The NRM victory is attributed to many factors, including the advantage of state machinery and a disorganised Opposition.

NRM sweeps LC3 seats in Buganda

BY MONITOR TEAM

The ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) has continued to prove its political prowess, sweeping the majority of sub-county and town council across the Buganda region.

In Masaka District, which is a predominantly Opposition National Unity Platform (NUP) stronghold, NRM won the three sub-counties of Buwunga, Bukakkata ,Kyesiiga and Kyanamukkaka Town Council.

The NRM candidate for Kyannamukaaka Town Council chairperson seat, Ms Zaina Nakidde, defeated three men including the outgoing chairperson Cyrus Kalema of NUP.

Ms Mable Kwarikunda, the returning officer for Masaka District, said Ms Nakidde polled 4,198 votes, while Mr Kalema got 2,845 votes. Gabriel Sekaddu of Democratic Party (DP) garnered 113 votes, and Blessed Mugenyi of Democratic Front (DF) got 55 votes.

In Buwunga Sub-county, Gerevaazio Sebudde , the NRM flag bearer trounced three other contestants with 1,579 votes.

Richard Bakkabulindi of NUP garnered 1,479 votes, Martin Senkeezi Mugatta (Ind) got 893 votes, and Caesar Mawanda for DP obtained 451 votes.

In Kyeesiiga Sub-county, the NRM flag bearer, Mr Lusiba Mikidaadi, also won with 2,371 votes, defeating Gordon Sebuggwaawo Mayanja of NUP, who is the outgoing chairperson. Mayanja came second with 2,215 votes, Edward Kirumira of DP, scored 319 votes.

The NRM party also won the largest number of councillors in all the four sub-counties and five parishes that make up Masaka District.

In Bukakkata Sub-county, Mr Fred Eric Sebadduka, who stood as an Independent after losing in NRM primaries won with 1,966 votes while his closest opponent, also independent William Wasswa got 1,006 votes. Mr Abdu Kaayabula of NRM got 964 votes while James Mwaasa of NUP obtained 201 votes.

Masaka District has 55,626 registered voters with 141 polling stations.

In Nakaseke District, out of the five town councils, NRM won all the 11 sub-counties and four out of the five town councils (Ngoma, Butalangu, Semite and Nakaseke). An independent, Mr Paul Mugisha, won Kiwoko Town Council. However, in the neigbouring Luweero District, NUP managed to win four town councils (Wobulenzi, Bombo, Kamira and Ndejje) while NRM won only two town councils— Kikyusa and Busiika.

Luweero Town Council and Zirobwe Town Council went into the hands of independents Paul Mukungu and Abdul Karim Tamale respectively.

Mr Axam Mudduse, a local political observer in Mpigi District, says after the 2021 General Election where NUP won majority parliamentary and local council seats, the much-anticipated shift never materialised, which seemed to have annoyed the voters.

"Instead of seeing a strengthened Opposition presence that could hold the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) to account, they [voters] witnessed fragmentation, internal wrangles, and a gradual erosion of the very momentum that had mobilised millions of Ugandans ….the energy poured into NUP often ended up reinforcing the very system it sought to challenge, as fatigue and cynicism set in," he says.

Weak Opposition

He adds that perhaps the most damaging blow, however, came from within NUP itself.

"The process of issuing the party flag for various positions exposed deep hypocrisy and poor leadership. What should have been a transparent, merit-based exercise became a source of division. Party executives failed to implement effective reconciliation mechanisms after the flag contests. Those who won the flags were favoured and celebrated, while the losers—many of them dedicated NUP members who had sacrificed time, money, and energy—were sidelined and neglected," he says.



Ms Zaina Nakidde (NRM), the mayor-elect for Kyamanukkaka Town Council, Masaka District

In Nakasongola, out of the six town councils, NUP won three (Migeera, Nakasongola, Katuggo) while NRM won the town councils of Mayirikiti, Kakooge and Lwampanga. NRM took seven out of the nine sub-counties and two were won by independents.

