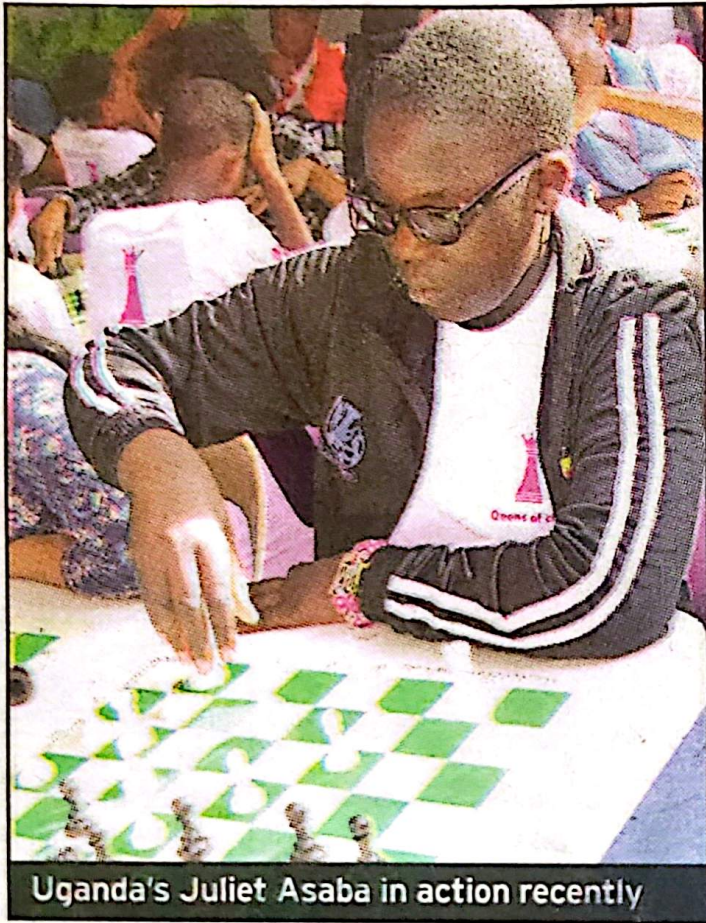


BATTLE LINES DRAWN AS AFRICA CHESS BATTLE STARTS

PHOTO BY SILVANO KIBUUKA



By Michael Nsubuga

Uganda aims to surpass its five-medal achievement from last year's African Youth Chess Championship (AYCC) 2025 held in Zimbabwe, as the 17th edition of the championship starts today at the Imperial Botanical Beach Hotel in Entebbe.

In Zimbabwe, Uganda's Sana Omprakash, Juliet Asaba, Apollo Ahumuza, Anil Suhana and Elvis Tumusiime returned home with medals. Omprakash topped the U-18 girls' category with eight points, beating Nigeria's Deborah Quickpen and Botswana's Natalie Banda, who each collected seven points.

Tumusiime won bronze in the boys' U-10 category after he collected 7 points behind Kenyan Nathaniel Manyeki and Botswana's Ngwao Keoletile, who took the gold and silver with 8.5 and 7 points, respectively.

Asaba and Ahumuza won silver medals in the under-14 and under-12 categories, respectively, after each collected 7 points, behind Cassidy Elizabeth of Kenya and Rannveer Tak of South Africa. In Entebbe, in addition to

medals and trophies, winners in the under-12, under-14, and open categories will receive the FIDE Master or Woman FIDE Master titles. Silver and bronze medalists will earn the Candidate Master or Woman Candidate Master titles. Winners in the under-8, under-10, and under-12 categories will qualify for the 2027 FIDE World Cup.

This year's competition features ten Ugandans in the under-16 category, including Jemimah Wanyana, Olivia Asimwe, Suzan Namukobe, and Nyatia Aimee Ahumuza. They will compete against strong contenders such as WFM Elizabeth Cassidy Maina and Zuri Kaloki from Kenya, WCM Rachel Jailos from Malawi, ACM Snyman Mila Marie from South Africa, and AFM Jain Amyra from Zimbabwe.

In the U-14 open category, which has 145 participants, ACM Sianyinda Lubona Twalumbe from Zambia is a leading competitor. Ugandan participants include Daniel Odokonyero, Apollo Ahumuza, Edwin Edel, Trevor Tumukunde, Dara Tendereza, and George Ssempijja.

Turn to Page 35