

University Guide

Universities urged to tighten security

Security. Universities should provide information to assist staff and students in protecting their personal safety and belongings.

BY JOAN SALMON

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Universities are public places and people from all walks of life access them. Despite several calls to universities to secure their premises, some have failed to put all the needed security measures in place.

When it comes to body checks, not much is done apart from checking a few cars as they enter universities.

Louis Kwizera, a student at Makerere University says, apart from making sure that whoever enters gets a parking ticket, there is nothing done as far as checking vehicles accessing campus.

"You can never know what someone is carrying. All they care about is that these cars pay for parking space. At the small gates, there are no security personnel to ensure safety and check who accesses the university premises," he says.

On the other hand, Viola Nakamate from Kyambogo University says, "While there are security officials checking cars as they come in, the way they do it is not convincing."

At some universities, their fences need to be repaired but this has been ignored.

For example, Kyambogo University's fence has several holes in it making it so easy for a wrong character to access any part of the university. While Makerere University is doing its best to repair its fence, most of the work has been done near the main gate while some areas still need work.

Nonetheless, we appreciate that some steps have been taken to ensure that university students and their property is safe.

Police spokesperson Fred Enanga, says Uganda Police and universities have partnered to ensure that students and campus premises are secure.

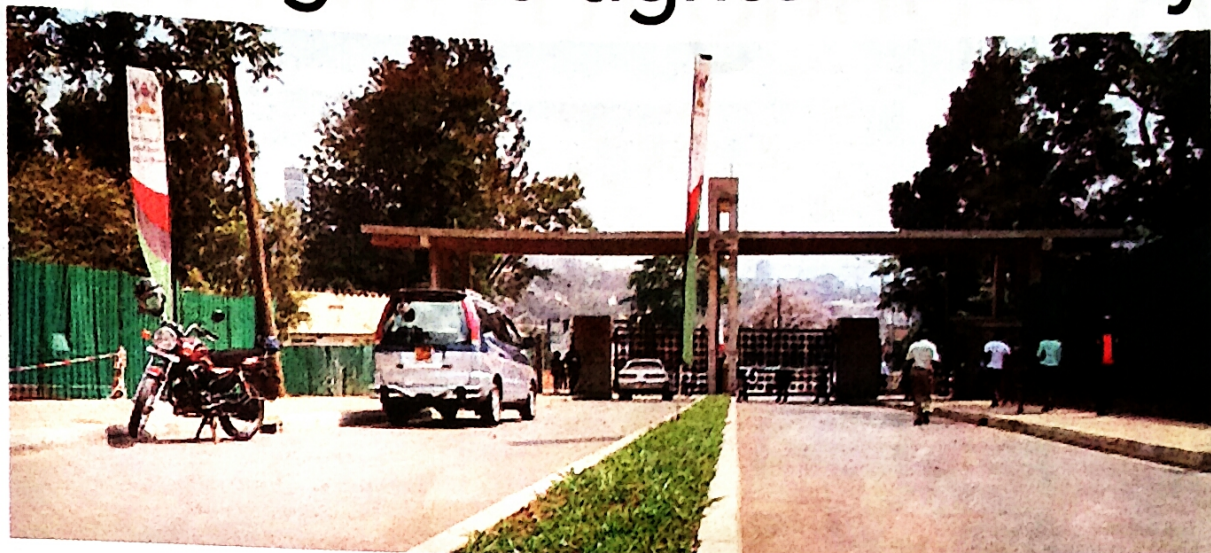
"There is a police station for every university and it is a mandate for all public universities to ensure public policing," he says.

Mr Enanga says security measures have been put in private universities. He says apart from police stations, they have police personnel.

Mr Enanga says they have traffic personnel and criminal investigation department who help with gathering information of any occurrence.

While hostels are not university property, Mr Enanga says Police conducts patrols either on foot or motorised patrols.

"There are also smaller police posts or booths created to manage petty crimes such as theft that



The redesigned Makerere University main gate. Universities should put in place security measures to protect both students and properties.

FILE PHOTO

could happen within universities. Within the universities, we have also identified black spots such as where trees or overgrown hedges are, where there is no lighting and notified security officers," he says.

"We also work with the dean of students to deal with the overgrown hedges as well as trees that make hideouts for criminals. Police is also giving circulars to students with details on how to become more security sensitive within their halls," Mr Enanga says.

Working together

The corporation between police and university security is further stressed by a statement on Makerere University website saying, "Police officers work closely with campus security personnel to maintain law and order as well as man security checks at the campus and building entrances". A cooperation that many students desire will better the security of university grounds.

Jasmine Nakibuuka, a student at Makerere University School of Business (MUBS) says, CCTV cameras should be placed within universities premises because these are public places that anyone can access freely.

"These cameras can capture crime in real-time and the perpetrators brought to book. However, they must also be maintained and monitored in order to serve their intended purpose," she says.

Mr Peter Lwasa, a parent urges universities to increase on the number of street lights along their streets.

"There are several dark patches and we need to know that our children are safe even in the dark of the night".

Ramsey Mutumba a finalist at the School of Medicine at Makerere University, says students should

move together in groups when they are going back to their places of residence.

"I have learned that over the

years because there are times we have to stay out late studying hence returning to our halls of residence late. Rather than leaving singly, we

learned to wait for one another and move in groups. That way, criminals would find it hard to take advantage of us," he says.

CAMERAS

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Location: The University is located on Plot 131, Block 2, Nyaruzinga Road, P.O. Box 44, Bushenyi District, along Mbarara-Kasese Road, 500 metres branching off at Bushenyi Magistrate's Court

Contacts: For further information please contact the Academic Registrar on 0772-491369 / 0701-491369 or send inquiry to info@vust.ac.ug. Website www.vust.ac.ug