

South African Sibanye-Stillwater gold miners' pay strike continues; steelworkers begin strike over pay at ArcelorMittal multinational in South Africa; Spanish healthcare workers continue fight for improved staffing levels, pay and conditions; protests in Khuzestan province, Iran over price rises

Workers Struggles: Europe, Middle East & Africa

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

Africa

South African Sibanye-Stillwater gold miners' pay strike continues

As South African Sibanye-Stillwater gold miners continue their pay strike, the union is offering some concessions while refusing to extend the dispute.

The first face-to-face talks between representatives of striking gold miners and employer, mining multinational Sibanye-Stillwater, took place May 2 and May 5, after nine weeks of strike action.

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) offered to reduce their living out allowance demand for new starters by R50. AMCU are still threatening to take secondary action at Sibanye-Stillwater's platinum mining operations but have not yet done so, despite upcoming wage negotiations in the platinum sector.

On May 6, in a speech at a mine owned by Anglo American Platinum, African National Congress leader and President of South Africa, millionaire Cyril Ramaphosa, said "Hostility between employers and employees should belong in the dustbin of history." Ramaphosa founded the country's biggest mining union in the 1980s and led the largest ever gold industry strike. In 2012, his call for a police clampdown precipitated the Marikana massacre of 34 striking miners at a mine owned by the Lonmin group.

At the recent Workers' Day rally, strikers forced Ramaphosa to abandon his May Day speech and flee in his limousine. The other guest invited by the Congress of South African Trade Unions, general secretary of the South African Communist Party Blade Nzimande, was also prevented from speaking.

In 2021, Sibanye-Stillwater's CEO received R300 million (\$119m) in

pay and shares.

In 2019, AMCU ended a five-month stoppage at Sibanye-Stillwater, accepting a deal they previously called "slave labour" when it was first agreed by the NUM and Solidarity unions.

Steelworkers begin strike over pay at ArcelorMittal multinational in South Africa

Workers at ArcelorMittal multinational steel manufacturing corporation, employing 6,000 at plants in South Africa, walked out May 11 to demand an across-the-board 10 percent pay increase. The company are offering five percent and two percent in cash.

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) members also want a housing allowance, 80 percent medical insurance contribution and an end to the insourcing of temporary workers. Talks under the auspices of the Metals and Engineering Industries Bargaining Council have been ongoing since March.

In October 2021, NUMSA called off a nationwide strike by 155,000 steel and metalworkers just as it entered its third week and was beginning to have a powerful impact on the auto industry and South African economy.

ArcelorMittal makes 60 percent of the steel in South Africa. It has 168,000 employees worldwide.

South African farmworkers' pay stoppage continues in Western Cape citrus growing region

Up to 1,000 farmworkers in the Sundays River Valley citrus fruit growing region of South Africa are to continue their strike, begun two weeks ago, after talks with farm owners in Gqeberha May 5 failed to reach an agreement. The workers want R30 an hour, but employers will only pay the minimum wage of R23.19 an hour. The workers also want

citrus growers to employ more local people.

The farmworkers, previously represented by the South African National Civic Organisation, have now established their own forum to lead the strike. They say that trade unions are too easily coerced into agreement with the growers.

In previous weeks, protests turned angry and farm owners sought a court interdict to prohibit strikers coming near their farms. Since then, a farmworker was shot and killed by private security guards.

South African paramedics in Eastern Cape threatened with dismissal for refusing to work in unsafe conditions

More than 200 paramedics in Eastern Cape, South Africa were given dismissal notices from the provincial health department after stopping work the last three weeks.

The National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU) members face dismissal for going on an unprotected strike, but they say they are exercising their right to safety at work. The paramedics attend in uniform every day and wait at the workplace until their shift is over. However, they cannot perform their duties as their ambulances are ill-equipped and in poor condition.

South African bus workers in Pretoria stop work over pay and conditions

Fare collection workers employed at Xtremetec, a subcontractor for the city bus service provided by the City of Tshwane municipality in Pretoria, South Africa, stopped work May 11, and demonstrated at city bus stations over pay and conditions.

