

BUMPER HARVEST

Joy of a farmer

Mr Mustapha Ssekiwala vends matooke on his motorcycle in Kyotera District last week. Although the area was hit by hunger as a result of a prolonged drought last year, many farmers have started getting good harvests due to steady rainfall in various parts of the district.

PHOTO BY IVAN KIMBOWA



Kyotera to lay off staff over funding

New. The district became operational on July 1 after it was carved out of Rakai.

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KYOTERA. Kyotera District council has resolved to return a big number of technical staff back to Rakai District over failure to meet their monthly salaries.

The resolution was made after the executive report read by the district chairperson, Mr Patrick Kintu Kisekulo, revealed that many of the workers are likely to miss their November and December salaries because the newly created district has no money.

The report accuses Rakai District executive of sending a big number of its technical staff to Kyotera yet the latter receives the least amount of money to cater for salaries.

"We receive only Shs78 million compared to the Shs639 million that Rakai receives, but they have many vacant positions now despite the continued receipt of such amount from the central government," the report reads in part.

When Kyotera became operational in July, Mr Edrisa Bukenya, the district acting chief administrative officer, acknowledged receiving a list of more than 500 staff working for the new district although some were already in the system, serving in sub-counties.

This means if the council resolution is implemented, at least 40 staff in key senior positions in the CAO's office and other departments such as human resource, education and health, are likely to be affected.

"Out of the 10 principal personnel officers Rakai had, seven were posted to Kyotera yet they receive the biggest share of the wages that we cannot sustain at this level. Every department is almost full now, including those at the sub-county level," Mr Kisekulo observed.

However, Mr Charles Ziriddamu, the Kalisizo Sub-county councillor, who served as interim chairperson, opposed the recommendation by the executive, saying the issue must be handled by the CAO.

"Most of those people chose to work in Kyotera and have been serving in acting capacity for the four months. Sending them back will send a bad signal because they hoped to

KEY ISSUE

Whereas the creation of new districts is popular among peasants and politicians alike – the latter often using the process to defend their electoral areas, those opposed to the creation question the motive, saying it is for political patronage.

Some studies have shown that creating more districts does not necessarily increase or improve service delivery.

get a better working environment here, as the young district grows," he explained.

However, his submission was opposed by majority councillors, who claimed that Rakai was in the process of filling up the vacant positions and any delay to send back the staff may have legal implications.

"Our colleagues in Rakai are rushing to fill up the vacant positions, when we delay, time will come when we can't send these people back after their positions have been taken yet we cannot afford meeting their salaries as a district," Mr Paul Wasswa, a councillor representing Kakuuto Sub-county, said.

He noted that even during the time of interim district administration, the permanent secretary at the Ministry of Finance, Mr Keith Muhakanizi, had advised Kyotera to send back most of its staff to Rakai unless they want to work without salaries.

In his response, Mr Bukenya asked council to give him one month to make more consultations before effecting the recommendation.

"I need to make more consultations on this matter to avoid any

briefly

MP donates age limit cash

LYANTONDE. Ms Pauline Kemirembe, the Lyantonde District Woman MP, has donated money meant for conducting consultative meetings on the controversial Constitutional Amendment Bill, 2017 to 14 women groups in the district. "If my voters are to share Shs29m meant for consultation, every person will get Shs400 which cannot even buy salt. I have thus decided to donate it to women by supporting each group with Shs2m," Ms Kemirembe said at the weekend. [Malik Fahd Jjinggo]

MP advises opponents

MUBENDE. Kassanda South MP Simeo Nsubuga has asked opponents of the proposed Constitutional Amendment Bill, 2017, not to attack those supporting it but concentrate on explaining why the presidential age limit shouldn't be scrapped from the Constitution. Addressing residents at Kiswera Village in Myanzi Sub-county last week, Mr Nsubuga said it was his personal decision to back the amendment of Article 102(b) and that no one will force him to change his position on the matter. [Jessica Nabukenya]

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Kyotera to reduce staff over funding

Voices

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KINTU KISEKULO,
KYOTERA DISTRICT
CHAIRPERSON

"Our colleagues in Rakai are rushing to fill the vacant positions, when we delay, time will come when we can't send these people back after their positions have been filled yet we cannot afford meeting their salaries as a district,"

PAUL WASSWA,
KAKUUTO SUB-COUNTY
COUNCILLOR

"I need to make more consultations on this matter to avoid any form of litigation that may occur. One month is not a long period, once the consultations fail to yield positive results; the executive will definitely implement its recommendation to avoid causing a management crisis,"

EDRISA BUKENYA,
KYOTERA DISTRICT
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE
OFFICER

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form of litigation that may occur," he said. However, the councillors requested Mr Bukenya to put his request in writing, committing himself to any mistake that may arise if he delays to implement their resolution.

"One month is not a long period, once the consultations fail to yield positive results; the executive will definitely implement its recommendation to avoid causing a management crisis," he said.

Mr Kisekulo said creation of

Shs1b

AMOUNT OF MONEY THAT GOVERNMENT IS ESTIMATED TO SPEND ANNUALLY TO RUN ACTIVITIES OF EVERY NEW DISTRICT CREATED BECAUSE MANY LACK SUITABLE SOURCES OF REVENUE

new districts has generated a lot of debate with some section of legislators and civil society activities arguing that the move will skyrocket the cost of public administration.

Records from both Ministry of Finance and Local Government indicate that government spends at least Shs1.2b annually to run activities of every new district because many lack sources of revenue.

The bigger part of government resource contribution to districts goes to paying salaries of district leaders.

Whereas the creation of new districts is popular among peasants and politicians alike - the latter often using the process to defend their electoral areas, those opposed to the creation question the motive behind, saying it is for political patronage.

Some studies have shown that creating more districts does not necessarily increase or improve service delivery.

briefly

Leaders clash over