



Buganda Kabaka Ronald Muwenda Mutebi observing a demonstration by the physics students of Mengo Secondary School. Photo by Dickson Kulumba

Vocational studies are Uganda's future – Kabaka

By Farooq Kasule

"If all teachers can assess the capacity of each student and help them build it in addition to classwork, I believe it can impact greatly on our nation," Kabaka Ronald Muwenda Mutebi II said.

Over the weekend, during the 11th Buganda Royal Art Shield, hosted by Mengo Secondary School, the Kabaka of Buganda implored Ugandans to spurn the belief that vocational studies are for only under-performing students.

"If all schools taught vocational studies, it would help reduce the number of job seekers in the country," the Kabaka said.

Kabaka also urged teachers to ensure that whatever they teach the children will impact on their future.

The stiff competition at the festival featured drama, poems, music and cultural dances.

Seated on his throne for close to five hours, the Kabaka kept on clapping to the drumbeat and smiling during the student's performances. Modern Primary School won the Royal Family Shield while St Lawrence Ssonde topped the secondary level for the third time.

The schools were each given a dummy cheque of sh1.5m by Kabaka to help them procure music instruments to boost their performance.

The Kabaka also commended all the school which participated in the festival,

Buganda first deputy premier, Haji Twaha Kawaase implored the schools to include vocational studies on their curriculum in order to produce multi-skilled students

saying the competition helps students become professionals in different fields.

Prior, the Kabaka launched a modern sick bay at Mengo Secondary School. Kabaka named the building *Mukunganya* which means unifier.

Buganda Kingdom's first deputy premier, Haji Twaha Kawaase, implored the schools to include vocational studies on their curriculum in order to produce multi-skilled students.

"There is need for all schools to balance

classwork with vocational studies if the future of our children is to get brighter," Kawaase said.

Buganda's education minister, Dr Prosperous Nankindu Kavuma, revealed that the competition focused on lyrics centered on proper upbringing of the children and promotion of Buganda's cultural norms.

"The aim of the competition is to promote Buganda culture and proper upbringing of children, but now we intend to include lyrics centered on sensitising children about HIV/AIDS starting next year," Nankindu said.

She expressed concern over some parents, particularly in Buganda that had abandoned their role of nurturing children despite several reminders from the Kabaka.

Mengo Secondary School head teacher, John Fred Kazibwe told the Kabaka that vocational studies has been part of their syllabus since the school's inception in 1895.

"Our students are taught tailoring, music, modern agriculture among others," Kazibwe said.

He lauded Kabaka for accepting to have the competition hosted at Mengo Secondary School.

According to Kazibwe Mengo has a student population of 4,601 of which 1,938 are female.