

Bamwine **tips** magistrates

By A. SSENGENDO

The Principal Judge, Justice Yorokamu Bamwine, has advised magistrates to be humane when sentencing offenders.

He said those who commit serious offences should be put where they belong, while those who commit minor offences and meet the requirements for doing community service should be given a chance to benefit from that punishment.

Bamwine made the remarks while opening a magistrates' conference on community service at Lake View Resort Hotel in Mbarara town on Monday.

He urged magistrates to follow guidelines when sentencing offenders.

Bamwine observed that some judicial officers and prosecutors believe in imprisonment so much that they refuse to grant bail to suspects who deserve it.

This, he said, has highly

contributed to crowding in prisons.

Bamwine asked magistrates to desist from being conservative and embrace the reforms in the criminal justice system to dispense fair justice.

He said making offenders reform should always be the major objective while sentencing them rather than just focusing on punishment.

Bamwine told magistrates

to give priority to land cases, saying they are among the main causes of violence in several communities.

"Please do something about land cases. Make life difficult for corrupt people and the land grabbers in our society. How do you do that? As soon as you start a file complete it," he advised.

Bamwine urged magistrates to encourage offenders to report back to court even after completing their sentences.