

Spanish Amazon strike threat, Strikes spread in Iran

Workers Struggles: Europe, Middle East & Africa

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Strike threat by Spanish Amazon workers

Amazon workers at the Spanish San Fernando de Henares logistic center are threatening to strike in the run-up to the busy winter holiday season. The proposed strike dates are November 23 (to coincide with the Amazon Black Friday event), November 24, December 7, 9, 15 and 30 and January 3.

The strikes are to protest the expiry of a previous agreement covering overtime rates, pay increases and sickness benefits. The Stalinist-led CGT union said the planned strike depended on support from the CSIT and UGT unions.

Workers first struck the plant in March for 48 hours for a new collective agreement. The plant, established in 2012, employs 2,000, with 1,100 workers on fixed contracts. At the end of 2017, Amazon workers in Italy and six German sites came out over pay and conditions.

Further strike by UK rail guards at two rail franchises

Rail staff working for Arriva North are due to strike tomorrow in what will be their 36th day of action in a yearlong dispute. The members of the Rail Maritime and Transport union (RMT) are resisting the company's plans to extend the use of driver only operated (DOO) trains.

Further strikes are scheduled for each Saturday until the end of the year.

Staff on South Western Railway are also due to strike for 24-hours tomorrow with another stoppage planned for November 24. The RMT called off a strike planned for November 10 but gave no reason.

The dispute over DOO, threatening passenger safety and 6,000 conductors' jobs, has been ongoing for two years. The RMT has limited action to regional, short-term strikes, isolating and dissipating struggles. It has already sealed deals with rail franchises at ScotRail and Greater Anglia. The union has agreed a sellout deal "in principle" with Merseyrail and the Labour Party-led Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, whereby "door control and dispatch of the trains will transfer to the driver" on new trains.

Shipbuilders in northwest England vote to strike

Around 600 shipbuilders working for the Cammell Laird shipyard in Birkenhead, north west England voted by an 80 percent majority on a 75

percent turnout to strike and impose an overtime ban.

The GMB union members are opposing plans by the company to cut around 40 percent of jobs at the site by March next year. The union has put forward an alternative proposal to just delay redundancies.

Union hails victory as university administrative staff jobs are cut at Bradford, England

Administrative and support staff recently struck for four days over threats by the University of Bradford to cut up to 250 jobs. The Unison union has claimed victory in the dispute, despite the university announcing that eight jobs are now scheduled to be cut with a further 12 voluntary redundancies.

Scottish local government workers threaten pay strike

Scottish local government workers have threatened to strike against an inadequate three percent pay offer made by Scottish local authorities' body, Cosla. Around two thirds of Unison members voted for action, after a decade of pay cuts in real terms.

Strike at Northern Irish school

A third of teachers at the St. Patrick's Pim Street primary school in Belfast struck Tuesday, with further stoppages planned for November 20, 22, 27, 28 and 29.

The nine members of the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers are protesting the work regime imposed at the school, complaining that a lack of respect and fairness is impacting their health and welfare.

Strike at Northern Irish heater factory

Workers at the Glen Dimplex factory in Portadown were due to hold

24-hour strikes today and next Monday. They held a 24-hour strike October 29.

The Unite union members are seeking a 27p an hour pay rise to bring their pay in line with the so-called living wage level of £8.75 an hour. The company, owned by billionaire Martin Naughton, makes domestic heater products and employs around 100 workers.

Strike by cleaners in Portugal

Cleaners in Portugal held a strike on November 9 after failing to get a collective agreement or pay rise for the last 14 years. The members of the STAD union also demand a nighttime and Sunday working premium and holiday pay.

Iranian drivers in further round of strike action

Iranian truck drivers began a fourth round of strikes this year on November 4. The strike involved workers in 60 towns and cities.

Previous strikes took place in May, July and September. Among their demands are increased pay, payment of wages arrears, improved road safety, cheaper insurance and spare lorry parts. The strikers also demand the release of 262 drivers arrested as a result of previous strikes.

Sit-in strike by Iranian teachers

Iranian teachers began a nationwide two-day sit-in strike Tuesday, following a similar two-day stoppage in October. The teachers are protesting the government's social and educational policies, which impacts their working conditions.

Iran: Striking steel and sugar workers hold joint protest

On Tuesday the sugar workers and steel workers held a joint protest in front of the Shush County Hall in western Iran.

Sugar workers at the Haft Tappeh Sugar Cane company began their latest round of strikes on November 5, protesting unpaid wages and demanding the company be nationalized.

Steel workers at the Iran National Steel Industrial Group began their strike on November 10—also protesting unpaid wages. The steel workers have held strikes and protests throughout the year, meeting harsh measures by security forces.

Strike of Israeli social workers

Social workers in Israel began striking Sunday against attacks on them while at work. They are demanding improved security provision. They say five such attacks took place last week. Social workers and their supporters

blocked roads in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

Nigerian government refuses to commit to minimum wage increase following cancellation of general strike

Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari has rejected claims by trade unions that the government has agreed a new minimum wage of N30,000.

