

Tororo hopes for lasting

By Daniel Edyegu

At the White House in Tororo, a name coined for the two storeyed main district administration block, the external serenity belies battles raging within. The lawn of the compound is well kept and surroundings are visibly neat. The streets are equally calm and neat. However, there has been a raging battle for a district split that has almost paralysed all local government engagements.

As Tororo district hosts the 33rd national NRM Day celebrations at Muwafu Primary School in Mulanda sub-county today, the desire for district status is an issue many residents feel should be high on the agenda.

James Wandera, the assistant bursar of Rock High School, a government-aided secondary school in Tororo municipality, says given the golden opportunity the district has got to host the national day, the politicians must explore avenues of casting aside their sentiments and work towards unification.

Wandera says given the sprouting infrastructural development at Malaba entry border point and the industrial infrastructures at the district, the leaders must find a way to realign their interests for the benefit of the district as a whole.

"There is a lot of mushrooming infrastructural developments in Tororo district of late at the border, in the health sector, the schools and the manufacturing sector. The only lacking ingredient is unity and



Solar street lights in Tororo Municipality. The town is growing despite the deadlock at the district council. Photos by Daniel Edyegu

THE MAJOR BONE OF CONTENTION HAS BEEN WHETHER TORORO MUNICIPALITY, IN CASE OF THE SPLIT, WILL BE PART OF TORORO COUNTY OR WEST BUDAMA

cohesion at the top. Based on the above, I feel that my brothers and sisters involved in the district tribal conflict should use this opportunity

to respectfully table their grievances to find reconciliation." "They are constantly watering down the implementation of

government programmes and as a result, some areas are lagging behind as far as development is concerned. A peaceful home with no sign of division weakens the enemy and strengthens your arsenal," Wandera says.

The tribal tension over territorial boundaries in Tororo between the Iteso and Jopadhola dates back to the 1940s. To calm the tension, the colonial administrators in 1947 demarcated Tororo and West

Budama counties to accommodate Iteso and Jopadhola respectively.

The prevailing cordial relationship in the interim led to intermarriages and growth of the two counties that have each birthed additional counties. In 1998, residents of Tororo County requested President Yoweri Museveni for a district. The then area MP Paul Etyang, while speaking at a rally in Molo sub-county, told the President that they were being marginalised and that they needed their own district.

The President then intervened and held meetings with Iteso and Jopadhola leaders to resolve the standoff.

Ignatius Okong Okiror, the former district vice-chairperson who attended the meetings with the President and was at the forefront of agitating for an independent district for the Iteso, says the quest for the new district was as a result of unfair distribution of resources.

At present, Tororo has 21 functional sub-counties, with four town councils and four counties. Pajwenda and Nabyoga have added to the two traditional town councils including Nagongera and Malaba. On the other hand, Tororo County has been split into Tororo County South and Tororo County North, while West Budama County was also split to form West Budama North and West Budama South.

For over 15 years, however, not much has been forthcoming from splitting of the original district into two local government administrative units.

The major bone of contention has

By Vision Reporter

In the last 10 years, Tororo district has seen an overhaul of the town and the rebirth of the industrial economy.

In Tororo Municipality, the previously rugged pot holed roads have been tarmacked, the main market is sprouting and the taxi park is refurbished.

The town that previously drowned in darkness at nightfall is now warmly lit with solar streetlights. Two cement factories and a phosphates industry have been established in the district.

Joel Ochieng, a Mobile money retailer on Bazaar street in Tororo town, says the installation of streetlights has helped to ease business.

"Previously, you could not carry on beyond 6:30pm for fear of thieves. But now we work up to 8:00pm," Ochieng says.

The good old days

John Paul Okanya, the Osukuru sub-county LC3 chairperson, says back in the 1960s, the district had Uganda Cement Industries (UCI), Tororo Industries Chemicals Ltd (TICAFU), the Jute factory

and numerous ginneries that sorted and processed cotton into lint and cotton seed.

UCI was a government corporation under the Uganda Development Corporation (UDC). It mainly manufactured cement and plastic pipes. The corporation operated the cement plants both in Tororo and Kasese districts. TICAFU, on the other hand, produced phosphate fertilizers and Dumsas pesticide, while the Jute factory mainly churned sisal sacks.

