

Resident Judge visits Kabale CM Court, Municipal Council to strengthen justice delivery

The Resident Judge of Kabale High Court, Justice Ssemogerere Karoli Lwanga, together with the Court's Assistant Registrar, HW Kenneth Tumwebaze, on Monday paid a courtesy visit to Kabale Chief Magistrate's Court and later to Kabale Municipal Council as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen justice delivery and foster closer institutional collaboration.

At Kabale Chief Magistrate's Court, the Judge was received by HW Aziza Njevu, Magistrate Grade One. During the meeting, she briefed the Resident Judge on the state of operations at the court, noting that she is currently handling a heavy workload following the departure of the second Magistrate who proceeded on study leave and is yet to be replaced.

She explained that prisoners consistently appear in court whenever warrants are issued for their production, while juveniles are duly accompanied by probation officers from the remand home whenever they are required to appear. She further noted that many of the cases handled by the court originate from Kaharo and Maziba, and that the court is grappling with a significant case backlog that requires urgent attention.

In his remarks, the Resident Judge commended the work of the lower court, observing that many of its decisions are upheld by the High Court on appeal. He, however, advised judicial officers to pay particular attention to the drafting of final orders, stressing the importance of ensuring that the orders arising from their findings and determinations are clear, proper, and legally sound. He also urged them to exercise caution when dealing with the demands litigants and advocates may make in the course of proceedings.

Justice Ssemogerere further encouraged judicial officers to maintain professional distance, discernment, and consistency in the discharge of their duties, noting that court users eventually adjust once they understand the judicial officer's mode of work.

The Assistant Registrar highlighted plans for the establishment of six courts in Kabale, namely Kaharo and Buhara, Remand Home and Municipal Council Magistrates Courts.

He also noted that during the Bar-Bench Forum, advocates had requested timely access to records of proceedings to enable them prepare and lodge appeals more effectively.

The visit concluded with a shared commitment by the judicial officers to devise practical ways of reducing case backlog and improving the rate of case disposal.

At Kabale Municipal Council

Later, the Resident Judge and the Assistant Registrar paid a courtesy visit to Kabale Municipal Council, where they were received by the Mayor and the Town Clerk. During the meeting, the Mayor informed the Judge of the Council's plans to tarmac the roads leading to the High Court through Kabale University. In response, the Assistant Registrar indicated that the Judiciary is also considering renovation of the road leading to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The Resident Judge reaffirmed the Judiciary's commitment to continued collaboration with the Municipal Council and shared that a Municipal Court has already been gazetted to help handle cases falling within the municipality's jurisdiction. He called upon the Council to identify a room that could temporarily serve as a courtroom to enable the court to begin operations. He also encouraged the municipal leadership to give thought to recreation facilities within the municipality.

The Mayor, in turn, informed the Judge that the Council is working to secure land for the establishment of a Court of Appeal presence in Kabale. He also shared plans to develop a public gym at the Mayor's Garden for use by the public, as well as an artificial turf in the coming years as part of broader recreation initiatives.

HW Tumwebaze urged the Municipal Council to also address the issue of land ownership for the High Court, noting that the Judiciary does not yet hold a title for the land it occupies. He further appealed for support in addressing infrastructural challenges, particularly the poor state of roads leading to the High Court. The Assistant Registrar reminded Council officials that they are always welcome to participate in meetings hosted at the High Court.

The Mayor appreciated the Judiciary for the improved case disposal rates and pledged continued cooperation with the Courts in advancing service delivery in Kabale.