

## **KABAKA MUTEESA I CONVERSION TO THE PROGRESS OF ISLAM IN UGANDA.**

- a. During Muteesa I's time the Arabs and the Swahili traders continued their direct contacts with in Buganda kingdom.
- b. Muteesa welcomed them basing on the problems he faced, so he thought that by welcoming Arabs, he would solve his political problems.
- c. Thus he expected to get a Guns and ammunitions from the Arabs to use them to fight against Bunyoro and the Sudanese who were wanted to take away Buganda's independence.
- d. He also wanted to create friendly relations with Zanzibar through the Muslim Arabs. Muteesa requested the Arabs to teach him Islam and they readily accepted, and his first teacher was known as Ali.
- e. The Swahili traders continued to come and Muteesa got more teachers.
- f. He learnt the holy Quran and Arabic in a short period and encouraged his chiefs to convert to Islam.
- g. He came into power in 1860.
- h. He succeeded his father Ssuuna II.
- i. He adopted Islamic ways of dressing
- j. Muteesa is considered to be a missionary because of the roles he played towards the spread of Islam in his reign. For example; Muteesa accepted Islam and declared himself a Muslim which made many of his subjects convert.

## **HIS CONTRIBUTION.**

- 1. Allowed more Arabs to come in and they preached.
- 2. He declared Islam as a state religion.
- 3. Used his office to call his subjects to Islam.
- 4. Influenced chiefs into Islam.

5. Ensured Islamic teachings e.g. Swalah, fasting.
6. Salam was declared the official greeting.
7. Normally favoured Muslims e.g. post of chief cook.
8. Hunting with dogs was prohibited.
9. Slaughtering animals was for Muslims.
10. Circumcision was for all men
11. Land and full help were provided to the Arabs which enabled them to continue
12. For all the functions Quran recitation was a must
13. Prayer was a must throughout the kingdom and Spies were put in place to supervise prayers It was a must to have an ablution stone in every home
14. Encouraged mosque construction and some pieces of Land was given in for mosque e.g. Nabulagala
15. A full department to look after mosques was established
16. Burial ceremonies were to be purely Islamic.
17. Flags of Islam were to be put up on Fridays.
18. Himself learnt Arabic and therefore led prayers.
19. Encouraged reading of the Quran and himself memorized the Quran and even gave a Khutbah.
20. He made many diplomatic communications which allowed more Arabs to come in.
21. Fridays were made special days in the area.
22. Fasting was also a must to all the Muslims Spies were also put in place for the supervision
23. Alcohol was prohibited.
24. He tried persuaded his fellow kings to Islam e.g. Kabalega of Bunyoro.
25. The Islamic dress code was promoted by him.

26. Most of the political posts went to the Muslims

### **PROBLEMS THAT FACED ISLAM DURING MUTECSA'S PERIOD**

- a. Much as Muteesa tried to spread Islam in Buganda, there *were* problems that limited its spread. For example, Baganda had problem of learning Arabic language which was foreign and at time, learning was not a practice of the people of Buganda.
  - b. The Arabs who had come to Baganda were not preachers but trader. They therefore spent most of their time in trading activities thinking little about Islam and Islamizing the people of Buganda.
  - c. Baganda faced a lot of difficulties in carrying out some religious practices like fasting, prayers and circumcision.
  - d. Muteesa himself failed to give up some traditional practices. This was evidenced when he refused to be circumcised yet he was considered to be the overall religious leader.
  - e. Some of the earlier converts were also moving up with their traditional beliefs together with Islam; For example, they used to pray to small gods.
  - f. Muteesa used to sacrifice animals to small gods yet he had ordered that animals should be slaughtered in an Islamic way.
  - g. He failed to identify and stick to one particular religion.
  - h. He made Islam to appear as a religion of force
  - i. He also invited the Christian missionaries
- These problems therefore brought about misunderstanding between the Kabaka and some Muslims who had learnt Islam.