

THE STORY OF MY POLITICAL ATTEMPT

Omuganda nagira ngu, “Okutambula kulaba, okudda kunyumya”

Chairman

BEINOMUGISHA
FREDRICK





Karamoja/vote
FREDRICK BEINOMUGISHA
LC CHAIRMAN
Karamoja District
2016-2021

THE COORDINATOR
BEINOMUGISHA
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PREAMBLE

Hello good people, I am greatly honored that you have before you this document of my story on my attempt on active politics.

It is really important to share this experience with the world, and more especially to document this political adventure for future reference, especially for my children – most likely if this political world doesn't see me again. And it is not that this attempt was a disappointment but just in case I incidentally don't find such appetite to run in an election again.

It is a small document, without a lot of sophisticated narration but a celebration of my attempt and probably a newcomer excitement ha ha ha! Three months before, I didn't know that I would take such a decision, especially putting on a yellow overall but a little months after, we got the victory – victory! Yes! I lost the election but of course won the intention. We got a new leader.

I recognize my comrades that walked this journey with me – with all kind of support. God Bless You!

ABOUT FREDRICK BEINOMUGISHA

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At some extent, Governor Agubanshongorera seemed unopposed – and really there was no smoke for a potential candidate who could dislodge him. Remember, I had been his ka young-man, not so close but a simple and somewhat reliable political relationship, we had. But that aside, I also believed in his first term, **“omushaija akaba akozire mazima!”**

I usually don't like discussing what happened between this space when we were praising him and even believed that he could decide to come for Bunyaruguru County Member of Parliament against Honorable John Twesigye Ntamuhiira and win convincingly (that was after his first term), he had projected himself as a servant leader, very aggressive and intolerant to corruption which had become a normal and public vice in the term of the previous Chairman, and now we were standing at a contentious end of his second term – these two were totally different.

And like I said in the first line, there seemed no hope for a potential challenger even when there were silent whispers that things had started going wrong at the administrative hill.

In my weekly Newsletter where I randomly picked up political discussions, on the 19th of October 2024, I had written on how Governor Agubanshongorera felt comfortable and unchallengeable and I guess I wanted to cause a thought in the minds of people that change was necessary.

Let us read that article publication:

RUBIRIZI EDITION **Newsletter** 19th October, 2024

GOVERNOR AGUBANSHONGORERA ENJOYING IN COMFORT ZONE: THE RUBIRIZI LC5 SEAT LIES UNCOMPETITIVE – BUT DO YOU THINK THAT THE DISTRICT LACKS COMPETENT CHALLENGERS? AND, DO YOU THINK CHAIRMAN AGUBANSHONGORERA PERFORMANCE IS UNCHALLENGEABLE?

Even if you freely offer to campaign for Chairman Agubanshongorera, he will likely refuse. He doesn't want anyone to even realize that the LC5 seat will be among the positions that will be voted for next year. That's how comfortable he is. What a political opportunity?

At the reelection for his second term, Chairman Agubanshongorera undoubtedly deserved it. He had come preaching servant leadership and zero tolerance to corruption and of course in his first term he had performed well bringing back sanity at the district. However, this time there have been more

cries especially with allegations of corruption in the recruitment process with people buying jobs. This as the writer I may not certainly confirm. And probably with other reasons beyond this, to at least attract a serious contender against Chairman Agubanshongorera.

At this time, serious competitors will have always shown up but Chairman Agubanshongorera is still comfortably unopposed. His main rival, the former Chairman Kisembo David Kabega is seemingly not showing up – but do you think Rubirizi lacks competent challengers? And do you think that Chairman Agubanshongorera's performance is

at the level that a disunited community is unanimously agreeing to leave him unopposed? The answers lie in your heart. And in every society so as in Rubirizi, there have always been fate crafters especially in the game of politics and Chairman Agubanshongorera has mastered this and therefore, strengthened his relationship with those “big boys”.

And I would confidently speak that Chairman Agubanshongorera is not as strong as he looks unopposed. Leave alone that he is at the moment favored by invisible protection, it is highly likely that in case a sellable candidate comes into the race now, the best Chairman Agubanshongorera would do is ceremonially participate.

It is also another factor that the LC5 seat is a tricky political venture. In Rubirizi the electorates have always welcomed elites that have in one way or another made successful foundations and there are few who at the middle of their successful careers could sacrifice to compete for a seat that probably will earn them less. But still, that in consideration, there're competent candidates that would this late still put up a tough challenge such as: Hon. Gaudioso Tindamanyire Kabondo, Mr. Twinomuhangi Deogratias, Hon. Mbabazi Betty, Mr. Bataringaya Ben, Mr. Kayemba Munir, and others you can continue to mention.

