

KENYAN STANDARD 12/04/08 X

KNUT officials reject plan to review 8-4-4

KENYA National Union of Teachers top officials have rejected a body formed by the Government to review the contentious 8-4-4 system of education.

KNUT Secretary-General Ambrose Adongo and Chairman John Katumanga described as "bogus" the Curriculum Review Project the Minister for Education and Human Resources, Kalonzo Musyoka, announced would review the system.

The KNUT officials told teachers, parents and the Union branches country-wide not to cooperate with the body during their tours of provinces next week to collect views from them, the religious organisations, students and other stake holders. They said what KNUT and other stake holders have been waiting for was the establishment of Education Review Commission Committee promised by the President last year and reiterated by him this year.

"The Curriculum Review Project announced by the Minister and the Government has been created without our blessings," they said, adding that KNUT was

Standard Correspondent

not consulted and had been ambushed.

The officials gave the Government till the end of the month to dissolve the body and replace it with the Education Review Commission or face an industrial action by KNUT.

Explaining their rejection, Adongo and Katumanga said the project was composed of officers responsible for the deteriorating standards of education.

They urged the World Bank not to fund the project till the body was substituted with the one the President had promised which must also comprise independent qualified experts in education matters.

The KNUT officials were addressing a Press confer-

ence in Kisumu. The call by KNUT comes a day after the Government set up a team to review the 8-4-4 system of education from next Monday at a cost of Shs 1 billion, adds **Standard Reporter.**

The team is to focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the controversial primary and secondary school curricula with an aim to strengthen education at the two levels.

The Curriculum Review Project will run for a year.

The team, divided into two groups, is to visit all the eight provinces in the country to collect views from all the stakeholders.

The questionnaire to be used was prepared by the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) and Kenya Institute of Education (KIE).

Knut rejects review plan

D N 18/4/98

By NATION Team

The Kenya National Union of Teachers yesterday rejected the Curriculum Review project for primary and secondary schools announced on Thursday.

But a cross section of Kenyans welcomed the move.

Knut secretary-general Ambrose Adongo rejected the plan and asked the World Bank not to fund the project. "It's bogus and won't serve any purpose," he said.

Mr Adongo, accompanied by national chairman John Katumanga and Kisumu branch secretary David Okuta Osiany said at a Press conference in Kisumu that the team to review the system of education was "hurriedly and secretly" set up and asked teachers and union branches all over the country not to give any information to the team.

Mr Adongo asked the World Bank not to "pump even a single cent" into the project until the Government sets up a proper body

Bank-funded project is aimed at identifying and correcting weaknesses in the curricula at the two education levels.

The project will actively involve teachers, pupils, parents and other stakeholders through seeking their views as from Monday. The World has already released Sh1.5 million for the start of the project expected to cost more than Sh1 billion.

A component of the review aims at phasing out the current national examinations by 2004.

The 20-member review team comprises curriculum experts from the Kenya Institute of Education, the Ministry of Education and the Kenya National Examinations Council.

It will visit all the provinces and collect views from representatives of trade unions, political parties, Federation of Kenya Employers the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and other stakeholders.

But Mr Adongo said that teach-

er studies without the blessings of the Knut.

Elsewhere, Anglican Church Bishop Julius Kalu said that a review of the system was timely, "as it will ease the burden on pupils and their parents."

He said the number of subjects offered at the primary and secondary level should be reduced to enable students learn without difficulties, he said.

He added that parents were forced to buy many books for their children as required for the various subjects which, he said, had strained their resources.

However, he said the project is too costly.

"I do not think that it is necessary to spend Sh1 billion in the review process," Bishop Kalu said.

A parent, Mr Stephen Maingi, said on the telephone that the review "was long overdue". He said the A-level system should be re-instated adding that its removal was a mistake.

DN 23/13/98

Knut for change in 8-4-4

By NATION Correspondent

The Kenya National Union of Teachers says it will pressurise the Government to come up with a new education curriculum to ease the load on teachers and students and enable the country to reclaim its past academic glory.

National chairman John Katumanga laments that the standard of education has drastically deteriorated over the years since the introduction of the 8-4-4 system.

"How does one expect a child to do more than 12 subjects and pass that examination with ease?"

He was addressing more than 250 teachers at Kapsowar on Saturday during an annual general meeting of the union's Marakwet District branch. The occasion also marked the official launching of the Knut branch since its inception following the split of the former Keiyo Marakwet District.

