

Uganda domestic radio and newspapers, February 22nd, 2010 (covering February 15th to February 21st 2010)

By Laura Schülke, MIGS reporter for Uganda

The New Vision (state-owned, mass-circulation daily) website. February 16, 2010, in English

"18 ministries run out of cash" by Yasiin Mugerwa

- The Defense Ministry yesterday topped a list of 18 ministries and government agencies asking for 285.5bn shillings in supplementary budget, which would increase this financial year's budget, approved seven months ago, to over 7.3 trillion shillings.
- Although it was anticipated the virtual end of LRA insurgency in northern Uganda would ease pressure on military spending, the army now says it has now exhausted 433bn shillings allocated to it last July and requires an extra 71.9bn shillings "for continuing Operation Lightning Thunder" and clearing unspecified domestic arrears.
- The UPDF launched OLT on 14 December 2008 to dismantle the LRA command but ended the offensive prematurely early last year amid protest by the Congolese government and without catching or killing Joseph Kony as planned. However, the Ugandan military left behind a contingent of specialized officers to track the insurgents, reportedly swapping hideouts between South Sudan, eastern DR Congo and the Central African Republic.
- If the latest requests are approved, the Defense budget this year will shoot to more than 500bn shillings. While opposition lawmakers criticized planned additional financing on the army as "wasteful", Ms Bbumba said the funding is required to "cater for shortfall in salaries for UPDF, food and Classified Expenditure to cater for urgent security operations under Operations Lightning Thunder."

The New Vision (state-owned, mass-circulation daily) website. February 17, 2010, in English

"EU urges electoral body not to waste time in preparing for elections" [Author unknown]

- The European Union has warned the Electoral Commission [EC] not to waste any more time in the preparation for the 2011 elections.
- "I am not satisfied because we are experiencing delays, starting with the electoral legislation in parliament, delays in procurement and in the mobilization of money," said EU ambassador Vincent de Visscher.
- De Visscher sounded the warning after a two-hour meeting with the EC chief, Badru Kiggundu, and secretary Sam Rwakoojo.
- He said the EU will closely monitor the preparation of the elections. "We want quality, accountability, fairness and objectivity."
- The meeting was called to discuss how the EU can assist the Electoral Commission prepare for the elections. Budgetary issues were also discussed. The EU promised 1.5m euros (4bn shillings) for the exercise. The EU ambassador urged parliament to quickly pass the electoral laws. They further discussed access to the media and the need to have a level playing field.
- The EU said it was willing to send election observers to Uganda like it did in the 2006 elections, an offer which was welcomed by Kiggundu.
- The core of the EU intervention this time will be on helping in voter education, De Visscher added.

The New Vision (state-owned, mass-circulation daily) website. February 18, 2010, in English

"NRM concedes defeat" by Moses Mulondo

- The [ruling] National Resistance Movement has conceded defeat by the [opposition] Forum for Democratic Change candidate, Jack Wamai Wamanga, in the Tuesday [16 February] Mbale municipality by-election.
- "NRM hereby congratulates the winner, Jack Wamanga, and all the other candidates for participating in the race. This is testimony to the fact that Ugandans believe in the democratization process being supervised by the government. While NRM would wish to win every seat, it is not practically possible. Democracy must triumph always," said NRM spokesperson, Mary Karooro Okurut.

The Daily Monitor (leading privately-owned newspaper) website. February 20, 2010, in English

"Government asks court to protect polygamy" by Lominda Afedraru

- The state on Thursday moved to protect the principal that a man can have more than one wife. The Attorney General's office has responded to a petition seeking to nullify the practice of polygamy by arguing that polygamy is protected by the Constitution under Article 37.
- The Attorney General's defense of the practice that allows a man to marry more than one wife follows a petitioned filed by human rights group, Mifumi Uganda Ltd, on February 8, 2010 asking the Constitutional Court to declare that the practice violated the right to equality between men and women and therefore was unconstitutional.
- But Attorney General Khiddu Makubuya stated in his response to the petition, that the law does not stop two consenting adults to choose the marriage of their choice. He said polygamy was protected under Article 37 of the Constitution which gives everyone the right "to belong, practice, enjoy, profess and promote any culture, tradition and religion of his or her own choice."

The Daily Monitor (leading privately-owned newspaper) website. February 21, 2010, in English

"Suspicion as truck-loads of youths cross Kampala" by Martin Sebuyiira & Stephen O.

- The youths, who were chanting NRM [ruling National Resistance Movement] party and martial songs caused concern with various people curious about what was happening. Security agencies expressed ignorance over the matter.
- It's not yet clear whether the youths on about 20 to 30 trucks were part of those being trained at the National Leadership Institute in Kyankwanzi or army recruits. Army Spokesman Lt-Col Felix Kulaigye expressed ignorance over the matter.
- Several attempts to get a comment from the Internal Affairs Minister Matia Kasaija over the youths ferried through the city centre yielded no fruits as his phone kept ringing to no response. When given a chance to comment, the NRM Secretary General Amama Mbabazi equally expressed ignorance of the event saying it could be something to do with the youth desk.
- Hudu Hussein Kahandi, the NRM National Secretary General for NRM youth, suspects these are NRM youth leaders drawn from across the country, who were invited for a conference on peace during elections. "The chairman of the Electoral Commission was expected to address them. "I was invited to attend but I had other issues to attend to here," Mr. Kahandi said.
- The specter of violence in the 2011 election been raised by mainly the opposition parties. It is feared that some of the youth currently undergoing cadre training may

become involved in election-related violence next year when the country holds general elections.

The Daily Monitor (leading privately-owned newspaper) website. February 21, 2010, in English

"Army draws fire in Karamoja" by Tabu Butagira

- The security situation in Karamoja [in northeastern Uganda] is reportedly deteriorating following disagreements between the military and some local leaders over "mismanagement" of ongoing disarmament exercise in the region, Sunday Monitor has learnt.
- Area politicians including MPs; Francis Kiyonga (Pokot) and Abraham Lokii (Jie), both facing prosecution for allegedly "inciting violence", accuse the army of failing to protect civilian communities that turned in their guns, rendering them vulnerable to other cattle raiders.
- Capt Henry Obbo, the spokesman for the UPDF [Uganda army] 3rd Division that oversees Karamoja operations, denied soldiers deployed in the area are taking sides and brutalizing residents as alleged, describing the complainants as "saboteurs" of the disarmament exercise "for cheap political gains".
- MP Kiyonga said the unrest in his constituency - in which soldiers were implicated in indiscriminate seizure of animals of innocent residents - worsened from December, last year and the Pokot alone have since then lost some 3,500 cattle. The lawmaker, who speaks of openly disagreeing with local UPDF commanders over mistreatment of his people during a December 28 meeting at Loringidwat, says five senior police detectives led by CID [Criminal Investigations Directorate] Director Edward Ochom grilled him on Tuesday and Wednesday for "inciting violence".
- He is expected to return for further questioning tomorrow, three days after police in his constituency also interrogated Ms Paulina Chepar, district councilor representing Loroo and Amudat together with Amudat Sub-County chairman, Mr. Swaleh Lokeno, for allegedly conspiring with the legislator to undermine the disarmament exercise by inciting residents not to surrender illegal arms.