

WE ARE RICHER THAN EVER BEFORE, SAYS

PHOTOS BY PPU AND EDDIE SSEJJUBA

By Umaru Kashaka

Uganda is richer than ever before, President Yoweri Museveni has said, urging all people to embrace government poverty alleviation programmes for prosperity.

He made the remarks at Kirambi Market Grounds in Mitooma district yesterday while campaigning for re-election in the 2026 general election on the National Resistance Movement (NRM) party ticket.

"Uganda has never been as rich as it is now. You can go and read [the country's] history," Museveni, who was accompanied by the First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, Mrs Janet Museveni, told thousands of residents.

He noted at his first rally of the day that people who have listened to them since they started preaching wealth creation in the 1960s have also become rich.

"Many people have made money from coffee and they are well off as individuals but also the whole country has benefited because we now produce nine million bags from three million a long time ago [1986]. We are also producing 5.3 billion litres from two million, just the same as maize," he said.

Museveni emphasised that he has been advising Ugandans since 1995 to only go for high-value activities from which they can get good money even if they do them on a small scale.

ENTERPRISES TO FIGHT POVERTY

He recalled that he, therefore, identified seven activities or enterprises for Ugandans to engage in to get rid of poverty. These, he said, include coffee, fruits, zero-grazing dairy farming, fish-farming, poultry for eggs, piggy for non-Muslims and homestead food crops such as cassava and bananas.

Museveni showed on TV screens erected at the venue some Ugandans who accepted their advice and were now doing well.

These include Joseph Basangwa, a prominent poultry farmer from Kamuli district, who turned to farming after failing to win a district leadership seat in 2007.

WEALTH CREATION STORIES

"Basangwa is selling 110,000 eggs a day, earning sh20m daily, which is sh600m a month and sh7.2b a year. He listened to our message. I advised him to join wealth creation, and now he employs 300 people," Museveni said.



President Museveni and the First Lady (standing through vehicle's sunroof) arrive for a rally in Rubiziri district yesterday

INFRASTRUCTURE

Like he has been doing in all the districts he has so far campaigned in, the President also highlighted several achievements of the NRM Government in Mitooma in terms of social and economic infrastructure.

"Many sub-counties in Mitooma (15 out of 18) have electricity except Kiyanga, Rwoburunga and Nyakizinga. On telephones, you all now have phones in your pockets, and on access to water, many rural villages have water," he said.

Out of 564 rural villages in Mitooma, 538 have access to a safe water source, representing an average coverage of 95%. There are only 26 villages (5%) without access to safe water.

Museveni also noted that they have worked on the Ishaka-Kashenshero road and promised to extend it (the tarmac) to Rukungiri district.

"We have all these in our plans but tell your MPs not to touch many things, which delays these crucial projects," he implored the people.

EDUCATION STATUS

Regarding education, the NRM presidential candidate noted that Mitooma is also not badly off, with 109 government primary schools and 16 government secondary schools.

"And all the parishes and sub-counties without government schools will also have them,"



Internal affairs minister Gen. Kahinda Otafiire (left) and youth and children affairs state minister Balaam Barugahara show support for Museveni

PROGRESS ON HEALTH

Regarding health, Museveni noted that out of 18 sub-counties in Mitooma, one has a general hospital, another has a health centre (HC) IV and nine have HCIIIs. However, he said, seven sub-counties do not have any health facility of either a HCIII, HCIV or a hospital.

"The plan is to upgrade Kigyende HCII to a HCIII in Kigyende sub-county, Iramira HCII to a HCIII in Kiyanga sub-county and construct new HCIIIs in Rutookye town council and the sub-counties of Mutara, Kabira, Nyakizinga and Katenga."

he promised.

GOVT PLANS FOR FARMERS

He reiterated the Government's commitment to create a fund for large-scale farmers to buy affordable fertilisers.

These include farmers engaged in growing tea, cotton,

maize, sugar-cane and those keeping local breeds of cattle. He stated that sh360b has already been planned for tea growers to enable them buy fertilisers and continue fighting poverty.

