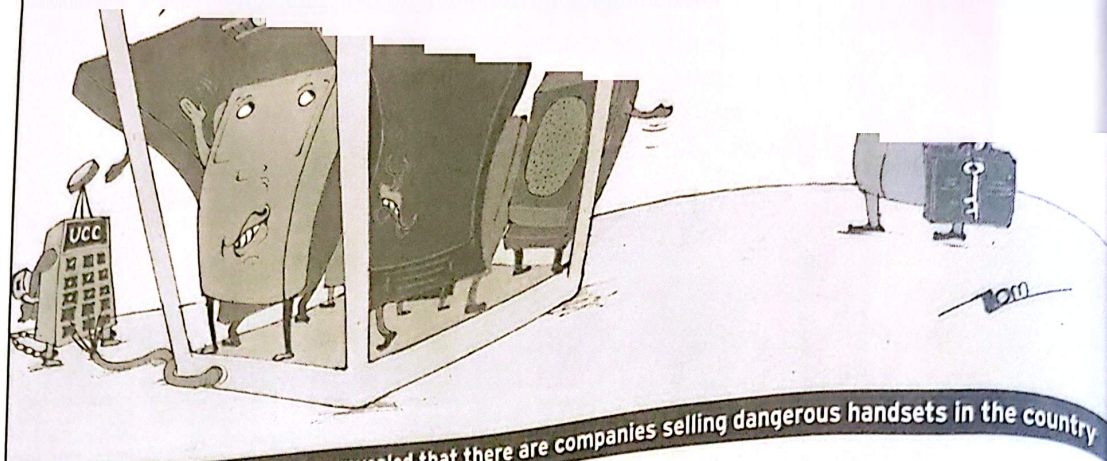


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One of the mobile phone dealers has revealed that there are companies selling dangerous handsets in the country

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Why kill research at Tororo Animal Research Institute?

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The only research institute carrying out animal research in Uganda is dead in preference for mining minerals at Osukuru hills.

This institute previously called the East African Trypanosomiasis Research Organisation (EATRO) was built by the colonial government in 1956 to carry out a multi-disciplinary research on Trypanosomiasis.

The institute was established on a piece of land measuring about 700ha, which had been reserved as animal sanctuary.

Its five departments were biochemistry, protozoology and entomology, medical and veterinary. It has a field station at Lugala on Lake Victoria, where experiments on trypanotolerant breed of cattle were to be tried. The support sections were administration, trypanosome and serum banks, vehicle garage with a filling station, stores, timber and metal workshops, all with administrative heads. There is also a well-furnished guest house for visiting research scientists and for recreation for staff; ideal environment for research. The institute also has an airfield.

When East African Community broke up in June 1976, the institute was re-named Uganda Trypanosomiasis Research Organisation (UTRO).

Restructuring of research was carried out in Uganda with the creation of the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) and UTRO was renamed National Livestock Research and Resource Institute (NaLIRRI) - thus becoming the only institute in Uganda to carry out animal research.

The institute has the history of doing animal and human tyranosomiasis as the two forms of the disease are inseparable. Towards the end of 1990s, the Ministry of Health considered doing research at the same venue and this would have made a multi-disciplinary approach to research, which is currently the desired approach. A statute establishing Uganda National Health Research Organisation (UNHRO) was passed by Parliament. The Health Research Institute was to handle parasitic diseases such as malaria, filarial worms, etc. other

than viruses, which are handled by Entebbe Virus Research Institute.

So again we see that Uganda is very good at making laws - useful laws - but the problem is implementation. In Tororo, the Chinese are taking over the premises of NaLIRRI. They are fencing it out. Has the institute been sold? Though some reports indicate that the Chinese are to build a new institute as a compensation elsewhere and politicians are fighting to relocate it to their constituencies.

This development implies that for some time now, there will be no animal research because new institute has not been built since old one is being taken over. A new institute should have been built first, inspected for research suitability before this one is released. There are differences between offices and laboratories. The current institute is heavily furnished with external assistance.

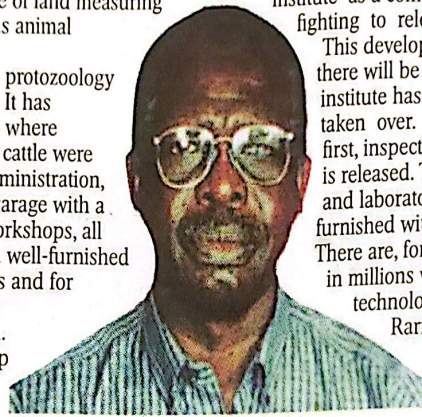
There are, for instance, facilities to rear tsetse flies in millions with the aim of using sterile insect technology (SIT) to control trypanosomiasis.

Raring flies is not like raring goats.

The death of this institute, which has been built over years, takes us back to colonial period. Animal and human diseases research need space. There is

no DFI with adequate space for research. Research institute is not like renovating a building like they have tried to renovate DFI into research institutes. These will remain like field stations. Research institute must attract scientists internationally. However, if there is an opportunity to set up a new institute, it would be an opportunity for the Ministry of Health to wake up and to ensure that the new institute incorporates their plan, because there is a law being sat on somewhere.

At the Osukuru hills, the Chinese had already acquired practically all the land surrounding the hills. They have even constructed offices at the hills. Many areas acquired by the investors around the hills are being used for agricultural purposes, like planting bananas, sunflower, maize, etc. in quantities. I do not believe that the Chinese need all that land to set up a factory. So has the Institute been sold or given in exchange of a new one to be built elsewhere? The public wants to know.



A statute establishing Uganda National Health Research Organisation was passed