The NUMSA members threaten further strikes in demand of an increased travel allowance, a night shift allowance, and medical cover with 80 percent paid by the company.

On May 13, the workers will march to City Hall for a meeting with the municipality, the contractor and similarly affected workers from other city bus companies. Xtremetec blame the City of Tshwane for not paying them enough.

Farm workers from South African vineyards march to demand protection from pesticide exposure

Over 200 women farm workers marched to the Worcester Labour Department office in the Cape Winelands of South Africa on May 5, calling for a ban of 67 pesticides which are illegal in the European Union.

The marchers, organised by the Women on Farms Project, also complain that vineyards are not complying with regulations on protective clothing, sending workers into the fields too soon after spraying and not giving them support when they become ill from pesticide exposure.

The women asked the Department of Employment and Labour to ban the 67 pesticides, reform legislation on pesticide use, enforce existing legislation and regulations and hold farmers responsible when they break the rules.

Staff and students protest sackings of workers at University of South Africa

Students and employees at the University of South Africa demonstrated last week, blocking entrances into the main campus in Pretoria with cars and trees, after the university dismissed five workers who were also union officials.

The NEHAWU members have been protesting for several weeks over pay increases and working conditions. The students joined the protests as they have their own grievances with the university.

Airport workers in Abuja, Nigeria strike over pay and conditions disrupting flights

Some flights at the Nnamdi Azikwe International Airport in Abuja and other Nigerian airports were disrupted on May 9, when airport workers began a two-day strike, later reduced by the unions to one day.

The National Union of Air Transport Employees (NUATE) and the Amalgamated Union of Public Corporation Civil Service Technical and Recreational Services Employees called the “warning” strike to demand employers implement the Condition of Service (CoS) for their members in the agencies where the strikes were called. The CoS had not been implemented seven years after it was agreed, nor were union members paid the minimum wage brought in 2019.

The unions said their aim was not to stop flights.

The other main impact of the strike was on offices such as the Nigerian College of Aviation Technology in Zaria, the Nigerian Airspace Management Agency and the Nigerian Meteorological Agency based in the international wing of Lagos Airport.

All operations at these bodies were brought to a standstill, with the offices kept locked. One NUATE employee said “all the staff including the cleaners are all outside. The gates leading to the offices are locked with chains and padlocks.” This meant no flights, local or international were possible.

The unions claimed the strike was 100 percent effective and achieved their aims, although there are no indications of success in terms of improved pay or conditions.

Nigerian lecturers to extend their strike by another 12 weeks

Lecturers in Nigeria are extending their strike by another 12 weeks due to the government’s refusal to address their demands. The Academic Staff Union of Universities complained that the government is refusing to negotiate.

The workers walked out on February 14 over salaries, the delay in release of revitalisation funds for universities and the adoption of new payroll software. Since then, the strike has been extended each time it is due to expire.

Namibian road workers in Asab walk out over pay and conditions

Workers employed by China Henan International Group-Chico on road

construction in the Hardap and Kharas regions of Namibia downed tools indefinitely on May 5. The company refused to respond to a demonstration and petition handed in the last month.

Workers are demanding a pay increase, better accommodation, provision of fresh water at the camp in Asab and adherence to safety guidelines. They also say they are threatened by managers with pay cuts or losing their jobs on a daily basis. They explained that the probation period is used to dismiss workers and keep only workers liked by managers. Due to mismanagement, the road is substandard.

Management issued an ultimatum that workers must return to work by May 10 or face disciplinary action.

The Metal and Allied Workers Union representative denied that the union called the strike. Shop stewards' chairperson Erwin April said the union was seeking a solution through negotiation.

Ugandan science teachers strike over lack of pay rise

Science teachers in all government-funded secondary schools of Uganda have been on strike since May 9, to protest the government's failure to increase their pay in line with promises made last financial year.

The union umbrella body Uganda Professional Science Teachers' Union (UPSTU) accused the government of reallocating the UGX 111 billion that was meant to finance the science teachers' pay rise.

