

Bengo pioneered African private dental practice

BY MATHIAS MAZINGA

Dr Samuel X'entho Euclas Bengo stands out as one of the noble Ugandans that gave our country international elevation and dignity.

He projected himself as a bright and exceptional student, right from Budo Junior School and later King's College, Budo. He was privileged to have had tutelage at the palace of the King of Buganda, which explains his ethical disposition.

Bengo's star started shining brighter when he got a Commonwealth Scholarship to study Dentistry at Guy's Hospital, London, a coveted institution sought after by all in the then British Empire. On top of being the pioneer Ugandan to win the respected scholarship, Bengo also became Uganda's first qualified dentist upon his graduation in 1959.

Bengo then worked in Masaka Hospital (and other hospitals in western Uganda) before returning to the UK, where he obtained a diploma in public dentistry and a Licentiate from the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

He opted to remain in the UK, where he established himself as an accomplished dentist. His career was so successful that he set up a Private dental practice, the first ever by an African medic.

Bengo's successful career was acknowledged with passionate admiration by Dr Ntwatwa Lule, an executive member of the Uganda Dental Association, who delivered his eulogy during his funeral service at St Paul's Cathedral Namirembe.



**DR BENGO
SAMUEL
FROM JANUARY
8, 1931 TO
NOVEMBER 17,
2017**

Tributes

Bengo had many human qualities for which he was greatly admired.

Samuel Safo Kantanka

"He was a unique grand-dad who never lost touch even after we grew up. He was always keen to teach

He was quintessentially a Budonian. He rose from a boisterous scholar to an accomplished dentist

us the traditions and culture of the Baganda. He was a party grand-dad who never missed out at our graduation functions, wedding and birthday parties. He bought my kanzu and jacket at my Kwanjula. At my wedding, he ironed my shirt."

Tessa Zalwango Bengo,

"Dad insisted on good manners and maintained high standards in all circumstances. He was a popular man with an amazing smile. Although London had become his home, he never forgot his heritage, of which, he was always proud.

He would take us to the markets in London. But he would always assure us that the agricultural produce from Uganda was the best. Dad's door was always open to family and friends."

Ann Bengo's poem

"Dad, you were so amazing; always loving and caring. You held us in your hands and kept us safe. You were our hero. You taught us values

like love and respect. You were always in our lives, in thick and in thin. We shall forever cherish the important moments we shared."

Charlie Lubega, a niece

"Uncle Bengo was my idol. He always motivated me to study hard. He would also give me encouragement whenever I got challenges. Uncle also inspired us to work hard and I attribute all my achievements to him."

Bengo was also acknowledged for recommending the legendary Cathedral organist, Eriya Paulo Lwasa to be sponsored for further professional development as an organist at Canterbury Cathedral. (Sir Edward Muteesa II granted Lwasa the scholarship and today, his influence in music at Namirembe Cathedral is still visible).

Official Eulogies

The Rev Prince Daniel Kajumba (UK Representative)

Our brother Dr Bengo was one of the brightest young men Buganda has produced. He was a pillar of his community and the Ugandan diaspora. He was a diligent and generous supporter of various causes ranging from political liberation to community/worship and cultural development in the UK and Uganda.

He was Kabaka's representative to the UK and Ireland from 1995-2000. He is one of those who started the association of the Baganda in the UK, where he has always been instrumental in promoting and preserving the language and cultural

norms of the Baganda.

He was a philanthropist, a keen photographer and an accomplished cook. His family and friends will forever remember his fabulous Sunday dinners. He was a fabulous host whose doors were always open to all. His dapper dress sense never left him even in the last few years of his ill health.

Chris Luswata (President, Old Budonians Club)

He was quintessentially a Budonian. He rose from a boisterous scholar to an accomplished dentist and a pillar of his community especially in England where he lived most of his time.

He was a traditionalist with an urban and cosmopolitan outlook, a prolific and generous host with a touch of cooking. He was an irrepressible and proud Budonian who helped many Budonians and non-Budonians. He was true to the tenets of the Old Budonian Association. At Budo, he shone brilliantly as an accomplished piano player in the college chapel.

Kabaka Ronald Muwenda Mutebi (message delivered by Oweekitlibwa Charles Bwenvu)

We thank God for the long life of Dr Sam Bengo, who worked hard, in various capacities, to protect and promote the interests of the Kingdom of Buganda. We shall always remember him for his steadfast love and loyalty to the Kingdom and his quest for truth and justice.