

Kasubi Tombs to be completed in 2018 – Mayiga

By Jeff Andrew Lule

The reconstruction works of Kasubi Tombs are to be completed before the end of next year, the Katikkiro, Charles Peter Mayiga, has said. He assured Ugandans that works were in high gear and at advanced stages, with about 80% of the work complete.

Mayiga made the announcement during his annual working tour of the site.

"Many people thought the works had stalled, but we have been working tirelessly throughout the year," he noted.

Mayiga said the construction and architectural works of the cultural site are extraordinary. It is founded on tradition, with norms and rituals which have to be followed during the construction process.

It is now eight years since Kasubi Tombs were torched by unknown people, leaving many of the historical objects destroyed and others damaged.

The tombs seat on a 64 acres of land at Kasubi Nabulagala, Rubaga division in Kampala district, about 6km from the city centre.

The tombs house the remains of four fallen Buganda kings; Daniel Mwanga II, Mutesa I, Edward Mutesa II and Daudi Chwa.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) listed the site as a World Heritage Site, because of its uniqueness. According to the one of the Buganda officials who preferred to speak on condition of anonymity, the tombs used to raise about sh400m annually, from tourists.

Mayiga said the site will be restored and maintained with advanced safety measures put in place to avoid the same incident in future.

He thanked the construction committee and the workers for the great work.

"The biggest fruit we want to harvest before the end of 2018 is the completion of the main house 'Muzibu Azalampanga'. With the progress at hand, I am sure the works will be completed before next year's Christmas. We suspended tourism at the site to first complete the works," he noted.

The chairman of the construction committee, Kaddu Kiberu, said most of the complex work involving performing ritual's has been done.

He thanked the Kabaka for the endless support he gave them.

"The Kabaka has been supporting us to make sure we reach this milestone. It was not easy because we had many challenges which affected our operations," he added.

Last year, the Government committed one more sh1b towards the completion of the historical site. Initially, the Government and Buganda Kingdom had budgeted sh4.5b for the reconstruction of the tombs, where the Government had contributed sh2b, but they realised it was an underestimate.

The Katikkiro also initiated 'Etofaali' fundraising project in 2014, where he managed to raise about sh8b and part of it was allocated towards other activities at the site.

UNESCO also provided firefighting equipment, a water tank reservoir and automatic canon firefighting kits, among other equipment worth over sh1b, which was installed at the site.

The Kasubi Tombs were handed over to Buganda Kingdom after President Yoweri Museveni reinstituted cultural institutions in 1993, after 27 years of abolishment.