

US/NATO war drive in Ukraine triggers protests and strikes across Europe against rising fuel prices; South African Clover workers stoppage enters week 16 as gold miners continue stoppage at Sibanye-Stillwater; protests in southern Iraq over food price rises due to proxy war in Ukraine

Workers Struggles: Europe, Middle East & Africa

17 March 2022

The World Socialist Web Site invites workers and other readers to contribute to this regular feature.

Europe

US/NATO war drive in Ukraine triggers protests and strikes across Europe against rising fuel prices

The rising cost of fuel due to the proxy war in the Ukraine is driving a wave of strikes and protests across Europe.

Lorry drivers in Italy stopped work on Monday, demanding measures to cut the price of diesel. A strike notice by the association *TransportoUnito* was rejected by a government commission as it did not give 25 days' notice, but the association called for haulage companies and self-employed drivers to refuse to drive on Monday anyway. According to *ANSA*, dozens of drivers joined a stoppage in Sardinia, telling the agency that since January 2021 the price they pay for diesel has risen by nearly two-thirds. Last week, Italian owners of fishing boats also stopped work to protest the rising cost of fuel.

Lorry drivers in the Czech Republic demanded the government intervene to bring down the price of fuel and other essentials. According to *denik.cz*, drivers throughout the country drove slowly on Monday to block traffic, including in the capital Prague.

Self-employed minibus operators and private bus drivers in the Turkish capital of Ankara refused to take orders from March 10 after the price of fuel repeatedly rose. According to *Duvar*, many drivers pledged to continue their stoppage indefinitely until fuel prices were brought down or the regulated fares were increased.

In Northern Cyprus, bus and taxi drivers protested the high price of fuel outside the parliament in Nicosia and began a stoppage on Monday, *Dialogos* reported. Two unions representing bus drivers and the taxi drivers' union demanded the administration take measures to support them, including supplying fuel without tax to professional drivers. They

suspended the indefinite strike on Tuesday after the prime minister agreed prices would be regulated.

French fishermen, farmers and others affected by the rise in fuel prices began a blockade of the oil depots in Lorient and Brest on Tuesday. On Wednesday, *France Bleu* reported that fishermen also set up a barricade outside the fuel depot in the city of La Rochelle, and drivers of fuel tankers refused to enter depots while the protests continued.

French national strike over pay and pensions

On March 10, workers throughout France joined a strike and protests called by several unions and student groups demanding an increase in pay and pensions.

According to *20Minutes*, the CGT demanded that a recently announced plan for the first general pay rise in the public sector since 2017 should be brought forward and negotiations begun over the precise amount. *France Bleu* noted that a similar strike called in January was joined by more than 150,000 workers, according to the unions' figures.

Teachers begin five-day strike against earlier school year in Catalonia, Spain

Teachers throughout Catalonia, Spain began a three-day stoppage on Tuesday, with two more planned over the next fortnight, to oppose changes imposed by the Catalan government in schools.

The main issue raised by the school unions is the change in the start of the school year, leaving a week less to prepare classes. The unions also denounced cuts made by the Catalan government ten years ago, which were never restored, and the new requirement for all teachers to prove they are fluent in Catalan.

The unions report between 40,000 and 60,000 stopped work.

Información reported that family associations endorsed the strike, complaining that the government has made too many decisions unilaterally. A minimum service requirement was imposed, requiring that one teacher remain in work for every three classes in most schools, and half of all teachers in special schools and nurseries were prevented from walking out.

As well as the two-day walkout planned for March 29, a one-day stoppage is called for March 23 after the High Court of Justice of Catalonia ruled that at least 25 percent of classes in school must be taught in Spanish.

Workers in Spanish Douglas shops strike against mass job cuts

On Monday, workers in warehouses of the Spanish branches of the multinational perfume and cosmetics retailer Douglas held the first of two strikes against plans to cut 1,000 jobs. A second stoppage of office and shop workers is planned for Friday.

