



# Juvarsity



A Monthly News Bulletin of the University of Juba

December 2020 Inventing the Future - Transforming Society

Volume 3 Issue 7

## Mass Higher Education Expands Opportunities for All



Prof. John Akec

### A word from the Vice Chancellor

**T**he Juba Monitor Newspaper published in its 13th November 2020 issue an opinion article with a title suggesting that the Vice Chancellor of the University of Juba had informed yet to be named audience that 'education is not for the poor', without explaining precisely when and in which occasion or medium this statement was released. I wrote to the editor of Juba Monitor, Ms Anna Nimiriano, asking her to provide proof that my office released such a statement, or she owes me an apology. I am still waiting for a response.

This message is however not meant to be a rebuttal of what the Juba Monitor has published, although in itself is a matter worth pursuing on other occasions. Instead, my message is intended to shed light on the aims and cost of providing mass higher education, which has become the tool for social mobility and inclusion of the underprivileged members in any society.

To begin with, it is reasonable to speculate that by demanding that all students pay their tuition fees without exception, the University of Juba may be seen as pursuing a tuition fee policy whose unintended consequence may be the exclusion of those from lower income brackets of society. In other words, making tuition fees a prerequisite for accessing higher education, irrespective of incomes of the families can be interpreted as another way of saying 'education is not for the poor.' Many can find this sentiment convincing. Yet, nothing could be further from the truth.

The advent of mass higher education is not new. It started in the US and other Western countries following the end of World War II, as a means of increasing access to university and college education for wider sectors of society, especially poorer families and war veterans. By the turn of the twentieth century, Western countries had moved from

'mass higher education' to 'universal higher education' on par with primary and secondary education in order to create 'nations of educated people.'

The idea of mass higher education came to Africa quite late, and is still taking shape. Historically, African countries inherited elitist colonial university systems, modeled after British Oxford and Cambridge, and French Grande Ecoles. Their sole purpose was to train colonial administrators and political leaders for the post-colonial era. They were neither designed to be inclusive, comprehensive, nor development orientated. Higher education was free and benefited a tiny fraction and most able or most privileged members of society. By early 1980s, expanding university education to accommodate larger numbers of students proved financially unsustainable for most African governments.

Moreover, a World Bank publication authored by George Psacharopoulos and his colleagues in 1986 argued that investment in general education renders higher returns than tertiary education, and recommended a financing policy that gave preference to general education over higher education as a part of Structural Adjustment Policy (SAP) for heavily indebted countries. It also called for cost sharing in order to finance the massification of higher education through payment of tuition fees; and advocated for the opening up of the higher education market to private sector investment.

Because Sub Sahara African countries could not devise sustainable financing policies for expansion of their higher education systems, the sector stagnated between the mid 1980s and early 2000s. It also resulted in the continent trailing behind the rest of the world in terms of university enrolment ratios. Asian and Latin American countries, as well as Russia, found ways to expand their higher education systems in the 1990s and 2000s through cost sharing and privatization, in line with World Bank recommendations. More recently, African countries have begun to catch up with massification.

Here at the University of Juba, we have a 15-year master plan (2015-2030) that aims to 'increase access to quality higher education.' As a result, our student population has risen from 10,000 in March 2014 to over 22,000 by September 2020. This is expected to rise further to 60,000 by 2030. This expansion will not be realised without contribution from students and their families in form of tuition fees. The government will continue to contribute a lion share of financing in order to make university education affordable to broader sectors of our society, as opposed to providing 'free higher education' which is not sustainable.

I wish you all a very happy Christmas.



## Academic Programme Update

In line with resolutions of the 13th Deans' Board meeting, held on 20 November 2020, the University Administration adopted the following measures:

- Classes to resume on 23 November 2020 for first and final year students as well as 5th year medical students. The rest of classes to resume on 30 November 2020;
- Entry to campuses will strictly be on presentation of valid ID cards at the gates;
- All students with outstanding tuition fees are asked to clear them in order to be issued with ID cards. All school registrars are asked to prepare lists of those who have paid one term fees at least to be used to check their eligibility of attending lectures; and
- Deans and directors are asked to continue updating their lists until all students who have paid are processed, followed by class attendance that is to be monitored by them.

