

THE FUNDS WILL BE DISBURSED AFTER THE GENERAL ELECTION

By Nelson Mandela
Muhoozi and Joseph EkolMUSEVENI RETURNS TO LANGO,
COMMITTS ON **CATTLE COMPENSATION**

President Yoweri Museveni yesterday returned to northern Uganda to woo Lango sub-region to vote for the National Resistance Movement (NRM).

Addressing rallies at Aculbanya Secondary School playground in Kole district and later at the Golf Course Grounds in Lira city, Museveni, who is the National Resistance Movement (NRM) flag-bearer, urged residents to vote for him, basing on his track record over the last four decades.

The President was accompanied by Government Chief Whip Denis Hamson Obua, Speaker of Parliament Anita Among, among others.

Addressing the gathering in Kole, Among asked residents to vote the NRM because of the improved security in northern Uganda, saying families which once lived in internally-displaced persons' camps have since returned to their homes.

She attributed the change to sustained government interventions and urged residents to support the NRM flag-bearers.

Among said the peace and security ushered in by the NRM has increased trade and commerce, citing the new roads in northern Uganda, Aki-Bua Stadium and skilling centres.

CATTLE COMPENSATION

During the rallies, Museveni addressed the issue of cattle restocking, saying the programme had previously faced legal setbacks, but stressed that funds will be disbursed after elections.

He revealed that the Government had already injected sh159b into the cattle compensation programme before anomalies were detected, prompting him to order the halting of the process.

"The money for cattle restocking is already on the bank accounts. After the general election, we shall return to discuss how the money will be distributed, whom to start with, and why. Registration of beneficiaries is already ongoing," Museveni said.

ERUTE NORTH, SOUTH TO BE SEPARATED

While in Lira city, Museveni acknowledged the challenges residents have faced since the city was carved out of the former Lira district.

He noted that residents are often forced to pass through the city to move between the



Museveni (sixth-left) with other NRM leaders and flag-bearers from Lira at a campaign rally in Lira city yesterday

LOCAL LEADERS SPEAK OUT

Local leaders used the rallies to commend the Government programmes, while raising concerns they want addressed in the next term.

George Odyek, the councillor representing persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Kole district, praised initiatives such as the Parish Development Model (PDM) and Emyooga for supporting vulnerable groups, but said access remains limited.

He cited the lack of sign language interpreters in public offices and poor physical accessibility of public buildings as barriers for PWDs.

Anyati said residents are still waiting for the construction of the Corner Aboke-Bobi road and fulfilment of a pledge to provide a school bus to Aculbanya Secondary School.

Kole District chairperson Andrew Moses Awany said increased district roads funding, now at sh1b, has improved connectivity, while health facilities and piped water systems have expanded.

areas, creating administrative and service delivery difficulties.

As a result, he said he supports the proposal to separate the city from Erute North and Erute South as distinct administrative units.

"I know you have been suffering because part of the old district remained north and another southeast and to move from one district to another part you must go through Lira city. We have to separate the two parts so that we have the city, Erute South and Erute North as separate areas," he said.

AMONGI-ACENG BATTLES

While in Lira city, Among told the President to request Minister Betty Amongi to leave the Lira City seat for health

minister Jane Ruth Aceng.

"During daytime you are with us, but at night you are using the same money to fight the party. We shall not allow this, and I am speaking as a second vice-chairperson," she said.

OPPOSITION SUPPORTERS CROSS TO NRM

The most notable political moment at the Kole rally was when local NRM leaders announced that Opposition supporters from the National Unity Platform (NUP) and Uganda People's Congress (UPC) had crossed to the NRM.

Kole district NRM chairperson Lillian Anyati said 320 Opposition supporters had crossed to the NRM and

He said residents are now seeking the upgrade of Aboke Health Centre IV into a district hospital, tarmacking of the Ayer-Aboke-Bobi-Gulu road, and elevation of Abilonino Polytechnic into a degree-awarding institution.

Grace Akullo, the vice-chairperson for NRM Elders League in Kole, said the district has benefited from NRM-led development and pledged continued support for President Museveni.

She urged the Government to fully implement the cattle restocking programme to lift households out of poverty.

Boniface Okot, the NRM flag-bearer for Kole South, called for additional support to larger parishes and for those previously skipped to be considered.

Okot also cited gaps in education infrastructure, saying: "We are still facing a challenge of five parishes without seed schools, and the coding process for them to receive funding has taken longer than usual."

committed to mobilising votes for Museveni.

"From NUP, there are 55 whose cards I now have, and the rest are from UPC," Anyati said during an interview with *New Vision*.

Anyati said UPC supporters told her they had opted to support the NRM because their party has no presidential candidate.

WEALTH CREATION

Museveni thanked residents for turning up in large numbers and outlined the NRM's central campaign message, anchored on peace, development and wealth creation.

"We are pointing out seven bricks that the NRM has used on the construction of Uganda, and the first brick is peace," he

noted.

Museveni said Uganda's past instability was rooted in identity and religious politics, arguing that the NRM's emphasis on unity enabled the building of national institutions.

He noted that peace created the foundation for visible development, such as roads, schools and health centres, but stressed that infrastructure alone is not enough. "You can have roads, but if you have poverty in your homes, you will be in a bad situation. That is why we emphasise wealth creation," he said.

He urged households to adopt productive farming models, citing the four-acre model promoted by the NRM since the 1960s.

"One acre for coffee, another for pasture for cattle, the third for fruits, the fourth for food crops, with poultry, pigs in the backyard and fish farming in the wetlands," he said.

Museveni cited examples of farmers benefiting from the approach such as transport state minister Fred Byamukama, whom he said earns sh55m in annual profits from a four-acre farm, and his own demonstration farm, where he said a single fish pond earns sh70m.

Museveni warned against wetland degradation and promoted fish farming as a profitable alternative that also supports irrigation.

"Instead of destroying wetlands, you can use them more profitably for fish farming and still have water for crops," he said.

On PDM, Museveni acknowledged complaints about mismanagement and marginalisation in some areas,

VOTERS' VOICES

Haron Okello, Kole

We thank the President for tarmacking the Kamdini-Lira road, but we request him to also work on the Koma-Mwolemu-Bobi road, about 30km from Kole, which is a short-cut to Gulu, but currently in bad state. We thank him for restoring peace in northern Uganda.



Pope Olwit, Kole

We request the President to sponsor the youths who were enrolled from Kole to train as pilots at Kajjansi Flight Training Centre. Many of us had started training but when the programme was stopped, our parents can't afford to pay private fees.



Janat Akello, Kole

We appeal to the President to increase the PDM money because many women have been left out. We have SACCOS but we have never been considered for PDM or emyooga.



Lilly Awedi, Aboke

We ask the President to come out tough on UPE schools that continue to charge high fees, failing many children to attend school. It is a big issue in our area yet many parents cannot afford private schools.



but pledged to work out a way forward.

"I started hearing that people in government were giving money to themselves or their friends. That is why I introduced PDM," he said, explaining that parish SACCOs are meant to be run by locally-elected committees.

He said he had directed the responsible ministry to investigate how the committees were formed and promised increased funding once challenges are addressed.