Uganda marks aviation week

By Reagan Ssempijja

While the Aviation Week is often synonymous with flying airplanes and airplane exhibitions in developed economies, in Uganda the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) does it differently. They chose to support the sports sector and updating the public on their latest programmes.

The International Civil Aviation Week is observed between December 1 and 7 annually by the global aviation community to commemorate the memorable week of meetings that led to the signing of the famous Chicago Convention. The Convention was signed on December 7, 1944, resulting in the establishment of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

The purpose of the annual celebration is to establish and reinforce awareness of the importance of international civil aviation in the social and economic development of states and the role of ICAO in promoting the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation.

It was first celebrated on December 7, 1994 to mark the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Convention on International Civil Aviation, the charter of ICAO. In 1996, pursuant to an ICAO initiative and with the assistance of the Canadian government, the United Nations General Assembly, by resolution, officially recognised December 7 as an International Civil Aviation Day and listed it as an official UN day.

The theme this year is: "Working together to ensure no country is left behind." According to Civil Aviation Authority, the theme for the Aviation Week is usually generated by the ICAO council. For three consecutive years (2015-2018), the theme has been: *"Working together to ensure no country is left behind"*.

The *"No Country Left Behind"* initiative highlights ICAO's efforts to assist states in implementing ICAO standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs). The main goal of this is to ensure that SARP implementation is better harmonised globally so that all states have access to the significant socio-economic benefits of safe and reliable air transport.

According to Vianney Luggya, the manager of public affairs at CAA, the authority kicked off the celebrations by sponsoring the Uganda Seniors Golf Open that run from December 2 to December 3 to the tune of sh20m as a form of corporate social responsibility in giving back to the community.



Luggya (right) admires trophies for the Uganda Seniors Golf Open

THE AUTHORITY SPONSORED THE RWABUSHENYI MEMORIAL CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP THAT RUN FROM NOVEMBER 30 TO DECEMBER 3 AT FOREST COTTAGES IN BUKOTO

"The event attracted players above 55 years of age. We were cognisant of the fact that many of the senior golfers are frequent fliers and users of the services and facilities at Entebbe International Airport," Luggya says.

He adds that as part of the activities in the Aviation Week, the authority also sponsored the Rwabushenyi Memorial Chess Championship that run from November 30 to December 3 at Forest Cottages in Bukoto. The event is held in memory of the late Cyril Rwabushenyi, a former director of airports at CAA, and one of the founder members of the Uganda Chess Federation. The aviation authority also extended support to the Uganda Air Transport Safety Engineering Association (UGATSEA) to hold their annual general meeting and workshop at the Uganda Wildlife Education Centre in Entebbe. UGATSEA is the umbrella association for aviation engineers.

Luggya says they also showcased their (CAA) latest developments such as the expansion of the passenger terminal at Entebbe airport.

"The existing passenger terminal building was opened in 1974 for peak hour traffic of 250 arriving and 250 departing passengers. The terminal got some limited improvements as the country prepared for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 2007, elevating it to the current capacity of 410 arriving and 360 departing passengers," he says

"The master plan projects 930 arriving passengers and 820 departing passengers during peak hours by 2033. The expansion is critical in providing for the growth and ensuring a good customer experience."

"The landside expansion by M/s Seyani Brothers Ltd seeks to provide more room and comfort for service users, especially passengers. It is fully funded by CAA from internally generated revenue," Luggya says.

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