

Govt gives special consideration to nurses

By Moses Mulondo

The First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, Janet Kataha Museveni, yesterday informed Parliament that the nurses who were denied registration by Uganda Nurses and Midwives Council (UNMC) for not having met the minimum entry requirements would be given special consideration.

UNMC refused to register over 1,000 nurse graduates over 'inadequate' academic papers and the graduands threatened to sue.

The students affected are from Uganda Christian University, Mukono, Kampala International University, International Health Science University, Bishop Stuart University, Mbarara and Aga Khan University.

The students were admitted for bachelor of science in nursing courses when they did not have two principal passes at A'level. But UNMC demands that nurses must have two principal passes at A'level for degree holders.

"The Ministry of education and



Sports is engaged in discussions with the ministry of health and UNMC in order that those nurses are given a period of six months' clinical attachment to allow them bridge the identified gaps and then do a mandatory one year internship," Mrs. Museveni told Parliament yesterday.

She made the statement while clarifying concerns raised in the report by Parliament's education committee regarding the matter.

Mrs. Museveni, however, explained that amid such agitations it is important to

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ensure that the right procedures and requirements are followed.

"I believe that it is also important first to note that the life and health of our people is of utmost importance and demands careful training, skilling and health practice," she explained.

Mrs. Museveni elaborated that many private health training institutions do not comply with the set minimum entry requirements for training.

"That is why the UNMC, in the execution of its mandate of regulation and quality assurance, may withhold its clearance of graduates from such institutions.

On the proposal to hire postgraduate medical students from Makerere University to fill the staffing gaps in Mulago Hospital, the minister revealed that they had agreed in principle that those post-graduate doctors should be supported.

"However, there is a technical hitch in that these doctors when they come for post-graduate training they have different categories of sponsors. Some are sponsored by their local governments where they are already employed, others by NGOs while others are self-employed," she explained.