

Unam agree to 6% salary increase

• SAKEUS IIKELA

THE University of Namibia has agreed to pay its employees a 6% salary increase after two weeks of protest.

An internal notice issued yesterday by Unam's director of communication, Edwin Tjiramba, confirmed that the university's council decided to comply with the employees' demands.

Unam employees, including lecturers and supervisors, went on strike on Monday last week, demanding a 6% salary increase backdated to January 2018.

The workers, who are represented by the Namibia Public Workers Union (Napwu) and the Namibia National Teachers' Union (Nantu), went on strike after failing to reach an agreement with the institution's management over their demands.

The strike negatively affected the examination process as some of the centres were closed, and some modules

had to be postponed because there were no invigilators. According to Tjiramba's statement, the unions were demanding a once-off payment calculated at 6% of the seven months' basic salary "with full (100%) waiver on the 'no work no pay' rule".

Tjiramba said the Unam Council, however, agreed to pay "a once-off amount calculated at 6% of six-months' basic salary with a waiver on the benefits of the "no work no pay rule" i.e. deduction on basic salary only".

He said the employees will, however, not have deductions made on medical aid, pension, housing allowances and the 13th cheque.

"Council also emphasised the fact that Unam's financial situation has not changed since the commencement of the industrial action. In an attempt to find an amicable solution to the industrial action, management informed council that it had to forego the implementa-

tion of certain activities for the current financial year, and divert the funds to meet the demands by the unions," the statement added.

Tjiramba further stated that the unions were given until Friday (today) at 10h00 to respond to the offer.

Failure to reach an agreement, the statement said, the "management is directed to adhere to the agreed strike rule by deducting the full remuneration for the days that a staff member did not work".

The deductions from employees' salaries will thus be fully implemented for the salary cycle of 15 November 2018 and beyond, "depending on the duration of the strike".

Nantu's general secretary, Basilius Haingura, yesterday said he was unaware of the offer from Unam as he was out of town. His deputy, Loide Shaanika, said she was in a meeting with Unam, and therefore unable to comment.