

Teach students to be critical thinkers, First Lady urges

Entebbe Secondary School is putting up a sh700m girls' hostel as its golden jubilee flagship project. The school marked 50 years of its existence on July 14, with students showcasing different innovations, including a dual electric and fuel bike, and a robot. The guest of honour, the First Lady and education minister, Janet Museveni, was represented by the First Son and senior presidential adviser for special operations, Maj. Gen. Kainerugaba Muhoozi, Billy Rwothungye was at the function.

Teachers and students, all clad in jubilee-themed wear, a neat compound and a new coat of paint for the old classroom blocks. This was the scene at Entebbe Secondary School on July 14, as the school celebrated 50 years of existence.

The First Lady and education minister, Janet Museveni, was slated to be the chief guest at the celebrations. She was represented by the First Son and senior presidential adviser for special operations, Maj. Gen. Kainerugaba Muhoozi.

Upon arrival, Muhoozi inspected the science exhibition set up by the students, who showcased a dual electric-fuel bike, robot and lighting system, among other innovations.

Rt Rev. Evans Kisekka, the retired Bishop of Luwero Diocese, during the thanksgiving service, urged students to concentrate on their studies. Yunia Lwanga, the headteacher, said the major jubilee project is a new sh700m girls' hostel.

"Our students were leaving us for other schools which had boarding sections because they thought they would allow them more time to concentrate on their studies. We, therefore, started a boarding section last year, but we were overwhelmed by the number of girls who wanted to stay at school," she explained.

"Due to the special needs of girls, we felt it wise to construct a modern girls' hostel. We need to protect our girls so that they can stay in school. The boys are important, too, but let us start with the girls."

In Mrs Museveni's speech, read by Muhoozi, she commended the school for offering day scholars break tea and lunch. She also praised the school for its poultry and dairy farms.

The education minister advised the teachers on lifelong learning, saying: "Teachers need to remember the concepts of lifelong learning. For example, children learn best when they participate in their own learning and when they are able to link what they learn to previous experiences."

"It is time to change from teacher-centred approaches to learner-centred ones. It is also important



The home economics class displaying their products. Photos by Tony Rujuta



Science students showcased a bike that can run on electricity or fuel

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Entebbe Secondary School started with 39 students in 1967. It was founded by Christians who were in charge of Anglican-founded Chadwick Namate Primary School, who wanted a quality day-secondary school for their children, after Primary Seven. The school became government-aided in 1976.

for teachers to remember that learners need to develop fundamental skills, such as critical thinking, communication, problem-solving, teamwork and interpersonal relationship building," she said.

"These are skills which enhance social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development, as well as self-sustainability."

Mrs Museveni contributed sh10m to the hostel project and Muhoozi contributed sh5m for the science club of the school.

What teachers say

Ronald Kiwanuka, a chemistry teacher at the school, said: "Academically, our school is average.



Muhoozi delivering a speech on behalf of Mrs Museveni at the function

We have all categories of students: those who excel, the average and the weak."

"As teachers, we are trying our best to help all our students to pass. Last year, we had a student who got aggregate eight in eight subjects in the O'level national examinations."

Kiwanuka says only through hard work will the school get better.

Aida Nakigudde, a teacher of French at the school, is optimistic that recent initiatives, such as extra lessons, will bolster academic performance.

What old students say

Gerald Wilson Mubiru joined the school in 2005 for A'level, before going to study chemical engineering at Makerere University. He now works for Baker Hughes, an American oil and gas company.

"The infrastructure at the school is not bad, but we need to work on the academic performance. My advice to the students is that they should not be lazy."

With the support of his former classmates, Mubiru contributed \$3,500 (about sh12.6m) to the renovation of the school buildings.

Barbara Najjuma joined the school in 2001, before joining Makerere University.

Najjuma, who now works at Dungen Orange in Mpigi district, wants the grades of the school to improve.

"When I was here, Entebbe Secondary School was at the same level with the best day schools in Uganda, but the academic performance of the school has stagnated. I want to see my school back to its best."

What a parent says

Joseph Erochu, a parent, applauded the school for inculcating morals in students, but lamented that teachers, countrywide, are no longer well-motivated.

"When we went to school, back in the 1960s and 1970s, teachers were able to sustain quality livelihoods. Their salaries were adequate. Maybe, that is why teachers were motivated and respected then. These days, things are not quite the same."

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The nominee must:

- Be a Ugandan aged 15-35 years
- Be a small or medium scale entrepreneur (except those doing farming as an enterprise).
- Be drawing his/her livelihood from the business.
- Have an enterprise that has been in existence for at least three years.
- Have an enterprise with apparent impact on society by providing a service/ product that is solving a community need and creating job opportunities.
- Have a formal business that is contributing to the economy through taxes and employment.