The UPSTU, with 16 or more sub-regions, said it will continue the strike until the Ministry of Public Service gives way. Teachers refuse to go back to their jobs until their pay is increased, and say they will not be satisfied again with empty promises.

Europe

Spanish healthcare workers continue widespread fight for improved staffing levels, pay and conditions, while unions work to shut it down

Healthcare workers throughout Spain continue a wave of strikes in defence of staffing levels and services, as well as the pay and conditions in the sector. The unions, however, suspended many walkouts on the promise of "negotiations."

In Madrid on Tuesday, healthcare workers began an indefinite strike against the abuse of temporary contracts, which are widespread in the Spanish healthcare system. They were due to walk out on Monday, but the government claimed this did not comply with the statutory notice period.

The delay was not the only strike-breaking measure, as the local government imposed high "minimum service" requirements, requiring at least half normal services to be provided across the system, and for many areas to run as normal. Despite this onerous requirement, Madrid's Ministry of Health announced that almost 10 percent of workers in the affected areas joined the strike in the morning, and a further three percent in the afternoon.

Most of the unions representing Madrid healthcare workers, including the largest national unions the Workers' Commissions (CCOO) and General Workers' Union (UGT), reached an agreement almost immediately with the local government. According to *Europa Press* the deal would move 9,577 workers to permanent contracts, including 1,600 doctors, decided by a "merit competition." Only the smaller Amyts union and two others representing workers on insecure contracts rejected the

offer, and stoppages and protests continued.

Another indefinite strike in Ciudad Real of "home help" workers who assist those with disabilities or complex healthcare needs living at home resumed again on Wednesday, after it was suspended by the CCOO and UGT last week "as a sign of good faith," in the words of *Europa Press*. Workers are fighting against low pay and widespread abuse of part-time and precarious contracts. As in Madrid, minimum service requirements of 50 to 100 percent were imposed.

Indefinite strike of workers in daycare centres in Navarre, Spain over working conditions and staffing

Workers in daycare centres in the Spanish autonomous community of Navarre continue an indefinite strike begun nearly two weeks ago on May 2, demanding improved working conditions and child-staff ratios, and opposing widespread precarious contracts.

The Platform 0-3 Navarra, which called the strike, told *Europa Press* participation was high considering many workers were banned from walking out by the imposition of a 100 percent minimum service requirement. Around 2,500 people joined a rally in Pamplona on Saturday, at which the Platform called for the Navarrese government to negotiate.

Metalworkers strike in A Coruña, Spain

On Thursday, metalworkers in the Spanish city of A Coruña joined the second of four one-day strikes called by the CCOO, UGT and Galician Union Confederation to demand a new collective agreement, after denouncing the employers' association for "not trying to negotiate."

A previous 24-hour stoppage took place on Thursday last week, and the unions reported a large follow-up among the 16,000 workers called to join.

The final two planned walkouts in A Coruña are on May 18 and 19, while metalworkers in the Basque province of Álava will also walk out on the first of three 24-hour strikes on May 18. In Barcelona, the CCOO and UGT also threatened to call a strike of 300,000 metalworkers if the employers' association does not apply a clause in the collective agreement for 2022 to increase the pay rise from 2.5 percent to 6.5 percent to match inflation.

Italian teachers join national strike against new law on recruitment

On May 6, teachers throughout Italy joined a strike and demonstrations against a new law on recruitment, which does not address many grievances of workers in schools.

The stoppage was called by the smaller, syndicalist unions following protests called by Italy's largest unions on May 1, when they denounced the law for neglecting precarious workers. The larger unions also called a strike on May 30, *ANSA* reported, criticising the reform for lengthening the training period and costing teachers an average of 2,500 euros over 10 years.

Italian metalworkers in Taranto hold 24-hour strike to demand job protection

Metalworkers in the Italian city of Taranto held a 24-hour strike last Friday, called by the unions in the sector to demand the government and employers come up with a plan to revitalise the industry, safeguard jobs and raise safety standards.