According to *Europa Press*, the company plans to close 136 branches with the loss of 1,000 jobs and impose new working conditions on the 600 workers who remain.

Youth care workers in the Netherlands strike against cuts and workloads

Dutch youth care workers joined a strike on Tuesday, to oppose a planned funding cut of 500 million euros announced by the government, and to demand improvements to high workloads which make it impossible to provide every young person with adequate care.

According to the *Algemeen Dagblad*, 7,000 people joined a protest in The Hague called by the Federation of Dutch Trade Unions, consisting of many of the 32,000 youth care workers in the country as well as children and parents.

Airport security workers throughout Germany join warning strikes over pay

This week, security workers in German airports joined warning strikes called by the United Services Union (Verdi) during negotiations over a new agreement covering 25,000 workers.

According to *Reuters*, the 24-hour stoppages took place at six airports on Monday, and in other airports including Frankfurt, Germany's busiest, on Tuesday. Verdi is demanding a pay increase of one euro per hour and the end of pay differences between East and West Germany. The union said around 1,350 workers joined the strikes on Monday, *dpa* reported.

Pilots for the cargo airline AeroLogic also began a week-long strike on Tuesday night, called by the Cockpit Association to demand the company negotiate a collective agreement. According to *Aviation Direct*, although AeroLogic is owned by Lufthansa jointly with DHL, it does not adhere to the pay agreement applied to Lufthansa employees.

The industry magazine also reported that AeroLogic plans to replace striking pilots with managers who are qualified for the duration of the strike.

Teachers in Serbia hold warning strike against class sizes and low pay

Teachers throughout Serbia held a partial warning strike on Thursday, reducing the length of each class to 30 minutes, in support of the demands of the Union of Education Workers of Serbia.

The union is demanding a reduction in class sizes from 30 to 24 students, a 12 percent pay increase, and the payment of at least a third of the wage arrears of 20,000 dinars. Further warning strikes are planned for March 21 and 31.

Workers in Danish slaughterhouse hold wildcat strike against victimisation of shop steward

Last week, workers at the Tican slaughterhouse in the Danish town of Brørup walked out after a written warning was issued to their shop steward, Bo Christensen, as a result of his comments during pay negotiations.

Christensen told *JydskeVestkysten* that the management terminated the local pay agreement. In attempting to negotiate an improvement in the new agreement, he made a comment about a manager which was "a little too square," but did not apologise for it as he "did not say anything wrong." His colleagues stopped work on Monday March 7, and two days later voted 227-28 in favour of continuing the strike.

The Food Union NNF, including Christensen, called for the strikers to return to work as the walkout breached the collective agreement with the company. *JydskeVestkysten* reported on Monday that following threats of job losses and increased fines from the Labour Court, everybody returned to work.

Turkish miners stop work over lack of safety measures and low wages

Thirty-four miners at a subcontractor to the state-owned Turkish Hard Coal Institution stopped work on March 10, according to *?SG Haber*, accusing their employer Karbomet Madencilik of unsafe working practices.

A lawyer hired by the miners said that Karbomet Madencilik did not provide the personal protective equipment which the previous company holding the concession provided, and some miners reported that even their work clothes were not replaced.

London Underground drivers continue stoppages over Night Tube rostering

Drivers on the Central and Victoria lines on the London underground are continuing their Friday and Saturday night stoppages, begun January 7. They also took action at the end of last year.

The Rail, Maritime and Transport union members oppose plans by employer Transport for London to scrap a 2016 agreement that established a dedicated grade of Night Tube drivers—favoured by female staff and carers. The Night Tube service, suspended at the start of the pandemic, was reintroduced last month. All drivers are now forced to work at least four weekend Night Tube shifts per year.

The stoppages on Fridays and Saturdays between 20.30 and 04.29 hours are scheduled to last until June 19.

Striking refuse drivers employed by scab-organising Coventry Labour council in England vote to renew strike mandate in pay dispute

The 70 UK refuse collection lorry drivers on all-out strike begun January 31 voted by a 94 percent margin to continue their stoppage.