Enter Amin

Okanya says the industrial sector in Bukedi block was dealt a huge blow during the 1970s economic meltdown caused by president Iddi Amin.

Inflation rose from 4% at the start of the era in 1971 up to 219% in 1979 and 150%

at the close of the decade in 1980, according to Bank of Uganda statistics. Hydro electricity became irregular and insecurity was the order of the day.

"Most of the industries here slowly started to decline and ultimately wound up when they could not hold on any longer. Those that survived did so under very difficult conditions with barely any profit," Okanya recalls.

A long road

The post-Amin era was mainly a recovery period for the country with negligible gains, given the frequent regime changes.

At present, Tororo is gradually staggering back to its former industrial feet. Besides what stirred industrial growth in the district in the past like strategic location to the Malaba border post,

existence of a major railway line and mineral resources, additional ingredients such as reliable energy have re-ignited industrial growth.

"The NRM government and President Yoweri Museveni must be commended for the capital investments currently being undertaken in public energy and infrastructure. This is what is nurturing the conducive environment for all the ongoing industrial developments in the district and beyond," Okanya says.

Mineral rich town

Tororo is among the districts gifted with the most mineral deposits in the country. The district has the third largest phosphate deposits in the world buried underneath Sukulu hills in Osukuru and Rubongi sub-counties.

Other minerals in the district include limestone,

iron ore, magnite, titanium, columbine tantalite and vermiculite.

As for energy, Tororo has a 132KV sub-station along Tororo-Bugiri road. In December last year, the Government launched another expansive 10MW solar power scheme in the district, which will boost power.

New industries

Prominent industries recently set up include Guangzhou Dongsong Energy Group, a Chinese firm that has injected \$620m (about sh2.3 trillion) in phosphate mining in Osukuru and Rubongi sub-counties. President Museveni launched the firm in October last year.

But the industry that has attracted more investment in the district lately is cement production. Apart from the long existent Tororo Cement

Industries (TCI), which was birthed from the Government privatisation process in 1995, Hima Cement Ltd and the National Cement Ltd, a Kenyan firm producing the Simba cement brand, have already established factories in the district.

TCI Ltd currently produces 1.8 million metric tonnes of cement per annum and is already building a plant to produce an additional 1.4 million metric tonnes per annum. This will push the company's total annual cement production to 3.4 million metric tonnes.

While Hima Cement is injecting \$50m (about sh180b) in its new plant along Tororo-Mbale highway, the National Cement firm has established its \$40m (about sh144b) cement plant at Nyakesi village, along Tororo-Mbale highway. President Museveni launched Simba cement in August last year and the firm has already entered the market.

Given the continuous capital investment by the NRM government, there's live hope that Tororo district will undoubtedly regain its industrial status in the near future.

Tororo on road to regain former glory as top industrial town

unity ahead of NRM fete

been whether Tororo Municipality, in case of the split, will be part of Tororo county or West Budama. Not even the efforts undertaken by the Government to retrace the administrative boundaries from Uganda's colonial administrators in the UK have yielded much.

After the death of Apollo Jaramogi, the district chairperson in 2017, the demand for district status resurrected and it has stalled the by-election activities to find a new LC5 chairperson to date.

Like Wandera, the issue of unity is among the factors that Pheobe

Otaala, Uganda's Ambassador to Kenya, feels the residents and leaders should reflect on during the NRM national celebrations in the district.

Otaala says the residents and leaders should reflect on where the district came from and where they want it to head for the sake of future generations.

"The beauty of the NRM government under President Museveni is that it is all-inclusive without segregations according to tribe, religion or social status. Besides, both residents in West

Budama and Tororo County remarkably contributed to the liberation war that saw this government ascend to power. We must think of how to unite to push," Otaala says.

To drive her point home, Otaala cites the late Mzee Bright Omongin, the late Daudi Mo, Osere and Mzee Stephen Nyapidi, who directly contributed to the revolutionary struggle.

She also cites Iyolwa sub-county, where over 500 residents were killed in 1987 shortly after the NRA took power.

"All these scenarios indicate that together, we have thrived and sustained this district and regime until now. The district needs all of us to move to the next level," Otaala says.

