MUBAJJE WANTS MORE MUSLIMS IN CABINET

By Nelson Kiva

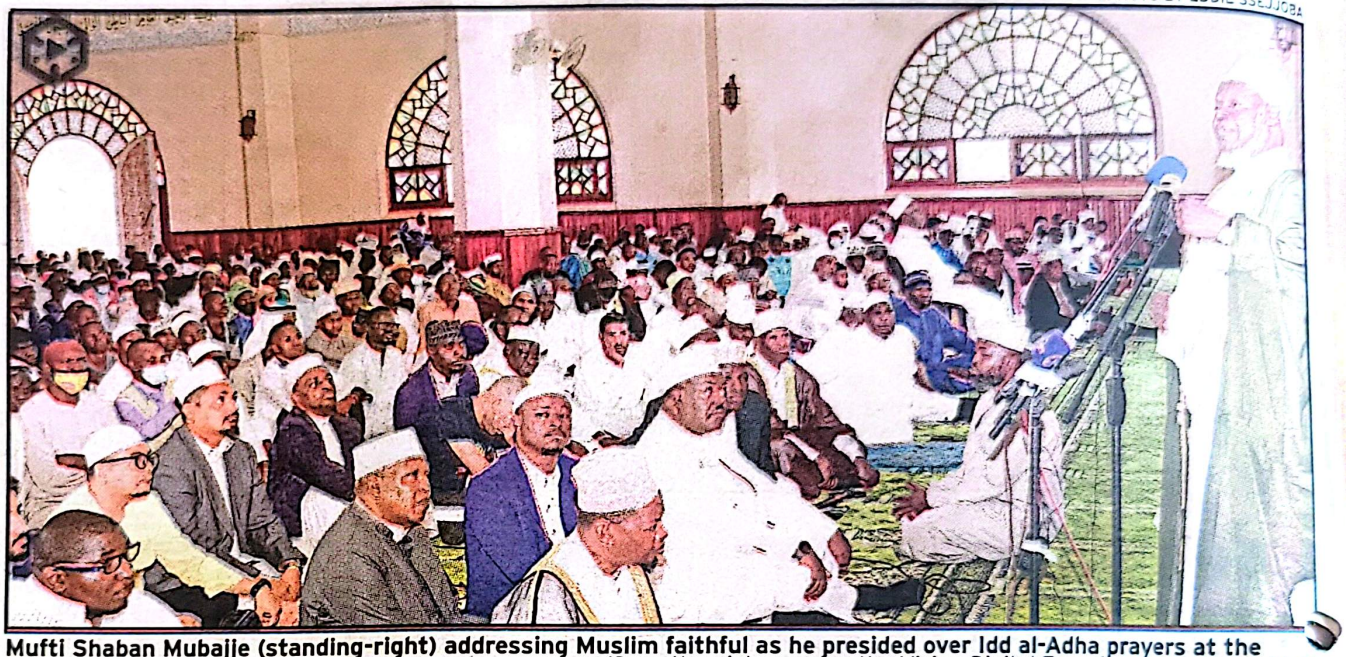
The Mufti of Uganda, Sheikh Shaban Mubajje, said he is dissatisfied with what he called the small number of Muslims appointed to the newly announced Cabinet.

Mubajje said the Muslim community deserves greater representation in government because of its continued support for national leadership and unity.

BETWEEN THE LINES

Similarly, at Nakivubo Blue Primary School in Kampala, clerics that led Idd al-Adha prayers said Muslims 'deserves greater inclusion in national leadership'.

PHOTO BY EDDIE SSEJJOBA



Mufti Shaban Mubajje (standing-right) addressing Muslim faithful as he presided over Idd al-Adha prayers at the Gaddafi National Mosque in Old Kampala, yesterday. (Scan the picture using the Vision Digital Experience to watch video)

IDD PRAYERS AT OLD KAMPALA

He made public his sentiments yesterday while presiding over Idd al-Adha prayers at the Gaddafi National Mosque in Old Kampala.

The prayers attracted senior government officials, diplomats, prominent Muslim leaders, business personalities and hundreds of faithful, led by the Minister for Kampala and Metropolitan Affairs, Hajjat Minsa Kabanda.

President Yoweri Museveni on Tuesday announced a new Cabinet. Among the Muslims appointed were Third Deputy Prime Minister Hajjat Rukia Isanga Nakadama, Hajjat Minsa Kabanda, Haruna Kasolo as foreign affairs state minister, Hajjat Hanifah Kawooya as health state minister in charge of general duties, among others.

"A small slice is not enough. We need more," Mubajje said.

MUSLIM PARTICIPATION

A similar call was made on the same day by Muslim leaders in Busoga region, who argued that increased participation of Muslims will boost efforts to eradicate corruption from Uganda.

The appeal was made during prayers led by assistant Mufti in Busoga Muslim region Dr Sheikh Hussein Mohammad Bowa in Jinja city.

At Nakivubo Blue Primary School playground in Kampala city, where hundreds of Muslims gathered to mark Idd al-Adha, the clerics said the Muslim community 'deserves greater inclusion in national leadership'.

Sheikh Ahmed Haruna Kasujja urged President Museveni to appoint more Muslims to top positions, saying the Muslim fraternity has capable leaders who can contribute to national development.

COMMERCIALISATION OF HAJJ

The Mufti used the occasion to express concern over the commercialisation of the annual Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca), accusing some individuals of exploiting pilgrims for financial gain.

"Those who are heading this programme have turned their religion into a business enterprise, that they exploit the Hajjis," Mubajje said, adding that the trend has contributed to confusion and reports of missing pilgrims during Hajj.

He said the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council (UMSC) had attempted to intervene in the management of Hajj arrangements, but had faced resistance from some actors involved in the process.

"This time with some people representing the Government itself," the Mufti said.

COMPLAINT OVER HAJJ SLOTS

Mubajje further revealed that President Museveni had allocated Hajj slots to UMSC, but claimed that many of those slots had been taken up by individuals attached to government offices. "Out of those 170, 83 were obtained by those who were sought to be working for the state and representing the Government," he said.

He added that discussions would be held with relevant authorities and the President to streamline future Hajj arrangements.

Additional reporting by John Musenze and Donald Kirya

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