Ondo institutions lament non-payment of salaries

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Ondo institutions lament non-payment of salaries  
  
Only AAUA affected, says commissioner  
  
Workers in Ondo State-owned tertiary institutions have cried out to Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa over the non-payment of their accumulated salaries and allowances.  
  
They were last paid in June.  
  
It was learnt that the subvention given to the schools by the state government is unable to cover salary payment.  
  
Besides, the schools are not generating enough funds to augment the subvention.  
  
Those affected are workers in four tertiary institutions – Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko (AAUA), Olusegun Agagu University of Science and Technology (OAUSTECH) Okitipupa, University of Medical Sciences (UNIMED), Ondo; and Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, (RUGIPO).  
  
According to them, the non-payment has affected their personal and social life.  
  
Commissioner for Education Prof. Igbekele Ajibefun said only the workers in AAUA are still being owed. He said workers of the other tertiary institutions have been paid up to date.  
  
Speaking on behalf of the workers, the Chairman of the Joint Action Committee (JAC) of the state-owned tertiary institutions, Comrade Olutayo Ogungbeni, said they are dying of hunger as result of the non-payment of their salaries.  
  
He decried that the situation was getting worse for the tertiary institutions workers, stressing that many could no longer feed their families and offset their children’s school fees with the existing cost of living crisis.  
  
Appealing to Governor Aiyedatiwa to facilitate immediate payment of their salaries, Ogungbeni said the subvention to the school, particularly Adekunle Ajasin University, is no longer sustainable to pay workers’ salaries and arrears.  
  
“As of today, we are yet to receive the July salary. So, if we should count August, which will end this week, it shows we are automatically being owed two months’ salaries.  
  
“And as I speak, there’s no hope that by this week they will pay us the salary. I remember during our struggle; an increase in subvention to the schools, especially AAUA, was a major issue we discussed with the governor.  
  
“N560 million monthly subvention to AAUA where salary would be paid including for pensioners, but the state government is releasing only N223 million, thereby leaving the school to augment it. You can imagine that the margin is far,” he said.  
  
Ogungbeni added: “Apart from AAUA, the challenge with other state owned-institution, especially in RUGIPO and UNIMED, is that they are yet to be paid the 2024 National minimum wage.”  
  
He called on Governor Aiyedatiwa to help the workers in the payment of their salary, saying there are those who depend solely on them to survive financially.  
  
Ogungbeni said: “As I speak with you, some of our colleagues (university workers) are ill. They don’t have the money to buy drugs or pay for hospital treatment. Many can’t even afford food. We go to school hungry and return hungry.  
  
“Although we know the problem confronted by the state is the issue of the multi-tertiary institutions, but the state is capable if you are to consider the increase in the federation account allocation to the state every month.”  
  
Prof. Ajibefun said the institutions have been paid, except workers of the AAUA, whose arrears are still outstanding.  
  
Ajibefun confirmed that some of the state owned-institutions are finding it difficult to pay salaries because of the subventions accruable to the schools, noting that the government would soon address the wide margin created by the fund.