

By Richard Ategeka

Rotary Clubs have been hailed for their growing role in the transformation of Ugandan communities, especially the rural and slum areas.

Presiding over the charter and installation of the Rotary Club of Summit View, Kololo on Wednesday, Kampala minister Minsa Kabanda said partnerships with organisations like Rotary have proved to be essential in solving the city's challenges.

The minister described the birth of the new Rotary Club in Kololo as "a new force of good rooted in the ideals of Rotary, ideals of integrity and service above self to improve lives."

Kabanda urged Rotarians to align their initiatives with Kampala's broader vision of a clean, orderly and productive city, highlighting key areas, such

as health, education, sanitation and youth empowerment.

#### AMBITIOUS PRIORITIES

The newly installed charter president, Hamida Khetani Altaf, outlined key focus areas for her term, including education, women's empowerment, health and hygiene.

Altaf also emphasised the need for solutions that empower communities rather than creating dependency.

Geoffrey Kitakule, the District Governor of Rotary District 9213, noted that the new club comes at a time when the Rotary fraternity is experiencing rapid growth in Uganda.

"When people see impact, they want to be part of it," he said. Kitakule attributed this

# Govt commends Rotary for community development

PHOTO BY SIMON PETER TUMWINE



Kitakule (left) and Kabanda (right) installing Altaf as the charter President of the Rotary Club Summit View, Kololo

growth to increasing public interest in community service and the visible impact of Rotary projects.

#### GRASSROOTS IMPACT VISIBLE

Stakeholders highlighted ongoing Rotary-linked initiatives already transforming lives across Uganda.

May Virgi, a long-time Rotary partner and chief executive officer of the Institute of Rural Education and Development (IREAD), underscored the importance of investing in early childhood development (ECD), noting that brain development between age of three and five is critical. Her organisation has supported the establishment of 24 ECD centres nationwide, though challenges, such

as infrastructure gaps, limited trained teachers and bureaucratic hurdles persist.

#### COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

A key idea Virgi emphasised was moving away from charity-driven models toward community empowerment.

"We don't control the schools; we empower the community to run them. That's how you create something that lasts," she explained.

This approach is not without challenges. She cited resistance from some local institutions like churches, particularly around land allocation, as a major barrier to scaling impact.

Fabian Nkasi, District 9213 Governor Nominee for 2027, who also worked with the donors earlier, said Rotary-backed projects have already made a tangible difference in the country.