Mr Katumanga disclosed that the union had given the Government up to April 30 this year to come up with a committee to review the schools' education curriculum.

"A functional committee should be formed with the urgency it requires to go round the country to solicit views from the people about the new curriculum."

Knut for changes to exam structure

57D 01/02/01
THE Kenya National Union of Teachers (Knut) has welcomed the changes effected on the country's national examinations structure.

Acting Knut secretary-general, Mr Francis Ng'ang'a, however, regretted that the reforms came after many children had suffered an overload of subjects under the old system.

He wondered why it had taken the Ministry of Education and Kenya National Examination Council so long to undertake the reforms.

Ng'ang'a said genuine professional concerns voiced in the past had fallen on deaf ears and demanded that the teachers union be involved in all initiatives aimed at reforming the education sector.

The new structure an-

By Judith Akolo,
Joseph Murimi and
Boniface Gikandi

nounced by the Kenya National Examination Council prescribes the number of subjects to be tested as nine (9) while grading will be based on seven (7) subjects.

Meanwhile, teachers in Central Province were yesterday told to legalise their marriages in order to avoid transfers.

Kirinyaga, Kiambu, Thika and Maragua Knut branches said a majority of their members were living in un-official marriages.

The employer does not recognise any marriage unless there is documentary evidence proving the same, the union officials said.

8-4-4 review soon

E-A-570
11/1/96
Standard Reporter

A COMMISSION to review the 8-4-4 system of education will soon be set, Education Minister Kalonzo Musyoka has said.

The minister would not, however, say how soon the commission members will be named. He, however, promised that it would be gender balanced.

Musyoka was opening the sixth British education fair at a Nairobi hotel yesterday. He was accompanied by British High Commissioner Jeffrey James.

Others were British Council director, Peter Skelton and Education Permanent Secretary Wilfred Kimalat.

Musyoka pointed out that there was need to revise the education curriculum to make it more relevant. He appealed to the British High Commission to continue supporting education by issuing visas to Kenyan students who wish to study in the UK.

The minister also appealed to the universities in Britain to consider lowering their tuition fees to make education more affordable to Kenyan students.

James noted that every year, more than 1,000 Kenyans go to Britain for higher education, adding that many were keen to seek British professional and vocational training.

X DF 3/10/98 ?

Reduce subjects in 8-4-4 review

The appointment by President Moi of a commission to review the education system is a step in the right direction, though long overdue.

It follows numerous complaints about the shortcomings of the 8-4-4 system of education. No wonder many are hoping this will lead to the end of this contentious system.

Education Minister Kalonzo Musyoka says there will be a new examination in the year 2002. Incidentally, the commission is slated to complete its work around that time. Are we then going to have a completely new system or an improved 8-4-4.

During the 13 years of implementation, the 8-4-4 system has been widely criticised. It has been blamed for massive failures attributed to its hasty implementation.

This is so yet the original objectives were quite relevant to the nation's needs. The idea of introducing technical subjects was in tandem with the much-publicised ambition to make Kenya an industrialised country by the year 2020.

However, little has been achieved in practical subjects like arts/crafts and in technical training. The teaching has been more theoretical than practical. Students spend many hours in classrooms learning about art and craft, and home science instead of training in skills.

The commission should come up with structures to develop the artistic and practical talents in children. Of course, the severe shortage of finances and uniform coordination have compounded the situation.

The number of subjects to be studied at the different levels in the schools should also be looked into. It is the workload that is to blame for the declining standard of education.

If I was to appear before the commission, I would suggest that the number of subjects taught in the lower primary school (Standards One to Three) be reduced to not more than four.

Mathematics, English and Kiswahili, reading and writing should be given more emphasis in the new syllabus. This will enhance the pupils' language skills and intellectual perception. Other subjects could follow later.

That there are too many subjects means that lessons are being hurried over to cover the wide syllabus. Some students are just pushed on and move from primary to secondary school without mastering reading and comprehension of even simple passages.

Another issue that should feature prominently in the review is the cost of education. This has become so high that many children drop out of school due to their parents' failure to pay fees.

According to a recent Unicef report, 68 per cent of those who enrol in Standard One ever reach Standard Five. This means an alarming dropout rate of about 6.5 per cent per year!

This exceeds the population growth rate by at least three times and portends a bleak future for us all. If the trend is not checked, it may spell doom for the education system in a few years to come.

