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News

Legal aid lawyers to meet managers

June 18, 2008 *Edition 1***Staff Reporter**

Union representatives of the Legal Aid Board lawyers are to meet board management tomorrow and have threatened to go ahead with a strike if the outcome is not "satisfactory".

Advocate Ben van der Walt, general secretary of South African Parastatal and Tertiary Institution Union (Saptu), representing the lawyers, said the meeting was due to take place at the LAB head office in Braamfontein in Johannesburg.

Van der Walt said the lawyers represented the "poorest of the poor" and with the downward spiralling economy, they were battling to survive on their current salary packages.

He said the lawyers had been waiting since February for the new salary scales to be implemented.

"We try our level best to serve the poor, and with food and fuel prices increasing this way we can't survive. We will discuss the latest on the Occupational Specific Dispensation and finalise the process in tomorrow's meeting," he said.

Van der Walt said the services of the LAB were not deemed essential services and they had the "full right to strike".

He explained that the LAB had applied to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration on being considered an essential service but the application was rejected.

"We will make a decision to tell all our members ... to embark on a full-scale strike."

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