They had to reballot as the mandate for the current action runs out on March 24. All-out action could run into the summer, including the period of the May local authority elections, beginning March 28.

The Unite union members voted by a 98.5 percent majority to strike in the current dispute. The Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) drivers' pay starts at just £22,183 a year. It takes 11 years of service to reach the top of the pay scale. There is a UK-wide shortage of HGV drivers, and some councils increased pay or made retention payments to keep refuse collection drivers.

Last week, the Labour-controlled council suspended shop steward, Peter Randle, on what Unite said were bogus charges.

Coventry council hired a replacement scab workforce mobilised through its wholly owned arms-length company, Tom White Waste. It set up sites across the city where waste can be dropped off. The sites are guarded by privately hired security staff.

Indefinite pay strike continues by pallet production workers in Greater Manchester, England

The stoppage by around 70 UK workers at Chep in Trafford Park, Greater Manchester, continues. The indefinite strike began on December 17, after workers rejected a one percent pay offer.

The Chep workers reballoted to continue the strike, with 94 percent in favour.

The Unite union members, who make pallets for companies like Heinz and Heineken, are paid less than workers at other Chep sites, where workers earn £1,000 more than those at Trafford Park. Trafford Park workers voted 75 percent to strike against a two percent offer. Chep recorded profits of £150 million last year. Chep is part of supply chain company the Brambles, with headquarters in Australia.

The Unite union is to hold a series of protests outside Chep's customers across Wales and northwest England publicising the strike. This will include businesses such as DHL, Heinz, Proctor and Gamble and Unilever. The 24-hour picketing, five days a week, is now reduced.

Strike by UK tugboat crews at Teesport over pay

Tugboat crew working for Svitzer Marine at Teesport, England held a 24-hour strike on March 9, following a 48-hour strike on March 1. A further 24-hour strike is scheduled for March 26.

The Unite union members voted 100 percent for the stoppages. They oppose a pay freeze enforced by the company. Svitzer is part of shipping giant Maersk, which is forecast to announce profits of nearly £12 billion for 2021.

Tugboat crews are responsible for docking and guiding the giant container ships that use the port.

Refuse workers in Wiltshire, UK continue walkout over pay

The two-week stoppage by around 70 UK refuse operatives, loaders and drivers working for Hills Waste Solutions providing refuse collection on behalf of Wiltshire County Council, in England, continues. It began last week.

Initially the stoppage was due to start February 28, but the GMB suspended the strike after Hills made a new pay offer. However, the workers rejected the new offer in a ballot.

The workers are responsible for bin collection at around a quarter of a million homes in Calne, Salisbury and Trowbridge. They oppose a two percent pay offer, a real terms pay cut. They voted by a 98 percent majority on an 85 percent turnout to walk out.

Refuse collectors in Sussex, England strike over pay

Around 60 UK refuse collectors, street cleaners and recycling workers in Adur and Worthing in Sussex, England began a two-week stoppage on Monday for improved pay.

The GMB union members voted by a 100 percent majority on a 90 percent turnout to walk out. They are also seeking an increase in overtime rates and a review of operating practices.

Local government workers in Northern Ireland to strike over pay offer

Local government staff in Northern Ireland plan to begin a week's strike on Monday.

The Unite union members rejected a derisory 1.75 percent pay rise, which comes on top of an 11-year pay freeze. Education Authority, NI Housing Executive and staff at several colleges will also walk out.

Council workers in Glasgow, Scotland to strike over broken promises on equal pay

Around 12,000 Glasgow council workers, mainly women, are to strike over equal pay broken promises. Around 3,000 GMB members will strike on March 29 and 30, to be followed by strikes on April 20 and 21. Around 9,000 Unison members will walk out on March 29 and 30 and are expected to join with GMB members on April 20 and 21.

In 2018, several thousand Glasgow city council workers, predominantly women, walked out, demanding to be paid in line with male workers carrying out equivalent roles. The council agreed to recompense the workers, but there were major delays in ending the dispute. The settlement figure was around £500 million.