And if one cared to investigate, one would establish that the real cause of the high dropout rate is the parent's inability to buy uniforms and text books and pay school fees and other charges. Thousands of children from poor families are being systematically locked out of school.

It is also important that the views of a wide cross-section of Kenyans be sought in this vital exercise. The commission should ventilate its process as much as possible to allow in more useful contributions.

Given that the commission is yet to announce its programme and process, it should consider asking school heads and boards of governors to submit memoranda through their district education offices. They are the wearers of the shoe who know where it pinches, and whether it fits for the long journey ahead.

**Concerned Kenyan,
Nairobi.**

EAST AFRICAN STANDARD 17/04/98

Kalonzo launches Sh1b 8-4-4 review

From Page 2

and disseminated to the public.

Kalonzo said the government recognised the need for continuous review of the curriculum and had carried out extensive formative as well as summative evaluation in the past leading to major reviews of both curriculae.

"We must therefore view this review as a major activity that will enable us to come up with the types of curricula that are relevant and quantitative," said Kalonzo.

He stressed the importance of data in decision making, and said the project aimed to collect data from various stakeholders.

"That ought to give us a lead to possible problem areas in the primary and secondary education curricula," said the minister.

He asked the experts to ensure that they collected relevant and accurate data which would enable his ministry carry out a meaningful curriculum review.

Meticulous

He said the aim of all those involved in the curricular review was to be meticulous in order to come up with curricula that are relevant and useful to the country's needs.

He said the curriculum must be cheap to implement, but added: "Implementation should not compromise the quality and standards of education."

Educationists, parents and teachers have also argued that the 8-4-4 system of education is too



Musyoka

presented an ample opportunity to address the issues of environmental and health study in the curriculum as was required in Sessional Paper No. 6 of 1988 on education and manpower training for the next decade and beyond.

"It emphasised the need for all curricula to include environmental studies."

He called for deliberate efforts to address the critical issue of industrialising Kenya in the next century by saying that each curriculum will need to be tailored towards meeting the needs of Kenya as an industrial nation.



Kimalatt

come up with relevant and suitable curricula that address this need," said Kalonzo.

He thanked the World Bank for availing the funds and called them "friends of Kenya" without whose assistance the project would have been difficult to initiate.

Reliant

The 8-4-4 system of education was introduced in 1985 following the recommendation of a committee headed by the professor Colin Mackay from the University of New Brunswick, Canada. It was aimed at producing young people who would be

tribute to the reduction of unemployment.

But critics and supporters agree that the system has not achieved its goals as they are many unemployed graduates from all levels of education.

The need to radically review the system has been a bone of contention since its introduction. Most educationists have argued that the system places a lot of psychological stress on learners and teachers.

The system has also been criticised for failing to propel the country into industrialisation as touted when it was ("hastily" to critics)

23/12/00 STD X

Varsities to admit fewer arts students

By Joan Wangusi

PLANS are underway to reduce the number of arts students being admitted into public universities.

Education Minister, Kalonzo Musyoka said the Government would reduce social demand for university education in unmarketable courses by allocating more funds to science and technological courses.

He said the study of arts-based courses by a majority of university students is not in tune with the country's goal of industrialisation.

The Government would come up with an inventory of critical skills as a basis for human resource development and funding, Musyoka said.

He said special schemes would be developed to raise performance of female students in Maths and Science subjects.

The minister made the remarks in a speech read on his behalf by Assistant Minister, Dr Joseph Wamukoya, during the launch in Kenya

Emphasis in science urged at varsities

Standard Correspondent

EDUCATION Minister Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka has challenged institutions of higher learning to put emphasis on science and technology as Kenya aspires to become a newly industrialised country (NIC) by 2020.

He said for any education system to stand the test of time and to meet the needs and aspirations of the people, it must be constantly reviewed to ensure that it was relevant. Such a system, he added, must also be affordable and possible to implement.

Musyoka was addressing the 20th graduation ceremony of Daystar University at Athi River, yesterday, where 280 graduands, representing 13 African countries, were awarded degrees in various academic disciplines. "Right now, a commission has been set up to review the education system with the above views in mind.

"I would like to call upon the co-operation of everybody in this very important exercise so that the country can come up with an ideal system that will prepare the youth to meet the challenges of the modern times without compromising standards and values," said Musyoka of the recently established commission to review the 8-4-4 education system.

