

New Muslim curriculum in offing

By Farooq Kasule

The Uganda Muslim Supreme Council (UMSC) has drafted a national curriculum for Islamic studies that will come into force for all Qur'an schools countrywide, starting next year.

This was revealed by the council's secretary for education, Sheikh Juma Bakhit, on Friday while announcing the 108 students that were offered scholarships to study degree courses at the International University of Africa in Khartoum, Sudan.

The 108 students emerged the best out of the 250 applicants who sat for the entry interviews in March.

Bakhit said the national curriculum is intended to regulate the teaching of the Islamic studies in the country.

"Each Qur'an school had set its own curriculum, but starting next year, they will all be required to follow this curriculum and students will only be issued academic transcripts after sitting the national Islamic exams," Bakhit said.

He noted that lack of a national curriculum has not only left Qur'anic teaching in limbo in the past, but also led to poor graduates in Islamic studies, that have also become problematic to the country.

UMSC spokesperson Haji Nsereko Mutumba said students were given professional courses, unlike in the past, after the Mufti of Uganda, Sheikh Ramadhan Mubajje, explained the challenges faced by the Muslim community as a result of training students in Islamic studies only.

Mutumba said Mubajje advocated for professional courses to avoid fighting for

mosques between the fresh graduates and those in charge. He said they have learnt that one of the causes of fighting among Muslim clerics is leadership, which they consider to be a job.

"When you go to countries such as Sudan, Iran and others, being an imam of a mosque is not a job like it is in our country. After leading prayers, they go to work. This is what we want in our country in the future," Mutumba noted.

He said although Muslims are advocating for more positions in the Government, there are few Muslims who qualify.

"One time I complained to President Yoweri Museveni over the few numbers of Muslims with jobs in the Judiciary, but he tasked me with giving him names of Muslims who have been in the legal professional for 20 years, but I failed," he said.

Mutumba commended Munazzamat al Dawa al Islamiyya, a Muslim charitable organisation, for pioneering the scholarship programme every year.

ON THE GROUND



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