Auto workers at Southampton, UK plant vote to walk out over pay

UK workers employed by VFS Southampton Ltd voted overwhelmingly to strike. VFS is part of Ford Motors and manufactures vans and tipper trucks.

The Unite union members rejected a 3.65 percent pay offer, a cut in real terms. They will stage 24-hour stoppage on March 29. Further scheduled strikes are set for April 1, April 11-14, April 25-29, May 3-6, May 23-27 and June 6-10.

UK university academic staff to ballot for further industrial action over pay, pensions and conditions

On Wednesday, UK academic staff began balloting at 149 UK universities. The ballot closes April 8. University and College Union (UCU) members are in dispute over pay, pensions and conditions. The mandate for the ongoing industrial action ends on May 3.

Staff at 65 universities, members of the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) will be balloted over cuts to pensions, while staff at 143 institutions will be balloted over pay and conditions.

Following 10 days of strikes at nearly 70 higher education institutions across the UK in February and early March, a further five days of strikes will take place March 21-25, affecting 39 universities. From March 28 to April 1, a strike will affect 29 universities.

Among the universities taking part in the first tranche of renewed strikes are Cambridge, Durham, Glasgow, Leeds, Newcastle and Salford.

The university management aims to cut already devalued pensions by another 35 percent, attack pay and working conditions, and extend casualisation. The cuts are on top of £240,000 already lost from the average lecturer's retirement income over the past decade.

The USS's joint negotiating committee (JNC) recently imposed massive attacks on pensions, meaning workers in the higher education sector losing tens of thousands of pounds. The JNC—comprising five employers' representatives, five from the UCU and a chair—was set up in 2018 and presented by the union as a concession from the employers to justify the 2018 pensions dispute sell-out.

Staff at Sheffield college, UK vote to strike over pay

Staff at the University of Sheffield International College, in South Yorkshire, England, voted by a 79 percent majority on an 86 percent turnout to strike. The college refused to pay a cost of living rise and improve holiday allowances.

The UCU members prepare international students for courses at Sheffield University including improving their English, with students paying up to £22,000 a year. A UCU press release announcing the result said strikes could begin March 29.

Academic staff at Stafford University, England to strike over plans to employ new staff on inferior contracts

Staff at Stafford University, England voted to take action to oppose

management plans to recruit new staff through a subsidiary company on inferior terms and conditions. It includes enrolling staff on an inferior defined contribution pension rather than the current defined benefit Teachers' Pension Scheme.

The UCU members voted by 70 percent to strike and by 80 percent to take action short of a strike. They are set to walk out on March 28 and have a mandate to take further action. They fear if the plans go through it would create a two-tier workforce.

Refuse workers in Solihull, UK set to strike over pay

Around 100 refuse collection workers employed on the Amey waste collection contract for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, England voted to strike. They will begin a five-day stoppage on March 28.

The GMB union members rejected a 4.21 percent pay offer from the company and demand a higher offer.

British Council staff to walk out over job cuts

Staff at the UK government's international culture and education body, the British Council, voted by a 73 percent majority to strike. Strikes will take place on March 24 and 25. Actions short of a strike will also begin at the same time. This will involve a withdrawal of goodwill.

The Public and Commercial Services (PCS) members oppose plans to cut jobs, restructure the service and outsource some parts of the organisation. The British Council is pushing ahead with plans to make 100 redundancies over the next few months.

PCS pickets will be mounted outside British Council offices in Belfast, Cardiff, Edinburgh, London and Manchester. PCS members abroad will take part in the strikes, including in Bogota and Baghdad.

UK National Education Union declares victory in pension dispute at Girls Day School Trust, but sell-out for new staff

Teachers employed by the Girls Day School Trust (GDST) at its 23 independent across England and Wales accepted an offer by GDST to maintain its present pension scheme. The GDST also offered a pay rise to teachers and support staff.

The trust is still proposing to enrol newly employed staff into its proposed alternative inferior pension scheme, which the union accepted.