● Africa Nazarene University wants an education system that stresses transformation and development of the whole individual introduced in the country.

The Chancellor, Dr Theodore Esselsty said "education in isolation from the development of the

K.T
27/1/92

Education system too exam focused

A long serving educationist, Mr Samuel Maneno, while speaking at a prize giving ceremony at Nyali Primary School, Mombasa, recently, made a suggestion which we feel is worthy of serious public attention and debate. He called for an end to the ranking of schools and pupils in order of their performance in national examinations, a practice, he said, was worthless and potentially harmful to the learning process.

Kenya has always been an intensively examination oriented education system. Everything, including the school syllabuses, curriculums, text books, teaching methods and overall approach to discipline, is geared towards preparations for one national examination or another. At the end of the learner's formal education career, his or her fate will be determined by an examination result slip and possibly the head teacher's comments about the person's overall academic standing in the school. Woe to those who obtain low grades, especially if they also went to schools which in turn scored poorly in the schools national grading system.

In the colonial days, examinations were barriers used to keep the Africans down by denying them chances of pursuing higher education. There were many such hurdles at various stages which ensured that very few Africans went beyond the primary school level. In those days, an examination struck chords of fear and terror in the candidates because failure meant the end of hope and an assurance that one was doomed to lead a life of drudgery. Grade A catapulted you into a life of greatness and bliss. Grade D straightaway qualified you for cheap, tormenting and rewardless labour on a white settler's farm.

Unfortunately, school examinations still remain a terrifying reality in modern Kenya. The average age of those subjected to this terror at primary school level is 13-14 years. The Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examination done at Standard Eight is dreaded and feared by the youngsters because it results in the elimination of hundreds of thousands of them from having secondary education. The fear of failure

DN 22/4/98

Appeal over education goals

By NATION Correspondent

The national goals and objectives of education established in 1963 should be updated in line with social, political and economic changes, an educational review committee heard yesterday.

An educationist, Mr Isaac Bartonjo, told the committee reviewing the 8-4-4, on its second day in Nakuru, that the curriculum should also be changed to meet the goals. "One paramount objective of our education has been to instill discipline in the learners and make them morally upright, but recent trends of militancy, mass indiscipline and violence shows the objective is not being achieved," he said.

Mr Bartonjo said the committee should avoid making the "same mistake that the initiators of the 8-4-4 education system made by inviting views from people with-

8-4-4 review team told of desired changes

in very short notice, thus failing to exhaust all views from the stakeholders".

The committee is led by Mr Edwin A.A. Lochemo of the Ministry of Education and includes other officials from the ministry and the Kenya Institute of Education.

It is collecting views from stakeholders across the country on how best to facilitate a review of the education system.

Mr Bartonjo said the 8-4-4 curriculum was overloaded, making it difficult for learners to complete the syllabi.

The personal assistant to the Rift Valley provincial commissioner, Mr Davis Chelogoi, said lack of physical facilities in schools undermined attainment of edu-

cational goals.

The current system, he said, had failed to create a smooth transition from primary to secondary school, leading to a high drop-out rate.

The chairman of the Nakuru District Headteachers Association, Mr Andrew Omeri, also said the curriculum was overloaded. He said 17 subjects were taught in primary school yet pupils were only examined on seven while those in secondary school were examined in only eight subjects out of 35 in five clusters.

As a result, some parents were opting to take their children to schools with alternative curricula.

Mr Omeri attributed the decline of the

8-4-4 system to lack of follow-up after initiation and shortage of personnel in practical subjects, workshops and school inspectors.

An inspector of schools, Ms Pauline Cherotich, said "the 8-4-4 system is restrictive and selective as it condemns people who do not attend universities as failures."

Participants said a feasibility study should have been carried out before introduction of the 8-4-4 system to ensure all schools had appropriate facilities.

Making his presentation at the Nakuru Municipal Town Hall, Kitale Mayor Sitati Maboni said that he was sceptical about the final submissions of the com-

mission.

He said the way the commission was set up and started its work was similar to the way the 8-4-4 system was implemented without regard of the implications involved.

□ The Kenya National Union of Teachers Kiambu branch said yesterday it did not support the curriculum review project. Executive Secretary Julius Githinji said the union should have been consulted.

In Meru, a unionist said teachers from Eastern Province would not participate as the review was being carried out "hurriedly and in an unprofessional manner".

