

Mumbere must face law - Museveni

Will not interfere. President rejects MPs calls for the immediate release of the king saying the matter is before court.

BY MOSES KYEYUNE
mkyeyune@ug.nationmedia.com

KAMPALA. President Museveni on Wednesday rejected demands for the release of Rwenzururu King Charles Wesley Mumbere as a precondition for dialogue between the government and the people of Kasese.

Sources told *Daily Monitor* that Kasese political leaders led by the Leader of Opposition in Parliament, Ms Winnie Kiiza, had included the unconditional release of their king among the terms for the dialogue, which were rejected by the President. Mr Museveni told the MPs that the matter was already before court.

The President held talks with selected FDC members at his Kisozi farm where he advised the lawmakers to "have hope in the court process."

Addressing reporters at Parliament, Mr Robert Centenary, the Kasese Municipality MP, who attended the meeting with the President, confirmed the narrative from the sources that indeed the President asked them [leaders] to wait for court proceedings.

"He [President] told us to wait for the outcome of the trial but we demanded that the trial be accorded enough time and with a permanent judge for justice to be rendered," Mr Centenary said, adding that the meeting was summoned by President Museveni himself and not Kasese leaders. "We had to go and listen to him because we have been castigating him for not cooperating with the elected leaders of Kasese," he added.

Although Ms Kiiza was not available to give the details and the background to the meeting, Mr Centenary explained: "We made it clear to the President that we will have no dialogue as long as the Omusinga remains incarcerated. We demanded for his release and his subjects under detention on similar charges."

He added: "If we are to engage



in dialogue regarding the issues of Obusinga bwa Rwenzururu, the head of delegation will be the king and those talks will begin immediately he is set free." Although the MPs kept begging the President to release Omusinga, sources said the president insisted that the matters were before court and therefore could not help them.

Omusinga Mumbere was arrested on November 27, and has since been charged with murder, terrorism, robbery and treason among others before he was remanded to Luzira Upper Prison. At least 116 people were killed that day in a UPDF-led raid on Buhikira Palace in Kasese Town.

Hearing of his bail application is slated for January 9, 2017 in High Court.

This dialogue, according to the legislator, will have to comprise elected leaders from the district, the clergy, traditional leaders and political players from the ruling National Resistance Movement party.

The Wednesday meeting was attended by all five elected Members of Parliament from Kasese District except, Mr Jackson Kathika, the MP for Busongora South, who was in the

Seeking solutions. President Museveni, (Left) meets political and religious leaders from Kasese District led by the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, Ms Winnie Kiiza (3rd Right), on Wednesday.

constituency and could not join his colleagues at short notice.

The meeting was also attended by Mr Geoffrey Sibendire Bigogo, the Kasese District chairperson and South Rwenzori Diocese Bishop Jackson Nzerebende.

Not Compromised

Mr Centenary told journalists that prior to their meeting with Mr Museveni, they held consultations with Mr Wasswa Birigwa, the national chairperson of the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), who allowed them to meet the President. "We asked for the proceedings and all photos to be made public so as to dispel any suspicion that would arise from a closed-door session," he said.

A statement released by Mr Don Wanyama, the presidential press secretary indicated that the President met political leaders from Kasese District and warned against unnecessary framing of individuals and attempts at extortion. According to Mr Wanyama, the President said the police should be allowed to do its work and promised to continue meeting political and religious leaders from Kasese.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Army recovers 43 mine in Karamoja