Uganda's first ever open heart surgery

EDITOR: I am writing to appreciate the work that has been accomplished by our Ugandan scientists as reported in the local press.

Ugandan doctors led by Dr. William Munyilirah were last week reported to have conducted Uganda's first ever open heart surgery at Uganda Heart Institute.

Seeing the photograph of our doctors and support scientists with total ıbsence of a foreign expert, conducting successful open heart surgery assured me that Uganda has the best the best, but they only lack tools and ıer facilitating requirements.

ı most of the hospitals, and other ılth units in Uganda, there is lack of lern equipment and consumables.

I have opined in this newspaper before that Uganda has the best scientists, who only deserve the best conditions of work to serve better. I wrote that article in response to the President's letter in which he indirectly expressed his reservations about the quality of his agricultural scientists when he chose to side with the anti-science activists that have chosen to be new experts in agricultural research science instead of excelling in their respective professions.

I challenge them to do the same with these gallant Ugandan doctors that have performed an open-heart surgery known as coronary artery bypass grafting surgery. Coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG) is a type of surgery that improves blood flow to the heart and this operation is reported to have taken 10 hours!

In that opinion piece of January 11, in the *New Vision*, I indicated that Ugandan doctors are under remunerated and even if that is not bad enough, they lack laboratory equipment and consumables. The procurement of the equipment that these doctors have used is, therefore, a big milestone on the part of Government, and more should indeed be done. I indicated that lack of equipment and consumables was a big contributing factor to brain drain of the best of our best. Interestingly, only a few days after I penned that opinion, the *New Vision* on reported that Uganda loses more than 700 doctors every year! I went further to enumerate a number of eminent Ugandan agricultural research scientists that have helped to avert major agricultural challenges and wondered why the President chose to consult non-scientists instead of these eminent sons and daughters of Uganda on the issue of the National Biosafety Act 2017. I would like to say that even for the medical profession, there are some non-science activist organisations that are emerging, and sooner or later they will be dictating what medical doctors can do and what they cannot do! Where are we going as a country?

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