According to *ANSA*, the Acciaiere d'Italia group already established a fund to restructure its operations, which would affect 3,000 workers, mostly in Taranto.

Workers in German daycare centres continue strikes during collective bargaining

Following warning strikes by thousands of workers in municipal services throughout Germany last week, including social workers and workers in schools, daycare centres and disability services, a further walkout took place on Thursday.

The United Services Union called a stoppage of daycare centres for the day as part of its collective bargaining negotiations, as well as protests on Wednesday to demand improvements in pay, working conditions and staffing levels for the 330,000 workers in the sector.

Strike of municipal workers called off in Corlu, Turkey after narrow vote to accept pay offer

A strike by municipal workers in Corlu, Turkey scheduled to begin on Thursday, was called off at the last minute after workers narrowly voted to accept the municipality's pay offer.

The *DHA* news agency announced the deal was accepted in a vote of 306 against 276 but did not give any details on the agreement. The Municipal Labour Union members voted in April by 77 percent to strike, but the union did not call a day's stoppage, continuing negotiations with the municipality which repeatedly rejected its offers. The union told *DHA*, "We would have gone on strike if [the vote on the deal] were the other way around."

Workers at Georgian mineral water bottling plant protest layoffs and imposed contracts

On May 5, 49 workers at the Borjomi mineral water company in Georgia were fired during a shutdown of production. *First Channel* reported that workers had not agreed to the new employment contracts, which the company claims are necessary due to financial difficulties.

According to the *Caucasian Knot*, the new contracts eliminate bonuses and cut overtime pay. Workers protested in front of their workplaces, opposing the sackings and the new contracts. The unions at Borjomi threatened a strike of the 400 workers, but only if they do not reach an agreement with the employer after three weeks of mediation.

Borjomi workers held a strike over pay cuts last year, saying that the company's cuts and high inflation reduced their real pay by 50 percent.

French high school students and teachers protest deportation of classmate

Over 100 students and teachers at a high school in the French town of Guéret protested on May 5 against the deportation of one of their classmates, *France Bleu* reported.

The student, Cécilia, who has attended the school for three years since she arrived in France from Gabon, was ordered to leave French territory, leaving behind her mother and younger sister to return to a country with which she has no ties.

Her classmates protested with signs calling for her to be allowed to stay, and one told *France Bleu*, "There is a famous double standard: we welcome Ukrainians with open arms, which is completely right, but on the other hand, we forsake a student who is two weeks away from passing the bac."

Strike of night service London underground rail workers to widen

The current strike by London Underground train drivers on the Central and Victoria lines each Friday and Saturday evening is due to widen. From Saturday May 22, drivers on the Jubilee line will also take part.

The Rail, Maritime and Transport (RMT) union members are opposed to the way drivers are rostered to the night service. Previously there was a dedicated team of drivers employed on the night service, but when it was restarted London Underground rostered all current drivers for the service.

The ongoing action, which started in December last year, is mandated until June 19. A ballot to renew the action is under way. The result should be known in early June.

Around 40,000 RMT members are currently balloting over attacks on jobs, pay, terms and conditions as part of the Johnson government's Great British Railways re-privatisation project. The ballot closes May 24.

Scottish train drivers to ballot over pay

The train drivers' union Aslef says it will ballot its members working for ScotRail. ScotRail was recently taken into public ownership. The drivers are seeking a pay rise above the recent 2.2 percent increase offer from ScotRail.

Maintenance engineers on UK rail line strike over pay

Maintenance engineers employed by Alstom on the C2C rail line running between London and Southend in England were on strike Monday. Further strikes are planned for May 13, 16, 20, 23, 27, 30 and June 3.

The Unite union members voted by a 95 percent majority to strike. They are protesting a 2.5 percent pay offer, the removal of on-call payments and staff travel permits among other issues.

French-owned Alstom made a €172 million profit in 2021 and has

awarded its managers a 10 percent rise.

Strike of auto component warehouse workers in Oxford, England after pay offer rejected

A strike by around 200 UK workers employed by logistics firm Rudolph & Hellmann at the Oxford Mini plant began Tuesday, with further strikes planned for May 12, 17 and 19. They are employed as warehouse staff and shunter drivers. Their action will affect production of Minis at the BMW factory.

