



# JOOUST to receive Sh100m to equip modern research and teaching laboratory

*The university is ranked Africa Centre of Excellence for sustainable use of insect as food and feeds*



**President Uhuru Kenyatta (3rd right), former Prime Minister Raila Odinga (2nd right) with University and Research Education PS Collette Suda (L), Education CS Amina Mohamed, Chancellor Dr. Vimal Shah and JOOUST VC Prof. Stephen Agong' (R) during the ceremony. Photo/Erick Nyayiera**

**By Erick Nyayiera**

It was a ceremony like no other as Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST) celebrated its 6th graduation presided over by the President Uhuru Kenyatta and the former Prime Minister Raila Odinga.

A total of 3,428 graduands have been conferred with PhDs, Masters, degrees, diploma and certificates this year. The first graduation was held in March and 1,444 graduated.

President Uhuru and Raila were awarded with Doctor of Sciences Honorary Degrees (Honoris Causa) for their tremendous contributions towards the advancement of peace and socio-economic development for the good of all Kenyans.

Addressing the gathering President Uhuru promised JOOUST Sh100 million grant from the government to establish a modern research and teaching laboratory.

He acknowledged the great work the university was undertaking in research, innovation and community outreach.

"The government is committed to support research and innovation-based education in order to meet the Big Four Agenda. JOOUST must be commended for its efforts towards attainment of the same," Uhuru said.

The president urged universities in the country to deliberately pursue linkages with local industries so that they can undertake research that offer practical solutions to the needs of the country.

"Our universities should drive the national research agenda along with the country's development goals. The government will support research activities in all public universities by providing additional resources



**JOOUST Chancellor Dr. Vimal Shah with President Uhuru Kenyatta and the Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga after the two leaders were conferred with Honorary Degrees.**

through National Research Fund," he assured.

Uhuru noted universities should consider commercializing the research findings that can be used to offer practical solutions for growth of local industries and national development.

He observed that most universities in the country are gradually shifting towards supporting the economy by providing relevant trainings.

He commended JOOUST for taking bold steps in providing not only relevant but practical courses that support the national agenda.

"I take special note that the gradaunds here today have great potential contributing to the development because of their training on courses such as food science, agriculture and spatial planning offered by the institution," he said.

Uhuru praised the university for being ranked Africa centre of excellence in sustainable use of insect for food and feeds, and having competitively won World Bank grants for its research and innova-

tion in food security.

"Being a young institution I am very impressed by JOOUST achievements that are enhancing country's image globally," he said.

On his part, Raila urged the university to work closely with the neighbouring counties to improve food security in the region by training local farmers and fishermen.

He urged universities in the country to focus on innovation and research geared towards achieving national development.

Vice Chancellor Prof Stephen Agong' said that JOOUST had made significant progress in key strategic areas.

"We have made major strides and our commitment is to make this university great. The management has remained a strong team under the guidance and direction of a strong University Council," said Prof Agong'.

"We are indeed humbled to be associated with President Uhuru and Raila. We recognize your contributions fostering nation peace



**Dr Vimal Shah, Chancellor.**

and cohesion," he added.

Prof Agong' revealed that JOOUST's School of Agriculture and Food Sciences, School of Public Health, School of Spatial Planning and Natural Resource Management and School of Engineering were contributing significantly to the realization of the Governments development agenda.

JOOUST has greatly embraced ICT technology in every aspect. The University has invested in the e-laboratory that is used by the lecturers and the e-learning students.

It is in the process of digitizing learning services for more efficient service delivery.

"The university has distinguished itself due to its proximity to the fresh water eco system. Our vision is in the usage of the blue economy as a vehicle for improving the livelihoods. Among the innovations that we are pursuing in this regard is the Marine Security Alert System, which has already been patented and collaborations underway with the County Government of Siaya," said Prof Agong'.

Speaking to *Education News*



**Prof. Stephen Agong', Vice Chancellor.**

after the occasion, Prof Agong' appreciated the President for the grant to establish a modern research and teaching laboratory. This, according to Prof Agong', is a boost to the university's newly unveiled engineering programme aimed at addressing acute shortage of artisans in the region.

The engineering programme, the first in the region, gives students the opportunity to learn technical skills that would enable them effectively compete in the emerging technology markets.

"We are targeting students from the all over the country. JOOUST offers quality education, as our foundation is based on research, technology and innovation," said Prof Agong'.

He added that lack of qualified artisans has been so severe to the extent that in most of the construction sites, labour has to be imported, the university will now be able to bridge the gap.

JOOUST has continued to expand its international profile. The university is now a full member of the Inter-University Council of

**Turn to the next page**





# President Uhuru unveils ultra-modern Science Lab

*The state-of-the-art facility has 24 science laboratories, 120 offices and accommodates over 1,000 students*

**By Erick Nyayiera**

A new ultra-modern science laboratory complex has been unveiled at Jaramogi Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOUST).

