

Students of University of Dodoma (Udom) at the Crossroads



News:

Media in Tanzania reported on the expulsion of nearly 8000 students who were pursuing Special Diploma in Science Education at University of Dodoma (UDOM). The source of crisis is lecturers' demands of extra pay for teaching Diploma students. And the government opposed the same, terming the demands unrealistic. Minister for Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training Professor Joyce Ndalichako admitted that they had tried hard to resolve the issue but in vain.

Comments:

In a state of shock, after the government failed to solve the problem instead they decided to expel innocent students under inhumane and cruel manner, by ordering them to leave the campus within 24 hours. It was alleged that some students were even forced to sleep at bus stations, others stranded in the streets since they had no food or fares to shuttle back to their respective homes in remote areas.

This issue led uproar within the Parliament, where opposition legislators sought the postponement of all house activities to debate the matter, describing the issue as urgent and of public interest. The Deputy Speaker of Parliament unflinchingly ruled out the possibility of debating the issue. In response opposition legislators protested the ruling which led to some of them being punished and dismissed from the chamber.

Educational disputes including strikes at universities have a long history in Tanzania and everywhere in the world. In 1966 there was a major strike at University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM). The leader of said strike was Samwel Sitta, who later served as minister in various ministries and became the Speaker of the Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Almost every phase of leadership in Tanzania has been facing unending strikes and disputes in universities, just to mention a few were in 1989 and 2011. Basic demands of emanating from strikes either from teachers or students are due to the government's failure to fulfill their dues that deprive them certain basic rights.

Other strikes and disputes in educational institutions occur as a protest of injustices and oppression committed by the state. For instance in 1970 estimated 4

million students in the US went on strike protesting against the US invasion to Cambodia.

In a democratic system, these sorts of disputes are inevitable since democratic governments pay little attention to public servants, and in most cases tend to deal with them in repressive manner as their slaves rather than employees. Not to mention the issue of benefit from the capitalists' view point, which is deeply entrenched to all parties be it teachers, students or Governments. This leads to making the disputes as hotspots with a repetitive manner. On the other hand politicians obtain better remunerations and other gratitude; while teachers and other public servants are left on the peripherals. Furthermore, capitalism considers education as a commodity rather than basic right to all citizens.

Islam came to solve disputes in the field of education over a thousand years ago. At the time of Khalifah Haroun Rashid, professionals who were working at the University of Baitul-Hikma were well paid and given lucrative state-of-care allowing them to work with efficiency and to the highest code of standard. The fruits of their labor brought about many innovations and major advances in the field of science and technology. We can authoritatively state that they laid the foundation of today's technology.

In addition, the University of Al-Qarawiyyin in Morocco benefited many from the Muslim world as well as the West. The university was built in 859 CE by a woman named Fatima Al-Fihri, teaching various subjects such as Quran, Islamic jurisprudence, linguistics, medicine, mathematics, geography, etc. Proper administration coupled with high-level care to teachers; it made the University provide high quality education to the extent that students from far corners spilt over to a wide range of fields. The man who later became a leader of the Catholic Church, Pope Sylvester II studied and graduated there. He is the one who distributed Arabic numerals in Europe, including making number "zero" known in which the people of Europe were oblivious of it! UNESCO declared it as the first academy that conferred degrees.

Once the Khilafah (Caliphate) upon the method of the Prophethood is re-established, it will anchor a cornerstone model to humanity in addressing the issue of education and any other issue by its just and effective rules from the Creator of all creations.

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