

President directs on medics' pay rise

By David Lumu

President Yoweri Museveni has directed that medical workers at the level of senior consultants be paid sh17m in salaries.

According to Museveni's letter to Dr Jane Ruth Aceng, the Minister of Health, dated September 30, medics working as directors of science should be paid sh16m, doctors sh5m and scientists sh3.5m.

The President has also ordered the Minister of Public Service to pay professors at public universities sh15m and lecturers sh12.2m.

"By copy of this letter, I am also directing the Minister of Public Service to conclude the issue of pay to government scientists and university teachers by moving them to the levels we previously agreed — professor-sh15m, university lecturer — sh12.2m, senior consultant medical — sh17m, director science — sh16m, doctors — sh5m, scientists — sh3.5m," Museveni stated in the letter that is also copied to the Vice-President, Prime Minister, Minister of Public Service, Attorney General, permanent secretary of Ministry of Health, Head of Public Service and Secretary to Cabinet.

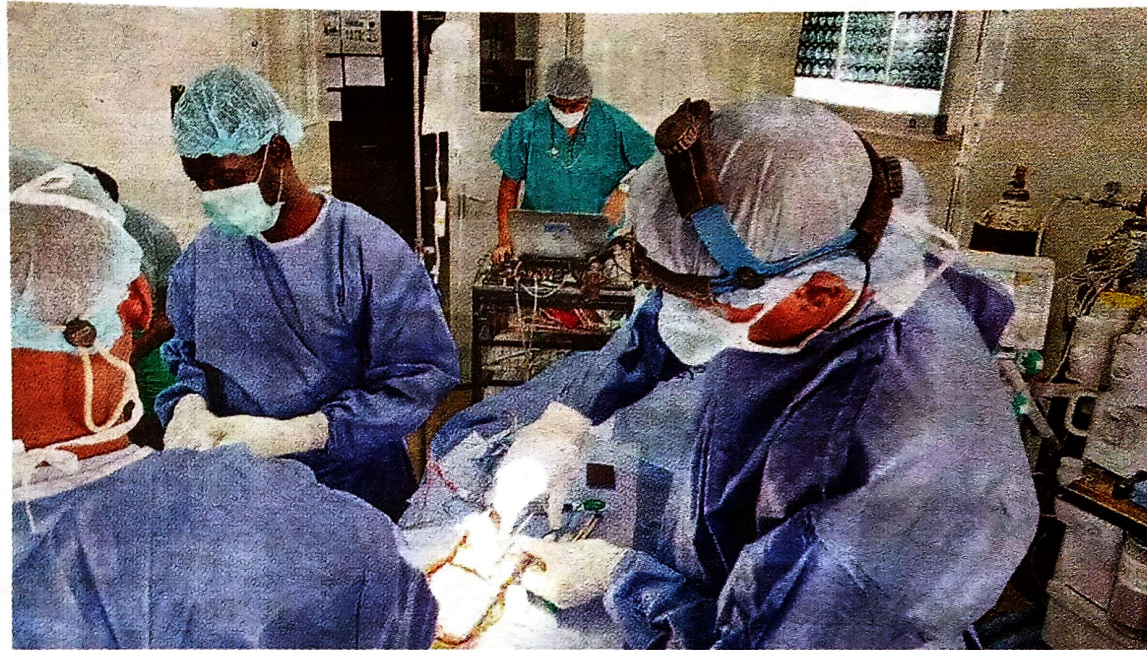
Payment of non-academic and non-technical personnel, Museveni said, "will be handled later, when we are able."

The President said paying medical workers, government scientists and academicians what they deserve tames their temptation to engage in other activities, at the expense of public service.

Ban on private pharmacies

In the same letter, the President has also directed Aceng to close all privately-owned pharmacy shops in government health centres.

"I am told that those pharmacies



Neurosurgeons carrying out a brain surgery at Mulago Hospital, Kampala. President Museveni has directed that the salaries of doctors and lecturers be increased

are owned by health workers," Museveni said, underscoring the fact that by paying the scientists well, the temptation for double loyalty will be sorted.

The President said it was not reasonable to ban private drug shops for government doctors when the salaries were still meagre.

Sh150b October release

Museveni's directive comes at a time when the permanent secretary in the Ministry of Public Service, Catherine Bitarakwate, has issued a circular, instructing the Ministry of Education, Chief Administrative Officers, town clerks and vice-chancellors of public universities and other tertiary institutions, to pay teachers, lecturers

ENSURING LOYALTY

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and judicial officers according to the revised salary structure, effective October.

The new pay structure

The circular indicates that a vice-

chancellor of a public university will earn sh12.2m, up from sh11.8m, teaching professors for science will receive a sh9.9m salary, associate professor sh9.3m, senior lecturer sh8.4m, lecturer sh7.6m, assistant lecturer sh6.2m and teaching assistant sh5.3m.

Announcing the demarcations of the sh150b kitty, Wilson Muruli Mukasa, the Minister for Public Service, in August said sh15b had been earmarked for public universities for salary enhancement of both teaching and non-teaching staff, while sh135b would cater for the enhancement of the teachers, principals, tutors and instructors from primary school level, up to secondary school level and the

Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (BTVET) institutions.

The teachers, lecturers and non-teaching staff of public universities and other government teaching institutions met President Museveni at State House, Entebbe, in August, to discuss remuneration, among other challenges.

The university dons had called for a strike over pay, but when they met Museveni, they agreed to call it off.

In 2017, Cabinet approved the public service pay policy principles and a five-year payment target of all salary arrears, increments and harmonisation of the salary disparities by 2023.

The plan covers all public servants whose salaries are derived from the consolidated fund. However, the long term pay targets were to be rolled out in a phased manner, depending on the availability of funds and the set priorities.

In the last financial year, Cabinet provided sh525b for phase one salary enhancement of public servants, covering pay of medical workers, scientists, legal professionals, prosecutors, post-primary teachers, instructors, tutors, headteachers and their deputies, principals, local government political leaders, Police, prisons and the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) personnel and staff of public universities.

Medical brain drain

Explaining the gravity of the brain drain problem, in March, minister Aceng told Parliament that despite the stock of qualified health professionals available for employment increasing over the years, consultants have abandoned all the 13 regional referral hospitals over poor remuneration.