

Army retirees petition CDF over discrepancies

JINJA

By Jackie Nambogga

Soldiers due to retire from the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) have accused their leadership of discrimination.

They complained to the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) Gen. David Muhoozi of being sidelined on several occasions.

Sgt. John Michael Aupel named the army shop as one of the places they had been turned away.

"I wonder if these shops are meant for selected officers or for us all?" Aupel asked.

This was during the closure of a three-day training on policy retirement for 511 officers ahead of their release at Gadaffi Barracks in Jinja on Tuesday.

Aupel further asked if Operation Wealth Creation (OWC) services were for only civilians.

Bosco Abwolaxy, a warrant officer with the airforce, asked why it takes long to promote officers who have served over 10 years.

"How do graduates stay for over 10 years without promotions," Abwolaxy, in charge of aviation fuel and lubricants, asked.

Gen. Muhoozi said the army shops were open to all once they identify themselves.

Muhoozi, who was flanked by

UPDF's chief of planning and logistics, Brig. George Igumba, said promotions depend on quality, discipline and courses attained.

"Promotions are done when there are vacant positions with a combination of quality, discipline and courses attended," he said.

BETWEEN THE LINES:

■ The army retirees had questions ranging from promotion requirements, recruitment of their children and years reflected on their pension slips.

Muhoozi assured the soldiers that a quarter was reserved for their children during recruitment. However, he said the army cannot compromise entry requirements.

"We will gladly take up your children, but some of you do not adhere to the requirements stipulated in terms of education level," he said.

Lt Grace Kafuko said he was retired in 1997 without pension, then recalled as a reserve commander in 2007. Kafuko said he only got his gratuity and urged the army leadership to address such frustrations.

Similarly, Capt. Moses Eyub said his discharge certificate was not reflecting the seven

years he served while in the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA).

Sgt John Okiror said he joined in 1995, but the certificate reflects 2005.

Muhoozi asked concerned

officials to include Eyub's seven years in UNLA both for pension and gratuity, as well as Kafuko's. He assured the soldiers that the force would continue sponsoring their children's education.



Muhoozi (left) and Igumba on arrival at the retirees training in Jinja on Tuesday. Photo by Jackie Nambogga



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