Stella Imukutet Echiria, the district vice-chairperson says for over two years now, the district council has stayed dysfunctional. This, she explains, is due to the current challenges the district is facing in running its activities.

"This issue is before State House. The district council committees, district service commission and

the district executive are all redundant. We cannot recruit to fill any vacant positions in the district and the district council committees cannot monitor and evaluate the government schemes on ground," Imukutet says.

Interestingly, almost all the members of the district council are NRM, which is the more reason Imukutet feels there must be cohesion in resolving the deadlock.

If left unresolved, the consequences will spill over to the 2021 elections, which are barely two years away.

114 people to be awarded national medals

By Jeff Andrew Lule and Samantha Byakutaga

Over 110 Ugandans are to receive medals in recognition of their contribution towards the liberation struggle.

The medals will be awarded today by President Yoweri Museveni, who is also the chief guest during celebrations to mark the 33rd National Resistance Movement (NRM)/National Resistance Army (NRA) victory day anniversary.

The event will take place at the Muwafu Primary School Grounds in Nabuyoga sub-county, Tororo district.

The Minister for the Presidency, Esther Mbayo, on Wednesday revealed the President will award different categories of medals to distinguished Ugandans who played outstanding roles during the struggle and those who have contributed towards the advancement of the country.

Mbayo stressed that medals are a form of appreciation to Ugandans who go an extra mile to offer a unique service to their motherland.

This year's event will be celebrated under the theme: *A moment of glory that set a new chapter for unity, peace and prosperity in Uganda.*

She said leaders from various political groups were invited to the national celebrations, which she described as a celebration for all Ugandans.

January 26, 1986 is when the NRA, led by Museveni, captured power, overthrowing the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA).

Mbayo said since 1986 NRM has been working tirelessly to achieve a unified, peaceful and prosperous country.

She said although there is still much to be done, there is much more to celebrate.

Mbayo cited participatory



Esther Mbayo

democracy as one of the achievements in the 33 years of NRM leadership.

The unprecedented stability still continues to provide a significant contribution towards sustainable peace, unity and development within the country and the region.

Mbayo said because of the sustainable peace, Uganda has become a safe haven for refugees fleeing conflict around the region, becoming the largest refugee holding country in Africa and fifth in the world.

The increase in the literacy rate for Ugandans from 54% in 1991 to 72.2% in 2014 is attributed to the introduction of universal education both for primary and secondary levels and the construction more schools.

Water

Mbayo highlighted the increase in water mains per annum from less than 100km in 2013 to now over 1000km.

According to the National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC), the total network length was 14,838.56km as per September 2018.

Mbayo noted that a number of irrigation schemes have been improved and water storage capacity increased from 38.86 million cubic

metres in June 2017 to 39.32 million cubic metres by June 2018.

Economic growth

The 2018 Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) report released in December, also indicated that, Uganda's economy expanded by 6.8% in the first quarter of financial year 2018/2019.

This was occasioned by stellar performance in remittances from Ugandans abroad, industry, services, tourism and agriculture.

Mbayo said the 2018 World Bank report indicated that Ugandans abroad remitted \$1.24b, a demonstration of increased confidence in Ugandans that home is the best investment destination.

A review of information from the National Budget Framework Paper for the financial year 2019/2020 revealed that exports had risen from \$4.8b in financial year 2016/2017, to \$5.3b in financial year 2017/2018.

The Paper further emphasised that Uganda registered for the fifth year in a row a significant trade surplus of \$472m with countries in the East African Community. Mbayo said investment in hydropower dams at Karuma, Isimba and Bujagali and road networks are pointers to a vision of building a modern state.

The future

Mbayo said there was need to invest heavily in encouraging a mindset shift away from a passive attitude of dependency to one of self-sufficiency, innovation and an entrepreneurial spirit.

"Our rallying point should now focus on developing and nurturing a national value system to change citizens' mindsets, promote patriotism, enhance national identity and nurture a conducive ideological orientation."

