

# Thika Power: A Power Plant into the Future.

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At around 8 o'clock in the morning a few students from year 7 and 8 including myself headed for the Thika Power Plant to learn about electricity is produced using diesel. So we entered the bus, chaperoned by Mrs. Charbonneau and Mr. Forster drove towards our destination. The drive was mostly uneventful. When we arrived there at 9:20 AM we waited for roughly twenty minutes and the guards then reluctantly let us in. The plant was really big. We were welcomed by Geoffrey and Anthony who told us a bit about the Plant like e.g. this specific power plant was a thermal power plant and that the engines they used were marine diesel engines. We all met in the supplies room and we asked how many people worked at the plant. Amazingly only 60 people altogether worked at the massive complex. Thika Power sold the electricity they made to Kenya Power at 18 shillings per Megawatt. We then split into two groups. Our group was guided by Anthony. Anthony told us there were three fuel tanks. One was used, another was a spare and the last one was always refueled. He told us that 28 trucks visit the plant every day. He showed us that separators were used to separate the diesel from lighter fluids that were found in the every fuel oil. He also told me that the plant was established in 2012. He then took us to the turbines and told us to put on some

ear plugs because the engines really were loud. We were shown that the engines used lube oil to separate the diesel from the walls as it was sticky. Anthony also explained to us how the foam extinguisher was used and showed us a room filled with the stuff. He then showed us the boilers and warned us against going near them as they were extremely hot. As we went back to join the others Anthony told me that the owner of the plant was Lebanese and the equipment was German. Coincidence? Anyway we join the others as Geoffrey answered some of our questions. Mr. Forster asked about the energy sector in Kenya and Geoffrey answered that Kenya uses 15,000 Megawatts a year. Someone else also asked how much of the sector does thermal electricity power up and he (Geoffrey) said that Hydroelectricity power up the most followed by Geothermal and lastly Thermal. We then left the Power Plant and came back to school.

By Rahim Kariuki.