

Zimbabwe government workers vow to strike over late pay

HARARE: Government workers in Zimbabwe vowed on Tuesday, 29 December, to go on strike in January after their salaries and annual bonuses were not paid in the latest sign of the country's economic woes.



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The state-controlled Herald newspaper quoted workers' representatives as saying their members had not received their wages and would not work after 1 January.

"We do not have transport money to go to work, which simply means that we will be home starving without even food," Zimbabwe Nurses Association general secretary Enock Dongo said.

Tens of thousands of government workers began their Christmas holidays without pay after the government failed to process salaries that were due in mid-December. For the first time since independence in 1980, the government has also not paid civil servants their annual bonuses.

Finance minister Patrick Chinamasa issued a statement apologising for "all the inconveniences caused" and pledging that the salaries would be paid after a delay. Zimbabwe's economy has been on a downturn for more than a decade since veteran President Robert Mugabe oversaw the often violent eviction of white farmers under controversial land reforms.

The economy shrank by about 40% between 2000 and 2009, and government wages now suck up about 80% of

government revenue.

Source: AFP

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