

Kabarole leaders fight over looming loss of district name

KABAROLE

By Wilson Asimwe

The leaders of Fort Portal town and Kabarole district are currently bickering over a name, but they should brace themselves for a bigger fight. One of them may actually disappear in a year or so.

Following the breakaway of Bunyangabu county, which became a district on July 1, Kabarole district remains with only two counties — Burahya and Fort Portal municipality.

But a 2015 Kabarole district council resolution states that all the 14 sub-counties of Burahya be annexed to Fort Portal municipality in order for it to qualify to become a tourism city.

So if Fort Portal tourism city swallows Burahya county, the district and the current municipality will become one. The city council would be the district council and the mayor would be the district chairperson. One set of politicians would evaporate and so would one name.

In anticipation of the impending change, Kabarole district council

ON THE GROUND

■ "Our focus now is not changing the name of the town, but attaining tourism city status as stipulated in Vision 2040," Muhanga said.

last week passed a resolution that the municipality name be changed from Fort Portal to Kabarole because the city is likely to inherit its name from the municipality. Richard Rwabuhinga, the district chairperson, defended the directive.

The Rev. Willy Kintu Muhanga, the mayor, on Thursday told stakeholders that Fort Portal municipality will not comply with the district council resolution to change its name.

"Our focus now is not changing the name of the town, but attaining the tourism city as stipulated in Vision 2040," Muhanga said.

He said that the district council should immediately withdrawal

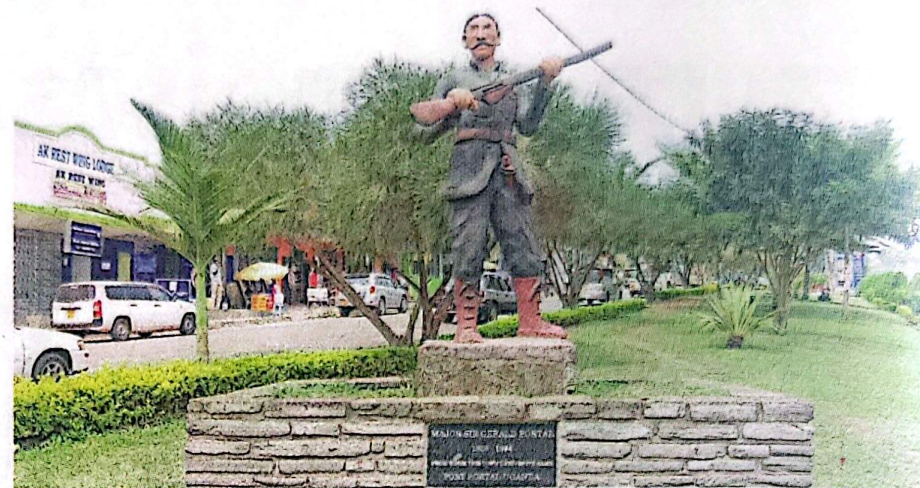
the resolution and apologise to the people of Fort Portal municipality.

"We have passed a resolution requiring the district council to withdraw its resolution and apologise for the mess because there is a council resolution that Burahya should be annexed to Fort Portal municipality in order for it to qualify to become a tourism city," Muhanga said.

He said Fort Portal municipality has already written to the urban development ministry seeking guidance on how to plan for the city status.

Grace Kenema, a community leader from Kichwamba sub-county, said the district council should have first consulted the people of Burahya before passing such a resolution to change the name of the municipality.

"In Burahya, we agreed to join Fort Portal municipality and this issue of Kabarole ceasing to exist should not affect our arrangements," Kenema said.



The statue of Major Sir Gerald Portal from whom Fort Portal town derives its name

History

Founded as a garrison for British soldiers by Gerald Portal in 1859, the area eventually came to be known as

Fort Portal.

Fort Portal, which was granted a municipality status in 1976, marked 40 years of existence last year.

PEOPLE SPEAK OUT

Stella Kemigabo, councillor

We don't want Kabarole district to cease. Some sub-counties from Burahya county should be annexed Fort Portal so that others can remain to form Kabarole.



Florence Byabazire, resident

Our leaders were misguided to pass a proposal to create Bunyangabu district before carrying out proper consultations.



Erasmus Kayongo, resident

Kabarole district is ceasing to exist because of the greed of some politicians. We shall petition Parliament to only get a few sub-counties from Bunyangabu district and Burahya county so that we maintain the original district.



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