

TAREHE SITA ACTIVITIES SPUR EDUCATION, HEALTH

By Vision Reporter

Week one of the 45th Tarehe Sita anniversary celebrations closed with Kigezi sub-region receiving a major boost to education, health and infrastructure, as the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) deepens community engagement ahead of the national celebrations.

Tarehe Sita, marked every February 6, commemorates the start of the National Resistance Army's armed struggle in 1981. This year's theme is: *Defending the Gains of the Revolution and Honouring the Sacrifices of the Freedom Fighters: A Call for National Unity, Peace and Socio-economic Transformation.*

Activities in Kabale, Kisoro, Rubanda, Rukiga, Rukungiri and Kanungu have highlighted the region's historical significance as a base for the Front for National Salvation during Uganda's liberation struggle.

SPIRITED DEBATES

On Friday, the Tarehe Sita activities shifted the focus to the education sector, with spirited secondary school debates centring on defending the gains of the 1986 revolution.

In Kabale district, Bishop Kivengere Girls' School, Muyebe, debated St Gertrude's Girls' Vocational Secondary School, Mutolere, on the motion: "This House Asserts that defending the gains of the 1986 revolution and honouring the freedom fighters is essential for achieving national unity, peace and socio-economic transformation in Uganda."

At Kisoro Municipal Council, Seseme Girls' Secondary School edged St Agatha Girls Secondary School, Kakore, after presenting compelling arguments on peace, stability, gender equality and national transformation.

Rukungiri municipal council hosted an equally competitive contest between Immaculate



Lt. Gen. Okiding

Heart Girls' School, Nyakibale, and St Paul Secondary School, Bukinda. At the end of the regional series, St Paul Secondary School, Bukinda, emerged as the overall winner.

UPDF officers who oversaw the debates included Col Robert Ngabirano, Lt Col Patrick Mukundane, Lt Col Robert Kamuntu and Maj. Josephat Tumukunde.

They applauded students for their "intellect and courage", noting that the debates

COMMEMORATION BEGINS

Regional activities were launched by Prime Minister Robinah Nabbanja at Shaza Grounds in Kisoro district. She praised President Yoweri Museveni for "his visionary leadership" in building a disciplined, professional force that protects Uganda's sovereignty.

She emphasised the Government's commitment to peace, saying the UPDF "stands with the people under all circumstances," citing their support during the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters.

Huda Abason Oleru, the state minister for defence (veterans affairs), said the UPDF is committed to promoting peace and socio-economic transformation.

Jacob Oboth-Oboth, the defence minister, said this year's theme reminds Ugandans to protect the progress secured by freedom fighters and called for unity and collective effort "to sustain those gains."

Oleru urged residents to embrace socio-economic transformation and fight poverty.

Deputy Chief of Defence Forces, Lt. Gen. Sam Okiding, speaking on behalf of Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, said Tarehe Sita remains the foundation of Uganda's achievements, including peace and regional stability.

strengthened critical thinking, public speaking and civic responsibility.

In another significant boost to education, the UPDF donated scholastic materials

valued at sh75m to 93 schools in the Kigezi sub-region.

Maj. Tumukunde led the team that delivered the items to Kayungwe Primary School in Kanungu district. Schools received textbooks, pens, pencils and notebooks.

He thanked stakeholders supporting the 2026 Tarehe Sita activities, including New Vision Printing and Publishing Corporation Ltd, which donated textbooks to schools in need.

On the health front, a UPDF medical team pitched camp at Chahafi Health Centre IV in Gisha village, Kisoro municipality, offering free medical and surgical services.

Residents received treatment for malaria, hernia and other types of minor surgery. The team is also offering dental and eye care, HIV/AIDS screening and counselling, free circumcision, antenatal services and general medical treatment.