LOWER CADRES EAT BIG IN PLANNED PAY RISE

By Martin Kitubi

It is not only a scary routine, but also a lonely one for mortuary attendants in government hospitals.

While everyone is asleep or when everyone is scared of opening the casket of their loved ones, mortuary attendants are awake and ready to help you locate them in cabins.

Much as they perform this great role, mortuary attendants are some of the underpaid public servants, taking less than sh500,000 a month for a role most Ugandans fear.

The mortuary attendants are not alone.

Their counterparts at the cemeteries, who clean and maintain government graveyards, have the same challenge of lower pay, on top of physical and spiritual breakdown.

However, in the coming financial year, they will finally have a smile.

Both the mortuary and cemetery attendants will eat big increase in the planned enhancement of salaries for public servants in the 2026/2027 financial year.

Documents seen by the *New Vision* indicate that mortuary and cemetery attendants, as well as machine operators of government ferries, will have their salaries doubled.

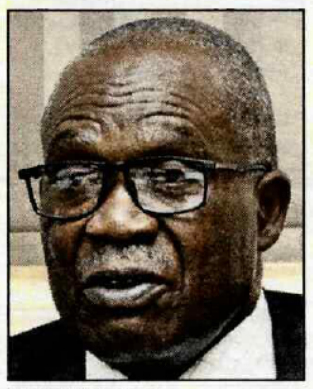
The category, who have been earning sh500,000, will see their salaries enhanced to sh1m a month, come July 2027.



The chief administrative officers attended a training at the National Leadership Training Institute in Kyakwanzi district last year. Under the planned salary enhancement, CAOs will earn sh6.5m from sh1.8m monthly



Mugyenyi



Muruli Mukasa

EDUCATION SECTOR

In the education sector, a senior education science teacher now earns sh4.2m, up from sh1.7m, whereas an education officer earns sh4m, up from sh1m.

These two are graduates; the difference is that a senior education officer is more experienced and sometimes has additional academic qualifications.

The assistant education officer (science), on the other hand, earns sh2.2m, up from sh933,000, while a lab technician earns sh2.2m, up from between sh795,000 and sh858,000. Both of these are diploma-holding teachers.

A lab assistant in a secondary school will earn sh550,000 up from sh300,000. These are certificate holders.

Under the Business Technical and Vocational Education and Training sub-sector, a principal of a diploma awarding institution now earns sh10.6m up from sh2.9m, whereas one who heads a certificate awarding institution earns sh6.5m up from sh2.8m.

Heads of a technical school, farm school and principal lecturers earn sh4.5m up from sh2.5m, while a senior tutor, lecturer and instructor earn sh4.2m up from sh1.7m.

A tutor, lecturer or instructor will earn sh4m up from sh1.2m and a diploma tutor or instructor earns sh2.2m up from sh1m.

OTHER CATEGORIES

The other categories that will benefit from the planned salary enhancement for public servants are the non-science assistant commissioners in government ministries and departments, as well as deputy chief administrative officers (CAOs) and the deputy town clerks for districts, municipalities and cities.

Under the planned salary enhancement, these local government chiefs will have their salaries raised from sh1.8m to sh6.5m a month come July 2026.

According to the documents, the Government had planned to enhance the salaries of deputy CAOs and deputy town clerks to sh10m a month, but because of the limited resource envelope, these cadres will take at least sh6.5m a month.

The other package will be increased as and when resources allow, sources told *New Vision*.

The planned enhancement will also cover other health professionals, such as radiology technologists from sh2.6m to about sh3m.

The Government is still analysing how much will be paid to the arts and humanities teachers at both primary and secondary schools.

Once the decision is made, the teachers are expected to receive at least 25% of the pay target under the enhancement plan adopted by the Government.

THE NUMBERS, FUNDS

For now, the Government has set aside at least sh500b for salary enhancement come next financial year.

The planned salary enhancement is expected to increase the country's wage bill from the current sh8.5 trillion to over sh9 trillion in the coming financial year, with the exception of new recruitments.

According to the finance ministry data, there are about 163 positions for deputy CAOs and deputy town clerks in districts, municipalities and cities.

In addition, there are about 200 assistant commissioners in government ministries and departments, expected to benefit from the enhancement.

While science teachers have had their salaries enhanced, at least 120,000 primary school teachers and 20,000 secondary school arts teachers have yet to be enhanced.

PUBLIC SERVICE SPEAKS OUT

While the public service ministry confirms that there is a planned enhancement of salaries for several cadres, the minister of public service, Wilson Muruli Mukasa, noted that the public should remain calm as the Government works on the plan.

"The Government, led by the National Resistance Movement (NRM), is determined to ensure that we improve the welfare of public servants. It's, therefore, true that we have a pay rise next financial year. However, I want to ask public servants to keep calm and wait for government communication," he said.

The minister made the remarks last week on Thursday, while addressing local government leaders from northern Uganda during a meeting on the planned rollout of the contributory pension scheme, which will commence next year.

The meeting, which was held at Bomah Hotel in Gulu city, attracted about 100 participants, including CAOs, human resource personnel and hospital directors from the region.

ALREADY ENHANCED

For the last five years, the Government has undertaken salary enhancement of public servants, but in a phased manner.

As part of the salary enhancements programme, the legal professionals under the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, except the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), had their salaries enhanced.

For instance, the deputy DPP now earns sh20m up from sh13.8m, the principal assistant DPP earns sh13.8m from sh8.7m. A senior assistant DPP earns sh12.5m up from sh8m.

The assistant DPP, on the other hand, earns sh10.5m up from sh7.8m, a chief state attorney earns sh9.8m from sh7.8m and a senior principal state attorney earns sh8.5m up from sh5.1m.

Under the medical category, all personnel, right from the director general of health services up to ambulance and lab attendants in health facilities, had their salaries enhanced.

For instance, the director general of health services now earns sh15.3m up from sh9m, while an executive director of any national referral hospital earns sh14.5m up from sh8m.

District health officers now earn sh6.5m up from sh4.6m.

Science directors, but non-medical in a ministry or department, had their salaries enhanced from sh3.6m to sh12.7m, whereas a deputy director of science (non-medical) earns sh11.9m up from sh3.3m.

All scientists at the level of Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIGP) in Police, had their salaries enhanced from sh3.3m to 12.7m, while commissioners who are scientists, but of non-medical areas, earn sh10.6m up from sh3m. The assistant commissioners' science earns sh6.5m from sh2.7m.

Principal officers (science non-medical) earn sh4.5m up from sh2.4m, whereas a senior science officer (non-medical) earns sh4.2m up from sh2.3m.

On the other hand, a graduate scientist (non-medical) earns sh4m up from sh2.3m, whereas a scientist (non-medical and diploma holder) earns sh2.2m from sh1.2m.

The above categories cover scientists, including agriculturalists and other engineers.

The Government has also enhanced salaries for aviation staff under the Soroti Flying School, presidential crew, as well as pilots under the Police force.

EXPERT'S TAKE

Onesmus Mugyenyi, a policy analyst and deputy executive director of Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment, said salary enhancement is good because it motivates workers.

"While salary enhancement alone cannot improve performance, it's a good move. However, we must have a comprehensive assessment and plan for how salary enhancement is done. We have different groups enhanced each and every year. I do not know whether this is healthy," he said.

However, Mugyenyi raised concerns that the growing wage bill will gradually affect the country's resource envelope and that this must be tamed.

He recommended that the Government intensify monitoring and evaluation of public servants for better service delivery.