



Kings College Budo hosts national debate

Under the theme My Environment, My Education, My Ethics, the tournament challenged learners to critically engage with issues shaping their generation, while sharpening skills in debate, poetry, storytelling, public speech, news anchoring and creative performance. P.19

BY PATRICK SSENTONGO

For five intense days since December 6, classrooms gave way to debate halls, poetry stages and storytelling corners as Uganda's brightest young minds converged at King's College Budo for the national finals of a major schools' communications and leadership tournament - National Speech & Debate Championship (NSDC).

The annual event by National Debate Council (NDC) Uganda, brought together 60 teams over 500 participants that had emerged from 13 regional qualifiers held between June and September, marking the culmination of months of preparation and competition.

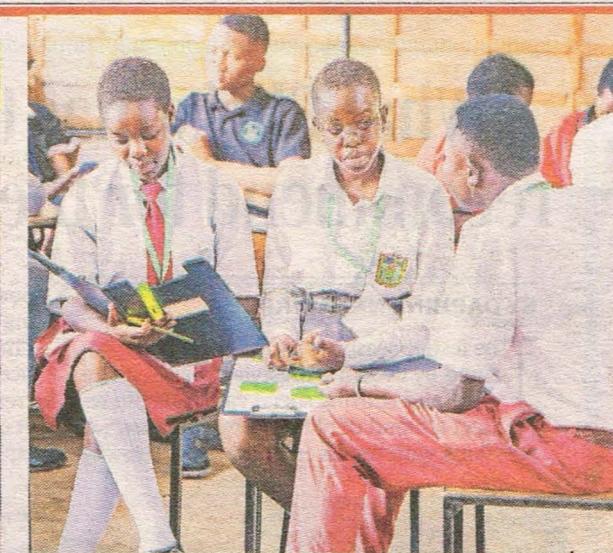
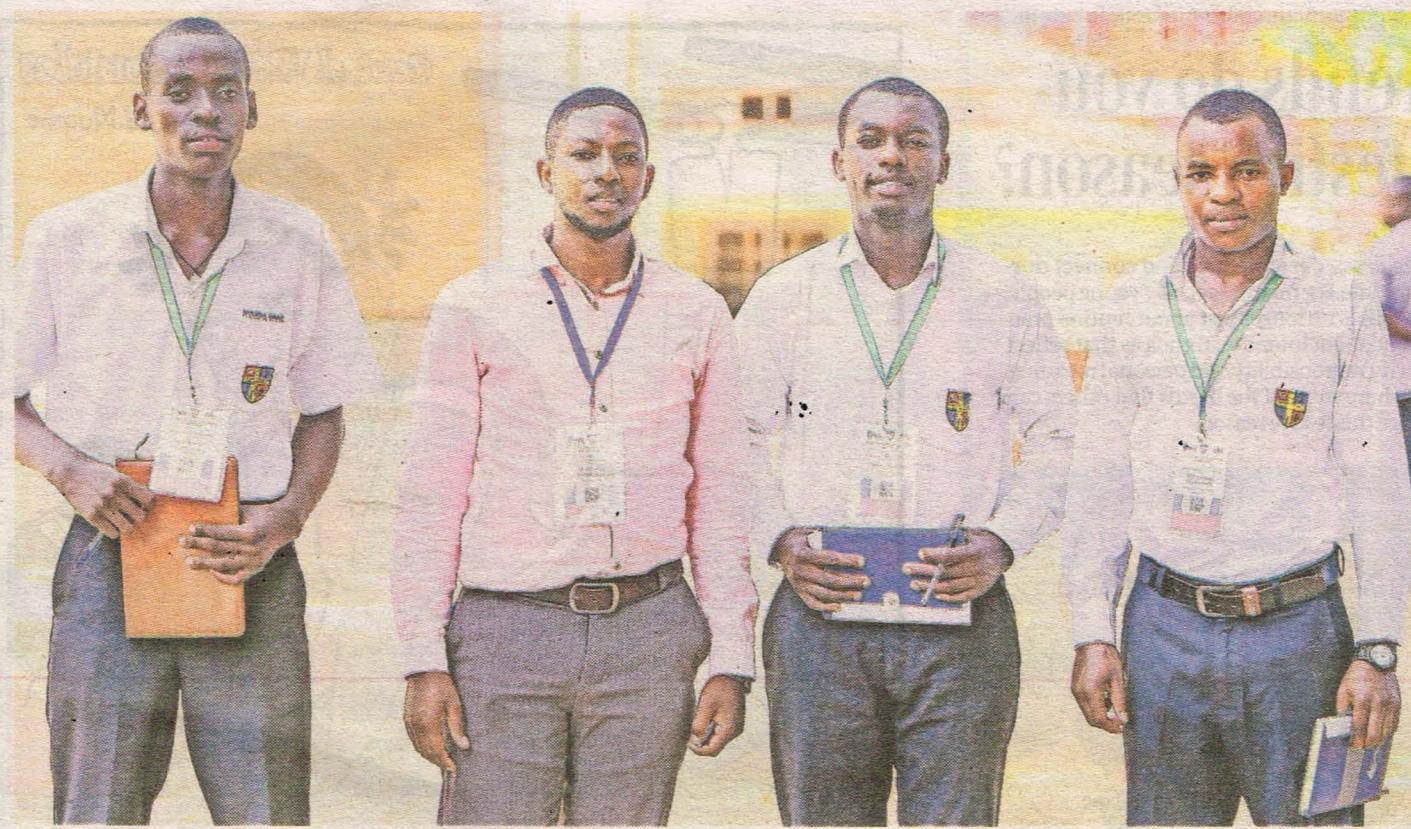
Held under the theme My Environment, My Education, My Ethics, the tournament challenged learners from both secondary and primary schools to critically engage with issues shaping their generation, while sharpening skills in debate, poetry, storytelling, public speech, news anchoring and creative performance. The finals were officially graced by the Deputy Inspector General of Government, Dr Achan Patricia Okiria, who served as chief guest who encouraged students to ground their leadership and ambitions in strong ethical values.

