

Public school teachers rap govt for curriculum mess

By Correspondent Crispin Gerald

TEACHERS in public secondary schools across the country have criticized the government over a poor education curriculum, saying that it is unrealistic and does not equip students with basic academic capacity apart from passing set exams.

They called for fresh review of the curriculum in order to produce competent students capable of helping to uplift the national economy.

Speaking to reporters in Dar es Salaam yesterday during the "Teachers Workshop on Education Sector Reforms: What are the Implications," they said that the government has failed to come up with a clear vision for the education sector, quite different from the 'self reliance' doctrine during the first phase presidency of the late Julius K. Nyerere..

The workshop was prepared by Civility, Equality, Transparency Accountability (CETA) in collaboration with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, a charitable foundation based in Germany.

Robert Msako, a teacher from Pugu secondary school said that it seems the government is not serious with the education sector on the ground that it has failed to introduce a national education vision.

"The government is supposed to initially assess the potential of the curriculum, if it is in fact focusing on lifting the carriers of students based on their talents," he said. The failure of many form four students in public schools is due to poor teaching and learning methodology which could not have happened if the curriculum was improved, he declared.

Dr Charles Kitima, the former Vice Chancellor for St Augustine University of Tanzania, said that current education reforms merely

focus on passing exams instead of strengthening levels of teaching and learning skills.

"The government didn't involve stakeholders in the process of formulating the curriculum. As a result most teachers face difficulties in teaching using the curriculum as it is new to them," the don underlined.

The curriculum needs to be overhauled to make sure that teachers and other stakeholders are incorporated to provide their views for improving teaching and learning methodology in public secondary schools, he further noted.

Dr Richard Sambaiga, a lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Dar es Salaam said that curriculum is one of the major components required to satisfy specific purposes in the education sector.

"But the current curriculum looks unrealistic as it doesn't reflect specific needs in the society," he asserted.

"The world is changing, with improvement in technology and science, hence our education system should be overhauled mainly to produce youth who are competent to fit in current dynamics," Dr Sambaiga emphasized.

A Kilimanjaro-based teacher vehemently criticized the government's move to fire several teachers due to poor performance of students in their schools, saying that it is not the solution to the problem, while proposing that the government increase investments in its schools especially in the supply teaching and learning materials.

"The welfare for teachers should also be considered effectively in terms of the position and salaries to encourage them in their efforts to yield better than expected results," he stated.

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