

Forgeries overwhelm Administrator General

By Andante Okanya
and Edward Anyoli

The office of the Administrator General is overwhelmed by forgeries fuelled by unscrupulous persons with an agenda to take control of estates of deceased persons, the land inquiry commission has heard.

Yesterday, the Administrator General Charles Kasibayo, testified at the commission during the hearing conducted at the National Records Centre and Archives in Nakasero, Kampala.

Arrests

"The Office of the Administrator General has issues of impersonation, uttering false documents, forgery of letters of administration, and forgery of letters of no objection. We arrested many people, especially at Nakawa Court, which had 30% of the forgeries," Kasibayo stated.

Without details, Kasibayo revealed that his office was currently pilot testing of a computerised monthly report, indicating the status of estates under the Administrator General. Section 11 of the Administrator General's Act, stipulates that upon death of a



Kasibayo (left) and his assistants Henry Koloba and Robert Bogere chat after appearing before the land commission yesterday in Nakasero, Kampala

person, the estate is vested with the Administrator General.

Responsibilities

The statutory mandate of the Administrator General, among others includes administration of estates of deceased persons, protecting estates of missing

persons and acting as a public trustee.

The commission

Justice of the Court of Appeal and Constitutional Court Catherine Bamugemereire is commission chairperson.

The commissioners are

Robert Ssebunnya, Mary Oduka Ochán, Joyce Gunze Habaasa, Dr Rose Nakayi, Fredrick Ruhindi and George Bagonza Tinkamanyire.

Others are Ebert Byenkya, who is lead counsel, while John Bosco Suuza is assistant lead counsel. The Judiciary

deputy registrar of planning and development Olive Kazaarwe Mukwaya, heads the secretariat. Kasibayo was invited by the commission to give an insight into the estate of the late Yakobo Lukwago of Mbalatira village, Nakaseke district.

The Administrator General was granted letters of administration for the estate in 1988.

The commission yesterday reported that a group people petitioned the commission, accusing Swaibu Mukasa Yiga of evicting bonafide occupants from six villages.

However, Kasibayo said an assistant Administrator General Jackie Mazinga, was the estate file supervisor.

Kasibayo promised to avail the commission with a detailed memo, with advice and his opinion on reforms needed to boost the mandate of his office.

He noted that in 1991, two of the estate beneficiaries, Joyce Namugambwa and Robert Wamala, obtained an illegal grant of letters of administration.

Kasibayo said these were inconsequential and were cancelled because the Administrator General had already obtained authority to

administer the estate in 1988.

Asked by Byenkya whether succession is closely linked to land fraud, Kasibayo replied in affirmative, adding that succession and land fraud were correlated.

On whether the duo were prosecuted for fraud, Kasibayo responded that the case was reported to Police. However, he explained that in such instances, families usually reach amicable settlement.

"Criminal- proceedings cannot disentitle them from a share of their benefits. The law does not disinherit them.

For this case, mediation could have taken place," Kasibayo said.

Also yesterday at a press briefing, the commission announced that public hearings will be halted, starting next week, due to lack of money. Bamugemereire stressed that other commission duties would proceed uninterrupted.

"The commission will go on a technical break until additional funds are provided to enable the resumption of its work.

Our offices will remain open but with skeleton staff until funds are provided.

**Additional reporting
by Joshua Katamba**