The National Education Union (NEU) members took six days of strikes earlier this year to protest GDST threats. The GDST threatened to withdraw from the Teachers Pension Scheme and impose an inferior scheme with reduced benefits. It backed up the proposal with "fire and rehire" threats.

The strike by the 1,500 teachers, which was the first in the trust's 149-year history was voted for by a 95 percent majority of its NEU members.

Teachers at Pocklington school, an independent (private fee-paying) school near Hull will strike on March 22 over a similar issue.

The NEU members oppose the school's plans to end membership of the Teachers Pension Scheme, replacing it with an inferior scheme paying lower pensions. The school is threatening to use "fire and rehire" methods

to enforce the change. Further stoppages are planned for after the Easter break.

Port workers in Lerwick, Scotland vote for industrial action over attack on conditions

Around a dozen workers at the Port of Lerwick in the Scottish Shetland Isles voted in favour of industrial action including a strike.

The Unite union members, comprising engineers, electricians, joiners and general operatives, oppose detrimental changes to their pay and conditions. These include basic pay, overtime rates, pension contribution and cuts to standby and call-out payments.

Unite has not called a strike but will impose a continuous overtime ban from March 28. Unite argues that because of the heavy reliance on overtime work by the Port, strike action is not necessary at this stage.

The port services liners as well as oil and gas production platforms. Unite is calling for the port employees' working terms and conditions to be brought in line with National Agreement for the Engineering Construction Industry and the Scottish Joint Industry Board standards.

Refuse workers in Northampton, UK ballot after rejecting pay offer

Around 70 UK refuse collection workers employed by Veolia to provide services to around 95,000 houses on behalf of Northampton council rejected a 2.5 percent offer from the company. The company refused to improve the offer, even though it received a 5.5 percent increase in funding from the council to run the service.

A ballot of GMB members which began Wednesday closes on April 6. Any action could begin April 20.

Staff at London, Luton airport ballot over sick pay promises

Around 100 workers employed by GH London Ground Handling Services at Luton airport are balloting over strike action. The ballot closes March 31. GH provides baggage handling and check in services to Wizz Air passengers at the airport.

The Unite union members are aggrieved over the company's failure to introduce promised improved sick pay arrangements and consistently late payment of wages.

UK financial regulatory workers ballot for industrial action over attacks on pay, jobs and conditions

Staff working for the UK Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) are to ballot for industrial action over proposals by the FCA to cut jobs, pay and impose an appraisal system.

On Tuesday, the Unite union announced its intention to ballot within seven days. It follows an 87 percent vote in favour in a consultative ballot.

FCA staff are responsible for monitoring and regulating companies providing financial services in the UK. The ballot of Unite union members

closes on January 31.

Refuse workers in Wealden, UK to ballot over pay claim

Around 40 UK workers at waste management company Biffa's East Sussex Joint Waste Partnership depots at Hailsham and Uckfield are balloting for industrial action.

The GMB members want a pay rise. Their claim is for hourly rates of £12.50 or loaders, £14.50 for Light Goods Vehicle drivers and £17.50 for HGV drivers. The sites provide domestic waste disposal for around 70,000 homes in the Wealden district of Sussex.

The ballot closes on March 25.

Unite calls off strike of XPO logistics workers in England as workers accept a new pay offer

The Unite union called off any further strike action by around 400 UK drivers and warehouse workers employed by logistics firm XPO, after workers accepted a new pay deal.

According to Unite the warehouse and cross dock workers will see a 15 percent rise in pay, while HGV drivers will get a 27 percent rise.

They voted to walk out earlier in the year, but proposed action was suspended in February for talks between XPO and Unite.

XPO depots involved in the dispute included Gloucester, Hounslow, Luton, Motherwell, Sheffield and Wakefield. XPO is under contract to deliver motor vehicles for Mercedes and VW, among others, as well as delivering supplies for Velux Windows and Tata Steel.