The secretary of the Knut Eastern Province advisory council, Mr Silas Muriuki, was speaking in his Meru Town office.

D/N 2014/98 P

Education system review plan crucial

For nearly a decade many Kenyans, from primary school teachers to university professors, political and religious leaders, have consistently called for a review of the education system.

But the appeals have often been dismissed off-hand by the ruling party, Kanu, and government officials. Party and government functionaries were wheeled in to trumpet one line — that the 8-4-4 system of education was the best in the world.

Of course, some critics did not offer an alternative in terms of syllabuses and objectives or relate this to the intention to industrialise the country by the year 2020. However, the criticism was not entirely without merit since an education system must be dynamic.

When parents, teachers and leaders complain about an education system, the Government should respond with alacrity and look into the concerns. Now it emerges that finally, there is a new school plan. Indeed, Education Minister Kalonzo Musyoka last Thursday launched the Curriculum Review Project for primary and secondary schools.

When this change of heart occurred is not known, but Mr Musyoka did say that the project is aimed at identifying and correcting weaknesses in the curricular of the two levels. And he revealed that new courses should be taught by the year 2000 and new examinations four years later. Even more interesting is the fact that some of the subjects will be taught in all the three East African countries.

Is there a problem? The Kenya National Union of Teachers (Knut) says it was not consulted when the Government constituted the review committee. We expect that this matter will be ironed out immediately for it is unfair and illogical to exclude Knut and other stakeholders from this important exercise.

However, it is significant to note that a cross-section of Kenyans has welcomed the plan. We expect that they will be turning out in large numbers to give their views and recommendations to the committee. This is an opportunity Kenyans have craved and which they must not fritter away.

The collection and collating of views must be exhaustive and comprehensive. It should be highlighted by both the media and the Government, but more important, its findings must reflect the wishes of Kenyans — not of vested interests.

X DN 22/2/98 X

School system's best for Kenya

The letter by Caesar Barare (*Sunday Nation*, February 8) headlined "Criticism of 8-4-4 unfair" requires a rejoinder.

A great deal has been documented about how the 8-4-4 system of education has failed in its mission, and I must agree with this conclusion — at least in regard to some conspicuous cases.

For instance, let us consider the introduction of practical-oriented subjects such as Art and Craft, Home Science and Music at primary level.

These subjects were, among other things, expected to gradually alleviate, if not entirely solve, the problems of unemployment by absorbing Standard Eight-leavers into the Jua Kali (informal) sector.

Much as this was a good-intentioned idea, it has more often than not backfired. Of course the causal factors include inadequate equipment and facilities, few trained tutors, an overloaded curriculum and shrinking incentives in the small and micro-enterprise projects.

But is this really enough to summarily dismiss the products of the 8-4-4 system? Is this a valid excuse for belittling and brushing aside the educational plan?

The answer is categorically no.

It is high time the numerous critics of the 8-4-4 system of education carefully considered the following:

- The effectiveness of the products of any education system (8-4-4 inclusive) should be the yardstick. The uppermost question should be: How is X or Y or Z able to satisfy the demands of the job market?

- A system is "a group of related parts which work together to form a whole" (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English).

As much as we should acknowledge the various flaws of the 8-4-4 system, we ought to deliberately address the issue with a view to pin-

pointing and rectifying the awful parts, instead of apportioning wholesale blame.

- Many supporters of the 7-4-2-3 system back it for the mere sake of it. It is a clear case of infectious nostalgia and a terrible temptation to defy and disown the principles of change and dynamism. The "sweet old past" school of thought, so to say. A very funny form of fear, anyway.

- The irony is that the real proposers . . . to be more apt, the actual architects of the 8-4-4 system of education were graduates of the 7-4-2-3 system. Then how illogical for some of them to look for a scapegoat in the whole matter!

- The mathematical equation (or is it formula?) $8-4-4=0$ (zero) is only a coincidental stereotype of the system.

In conclusion, the 8-4-4 system of education may be full of loopholes. It may be in dire need of reform. But this is no legitimate reason to distort the academic dignity, integrity and credibility of the system's graduates.

**Titus M. Mbaluka,
Mtito Andei.**

☆☆☆

When Kenyatta University students demonstrated on February 5 to mourn a victim of ethnic genocide, they sent a challenge to all Kenyans.

These young people should be thanked for rising up and saying no to bad governance.

