

Union ends strike by Fiat Chrysler workers in Serbia

Workers Struggles: Europe, Middle East & Africa

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Striking Serbian autoworkers return to work

The union at the Fiat Chrysler factory in Kragujevac agreed to call off a strike that began June 27 following the intervention of the federal government. Some 2,000 workers at the facility had been seeking a 12 percent pay rise, the payment of previously agreed bonuses and the recruitment of additional staff.

Ana Brnabic, the Serbian prime minister, intervened and organised talks between the union and Fiat representatives, which were due to begin on Wednesday. Brnabic said she would be present at the talks.

The strike completely shut down production at the factory. The workers are demanding a wage increase from the current average monthly salary of 38,000 dinar (€316 or \$US362) to 50,000 dinars.

The members of the Unite union are opposing Birmingham City Council's plans to cut 120 jobs. They began the action on June 30 and plan to carry out the daily stoppages until September.

Rail guards on another UK train company vote to strike

Train guards working for Greater Anglia are being balloted by their union, the Rail, Maritime and Transport (RMT) union, over plans by the company to bring in driver only operated (DOO) rolling stock and get rid of guards' jobs. Greater Anglia runs trains out of the London Liverpool Street station serving the East Anglia region.

British Airways staff in further strike action

British Airways staff working for the mixed fleet based at Heathrow, London began a further two-week strike on Wednesday against low pay and to oppose sanctions taken against those who participated in previous strikes. The members of the Unite union are due to begin a further two-week strike on August 2. They have been involved in a long running dispute.

Ukrainian miners underground protest

Miners in the Lugansk region of Ukraine employed by the state-owned company Lysychanskvugillya began an underground sit-in on July 15 to protest salary arrears.

Around 70 stayed underground at the Kapustin mine followed by 20-plus miners at the Novodruzhska mine the following day. The arrears, which date back to 2015, amount to 96 million UAH (\$3.7M). On Monday the miners' families and supporters held a support rally at the Kapustin mine.

UK job centre staff walk out at Sheffield office

Staff at the Eastern Avenue Job Centre in Sheffield began a weeklong strike on Monday. They are members of the Public and Commercial Services union. It is their second weeklong strike against the threatened closure of the Job Centre, which is part of a campaign of closures targeting more than 70 other centers throughout the country. Pickets were present each morning throughout the strike.

Walkout by Hungarian civil servants

Around 6,000 Hungarian civil servants at over 100 sites went out on strike on Monday. Members of the Workers Union of Hungarian Employees of the Public Sector (MKKSZ) are seeking a 25 percent pay increase over three years. The strike took place after talks between the union and deputy state secretary Laszlo Felkai broke down on July 14.

Birmingham waste collection workers step up action

Refuse workers in Birmingham, currently carrying out a daily two-hour stoppage, are to step it up to three hours a day from July 28.

Portuguese specialist nurses demand recognition

Around 2,000 specialist nurses in Portugal employed by the country's

health service, the SNS, are set to come out on all-out strike between July 31 and August 4.

The nurses, who work in obstetric and maternity units, began a limited action on July 3 that took the form of only doing normal nursing duties and not performing their specialist roles. They are seeking recognition and a pay enhancement for their specialist skills.

Italian telecoms staff vote to strike

Staff working for the Italian telecoms company BT Italia are to strike on July 26. The whole workforce of around 1,000 is due to walk out over the company's plans to cut around 200 jobs. The staff are represented by the Silec-cgil, Fistel-cisl and Uilcom-uil unions. The UK BT Company owns an 11 percent controlling share in BT Italia.

Sweden's Labour Court rules refuse collectors wildcat strike illegal

Sweden's Labour court has ruled a strike by refuse collectors in Stockholm illegal. The workers took wildcat action on July 5 in protest at plans by the company Reno Norden to cut their pay.

The company collects household waste from around 10,000 houses in the capital. Some of the refuse workers resigned last week after the court decision, but the remaining strikers have now returned to work.

Professional pathologists walkout as their assistants return to work in South Africa

Following the strike by pathology lab assistants, which has just concluded, pathology professionals are to go on a national strike.

Their employer, the National Health Laboratory Service (NHLS) is offering a three percent pay increase while the workers are demanding 7.3 percent. The official rate of inflation is recorded at 5.1 percent and upwards.

The lab assistants were sent back to work with their union accepting they can carry out aspects of the professionals' work, (the main reason for the strike) without extra pay.

The South African NHLS had become more dependent on assistants as professional pathologists are not being replaced. A health workers' union spokesman said some of its members, cleaners and drivers, are involved in cutting and stitching up bodies.

Education institutions under fire in Nigeria

Education institution workers throughout Nigeria continue to strike over unpaid wages and associated issues. The Federal College of Education in Gombe State, a technical college, is on indefinite strike over a backlog of unpaid allowances.

The striking lecturers union, the College of Education Academic Staff Union, COEASU came out on strike July 11, and has had a no-work no-pay diktat imposed on them by the education authorities.

Members of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) are out on strike at the Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, or LAUTECH, over unpaid salaries. An ASUU spokesman said the college has almost lost a full semester to the strike and still there is no end in sight. ASUU says its members have been reduced to paupers.

ASUU members in Nasarawa State are appealing to the federal government to release billions of Naira to head off an impending indefinite strike. Meanwhile the NLC and the TUC are sending public sector workers back to work on promises regularly broken by the state government.

Nigerian port workers bring a halt to cargo movement with a half-day strike

Nigerian port workers went on a half-day warning strike on July 11 to protest the amendment of the Nigerian Ports Authority Act going through the National Assembly. The union, the Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria (MWUN), says the amendment threatens more job losses.

MWUN members blockaded entrances to Nigerian ports stopping loading and unloading of cargo. A spokesman for the union complained that previous concessions in the past had reduced the number of port jobs from 14,000 to 3,000.

Kenyan university unions capitulate to government demands

Kenyan authorities threatened to close down the universities if the unions did not accept the promised pay agreement in two tranches. Two unions involved in the dispute, the University Academic Staff Union (UASU) and Kenya University Staff Union (KUSU), shelved their campaign and capitulated to their employer's demands.

The unions have consistently conceded to the onslaught of the Kenyan government in its refusal to implement an agreed collective bargaining agreement (CBA). They had backed off from the CBA based on full payment in one tranche of their monetary settlement.

The government has again been emboldened as the unions prostrate themselves in front of the crisis-ridden administration. Although the strike has been called off promises of the pay settlement being in the post may still not materialise.

Kenyan doctors union threaten action over non-payment of salaries

Kenyan doctors of the Kenya Medical Practitioners and Doctors Union (KMPDU) of Trans Nzoia threatened to strike over the non-payment of their June salaries. The doctors gave the state government a week to pay their wages and outstanding remittances, while questioning why they had not been paid.

According to the understanding of the medical workers, the federal government had released funds to pay their wages.

In an attempt to stigmatize the potential strikers, the state government accused them of using the strike politically. A union spokesman accused state officials of using the doctors' pay to finance electioneering.

Kenyan nurses strike continues

More than 25,000 Kenyan nurses remain out on strike. The Council of Governors (CG) and now the Salaries and Remunerations Committee have reasserted their objection to paying the nurses.

A Council of Governors representative said nurses' wages are too high and that the CG is already struggling to pay the doctors' 100-day strike settlement, insisting there are more than just doctors and nurses to pay.



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