Located in the triangular region bordering Burundi and DR Congo, Rusizi district sits on a total surface area of 940.95Km2 and inhabited by 485,529 people. The district borders Nyamasheke to the North, Nyamagabe and Nyaruguru in the East with a big part of Nyungwe National Park in between.

The district's topograph rises from Lake Kivu and connects to Lake Tanganyika, with a network of rivers. The region is characterized by the great plain of Bugarama, a chain of plateaux and the Congo-Nile basic where the Nyungwe tropical rain forest is situated.

Nyungwe forest is a habitat of diverse flora and fauna, including many endangered, rare and endemic species. A total of 960 individual trees representing 70 different species are found here. There is, also, a long list of animals including blue monkeys, owl-faced monkey, range-restricted L'Hoest's monkey, chimpanzees, bushpigs, duiker species, birds of different species among others attract many tourists as they offer an amazing experience.

Therefore, Nyungwe forest as a unique habitat to various primate species serves as a potential tourist destination. The forest is a vital source of protected watershed that is critical to Rwanda, contributing to over 70% of the country's water resources. Today, Nyungwe is a popular tourist destination, being one of the last remaining natural forest in the country.

Along the shores of Rwanda's biggest lake, the district is a gateway to Lake Kivu Islands that are regarded as key zones in the country's biodiversity conservation and host a number of rare and endemic plants and animal species that are a source of tourism and recreation.

Despite the pressure on the land, the soils of this region are generally permeable and rich in iron. Hence, Rusizi district is capable of producing sufficient food for its people and crop husbandry is carried out in the vast plains of Bugarama, Muganza, Nzahaha, Gikundamvura and Nyakabuye. The district in the South Western tip of Rwanda is the country's model district as regards to horticulture particularly the growing of patchouli oil plant, a raw material for perfumes processing.

Rusizi was the first district to establish a coffee wasting station to produce high quality coffee dubbed Rusizi Specialty Coffee and boasts of thousands of hectares

occupied by tea plantations.

Potential tourism destination

Designated as one of country's secondary cities, Rusizi boasts of numerous opportunities to support sustainable urban development with trade and tourism activities high on the list. Its tourism potential is enhanced by the presence of Lake Kivu and a network of rivers, tea plantations and Nyungwe natural forest.



Having a waterfront and multiple border entrances to Burundi and the DR Congo with Bukavu City nearby, Rusizi one of the best performing border cities.

It's trade track with the two neighbouring countries, an agro-industry and legacy in various forms of tourism increases chances for cumulative trade opportunities in regional with cross border at the centre.

The district is also endowed with other historical and natural wonders like where King Musinga stayed after his deposition and the hot springs in Bugarama that are part of the tourist attractions.

In November 1931, when King Musinga was deposed by the Belgian colonial masters, he was first exiled to Kamembe before finally going to Kilembwe, in the southeastern Congo, where he lived the rest of his days.

The village where the king stayed with his family and servants until 1940 was later named after him, its found in the present day Kamatita Cell in Gihundwe Sector.

Today, it's a touristic attraction because of its great historic significance. The garage where he was imprisoned by the Belgians has broken down but there are plans to restore it so that visitors get this bit of Rwanda's history.

As Rwanda's frontier to the southwestern tip, the city has developed and expanded from a small border and fishing city to one that attract investors. It's has expanded from the original three sectors of Gihundwe, Kamembe and Mururu to five sectors including Giheke, Nyakarenzo, Nkanka and Nkombo Island.

Dr. Anicet Kibiriga, the Mayor of Rusizi District notes that the area is now a tourism hotspot with a variety of attractions both natural and man-made. Highly competitive

number of hotels are growing with different vantage locations where tourists are assured of great experiences.

Rusizi district is known as popular destination for hot springs, locally known as Amashuza. The much-adored hot springs are a touristic attraction where many flock the area because of the reported healing factors in the water.

Aside, cultural tourism is encouraged in Rusizi. For instance, the traditional dance known locally as ‘Gusama’ of the Abashi communities on Nkombo Island and their language, Amashi form potential tourist attractions.

Nkombo community is also known for fishing, 80% of the residents depend on fishing for a living and the district has already considered how fishing in general can be promoted by availing fishing equipment.

