



South Africa faces major public sector strike

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Technology 0 One of South Africa's largest public sector unions on Monday gave notice of its intention to strike after rejecting a 3% wage offer from the government. The Public Servants Association (PSA), which says it has more than 235 000 members, could embark on a national strike from Wednesday next week, potentially affecting service delivery across government departments. It would be the first major strike in the public sector since 2010. Salary negotiations began in May, with unions initially demanding a 10% increase, but this was later revised down to 6.5%. Government had hoped to conclude wage negotiations ahead of its mid-term budget on Wednesday. Government had hoped to conclude wage negotiations ahead of its mid-term budget on Wednesday, but with the deadlock in wage talks that is unlikely to happen. The public sector wage bill makes up about a third of total government expenditure. Government has been trying to keep a lid on rising civil servants' salaries as part of efforts to contain recurring budget deficits. Its offer to public servants included a once-off cash payment of R1 000, but unions say that does not materially improve their income. "As long as the cash gratuity ends next year March they (PSA members) won't accept the deal," senior PSA official Reuben Maleka said. Most unions in the country's largest labour federation Cosatu, which is in an alliance with the ANC, have also rejected government's wage offer. But they are yet to file a notice that they intend to strike. — (c) 2022 Reuters...