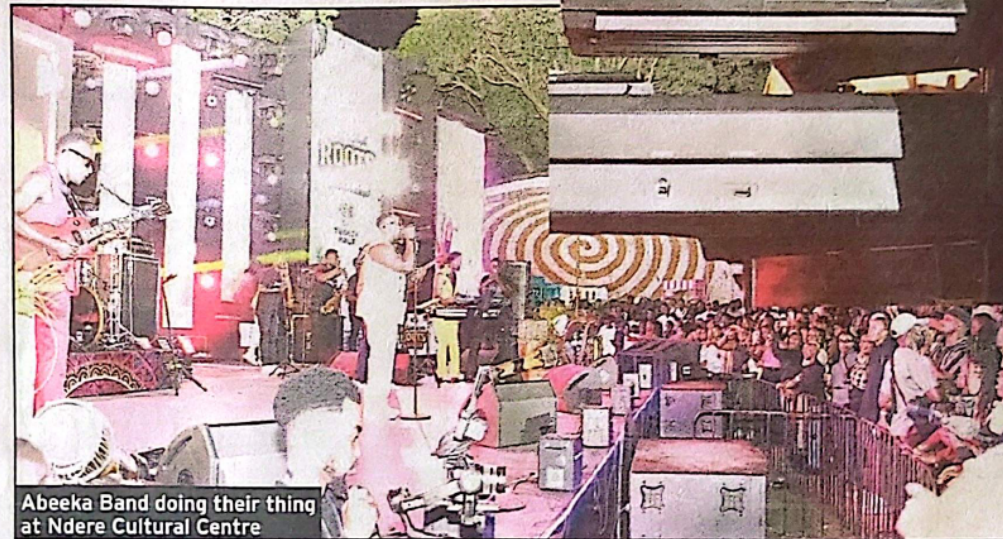


ABEEKA BAND COMES OF AGE

By Ranell Dickson Nsereko

For a group that began five years ago performing for barely 15 people in a hotel setting, an anniversary concert felt like a powerful full-circle victory. By 9:00pm on Saturday, when the band finally stepped onto the stage, the venue was already packed to capacity. Abeeka (loosely translated as Home Boys) stayed true to the sound that built their name, delivering covers. Their setlist carried the audience through reggae favourites from Morgan Heritage to hits by Chronixx, whose own Kampala debut happened at the same venue. It is still puzzling why the concert was named Roots and Vibes. It had the vibe alright, but it was not rooted in anything for it was a mix up of everything populist.

One of the most emotional highlights came with their rendition of *Lwaki Onumya* by Radio and Weasel. The performance doubled as a tribute to the late Mowzey Radio, with the crowd singing every word



Abeeka Band doing their thing at Ndere Cultural Centre

in unison.

The night reflected the relentless consistency behind Abeeka's rise. The band performs nearly six nights a week, juggling gigs across weddings, corporate events and

nightlife spots. That grind has not only sharpened their craft, but built a loyal following; one that turned up in full force for this milestone.

"Abeeka Band understands what live music means to people. They

have built their audience organically, night after night," said Sandra Againe, the Tusker Malt brand manager.

Apart from the covers, the band also delivered a master piece

performance of some of its originals.

Importantly, the show also subtly addressed the ongoing conversation around cover bands and copyright. The presence and support of artistes like Bebe Cool, Levixone, Racheal Magoola, Dax Vibe, A Pass and Maurice Kirya underscored a growing sense of collaboration rather than conflict.

During their performance, the Abeeka Band proved that live bands are no longer background music for people drinking in lounges. They can headline, sell tickets and the Abeeka did exactly that.



Abeeka Band's Trevor Muhumuza aka Dr Tre the keyboardist