In the senior debate category, hosts King's Col-

lege Budo emerged champions, with Mbarara High School finishing as runners-up. Budini Secondary School was recognised as the Best New School, while individual excellence was highlighted through awards to Fahad Musasazi of Kawempe Muslim Secondary School as Best Speaker and Mercy Gukunda Mugisha of Iganga Secondary School as Best Female Speaker. Poetry honours went to Wampeewo Ntakke Secondary School, who defended the title for the second consecutive year. Immaculate Heart Girls' School Nyakibale topped the news anchoring category, Revival Girls High School Mbarara led in storytelling, and Madina Islamic Secondary School claimed top honours in public speech.

Beyond competition, the tournament offered a full learning experience. Daily programmes began as early as 6am, followed by briefings and competitive rounds that ran until evening.

Special moments included a panel discussion on the tournament theme featuring youth leaders and NSDC alumni, cultural and talent nights, chess and networking sessions, a dinner night and an NSDC Alumni Spotlight Hour. At the close of the tournament, participants and schools were awarded trophies, medals, certificates and accolades, celebrating not only victory but growth, discipline and the power of young voices.



Preparing for a debate round takes teamwork and strategy.

Young voices take centre stage at debate tournament

It is never about age, your coach could be as young or even younger; JOVOC team with their patron after a round. PHOTOS/ PATRICK SSEN-TONGO



When NDC said the championship is legit, Immaculate Heart Girls took it 'Personal.'



A confident walk out of the debate room doesn't take away your rights.



A student from CHAAPA delivers his whip speech.



Student representatives leading preliminaries at the Awards Ceremony on December 10.



Media Club
Youngsters display their Creative performance and artistry during the finals.



The family spirit—students of Code High School share a light moment before departure.