

By Isaac Nuwagaba

In an effort to fill the widening staffing gaps in the public service at the senior level, the Government has started a recruitment exercise to fill key senior positions in the Ministry of Public Service with existing public servants examined to fill 426 positions across 18 government ministries, departments and agencies.

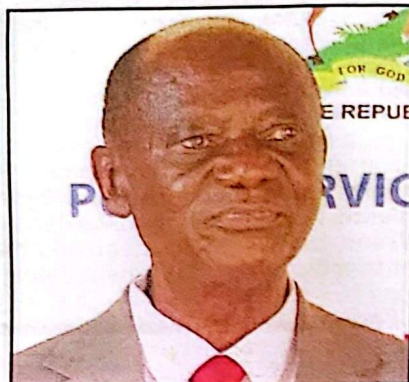
The three-day recruitment drive, which started on Tuesday is ending today, attracted 1,287 public servants out of 5,595 who applied, but missed being selected for written interviews.

COMPETENCE RECRUITMENT

"These are competence tests for people who are aspiring to be promoted. Public Service Commission (PSC) competence-based exams are technical and will contribute to 60% of the successful winners and the best will still be subjected to oral interviews to get the eventual winners of the positions in 14 days," Public Service Commission secretary Eng. Dr John Geoffrey Mbabazi said.

In public service, promotion requires one to undergo a competence examination and initial training.

"We want to roll out competence recruitment exercises in phases to local governments (districts) and city service commissions to move away from paper recruitments to online systems," he said.

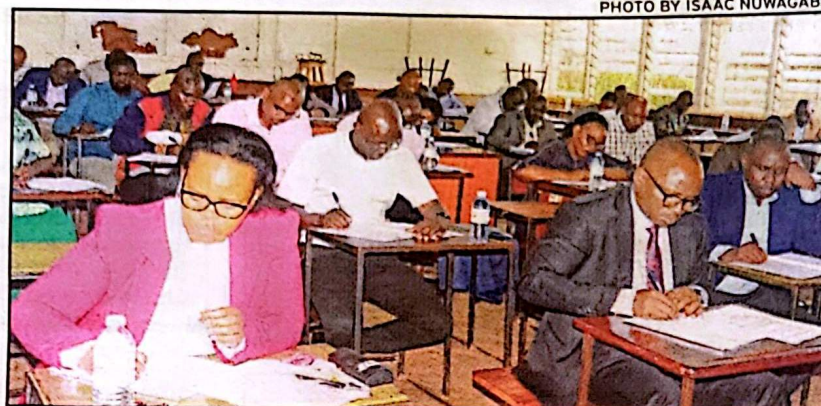


Dr Mbabazi

GOVERNMENT POSITIONS

The exercise conducted at Kibuli Secondary School in Kampala city's Makindye division, included those vying to become chief administrative officers, principal state prosecutors, town clerks, under-secretaries, principal information technology officers, principal human resource officers, principal economists, principal, assistant commissioners and commissioners.

Others include assistant Director of Public Prosecutions, principal social development officers, principal registrar of titles, senior officers,



Public servants sitting competence examinations during a three-day recruitment drive for jobs in government ministries, departments and agencies at Kibuli SS, yesterday

probation and welfare officers, among others. Others include principal agricultural engineers, principal occupational hygienists, principal staff surveyors, principal staff cartographers, principal urban development officers and principal staff photogrammetrists.

WARNING AGAINST BRIBERY

Addressing a section of applicants who turned up, the head of Public Service and Secretary to Cabinet, Lucy

Nakyobe, warned applicants against tempting PSC officials with bribes to buy jobs.

"I have been briefed by the PSC on the competitive nature of this process, and I caution you not to pay any money for purposes of getting jobs," she said.

"I would like to assure you that the process you are going through here is merit-based and free of any charges," Nakyobe added.

According to Nakyobe, previous

recruitment processes in the public service were marred by corruption including the recruitment of unqualified individuals with forged academic documents, which the Government has been fighting for years. "Nepotism in government is a pervasive issue that undermines the principles of meritocracy and fairness. This must stop," she said. PSC chairperson Winnie Kabogoza confirmed that merit will be the guiding principle in all future selections.

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

The shortlisted candidates will undergo written aptitude tests followed by oral interviews before final selections are made after answering 40 questions in 40 minutes.

"For every position, we consider only six candidates vetted by the automated aptitude test and the special needs candidates are given a special time and extra hours to complete the interviews," Kabogoza said.

The latest State of Human Resources in Public Service Report 2025 by the public service ministry points out only 58% staffing capacity due to budgetary constraints suffered over the years.

PHOTO BY ISAAC NUWAGABA