

Joy as Aga Khan University holds first graduation at Kampala campus

BY SYLVIA KATUSHABE

KAMPALA. The Aga Khan University (AKU) in Nakawa, Kampala, was abuzz with excitement and pride on Saturday as graduates and their families gathered for a historic milestone.

The institution held its first-ever convocation at the Kampala campus, months after its official inauguration in September 2025 by His Highness the Aga Khan V and President Museveni.

A total of 108 graduates were awarded qualifications in disciplines including Nursing and Midwifery, Education, Media and Communication, among others.

Presiding over the ceremony was Princess Zahra Aga Khan, who was recently

installed as AKU Pro-Chancellor on January 17, 2026.

Among the graduates was Mr Gilbert Biryahwaho, a visually impaired teacher from Kabale District and the only visually impaired student in the class of 2025. Despite losing his sight, Mr Biryahwaho completed a Master of Education Degree, a journey marked by resilience, determination, and unwavering hope.

"I'm very excited about this achievement. I look at it as my stepping stone for my future dreams, because I dream bigger than this. I went to school inspired by delayed opportunities for promotions," Mr Biryahwaho said.

Mr Biryahwaho teaches at Hornby Primary School in Kabale, a school for learners with special needs. He lost his sight at age 28 following a road accident



Aga Khan University (AKU) Pro-Chancellor, Princess Zahra (left) poses with the Nation Media Group-Uganda Head of Content Hubs and AKU graduate, Mr Julian Mwine (centre), and AKU Vice Chancellor Dr Sulaiman Shahabuddin in Kampala on Saturday. PHOTO/ ISAAC KASAMANI

in 2010, while pursuing a diploma in Education.

After recovery, he rebuilt his life with a diploma in Special Needs Education and later a bachelor's degree from Kyambogo University. Determined to grow professionally, he secured a scholarship from the Ministry of Education and Sports to pursue a master's degree at AKU.

In his virtual address, His Highness the Aga Khan V, the Chancellor of AKU, urged graduates to use their knowledge and skills to transform communities.

"Education amplifies impact, our own and that of our partners, by making our efforts across health, education, social development, livelihood enhancement, and cultural preservation more effective, efficient, and sustainable," he said.

"Through those we educate and through the knowledge we generate, we seek to help communities overcome persistent challenges and build more pluralistic, safe and productive societies," he added.

Dr Sulaiman Shahabuddin, the Vice Chancellor of AKU, said the class of 2025 is prepared to address Uganda's pressing challenges with integrity and professionalism.

"I am optimistic because of you. But also because of the vision that AKU embodies and the progress it has made toward realising that vision. Today, the Aga Khan University is stronger and more capable than ever," Dr Shahabuddin said.

He added that the Kampala campus is designed to produce professionals equipped to respond to Uganda's challenges in health, education, and media, with plans underway to expand programmes and open the Aga Khan University Hospital by 2028.

Mr Julian Mwine, the head of the Content Hubs at NMG Uganda, who completed his Master's in Media Leadership and Innovation, said the qualification is relevant in today's rapidly changing media landscape.