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MAKERERE TO INCREASE FEES, SCRAP COURSES

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Private students planning to join Makerere University next academic year will be forced to pay higher tuition fees in order to make the institution more competitive both nationally and in the region, *Sunday Vision* has learnt.

This is the second time the university is changing the fees structure in two years. The last time they changed caused the just ended students' strike.

During a meeting between President Yoweri Museveni and the University Council at State House, Nakasero on Friday, members also agreed that some humanity courses at Makerere be scrapped.

In the meeting, President Museveni also directed that Government takes over the university's entire wage and that the money generated by the university be invested in infrastructure.

The President said he would table the resolutions at the National Resistance Movement parliamentary caucus meeting on Monday.

Sources who attended the meeting told *Sunday Vision* that they also agreed that the Government scraps all forms of subsidy in order for the



Makerere council boss Lorna Magara

students to pay the full unit cost of the courses.

The meeting was called to resolve the impasse between students and the administration over the 15% tuition agreement, which caused a strike last week after students leaders said the increment would lock out needy students from the university.

Lorna Magara, the university council chairperson, led the delegation, together with Makerere vice-chancellor Barnabas Nawangwe. Education minister Janet Kataha Museveni also attended the meeting.

Magara confirmed the developments, but noted that

no definite time for effecting the changes had been provided.

"There is going to be a review of all the courses to determine which ones should be merged or scrapped," Magara said.

The deputy vice-chancellor for finance and administration, Prof William Bazeyo, said the meeting observed that Makerere charges the lowest fees in the region.

"It was agreed that we start charging fees per unit cost," Bazeyo noted.

Giving an example of medicine, Bazeyo said Makerere charges sh3.5m per course after government subsidy, while in Nairobi University, the same course costs sh15m.

On the issue of the wage bill, Bazeyo noted that Makerere University was contributing over 20% of the money internally generated to top up on the Government bill.

He noted that now that the President had directed that the Government takes over the wage bill, all revenue generated would be used to develop the university infrastructure.

PRESENCE OF MILITARY QUERIED

During the meeting, Museveni also asked the university to explain the

presence of Military Police at the university after claims emerged that it was the administration that invited them to quell the strike.

He was, however, told that the army had set up a base at the university long before the strike for purposes of securing the entire greater Kawempe area, which had been prone to insecurity.

Sources told *Sunday Vision* that the President called the Inspector General of Police and demanded a detailed security brief about Makerere University and its environs.

Museveni also reportedly hailed Nawangwe for his steady leadership and commitment to transform the institution.

GUILD CONDEMNS MOVE

The university guild president, Julius Kateregga, told *Sunday Vision* that he had also received a call from State House inviting him for the meeting, but he had travelled to Namagunga for a burial.

However, he condemned the decision to increase fees, noting that the move is out of touch with reality.

"If that is communicated to us, we shall take it to the students general assembly and decide a way forward," Kateregga said.

He noted that their demands are

public-driven.

"A number of students are dropping out of university because of the annual increments. We shall continue to demand the rights for our generation as far as university education is concerned," he said.

Kateregga said on Thursday, he and 25 other students met Gen. Salim Saleh, Museveni's younger brother, in Kapeeka, over the strike.

"We received an invitation from Gen. Saleh, who wanted to understand why we had gone on strike and why his name was being used by security agents while quelling the strike at Makerere. There were rumors among the students community that it was Saleh who had ordered for the deployment at the institution, but he denied it," Kateregga noted.

Last week, Speaker Rebecca Kadaga also tasked the education committee with probing the current impasse at Makerere. Kadaga also condemned the violence that was meted on the students. On Tuesday, MPs expressed disappointment that the minister who had been invited to appear before MPs, had yet again delegated the state minister for Higher Education, Chrysostom Muyingo, to answer queries about the impasse at Makerere.