Stoppages planned by Unite union members for April 26, 28 and May 4 and 6 were postponed after the employer made a new offer. In a ballot with a 98 percent turnout there was a 91 percent majority to reject the offer.

UK street cleaners and refuse collectors in Rugby extend strike over pay

The strike of refuse lorry drivers, loaders and street cleaning staff in Rugby working for Conservative-controlled Rugby council in England, begun April 26 and due to end May 10, has been extended until June 15.

The Unite union members are low paid. Street cleaners begin at £17,100 a year, rising to £19,200 after five years, while loaders begin at £19,200, rising to £21,300 after five years. The Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) drivers start at £21,300, reaching £23,400 after five years.

An ITV News website article of April 26 reported that some of the workers must resort to food banks to get by. Also, the council would not pay above the nationally agreed 1.75 percent rise.

Strikes by teachers at London school over cancellation of talk by author

Teachers at the John Fisher Catholic state school in Croydon, London are continuing a series of strikes begun in April. They held a two-day strike last week, and began a three-day strike Tuesday.

The National Education Union (NEU) members are protesting the actions of the Southwark Archdiocese (catholic church area body). The Archdiocese intervened to cancel a planned talk at the school by author Simon James Green, who writes books for young adults featuring gay characters. The Archdiocese also sacked several school governors who were in favour of inviting the author.

The teachers are demanding the reinstatement of the governors and that the invitation to Green to speak to be reissued.

Union ignores strike vote by teachers in Northern Ireland who begin programme of industrial action short of a strike

Teachers in Northern Ireland began a programme of industrial action short of a strike on Monday over pay and workload.

The NASUWT union members are protesting a two percent pay offer

and increasing workloads. Teachers received two percent in 2019/20, and again in 2020/21.

The NASUWT members voted by a 100 percent for the action short of a strike. The union ignored an 80 percent strike vote. The action will include refusing to cover for absent colleagues, invigilate exams, respond to emails and text message during the lunch break or outside school hours and carry out bulk photocopying. From May 9, teachers will not attend more than one parents' evening or cooperate with school inspections.

Sixth form college teachers in Croydon, south London strike over pay

Teachers at Coulsdon sixth form college in Croydon, south London, were to walk out for two days this week.

The NEU members are protesting the college management's decision not to honour nationally agreed pay terms. They voted by a 95 percent majority for the stoppage. A three-day walk out is planned for next week if college management do not recant.

Further stoppages by teachers at London school strike against bullying, poor working conditions and pay

Teachers at Walthamstow Primary Academy in Waltham Forest in the UK capital began a programme of nine days of stoppages this week, consisting of three days each week for the next three weeks.

The NEU members are protesting poor working conditions and bullying by management, and claim they are wrongly underpaid. They held previous strikes over the same issue.

Academic staff at London's Queen Mary University 10-day strike over docking of pay for industrial action

Academic staff at Queen Mary University in the UK capital began a 10-day strike on May 5.

The University and College Union (UCU) members are protesting the threat by the university management to dock 100 percent of pay for lecturers involved in action short of a strike. The strike will be followed by a boycott of marking student scripts.

Lecturers at Richmond UK college to strike after fire and rehire threat

Teaching staff at Richmond upon Thames college in England are set to strike over fire and rehire threats from college management. The new contracts management want to impose would mean 10 days less leave.

The UCU members voted by a 97 majority to walk out. The college plans to fire all 127 staff and then rehire them on the inferior contracts. The strike is set to take place May 23-27. This would be followed by action short of a strike. The teaching staff at the college, as at other colleges, are paid up to £15,000 less a year than teachers with similar experience in nearby secondary schools.

Strikes announced of workers at Caterpillar in Northern Ireland over pay

Teachers in Dundee, Scotland to strike over faculties plan

Teachers across Dundee announced a walk out on June 22. They are opposed to plans by Dundee council to get rid of specialist principal teachers. Instead, a faculty system would be brought in grouping subjects together with a curriculum leader. Such faculties are in place in most councils across Scotland.

