

AGENCIES EXPOSED

A report released recently by ISO on expenditures in government agencies exposed wasteful expenditures costing the taxpayer billions of shillings

The committee's report recommended that following the doctors' strike, their salaries should be increased to the promised sh5m, from sh1m.

The committee also recommended that the salary of scientists earning sh2m should be increased to sh12m.

The salary of the director medical services should be increased from sh4m to sh15m and the enrolled nurse from sh400,000 to sh1m.

The report further recommended that the hospital superintendents should also get a pay raise from sh4m to sh14m.

Asked whether cabinet approved the salary increment based on the figures proposed by the committee, the source said: "We approved the principles. It is the ministers of finance and public service to work out the figures."

However, appearing before the parliamentary health committee last week, the state minister for health, Sarah Opendi, said the Government is proposing at least sh1 trillion to cater for salary enhancement for civil servants. Of recent, the country has been faced with a number of strikes that have paralysed service delivery, particularly judiciary and health sector.

A study on salary disparities in the public sector by the Equal Opportunities Commission in June revealed huge salary disparities between the traditional civil service and statutory bodies.

Wastage in government

A report released recently by ISO on expenditures in government agencies exposed wasteful expenditures costing the taxpayer billions of shillings.

The report also highlights the problem of duplication and overlaps in government departments and agencies, as well as a highly irrationalised wage bill. It says the Government has been turned into projects and consultancies.

The said ministries, parastatals and agencies combined were squandering sh1.3 trillion on consultancies, travel, welfare and entertainment, fuel and lubricants, workshops and seminars, vehicle maintenance and advertising.

According to the report, Uganda's public service now has 313,565 employees and the total wage bill stands at sh3.36 trillion. A total of sh1.7 trillion (51%) is paid to workers in central government (including agencies), while sh1.6 trillion (49%) is paid to local government workers.

The report noted: "The mainstream government (public service) spends a relatively lower proportion of their budgets on workers. But general staff salaries in ministries are dwarfed by salaries for contract staff. For example, the finance ministry spends sh4.5b on general salaries, compared to sh18.7b on contract staff salaries. The health ministry spends sh5.8b on general salaries compared to sh16.7b on contract staff."



Medical workers on strike in Kampala recently. Of recent, the country has been faced with a number of strikes that have paralysed service delivery, particularly in the judiciary and health sector

LOCAL POLITICAL LEADERS

Sources said in the second phase, priority will be on the pay for the local political leaders while the rest of public servants will be taken care of in the third phase

By Mary Karugaba

Cabinet has approved the proposal to increase salaries of all public servants, but in a phased manner, starting next financial year.

Cabinet said the pay raise will start with essential cadres, who include scientists with science-based jobs, state attorneys and judicial officers.

Details from a special Cabinet meeting chaired by President Yoweri Museveni on Saturday indicate the category will have their salaries enhanced starting next financial year, 2018/19. It was a day-long meeting at State House.

However, sources said, the primary school science teachers will not fall in the top priority category to benefit in the next financial year.

The source further said the meeting agreed on salary increment for security officers at lower ranks, local political leaders, such as district chairpersons and their executives, sub-county chairpersons, district councillors and traditional civil servants.

However, the President reportedly agreed with the rest of the team that the categories of civil servants will also be considered, but in the subsequent two financial years.

This implies that the third category of public servants will be catered for during the 2020/2021 financial year.

"We agreed to focus on pay raise for essential cadres, such as scientists who include doctors, nurses and all those doing

Cabinet approves pay raise for all public servants

science-based jobs. The President said this is where the priority should be put," a source said.

"The meeting agreed that the implementation should be in three phases and by the end of the third phase, everybody would have been catered for," the source added.

Another source said the pay increase will be based on the salaries paid by the governments in the region. This means that a public servant will receive a salary comparable to what their counterpart in the region gets.

Sources said in the second phase, priority will be on the pay for the local political leaders while the rest of public servants will be taken care of in the third phase.

The special meeting was called to discuss a report of the salary review committee that was set up last month by President Museveni.

During the meeting, it was agreed that a special committee comprising of ministers of finance and public service review the budget allocations for the next financial year and identify areas where money can be saved and used for the salary enhancement.

The meeting said the committee should

critically look at the expenditure on non-essentials and also review the expenditures on agencies and authorities.

This means the Government will likely merge some agencies or departments and downsize the workforce for non-strategic sectors, in order to raise funds for salary enhancement as has been recommended by the Internal Security Organisation (ISO).

Museveni reportedly directed that by February next year, the committee should be done with the work and should have agreed on a final decision.

"The President was of the view that since the Budget process is still on, the two ministers should be able to identify savings to fund the salary raise," a source said.

After the meeting, sources said Cabinet directed the Minister of Public Service, Muruli Mukasa, to issue a statement on decisions taken. The minister is expected to announce the Cabinet's decisions today.

When state minister of finance David Bahati was contacted, he declined to give details of the Cabinet meeting and instead said the media should wait for Muruli Mukasa's statement.

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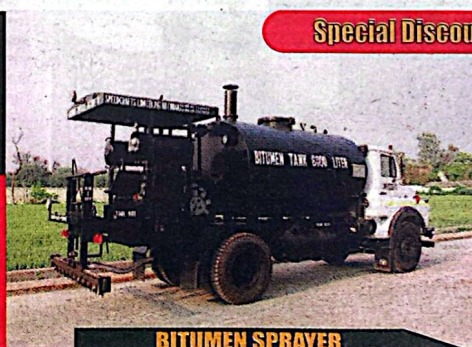
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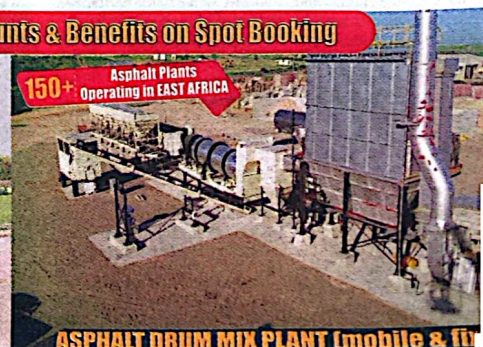
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