

MAK staff backtrack on lectures

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It was anticipated that business at Makerere University would return to normal given that some lecturers had by yesterday resumed their duties at various colleges.

Basing on a mini survey conducted by *New Vision*, a number of colleges and schools yesterday indicated that lectures had resumed although security remained tight with heavy deployment of Police and army, who kept a 24-hour surveillance. Whereas some lecturers reported for work at their various stations, the School of Law did not open at all.

Lectures were conducted at the colleges of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Business and Management Sciences, Computing and Information Sciences, Education and External Studies and the College of Health Sciences.

The colleges of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology, Humanities and Social Sciences and Natural Sciences registered the biggest turnout of lecturers.

However, a general assembly held by the university joint staff associations last evening resolved that all lectures be called off and all offices be closed until management makes a 'clear' pronouncement on reinstating their suspended leaders.

The assembly, which took place at the Makerere University main hall, was packed to full capacity with members of three staff associations, including Makerere University Academic Staff Association (MUASA), Makerere Administration Staff Association (MASA) and National Union of Educational Institutes (NUEI).

The members unanimously agreed to give management up to Friday this week to fulfil their demands.

Prof. Edward Nesta Mwavu, the vice-chairperson of MUASA, said the joint meeting has since selected a sub-committee of six people to liaise with different striking groups.

Dr Muhammad Kiggundu -Musoke, the acting manager communications and international relations at the university, however, expressed disappointment over the general assembly's decision, saying it was not going to be helpful to the stakeholders.

"Much as we cannot alter their decisions, I have always maintained that dialogue is the way to go. Therefore, both the MUASA leadership and management should be able to meet to enable the university move in the right direction,"



MUASA voting to continue with the strike until Thursday. Photo by Badru Katumba

BETWEEN THE LINES

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Kiggundu said.

Business at some of the colleges and departments of Uganda's oldest university has been paralysed for more than three weeks due to an ongoing strike between the university administration and its academic and administrative staff.

The strike started after several lecturers including Dr Deus Kamunyu Muhwezi, the MUASA chairperson, Bennet Magara and Joseph Kalema of MASA, were suspended.

The administration argues that they were suspended for misconduct, indiscipline and

involvement in acts that breach the terms and conditions of their employment.

However, a big section of the academic and administrative staff at the university rejected calls by management asking them to return to work, demanding that the suspended leaders be reinstated.

Nawangwe urged them to start a new chapter of mutual respect and take the university to greater heights.

Students react

Some students confirmed to have had lecturers yesterday.

"We missed several classes last week, but I am happy that the lecturers have started teaching," said Noelene Nanyanja.

Emmanuel Barekye, a student of land surveying, said whereas they had few lectures last week, they were compensated yesterday.

The guild representative to council, Hilary Nuwamanya, hailed lecturers who turned up for work.