

## **Reminiscing President Kenneth Kaunda's visit to Fort campus, University of Mumbai**

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The University of Mumbai had the privilege of hosting a distinguished statesman- the former President of Zambia (1964-1991), the charismatic Kenneth David Kaunda at the Fort campus on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June, 2012. President Kaunda was the first president of Zambia and led the struggle for Zambia's independence against the colonial rule of Britain. The meeting was presided over by the BCUD Director, Shri Rajpal Hande and attended by senior University official, the Registrar, Shri Kumar Bhagwan Khaire, the P.R.O. Shri Vinod Malale and faculty from the Centre for African Studies. The first secretary of Zambian High Commission, Mr. Mufalali Nasilele accompanied President Kaunda and the team of visiting dignitaries.



*President Kaunda receiving a warm welcome by the BCUD Director, University of Mumbai*

The President lauded the efforts made by the University of Mumbai in handling 700,000 students spread across six districts of Maharashtra. He reminisced of his days as a school teacher in Lubwa before he entered active politics to work for the independence of his country. The largest multidisciplinary University of the country, University of Zambia (UNZA) in Lusaka was established in 1966 during his tenure, soon after the country gained independence in 1964. The President emphasized the role of education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, towards development and poverty alleviation of a country. In 1964, Zambia did not have a University and only 0.5 percent of the people had received primary education. Cognizant of the role played by the education sector, Zambia invested heavily in this segment soon after independence. Kaunda served as the Chancellor of UNZA and the Cavendish University.

He espoused Zambian Humanism that borrows from Mahatma Gandhi's ideology of non-violence and pacifism and reiterated the need to inculcate these values among the younger generation of students. It was a great privilege for me to have met the founding president of Zambia and listen to his views on the role of education plays in our lives.



Kaunda is remembered for the oft cited quote; “the power which establishes a state is violence; the power which maintains it is violence; the power which eventually overthrows it is violence”. Practicing what he preached, Kaunda is remembered for gracefully stepping down when he lost the first multiparty democratic elections in 1991. The former president

advocated stronger India- Zambia cooperation in general and in the education sector in particular. We will always remember the charismatic personality in his trademark KK suit and for singing for us 'Que Sera, Sera' (Whatever Will Be, Will Be) from the film 'The Man Who Knew Too Much' (1956), just before he said good bye to us and his car pulled off the tarmac. RIP Mzee Kaunda!