

Nelson Mandela University workers march for higher salaries

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Marchers demand an 8% increase.



Employees of Nelson Mandela University marched on Wednesday, demanding an 8% salary increase. Photo: Thamsanqa Mbovane

About 200 employees of Nelson Mandela University (NMU) protested outside the university on Wednesday, demanding a salary increase.

The singing workers marched from Kings Beach, led by National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (NEHAWU)'s Thabo Moshoeshe region.

They demanded an 8% salary increase, better housing allowances, medical scheme benefits and equality between black and white staff members.

The protest was supported by Cosatu , the South African National Civics Organisation, the South African Students Congress and the South African Communist Party. Protesters, who included cleaners, caterers, clerks and supervisors, said they wanted answers within 30 days.

The marchers blew whistles and vuvuzelas. They carried placards that read: “Housing allowance must increase from 1,100 to 1,500” and “Fill all vacant vacancies”.

NEHAWU shop steward Vuyokazi Nkevu-Langbooi led protesters in songs including “Oliver Tambo thuma mina, kulomasela Oliver Tambo” (Oliver Tambo send me to the thieves, Oliver Tambo) and “Iyo iyo iyo kuyatsha” (Iyo iyo iyo it’s burning) and “Asinavalo sisebenza kanzima (we are not scared, we work hard).

NEHAWU regional secretary Samkelo Msila said black employees were paid the minimum and employees of other races the maximum for the job.

Police monitored the protest which ended in the early afternoon.

The protesters dispersed after their memorandum was accepted by Lesiba Ramoroka, director of employee relations at the university, who promised to give it to the relevant people.

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