RUBIRIZI EDITION NEWSLETTER – Your Local Story Teller

THE LOOKING OUT

At the time, though I was a little bit convinced that my father, Mr. Twinomuhangi Deogratias had totally disliked politics, and indeed he is one of the people I believe that are too straight for politics but what had attracted him to join this messy reality when he contested against the then interim Chairman Kisembo David Kabega in 2010 automatically made him a viable option and resort in such opportune time of leadership gap we were facing at the moment. Therefore, I tried to speak to him if he could come into the race – he had overcome a serious illness and I was again convinced that I was just trying unsuccessfully and so I just wrote to him an email which he never responded to.

When I thought about Mr. Bataringaya Ben, this really shows how indeed I was desperate for change because my uncle Mr. Bataringaya Ben Bakalema is also another person I believe are too humble for politics but like in any other community, the end of every successful career is always most times pursuit for prestigious positioning and this is usually found in politics. And so because Ben had unsuccessfully tried out politics when he contested for Member of Parliament for Bunyaruguru County in 2021, I thought that he would be another better resort option to challenge Governor Agubanshongorera but I was guided by a confidant I approached that my uncle would totally not pick interest – I was not given the reasons and so I turned my hopes to Honorable Gaudioso Tindamayire Kabondo all in the quest of searching for a potential replacement for Governor Agubanshongorera but looking at individuals who already had an introduction into the Bunyaruguru – Katerera politics in one way or another since time really seemed gone for any starter to potentially challenge the incumbent.

Therefore, I visited Honorable Gaudioso, I think two times in Ntinda at his home for other relationship business but also to discuss about the possibility of requesting him to come and “save” our district and he was very clear with his stand – at that point his most interests were on the District NRM Chair which eventually went to Mr. Manyire Edgar.

I shouldn't leave this line without clarifying to the public how I found myself with Honorable Gaudioso in the same race – the person I was in the first place committed to stand behind with genuine support. This to most individuals appeared like a sort of confusion which they thought wasn't palatable. To campaign together on the same political microphone (everyone believed that we presented a similar candidature and likely shared a same support base irrespective of the seniority difference) – it is unavoidable to find having some sort of confrontation at some extent of the process and I remember we were in Kyambura for that day's joint campaign and Honorable Gaudioso found me with another fellow candidate (Bagambe Fred) seated with other young people and he greeted everyone but when he reached me he said, “I will not greet this one because he is a young boy,” whether this was jokingly or not, it didn't go well with me and when I was presenting my speech to the people, I touched on it before the people telling them that, “if me Beinomugisha Fredrick a candidate for Chairman LC5 and maybe the next District Chairperson could be under-looked publicly, then how would they act before you the ‘Omuntu W’ahansi’.” Ha ha ha! And at the end of the day, he (Honorable Gaudioso) whispered to me asking if it was not allowed to joke.

So, back to how we found ourselves in a same race. After failing on the request to convince Honorable Gaudioso to participate in the Chairman LC5 election, my all hopes were gone but still it pained me that such a progressive community like of Bunyaruguru we couldn't lack potential contenders in the race of Chairman LC5 especially at that opportune time when the incumbent just needed to be helped to retire just like any politician would only wait for a defeat to accept to get out of active politics.

Truly, Honorable Gaudioso remained skeptical about standing to become the NRM party district chairperson when Kakaka remained threatening to contest on the same position. Gaudioso feared competition against the businessman that he couldn't afford surpass the voter-buyoff-money that Kikaka was intended to spend. He had promised UGX 250,000/= per delegate. But towards the election there was some archaic and informal exchange that involved Kikaka and the incumbent party Chairperson Mr. Kayankole Said which apparently depopularized Kikaka's candidature and the seat ended in the hands of Honorable Manyire Edgar who passed through unopposed and whether that was strategically calculated from the beginning or it was successfully incidental, I don't know.

Therefore, Mr. Manyire Edgar on being elected the district Chairperson for NRM party, me who had been in the search for a potential challenger for Governor Agubanshongerera immediately thought about him (Edgar). Being a Katerera resident and again with traceable relationship in Bunyaruguru, I felt that indeed now that was the suitable person and by the way I privately engaged Honorable Gaudioso himself to discuss with Edgar about that possibility and from the feedback I got that from word go Manyire Edgar turned down the suggestion.



