

## 20 YEARS WHAT A JOURNEY?

**By:** Rt. Hon. Obbo Richard Josel – the Jago (Prime Minister)

Looking back at the history of Padhola, we remain grateful to the works of our ancestors who set the foundation on which we are building today. The commencement of this Institution as pointed out by different writers in this magazine, has brought the Jopadhola as a united force to reckon with. The dignity and the feeling of sense of belonging under Tieng Adhola among our people is something felt beyond our territory. We thank God, we thank His Royal Highness the Kwar Adhola and the people of Padhola for loving their leader and the Kingdom.

Tieng Adhola is a Cultural Institution that embodies the unity of the Jopadhola who live in the present day Tororo District. The History of Padhola stretches as far back as the 1500 - 1550 when Adhola and his brother Owiny arrived in the present day Tororo District that was later referred to as Budama. After defining the territory of Padhola, the area was divided into three Ecological Zones namely; the Western zone that was called *Luli* in the North of Budama, this area was the primary settlement for the Jopadhola in the early years and was considered the most fertile areas of Padhola. It included the areas of Senda, Katandi and Maundo. The second ecological zone was *Mawele* that was lying in the South of Budama which included Mulanda, Iyolwa and Nabiyoga. This area was less watered and infested with tsetse flies which initially discouraged settlement. The third zone was *Yowoko* in the Eastern side of Budama and included areas of Rubongi and Tororo. This was an area that was initially virtually uninhabited due to its rocky nature, though it was considered the highest and coolest part of Budama.

The initial settlement of Padhola was along Clan lines who initially numbered 32 clans. To date 52 clans constitute Padhola though more are aspiring to join.

As we celebrate the 20 years journey of Tieng Adhola Cultural Institution (TACI), I take this special honor and privilege to congratulate His Royal Highness the Kwar Adhola Moses Stephen Owor for steering the Institution to this great height. He has done a tremendous job in uniting the people of Padhola of all creed something that had been jeopardized by the Missionaries in the early years as they struggled to win converts. This state of affairs was further worsened by the political parties especially the UPC and DP which attempted to win followers through the same religious inclinations.

The administrative setup of Tieng Adhola Cultural Institution currently makes all our people to appreciate the role of the Institution in the entire Padhola. The Cabinet, the Clan leaders Council, the Supreme Assembly and the coordinators (Jumukwenda pa Kwar Adhola) makes all the people of Padhola to appreciate the role of the Institution in uplifting their welfare through the already enlisted Institutional pillars. Kwar Adhola has always emphasized Unity, and Peaceful coexistence among his subjects as they develop their motherland Padhola and the Nation Uganda. The role of the Padhola Elders forum and the Council of the Senior Royal Advisors have in the same measure made the Institution to keep track in meeting its objectives.

The youth who had hitherto felt left out have today appreciated their role as the Institutional arm who have continuously kept the candle of the Institution burning wherever they are. Their coming together last year to launch an Association of the tertiary institutions as a common umbrella has further left no doubt that the Institution is treading in the right direction.

The singing of Padhola Anthem in our Institutions of the Primary, Secondary and Tertiary schools, has further led our subjects to appreciate their sense of belonging.

My writing won't be complete without appreciating the roles played by the elders particularly the late Rogers Kwero Jassa (RIP) the first Jago of TACI together with other elders for having been foresighted to go out of their way and thought of an umbrella body in the name of our Institution (TACI) to bring together the Jopadhola. Our pledge today is, never to look back. Whoever desires to tear Padhola today shall instead remain the enemy of our people, especially as we reflect on the solid steps the Institution has moved to date.

Today the Institution is dealing with challenges of our otherwise rich cultural practices and heritage that seem to be eroding. The Adhola dance, songs, poems (*kigana*) and symbolic heritage are fast dying out. The Institution is trying its best to redeem this trend through the Annual cultural festivals that commenced this year.

Further, a number of Institutional challenges still stands on our way e.g. stalled construction of the Kings' Palace, lack of resources to run the Kingdom affairs, lack of regular income generating activities for our subject among others. Amidst all this, 20 years is a momentous occasion worth celebrating. Bravo to all!

Long live Tieng Adhola, Long live Kwar Adhola!

Padhola oyindira!