## Farewell Party

On 19 November 2020, the University of Juba organized a party to honour Dr Kamil Kamaluddeen, UNDP Resident Representative, whose term of service in South Sudan had ended.



The deans and directors in attendance made speeches praising Dr Kamaluddeen for supporting the university as it strove to improve teaching and research. In his remarks, Dr Kamaluddeen pointed out that, "when crown, town and gown come together, positive things happen including development and economic growth."

We all wish him well in his new posting.

## International Academics Join the University of Juba

The University is pleased to welcome two international academics. Their profiles are as follows:



### Dr Kamal Hamid Dabet al Dood

Takes up the position of Assistant Professor at the School of Education. He holds an MSc in Educational Biology from Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria, and a PhD in Pathology of cucurbitaceae plants in Zaria and its environs from Ahmadu Bello University.

He was a lecturer at the Ahmadu Bello University, and also at the University of Sirte in Libya. He also taught in various international schools in Saudi Arabia and Sudan.



### Dr Mohamed Yagoub Abaker Bakheit

Takes up the position of Assistant Professor at the School of Mathematics. He holds a PhD in Applied Mathematics from College of Mathematics and Statistics, Northwest Normal University, China. He also has an MSc in Applied Mathematics from the

Faculty of Mathematical Sciences, University of Khartoum. He previously lectured at Rumbek University of Science and Technology, and also held part time positions at University of Khartoum and Alnaser Technical College.

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## University Contracts Fast Network Ltd (FASTNET) to Provide Internet Service

The University of Juba signed an agreement with an internet service provider, FASTNET, which will provide internet access service on all campuses and later staff residences. Already, the main administration building has access to fast internet. By the end of the year, all the campuses will be connected, and so staff and students will have internet access during working hours and also on weekends. Reliable and fast internet access will boost teaching and research activities.



## Street Children Visit the University

On 19 November 2020, a number of street children, cared for by Street Children Ministry, visited the University of Juba so as to inspire them. Street Children Ministry is an interdenominational and Christian-based organization concerned with the plight of the many children who have been scattered by the economic crisis and persistent war in South Sudan.

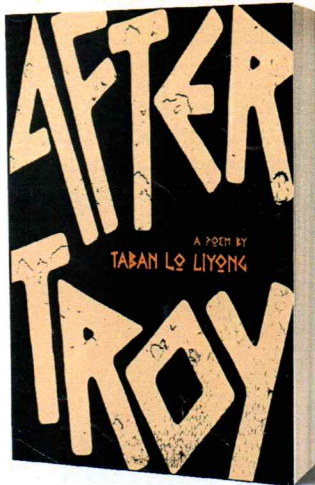
The children were happy to visit the university because they believe some of them will join the university. Mr William Wol Garang, Executive Director, and Mr Arkangelo Sabastian Nyilok, Programs Manager, accompanied the children, who were welcomed to the main campus by Dr Milton Melingasuk, Director of International Cooperation and Alumni Affairs.



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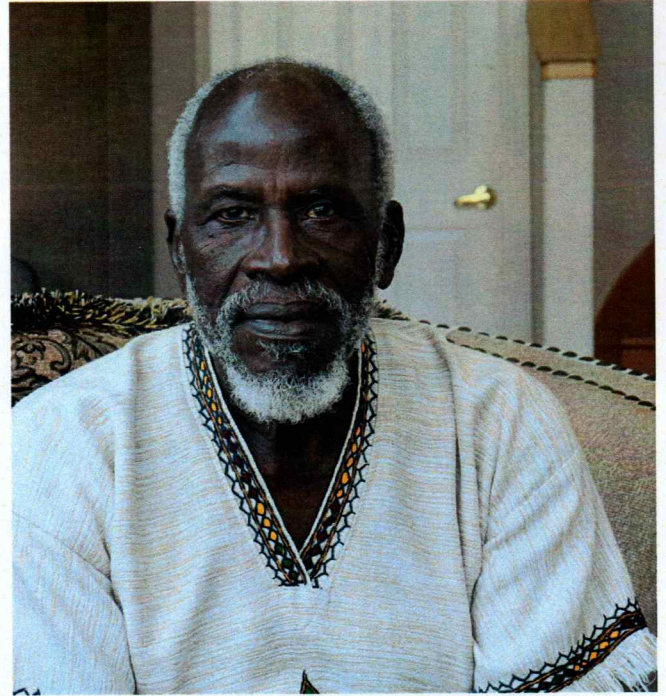