The demonstration and subsequent closure of the university sends a message to Kenyans that good governance involves sacrifice. These students sacrificed their precious time and studies to express to the Government that all is not well.

If Kenyans wait for students to fight for them, then there is something the matter with them. Such impotence and indifference lead to anarchy and degeneration.

Kenyans should learn from these students and be ready to sacrifice their most precious assets, including life itself, for the sake of good governance. They should rise up and say no to genocide.

It is not enough to condemn the barbarism by word of mouth only. A small act as a show of sympathy will help to remove the bitterness and desire for revenge.

The demonstration by Kenyatta University students was more sympathetic than just calling for peace. If these students did that, how much more are others expected to do?

The Government should compensate the families of those people who died during the violence in the Rift Valley and for the property lost.

It is not enough to stop the killings because the scars live longer and may take time to heal. We have orphans, widows and widowers who want more than peace.

These people should be shown acts of love and sympathy. A small act of understanding and sympathy, which is what the students were trying to offer, has far more healing powers than mere armchair rhetoric belled out by our politicians.

The politicians should be very mindful of the words they use in their zeal to gain power. What they say lives longer and has more far-reaching consequences.

Some are known for their war-like utterances. They should sacrifice their war-like tendencies for the sake of peace.

The Opposition should swallow their pride and co-operate with the Government to restore peace in war-torn zones. The Government, on the other hand, should know that history will judge it harshly if it does not live up to its promises.

**Mutie Malai,
Matuu.** X

DN 18/2/98 1

Education is a priority

Mr Andrew Kiptoon's appointment as an assistant minister for education is an honour for Baringo North constituents.

It has been acknowledged countrywide that the 8-4-4 system of education needs an overhaul and our constituency is no exception.

What needs to be curbed most urgently is the duplication of efforts. The building of more secondary schools in areas where others (under-equipped) already exist should be discouraged. This leads to a dilution of the standard of education as well as wastage of scarce resources.

Secondly, the morale of primary school pupils must be boosted if Baringo North is to continue sending students to university.

The constituency has a number of prominent people. They should be encouraged to supplement the Government's efforts and those of local leaders. Together we can achieve parallel and simultaneous development of primary and secondary education.

**Kimulwon Chelesa,
Nairobi.**

D N 23/4/98

Education review work clarified

By NATION Correspondents

The curriculum review project would not address the entire education system, the Ministry of Education clarified yesterday.

Permanent Secretary Wilfred Kimalat said the project was an internal Kenya Institute of Education exercise and should not be mistaken for the work of a commission which would address the education system and mode of provision.

"This is why the size and composition of the review teams is small," he explained.

He said the KIE had been instructed to first analyse and use the data already collected from Central and Rift Valley provinces before proceeding.

A 20-member team comprising curricu-

Hitch blamed on conflicting information

ulum experts from the KIE, Kenya National Examinations Council and the Ministry of Education was mandated to collect views from parents, pupils, the public and stakeholders regarding the curriculum.

□The committee reviewing the 8-4-4 system is using a wrong approach in fighting people it wants to collate views from through the provincial administration, a retired educationist said yesterday.

Mr Mwalimu Machomba accused the Government of downplaying the task by failing to use the media to publicise its operations.

□An administrative flaw emerged yesterday within the review committee after its planned sitting in Nyanza failed.

Ministry of Education officials in the province, who complained of being sidelined, said the committee was poorly coordinated.

The KIE, which is coordinating the Sh1 billion World Bank-funded project, was accused of dealing with the provincial administration instead of going through the provincial education office.

The provincial director of education, Mrs Roselyne Onyuka, said the planned visit by the committee aborted due to con-

flicting information. She said the KIE and the Nyanza provincial commissioner's office gave different dates for the team's visit.

Whereas the PC's office had asked stakeholders to turn up to present their views on May 2, the letter she received from the KIE last Friday wanted the three-day function held from yesterday.

She said she had only read of the planned visit by the committee in the newspapers and had the questionnaires sent to her last Friday through a courier firm after she complained to her bosses in Nairobi over the manner in which the KIE

was coordinating the programme.

"There has been a lot of confusion but I hope things will get on well. We hope the breakdown in communication will be corrected," Mrs Onyuka told journalists who went to her office after searching for the venue of the planned meeting in vain.

The director said no preparations had been made for the team and she had asked that the visit be postponed to next week to enable her office to invite as many interested parties as possible.

