

ANYONE WHO ATTACKS UGANDA WILL BE

PHOTOS BY PPU AND EDDIE SSÉJJOBA



By Umaru Kashaka

Anybody who dares to attack Uganda will be shot dead, President Yoweri Museveni has warned.

He issued the warning yesterday while campaigning at Nyakasanga playground in Nyamwamba division, Kasese municipality.

The rally in Kasese district, which was his first campaign event of the day, marked the start of his campaigns in the Rwenzori sub-region.

Museveni, who was speaking Rutooro and Runyankole through a translator, said Uganda will remain like ripe yellow bananas (amenvu), which cannot be touched or eaten.

"Uganda will remain like yellow bananas; you see them but you cannot reach out to eat them; whoever touches it [Uganda] is hit by the bullet. So, those who are greedy and want to eat the yellow bananas that are not theirs, should stay in their homeland," the President said.

Museveni, who is the National Resistance Movement (NRM) flag-bearer, said the people of Kasese know what it means not to have peace because they stay near DR Congo, which has been dogged by conflicts for over three decades.

"You, the people of Kasese, you know that we foiled attempts by all the groups of people to destabilise Kasese and the mountains," Museveni, who was pleased to find peace and continued development in Kasese, said.

Museveni, who was accompanied by his daughter, Natasha Karugire, also told the residents of Kasese that they have seen Congolese refugees



Religious leaders, led by the Rt. Rev. Jackson Thembo Nzerebende, the retired bishop of South Rwenzori Diocese, pray for President Museveni during the rally

in their area who flee their country due to instability.

The President said Uganda is currently hosting 700,000 refugees from DR Congo, who cannot return to their country due to continued instability.

TRANSFORMING RWENZORI

Museveni made a commitment to further transform the Rwenzori sub-region.

"We have started repairing the old railway line from Malaba (border in Tororo district) and here, we shall construct a new standard gauge railway," he promised thousands of his enthusiastic supporters.

Museveni promised that his Government will build an international airport in Kasese to support tourism and open up the Rwenzori corridor.

He used the platform to re-echo the seven contributions the NRM has made to Uganda over the last 40 years, and emphasised the importance of

prioritisation.

"Some leaders who are not guerrillas like us want to touch everything at once, but prioritisation is how we built key roads in Kasese and across Uganda. It is true Kasese needs more road machinery, and we shall add it," Museveni said.

Regarding electricity, Museveni said every district now has power except Buvuma Island. The President said his Government is now taking electricity to every sub-county and promised that areas without electricity in Kasese will be connected if he is re-elected.

On social infrastructure, Museveni said Kasese is doing well, with 260 government primary schools and 25 government secondary schools.

Kasese district and municipality have 215 parishes, with 130 of them hosting at least one government primary school, while only 85 are still

lacking. Twenty-one sub-counties in the district do not have a government secondary school.

Museveni further said out of 44 sub-counties in Kasese, one has a general hospital, two have health centres (HC) IV and 28 have HCs III. There are 14 sub-counties that do not have a health facility; HCIII, HCIV or a hospital.

Museveni revealed government plans to upgrade 13 HCs II to HCs III. These are: Nyakatonzi, Kibiri, Kayanza, Mbuga, Bughalitsa, Kabirizi upper, Kanyatsi, Rugendabara, Kalingwe, Kahokya, Kilembe, Kisojo and Ibanda.

He also promised to construct new HCs III in the sub-counties of Kyabarungira and Kyarumba, as well as in town councils of Maliba and Kinyamaseke.

On wealth creation, the President urged the people of Kasese to listen to the Government like many people



Museveni and his daughter, Natasha Karugire, addressing NRM supporters in Bunyangabu district

have done in order to get rid of poverty. He said development alone does not translate into prosperity unless households embrace productive activities.

Museveni implored Ugandans to implement the four-acre model of farming to create wealth. He cited George Matongo of Nakaseke district, who produces 900lbs of milk daily and earns over sh21m every month, despite living far from a tarmac road.

He urged the residents of Kasese to focus on lifting their households out of poverty, especially now that the Government is providing funds to support them through the Parish Development Model (PDM).

Museveni warned that he had received reports of individuals stealing PDM funds and vowed to investigate and arrest the culprits.

He said as locals concentrate on creating wealth using PDM funds, the Government will

work on roads, schools and electricity.

Regarding job creation, Museveni said employment comes mainly from commercial agriculture, services, ICT and factories — not the Government.

He said factories alone have created 1.3 million jobs, compared to 480,000 government jobs. He encouraged the youth to utilise skilling centres to acquire employable and wealth-generating skills.

WHAT OTHER LEADERS SAID

The second NRM national vice-chairperson (female) and Speaker of Parliament, Anita Among, thanked the President for maintaining peace in Kasese despite its sharing a border with DR Congo.

Among, who spoke before the President and invited him to address the residents, asked the Government to upgrade Kasese Airfield to an

SHOT DEAD – MUSEVENI

international airport.

She appreciated Museveni for funding interventions on River Nyamwamba, which has long caused flooding and displacement of people.

Kasese district NRM chairperson James Mbahimba commended the President for restoring peace and spurring development, citing the construction of schools, hospitals, business growth and improved access to safe water.

Out of the 867 rural villages in Kasese, 404 have access to a safe water source, representing an average coverage of 47%. Only 463 villages (53%) do not have safe water sources.

Mbahimba thanked Museveni for wealth creation programmes such as PDM and Emyooga, saying they have improved household incomes.

MOVES TO BUNYANGABU

From Kasese, Museveni went to Bunyangabu district where he held his second and final rally at Kibiito Secondary School playground.

Here, he reminded a mammoth crowd of residents of the peace that Uganda has enjoyed for the last 40 years.

"I thank God that a child can be born, grow, study, marry and raise a family in a peaceful country. This is one of the greatest fruits of the NRM struggle. We see development everywhere: roads, electricity, water, telephones, railway and the Internet," Museveni said.

He explained the delay on the Mityana-Mubende-Fort Portal road, which he said was due to scattered resources.



President Museveni (left) being received by the Anita Among (second-left) and other officials as he arrived at Nyakasanga playground in Kasese municipality where he launched his Rwenzori sub-region campaign

"But our young cadres now understand prioritisation and the road will be completed."

Museveni was also pleased that Bunyangabu alone has eight government secondary schools, noting that in 1961, Uganda had only six A-level schools.

"This shows how far we have come," he said.

WHAT VOTERS SAY

Amos Isebayanda, a resident of Kikongo town council in Busongora North, Kasese, thanked the NRM Government for always maintaining peace and order in the district.

He, however, said considering the recent attacks and the tension in Kasese, youth

leaders should be involved in promoting national values, volunteerism and civic responsibility to ensure that they become ambassadors of peace and unity rather than sowing seeds of discord.

Catherine Asabahebwa, a 32-year-old resident of Railway village in Central division, Kasese, thanked the President for empowering women and providing them with equal opportunities as their male counterparts.

She said statistics since January 1986 when the NRM Government came to power indicate a steady rise in female political participation in elective offices, as well as in formal and informal employment.



A singer, Lady Mariam – known for her song, 'Tinda Tine' – pairs up with Kasese district NRM chairperson Mbahimba in a performance



NRM supporters flash the party's sign at Museveni's rally in Kasese municipality