## Professor Taban Lo Liyong Launches Poetry Book



On 27 November 2020, Professor Taban Lo Liyong of the School of Education launched a book entitled *After Troy*. The veteran writer is well-known and so does not need introducing.

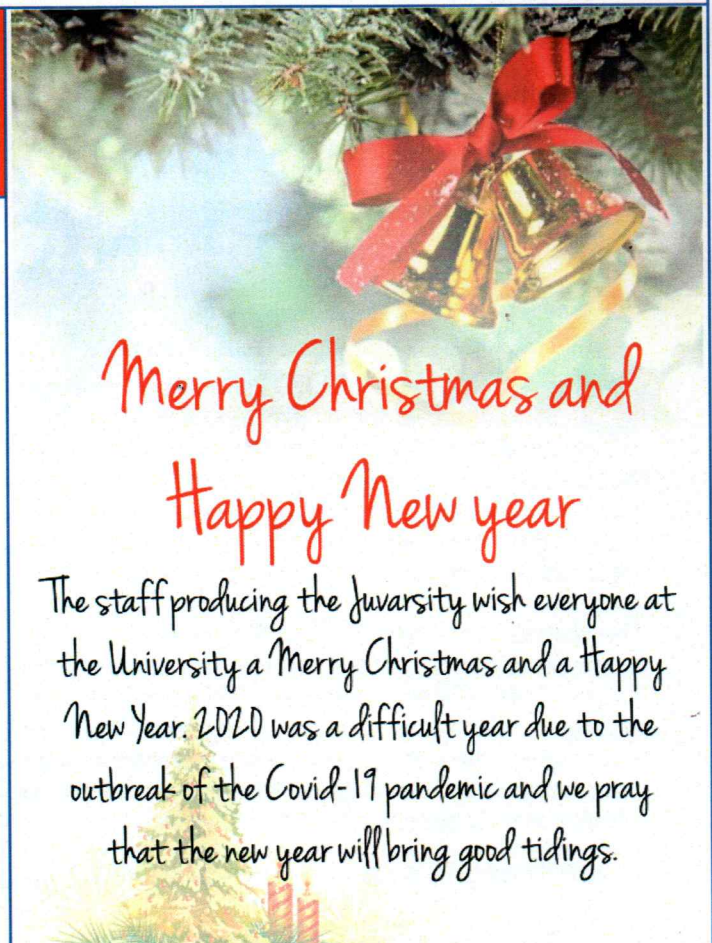
In South Sudan, the book is printed and distributed by AMO Publishers, Main Campus of the University of Juba (amopublishers@gmail.com or +211 922 660 696), in South Africa by University of KwaZulu-Natal Press (www.ukznpress.com), and worldwide by African Books Collective, Oxford. (www.africanbookscollective.com/publishers/deep-south).



*Professor Taban lo Liyong*

## Symposium on Writing and Publishing Papers for Master's and PhD Students

On Saturday, 21 November 2020, the School of Business and Management at the University of Juba organized a symposium for Master's and PhD students. The students were mostly from the School. However, a few of them came from other schools and institutes of the university as well as other universities. During the symposium, the Director of the School, Dr Ayine Simon Nigo, covered materials on researching, literature review and constructing theory. The other facilitator, Dr Leben Nelson Moro, took the participants through article or paper submission, processing and reviewer handling as well as proposal writing and development. Dr Michael Lawrence Mogga moderated the sessions.



*Merry Christmas and  
Happy New year*

*The staff producing the Juvarsity wish everyone at the University a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. 2020 was a difficult year due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and we pray that the new year will bring good tidings.*

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