

Argument. The petitioners say denial of entitlement of their property has kept the royal family members in abject poverty.

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Queen Mother accused of selling burial sites

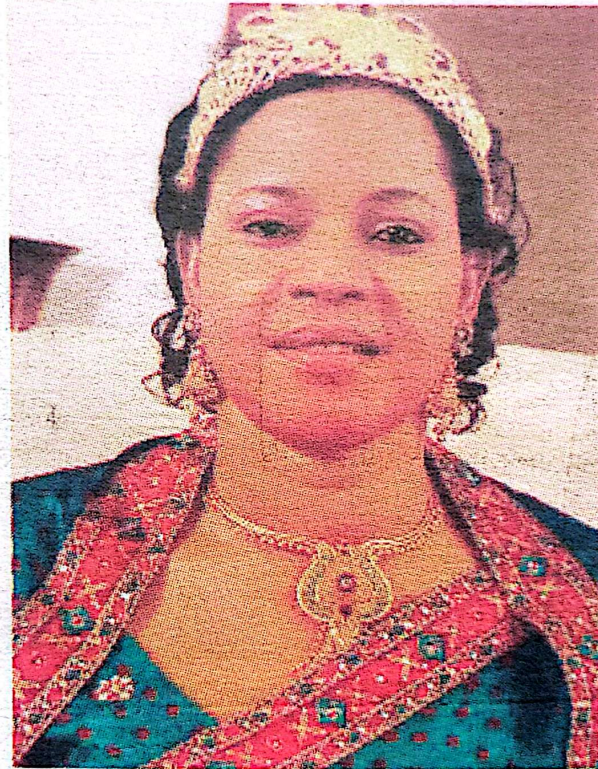
KAMPALA. Enraged royal family members yesterday reduced the stature of their Queen Mother, Best Kemigisa, to a land grabber and openly accused her of illegally selling Tooro Kingdom land.

In their petition to the land commission, royal family members led by Prince Gilbert Atwooki Mujogya and Princesses Damali Kankya, accused the Queen Mother of grabbing the kingdom land and selling cultural sites such as burial grounds of their forefathers at Kagoma and Burongo in Kibitto and Kisomoro sub-counties respectively.

Evidence before the Justice Catherine Bamugemereire-led commission shows that upon the death of King Patrick Mathew Olimi Kaboyo III in August 1995, the Queen Mother acquired letters of administration as a sole administrator of the estate in 1999, which formed basis for transfer of the land into her names and subsequent sale of the royal family land.

Documents presented before the commission yesterday indicate that the late Kaboyo acquired proprietorship of his late father George David Kamurasi as the heir during the political turmoil that led to abolition of monarchies in 1966.

The royal family members told the commission that the late King Kaboyo



THE ISSUE

Adamant.

Prince Mujogya said despite the efforts, "Ms Kemigisa has remained totally adamant" to recognise the beneficial interests of the royal children of late King Kamurasi.

Summoned.

Justice Bamugemereire said the Queen Mother has been summoned to defend herself.

On the spot. Queen Mother Best Kemigisa

acquired proprietorship of the disputed property as a trustee (during an emergency) upon the death of

their father Kamurasi. They said the late Kaboyo died intestate.

"As a tradition, the king (Kamu-

rasi) left a will and appointed guardians of his 27 children but those who were above 18 years. For us who were younger were subjected to the trusteeship of Kaboyo by way of a certificate of succession," testified Prince Mujogya adding that their late brother Kaboyo had kept their share as per the tradition like the late Kamurasi.

Prince Mujogya told the commission that the Queen Mother sold their property in contravention of her own declaration that she made before court to properly administer and account for the estate of the deceased King.

"We approached the Queen Mother with all the facts to have the land transferred to the rightful owners but she refused," said Prince Mujogya.

He also explained that King Kaboyo died intestate, before processing beneficial interest of rightful owners as per Kamurasi's will.

According to Prince Mujogya, family elders; Agnes Bagaya and Switzer Kajjamurubi wrote to the Queen Mother about the property and asked her to return it but in vain.

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