

IGP Abas Byakagaba replaced Mr Richard Ecega with Mr Ezekiel Emitu, as the commander of KMP.

BY ANDREW BAGALA

The Inspector General of Police (IGP) has dropped top commanders of Kampala Metropolitan Police (KMP), including Mr Richard Ecega, his deputy and chief intelligence officer, on the heels of a recent rise in urban crime.

IGP Abas Byakagaba replaced Mr Ecega with Mr Ezekiel Emitu, as the commander of KMP.

The deputy commander of KMP, Mr Gerald Twishimye, and the head of Crime Intelligence in Kampala Metropolitan Police, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Ben Kasozi, were also dropped.

SSP Kasozi has been replaced by SSP Julius Isabirye.

The District Police Commander of Old Kampala, Superintendent of Police Francis Liiga, was also dropped.

As a policy, the police don't comment on the transfer of their officers. Police spokesman Kituuma Rusoke said he hadn't received a message about the changes at KMP.

The new KMP commander, ACP Emitu was once the deputy KMP commander between July 2016 and March 2018.

The current police reshuffle comes at the time when dwellers of Kampala Metropolitan Area and its suburbs are gripped with fear over the spike in crime.

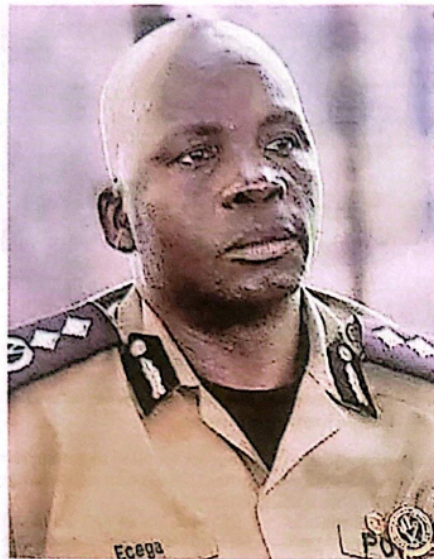
Kampala City motorists, business community and residents have been criticising the police leadership for failing to deal with panga-wielding thugs, who have given them sleepless nights.

Old hand

Mr Emitu's major hurdle would be to arrest the crime situation in the Kampala Metropolitan Area.

Two directors of police told *Daily Monitor* that Mr Emitu's chances of suc-

Hurdles awaiting new Kampala police chief



Richard Ecega, outgoing KMP commander



Ezekiel Emitu, new KMP commander

ceeding in bringing down crime are high since he had been mentored for that position when he was the deputy commander.

"He isn't going to a new territory. He has been there before as the deputy commander of KMP under Frank Mwesigwa for two years. They also worked together while at the Police Training School at Kabalye. So, I expect Mwesigwa to support him. That relationship is very important," a police director said.

Another senior officer said Mr Emitu will command respect from the commanders at the divisions and stations since he was once their deputy commandant at the training school.

"Most of the commanders at division and station level in KMP were his trainees at Kabalye. He probably knows the strength and weakness of each of the lower commanders. They still see him as their chief instructor," the senior officer said.

Resource constraints

Although Mr Emitu might get support from his subordinates, he will face challenges of resources and equipment that have impeded the work of many commanders before him.

As the urban areas continue to rapidly expand outside the major city boroughs, the KMP is under a lot of stress to provide services.

According to police documents, the KMP has a shortage in all policing areas.

In a hand over report of former Inspector General of Police Martins Okoth-Ochola in 2024, he said there was limited coverage of patrol vehicles within 19 police divisions of KMP due to a thin fleet that is dominated by old vehicles.

"Inadequate fleet, dominated by old motor vehicles that often break down during operations. The available fleet cannot cover all the 19 KMP divisions and other vulnerable points/targets. Insufficient fuel allocated to the vehicles per day cannot sustain extended periods of motorised patrol. Thus operators are limited to mainly responding to dis-

POLICE STANDARDS

According to the police standards, a superior officer isn't supposed to be led by another lower than his or her rank. In March 2018, Mr Emitu, who was then at the rank of Senior Superintendent of Police and the deputy commander of KMP, had to be transferred outside KMP two weeks after an officer of a higher rank than his, was appointed to a lower commanding position in the same jurisdiction.

truss calls," the report read in part.

Little has changed since Mr Okoth-Ochola handed over to Mr Byakagaba due to challenges of funding.

The KMP has a strength of between 7,000 and 10,000 officers. More than 3,000 of them protect Very Important Persons, leaving the rest of the population to police around six million people in Kampala City and neighbouring Wakiso and Mukono municipalities and tracts.

On average, each police officer in KMP polices some 1,000 people, which is far below the internationally recommended ratio of one policeman to 500 people.

The traffic officers in KMP have been outnumbered by the errant motorists, especially the taxi operators and boda boda riders, and have as a result given up enforcing many traffic regulations.

Inadequate accommodation

Mr Emitu will also struggle to accommodate his personnel since currently four officers occupy space meant for one officer in the police barracks. Other officers and their families are stuck in the police tents for months.

Last year, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Maj Gen Kahinda Otufire, said the shortage of accommodation at police stations in urban areas is the root cause of late coming and indiscipline of the police officers.

Mr Emitu's rank of Assistant Commissioner of Police will likely affect his leadership from getting high ranking and experienced officers to work below him.