

Chinese govt gives 54 more scholarships

By Andante Okanya

Beneficiaries of the Chinese government scholarships 2017/2018, have been warned to keep off narcotic drug trafficking, lest the uncompromising arm of the Chinese law enforcement bites.

The caution was made on Saturday during a send-off ceremony for the 54 beneficiaries, hosted by the Chinese Embassy. The function was held at the Great Chinese Restaurant at Malcom X Avenue in Kololo, a city suburb.

Since 1972, the Chinese government has offered thousands of scholarships for students studying courses up to doctorate level, at the various institutions of learning across the country.

The president of the China Alumni Association in Uganda (CAAU), Felix Ocitti, told the beneficiaries to decline to be duped into risky trade, saying the culprits risk losing the scholarship.

"You are a student, that is the first thing. You are not going to China to do business. When you go and engage in business, you are breaking the law. Your visa is an X Visa, a student visa," Ocitti said.

Follow the law, China is a



(Seated left to right) Sooma, Karabaya, Zhuqiang and Ochiti with some of the beneficiaries of Chinese scholarships on Saturday. Photo by Maria Wamala

country that keeps the law. You may be tempted to carry drugs to China, please do not do this. The list of those on death row in China for narcotic drug peddling is high," Ocitti stated.

In September last year, the deputy director general of Guangdong province security department, Zheng Dong, said many Ugandans are drug-trafficking jailbirds.

Last year, the deputy head of Uganda's mission in Beijing, Henry Mayega, said over 100 Ugandans are jailed over the vice in China.

The CAAU president tipped essence of the Chinese language and encouraged the beneficiaries to learn it. He said those who know the language have a competitive advantage in the continental

job market, with Chinese companies having a global presence.

The general manager of Civil Aviation Authority, Eng. Ayub Sooma, an alumnus who got a scholarship in 1988 to study electrical engineering at Tsinghua University in Beijing, encouraged the students to be Uganda's ambassadors.

He urged them to promote

Uganda and make good use of the knowledge from China.

"The major mission is that you go to China and bring the knowledge you have gotten the privilege of attaining. Love your country and do not speak ill of Uganda," Sooma said.

He was flanked by his wife of 25 years, Wang Li Hong, the managing director of Luyanzi Academic Foundation. Sooma,

a father of four, threw the guests into bouts of laughter, saying his academic trip to China, was fruitful and expanded his family.

The assistant commissioner for higher education in the education and sports ministry, Jolly Karabaya, represented the state minister for higher Education, Dr Chrysostom Muyingo and read his speech. Muyingo applauded China for being Uganda's dependent and loyal partner, saying the bilateral relationship has enabled the Government to implement its pro-people agenda.

"The support of the People's Republic of China is highly appreciated and is in line with the Government's programme of steady progress and wealth creation," Muyingo's said.

Chinese ambassador to Uganda, Zheng Zhuqiang, encouraged the students to make friends with the Chinese people, describing his country men and women as delightful, charming and high-spirited.

"I hope that the friendship built during your stay in China will be long-lasting. It will be the seed of the friendship between China and Uganda, and the beautiful flowers of the two countries' friendship will blossom forever, under your efforts," Zhuqiang said.