Education

Maruge's school receives Sh380,000 equipment

Shoe for Africa donates sports equipment and laptops during Maruge's second memorial anniversary

By TITUS TOO

The second memorial anniversary for the oldest pupil Kimani Ng'ang'a Maruge was held at his former Kapkenduiywo Primary School in Eldoret. Celebrations were marked in style as pupils engaged in sports activities with children from an orphanage in Nakuru to promote peace and reconciliation.

Patrick Chege Memorial Orphanage pupils from Nakuru joined pupils at Kapkenduiywo to play fun ball games to honour Maruge.

The two institutions also benefited from a donation of Sh380,000 (US$4,000) worth of sports equipment and computers from Shoe for Africa.

The donations included laptops, footballs, sports shoes, socks among others to promote learning and sports in honour of the octogenarian who defied all odds to enrol in the school.

Shoe for Africa founder and Chief Executive Officer Toby Tanzer described Maruge as 'a hero' who enrolled in school despite his advanced age.

"Our assistance is to promote education for peace and co-existence. In 2007/2008, there was confusion in Kenya because of violence. With education, there would be no fighting," said Mr Tanzer. He said orphans should not be marginalised, but should be assisted to access quality education.

PROMOTE PEACE

"Sports will bring cohesion and togetherness among Kenyan communities," he said.

Tanzer said Shoe for Africa is working with international athletes to promote health and education facilities in the region.

Three times world 3,000 steeplechase champion Mr Moses Kiptanui, Commonwealth Marathon Champion Mr John Kelai and Chege Orphans founder Slandia Chege, attended the function.

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Chege said exchange programmes between pupils from different parts of the country would promote integration, peace and reconciliation.

Maruge made history when he became the world's oldest student after he joined school in 2003 following introduction of free primary education by the Government.

He travelled to the United Nations in New York in 2005 with the global campaign for education and urged leaders to ensure free education for all.

Maruge died on August 14, 2009 when he was about to complete primary education.