The Educational Institute of Scotland members voted by an 88 percent majority to take the action.

Workers at Sandwell Leisure Trust in English Midlands strike over pay

Around 300 workers employed at nine leisure centres run by Sandwell Leisure Trust, in the English Midlands held a one-day stoppage Tuesday over pay.

The Unite, GMB and Unison union members were fired and rehired in March 2021, when the trust removed the workforce from national pay terms that apply to local government staff.

Sandwell Leisure Trust, an independent company with charitable status, runs the leisure centres on behalf of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough council.

Unofficial walkout of refuse and maintenance workers in Hertfordshire, England against bullying

Around 100 UK refuse, recycling and maintenance workers employed by Spanish-based waste management company Urbaser walked out Tuesday, protesting against alleged bullying by a manager. Urbaser is under contract to Welwyn Hatfield Borough council.

The Unite union members accused a manager of sexist and racist behaviour. Around 40 workers signed a grievance letter protesting the manager's behaviour. Following the grievance, the company suspended the manager, but the workers learned Tuesday that he was due to return to work this week, prompting the unofficial walkout.

Strike by workers at Hackney council in London over pay offer

Around 200 workers employed by Hackney council in London held a three-day strike last week, following a three-day stoppage the week before.

The Unite union members work in refuse collection, building services and transport for special needs and the disabled. They oppose the nationally set Local Government Association pay offer of 1.5 percent, and up to 2.75 percent for those on the lowest pay grades. The offer is a cut in real terms on top of 11 years of pay freezes, which leaves council workers around 22 percent worse off in spending power. The workers are demanding as a minimum a 10 percent rise.

On Tuesday, the Unite union announced a further four weeks of strikes by workers employed by heavy construction machinery manufacturer Caterpillar in Northern Ireland over pay. The workers already carried out four weeks of strikes. Caterpillar has sites at the Springvale business park in Belfast and at Larne.

The Unite members rejected the company's unacceptable pay offer predicated on compulsory overtime. According to the Unite union, Caterpillar was offering bonuses to office workers from other locations to cross picket lines and continue production.

US-based Caterpillar recorded surging profits last year after COVID-19 measures were abandoned, with cash reserves of around £7 billion, paying out £1.75 billion to shareholders.

Pay strike of bus workers in Northern Ireland is back on following suspension

Bus workers at Translink in Northern Ireland will walk out for seven days from May 17. A week-long strike planned to begin April 25 and a one-day stoppage on May 6 were suspended by the GMB and Unite unions after the company made a new offer. The workers, who work as drivers, cleaners and shunters, rejected the offer.

The initial pay offer was for three percent, but this was increased and subsequently rejected. The unions have put in a pay claim below six percent.

UK component delivery drivers employed by logistics firm DHL set to strike over pay

Dozens of UK delivery drivers employed by logistics firm DHL, under contract to deliver component parts for heavy construction machinery manufacturer JCB, are set to strike.

The GMB members voted by a 96 percent majority to walk out, with dates set for May 23 and 24. They rejected a five percent pay offer the company tried to impose.

Thousands of UK supermarket workers indicate willingness to take industrial action over pay

Around 8,000 workers employed by UK supermarket giant Asda voted by a 95 percent majority in a consultative ballot in favour of balloting for industrial action.

The GMB members work as drivers, warehouse and clerical workers for the supermarket. Asda is trying to force through a pay deal which includes an attack on sick pay entitlement. The sick pay scheme was introduced in 2012 in recognition of the stress and musculoskeletal problems caused by higher pick rates of the staff.

The GMB has not announced any immediate action, only that it will meet with members to discuss what to do next.

Strike ballot of refuse collectors on UK Isle of Wight

A ballot of refuse collectors on the Isle of Wight, off the southern English coast, began on Friday and closes May 27.

The GMB union members are employed by outsourcing company Amey which provides refuse collection for the Isle of Wight council. According to the GMB, the pay rise offer from Amey only amounts to the pay given to trainee refuse collectors on the mainland.