The four-storey building, which is located at the university's main campus in Bondo, was officially commissioned by President Uhuru Kenyatta.

According to the university's Vice Chancellor, Prof Stephen Agong', the facility is aimed at meeting the needs of the growing student population and research at the university.

"This science laboratory complex will ease the challenges we've been experiencing in research and teaching of science courses," said Prof Agong'.



**The President inside the newly unveiled multi-million Science Laboratory Complex at the university.**

He said the university will be using the new facility to also train students from other universities in the region and also offer research to professional people and organizations.

"As a university, we have to compete favourably. We cannot compete with other universities

if we lack equipment, therefore, getting such a facility is a milestone towards achieving our mandate as an institution of research and technology," he said.

The state-of-the-art facility is able to accommodate at least 1,000 students at one go and consists of eight laboratories in each

floor. It also has a well-equipped ICT laboratory and offices.

"The facility which has 24 science laboratories and 120 offices is now complete and it will ensure that training is up to the task," said Prof Agong' adding that it will give the university a head start in terms of science

training.

Meanwhile, the university is set to get Sh1 billion grant from the government to establish and equip a manufacturing and engineering laboratory.

Speaking during the university's sixth graduation ceremony, President Uhuru said that this will help in improving research.

"The government is committed to support research and innovation-based education in order to meet the Big Four Agenda," said Uhuru.

This, according to Prof Agong', is a boost to the university's newly unveiled engineering programme aimed at addressing acute shortage of artisans in the region.

The engineering programme, the first in the region, gives students the opportunity to learn technical skills that would enable them effectively compete in the emerging technological strategies.

He said that lack of qualified artisans has been so severe to the extent that in most of the construction sites, labour has to be imported.

This, he said, is the gap the university saw it could fill as part of its 50 year Master Plan.

## Varsity proposes the establishment of a manufacturing institute

**From previous page**

East Africa (IUCEA) and RU-FORUM, regional initiative in capacity building in the agricultural sector.

"The university students continue to be the focal point for outreach activities over the years. In 2018 the Enactus Club emerged top of the list among universities in Kenya and represented the country in San Jose California, USA. The team was able to demonstrate the improvement of forest cover in Siaya County through its Panda Kenya Initiative that stood out as the most creative and impactful community oriented project," said Prof. Agong'.

JOUST Chancellor Dr Vimal Shah urged the graduates to be innovative and use their intellect to create job opportunities noting that the university had given them the necessary skills to be able to perform optimally in the industry.

"While the current trends in higher education shifts towards the fields of science and technology, it is just as important as ever to keep in touch with changes in learning trends and to forecast possible future growth. The state of our workforce depends on how higher learning adapts to the changing needs of the workplace and those who fail to adapt to these shifts may be left in the digital dust," Dr Shah said.

He appreciated the Ministry of Education for its steadfast support in making university education accessible. However,

acknowledged the resource challenges affecting public universities.

"Capitation continues to be a huge challenge to all public universities. At JOUST we are determined to look further at avenues through which the university can supplement its resources," said Dr Shah.

During the graduation, the chancellor, Dr. Vimal Shah expressed a request for the Government to assist in funding of a vision of an engineering and manufacturing institute that will go a long way in value addition in the food security value chain.

The Ag. Chairman of Council Amb. Steven Loyatun noted that the university has accomplished a lot within the short period of its existence owing to the committed

leadership and management.

"We have competent staff, quality facilities and our financial resources are mobilized and used prudently for the sustainable development of the university," said Loyatun.

He revealed that the World Bank INSEFOODS project in sustainable Agriculture and Food Security Programme has recently attracted 49 students who have joined JOUST from diverse countries in Africa to study under the project.

The occasion was graced by among others Education Cabinet Secretary Amb. Amina Mohamed, Interior Cabinet Secretary Dr Fred Matiang'i, Nairobi Governor Mike Mbuvi, Siaya Governor Cornell Rasanga and several Members of Parliament.



**President Uhuru Kenyatta unveils the multi- million Science Laboratory at the JOUST.**



**Graduands during the ceremony. Photos/Erick Nyayiera**



**President Uhuru waters a commemorative tree he planted to mark the occasion.**

**Jaramogi Odinga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOUST), Bondo (Main) Campus**  
P.O. Box 210 - 40601 Bondo - Kenya.  
Telephones: Orange Fixed: 057 - 2058000  
Orange Wireless: 057-2501804  
Safaricom: 0707 - 058000  
Fax: 057 2523851  
E-Mail: vc@jooust.ac.ke