

Lack of faith in recent exam results is intellectual dishonesty

write in response to columnist Gawayya Tegulle's article of March 15 titled, "Namilyango@124, Mobutu's many Generals, and Uganda's many A's".

Rene Descarte's work on the allegory of the cave reminds us about three waves of doubt. The first being the illusion argument, the second, the dream argument and the third, the evil demon hypothesis.

In doubting the many As posted by the candidates who sat their national exams recently, Mr Tegulle should identify a wave that resonates with his opinion. Since it is a fact that, no person should be barred from doubting or dreaming, it is also critical for one to analyse the other's intentions and actions in an opinion.

When one's mind and resultant actions are accurately read, spinning and speculation gets suffocated. This means writers of opinions must base their writings on the truth because it is the same truth that a judge in courts of law relies on in assessing the accused person's *mens rea* (intention or knowledge of wrongdoing that constitutes part of a crime) and *actus reus* (guilty act) before making judgement.

So, at the risk of not judging Mr Tegulle, is to state that it is obvious to know that celebration of excellence and hard work cannot be sacrificed at the altar of skepticism and radicalism. If the results attained anywhere are scientifically credible and of a nation-

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al standing, they cannot be thrown under the gutters. It is crucial to know that matters of national obligation and mandate require competent authority to claim responsibility and not individuals who have nothing to do with setting national assessment standards.

Claiming that assessment standards are making majority of learners pass with As and likening it to Mobutu's Generals is unpatriotic.

I implore the public to continue motivating their sons and daughters in secondary schools to focus on attaining more As for the new curriculum is here to stay. The current assessment regime requires school teachers to score learners with continuous assessment scores, teach and record project work outcomes as well as prepare learners for summative assessment whose scores conclude

the assessment cycle. When an opinion is written with the writer choosing to ignore all parameters used to arrive at a final assessment outcome, it is not only enough to say that there is more work to be done but also rather to assert that there is a bit of laziness in finding out facts before one can write an opinion.

From Tegulle's context, it is wrong to assert that when examination results begin to look uniformly excellent may not be that our children have become smarter. This kind of reasoning communicates both pessimism and skepticism.

To assert that a system that occasionally produces disappointing results may in fact be healthier than the one that produces a million As is an indicator that some individuals struggle to accept, live with, and relate with excellence.

Again, could it be that such a thinking points to the fact that if Mr. Gawayya was a lecturer in a university or a head of department, many senior lecturers' promotion would be delayed because he would wait for the system to reduce on the number of good publications?

Would students struggle to get their deserving distinctions from him as their teacher or they would be asked to explain why they got distinctions?

In conclusion, if too many students are declared excellent, the meaning of excellence itself will gain traction and not a decline. Similarly, if a lawyer excellently wins a number of cases, it is excellence at litigation.

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