



The First Lady (wearing a hat) in a group photo with some cabinet ministers, staff and students of Gulu University on Wednesday

First Lady urges students to talk other than strike

By Arnest Tumwesige

The First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, Janet Museveni, has cautioned university students against using aggressive means, such as striking, to solve their grievances and challenges.

Mrs. Museveni noted that through the learning process at the university, students can find better conflict resolution methods instead of destroying what the Government is endeavouring to put in place in terms of infrastructure.

"I pray that you abandon that old-fashioned style. If there is anything that you need solved, discuss it like modern people and do it in a civilised manner," she added.

The First Lady made the call on Wednesday at Gulu University, where she was on a monitoring tour of the progress of construction of the university structures under the African Development Bank (ADB)-funded Higher Education, Science and Technology project.

She said she was happy to see that Gulu University was changing the Gulu skyline to gradually become a university town, which she, however, said comes with a lot of added responsibility.

She also hailed the excellent work done on the structures, which will soon be ready for the handover. The minister observed that being a rural university, it is tasked with changing the quality of life of the community around it.

School feeding

The First Lady, who is already traversing the country to sensitise parents on their cardinal role of feeding their children with nutritious meals



Mrs. Museveni (wearing a hat) accompanied by staff members and political leaders during the tour of the faculty of agriculture block at Gulu University on Wednesday

both at home and school, commended Gulu district for coming out with a feeding policy that is already being implemented.

Mrs. Museveni was given a copy of the policy by Martin Ojara Mapenduzi, the Gulu district chairperson. She applauded the district leadership for coming up with the policy noting that it will also help her in engaging other districts.

Prof. George Ladaah Openjuru, the vice-chancellor of Gulu University, told Mrs. Museveni, that the University is faced with a major challenge of inadequate land, which curtails infrastructure development and future expansion of the main campus.

The main campus sits on a 15-acre piece of land, which was a district farm institute.

However, the district, municipal leaderships and the university have set up a joint committee to work out mechanisms so that it can have ownership of the land titled in its name.

Openjuru noted that the current structures constructed under ADB/HEST project are sitting on 70 acres of land, which belongs to National Forestry Authority (NFA).

"We secured alternative land in Latooro, Nwoya district for NFA, but the process was halted because of the ban on degazetting forest land. My plea to the Government is that the piece of land be degazetted," he pleaded.

Openjuru noted that while other universities begin with infrastructural development, for Gulu, it began with teaching and research.

is shifting to having better structures and the Government has done a good job to put up the buildings, which will be ready by the end of the month.

Grace Freedom Kwiyuucwiny, the Minister of State for Northern Uganda, said with the modern buildings already erected on the NFA land, it would be hard to demolish them since the two institutions are both government.

She supported the request to degazette the 70-acres of land.

Farmers to benefit

Mrs. Museveni noted that the cassava processing machine that will be set up at the university will interest more farmers to embracing farming in northern Uganda.

She noted that the region

farmers lack such plants, they cannot add value to them and hence gain much more.

"It is a landmark in our region. If there is value addition, the farmers can even export cassava products and this will, therefore, attract more into farming," she said.

The state minister for primary healthcare, Dr Joyce Moriku Kaducu, was among those who accompanied the First Lady to Gulu University and she thanked the Government for in the public universities.

The three modern structures worth about sh22.5b, which will be handed over to the university in 20 days, will accommodate a library, agriculture lecture halls and research laboratories that will be used by the medicine.