Protest outside Scottish pub chain's flagship London pub

Unite members took part in a protest outside a Covent Garden pub in London on March 9.

The Abandon Ship pub, flagship of the Scottish pub chain MacMerry, was targeted to publicise concerns at the chain's outlets in the Scottish cities of Glasgow and Dundee. The concerns include sexual misconduct complaints being ignored, health and safety concerns, pay irregularities and victimisation of trade union members.

Middle East

Protests in southern Iraq over food price rises due to war in Ukraine

Last week, protests took place in southern Iraq as food prices rose. The price of imports of Ukrainian sunflower oil and wheat have risen because of the war in Ukraine. In response, the Iraqi government gave an additional \$70 monthly allowance to low-paid civil servants and pensioners and waived custom tariffs on basic commodities for two months.

Sudanese teachers take nationwide strike action to double salaries

Teachers in Sudan took nationwide strike action on March 10 against low wages, followed by further walkouts on March 14-15. There are around 350,000 teachers in the country.

The Sudanese Teachers Committee called the strike. Teachers demand a raise in the minimum monthly salary to 24,000 pounds, up from the current 12,000 pounds, and an end to an unfair pay structure.

The Sudanese economy is in a state of collapse, and the currency falling against the US dollar, driving food and fuel prices up. Teacher cannot live on their wages.

Moroccan teachers strike over fines and arrests of teachers after previous protests

Moroccan teachers, organised by the Coordination of Contractual Teachers, walked out on February 28 to protest the treatment of teachers by the authorities in previous protests.

On March 10, the teachers extended their strike until March 13, in response to three-month prison terms and fines handed out to 44 teachers arrested in protests last year.

Protests by Egyptian media workers over non-payment of bonuses

Workers employed by Egyptian state broadcasting company The Radio and Television Union have been staging protests. Tens of thousands of workers, including admin staff, editors, presenters, reporters, technicians and writers have not been paid bonuses since 2018.

Africa

Striking South African Clover dairy food workers demand nationalisation and workers control while unions offer pay cuts

As the strike by 5,000 dairy workers at Clover Foods in South Africa enters its sixteenth week, scores of workers protested March 10 outside the company's Clover Park headquarters in Roodepoort, Johannesburg. Inside, a meeting took place between management and the Israeli-owned Central Bottling Company (CBC), which owns Milco SA, a major shareholder in Clover.

Workers are striking against longer hours, poor working conditions, salary cuts, job losses and factory closures. They are suffering extreme economic hardship as well as violence by company thugs on the picket line.

More than 250 of the General Industrial Workers' Union of South Africa (GIWUSA) and Food and Allied Workers' Union (FAWU) members also occupied the offices of the Industrial Development Corporation in Sandton demanding Clover's nationalisation and for the company to be put under workers' control.

Despite huge concessions by the unions—FAWU is willing to accept five percent in salary cuts for workers, and GIWUSA proposes an across-the-

board salary freeze—the talks collapsed. Clover insists it will take back only 700 out of the 2,000 sacked workers, on condition that a 30 percent cut in wages is implemented. GIWUSA intend to make an appeal to the Labour Court on the grounds that Clover's restructuring is illegal.

Pay strike by thousands of South African Sibanye-Stillwater gold miners faces union sabotage

Miners employed at Sibanye-Stillwater gold mines in South Africa are continuing their strike begun March 9 for a R1,000 monthly rise, on a par with a three-year wage deal already negotiated at another South African mining operation, Harmony Gold.

However, the Solidarity and UASA unions, representing 1,550 of the total 34,000 miners, undermined the stoppage by unconditionally accepting the company's five percent offer. Their members are back at work, having used an interdict from the Labour Court to stop Sibanye-Stillwater's lockout against the strike.

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) union members remain out. In 2019, AMCU sold out a five-month stoppage at Sibanye-Stillwater, accepting what it had previously called a "slave labour deal" agreed by both the NUM and Solidarity.

