

Speech to be presented by H.E. Mr Yonezo Fukuda, Ambassador of Japan to Zimbabwe, on the occasion of the signing of grant contract with Mr. Ephraim Newton Mutubuki, principal of Seke Teacher's College, for "The Project for the Construction of Sports Courts at Seke Teacher's College"

28 February 2013

**Principal of Seke Teacher's College, Mr. Ephraim Newton Mutubuki
And your officials,
Members of the press,
Colleagues,**

It gives me a great pleasure to address this gathering, realising the importance of promoting sports in teacher training colleges.

Today's signing ceremony will be a progressive initiative to ensure that talented young teachers are offered an opportunity to develop their talents and therefore excel in sport activities they may want to teach after graduating from this college.

It is important to realise that sport is an integral part of the life of a nation. An athlete will be able to benefit from a wide range of training programmes within these facilities. These include: sport specific skill coaching; sport conditioning and strength training; athlete development and support; capacity building programme as well as team preparation programme.

As you will know, the Embassy will assist in the construction of two basketball and volleyball courts as well as two tennis and netball courts. Early this month, the Embassy also donated funds for the construction of three all weather tennis courts, three spectator benches and provision of eighteen tennis wheelchairs to Danhiko Project. Danhiko and Seke Teacher's College amongst other learning institutions in this country enjoy the expertise of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers who teach in various capacities.

Let's collectively identify the problem areas in our schools that impact negatively on the development of sport, and that we put in place strategies to resuscitate sport in teacher training colleges. This means providing sports fields, training equipment and facilities and sport equipment.

Sport is an indispensable means of improving the social fabric of our society, and can make a very real contribution to ensuring our children lead meaningful lives.

Use school sport as a nursery for talent identification and development, which will lead to learners moving onto higher honours and make us all proud. Learners can all enjoy physical exertion and benefit from the excitement that sport brings.

It is critical to note that sport is also for those with disabilities. Recognise the crucial role of sport and physical education in the lives and development of women and girls. We should encourage their participation and success.

Ladies and Gentlemen: it is important we stress the role played by sport in intellectual development and the subsequent advantages it has in hers or his academic performance, therefore let sport become an integral part of a learner's activity in school if we are to ensure improvement in academic performance in schools.

Thank you. Tatenda!