

# The Anvil

## Row at Kikuyu Campus

By Anvil Team

A row is brewing at the College of Education and External Studies (CEES) over payment of service providers in parallel programmes. The most affected is the Faculty of External Studies (FES) which has not paid its service providers for six months now.

According to our source, the bone of contention has been queries by the Principal CEES, Prof Lucia Omondi, over glaring disparities in payment and her insistence on inclusion of staff from her office and the Finance department. The highest paid member from the faculty gets Ksh 49,000 and the lowest earns Ksh 1,350. Some senior lectures, it is said, earn less than the administrative staff.

The faculty on the other hand insists that staff from the Principal's office and the accounts department can only be paid when their duties are specified. At the moment FES pays the cashier who is actively involved in collection of fees.

The faculty further insists that the Principal's Office has its own allocations from parallel programmes, separate from the faculty and the department. They insist that the Principal should use her office allocation to pay service providers within her department. Finance department is directly under the principals office.

Fees paid by parallel students is divided between the central administration, the college, faculty, department and

the library. Each has its own budget.

Our sources further indicated that memos have been exchanged between the Dean FES, Prof. David Macharia and the Principal, but approval for expenditure has not been granted.

Early this year, parallel programmes under CEES were almost paralysed when lecturers from the faculties of education and social sciences petitioned the Vice Chancellor to order the principal CEES to approve payment of services rendered or withdraw from the programme.

Lecturers in the two faculties had taught for months without payment. University of Nairobi Enterprises and Services (UNES), the body that manages parallel courses, does not release payments without prior approval from the relevant College Principal. The Vice Chancellor's intervention saved the situation.

On the spotlight is the college auditor, a Mr. Aritho, who has been accused of working in collaboration with others to frustrate FES. At one time, the Dean wrote to the Director, UNES, informing him to advise Mr. Aritho on what to audit regarding payments of service providers.

Mr Aritho has had a share of his problems with the Kikuyu Campus fraternity. He is said to insist on seeing the original insurance sticker on the vehicle, before passing mileage claims. Normally copies of a log book and insurance stickers filed with the college are enough.

Other complaints about the auditor include his insistence on teaching timetables before processing teaching claims

already authorised by the head of the department.

Anvil further learned that retrenched workers who left the Faculty in March this year, have not been paid for the services rendered. The Principal CEES has been wondering why they should be paid when they are no longer on the payroll. The Faculty argues that the retrenched workers rendered service before they were axed and deserved payment. This has formed part of the problem. The deadlock was there before retrenchment.

Workers have been contemplating on a go slow or a complete withdrawal from the programme over frustrations and delay in payments. They however, fear that this could be used as an excuse to retrench them during the second phase.

Early this year, attempts by the university to implement the Kibera (IV) report which suggested among others, to pay lecturers on the basis of the number of students, paralysed parallel programmes for three days when the dons refused to teach. The administrators retreated and classes resumed.

As the events unfold, students are likely to be the victims as some lecturers threaten to pull out of parallel programmes in FES. Teaching in parallel programmes is considered a part time assignment which makes withdrawal have less bearing on a lecturer's terms of service.

## Water contamination

By Tom Ongalo  
and Dorothy Otieno

**Water supply to consumers in Nairobi is properly treated and safe for consumption.**

Responding to a question by Mr. Njehu Gatabaki, the Assistant Minister for Local Government, Mr. Musa Sirma, told Parliament on Tuesday that the city's water system is treated through three plants, namely Ng'ethu, Sasumua and Kabete.

Mr. Gatabaki had sought to know what measures the Government was taking to ensure that water supplied to consumers in the city and other towns conforms with international standards. Mr. Sirma explained that the treatment involves an aluminium sulphate dosage, coagulation and flocculation, sedimentation, filtration, chlorination, and PH correction.

He added that "the results obtained from the Quality Monitoring Unit indicate that City Council's tap water is safe and is within both the Kenyan standards and the World Health Organization's guidelines and values".

A visibly infuriated Gatabaki asked the Assistant Minister to assure the House that his wife and children drink water directly from the taps without boiling.

Mr. Sirma drew the ire of the House when he jokingly invited Mr. Gatabaki to his house for confirmation. The Speaker, Mr. Francis Ole Kaparo, warned the Assistant Minister to take the House seriously since the matter was of grave concern to Kenyans

taps. "Even in Parliament, no Hon. Member takes water without asking whether it has been boiled!", Mr. Muite added.

Despite spirited pleas to the Assistant Minister from the Leader of the Official Opposition, Mr. Mwai Kibaki, Mr. Simeon Nyachae and Mr. Kamolleh to declare tap water in the city contaminated, Mr. Sirma maintained that it was fit for consumption. He said that any contamination could be a result of other reasons such as leakages within the piping system. He also attributed the notices in hotels warning tourists not to drink tap water as a conspiracy by bottled water dealers to market their products.

Mr. Norman Nyagah drew the attention of the House to the Report of the House Committee on Health, Housing, Labour and Social Services which toured the whole country extensively and established the inability of local authorities to treat water.

The Speaker ordered Mr. Sirma to consult with the Minister for Public Health, Prof. Ongeru and come back to the House in two weeks time with a satisfactory answer.

Mr. Anyona described this trend as disruptive of proceedings, while the Opposition Chief Whip Mr. Norman Nyagah drew the attention of the Speaker to his earlier directive to the Leader of Government Business that Ministers must be in the House to answer questions.

The Speaker, in his ruling, replied that the Government has a higher responsibility to Parliament and to the public than an individual Member of Parliament. He called upon the Government to