DEPUTY IGG TIPS FEMALE LAW STUDENTS ON INTEGRITY

By Nelson Kiva

The Deputy Inspector General of Government (IGG), Dr Patricia Achan Okiria, has challenged female law students to uphold integrity and dignity if they are to succeed in the legal profession and help Uganda defeat corruption.

Speaking during the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU) Female Campus Law Dinner on Saturday, Dr Okiria said the legal profession demands honesty, courage and accountability because lawyers are custodians of justice and defenders of the vulnerable.

The event, held under the theme: *The Audacity To Advocate: Owning Your Space in the Legal Arena*, attracted judicial officers, lecturers and students. Among the guests were Lady Justice Suzan Abinyo and Lady Justice Eva Luswata.

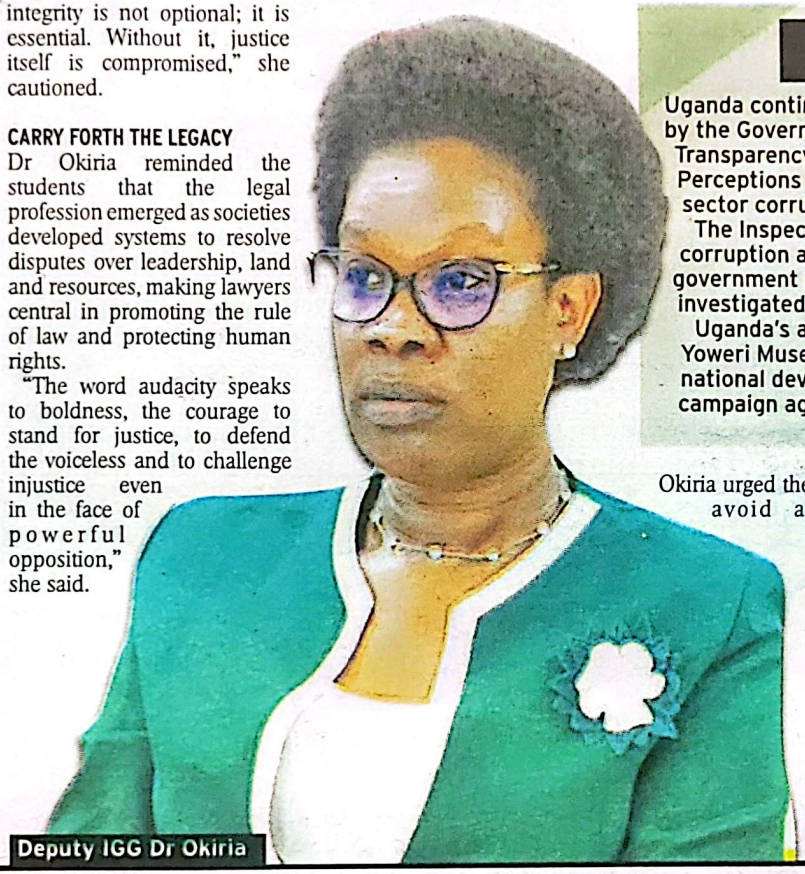
"Integrity is the alignment between your values, words and actions. It is doing the right thing even when no one is watching," said Dr Okiria.

"In the legal profession, integrity is not optional; it is essential. Without it, justice itself is compromised," she cautioned.

CARRY FORTH THE LEGACY

Dr Okiria reminded the students that the legal profession emerged as societies developed systems to resolve disputes over leadership, land and resources, making lawyers central in promoting the rule of law and protecting human rights.

"The word audacity speaks to boldness, the courage to stand for justice, to defend the voiceless and to challenge injustice even in the face of powerful opposition," she said.



Deputy IGG Dr Okiria

Okiria urged the students to avoid academic dishonesty, shortcuts and unethical behaviour, saying character building begins while one is still at university. According to Okiria, Uganda and the world continue to face serious challenges arising from corruption and unethical conduct, including within the legal profession.

"We live in a time when the legal profession is not immune to corruption and unethical conduct. There is a pressing need for a new generation, your generation, to raise the standard," she said.

Okiria said the fight against corruption requires principled leaders willing to defend truth and fairness even under pressure.

"Build your name now. See mentors. Surround yourself with principled individuals. Invest in your growth not only academically, but morally and professionally," she advised.

Okiria further encouraged active participation in debates, moot court competitions and public speaking engagements to sharpen analytical and leadership skills.

CURBING CORRUPTION

Uganda continues to struggle with corruption, despite numerous interventions by the Government agencies and civil society organisations. According to Transparency International, Uganda scored 26 out of 100 in the 2024 Corruption Perceptions Index, ranking among countries still battling widespread public sector corruption.

The Inspectorate of Government (IG) projects that about sh10 trillion is lost in corruption annually undermining effective service delivery. IG working with other government agencies, such as Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID) have investigated and prosecuted a number of corruption-related offences.

Uganda's anti-corruption drive has also received strong backing from President Yoweri Museveni, who has repeatedly described corruption as a major obstacle to national development and service delivery. He has, among others, beefed up the campaign against corruption with State House anti-corruption units.



