Teachers accused of selling booze to students

GULU

By Arnest Tumwesige

Teachers of Sir Samuel Baker Secondary School are on the spot for allegedly distilling alcohol in the staff quarters and selling it to their students during the school term.

This unprofessional behaviour was discovered by the deputy headteacher, Richard Adolo Okello, last August, when students went on strike and vandalised school property.

"When I tried to raise the matter before the top management, I was instead, opposed over claims that I was just envying my colleagues who were involved in the business," Okello told *Rupiny*, a Luo language sister paper of *New Vision*.

Okello, who has been at the school for about one year after being transferred from Masaka, said there was no point in continuing to argue with his bosses, who were eventually confronted by the truth after the strike.

During a monitoring exercise by the parents after the strike, three staff quarters were found to have brewing holes dug in the compounds and more alcohol in the jerrycans and bottles, ready for sale.

"We confiscated many exhibits, including some bottles full of alcohol, while others were littered in the dormitories and the compound," Okello added.

When *Rupiny* contacted the chairperson of the board of governors, Can. John Stephen Onyango, on the matter, he acknowledged that teachers were engaged in distilling alcohol. He also accused some teachers and students of stealing school property, such as hoes, furniture and flat TV screens during the school term.

However, Okello declined to reveal the names of the implicated teachers.

But Onyango, who was cited as being among those that first dismissed Okello's allegations, told *Rupiny* that the vice has been stopped and that they intend to strengthen monitoring so that it does not happen again.

"That is what I have told you and in case you want more about this, I'm not ready to say anything else," he added.

Before the interview, Onyango told the district chairperson, Martin Ojara Mapenduzi, that there was a lot of laxity among teachers in the school, with some of them playing cards in the staffroom during class hours.

He observed that the teachers are so money-oriented that they would not allow supervising any extra school activity without demanding payment.

Mapenduzi expressed disappointment at the high level of laxity among teachers and recommended that some of them who had stayed for more than 10 years be transferred.

In 2017, the school closed with only 450 students and yet it can accommodate 1,300 students. It sits on 600 acres of land, making it one of the biggest schools in Uganda, but with many of the facilities are underutilised.

The current headteacher, Johnson Erick, has been transferred to Otuke district after serving only a year. He will be replaced by Tony Lubwama Kiwanuka from St. Charles Lwanga SS in Kalungu district.



Mapenduzi pointing at part of the unused land at Sir Samuel Baker School. Photo by Arnest Tumwesige

BETWEEN THE LINES

Teachers have been accused of brewing alcohol which they sell to students during the school term. As a result, the students get drunk and on one occasion, went on strike. The teachers are also accused of stealing the school's property such as hoes and furniture.

CamScanner