

CHIMWAGA CCM CONFERENCE:

Secret behind Kikwete's victory

The ruling Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM) last week elected Jakaya Kikwete to be its presidential candidate for the forthcoming October general election. But how did Kikwete win the landslide victory, defeating renowned politicians like Frederick Sumaye, John Malecela and Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim. Our Staff Writer, MWANDOSHAH MFANGA, who was in Dodoma during the conference explains what transpired.



Frederick Sumaye



John Malecela



Dr Salim Ahmed Salim



Jakaya Kikwete

I COULD say that there were at least eight reasons why the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, Jakaya Kikwete, made it to the CCM presidential candidacy last week in Dodoma.

Of all the 11 contestants and the last four candidates, Kikwete may be seen as the only one who did a serious, underground mobilization network permeating across the youths.

The largest number of delegates who attended the just ended special CCM congress was the youth who, in one way or the other, showed supported him.

His network campaigns were not only limited to party delegates. Secondary school students and some members of a financial non-governmental organization here told this reporter that before CCM started its series of meetings there were campaigns in their areas of residence, all supporting Kikwete.

His mobilization network was expansive,

penetrating and concentrated largely among the youth and was partially supported by the elderly and other groups.

The second reason is when the name of John Malecela was dropped during Central Committee (CC) selection.

Besides the criterion of age, an argument was advanced in the CC that for CCM to squarely face the opposition this time, since it was supposed to look for someone who could be



easily 'sold' during the election campaigns.

This is one reason, which put Malecela out of the race right from the start.

But there were others, one being that his mobilization campaigns network was relatively

weak compared to that of Kikwete.

He confined it to some selected old cadres of the party and some government officials, whom he made at the time when he was Prime Minister.

The same thing applies to Prime Minister Frederick Sumaye, whose name was tainted last year of graft allegations.

Had Sumaye contested as a person free of the graft allegations, the duel would have climaxed into him battling toughly against Kikwete.

History teaches that Prime Ministers can hardly make it to the presidency. For this happened only once when Mwalimu Nyerere made it from Chief Minister of Tanganyika to President in 1962.

Since then attempts to become president from this position by others, including Justice Joseph Sinde Warioba, Dr Salim Ahmed Salim, Malecela and now Sumaye have failed.

Like Malecela, and unlike Kikwete, Sumaye also had

a mobilization network made from officials and non-party cadres.

Third and fourth factors related to Dr Salim's failure, which may have been deliberately made by him.

Being another serious candidate who would have challenged Kikwete seriously, he made no intensive campaigns immediately after his retirement from the Organisation of African

Sources close to Dr Salim told this paper that ever since he came back in 2001, he could not involve himself in any political fans and supporters mobilization work, all of which needed a down to earth activity within the party.

This was a serious mistake he made, contrary to Kikwete, who grew up in the party, working for it for 30 years from its lowest ranks upwards.

Coupled with this, is the failure by members of CCM and delegates from Zanzibar to stick to the tradition of alternation-

that this time it is the Isles' turn to produce the candidate.

This was determined by two factors. One is the Civic United Front's (CUF) election held recently, which set the parameters for CCM to look for better presentable candidates.

CUF nominated Prof. Ibrahim Lipumba for Union presidency and Juma Duni his running mate. Seif Shariff Hamad is to face Amani Karume in the Isles presidential bid.

Related to this is the Karumes factor, as a matter of history and prevailing situation in Zanzibar.

Implicating Dr Salim in a group which killed Abeid Karume in 1972, it was impossible for him to work quite amicably with the former as Union president. It is very possible that Amani's camp supported Kikwete in that one regard. The other reason being that Kikwete had in 2000 supported him for election to presidency.

Had Dr Salim not been associated with the allegations of the

assassination of Karume and those on racism, he would have been a good challenge to Kikwete.

Mkapa's special congress opening speech on Wednesday, which some delegates say was more twisted in looking for youthful leadership, one capable of reorganizing the party and pay particular regard to the country's international posture is another factor.

Though Kikwete is not young in the strict sense of the word, in relative terms, among the contestants, he is the one who appeared before the delegates to possess those qualities.

Kikwete's curriculum vitae shows that in comparative terms he was the only candidate with a good blending of party leadership experience, international affairs exposure, military and governance experience, this being another reason why he swept through.

The eight factor is the amendment of the constitution which allowed the one vote system

instead of three for presidential contestants in the National Executive Committee.

Without the removal of this block, Kikwete would have been stuck in the three votes system, in the use of intrigues and connivance.

The ninth element is, of course, the media. Besides some very few houses, which decided to remain neutral, many took sides, and a good number supporting Kikwete more than any other candidate. In fact some of the houses took the advantage to vilify and disparage other candidates.

Among the delegates

who attended the congress divided the contestants into three categories.

Those who were serious for the duel—these include Kikwete, Malecela, Sumaye and Dr Salim.

The second category included those who took forms in order to elevate their party positions which were earlier weakened. These included Idd Simba and John Shibuda.

Analysts says that the remaining ones, including Patrick Chokala, Dr William Shija, Dr Abdallah Kigoda, Prof. Mark Mwandosya, Ali Karume took forms only to support or reject the serious contestants.