

Times change. This is the Age of the Thief. To achieve one's objectives, one is generally expected to steal, especially from public funds.

University students must learn to steal food

ALAN TACCA > ON THE MARK

I don't know what is wrong with students, especially university students. They are such a pain.

If I believed in demons, I would have said that the moment our university gates are thrown open and the students flock in, God or his Son goes out on a hunt around the city, as well as door to door through the country's mental asylums, capturing as many demons as He can stuff in His holy bag, before invading the campus in question and unleashing the spirit nasties among the students.

I remember one crazy day when I was a university student (you may not believe it, but I was once a university student), I and hundreds of other students stormed the city and attacked every creature on the streets that looked like a White hominid.

Because of some unjust action that had been perpetrated by the then apartheid regime in South Africa, we assumed (or at least acted as if) every White hominid walking or driving on Kampala's streets was an enemy of every blinking Black hominid. We were so stupid!

Many years later, I still do not understand who university students think they are. Now they want food for a full stomach; or, instead, enough money to buy three square meals. And all that in this land, the pearl of abominable holes discovered by one Mr Trump!

Food. In those ancient days, I remember the late Sulaiman Kiggundu, who later distinguished himself as a scholar, Bank of Uganda governor and Greenland Bank honcho. During Kiggundu's failed campaign to become guild president, he was greeted in the Northcote Hall dining-room by a din of heckling inspired by UPC/Obote anti-Baganda hatred.

Kiggundu waded through a furious storm of food missiles. When he came out, the whole of his head and striped grey suit were dripping with gravy and lumps of rice and exploded Irish potatoes.

It was an extraordinary sight. Most of those ageing fat 'ndugus', doctrinaire 'comrades', 'revolutionaries' and all manner of liberators, who are now imposing a frugal existence on

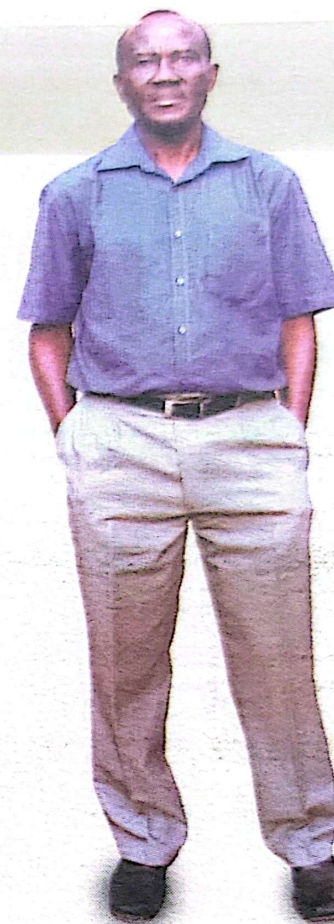
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Feeding. With a huge chunk of government expenditure already going to theft and official extravagance, the government has reportedly proposed giving only Shs4,500 for a day's meals to every student on government sponsorship.



students and every Ugandan except themselves, were beneficiaries in the times of tax-funded abundance and food abuse at university.

But times change. This is the Age of the Thief. To achieve one's objectives,



one is generally expected to steal, especially from public funds.

At a function in Kigali, President Museveni was once reported to have turned to his host, president Paul Kagame, and (with pride or sadness?) inquired whether Rwanda had as many thieves as Uganda.

When doctors, teachers and other

government-employed professionals demand enough pay to sustain even a basic bread-without-butter existence, the ruling NRM solution is to import higher-paid Cuban expatriates.

The Ugandans, I suppose, are expected to steal drugs, stationery, or cheat in other indirect ways to make ends meet.

In the Age of the Thief, understandably, university halls of residence cannot properly prepare meals for the students who reside there. Half of everything in the catering system gets stolen. So, why not give the students cash?

With a huge chunk of government expenditure already going to theft and official extravagance, the government has reportedly proposed giving only Shs4,500 for a day's meals to every student on government sponsorship.

Hardly the purse for three square meals. Shs4,500 will buy one bland meal in a dingy place in university neighbourhoods.

You are protesting? Who are you, students, not to live like other Ugandans? If you cannot steal any-which-way to get your three square meals, our ageing revolutionaries may consider replacing you with Cuban students.

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