THE MAKING OF THE DECISION

Therefore, I remember finally meeting up with Honorable Gaudioso in Bugaya in my yellow overall officially informing him about my final decision to contest as Chairperson LC5 after all unsuccessful attempts to find a potential challenger – I think he gave me blessings to go on until when I read it in news that he had also picked nomination forms – I had already picked mine too and we rolled on.

Someone may see all this effort and determination I put in to find a challenger and probably an incoming District Chairperson other than the incumbent and think that I had personal feud with Governor Agubanshongorera, I really don't understand why it is only negativity that most times has effort to fuel within ourselves the overwhelming determination and courage to change things – cant good intentions also push us that far to fight for good intentioned change! So I was not fuelled by any disagreement with the incumbent or some sort of bad heart but I carried fair conviction that was good intentioned for continued development of our dear district. Therefore, I reached personal decision to come into the race myself. One, I wanted a platform to say something good to the people and I guess I utilized well this opportunity and of course I believed and even until today I don't think I was wrong, I believed that Governor Agubanshongorera was winnable – this shouldn't make you think that I am politically blunt and probably detached from the community to not to understand how hard it was to win especially at the moment when he was leading with a moral – emotional campaign for re-election. So I was aware that the incumbent was deep-rooted, very deep planted into the community with local advantage from the two communities of Katerera and Bunyaruguru, the Catholic Church and others you can add on the list. But I am not a pessimist, I am a faithful believer, *“what can be done would still be undone.”*

THE OMUNTU W'AHANSI CHARACTERISATION

I much knew that it would take many people a lot of time to believe that I was serious with my declaration, I therefore picked intentional representation or characterization – we picked the **OVERALL** as our identity cloth in representation of the common laborer and also deliberately portrayed myself as **OMUNTU W'AHANSI**. I recognize my friend Julian Amanywa for guiding me towards that overall decision. The biggest part of my campaign message was strategically-politically and specifically directed to who I called “Omuntu W'ahansi”. And whether I personally categorically and truly fall into this social grouping, I don't know but I emotionally envision the life of the ordinary people and I didn't necessarily grow through a very poor lifestyle even though I lost my father at 48 days of age (1st April 1995), there was a relatively strong backup system and there was a loaf of bread at our table at least one day every week but that is a rare opportunity, my father Deo Twinomuhangi (you will realize that even when he is my uncle, older biological brother to my late father, I directly call him “father” – *mbwenu ni*

Taata mazima), he always told me whenever I seemed taking the guardianship for granted that there are many orphans who are not finding such backup system in their uncles and thus, his guardianship was not just guaranteed.

THE OVERALL REPRESENTATION

This overall that I put on during my campaign, this was really disgusting! Previously I had my personal issues with the ruling system and NRM in particular. A very big enmity by the way. I have grown a radical, I detest stagnation and I am a student of ideas, my head beats with new suggestions many times every second. I believe in good processes and clean systems and opposition preaches this message better so from very young age I had never been at peace with the status quo. I believed a lot in lamentation for what is not done and specifically detested the hope, the trust and faith in the NRM system, its processes and will. And though, there may still be not so much difference today from this point of thought, but I have now undressed the hate and I want to front myself as a vessel for whatever can be done that is not yet achieved by whoever – I now ask myself what I have done about what is lacking, at least to the person near me. So while I dressed in this overall for the first time, I felt the pain, the disgust, I felt shame and until I got used and felt at peace with the NRM – I am now a peaceful radical.

I think the people who have lived around me now understand me, when I have come to a personal decision, the best option towards that would be to support me and help me avoid whatever one thinks would be the dirty components along the path but truly, **there is a very big gap between the intentions to want to stand for a political office, then standing and then completing the process.** Today I would go for an adoration ceremony for any active politician. The world is so harsh, very rough for them, “bambi!”

I believe my quality is unquestionable, I have personally climbed ladders without solicitors from nowhere to at least an unknown echo in the community and therefore, Beinomugisha Fredrick was not a very new thing. But there was one challenge and which I was very prepared for, the unfair, formulaic conception that the LC5 Chairperson position was only meant for “mature” people. With “mature”, the people don’t necessarily mean in understanding but age. The community believed that the district chairperson must be one who was very grown in age, so they didn’t want to know anything about quality, about good knowledge, about young age experience and modernized exposure. Everyone believed that the position has been a reserve for older people who after their occupational careers and had reached age of retirement were now looking for a fallback position into the community – the local people didn’t easily understand this.

