

RUTO, PRESIDENT'S AWARD, NAIROBI, JAN 21, PCS

The government will double the budget of the President's Award-Kenya to enable it reach more students, President William Ruto has said.

The President explained that this will address the financial constraints facing the agency that has led to limited operations.

"The Cabinet Secretary responsible will, in the coming budget, double the budget for this agency so that they can extend this most consequential training and reach out to our young people in more schools and institutions," he said.

He also announced that the government will recruit additional staff for the President's Award-Kenya.

Additionally, President Ruto directed the Head of Public Service to find a modern office for the agency.

He made the remarks during the presentation of the Gold Award under the President's Award at State House Nairobi on Wednesday.

The Gold Level represents the highest achievement in the President's Award and is designed for young people who demonstrate consistent commitment, maturity, and leadership.

It requires a longer period of participation across the core sections of Service, Skills, Physical Recreation, and Adventurous Journey, and uniquely includes a residential project that brings participants from diverse backgrounds together to live, work, and serve as a team in an unfamiliar environment.

A total of 1,252 young people qualified for the Gold Award this year.

Speaking at the event, the President said the Gold Award recipients will be given priority in public service opportunities.

"We are going to give consideration to the mentors of these young people," he pointed out.

The President said the government continues to invest in the education and training of young people to strengthen the country's human capital development.

He said education is a central pillar in the country's transformation, noting that the government has committed to scale up the National Research Fund to 2 per cent of Kenya's GDP.

"No nation can achieve sustained prosperity without investing in knowledge, innovation, and human capital development," he said.

At the same time, President Ruto appealed to the youth to believe in their country and ignore agents of doom.

"Do not allow yourself to be consumed by the pessimism that afflicts some voices in our public life," he said.

He explained that optimistic people see opportunities in every challenge, while pessimists only see obstacles in every opportunity.

"Kenya's future belongs to those who choose hope, effort, and purpose," he said.

Sports and Youth Affairs Cabinet Secretary Salim Mvurya said the government is providing strategic opportunities to empower young people.

He said the President's Award-Kenya complements schooling with life skills that train them to manage personal development and community challenges.

Thika Town MP Alice Ng'ang'a, who is also the chair of the National Assembly Parliamentary Committee on Social Protection, said the programme is nurturing young people in productive activities, keeping them away from drug and substance abuse.

Amani Njoki, a Gold Award recipient from St Austin's Academy, said the President's Award programme is instrumental in shaping young people into dependable adults, professionals, and leaders.

She called for the expansion of the programme to reach more young people, a request the President committed to implement.

President's Award-Kenya CEO Margaret Kiogora described the programme as a transformative initiative that is turning young people into responsible and productive citizens.

"Through the President's Award, we impact young people with integrity, service, and resilience," she said.

Ends.