
Bunyoro Demands Counties From Buganda

Posted by chamu - 2008/06/10 09:49

Someone other than the indignant bunyoro people has planned this Bunyoro demand. Obviously for personal gains. Who is behind it? Is he the same person behind the FIRES in Buganda?

If such demands are coming up, Mr Ndebesa said, "we shall redraw maps until we shall not have a unit called Uganda." But we never had a unit called Uganda in the first place.

Bunyoro to Buganda: RETURN OUR COUNTIES.

Chris Obore

Kampala

The Kingdom of Bunyoro-Kitara has demanded that Buganda returns all its seven lost counties in a move that could reignite old rivalries between the two biggest kingdoms in the country.

"It is our time now to get stronger we badly need our counties back from Buganda," said Mr Emmanuel Kiiza, the prime minister of Bunyoro. "We badly need them." But the Buganda Kingdom says that Bunyoro's demand is mere wishful thinking.

"The Constitution provides which parts are for Buganda and which parts are for Bunyoro," said Mr Apollo Makubuya, Buganda's attorney general. "Any other talk is unconstitutional."

The government has urged calm. "I would urge the people of Bunyoro to be calm," said Lands Minister Omara Atubo. "We are opening a very dangerous Pandora's box."

The areas in contention are Buwekula, Buruli, Bugerere, and parts of Singo and Bulemezi. Initially, the disputed counties included Buyaga and Bugangaizi but the two were returned to Bunyoro after the 1964 referendum, an event that led to the bitter fallout between Buganda and the central government in 1966 and the consequent abolition of kingdoms the following year.

Now Bunyoro says it does not recognise the 1900 Agreement which gave the disputed areas to Buganda because "we were not part of it".

Said Mr Kiiza: "That agreement is completely invalid for the people of Bunyoro. I want to develop the kingdom and we need our human resources back."

Asked why Bunyoro is making its demand now, Mr Kiiza said his kingdom has always demanded its lost counties back. He added that officials there are serious about the matter because the kingdom has now got oil which it can use to sustain its people.

“We need our people to enjoy our oil,” he said. “The more we are the stronger we become.” Although oil has recently been discovered in Bunyoro, its benefits will only be felt when commercial production actually begins.

Why Now? Is It The 2011 Votes?

But Bunyoro’s newfound assertiveness seems to be a direct result of its newly cosy relations with the government. Sunday Monitor reported on June 1 that the NRM government has worked out a plan to isolate Buganda for its “treachery, ingratitude and egotism” as it reorganises alliances ahead of the 2011 general elections.

The idea of the plan emerged especially after Mengo, the administrative seat of Buganda, opposed the central government over the Land Act Amendment Bill now before Parliament.

As a counter-weight to Buganda whose votes have served the NRM well at election time, the government is now cementing its ties with the equally large Bunyoro-Kitara.

To kick-start the new alliance, the UPDF has recently renovated the Bunyoro royal tombs and plans to dust up the historical standing of Omukama Kabalega, the kingdom’s revered former leader who stood up to British colonialists even as Buganda generally allied with those same colonialists.

Asked whether Bunyoro’s demand would not resurrect old rivalries, Mr Kiiza said Buganda should remain as it was before the 1900 Agreement.

“Let them challenge us with historical facts,” he said. “They should tell us why they are unwilling to return our counties.”

The premier said that the fact that some Banyoro in the disputed areas associated themselves with Ganda culture does not make them Baganda.

And Mr Ford Mirima, the kingdom’s spokesman, said successive governments had failed to correct the historical wrongs committed against Bunyoro.

“Which conflict? The conflict has never died. There is nothing to resurrect,” Mr Mirima said. Mr Mirima said Bunyoro’s current demand for the return of the lost counties was partly provoked by Buganda’s persistent quest for the federal system of government.

Or is it the Federo?

“By demanding federero, the Baganda want to tax people,” he said. “They want Banyoro in those counties to pay taxes to them. Why should they tax Banyoro?” He said even in the returned counties of Buyaga and Bugangaizi, the Baganda still have interests.

“The Baganda are still holding our land titles. We got only political administration but not the physical land,” he said.

He said that Bugerere was initially known as Bunyara and Singo was Rugonjo before Buganda annexed them.

But Mr Makubuya said the districts of Bunyoro include Buliisa, Hoima, Kibaale and Masindi. “That is what our friends should lay claim on. Anything else is illegal,” he said.

Mr Kiiza, however, said “very soon” they would formally write to the central government demanding that the 1995 Constitution which recognises the disputed areas as belonging to Buganda be amended.

Revisit the Constitution Again?

Asked whether Bunyoro has formally notified Buganda of its intentions, Mr Kiiza said: “I don’t see why I should communicate to Buganda. I will communicate to central government to revisit the Constitution.”

Makerere University historian Mwambutsya Ndebesa said Bunyoro has a basis to demand the disputed areas but “it’s too far in history to be recovered. They have a historical basis to demand those areas because they belonged to them”.

Mr Ndebesa said traditional institutions should have been restored, as they were in 1993, after clearly defining what they were “but the restoration was done in euphoria” without foreseeing the repercussions.

We Never Had A Unit Called Uganda In The First Place.

If such demands are coming up, Mr Ndebesa said, “we shall redraw maps until we shall not have a unit called Uganda.”

He said it is not rational for people to demand historical kingdoms; instead they should focus on how to improve their lives.

Lands Minister Atubo agreed.

“It’s not in the interest of Uganda for people to begin looking at small tribes,” he said, while acknowledging that Bunyoro’s demands could present the country with “a very serious Constitutional issue”.

The minister said that if the different ethnic groups begin to dispute boundaries imposed by the British, it would

undermine the sovereignty of Uganda.

A senior government official also told Saturday Monitor that the Basoga had started murmuring that Mukono belongs to them.

Mr Atubo, a lawyer, said Uganda is one sovereign state and a republic with a Constitution which allows people to move freely and live anywhere.

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Re:Bunyoro Demands Counties From Buganda

Posted by kingo - 2008/06/11 14:08

I think the best to be done now is each kingdom to develop itself. we cannot turn back the hands of time.

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