

Makerere drops in new ranking

Past results.

Webometrics previously rated Makerere University as 6th best on the continent and 1,033 in the world.

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Makerere University has dropped by 10 places to 16th best university in Africa, according to latest Webometrics Ranking of World Universities.

Webometrics previously rated Makerere University as 6th best on the continent and 1,033 in the world. But the university has plummeted to the 1,225th slot in the new world ranking.

The Webometrics Ranking, an initiative of the Cybermetrics Lab, a research group belonging to Spain's largest research firm, the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC), conducts quantitative analysis to rank universities based on their Internet and Web contents related to the "processes of generation and scholarly communication of scientific knowledge".

Its July 2019 ranking shows Makerere also lost its rating as the best university in East Africa.

Prof Umar Kakumba, the deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, attributed the drop to strikes that paralysed scholarly activities on the campus for six weeks at the start of this year.

"The university lost a lot of



Lost glory. Makerere University graduands jubilate during the 69th graduation ceremony early this year. PHOTO

BY RACHEL MABALA

time during the staff strike when the semester had just started and when we resumed, everyone was busy and the administrators did not do the needful (publish research works on the web)," he said by telephone.

Makerere occupies the 5th best slot in Africa, according to The Times Higher Education World University Rankings, Prof Kakumba said, pointing out that this rating based on not just research publication but also education and general performance of the institution.

According to the Webometrics ranking, four of Africa's best five universities are in South Africa; University of Cape Town, University of Witwatersrand, Stellen Bosch University and University of Pretoria.

Dr Tanga Odoi, the chairperson Makerere University Con-

RANKING

World's best. Egypt's Cairo University is the 5th best on the continent while the world's best ranked universities are Harvard University, Stanford University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), University of California Berkeley and University of Washington ---all in the United States.

East Africa's best. East Africa's best rated institutions are University of Nairobi, Makerere University, Kenyatta University, University of Dar es Salaam and Moi University.

vocation, said the rating in the latest Webometrics is not good

for Makerere whose managers he asked to right the wrongs.

"The drop in ranking should not cause us to press the panic button; we should actually go back and revisit how we had become 4th and 5th. What had Makerere done before?" he said.

According to Dr Edward Mwavu, the deputy chairperson of Makerere University Academic Staff Association (Muasa), there should be no reason for alarm because Webometric's bases its rating on research files each university publishes on the website.

"Most of our research depends on donor funds; so, without the funds, we do less. I am sure that we shall go back to our position," he said.

Makerere Guild President Julius Katerega questioned the authenticity of the results, claiming the university is performing better.