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# Public varsity employees call strike over salaries

**KAMPALA.** The teaching and non-teaching staff in all public universities across the country have again resolved to lay down their tools effective August 1 if their demands for salary enhancement are not met by the government.

The university staff made the decision during a joint meeting at Makerere University on Wednesday, where they resolved that if the money they are demanding is not included in the 2019/2020 financial year through a supplementary budget, they will not report for the next academic year which starts in August.

## Failed promises

The chairperson of the Forum for Public University academic staff, Dr Grace Lubaale, said government promised to increase the salaries of all staff in five years, with a professor expected to earn up to the 15 million shillings, but that period has elapsed without any adjustments.

"In our joint meeting, members unanimously resolved that if the balance is not given in the financial year 2019/2020 to all staff in public univer-



**In-charge.** The chairperson of the public universities non-teaching staff association, Mr Jackson Betihamah.

PHOTO BY ALEX ESAĞALA

sities will not resume work effective August 1st," Mr Lubaale said.

Mr Jackson Betihamah, the chair-

person of the public universities non-teaching staff association, said government has taken them for granted since the money was not even included in the just read 2019/2020 budget.

He said they have written a joint letter to the minister of Education Ms Janet Museveni, Ministry of finance and that of public services, demanding inclusion of their money in the budget.

The staff are demanding Shs138 billion; Shs58.5 billion as arrears while Shs78.5 billion is for enhancement in the 2018/2019 financial year.

They say while they have been engaging the government over this money.

## Government responds

The under secretary at the ministry of Education, Mr Aggrey Kibenge, said the budget was read and confirms what the government is committed to do in the next financial year.

He said those who were left out should not close their offices nor strike because what was pledged

## BACKGROUND

Government has had a fair share of rundowns with civil servants. Towards the opening of the second term primary and Secondary School teachers also laid down their tool over their pay, but they called of the strike after meeting President Museveni who promised to handle their issue in July.

would be fulfilled soon.

He asked the university staff to be patient and initiate dialogue with government.

"There are many things the government did not fund in the next financial year and this does not mean that we should strike. You should engage us on how we are going to fulfil your pledge rather than striking," Mr Kibenge told *Daily Monitor* in a telephone interview.