List of people to be awarded medals on NRA/ NRM Victory day

GOLDEN JUBILEE MEDAL (CIVILIAN)

Mr. Benezeri Amooti Nyakabwa
Baryamwisiaki Conrad
Higiro Celestine
Kisembo Godfrey
Byamukama Francis (Deceased)
Ssalongo Samwiri Mafumu
Pamba John Baptist
Maliko Tinkamali (Deceased)
Basiga Kassiano
Kabanda Joseph
Kisitu George William
Mr. John Japheth Emmanuel Kintu
Bakojia Richard Seruwu
Mr. Kajja William
Mr. Lubowa Igombe Joseph
Mr. Ibanda Wycliffe
Hon. Justice James Ogola
Namwamba Wilberforce Angejo -principal education officer – BDLG
Wafula John Ogumbo
Fatuma Nasanga
AIGP Etyang Zekedia
Paul Owono (RIP)
Ms. Yedida Padde
Emmanuel Obbo Josel (Prime Minister of Tieng Adhola)
Canon Beatrice Owori
Obore Alfred
Dr. Okumu David Cyrus
Oketcho Sinambiyo
Osinde Robinah
Okong Leo Emong (R.I.P)
Paul Sande Emolot
Ekabat Samuel
Ekabat Emmamuel (RIP)
Kipengi Stephen Omwedo (GISO)
Okumu Viliran
Christopher Okoth (RIP)
Owino Obungila
Otti Kennedy Adhola
Hellen Owino
Gastafasi Opondo Podel (RIP)
Gokaldas Laxmidas Tanna
Mr. Y.Y. Ongango

Mr. Dominic Ochieng (Secretary for Security RC 4)

Mr. Samwiri Owono (R.I.P)
Mr. Okware Emmmanuel
Amb. Bennedatte Olowo Freres
Owor Geoffrey 90 (ex-policeman)
Othere Eria (RIP)
Onyazza Alosias (RIP)
Etori Metime
Arther Komusolo (RIP)
Ignatius Okiroi
David Okurut (RIP)
Oburu Joy Joseph
David Okolong
Okama Radice
Sheik Mohammed Kayiira
Mr. Kiwanuka Godfrey Galiwango

NALUBAAL MEDALS (CIVILIANS)

Maliro Gaston John
Kajja Peter Gyagenda
Mbasanze Christine
Onyang Livingstone (Rtd Teacher)
Yara Odinga (Teacher)
Omeja Oloka John Stephen (RIP)
Hussein Shire (RIP)
Okongo Jasper
Leopold Osudo (R.I.P)
Bagambaki Kaliisa Joseph
Mrs. Nalukwago Ssali Nalikka Agnes
Mrs. Sentume Janerose
Mzee Kasozi George
Hajji Ahmed Hirame
Hajji Hussein Mabuya
John Mugurusi
DAMU MEDALS (UPDF)
Col Fred Zakye
LUWERO TRIANGLE MEDALS (UPDF)
Lt. Col (Rtd) George Bigo
CPT Sabiti Abdul
LT Kamya Godfrey
2 LT Kasiye Joseph
CP Mwanje Idi, Luwero

Yusuf Kalemera, Luwero
Namazzi Christine, Luwero

MASABA STAR

Maj. G Kiruge Bizibu
Maj. P Waswa Kaaya
Maj. F Musana
Maj. BJ Lugarama
Maj. S Makona
Maj. S Bisegusi
Maj. Byoruganda Mwebesa
Maj. N Mugizi
Maj. D. Kaweesa

LUWERO TRIANGLE MEDAL (UPDF)

Maj. Fred Kimala (Rtd)
CPL Rwamwojo Stephen
CPL Katureebe Denis
PTE Kamugisha Benard

GOLDEN JUBILEE MEDAL (UPDF)

Capt (rtd) Deo Ateenyi Katagwe
Lt Charles Hassan Asimwe
Lt Josephine Wanyana K Nabulemu
WO1 Magara Leonard

RWENZORI STAR MEDAL (UPDF)

Capt Wakwu Mpiima (KAZI MOTO) (RIP)

POLICE OFFICERS

Honorary Medal

Dr. Mbonye John

Gallantry Star

SP Rusoke James

ASP Walugembe Musa

Meritorious Medal

SSP Agelo Rashid

SP Tumwesigye Francis

PC Pule Boniface

Silver 20+ Years Centenary Medal

AIP Batoraine Joram
No. 19691 Sgt. Nanteza Lecia, Mpiigi

Centenary Plus Medal

IP Wilson Edemacu Anania (Rtd)
IP Kato Samuel (Rtd)