But I was intentioned at making this position a center of attention especially towards the young people. I wanted to attract our young quality community to think about this position because I believe that while decentralization policy gives the local government the autonomy to dream and lead local communities to defined, strategic, and intentioned development from

well-defined local development goals and objectives, this required quality discussion in the local council meetings. But, the local councils had been left for local/village “kings” who had very less exposure, were illiterate and unable to make a statement or read one, how do such people manage to cascade the national policies deeper and chopped down to translate them to the local ordinances building from the available advantages/opportunities and challenges! And indeed I utilized my campaign time to request the people to vote presentable lower council leaders who would indeed lead them into countable development.

Counting all this, it was very truly very strange for a young man to contest on that position, but fellow contestant, and the final victor, Chairman Obed Byakureka Agaba always told people that he was not going to carry the district on his head so why demand him be older.

And along the campaign trail, people thanked me about the courage and said that it was fine **to come to popularize my name** – this always didn’t do well with me because my participation in the District Chairperson race was certainly and ideologically intentioned, it was not a matter of political selfishness. I had come to cause change. I wanted change and like I earlier narrated that I had failed with chances of finding it through the potential individuals of our society, I had decided not to betray my community like them. **The chances of winning were very obscure and I guess few of us could take such a political risk, I am happy that I stood out.**

WHY THE LCV SEAT? NOT MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT!

When I was going to start writing RUBIRIZI EDITION MAGAZINE, I consulted my friend Katureebe Dennis and he frankly informed me of the impossibility of the business and I think I was just looking for his support not his disapproval. The same with when I informed him about my intentions to stand as Chairperson LC5. Thinking that I was looking at popularizing my name, he suggested that it was reasonable if I stood against his boss and “political god” Honorable Benjamin Cadet. Dennis was reasoning that it was very catching for me to be counted amongst the contenders that included high profile individuals. One was, the incumbent and Catholic Church big name, the common challenger was Honorable Cadet Benjamin, the big and lucrative business (Cannabis) director and former Member of Parliament and then thirdly, the son of Emeritus Chief Justice Bart Magunda Katureebe, David Tugume Katureebe. Dennis thought it was good political show coming against and amongst such reputable individuals in the same race instead of the LC5 Chairpersonship. And either I didn’t understand his good guidance or it is evident that mine wasn’t just a rush into politics but an intentioned political ambition. I remember trying to inbox elder Higiyo about this political ambition and I guess he thought it was as superfluous / unnecessary as deadwood to stand within NRM and without enough financial muscle and strategically compete. From his advice he thought it was better to stand through probably Alliance for National Transition or National Unity Platform and of course in the Bunyaruguru County Member of Parliament race – he also thought that my age was not attractive for the District Chairperson position.

And I think all these good people didn't understand my conviction. ***Abanyaruguru nibagira ngu, “ekyokubura kusinga orwigi hakiri oyegyekaho.”*** And indeed, if my community had failed to bring a potential challenger against Governor Agubanshongorera, whom I so much believed that if it wasn't for political greed, he truly needed to step down and or at least helped to stand down through a very welcome competition – so that was the gist for my conviction to enter into the race. Not that there was some kind of gold I was targeting in that position but I was very decisive to at least, if all failed I get a platform to communicate to the people. ***“Ekyokurarakwe hakiri orya akanyonyi.”*** That is how strong my candidature was!

And the next thing I heard was that Chairman Agubanshongorera had commented at some burial that he was very comfortable with competing with very young kids, ha ha ha! The other disappointment was when I got five people in one hour telling me that Governor Agubanshongorera had reliably informed them that my candidature was just founded on the wish to only sit in big chairs and huge office of the Chairman LC5 in the new administrative building that following my visit to him in the same office. For God's sake, I have not yet entered inside that commonly sang house and the nearest I have been to it was recently when we were supposed to use the hall for our meeting as candidates with the NRM electoral committee for drawing the joint campaign road map and instead we used the space in the RDC building.

I don't know, as politics is, was that strategically intentioned to demean my candidature? To show the people that there was no good in it apart from wishing to sit in big chairs and huge office? Or, like I hear from silent whispers, the Governor indeed didn't really remember who he had met in his huge office – potentially being my friend Happy Ali whom I saw in pictures in the office! Anyway, that is real politics.

