

Gulu University fails to clear arrears for non-teaching staff

Accountability. Only Shs1.9b was paid to the non-teaching staff out of the Shs3.2b the university received for the same purpose.

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GULU. Gulu University administration has come in the spot light over its failure to clear arrears for non-teaching staff, despite government remitting the money to the university account last year.

Last year, the government remitted Shs28.5b to pay non-teaching staff in all the public universities in the country after they went on strike over salary enhancement.

Gulu University received Shs3.2 billion in two batches between October 2016 and April this year to clear the more than 200 non-teaching staff it employs.

However, only Shs1.9 billion was paid to the staff, raising questions on how the remaining balance of Shs1.3b was spent.

Information *Daily Monitor* obtained indicates that the university management on July 15, submitted an annual budget per-



Paralysed. Students of Gulu University stand at the main gate to the university during a strike last year. The non-teaching staff at the institution are on strike over unpaid salary arrears. PHOTO BY JOHN OKOT

ON STANDSTILL

Business paralysed. By Monday, the industrial action by the non-teaching staff had paralysed activities at the university. Mr Daniel Mbazira, a fourth year Medical student, told this newspaper at the weekend that they have been unable to attend lectures since they could not access a projector to aid lectures. "The person in charge of the room where we should have had our lectures from didn't show up. Many of the non-teaching staff didn't show up at the campus, if this goes on, we shall miss a lot," Mr Mbazira said.

formance for the year 2016/2017 to the Finance ministry but they were instead tasked to account for the money submitted to pay salary arrears for non-teaching staff.

"It has been reviewed and noted that you only spent 66.1 per cent for salary arrears that was advanced to you for payment of non-teaching staff salary arrears for FY2015/2016, yet you received 100 per cent release," reads in part a September 6th letter signed by Mr Kenneth Mugambe on behalf

of by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance addressed to the Gulu University Secretary.

Mr Mugambe in the letter gave a one-week ultimatum to the university management to address the issues raised and submit revised reports to enable the ministry finalise the annual budget performance report.

Non-teaching staff strike

The non-teaching staff, who had earlier this year been convinced to abandon a planned



On the spot. Prof Jack Nyeko Pen-Mogi, Gulu University VC.

strike by the university management over the delayed payment of arrears, on Thursday went on strike after learning of the Ministry of Finance directives.

Under their umbrella body, Gulu University, Senior Non-teaching Staff Association [GUASA], they resolved to lay down their tools until the university clears their unpaid arrears.

Mr Mahmoud Khalid, the GUASA chairperson, said their resolution to lay down tools arose from unsatisfactory responses from the university administration regarding their unpaid arrears for the Financial Year 2015/2016.

"We have been re-energised to demand our money because the Finance ministry is querying why only 66.1 per cent of the money meant to clear us has been spent instead of 100 per cent. This is a clear indication that the money is somewhere in the university," Mr Khalid said in an interview on Friday.

However, Prof Jack Nyeko Pen-Mogi, the university Vice-Chancellor, criticised the non-teaching staff's decision to strike.

Prof Pen-Mogi claimed the university had paid the non-teaching staff 100 per cent of their salary arrears, adding that the strike was uncalled for.