appears [*a transition is underway*](https://apnews.com/article/africa-uganda-yoweri-museveni-east-kampala-8d6681b18806cdda499eb0a8edba25b0) as Museveni, 79, serves what could be his last term without a recognizable successor within the civilian government.

Kainerugaba has most recently been serving as a senior presidential advisor in charge of special operations, after his father removed him as infantry commander in 2022. At the time, Kainerugaba was responsible for [*a series of offensive tweets*](https://apnews.com/article/africa-kenya-uganda-yoweri-museveni-east-185637ad1eb252e66881307302fb4bfa), including an unprovoked one in which he threatened to capture the capital of neighboring Kenya. He has previously served as the commander of an elite group of special forces protecting the first family.

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