KYOBUTUNGI SHAMIM

There is one of my close contacts and whenever he would be giving me report of what is on ground, he would start with, “why are you not doing enough! The other lady of Kyambura, Shamim is moving and not seated. Yesterday she was there and today here.” Ha ha ha! And then I learnt that when you abide to the pressure of the voters, you may not live to your victory, but I found interest to know who this lady Kyobutungi was and unfortunately, though we have met face-to-face, I haven't got the chance to listen to her presentation of ideas to the masses – that means a lot.

Kyobutungi had indeed moved because you would go deep where you would think no one else has reached and find posters of Shamim and the little I had some people had started getting scared of her candidature. She was a Moslem, that is the first thing and female, these some of the reasons why she caused discomfort to some group, but to me, they were the same reasons why I wasn't worried and carried by her charisma.

At Kyambura, I publicly consoled with her for not getting chance to continue to appear in the race with the rest of us. And that is why I have intentionally included her in this story because I believe that for the efforts she had already showed, she deserved the same respect.

So Shamim eventually got out of the race and her issue is very much known to her. Very complex and so simple at the same time – some say that she was not in the NRM register and others say that didn't have academic qualifications and you will also find some few people claiming she was bought out of the race.

THE NRM JOINT CAMPAIGN – WHAT A POLITICAL ADVENTURE

Our first Joint Campaigns stage was in Kashenyi – Rutoto and in all my traverse I preferred moving in time and so I reached earlier before any other fellow contestants and the ground where we were supposed to converge from at the primary school was very empty and the school administration complained that they were not even notified about the program. I went back to my team and told them that the day and most probably the whole Joint campaigns program would seem to be a spoil. But after like 30 minutes, life came. The three ladies in the race for Woman Member of Parliament gave our campaign life.

They moved along with almost 60% or more of the total audience that attended to us at every stage. I remember Governor Agubanshongorera saying, “but why don't we finish from here! All the people here we already addressed them from where we are coming from.”

And now the ground was very lively with a showoff of “vibe” from each camp except for us of the LC5 Chairperson race, we were lost amidst the noise.

I had prepared a real campaign speech from my manifesto that I had dubbed **THE GOOD INTENTIONS FOR RUBIRIZI – A FOCUS ON THE ORDINARY PERSON** that I thought would fit in the 5 minutes that we had for presentation. Talking about non-formal-school solutions for people in villages who are not looking at school as their hope for livelihood, talking about broad health, infrastructure, tourism and also bringing into light the functions of the Chairperson LC5 and a little important to note from the Local Government Act that I had thought would be useful for our people because, apart from the politics, I took every platform to speak to the people as an opportunity of sensitization – our people are failing in darkness. But before the microphone reached me and reading from the previous fellow contestants and then the attention of the voters, I quickly realized that what I thought was sense wasn't sense to the audience. The voters liked “vibe” and probably they were right, many of them are sitting on hardship, pessimism and likely combination of hunger and anger – so they preferred some sort of comedy, some sort of storytelling and some sort of emotional preaching of the points that really touched their exact world. They needed to either cry or laugh. The people needed someone that could emotionally touch their hearts – maybe someone that could pretend to live their hard lives. And Agaba Obed Byakureka won on this scoreboard.

Therefore, I swiftly changed my message. I intelligently looked around and saw a woman selling hard-nuts and another holding a small-looking baby. I called the woman and bought nuts for UGX 1000/= and walked across and handed them to the mother of the small-looking baby.

“Abantu ba Kashenyi Mukama nabakunda, mwijure Amani ga Mutima ori kwera, halelua he he!” I heard a few respond. “Yesu niwe Mukama w’amagara gangye gona.” Nanye nti, “ako nimukakyenga!” And then the NRM sloganeering, “NRM oyee! NRM oyee! Museveni oyee! Kashenyi oyee!” And indeed! In all this life, the people who have known me did not expect me to flow freely through these NRM chants – empty chants of self-seeking politicians. But, I also believe that, that was a kind of hate I needed to undo. Probably I needed to give chance to my potential towards serving people. So I had come to terms with my political choosiness and was forward-looking and if at all, I was not going to be a holy priest of God in politics. I was going to be a politician amongst themselves and like I have now grown to believe, that it is only my membership to Abasonga clan that I may not afford to change from, but for mere politics? So now, I can be considered as a radical NRM-ist.

Rutoto, there is how I had been a little bit phobic about this Sub County. It is where we were beginning our campaigns from and I was wondering how my reception would be. I really had a very poor previous contact and direct history with place. But later to realize that the biggest impact among the audience was your presentation and how your words touched the hearts of the people, otherwise, Honorable Gaudioso and Governor Agubansongorera would be the only candidates as the center of attention.