Museveni also responded to some residents' concerns

raised by Deputy Speaker of Parliament and Ruhinda North MP Thomas Tayebwa about wild animals destroying their crops and directed the Uganda Wildlife Authority to put an electric fence around Imaramagambo Forest.

Museveni started off by reminding people of his government biggest achievement: the peace and stability that Uganda has enjoyed since January 1986 when they took power.

The rally in Mitooma was nostalgic, because it is where he found some of his Old Boys of high school.

"I am happy; when I was entering here I saw the elders I had in high school. We had many children we were studying with but some of them died," he said.

FIRST LADY SPEAKS

On her part, the First Lady, who was asked by the President to greet the people before he continued with his speech, thanked the NRM supporters for turning out in large numbers and giving them a warm reception.

She thanked God for protecting the President and for enabling the NRM to lead the country for the last 40 years and usher in an era of peace, forgiveness and reconciliation.

She urged the area's electorate to also turn out in such large numbers on January 15, 2026 and vote for the President and all the NRM

candidates because they have brought the country from afar.

"For us, elders, we remember where we have come from... Vote for all NRM candidates to give the party that strength and hold it up to build this country and give hope to the whole region, especially to countries that are unstable and have many refugees here," she implored the residents.

INTO RUBIRIZI

In Rubirizi district, where Museveni held his second and final rally of the day at Kyenzaza playground, wrapping up his campaign in the Ankole sub-region, he polled 39,686 (82.6%) votes while Kyagulanyi garnered 6,338 (13.2%).

Mrs Museveni thanked Tayebwa for uniting winners and losers in the NRM primaries to work together.

She also thanked the Minister of Internal Affairs and area MP, Gen. Kahinda Otafiire, for offering wise counsel to the youth, noting that many have grown up under the current government and do not know the hardships of the past.

Earlier, Tayebwa blasted Kyagulanyi for vowing to abolish the Government's flagship Parish Development Model (PDM) programme immediately if elected president.

He stated that Kyagulanyi, who pledged that PDM would end within his first 100 days in office, does not wish the poor

MUSEVENI IN MITOOMA



Converts from other political parties walk to join President Museveni for a photo at Ryakitanda playground in Mitooma district yesterday



Bethel Turinawe, a woman with disability and a presidential skilling graduate from Mitooma district, testifies regarding the way she acquired skills in baking. She now employs three people

well because the programme targets them to work and join the money economy.

The Deputy Speaker of Parliament vowed to support the President in protecting the programme, which has transformed many lives.

Mitooma with 79 parishes has cumulatively received sh27.5b, and out of this, sh23.6b (85.64%) has been disbursed to 24,050 beneficiary households.

In Rubirizi, Museveni noted the improvement of the road network, electricity, access to healthcare and educational facilities, saying it is undeniable.

The NRM presidential candidate stated that Rubirizi has 53 parishes, with 46 hosting at least one Government primary school while seven are still lacking. He also said Rubirizi has 58 government primary schools but there are

parishes with more than one government primary school.

The district also has 10 government secondary schools and 14 private secondary schools. And out of 11 sub-counties, eight host at least one Government secondary school, while three are still lacking.

He also told his supporters that they are currently constructing three seed secondary schools and when completed, the sub-counties without government secondary schools will reduce from three to zero.

In health, he noted that out of 11 sub-counties in Rubirizi, one has a HCIV and 10 have HCIIIs. All the sub-counties have HCIIIs and above, he added.

'I'M NOT GOD'

On roads, he pledged that they would work on Katerera route

in Rubirizi if re-elected.

"If you agreed on the rebels' way of working – that one by one makes a bundle, some crucial projects would be worked on. We can't do everything at the same time and whoever says we can do everything at the same time, is a liar," Museveni said.

He told the residents of Rubirizi that God created the universe and everything in it over a period of six days and rested on the seventh.

"God created the universe in six days... On Monday, he created some things... and on Saturday, He created man. Now, why didn't God create all the things on Monday? So, can I do what God failed to do on Monday? I'm not God. I do what I can manage. What delays these roads is touching many things," he said.



President Museveni and Mrs Museveni being received by NRM leaders as they arrive for the rally in Rubirizi district yesterday