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Civil servants grumble as July pay delays

BY DAVID MAFABI

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KAMPALA. Civil servants from several departments were by last evening still grumbling and had not yet received their July salaries even as the Ministry of Finance insisted the money had been sent to their respective district bank accounts.

"It is true we have not received salary for July and we haven't received any explanation from the government," Mr Peter Nakhokho, a civil servant with Manafwa District local government, said.

"I went to the bank last Saturday and Sunday and there was nothing, I am going to contact the chief administrative officer (CAO) and the district chief finance officer tomorrow to understand what's going on. Sometimes government plays on our brains because they know we can't do anything," said Ms Irene Namome, a secondary school teacher in Mbale Municipality.

Mr James Tweheyo, the general secretary of Uganda National Teachers Union, confirmed that many teachers had not received their salaries for July.

Some civil servants, including teachers, medical workers and police officers who talked to *Daily Monitor* yesterday said they had not received any explanation concerning the delayed payments.

Mr Moses Dalili, the Adjumani District deputy CAO, said by the time he left the district at the weekend, only a few civil servants had received salaries for July.

But Mr Keith Muhakanizi, the secretary to the Treasury and ministry of Finance permanent secretary, yesterday said: "The Ministry of Finance has already paid the salaries. If there are delays, then these must be in respective districts and the CAOs should explain to the civil servants."

But when pressed further to state when exactly the money was sent to the districts, Mr Muhakanizi said: "Let me check with my people and get back to you."

Similarly, the Finance ministry spokesman Jim Mugunga only cited government policy that requires that salaries be paid by 28th of every month.

"Since the policy shift to decentralise payment of salaries, we release the money for salaries between July 20 to July 25 except for a few anomalies that still exist like "ghosts" and under-payment and failure by some civil servants to appear for the verification exercise. A salary is a right which every civil servant is entitled to," Mr Mugunga said.

He said the delayed payment could have arisen because of the new payment system and creation of new districts that became effective in the Financial Year 2017/2018. Ms Ada Muwanga, the director of human resource at Public Service ministry, declined to comment on the issue and referred *Daily Monitor* to her permanent secretary, who was unavailable for a comment by press time.