And the whole of Bunyaruguru County was not a bad reception. The Banyaruguru or to be more general and gentle, the people of Bunyaruguru, are welcoming people. Irrespective of many issues we identify with them, true and or untrue, the people of Bunyaruguru have an open and unconditional heart drawn to excitement, and emotions and would easily be excited to love and welcome. And, speaking in crude Runyaruguru was not a big factor of and would without conditions appreciate and like anyone no matter what language they speak.

This was totally different in Katerera! I remember, as we started traversing in Katerera, one of us candidates commenced with an advantaged talk that I thought was sectarian and the moment the people of Katerera (whatever tribe they are and language they speak) heard you speak in the language that identified and in common with the Bunyaruguru side, they believed you were not one of them.

I really hated this and at some extent it felt like I was no longer interested in “votes of division.” I remember the main part of my campaign were founded on equality and equity. I had previously believed that Katerera was systematically unfairly treated and I preached a “no segregation” message. Equal distribution of resources between the two counties and well balanced power share and I think at the moment while I still believe in equality as a moral tenant, today I would first need an apology to sympathize with Katerera in particular regarding that issue.

And, I think, irrespective of other reasons, I want to believe that it was reason to why I didn’t plant any polling agent in Katerera – the fact why I got 000 votes from the whole constituency even when I really had people who believed and liked my message and would likely vote me - you know, where you had no agent appointment, the votes on that station were not counted. I remember some village raising me that I said them a soft copy of the appointment so that they could count my votes and I instead called my boda boda guy (Medson) to rush me to Kasarara and then Busonga to settle the issues of agent bribing. But again, from reality and applying common sense, amongst us the young people who were in that race, it was already evident

that Obed had some chances of winning the election and that was if the people of Katerera understood the kind of message he had started to preach and indeed they got it right but also, the fellow young had a vibing message that emotionally touched the hearts of the people and this too, I think God too had already taken sides – Obed had a spiritual favor, I tell you. And on realizing this, irrespective of other issues, I was also intentional to not interfere with Katerera and spare that support base for Obed. He was already my option for favor of victory between him and Chairman Agubanshongorera – for Honorable Gaudioso, I could not even believe that he could get the votes he got comparing from his reception in the joint campaigns. So I already prayed that while the rest four of us fought for votes share in Bunyaruguru, Obed could hold together from Katerera and so I didn't see the reason for spending my UGX 10,000/= on every village to facilitate agents.

MORE ON THE KATERERA – BUNYARUGURU CIRCUS

And, I had already been forewarned by a friend on understanding how to play around the tongue to fit in language preferences for the two diverse counties and of course, as I am not a good master of pretense, I didn't take it serious.

The people of Katerera wanted to you hear you speak, to be straight, they wanted to hear you speak at least Rukiga as a number one prequalification for their votes. But, I think that is not the underlying problem, probably the real problem could be bigger.

I have previously given attention to the change from the main name (Bunyaruguru) when we were still a County under the greater Bushenyi to the new district name (Rubirizi) which had initially been just an administration area. Probably, the pavers (as they refer to themselves as the “bringers of the district”) thought that “Rubirizi” as the district name would bring upon a neutral status between Bunyaruguru and Katerera and preferably were the people who were afraid of the Bunyaruguru dominance and forgetting that “Bunyaruguru” is the identity and in doing so, it literally looked like the betrayal to the aboriginal demographical status. It was real shame by those shameless crafters. And I have really been part of this discussion that at some point and had even initiated efforts to petition to the district council to resurrect a discussion on reversing the district name to Bunyaruguru and have also collected views and opinion published in my first issue of Rubirizi Edition Magazine about the same issue.

And I guess, the experience from this election sealed my understanding about the district name saga. I believe that if the District continued with the Bunyaruguru name and probably having Bunyaruguru South and Bunyaruguru North as constituencies/counties and Rubirizi remaining just a sub county/Town Council administrative area name and the same to Katerera, we would probably have a better community that really felt that we were one people.

I have always quoted the words of Mr. Mubangizi John (though no longer as exact as quotes them. Mr. Mubangizi had been the lead campaign personnel for Agubanshongorera camp on his reelection, and probably they had faced some challenges with this Katerera-Bunyaruguru thing and he said that at some time, it would be better and unavoidable to pray that each of these two counties becomes an independent district.

