

# House considers Bill to address unemployment of graduates

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If passed by Parliament, jobless university graduates will have to enrol for a one-year internship in either a government entity or private company.

The graduates, while on this kind of internship, will be given a stipend/monthly allowance to facilitate them.

These interns, according to the Bill, will receive hands-on skills training in various fields so as to acquire extra skills other than the campus qualifications. After internship, the graduates will receive certificates which

they will always attach these certificates onto their academic documents, while applying for jobs.

The National Graduate Scheme Bill, which seeks to address unemployment among university graduates, was read for the second time last Thursday.

The private member's Bill, moved by Bunya East MP Kyewalabye Majegere, seeks to address the high rate of unemployment among graduates churned out of the so many universities in the country by ensuring that all of them get placements mostly in government entities.

## BETWEEN THE LINES

■ Interns, according to the Bill, will receive hands-on skills training in various fields so as to possess extra skills.

"There are so many university graduates who are jobless and as Parliament, we can provide a solution through this law," Majegere told Parliament yesterday.

The youthful legislator noted that in the 2017/2018 financial year, over sh160b was returned to the treasury by various government entities

partly because they were understaffed and, therefore, lack adequate staffing levels to have high absorption capacity for the money allocated to them.

"We have to address the issue of unemployment, without which it will become a security threat. This scheme will enable the jobless graduates to get placements, which will enable them acquire hands-on work experience, which will improve their employability," Majegere explained.

The framers of the Bill believe that if passed, the Bill will help to do away with the colonial mentality of asking

youth for experience of three to five years while applying for jobs, despite having been jobless for more than five years.

"The graduates shall be provided with practical skills through placements in different work spaces. These will include public and private organisations for a period of one year. The main objective of this Bill is to, therefore, provide young graduates with employment training through work-related learning and thus, enhancing youth's employability and self-employment through career guidance, job placement,

mentoring and connection to enterprise role models," he explains in the justification for the Bill.

Last week, the state minister for primary education, Rosemary Seninde, asked Majegere to explain how the Bill would be implemented, arguing that many youth do not work on voluntary basis.

Majegere explained that a pilot project funded by the United Nations Development Programme is already being implemented by the gender ministry, where 500 graduates have been given placements with monthly payments of sh800,000.