

Mukiibi (left), Lugendo and Lwasampijja were recently arrested

District leaders arrested

MITYANA

By Kizito Musoke and Luke Kagiri

Police, together with the State House Anti-Corruption Unit, have arrested the vice-chairperson of Mityana district and members of the district service commission over allegations of soliciting bribes during staff recruitment.

The suspects are Ann Mariam Lugendo, the vice-chairperson of Mityana district; Dr Fred Lwasampijja, the chairperson of the district service commission; Hussein Mukiibi, the secretary to the commission and Andrew Ssekibuule, a member of the commission.

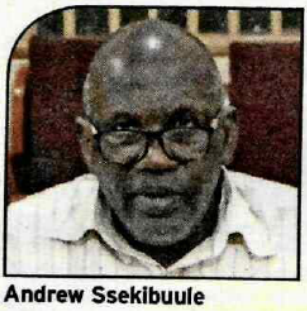
Mariam Natasha, the spokesperson of the Anti-Corruption Unit, told *New Vision* that investigations were ongoing.

The arrests followed a formal complaint by the chairperson-elect for Mityana district, Joseph Luzige, who petitioned the offices of the Inspector General of Government, the President of the Republic of Uganda, the Anti-Corruption Unit and the Minister of Local Government, seeking urgent intervention to probe alleged corruption in the district.

The suspects are accused of nepotism, allegedly allocating key advertised positions to close family members and relatives, who, in most cases, were reportedly less qualified and unsuitable for the roles.

There are also claims that members of the commission solicited bribes in exchange for jobs within the district, an alleged practice said to have contributed to poor service delivery and loss of government funds.

It is alleged that Lwasampijja appointed his daughter, Teddy Namaganda, to the position of labour officer for Mityana municipality, despite claims that she was less qualified. He is also accused of appointing other relatives.



Andrew Ssekibuule

Andrew Ssekibuule is accused of employing three close relatives, including his son, Jacob Lutabi as accountant for Mityana municipality, his daughter Nanyonjjo as a Grade III teacher and his wife Zavuga Nabawesi as headteacher of Kasalaga Primary School, despite allegations that they did not meet the required qualifications.

Ann Mariam Lugendo is alleged to have influenced the appointment of her husband, Saul Lugendo, as district inspector of schools, even though he was reportedly not the most suitable candidate.

The commission is further accused of abusing its office by recruiting ineligible staff who allegedly sought short-term employment to enable them access their National Social Security Fund (NSSF) benefits.

According to the complaint, such staff were mainly hired as security guards and porters, worked briefly, then resigned to claim their NSSF savings.

Their intention, it is alleged, was not long-term service, but to fulfill the legal requirement needed to access their benefits.

Among the cited cases is that of Jackson Ndibalema, recruited as an askari at Kabuwambo Health Centre II, who was previously employed by Equity Bank and is currently employed by Platinum Credit Finance. Another is Daisy Nalugo, recruited as an askari at Kabule Health Centre II. Both reportedly resigned after six months.

It is further alleged that certain individuals had already been earmarked for advertised positions.

Dr Vincent Kawooya, the district health officer, is reportedly identified for appointment as executive consultant at Mityana Hospital.

Luzige said Kawooya's tenure as medical superintendent of Mityana Hospital before his elevation was "riddled with many management queries, leading to poor service delivery and his subsequent interdiction at one time".

The secretary of the commission is also accused of having faced numerous corruption-related queries that allegedly went unpunished due to entrenched connections within the district. He previously served as district human resource officer and is accused of unfair and illegal salary deductions from teachers.

The recruitment process itself has been described as flawed. According to the petition, applicants were categorised in groups and interviewed by individual commissioners instead of the full commission sitting collectively to assess each candidate. Critics argue that this created room for corruption and inefficiency, with commissioners allegedly allocating themselves groups of key positions they preferred to influence.

It was also alleged that the district service commission was "selling jobs to the highest bidder", with bribes reportedly ranging from sh500,000 to sh15m.

Nalongo Mary Babirye of Ssekanyonyi claimed she paid sh1m, but was never offered a job.

"The district leadership hurriedly advertised all the vacant positions with a view of handling the exercise before my swearing in, in order to circumvent and pre-empt a possible inquiry into the allegations," Luzige said.

He asked the Anti-Corruption Unit to halt the ongoing recruitment process, investigate the allegations, and institute corrective measures aimed at restoring integrity, improving service delivery and promoting development in Mityana district.