

Garbage, roads, jobs: Issues driving Masindi mayoral contest

BY ISMAIL BATEGEKA

MASINDI. Political temperatures are rising in Masindi ahead of tomorrow's polls, where the race for mayor has become one of the most talked-about contests in the municipality.

From market stalls to taxi parks, residents are debating who is best placed to lead the fast-growing town through challenges of poor services, unemployment, and rapid urbanisation.

Masindi Municipality, the commercial heart of Bunyoro Sub-region, has over the years struggled with issues such as poor garbage management, broken roads, flooding, and limited jobs for the growing youth population. Several voters say the next mayor must be practical, accessible, and focused on ser-

vice delivery rather than politics alone. Four candidates are in the race, each presenting themselves as the right choice to steer the municipality forward.

The incumbent, Mr Ronald Kyomuhendo, is seeking re-election on the independent ticket. Having served one term, Mr Kyomuhendo says continuity is important to complete ongoing projects.

"I know the problems of Masindi very well because I have been in this office. We have improved revenue collection and tried to open up roads despite limited funds," he said during a community meeting earlier this month.

However, some residents are disgruntled and do not want Mr Kyomuhendo back in office.

Several traders in Masindi Main Market complain about poor sanita-

A VOTER SPEAKS OUT

“

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James Byaruhanga, a boda boda rider and resident of Masindi Municipality.

tion, while residents of low-lying areas say flooding remains a serious problem during the rainy season.

"Things are still the same. Rubbish piles up, roads get muddy, and nothing changes," said Ms Aisha Kisembo, a food vendor in the central market.

The ruling National Resistance Move-

ment (NRM) party has fielded Mr Rogers Amanyire as its flag bearer. His candidacy gained momentum after Mr Peter Wobusobozi, who had earlier shown interest in the race, withdrew and publicly endorsed him.

"As mayor, I will work closely with government ministries to improve roads, street lighting, and youth skills training," Mr Amanyire told supporters at a rally in Nyangahya Division.

Forum for Democratic Change candidate Isaac Bongomin is running on a message of accountability, transparency, and people-centred leadership.

"Our town collects revenue, but residents do not see value for their money. We need accountability, not excuses," Mr Bongomin said.

Ms Milly Mateba, who is contesting as an independent candidate, pledged

to promote employment of youth and women as well as cleanliness in Masindi.

"Women and young people are the backbone of this town, yet they suffer the most. My leadership will prioritise them," Ms Mateba said.

Voters said they want better waste management and job opportunities for young people.

"Whoever becomes mayor should first clean the town. Garbage is everywhere," said boda boda rider James Byaruhanga.

"We don't want handouts. We want support to start businesses," said Ms Diana Akello, a youth group leader in Karujubu Division.

Mr George Kato, a retired civil servant, said: "Even if resources are small, they should be used well."