

Unam to operationalise its new IT system

■ Albertina Nakale

WINDHOEK - The University of Namibia (Unam) Vice-Chancellor, Kenneth Matengu says upon completion of the 2019 academic registration, the university is migrating data to integrator 4.1 (the latest version of Adapt IT system) which should be fully operational and stable by June this year.

Although Unam extended its late registration to last Friday, some senior students at the time expressed disappointment saying Unam's IT system is a mess.

For the past few years, senior students could register online without going through long queues but this time around were forced to join these lines at the Main Campus to register due to the ongoing migration of an IT system.

Most senior students said they have been unable to access their portals to acquire their academic data.

Over the years, Unam has faced challenges of migrating historical data from its Integrated Tertiary Systems (ITS) to University Management System (UMS), which cost millions of dollars despite the fact that it could not work effectively.

Matengu who addressed Unam staff and students admitted that over the past few years, they had difficulties with the university management IT system.

"We have discontinued this system since December 2018 and are currently operating on a new ITS. There may be some hiccups during this phase, but please know we are paying attention to details as we want to ensure this project is not only completed on time but that it is quality delivery," Matengu said.

Hence, he announced the latest IT version will be fully operational by June.

Therefore, he asked Unam staff and students to give the necessary support and cooperation to the various teams working on the project.

During his address, Matengu also touched on the industrial strike the university had last November, which he says was a difficult period for them.

"Like a family, we can have differences. No one wins from a dispute in a family, everyone must contribute to nursing those wounds. After very difficult but genuinely pursued negotiations, we have resolved the matter and buried those differences. We will honour the agreement in full," he promised.

Unam management informed staff falling within the bargaining unit that the six percent salary increase for 2019, which formed part of an agreement with the unions late last year shall be implemented on February 15 (last Friday) backdated to January 1 this year.

Matengu told staff to remain focused and work together to get to sustainable economic levels, where Unam can reward its staff in a variety of ways.

He advised no one should and will be allowed to advance agendas of disunity or misdirection.

Therefore, he said they must leverage their networks and partnerships but above all, they must work as a professional team anchored on integrity and ethical conduct.

He also clarified that Unam values the relationship with the union, saying they play an important role in the promotion of good governance and effective labour relations.

"That's why I keep my doors open and we consult on a variety of issues. However, they are not to run the university. That is the business of the university council and its management team. All genuine issues should be channelled through the body that is legally mandated to represent Unam staff," he noted.

Equally, he said the same is true for students, as the legally mandated body is the student representative council and no other entity.