Katerera and Bunyaruguru have very different characteristics. One is founded on the pillar of education and professional occupation of its people especially outside the district. The sons and daughters of Bunyaruguru utilized the chance to study and they have had numerous dignitaries who passed through prestigious schools in the country including Kitabi and Namagunga among others and have come to produce important people in the government and crucial professional fields of occupation in the country and very less business men and women but for Katerera, I think their strength is with agriculture.

And locally, it is very reasonable that it would be unavoidable to have unbalanced power share the fact that Bunyaruguru would send better quality of Councilors in the district council. It is again very reasonable, following the monopoly of power between the Moslem brothers (Hatwib and Mohammad) regarding the Katerera County Member of Parliament representation, that Bunyaruguru County would have better national lobby capacity than Katerera and this can be seen from the recent incident when Honorable John Twesigye Ntamuhiira as member of parliament for Bunyaruguru managed to lobby seed schools that saw an unbalanced distribution in this district because he wanted to impress his voters for reelection instead of distribute them equally in the district.

And, following all this height of the matter, in my campaigns, I was very straight on this. I vehemently called out people not to fall for favor and preferences in the language differentiations but try hard to understand the truth in the words regarding the points the politicians raise. And I guess it was in Kyenanza or Kirugu where I told the audience at the joint campaigns that the two Counties are inseparable and the very little diversity in language and aboriginal heritage must not be an underlying factor to disunity people and cause social segregation.

IT WAS A REAL WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE

And the joint campaigns were a very wonderful experience for me. I believe with this now busy and demanding life, I would probably never find chance to traverse this beautiful district and pick these marvelous experiences.

I had not been so much familiar with Katerera and it was a very humbling adventure. My contact with the fishing sites (emyaro) had also been lacking with little familiarity with Kishenyi because my grandmother (mother to my mother) Tekera Babizukenyima, a daughter to the late famous Mzee Furumato had made her life fortune from Kishenyi trading waragi and fish. And my own mother (Namara Florence) had returned back to her mother following death of my father and therefore, we often made some trips to Kishenyi to check on them (me and my brother Karuhanga Martin). And the other fishing sites were just theoretically known to me from my late grandmother (Nyakatura Yaaya Victoria Ariyenza) who had also labored her life in Kazinga and also Katunguru.

I used a boba boda for the whole of my campaign reach outs even when there was capacity to hire a car. I heard that it disturbed and humiliated some people that I looked for votes on a boda boda. But how is that a problem? In fact it was very enjoying for me, I didn't want to miss even a glimpse of the moment and secondly, I had portrayed my candidature as an ordinary person's struggle (Omuntu W'ahansi) and our slogan read as, "Ahabw'omuntu waburiijo." The fact I had even chosen the yellow overall as my signature wear. And most interestingly, every other candidate who by passed me with their cars they felt sympathy and always asked to take me in and I told them that I couldn't leave my team in the dust, rain and wind and hide inside the glasses of the prestigious cars. That would be unfair.

RECOGNIZING MY CORE TEAM

My core team was literally composed of only three people. Myself, Mbamanya the flag raiser and Medson my boda boda guy. And I really feel indebted to this team. The rest I considered them as voters and my candidature was not demanding. It was my personal attempt and I didn't want to attach any form of responsibility to anyone, else be it my family. Everyone was at liberty to fall behind me or even criticize because I wanted to impress every one of my ability and capacity from real merit.

The evening I came back home and found my grandmother, (Tekera Babizukanyima) not at home, that she had been since morning canvassing for my votes house to house on foot and in hot sun, I felt bad. I didn't want to subject my political life to such heavy commitment to my family and I really wanted to consider all of them as mere voters. I didn't want to burden anyone.

WHAT NO POLITICIAN WILL SAY

I have never liked being referred to as a politician but I guess they (politicians) also passed through the grounding process like I was experiencing to become liars, schemers, cunning creatures, and many other terms these people have defined themselves with, and probably I am also in the process. So, fellow politicians, these electorates have been rendered hopeless and maybe by the same systems we have been architects and they really do not understand and not even want to know of the good world you may dream to create for them (that is if truly you mean it). The people, most of them have only known and inherited hard lives – that's the only thing they have known. They have grown suffering and giving a lot to achieve even little and so they may not understand the promise of creating a better world for them.

And the better world they may quickly understand is the UGX 1,000/= you can leave with them when you pass by. An economy and a political system of election commercialization is not a choice for the politician, especially here in Uganda. Both the politicians and the demanding voter are victims of this whole well planned political economy and the selling of votes is

unavoidable and I will talk more about this later in this story.