The union reports that some workers were told if they wanted better pay, they should travel to the mainland.

Workers at Norwich city council in England to ballot over pay

Around 200 UK workers employed by Norwich City Council's wholly owned Norwich City Services Ltd are to ballot for industrial action.

The Unite union members who work as grave diggers, in-house maintenance, parks maintenance and street cleaners rejected a 4.2 percent pay offer in a consultative ballot.

UK care home workers in Bristol ballot over pay and conditions facing fire and rehire threat

Staff working as care workers, nurses and other staff employed by St Monica Trust at four care homes in Bristol are balloting for industrial action.

Under the threat of "fire and rehire," management want to amend shifts and reduce rates of pay for sickness and unsocial hours of the Unison union members. It would mean them losing up to £300 a month.

UK police civilian staff vote to accept pay offer

UK civilian police staff voted by an almost two-thirds majority to accept a pay offer for the period September 2021 to August 2023.

The offer accepted by Unison union members falls well below the current rate of inflation.

Transport staff at London hospital protest over new work rota

Workers employed as ambulance care assistants and in patient transport for Barts Health NHS Trust held a protest outside Newham hospital in east London on Tuesday.

The GMB members accuse management of trying to impose a new rotating shift pattern. The workers plan to protest at other Barts Health trust sites, including Whipps Cross hospital and Canary Wharf health centre.

Ancillary staff at University College London to protest over pay and

conditions

Outsourced staff working as cleaners, porters and security staff at University College London (UCL) are demanding the same terms and conditions as staff directly employed by UCL.

The Independent Workers' Union of Great Britain members will hold a protest at Malet Place on May 26 at 5 p.m.

Middle East

Protests in Khuzestan province, Iran over price rises

Protestors took to the streets of the cities of the Khuzestan province in Iran on May 6-7. Cities involved included Ahvaz, Baghmalek, Izeh and Susangerd. They were protesting the steep rise in prices for essential basics, particularly bread.

On May 7, cattle farmers held protests outside provincial agricultural departments in several cities including Arak, Isfahan, Kerman and Yazd. They were protesting the high cost of cattle feed and other products.

Last week, the Iranian government closed down internet access in Khuzestan province in response to growing protests over living conditions. The denial of access is filtered so businesses and government bodies are not affected. This week the Iranian government widened the denial of access to the internet to the whole country.

In May, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi announced he was going to cut back the bread subsidies the Iranian poor rely on. A limited number of digital coupons will be made available to purchase bread, but otherwise they will have to pay the full market price.

The rise in world food and fuel prices has exacerbated Iran's already difficult financial position resulting from ongoing US sanctions.

Strike of delivery workers over pay in Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Following a strike of hundreds of fast-food delivery drivers working for Deliveroo in Dubai on May 1, fast-food delivery workers employed by Talabat walked out on May 9.

Talabat is the Middle East operation of German food delivery company Delivery Hero. The Talabat workers organised the walkout via social media. They were demanding an increased rate for deliveries. They are currently paid \$2.04 per delivery. Talabat employs foreign workers, mainly from Asia and Africa. Their expenses have shot up, especially their fuel costs.

Following the walkout of Deliveroo delivery drivers, the company was forced to increase the rate per delivery from \$2.04 per delivery to \$2.79.

Striking in Dubai is illegal, so the action of the delivery workers took courage.

Strike of Moroccan contractual teachers over job security

Contractual teachers in Morocco began a week's strike Monday. They are protesting lack of job security. The teachers have been taking

industrial action and holding protests over the last four years. Many teachers ended up in court for taking part in such protests. Ten teachers were in court on Tuesday. Some of their colleagues held a sit-in to support them.

Until 2016, teachers in Morocco were hired by the Moroccan education ministry on permanent contracts. However, since then public school teachers have been hired by regional academies on a contractual basis. Prior to his election in September last year, the Moroccan prime minister, Aziz Akhannouch, had promised to address the situation of contractual teachers, but to date he has failed to do so.



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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