□Limuru councillors yesterday described a Central Province meeting, held at the weekend to discuss the review of the 8-4-4 system, as a waste of time and called on the minister to involve all stakeholders in the process.

**DAILY
NATION**

Nairobi, Saturday, August 1, 1998

Education review should kick off

It is nearly two months since the education review commission was constituted and sworn in. Although the public has been waiting anxiously to hear about its programme and plan of action, nothing has been forthcoming. Simply put, there is an envelope of darkness on what is going on at the commission headed by Dr Davy Koech of the Kenya Medical Research Institute.

The public wants to know the schedule of the commission, when and where it will sit and receive submissions, how and who should make the presentations.

The fact of the matter is that the public wants to make an input into the education system, which is currently reeling under serious logistical and structural flaws. It wants to see a functioning commission that operates diligently and does things openly and expeditiously.

DN 2214/98

VC: Varsity to start three new departments

By NATION Correspondent

The Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology will introduce three new departments over the next few years to cope with growing demand, the vice-chancellor, Prof. R.W. Michieka, said yesterday.

Prof Michieka, who was welcoming 622 new students, said the university will in future offer courses in telecommunications, mining and mineralogy and marine sciences.

At the same time, the vice-chancellor said that strict mea-

asures were in place to ensure no cases of theft or forgery of academic certificates occurred as reported in some universities.

He warned students against engaging in strikes as this leads to academic interruption through unnecessary closures and delay in the learning process.

Despite the financial problems facing the institution, he said, the students had a chance to make scientific breakthroughs through research. Besides, JKUAT offered courses which are in high demand in the job market, he added.

Standard

JKUAT ^{15/3/05} to retain bridging courses

JOMO Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) will not scrap certificate and bridging courses like other universities have done.

Instead, it will expand and improve the quality of its programmes.

"Look at what happens in other universities worldwide. Cambridge in the United Kingdom, for example, sets even O-Level examinations. That is where we are heading. We have already started with bridging courses," said the JKUAT V-C Nick Wanjohi said yesterday. He becomes the first V-C to break ranks with his University of Nairobi counterpart, Prof George Magoha, on whether universities should continue offering programmes other than degrees and diplomas. Traditionally, certificate programmes are offered by middle-level colleges.

EAST AFRICAN STANDARD

22/04/1987

Don speaks out on education review

By Fred Mudhai and Correspondent

FORMER University of Nairobi deputy vice-chancellor, Prof. Shem Wandiga has said any meaningful education review should de-emphasise and make communities in charge of learning institutions.

"Emphasis on examinations makes robots of learners as many of them just cram. This results in little educational achievement," he said in an interview with *Sunday Standard* at the launch on Friday of a book, *Christie's Crisis* by Gambian author Sally Singhateh.

The ceremony, at the French Cultural and Co-operation Centre, Nairobi, was presided over by High Court Judge, Lady Justice Joyce Aluoch.

The 91-page book, published by East African Educational Publishers (EAEP), is the tenth in a series aimed at making secondary school students read for pleas-

ure. Prof. Wandiga said he favoured a wider educational review aimed at making communities stake holders with the government as partners.

The Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) has termed as "bogus" the Shs 1 billion Curriculum Review Project launched this week by Education and Hu-

man Resource Development Minister, Kalonzo Musyoka.

● Justice Joyce Aluoch has cautioned publishing firms against violating authors' copyrights.

Most of the cases in court between authors and publishing houses arise from violation of the authors copyright, she said.

When authors are young, she added, the risk of them being exploited by publishing firms cannot be overlooked.

Varsity should rethink plan

DIN 214198

In the face of the over-stretched teaching facilities, dilapidated lecture halls and anaemic academic programmes, what the University of Nairobi requires is a major face-saving effort, rather than a new private medical class.

The criteria for qualification to the private class, leading to Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery, Bachelor of Pharmacy, and Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees, are an insult to the medical profession.

The proposed programme is indeed good news for the rich and daft who can now learn medicine without having had to exert themselves in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination to qualify for admission to any public university.

It's bad news, however, for the bright poor students who may have to give up their facilities and lecture rooms to this group. It's a mockery of those who have had to work hard to excel in examinations and join the Faculty of Medicine. They will be upset to learn that a holder of a diploma in any science subject or even in nursing is eligible for admission to the Medical School.

