Govt takes over running of Busoga University

KAMULI

By Tom Gwebayanga

The Government has announced its decision to take over the management of the stressed private Busoga University in a bid to end the woes that have rocked the institution for over six years, the Speaker of Parliament, Rebecca Kadaga, has said.

Kadaga said President Yoweri Museveni last week okayed the takeover of Busoga University to relieve the public of last year's tension as a result of its closure by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE).

"It is over; the people of Busoga and beyond have every reason to smile," Kadaga said.

She said amidst the troubles of the university, a blessing has come after President Museveni gave a directive that the government takes over full control of the university, which is on the brink of collapse.

"The Government could not look on as the 17-year-old university collapses," Kadaga said on Saturday at Nabirumba Mosque grounds in Kamuli town at the graduation party of three children of Kamuli Woman MP Rehema Watongola.

Mariam Mutakubwa graduated with a bachelor's degree in adult and community education at Kyambogo University while Baroda Kayanga graduated with a diploma in community-based rehabilitation from the same university.

Derrick Kasadha got a bachelor's degree in human resource from Kampala International University.

Kadaga said the takeover that takes immediate effect shall relieve students of the tension after NCHE closed the private university in December due to technical irregularities.

Kadaga said the institution, with the main campus in Iganga town and others in Kamuli, Kaliro, Lugazi and Bugiri, has hoisted Busoga's glory for 17 years and, therefore, the closure was uncalled for.

She said the campuses had not only produced elites, but also generated income for the community in terms of shops, supermarkets, hostels and hotels.

Kadaga (fourth-left) with the graduates and Watongola (right) at the party. Photo by Tom Gwebayanga

Kadaga lashed out at critics, competitors and bad elements she said were working round the clock to see the fall of the institution.

Watongola urged parents to invest in education, saying it is profitable. "With more learned people in our society, innovations shall come by and in farm development," she said.

Why university was closed

NHCE revoked Busoga University's licence over the manner in which more than 1,000 South Sudanese were admitted and went on to graduate in a space of two months.

In September 2012, the same university was involved in a case where it suspended four of its senior staff for issuing 'fake' degrees to students.

The officials allegedly used to remove names of some students who were genuinely meant to graduate from the graduation booklet and substitute them with the unqualified ones. The staff were reportedly paid sh60m.

The students also lacked the minimum criteria for admission — an A'level certificate or its equivalent.

There was no formal registration