

Angolan teachers threaten strike

Workers Struggles: Europe, Middle East & Africa

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Angolan teachers are preparing to strike on April 9 thru April 27.

Educators, members of the National Union of Teachers, want a teaching statute implemented to improve salaries and teacher training, but the government refuses to discuss this. The workers previously struck over the same issues in April 2017. Union officials stressed that they had repeatedly given the government additional time to address teachers' issues, but that problems remain unresolved.

In last year's strike, police shot at students, injuring three. The students were demonstrating over the introduction of fees for their education and teachers were sacked for opposing the new charges.

The country, Africa's largest oil producer, has been hard hit by the fall in global oil prices, which have cut into state revenues.

Nigerian Embassy workers sacked

Nigerian Embassy workers in the US capital of Washington, D.C. have been made redundant, some with 30 years service. Fifteen of the embassy staff's jobs have gone because of rationalization, according to the Nigerian government.

Workers had in the past carried out a go-slow at the embassy over months of unpaid wages.

Nigerian university non-academic staff strike after academics' strike ends

Non-academic union members at the Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University in Nassau state, Nigeria, embarked on a seven-day warning strike on March 27, following the Easter break.

The strike by the Non-Academic Staff Union (NASU) members follows a settlement at the university with members of another union—the Academic Staff Union of Universities—over N500 million (US\$1.39 million) of unpaid allowances.

NASU claims that outstanding allowances owed to them amount to N1.5 billion (US\$4.17 million).

Pickets locked the academics' office, the bursary, library and the porter's room.

Kenyan university workers strike continues in defiance of court order

A month-long strike continues in 31 public universities across Kenya to demand management sign a collective bargaining agreement. Workers involved in the dispute have walked out four times in the last year.

Six hundred thousand students are affected, and 27,000 university staff are threatened with their income being stopped.

A labour court ruling two weeks ago imposed a return to work on the Universities Academic Staff Union, the Kenya Universities Staff Union and the Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers.

The court ordered university vice chancellors to commit to negotiations over the 2017-21 collective bargaining agreement within 30 days. The government insists on a job evaluation before negotiations can get under way.

Kenyan government reneges on doctors and nurses pay increase

Kenya's health unions are considering strike action as central government has reneged on agreed pay increases.

The collective bargaining agreement (CBA) signed in November last year for 2017-21 was to add Sh11.6 billion (US\$114.724 million) to the Sh314 billion (US\$3.105 billion) annual budget, to increase in doctors' and nurses' pay.

The central government has instructed the 47 county governors responsible for health to ignore the commitment. Any pay increases will have to be found within each county budget or paid for by deductions from their other social spending.

Kenyan national health sector workers went out on strike for five months last year to get the CBA signed.

Last week, workers in the Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentists' Union threatened to strike if the lecturers strike continues. The lecturers train student doctors.

The strike warning applies to two leading hospitals, the Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) and Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital in Eldoret, where staff are worn out with work overload.

Seven hundred student doctors went on strike in early March at KNH in defence of a colleague held responsible for a hospital blunder.

Unions call off Zimbabwean doctors' and nurses' strike over pay and

conditions

Zimbabwe's Hospital Doctors Association called off a month-long strike by doctors, with staff returning to work April 3.

Doctors struck to demand better pay and conditions, an increase in on-call allowances, a cancellation on vehicle duty and a modification of their rural allowances.

In sending its members back to work, the union cited a "review" of allowances, and said that procurement of medicines and drugs was "in motion," adding they "were aware of the shortage of foreign currency hence we're not expecting change overnight."

Striking nurses were instructed by their union, the Zimbabwe Nurses Association, to go back to work March 19, without a pay increase.

Zambian miners' union accepts casualisation

Zambia's Mine Workers Union, in dispute with Konkola Copper Mines over the contracting out of its workforce, has turned a blind eye to the company's casualisation.

The copper mining company has moved 200 of its 1,000 employees over to South African firms Reliant and Minopex, as well as Chinese firm MMS, Scalmont of South America and CMC of Italy. The union denied all knowledge.

South African shop workers strike over wages and conditions

Shop workers at the South African supermarket chain, Shoprite, carried out a two-day strike and protested outside its Elliot Street branch in Johannesburg.

Workers, members of the South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union, want to be put on the company books after being casual for five years. Some of the casuals have worked at the company for over 16 years.

They also want to increase their hours from 32 to 40 hours a week to up their pay, and secure transport home after late shifts.

The South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union is calling for a boycott of all its branches across Africa. Shoprite employs 144,000 workers across southern Africa, with a R141 billion (US \$11.875 billion) turnover.

A three-day strike took place at the upmarket store, Shoprite Checkers, at its Horizon View Village Rooderpoort branch, for a pay increase.

Workers complain they cannot live on the R500 (US\$42) a week and there is no premium pay for Sunday or late working.

