

India: Kerala nurses on state-wide strike

## Workers Struggles: Asia, Australia and the Pacific

15 July 2017

*The World Socialist Web Site invites workers and other readers to contribute to this regular feature by writing to [comments@wsws.org](mailto:comments@wsws.org).*

### Hyundai Motor workers to vote on strike action

Over 51,000 Hyundai Motor union members in South Korea were voting this week on whether to strike for increases in wages and benefits. The ballot closed Friday. The union wants monthly basic wages increased by 154,883 won (\$US136) and a bonus of 30 percent of the company's 2016 full-year net profit.

Union members at Kia Motors, Hyundai's sister company, will soon vote on whether to strike after negotiations with management were halted. Kia workers' demands are the same as their counterparts at Hyundai.

### India: Kerala nurses on state-wide strike

Over 80,000 nurses from state-government hospitals in Kerala escalated ongoing industrial action and called a national stoppage on Tuesday after failed talks with government officials on Monday. Indian Nurses Association (INA) and United Nurses Association (UNA) members began strike action at the end of June to demand a wage increase. INA members are also holding a hunger strike outside the Secretariat in Kochi.

The 9,500 rupees (\$US148) monthly minimum wage for nurses was established in 2013. Nurses claim that most hospitals are paying below this minimum and want it increased to 20,000 rupees.

UNA members from 328 private hospitals in Kerala are on strike to demand the same minimum pay as government hospital nurses. They claim that some hospitals keep them as trainees indefinitely and only pay a 6,500-rupee monthly stipend.

The nurses rejected a pay offer of 17,500 rupees, including allowances, from the government and the Private Hospitals Association. The Kerala industrial relations committee is to decide on the nurses' demands on July 20.

### Chennai sanitation workers on strike

Sanitation workers from the Greater Chennai Corporation, Tamil Nadu

struck work on July 7 over the corporation's plans to extend privatisation of garbage collection to more than 70 percent of the city.

Over 300 permanent and temporary workers from CITU's affiliated Red Flag Union demonstrated near the Chepauk state guest house. They are concerned that privatisation will reduce their wages and could render them jobless. They also claim that their meagre 295-rupee daily wage is often cut by their supervisors. The workers have threatened to begin indefinite strike action at the end of July if their demands are not met.

### Andhra Pradesh municipal contract workers strike

Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) contract workers struck for three days on Tuesday in opposition to the Andhra Pradesh government's proposed sanitation privatisation order GO279. The walkout was part of state-wide action coordinated by the Joint Action Committee.

Last month, a large group of workers, representing over 3,400 fellow GVMC contract employees, demonstrated outside the corporation's headquarters in protest against plans to privatise sanitation services. Sanitation, water supply, lighting and park workers, drivers and contract workers were involved in the protest.

The GVMC Contract Workers' Union claims that the corporation had reduced the sanitation workforce from 4,000 to 3,400 even though the city's population is now two million.

### Hyderabad hospital sanitation workers strike

Around 250 sanitation workers at the Gandhi Hospital in Hyderabad walked off the job indefinitely on Tuesday over the non-payment of salaries. Workers said they have faced the same issue three times in the past six months and have only been paid after taking strike action. They said they would not return to work until the salary arrears are paid.

### East Delhi sanitation workers call another strike

The union representing over 25,000 sanitation workers from the East Delhi Municipal Corporation (EDMC) has threatened to call an indefinite

strike on July 27 if the corporation fails to distribute unpaid wages and entitlements. It will be the fifth time in a year that these workers have walked out over the issue.

According to their union, the Swatantra Mazdoor Vikas Sanyukt Morcha, the workers have not received their salaries and pensions for three months as well as pay arrears outstanding three years ago, and promised cashless medical cards. A spokesman said workers will begin strike action on July 27 and continue until their demands are met.

Last month, 600 members of the All Municipal Corporation Staff Union and All Municipal Corporation Sanitation Supervisors' Union ended a four-day strike over unpaid wages after EDMC invoked the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA). Sanitation supervisors were demanding two months' wages, filling of vacant supervisory positions, promotions and distribution of cashless medical facilities cards. EDMC said it would meet most of their demands.

### **Pakistan: Islamabad charity workers protest**

Employees of the not-for-profit National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) demonstrated in Islamabad on Tuesday demanding minimum salaries as per the law. Protesters, mostly teachers and workers from provincial areas, demonstrated outside the NCHD offices in Blue Area and then marched to the National Press Club.

A workers' representative told the media that NCHD employees had been denied benefits and allowances since 2013 in defiance of Islamabad High Court orders.

### **Sri Lankan government surveyors strike**

Around 800 surveyors from Sri Lanka's Survey Department held a two-day sick-leave strike on July 11 over six demands, including wages, financial benefits and improved working condition. The surveyors also want long-term solutions for the shortage of survey field assistants.

Sri Lanka Government Surveyors' Association members demonstrated outside the land ministry office to demand a meeting with the minister. The surveyors association decided to call an indefinite strike on Thursday following failed talks with the minister.

### **Bangladeshi municipal workers protest**

Hundreds of workers from the Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) demonstrated on Monday in a dispute over unpaid wages and a pay increase. They occupied the RCC building and locked the compound gates.

The RCC Workers Union has made 11 demands. These include promotion of permanent employees based on seniority, access to bank loans for permanent workers, preferential hiring for relatives of dead and retired workers and implementation of the government's revised wage structure from May 24, 2016.

The union says that employees working on a daily basis currently are only paid 300 taka (\$US4) but the official fixed daily rate is 450 taka. The workers' action followed several demonstrations in June after which RCC falsely told workers their grievances would be resolved after Eid religious

holiday. Union leaders warned that the strike would continue until workers' demands are met.

### **Cash delivery guards in South Australia and Northern Territory strike**

Prosecur cash delivery guards in South Australia and the Northern Territory struck for four hours on Tuesday to demand higher pay. A spokesman for the Transport Workers Union claimed that the enterprise agreement offered to workers by the international cash management company include an inferior flat pay rate that attacks penalties and allowances. The union has said there could be further industrial action over the dispute.

### **Solomon Islands doctors issue strike notice**

The Solomon Islands Medical Association (SIMA) issued a strike notice to the government on June 23 after six months of failed negotiations for a review of the doctors' work agreement. A SIMA representative said that the doctors are working under an agreement that has not changed since 2005.

SIMA said that the government has ignored the 28-day strike notice and that doctors would begin strike action in escalating stages from July 21 when the notice expires.

### **New Caledonia pilots strike**

Pilots from Air Caledonia, the country's flagship carrier, walked off the job without notice on Thursday in a dispute over management's disciplinary methods. All flights by the airline have been cancelled. Few details have been made public but the pilots were still on strike yesterday morning.



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](http://wsws.org/contact)**