But, it was really painful for me, seeing 6 to 15 year olds moving freely in the community during school time. Seeing these young people in the villages of Katerera running after our convoy cars and boda bodas was really so touching for me.

Most of these and about 50% of all the children who reach 15 years before going to school, are highly likely never to ever step at school – this should be very touching and in Katerera, Katanda, I told the audience that the only tested process that would possibly bridge a poor background and household would be education. A poor family that has educated its children has every chance to completely forget poverty.

And this was very evident to me that furthering only formal-school solutions for sustainable communities is very futile in such circumstances where we have a big chunk of the people having senior four as their highest class of education.

We therefore, instead of bringing cash money to parishes through the Parish Development Model (PDM) and other similar projects, need to bring skills development to villages. Vocational Education Training to equip these people with at least a marketable skill that would help the people to start their own enterprises.

You see an example of the fishing sites, every young man grows into one or two skills that they practice for their life and these people make daily money and that is why we know them for being spoilt with them. They waste it with every addiction well knowing they will make another because they have got a life skill of either going inside the water to fish, make and repair boats, make fish nets or prepare them after and going inside the water etc.

And throughout my campaign, I promised people to utilize my electoral mandate to lobby a government vocational institution in Rubirizi or at least consider massive sensitization for embracing vocation education training.

THE STRUGGLE WITH AGENTS AND ELECTION BUYING

I have already stated it somewhere up there that I intentionally didn't place any agent in Katerera. And maybe in few places where I had known contacts founded on friendly and family relationship that I had "free" agents, but elsewhere, I spent the least UGX 5,000/= to facilitate a polling agent and without assurance whether he or she would appear for duty on the election day because about 40% of my agents didn't work.

And I was at home trying to sort out with my agent letters that I got news of the money for a certain candidate that was passing around in Kasoga village. I was very surprised because such kind of election spending was not known in this race for Chairperson LCV, but again, I was amused that the money was just in my compound. And worse, the person who was distributing it was the same person who was recommending agents for me.

I was intentionally personally delivering agent letters by myself for some reasons and when I had visited Busonga I and II, some friendly elders had asked to be my agents but following the victory of Honorable Cadet Benjamin, I was convinced by my reasoning that the older people were not attractive to the young population that was the majority and therefore, picked Ferdinand who happened to be my old student at Trinity preparatory primary school of Head teacher Fortunate and then Bosco whom I got to know from Ferdinand.

I had just finished engaging the two guys and agreed on becoming my agents for the two neighboring villages and had just reached back home when Bosco called me. It was a wrong call. He was trying to call my friend Obed Agaba Byakureka, a fellow candidate in the race and mistakenly called me and I also pretended to be Obed. The guy told me how Fredrick had approached him but he was not clear and straight and so he needed to meet me (Obed) on possibility of becoming my agent. Ha ha ha! Mbweni ensi egi! I got furious and immediately called Medson to come back and take me to Butoha to get my agent letter from Bosco.

CONCLUSION

As I conclude this story, Chairman Agubanshongorera also got nominated to stand again and this time as an independent candidate. But I am rest assured that Chairman Obed Agaba Byakureka will win him again but massively this time. And for that fact my involvement in this election of the general is very limited this around but openly supporting Chairman Obed.

The iron lady Shamim Kyobutungi also got nominated to participate in the general elections and particularly, in my view I think she intended to “adamantly” continue to come so as to dismiss any rumors that she didn’t have the academic qualifications and or had been bought out of the election as they were the alleged cases at the time of the NRM primary election when she suddenly got out of the race.

But following the defeat of the incumbent and more so by a fellow young person, with heed to advice, Shamim shouldn’t have contested against Chairman Obed at this point because it is practically impossible for her to win him. It would have been easier for her to win the primary election than this general as it stands and, coming as a councilor would have been a very strategic move for her. Preparing for 2031.

And to rap it all, my hopes to run again for District Chairperson are very minimal, in fact it would be a surprise even to myself and if I will have to keep political interests, it would be representing Bunyaruguru in the August House. I was a little bit disappointed in the political technicalities around the conditions and chances of winning the District Chairperson seat. The differences between Katerera and Bunyaruguru are very real and maybe unfavorable for my political character.

Previously I had bias about Rutoto Sub County, my familiarity with the sub county was wanting and it had been one of the places I had been worried about, but I really found it good, and else, I find Bunyaruguru a common place.

That’s all I can share with you for the moment. CHEERIO





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