Three labour congresses, dominated by the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), called off a planned national strike set for November 6, saying the agreed figure would be announced following its endorsement by the president.

A spokesman for Buhari said he was only committed to giving workers a new minimum wage as soon as possible, subject to a bill in parliament.

Workers initially demanded a minimum wage of between N56,000 to N65,000. The present minimum wage of N18,000 has never been fully implemented.

Nigerian college unions end strike and accept pay cut

Unions called off a four-month strike by workers at Emmanuel Alayande College of Education on November 5—the same day the minimum wage dispute was sold out by the major Nigerian union federations.

The College of Education Academic Staff Union, Senior Staff Union of Colleges of Education in Nigeria and the Non-Academic Staff Union negotiated a 30 percent pay cut to “save” jobs.

The unions wrote a groveling letter of apology to college management in response to alleged criminal activity by strikers.

Strikers shot outside South African pharmaceutical company

Pickets outside the South African United Pharmaceutical Distribution company (UPD) in Gauteng were shot at by management-hired security guards, injuring at least five.

Workers have been on strike since Monday against UPD's illegal use of casual labour. The Labour Relations Act 2015 states that casuals should be brought onto the books after working three months for a company. Employees also want a 15 percent wage rise as they are paid under the minimum wage of R3,500 a month/ R20 per hour.

The members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa say the company is deducting medical aid and payments to a provident fund from their wages—but that they derive no benefit.

South African gold miners at South Deep mine continue strike over redundancies

Mineworkers are continuing their two-week strike at Gold Field's South Deep mine, West Rand, South Africa over threatened redundancies.

South Deep mine employs around 5,500 workers and wants to shed 1,102 full-time jobs and 460 contractors. In 2008, 1,800 workers were

made redundant.

Scabs are being transported into the mine in light-armoured vehicles.

Miners at South Africa Sibanye gold mine threaten to strike over pay increase

Workers at Sibanye-Stillwater mine are threatening a pay strike. Wage increases offered at Sibanye are lower than the 6.5 percent for skilled workers made by Harmony Gold and AngloGold. Sibanye initially offered 5.2 percent then reduced it to five percent.

The National Union of Mineworkers and the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union received a certificate to strike after negotiations at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration failed.

Twenty-one fatalities were reported at the mine from January to July 2018. Since 1994, gold mining jobs in South Africa have fallen from 400,000 to 112,000.

South African broadcasting workers protest job losses

Employees at the South African Broadcasting Corporation held pickets at offices over lunchtime across the country November 9 to oppose 2,400 job losses. 900 permanent and 1,500 freelance jobs are threatened.

The workers were also protesting alleged corruption among executives and their extravagant pay.

The members of the Communications Workers Union have given until Friday this week for the new executive board to cut their own wages by 40 percent and lift the retrenchments, or they will strike.

South African MyCiTi bus drivers continue unofficial strike for full-time employment

MyCiTi bus drivers in Cape Town, South Africa, are into their fifth week of unofficial striking to demand an end to casualisation.

The drivers are employed by labour agency Kidrogen, MyCiTi's Vehicle Operating Company, and want to be employed directly by the city.

Some bus drivers have returned to work, with the city asking the South African Road Passenger Bargaining Council to mediate with strikers.

Ghana mortuary workers strike threat over excessive work and dangerous conditions

Mortuary workers across Ghana are to strike next Monday if the Ministry of Health does not resolve their grievances.

Workers are concerned at the lack of safety facilities. Many workers are casuals and work beyond their standard forty-hour workweek with the loss of weekend and holiday breaks due to workload demands.

As the cause of death is often unknown, workers should undergo regular health checks—but this is not taking place.

The Health Ministry said a meeting had been arranged with the Mortuary Workers Association of Ghana for Tuesday this week. The union said the outcome would determine whether the strike goes ahead.

Kenyan hospital workers strike made illegal by court

Striking health workers in Homa Bay county hospitals in Kenya have been ordered back to work by the Labour Relations Court.

Hospital workers came out last Wednesday in an indefinite strike but were ordered to return Thursday.

The members of the Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentists Union, the Kenya National Union of Nurses, the Kenya Union of Clinical Officers and the Kenya Union of Medical Laboratory Officers are protesting months of unpaid wages, non-payment of statutory dues, lack of medical supplies and harassment by management.

Namibian university staff pay strike ends

Workers at the University of Namibia returned to work on Tuesday after a three-week strike over pay.

Workers were demanding a six percent pay increase backdated to January. The Namibia Public Workers Union and Namibia National Teachers Union agreed on a one-off payment of a five percent increase over seven months for 2018.

The six percent pay increase will only begin from January 2019. Workers were also demanding the waiver of the “no work no pay rule.” Instead, the unions agreed to accept half the strike days as leave days.

Zimbabwe teachers strike and demonstrate to demand wages paid in dollars

Zimbabwe teachers struck for one day in Harare last Friday and 500 demonstrated, demanding to meet the finance minister.

The workers want payment in US dollars and not Zimbabwean bond notes. For 10 years, Zimbabwe has used American, British and South African currencies because hyperinflation has rendered the Zimbabwean dollar worthless.



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