

MAK to build first petroleum institute in East Africa

By Vision Reporter

Makerere University is ready to set up an institute of petroleum study following an agreement signed with China University of Petroleum (UPC).

In the agreement, which was signed on January 7, Makerere agreed to co-establish and operationalise the Institute of Geoscience and Petroleum with UPC.

The agreement was signed by the vice-chancellor, Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe and the vice-president of China University of Petroleum, Prof. Jun Yao, on behalf of the two universities, respectively.

Under the agreement, the parties agreed to develop and implement a curriculum system construction and development plan for both undergraduate and post-graduate students of petroleum engineering programmes, including short professional development courses.

The agreement activates an earlier Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that the two universities signed on December 19, 2017 to establish the institute of Geosciences and Petroleum.



Professor Jun Yao

During his New Year media briefing, Nawangwe said the institute will be used to train high-level cadres for the oil industry.

“The establishment of this institute fits well with the appointment of Makerere University as the Centre of Excellence for petroleum and minerals by the Northern Corridor States, especially as Kenya and Uganda make progress in developing their respective oil and gas discoveries,” he said.

Nawangwe said the oil industry is currently faced with lack of qualified manpower and expertise. Therefore, establishing the institute will be an open opportunity to carry out research and build capacity in that area.

In 2009, Makerere University introduced the bachelor of science programme in petroleum geosciences and production to bridge the knowledge gap that exists in the oil and gas sector in Uganda.

The course aims at training petroleum geoscientists, who can effectively contribute to exploration and development of petroleum resources.

Nawangwe said although petroleum resources have been discovered in Uganda and Sudan, there is little experience in the area of petroleum geoscience and production in Uganda and the region as a whole.

“Therefore, there is need to train local human resource in the development and sustainability of the petroleum industry,” he said.

Jun Yao commended Makerere University for the tremendous research that is carried out in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

He said he looked forward to a successful implementation and operation of the institute.

Under the 2017 MOU, the universities agreed to jointly apply for funding from international funding agencies to support the establishment of modern petroleum engineering labs at UPC and Makerere University.