BY STEPHEN OTAGE

Govt right to shut down Internet - NFSU director

KAMPALA: The director of the National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU) has defended the Ugandan government's decision to shut down the Internet during the recent presidential and parliamentary elections, saying the move helped maintain peace and security.

Addressing the media during India's Republic Day celebrations at the Indian High Commission in Kampala yesterday, Air Commodore KR Thaakar, said the decision resulted in relatively peaceful elections.

"Security concerns of any nation are perceived by the leadership, and the solutions are also determined by the leadership. In their wisdom, they decided on the measures to adopt, and at the end of it, we had a fairly peaceful election, which is the most important thing in my view," Mr Thaakar said.

Mr Thaakar explained that NFSU, the only such institution established by the Indian government outside India, is a strategic collaboration between the Governments of Uganda and India.

The university is mandated to offer graduate academic programmes in forensic sciences, cyber security, digital security and online security to Uganda's security agencies, including the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) and the Uganda Police Force.

Meanwhile, the Indian High Commissioner to Uganda, Mr Uppender Singh Rawat, said January 26 holds great historical significance for India, as it marks the adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1950 and the country's transition into a sovereign republic.

As Uganda also marked its 40th Liberation Day, Mr Rawat congratulated President Museveni on his seventh consecutive election victory, adding that peace and stability in the country have strengthened bilateral relations between India and Uganda in areas such

The Indian High Commissioner to Uganda, Mr Uppender Singh Rawat (left), and members of the Indian community inspect an online visa application system that the Indian High Commission has introduced. PHOTO/STEPHEN OTAGE

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have strong civil relations, India is offering scholarships in various technical fields, and the National Forensic Sciences University in Jinja is providing support in cyber and homeland security," Mr Rawat said.

The Chairman of the Indian Association of Uganda, Mr Paresh Mehta, thanked Ugandans for conducting peaceful elections. He said the Indian community, which has lived in Uganda for over 100 years, remains committed to continuing its charitable initiatives, including free heart surgeries, blood donation drives and scholarships for Ugandans to study in India.

He said as a business community, they are committed to supporting the government's Vision 2040 and creating employment, adding that Indian-owned businesses currently contribute about 65 percent of Uganda's tax revenue.

as trade, politics and community development.

"We are doing very well in offering support to the Staff College Kimaka. We