In Mukono District, NUP's Susan Bogere Nsesebuse and Humphrey Kyasa won Mukono Central Division and Goma Division respectively.

Mr Michael Mulwana of NUP also won in Kasawu Town Council while Sam Kyege and Dauson Nyakuwa won Mpunge Sub-County and Seeta-Namuganga Sub-county respectively.

NRM further won in the sub-counties of Nakisunga, Namataba, Nama, Kasawu,Nagojje and Katosi Town Council while an independent took Ntenjeru –Kisoga Town Council.

In the island district of Kalangala, NRM won four out of the six sub-counties and NUP took the remaining two.

NRM also took Kalangala Town Council. In Wakiso District, NRM won the divisions of Busukuma, Nansana, Nabweru, Kakira Town Council and Masuliita Town Council.

The NRM party further won the sub-counties of Namayumba, Kakiri, Masuliita while NUP's Sazir Ssebuufu won Namayumba Town Council.

In Mpigi District, NRM won the sub-counties of Muduuma, Buwama, Kituntu, Nkozi while independents won in Kiringente, Buwama. NUP won Kammengo Sub-county in Mpigi Town while independents won Kayabwe Town Council and Buwama Town Council.

NRM GAINS

The NRM lost many seats to NUP in the 2021 election, but in the recently concluded 2026 General Election, Mr Museveni managed to win back Buganda region with his party-NRM winning more than 50 parliamentary seats against NUP's 49.

NRM also won majority LC5 and mayoral seats across the 27 districts of Buganda.

NRM machinery

Mr Creacent Kivumbi, another political observer in Mpigi District, says the Opposition in Uganda continues to struggle against the entrenched NRM machinery not primarily because of state repression alone—though that remains a brutal reality—but largely due to deep-seated internal weaknesses that opposition actors have failed to address for years.

"There is chronic disunity among Opposition political actors. Instead of forging a united front against the regime, leaders and parties often prioritise personal ambitions, ethnic calculations, or petty rivalries over collective strategy. We have seen this repeatedly: alliances form during campaigns only to fracture soon after, with accusations flying in every direction. This lack of cohesion sends a clear message to voters—that the Opposition cannot even govern itself, let alone the country," he explains.

In Kyotera District, the Returning Officer, Ms Esther Asiimwe, declared Sulaiman Sseremba (Ind) as winner of Kyotera Town Council chairperson seat, while Zachariah Kigozi (NRM) is the new chairperson Kasaali Town Council. NUP's Geoffrey Sasa is the new chairperson of Kalisizo Town while Yusuf Masumbuka (NRM) won Kasasa Sub-county chairperson seat. NRM's Muzakiru Kintu won Kakuuto Sub-county seat while Ben Ssentongo (Ind) and John Sserubiri (NRM) won Kabira and Nabigasa Sub-counties respectively.

NRM further won the sub-counties of Nangoma, Kalisizo, Kirumba, Lwankoni and Kyebe and town councils of Mutukula and Kasensero.

NRM also won majority of sub-counties and town councils in the districts of Lyantonde, Lwengo, Gomba , Bukomansimbi, Butambala, Kassanda, Mubende, Kayunga, Buvuma,Rakai,Kyankwanzi ,Kiboga, Buikwe and Mukono. Mr Sadam Kiggundu, a renowned political commentator in Greater Masaka, attributes the NRM victory in the sub-county polls to what he describes as state machinery that suppressed Opposition actors.

"The NRM entered the 2026 General Election with a goal to win majority of the positions at all levels by hook or crook. Some constituencies [MP seats] were won under unclear circumstances. This made the Opposition supporters loose interest in participating in the next round of locals council elections, which gave NRM an opportunity to take majority seats," he says.

However, he advises leaders of key Opposition political parties to go back to the drawing board and plan early for the 2031 General Election.

Compiled by Al Mahdi Ssenkabirwa, David Sekayinga, Noeline Nabukenya, Sadat Mbogo,Antonio Kalyango, Ambrose Musasizi, Hanifah Nanyanzi, Dan Wandera & Herbert Kamoga

CamScanner