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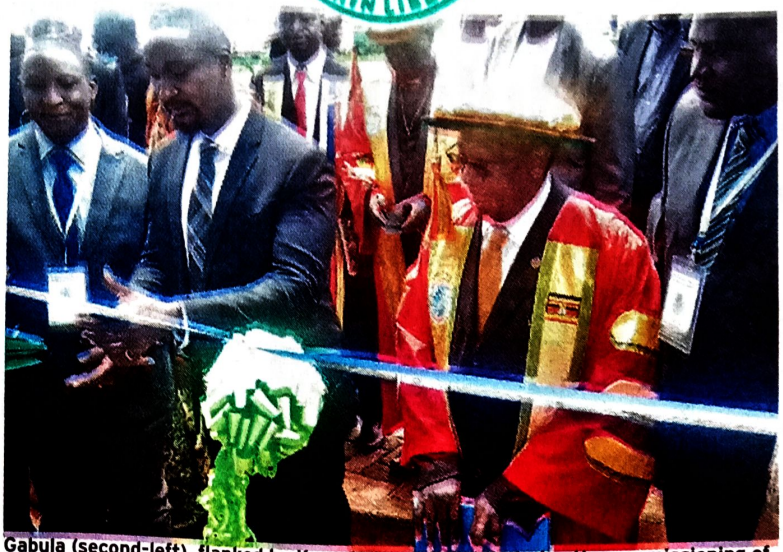

Gabula (second-left), flanked by Kezaala (second-right), during the commissioning of the sh3b resource centre at the International Institute of Health Sciences on Friday

Health tutors shun private institutions

JINJA

By Jackie Nambogga

Health training institutions in Busoga are grappling with shortage of qualified tutors.

According to Prof. Wilton Kezaala, the executive director of the International Institute of Health Sciences (IIHS) located at Lubaga village, Mpumudde/Kimaka division in Jinja municipality, even the few qualified trainers have shunned private institutions due to poor pay.

As a result, Kezaala said they have failed to attract and retain tutors with vast skills and knowledge because they demanded a high pay.

Kezaala made the remarks during the institute's third graduation ceremony, which was presided over by the Kyabazinga of Busoga, William Gabula Nadiope IV, on Friday.

"As private institutions, we cannot hire them because they ask for money ranging between sh6m and sh7m, which we cannot afford," Kezaala said.

He said the qualified tutors prefer working for government-aided institutions because they are paid highly.

He added that the few who show interest prefer to teach as part-timers.

According to Kezaala, of the 15 tutors needed, they have only eight.

Similarly, Joyce Zirabamuzale Christine, the Principal of Iganga School of Nursing and Midwifery, said the challenge was a cross-cutting in all private health and faith-based institutions in Uganda.

Zirabamuzale told *New Vision* that whereas the tutors are many, they do not want to teach in private institutions due to the meagre pay offered.



Gabula (right) serving cake to Kwiringira as Kezaala (centre) looks on. Photos by Jackie Nambogga

Alternatively, both Kezaala and Zirabamuzale said they resorted to sponsoring their own tutors for trainings.

They explained that under such an arrangement, they bond with them for about four years, as they continuously sponsor more.

In order to bridge the gap, the Kyabazinga implored parents to educate their children and also encourage them to focus on science subjects.

"I know this is a challenge, but it can partly be solved by encouraging all children to love science subjects," he urged.

During the function, the Kyabazinga commissioned a four-storey resource centre worth sh3b.

Kezaala explained that it was in line with their five-year strategic plan of commencing four more programmes, which include a Bachelor of Science in medical education, effective January next year.

He explained that the institute is affiliated to Busitema University, which is expected to offer the said programme.

Kezaala said they were only waiting for clearance from the National Council for Higher Education, since they had submitted all the requirements.

Kezaala said they also hope to introduce diploma courses in clinical medicine and community health, laboratory technology and pharmacy.

The Kyabazinga pledged to support Kezaala after he announced their next move of turning the institute into a university.

Of the 543 students who graduated, 332 and 169 got certificates in nursing and midwifery respectively. Allan Kwiringira was the overall best performer after passing in Class A.

A total of 31 were awarded diplomas in nursing and 10 in midwifery.

Of the 543 graduands, 336 were female.