For the hard-working high school students, the message is that they do not have to work that hard as it is possible to enter this presiti-

gious institution by scoring a mere mean grade C+ (which is next door to a fail) in the KCSE. And that all the people need to do is get money and they will register as privately-sponsored students and comfortably pursue courses in medicine, pharmacy or nursing.

Is it possible that the holders of grade C+ in KCSE can undertake the intense six-year course at the Medical School and successfully complete it in less than four years.

If indeed they go through the same programme with the other medical students, the success rate might be anything next to nil. It is obviously not the intention of the university that all these privately enrolled students should fail.

May be if they wish to see this programme work, the following measures must be put in place:

- Lower the standard a student has to attain in a year to ensure that a class remains for the next academic year.
- Tout for lecturers from the public part to teach the private class.
- Skip some courses done at the college to ease things for these students.
- Introduce double standards in the assessment of the public and private students.

The end result will be the manufacture of half-done doctors, pharmacists and professional nurses who, sadly, will be entrusted with taking care of the health of fellow Kenyans, including those who are now pushing for the dilution of standards. The whole plan reeks of bad faith.

Such outlandish policies aimed at political aggrandisement should not be allowed to compromise standards in a vital area such as health, a matter of life and death.

It would appear that something really strange is happening at our public universities today. What with the claims of degree certificates and academic transcripts being sold to people who have never sat in a university lecture hall!

The introduction of this private programme favoured by the administration is ridiculous as it will undermine the entry requirements set by these institutions.

Merit must be followed and politics divorced from academic matters if we hope to realise any tangible progress in the education sector.

Moses N. Ndirangu,
Benjamin M. Ngugi,

17/04/98
EAST AFRICAN STANDARD

Varsities now sign cooperation agreement

Standard Correspondent

UNIVERSITY of Nairobi has signed a 10-year co-operation agreement with Free University of Brussels, Belgium.

The co-operation will involve undertaking joint projects in various fields and will cost Shs 45 million per year.

The agreement was signed by University of Nairobi Vice-Chancellor Prof Francis Gichaga and Free University of Brussels co-ordinator Prof Philip Polk.

University of Nairobi co-ordinator Kenneth Mavuti said 10 per cent of the money will be allocated to STD/Aids prevention, 30 per cent to Marine/management and 60 per cent to computer networking.

Prof Polk said destination of the budget will be decided by UON.

Capabilities

EAST AFRICAN STANDARD 13/04/98

Give varsity a chance

I AM not convinced by the opponents of the new degree scheme started by the University of Nairobi.

The opponents of this proposal include the members of the medical Practitioners and Dentists Board. I am sure not all of them attained the qualifications for admission to the University of Nairobi at their time. There must be many of them who could not be admitted to the university, but went

abroad and returned with the qualifications which entitled them to practice as they now do as doctors and dentists.

They should explain why they continue to be such members when they are denying other deserving Kenyans that opportunity.

A person who attains C+ grade has passed very well. This is a person who will be admitted to

any university to pursue various degree courses including medicine. These students are not going to have a curriculum which will be different from the B and B+ entrants. The only difference is that they will pay, just like some of the members of the Medical Practitioners and Dentists Board did elsewhere.

True, the University of Nairobi

will get money in form of fees. But what is wrong with that if the participants pay willingly and get proper tuition. The board is not offering to assist the university with any funds.

These young people can go elsewhere and return with acceptable qualifications. What is wrong with our university receiving the money and train them well?

In my view, so long as the courses are acceptable, I see nothing to protest about. We all cannot afford to send our children to United States, Britain, Canada or India.

Some Kenyans are less endowed than others and yet intelligent and able. Let them have a chance to advance.

S Kivuitu,
Nairobi.

KU offering journalism course

By Winnie Koros

THE African Virtual University (AVU) was yesterday commended for contributing to media development in the continent. The Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) Managing Director, Mr Joe Hamisi, said the series of capacity-building courses organised by AVU for journalists had contributed greatly to the revitalisation of the media.

Hamisi was speaking at AVU centre, Kenyatta University, during the launch of an Investigative Journalism seminar.

About 43 local journalists are participating in the three-month course which is being transmitted from the World Bank Institute in Washington DC.

AVU Director, Dr Magdalene Juma, says the university is committed to equipping the journalists with skills to improve the quality of reporting of issues affecting the continent including on civic rights.

EA STD
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