

How disgruntled police officer exposed Shs15b drug scandal

Treachery. Constable detailed how police officers connived with drug traffickers to switch drugs in parcels with maize and wheat flour.

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KAMPALA. Police Flying Squad Unit is hunting for the Commissioner in charge of Narcotics, Mr Tinka Zarugaba and three others after they eluded arrest on Thursday at the Directorate of Criminal Investigations.

Police authorities have arrested the Commandant of Very Important Persons Protections Unit (VIPPU), Senior Commissioner of Police Lodovic Awita, formerly of the commandant of Aviation Police, and five others in connection with theft of 85kg of narcotic drugs from police stores between 2011 and 2012.

Mr Zarugaba was the officer in charge of investigation at the time the incident happened.

Saturday Monitor understands that an incident that started as a casual fight between a police constable and his superior over deployment at Entebbe International Airport in 2012 has morphed into a huge scandal involving high-profile police commanders.

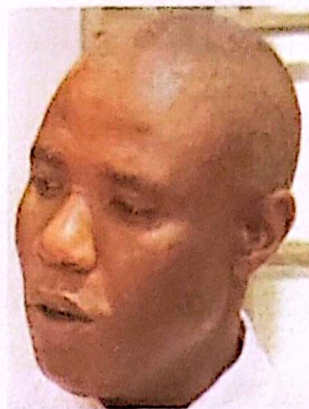
The arrest of the police officers who are supposed to be guardians of the law and order has exposed a multi-billion drug scandal in police and insider trading.

A constable, who claimed to have been mistreated at Entebbe International Airport, blew a whistle on disappearance of narcotic drugs from the exhibit strong room.

In a November 2012 dossier to the Inspector General of Police, Gen Kale Kayihura, the constable detailed how police officers were conniving with drug traffickers to switch drugs in parcels with maize and wheat



Lodovic Awita



Tinka Zarugaba

flour. His information was sent for analysis and preliminary investigations turned out to be positive.

Police officers privy to the investigations said the implicated officers at Entebbe Airport were able to detect the whistleblower and then started harassing him with impunity.

To save himself, the constable wrote to the then Director of Interpol, Mr Asan Kasingye and now police spokesperson, asking to be moved from Aviation Police to another unit.

However, Mr Kasingye reportedly worked with the Police Human Administration and transferred him to Interpol but retained him at airport as intelligence gathering continued.

In 2014, a case of theft 80kg

of narcotics was opened at Entebbe Police. The source said the investigating officers failed to make any headway after they got information from their superiors in the Directorate of Counter Terrorism to back off.

Gen Kayihura ordered the Police Compliance Unit, then led by Senior Superintendent of Police Susan Kasingye, to take on the investigations.

A team raided the exhibit stores at Entebbe International Airport and impounded all the drug exhibits and took them for testing at the Government Analytical Laboratory in Kampala to establish whether the contents in the parcels were narcotic drugs.

The Government Analytical Laboratory released their

findings early this year indicating that the drugs had been switched with maize and white flour.

Mr Kasingye said the Police Compliance Unit also failed to complete the case, but he didn't indicate the reason why.

Sources say the team also got threats both from top commanders from the directorates of Crime Intelligence and Counter Terrorism.

"The IGP ordered Flying Squad Unit to take charge of the case. The unit did its work and submitted its report," Mr Kasingye said.

Our investigations have revealed details on how senior officers implicated in the theft of drugs were promoted and then redeployed to head departments that were supposed to investigate them.

When this happened, the investigators backed off.

A police source close to the investigations said the case was only revamped after police management got wind of Chief-taincy of Military Intelligence (CMI) pursuing the matter.

CMI operatives were expected to carry out a raid at Entebbe and the Directorate of Criminal Investigations on Friday to arrest the officers in charge of narcotics. The army is hunting for Zirugaba and three others.

Police infiltrated?

In March this year, President Museveni said criminals had infiltrated the Uganda Police Force and other security agencies and asked IGP Kayihura to clean the force. The President was speaking at the home of the slain Assistant Inspector General of Police Andrew Felix Kaweesi.

Last week, CMI arrested nine people, among whom are five top police officers. CMI is also hunting for three others in a crackdown

that could shake the top ranks in the police hierarchy. The police officers were last Friday charged with conspiracy with Rwanda to kidnap Lt Joel Mutabazi in Uganda in 2013. They appeared before the Court Martial in Kampala.

The suspects who also include Rwandans and Congolese nationals, are accused of conspiracy with a neighbouring country to kidnap refugees in Uganda, who are perceived to be opponents of

their home government.

The officers are: Commandant of Police Professional Standard Unit, Senior Commissioner of Police Joel Aguma, Senior Superintendent of Police Nixon Agasirwe, former commander of Police Special Operations, Sgt Abel Tumukunde under the Flying Squad, Assistant Superintendent of Police Magada under Crime Intelligence and Faisal Katende under the Flying Squad.