I am not fighting for the Yiira state, says Omusinga Mumbere

BY MOUREEN BIIRA

KASESE. Omusinga Charles Wesley Mumbere Iremangoma of Rwenzururu kingdom has dismissed claims that he or his cultural institution is pursuing the creation of a so-called Yiira State or Yiira Republic.

In a strong cautionary message, the Omusinga warned his subjects against engaging in activities that could destabilise peace in the Rwenzori sub-region under the guise of pursuing the so-called Yira State.

The Omusinga made these remarks on March 27, 2026, while addressing his subjects at Rwenzori Square in Kasese Town.

They had gathered at the venue to welcome him after his return from Kampala, where he had been residing since December 2025 after undergoing specialised medical treatment in Istanbul, Turkey, where he had been since October 2025.

He reminded his subjects that the government already recognised Obusinga Bwa Rwenzururu (OBR) as a legitimate cultural institution, warning them against being misled by people with hidden agendas.

Omusinga criticised individuals unknown to him who, over the years, have continued to misrepresent the intentions of the kingdom and the Bayira (Bakonzo-speaking) people.

He clarified that he is not involved in any campaign advocating for the formation of a separate state, saying he is instead focused on preserving identity,

Caution.
Let us avoid traps that could cost our lives. Some people are using innocent young people for wrong purposes. What happened at the palace [his royal palace in Kasese] in 2016 did not just happen; it was influenced by people from outside, and it led to a lot of suffering.
Omusinga Charles Wesley Mumbere Iremangoma of Rwenzururu kingdom

unity, and heritage of the Bakonzo.

"Obusinga Bwa Rwenzururu and the Bayira culture will never die until Jesus returns and nobody can challenge that. Others say we are after the Yiira State, while others say the Yiira Republic, what is that? We are not fighting for such things."

Reaffirming cultural identity

In his address, the monarch stressed that the mission of the Rwenzururu Kingdom is centered on safeguarding and reviving the original identity of the Bayira people, not engaging in political or separatist agendas.

He reflected on the historical division of the Bayira during the colonial period, noting that the community was split between different colonial administrations. One side (commonly referred to as the Bakonzo) was retained by the British in Uganda while the other was taken over by the (Banande) in the DR Congo.

"Our culture, language, and even naming are similar. Despite this separation, the cultural and linguistic ties between the Bayira and the Banande o remain strong"

He also spoke of the distortion of the original identity and language of his people, saying the name "Bakonzo" is not the authentic community designation but a nickname with negative connotations.

He said the name "Bakonzo" was derived from a Kiswahili word 'Mgonjwa,' meaning a sick person. "For how long will we remain 'sick'?"

He reminded his subjects that the government already recognised OBR as a legitimate cultural institution, warning them against being misled by people with hidden agendas.

CamScanner