

Museveni moves to bridge the gap with Buganda clan leaders

BY BUSEIN SAMILU

KAMPALA. In a bid to bridge the gap between him and the Buganda Kingdom clan leaders (Bataka), President Museveni has appointed Mr Henry Lutwama as his special presidential assistant and coordinator of the Bataka of Buganda at State House.

Mr Lutwama, who, up to his appointment, served as a political assistant to the State minister for ICT and National Guidance, will, among other things, serve as the link between the Presidency/President and the Bataka on matters related to culture, lineage, and customs.

He assumed office in January, two months after being confirmed by the Public Service Ministry.

"I am pleased to inform you that His Excellency the President in exercise of the powers vested in him under article 172(1) (a) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995 (as amended) and on the advice of the Public Service Commission directed that you be of-

fered appointment as Special Presidential Assistant/ coordinator of Bataka in Buganda, in the Public Service of Uganda," the November 24, 2025 letter written by Stephen Okiror on behalf of the Ministry Permanent Secretary informed Mr Lutwama.

It added: "The appointment is subject to the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995 (as amended); the Public Service Act, Cap. 91; the Pensions Act, Cap. 89 and the Regulations made thereunder; the Uganda Public Service Standing Orders 2021 and Administrative Instructions issued from time to time."

Speaking about his appointment, Mr Lutwama said: "I am grateful to His Excellency the President for this appointment, and I look forward to engaging respectfully and to working collaboratively so that our cultural heritage continues to contribute meaningfully to peace, unity, and social and economic progress."

Until his appointment, there was a huge gap between Mr Museveni and the Buganda administration following the split in the Bataka, where others secretly

dealt with the former without the kingdom's knowledge.

In June last year, a group of five Bataka attempted to forcefully visit the then-ailing King Ronald Muwenda Mutebi II in Namibia, where he was getting treatment.

They claimed that the President had

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Mr Lutwama, in December last year, won the prestigious Climate Innovation Champion Award by Heal the Planet Global Organisation for his groundbreaking project, harnessing the Replication of Biogas Technology for Community Uptake and Utilisation. He has also held multiple leadership positions at Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), focusing on community mobilisation and development.

reportedly sponsored them to go see the king after a section of Ugandans demanded to know his condition. They were, however, arrested and deported before reaching the king.

Mr Museveni later penned a letter to his Foreign Affairs minister, Gen Abubakar JJ Odongo, where he vehemently distanced himself from them and supported their "preventative arrest" in Namibia.

"I have seen a letter... informing me of the indiscipline of some Ugandans vis-à-vis the Kabaka's presence in Namibia... Therefore, by the copies of this letter, I request all the Ugandans to stop embarrassing Uganda by opportunistically trying to show how much they are for the Kabaka," Mr Museveni said in the letter.

This development was barely a year after a group of Bataka, in what many described as a disgraceful manner, without authorisation from their king, met Mr Museveni in a meeting that was orchestrated by the State Minister for Information, Ms Joyce Ssebugwawo.

Mr Walusimbi Mbirozankya, the head

of the Ffumbe clan, who thanked the President for the peace not only in Uganda but also in the region, used that chance to appeal to the President to secure for them two and a half acres of land near Bulange Mengo, which they needed to set up their offices and other developmental ventures to benefit the kingdom. This land was later gifted to them.

In a subsequent June 2024 meeting, the leaders expressed their need to construct two buildings on the 2.2-acre piece of land. They said the buildings will house cultural resource centres such as a museum and a theatre.

In response, Mr Museveni agreed to set up the buildings for them using the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) Engineering Brigade. He also pledged to support the Bataka Sacco with Shs200 million.

Mr Lutwama said he would use his position to lobby and ensure that this and more gains are achieved by both the Bataka and the government in the presence of a conflict-free environment.