Hundreds of South African water workers continue strike over pay and conditions

Over 300 water treatment workers at Amatola Water, Eastern Cape, South Africa are still on strike, after talks with the Minister for Water and Sanitation and the water board failed to address their grievances.

The South African Municipal Workers Union members stopped work on March 4 to protest unpaid bonuses, staff shortages and withheld pension payments.

Staff shortages at Amatola, as Eastern Cape province experiences severe water shortages, may have contributed to the reported presence of *E.coli* bacteria in the Nelson Mandela Bay Metro municipality water supply over the last few months.

Doctors, health workers and ancillary staff demonstrate against 800 hospital job cuts in Gauteng province, South Africa

Doctors and other health workers picketed the Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital in Soweto, Gauteng, South Africa March 10, to protest the dismissal of 819 employees recruited during the pandemic.

The 50 health workers were joined by over 100 Extended Public Works Programme workers represented by the National Union of Public Service and Allied Workers. The Chris Hani Baragwanath hospital, the largest in the southern hemisphere, is also struggling to pay food suppliers or maintain essential medical equipment.

The Gauteng Department of Health said over 8,000 new posts were created during the pandemic, but budget restrictions meant they could not keep them all. In a separate demonstration on March 9, Young Nurses Indaba Trade Union members marched to the department headquarters in Johannesburg to protest the loss of their temporary positions.

secretaries.

Student nurses in Eastern Cape, South Africa protest over job losses

Around 200 student nurses demonstrated in Bhisho, Eastern Cape, South Africa March 9 at not being hired by the province's Department of Health when they qualify at the end of this month.

Over 630 nursing students will have their contracts ended after four years' study, despite a funding agreement stipulating they must work for the health department for at least four years after training finishes. The provincial health authorities now say they cannot afford to employ them and blame a lack of finance from central government.

South African health workers stop work in protest over hospital closures in Eastern Cape province

Staff at Uitenhage Provincial Hospital, Eastern Cape, South Africa stopped work March 9 and demonstrated against the closure of three local TB hospitals.

The National Education, Health and Allied workers' Union members blocked the entrance to the hospital for over six hours, demanding to meet with management and the provincial health department. They say the TB hospitals must stay open to prevent needless deaths.

Demonstrations by support staff over unpaid salaries and job losses shut down University of South Africa

Cleaners, security, catering and other support staff at the University of South Africa (Unisa), Pretoria demonstrated March 15 at the university, stopping lectures from taking place. Academic staff joined them in solidarity, halting graduation ceremonies.

The National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union members are protesting unpaid salary increases for 2022. Other contracted-out support staff on the catering side, represented by SAWU-South African Workers Union, demonstrated against 60 percent job losses as a new service provider took over the Unisa catering.

Teachers walk out on indefinite strike in Akwa Ibom, Nigeria over pay and conditions

Nigerian teachers in primary and secondary schools in Akwa Ibom state began an indefinite strike on March 15.

Promises made by the state government have been broken. One was to pay arrears for the minimum wage to primary school teachers. Education has been cut to the bone in Africa's richest nation.

The National Union of Teachers members are also demanding: the refund of 7.5 percent contributory pension to primary school teachers; harmonisation of pensions for retired teachers; payment of leave grant (2013-21) and promotion arrears (2011-16) to primary school teachers; release of results of the 2017-18 promotion exercise; commencement of 2019-21 promotions, and the appointment of teachers as permanent

Thousands of teachers strike over unpaid salaries and conditions in Cameroon

Thousands of school teachers in Cameroon have been on strike for three weeks, as a response to declining conditions and unpaid salaries going back years.

Videos show the teachers have the support of their pupils, who have been demonstrating using the slogan "OTS!" meaning "On a trop supporté" ("We have suffered enough!")

After the death of one of their colleagues, teachers complained that "the Cameroonian state kills its teachers."

To defuse the strike, the government accepted the legitimacy of the teachers' demands while claiming it can pay the debt only "gradually." Teachers should treat this lie with the contempt it deserves. One does not allow a thief to pay back the money he stole in small instalments.



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