Air France staff, SNCF rail workers continue strikes

Following Tuesday's Air France strike by 60,000 flight, cabin and ground crew, there will be further strikes on April 10 and 11 for a 6 percent pay increase.

The strike led to the cancellation of around a third of long and medium-haul flights.

The Air France stoppage is part of a growing strike movement against

the attacks of the government headed by Emmanuel Macron.

This week rail workers employed by state rail operator SNCF began a series of rolling strikes to be held over three months. The government plans to push through privatization plans, with attacks on the jobs and conditions of the 150,000 workers.

Strikes were held on Tuesday and Wednesday hitting around 4.5 million commuters daily, cancelling nearly 90 percent of high-speed trains and 80 percent of regional services.

The four unions representing the strikers have limited the actions to taking two days of strike action every five days until the end of June to dilute the impact.

Refuse collectors strike in major French cities

Refuse collectors in Paris, Marseille and Montpellier are on strike over poor working conditions, pay cuts, a decrease in working hours and ongoing privatisation. The members of the CGT began an indefinite strike on Monday.

Due to the nature of their work, refuse collection workers can expect to live 15 years less than other workers.

UK barristers protest new payment scheme

Barristers in the UK are refusing to accept new legal aid cases and are planning walkouts. The Criminal Bar Association members began action from April 1, when a new payment system, the Advocates Graduated Fee Scheme, began.

Under the scheme, payment will be linked to the complexity of cases, but barristers argue this does not reflect the amount of material to be examined, regardless of complexity.

Unite union try to end bus drivers' strike in Aberdeen, Scotland

The ongoing strike by around 250 bus drivers employed by the First Bus conglomerate in Aberdeen was due to escalate into an all-out strike on Friday.

Contract changes by First Bus would mean some drivers working 12-hour shifts with 10 hours at the wheel. Other changes include split shifts, cuts to holiday pay and pension provision.

On Wednesday, talks began between First Bus management and the Unite union aimed at ending the strike. The talks are being held at the government reconciliation service Acas.

Strike of recycling staff in Hull, UK

Around 20 workers at two FCC Environment recycling centre sites, Wilmington and Driffield in Hull, England, began a 14-day strike on March 29. It follows a one-week strike at the beginning of March.

The Unison members are striking over pay, working conditions and the low level of sick pay.

FCC is a subsidiary of a major Spanish waste management company.

electricians, but not the oil industry.

Further strikes by Ryanair staff in Portugal

Cabin crew employed by Ryanair's Portuguese operations held a third day of strikes on Wednesday, following one-day stoppages on March 29 and last Sunday.

According to Reuters, over 300 took part in Wednesday's strike, representing around 90 percent of the workforce. They are striking over poor industrial relations, including disciplinary measures and threats to meet in-flight sales targets.

The cabin crew union SNPVAC said the action grounded around 15 flights.

Walkout by Cypriot bus drivers

Bus drivers employed by Zenon in the Cypriot city of Larnaca staged an unofficial two-hour work stoppage last Friday. The 100 workers were protesting delays in payment of their wages until next week. The company blamed delays in the payment of a government subsidy.

Irish life insurance company workers to strike

Around 1,000 workers at the life assurance and pension company, Irish Life, are to hold a 24-hour strike on April 12.

The strike by the Unite union members is in opposition to Irish Life's decision to close its staff's defined benefit pension scheme on June 30 despite being in surplus. Staff would be transferred to an inferior defined contribution scheme.

The strike is expected to hit the company's head office operation, regional offices and its call centre in Dundalk.

Italian port workers strike over workplace safety after fatal accident

Port workers in the Italian city of Livorno came out on strike on March 29, following the death in an explosion of two workers carrying out maintenance work on gas tanks the previous day.

The local prosecutor has opened a manslaughter investigation.

Norwegian private sector workers set strike date

Around 250,000 workers in private industry are threatening strike action over wages, pensions and benefits from April 8.

The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions and the employers, represented by the Confederation of National Enterprise, are in talks.

If the strike goes ahead, around 35,000 workers will be involved initially, hitting fertilizer production, metal production, transport and

Protesting Iranian sugar workers arrested

Several workers at the Haft Tapeh sugar cane mill in Ahvaz in southwestern Iran were arrested by Iranian security forces on Saturday, as they protested outside the factory over wages arrears.

Five workers were arrested in similar circumstances two days earlier.

The workers have repeatedly protested wage arrears going back to July 2017.

Iraqi civil servants stage protest against Kurdistan authority in Iraq

Hundreds of civil servants, including health workers and teachers, in the Kurdistan Regional Government area of Iraq, protested Saturday over a compulsory savings scheme, which has reduced their wages.

The demonstration was in front of the courthouse in the city of Sulaymaniah.

The health workers strike closed most of the hospitals in Sulaymaniah and all in Halabja.



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