

Varsities' staff union wants new NHIF rates suspended

By BRIGID CHEMWENO

The Kenya University Staff Union (Kusu) has demanded the suspension of new rates levied by the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF).

The union also wants money deducted from its members' basic salaries refunded with immediate effect.

Kusu National Organising Secretary Ernest Wayaya said the NHIF board did not explain the fate of existing medical schemes that workers belong to or assure contributors that their hard-earned cash would not be misappropriated.

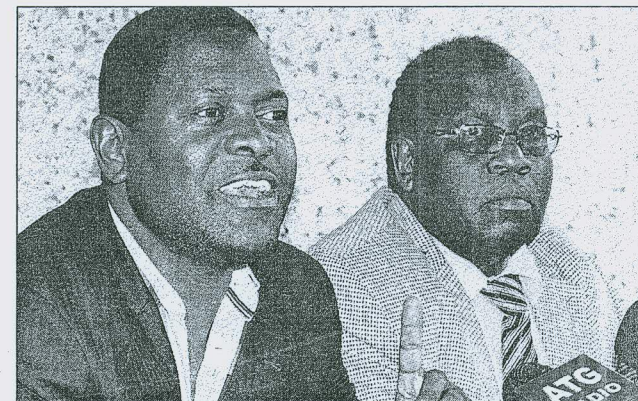
"NHIF has in the past been involved in scandals and no one has given an assurance that the cash will not be misappropriated. The board has also published names of appointed health facilities without prior consultation," said Mr Wayaya.

He pointed out that the majority of health facilities had no capacity to offer commensurate medical services.

"It is ironical that while workers' money is being deducted, the medical benefits they are paying for are not feasible yet. University employees will not pander to the whims of a heartless and insensitive government," he added.

Meanwhile, Charles Mukhwaya, the secretary general of the Federation of Public Service Trade Unions of Kenya, told the press yesterday that Kusu supports calls by affiliate unions within the Trade Unions Congress of Kenya to resort to industrial action if the demand is not met.

"It is heartless for a government on one hand to freeze salary reviews for hapless workers and on the other impose increased taxation in the name of NHIF on their poor pay. The new deductions have severely reduced workers' take home to below the statutory one-third and rendered them destitute," said Mr Mukhwaya.



Public Service Trade Unions Secretary General Charles Mukhwaya with national chairman Anthony Nyakoni at a press conference in Nairobi yesterday. [PHOTO: WILLIS AWANDU/STANDARD]

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Kwengu and Company Advocates represented Apex Finance International Ltd and Anglo Leasing companies in case against the defunct craft agency



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