

Janet rebukes teachers over poor *nygiene*

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KAMPALA. Education Minister Janet Museveni has said schools have become a “menace”, pupils and teachers unhygienic and demanded an overhaul of her ministry to right the wrongs in the sector.

“The schools used to look beautiful places for children to learn. But now the gardens are bushy. The children are filthy. The teachers don’t look like teachers. Really? Education cannot happen in places like that,” she said, adding, “I don’t know what education you are talking about because education cannot mean writing on the blackboard Mathematics and English. It is comprehensive.”

Recounting her primary school days, Ms Museveni told participants at the education



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JANET MUSEVENI, MINISTER OF EDUCATION

sector review workshop in Kampala yesterday that they always looked cleaner than today’s pupils.

She said: “There is no life in our schools where our children are going. You look at the pupils’ faces, they are so unhappy. They are just there waiting to get out. I don’t think they are learning anything. That takes sensitisation and perhaps going to these schools in rural areas

and talking to teachers.”

Ms Museveni, who is also the First Lady, made the comments in response to submissions by various stakeholders, who kept blaming each other for the failures in the education sector. Ms Museveni noted that the officials always give excuses of lack of money to do some tasks yet they could improvise in some cases.

Pallisa District Chief Administrative Officer, Mr Godfrey Kuruhira, had said there was need to hear the teachers’ side of the story and appreciate the conditions they operate in.

“We need to hear the story of a teacher. If I have a class of 100 children, how do I check their fingers and handle their physical education (PE)? As much as they have challenges, we should appreciate their effort,” he said.

Mr Zadock Tumuhimbise, the chairperson of Uganda National Teachers’ Union (Unatu), acknowledged the challenges facing the teaching profession, but added that government has a responsibility to bear for some of the failures.

He said the money teachers get is inadequate to enable them lead a decent life like it was in previous governments.

“There are other causes that make teachers look the way they look. You can’t be clean when you have no soap, no money to buy that shirt. I have been receiving calls from teachers who have not been paid. What would you expect from such?” Mr Tumuhimbise said.

Ms Museveni, however, said the financial headwinds could not have prevented school administrators and teachers from keeping tidy.