

# Now Great Court turned into a talking point

The Great Court, the Venue of University of Nairobi Graduation Ceremonies for many years, is gradually being transformed into a Lunch-time baraza by both staff and students following the shifting of Library Services to the ultra-Modern Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library. For many years stretching way back in 1956, the Great Court and the Gandhi Memorial Library had breathed life into each other. This symbiotic relationship however suffered sudden death in 1987 when the new Library was opened. For some-time, the University Community feared that the picturesque and evergreen square, which has hosted prominent scholars, was doomed to oblivion. Indeed few people know that the "Mugumo" tree which adorn the Court was planted by the Late Chancellor of the University of Nairobi His Excellency Mzee Jomo Kenyatta.

But in keeping with the tradition established by the University, the Great Court today attracts scores of staff during Lunch hour for what is now popularly known as "Lunch-time barazas". Recently, Varsity Focus attended one such Baraza incognito and had the privilege of participating in an open for all discussion. The issues discussed in the Barazas range from Family Planning to staff Welfare. And with the recently concluded elections, the Great Court Lunch-time Barazas were for sometime dominated by a round-up of news on the exploits of parliamentary hopefuls.

Asked why he attends the "Barazas" everyday, Mr. D. Syuki of the School of Journalism says its the only informal forum of getting to know what is going on at the University. Others interviewed said it is neither a "Factory of Rumour" as some people have branded it nor a Cafeteria for "air-burgers".

Anybody interested in joining the Baraza should have a knack for discussing both local and International issues with as much in sight and enthusiasm as parliamentary hopeful wooing voters to send him to parliament. Those intending to test their eloquence in the Court-Great-Lunch-time Barazas



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might benefit to know what to expect on each day of the week.

Monday is described as a "hardship day" and is dedicated to recriminations of excesses during the weekend. If you are a newcomer, you will find yourself listening to exploits of some people which would make James Bond green with envy. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday are "family days" and issues discussed revolve around the family—With family planning carrying the day, thanks to the efforts of the National Council on Population and Development. Friday, "Nyalgunga Day" is a "get it right day" as members prepare to migrate to their rural homes to see the Loved Ones.

The attendance of the Barazas is drawn from as far as Kabete Campus and the Medical School. Asked what makes him trek all the way from Kabete to the Main Campus, one "founding Member" of the Baraza who preferred to be anonymous said, it offers a chance to socialize with colleagues and also pick the latest rumour doing the rounds.

For those who think that the Baraza's are the exclusive preserve of "Air-burger" Lovers, spare sometime and spend a few minutes in the back-bench of the Baraza and you will not regret. Varsity Focus went through it and came out wiser.

## Mrs. Ndiege thanks V-C



*Mrs. Ndiege: Thanked V-C*

Mrs. M.E. Ndiege has on behalf of her family thanked members of the University Community for the support and assistance during the death of their eldest son, the late Mr. Thomas Charles Onguss who passed away in Nairobi Hospital on 6th December, 1987.

In a letter to the Vice-Chancellor, Mrs. Ndiege who works in the Faculty

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