

Kabale University to be funded

By Henry Sekanjako

Parliament's public accounts committee (PAC) has directed the finance ministry to avail sh85.5b. required by Kabale University to establish well-equipped infrastructure for science-based programmes.

According to the Auditor General's report for the 2016/17 financial year, an audit inspection of the university noted that the physical infrastructure, specifically lecture halls, laboratories, library and staff common rooms were inadequate.

"As a result, lectures were being conducted in tents and the available lecture rooms were congested," John Muwanga, the Auditor General, stated in his report.

He noted that the lack of adequate physical infrastructure not only contravenes the universities and other tertiary standards regulations, but may also result in termination of the provisional operating licence that was granted by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE). The committee, chaired by Budadiri West MP Nathan Nandala Mafabi, yesterday summoned the university's officials over the Auditor General's concerns.



Baryantuma (left), David Biganja, the university's bursar appear before Parliament's public accounts committee recently. Photo by Miriam Namutebi

"We are going to make a recommendation to Parliament so that this money is provided in the budget. We are taking up this matter," Nandala assured the university officials. According to documents submitted to the committee by

Johnson Baryantuma Munono, the university secretary, on August 13 last year he wrote to Keith Muhakanizi, the finance ministry permanent secretary, requesting for the funds to establish the infrastructures. In response, Muhakanizi, in

a letter dated September 24, last year, asked the university to phase the infrastructure development, beginning with those that are urgently required for efficient delivery. Muhakanizi also asked the university to submit copies

In 2016, President Yoweri Museveni, who had visited Kabale University, acknowledged the inadequate infrastructure at the public university and pledged sh47b to help in the construction of modern buildings.

The officials, however, told the MPs that the President's pledge was yet to be honoured. The university wrote to the education minister, Mrs Janet Museveni, asking for a follow-up on the sh85b funds by the finance ministry and the sh47b promised by the President.

On October 10, last year, Mrs. Museveni wrote to the President, reminding him about the sh47b pledge.

In her letter, she indicated how the university was operating under difficult circumstances due to lack of infrastructure.

The university advised that the sh47b pledge by the President could be part of the sh85b funds to be availed through the education ministry.

SH47B PLEDGE

of project documentation in line with the development committee guidelines for appropriate action.

Appearing before the committee yesterday, Baryantuma, however, noted that no action had been taken despite working on the required documents.

He dismissed reports that the university was conducting

lectures under tents, saying they had since rented neighbouring buildings for study purposes.

Prof Allen Babugura, the deputy vice-chancellor in charge of finance, said just like other institutions of higher learning, Kabale was facing infrastructural challenges, which he said need to be addressed.