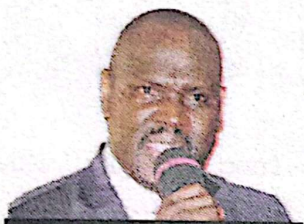


The unanswered pain of Ugandans

EDITOR: Uganda's history is deeply marked by bloodshed, political violence and heartbreak. Many lives were lost and countless families were left with unanswered questions about the fate of their loved ones.



James Galabuzi Mukasa

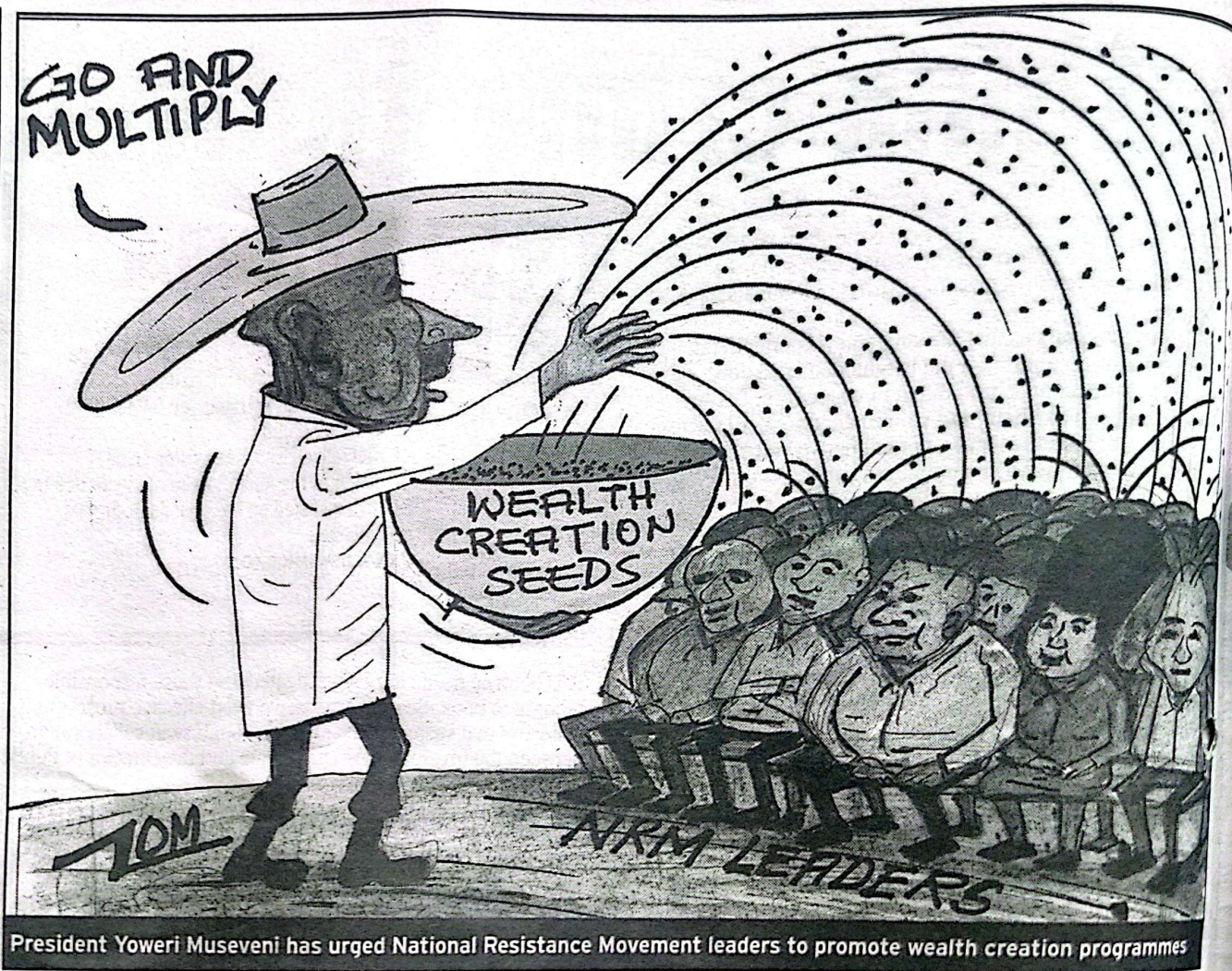
Political violence entered Uganda's landscape in 1966 and intensified through ethnic divisions and the terror of Idi Amin's regime. The Lubiri attack left many dead, with bodies never recovered for decent burial. This tragic pattern continued throughout the 1970s. One such painful story is that of my father, Edward Galabuzi Mukasa, who was kidnapped on August 23, 1977, from his office at Udyam House. Forty-nine years later, he has never been seen, dead or alive. His disappearance remains one of the many unresolved mysteries of Uganda's dark past.

Under Amin's regime, victims were dumped into infamous detention centres, such as the Nakasero dungeons, where countless Ugandans were tortured, starved and dehumanised. Mzee Lawoko, one of the few survivors, recounted the horrors inside those prisons. He described prisoners were given human-cooked meat during Christmas and Easter, while others drank urine to survive. The psychological trauma endured by those who lived through such brutality is beyond comprehension.

Disappearances like my father's were not acts of war, but calculated actions by state agents. A person would go to work and simply vanish, never to return. The pain of not knowing whether a loved one is dead or alive is immeasurable. It is a burden many Ugandans still carry.

Many Ugandans carry hidden pain behind brave smiles. Unanswered questions continue to haunt families decades later. True national healing requires acknowledging the past, confronting the truth and embracing meaningful reconciliation.

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President Yoweri Museveni has urged National Resistance Movement leaders to promote wealth creation programmes