

# 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.

## **Tens of thousands of government officials in the Netherlands strike over pay freeze and staff shortages**

On Tuesday, around 160,000 central government employees in the Netherlands, including administrative workers, cleaners and food inspectors, held a national one-day pay strike and demonstrated in cities across the country. The strike followed a previous stoppage at the beginning of March.

The civil servants, belonging to the FNV, CNV and other unions, demand an end to the government-imposed freeze on pay and cost-of-living increases when they already face heavy workloads and staff shortages. One demonstrator held a sign saying, "Reward us, Tax the rich."

## **Confectionery workers in Perpignan, France strike for pay increase**

Workers at the Perpignan factory of France's largest chocolate manufacturer, Cémoi, began an indefinite strike April 7 for a pay increase and bonus. The firm has nine factories in the country.

The CGT, Sud Industries and UNSA union members demand a 1.7 percent wage rise and a bonus of 1,200-1,500 euros for 2026. They say the company had operating earnings in 2025 of 92 million euros but only offers workers a 1.2 percent increase.

## **Academic staff at London university walk out over job cut threat**

Academic staff at London Metropolitan University walked out Wednesday and Thursday. They have also imposed a work-to-rule ban, which began April 6.

The University and College Union (UCU) members are opposing planned cuts by the university management. The cuts would mean the loss of 295 jobs including 120 academic staff (around 20 percent of the total) through compulsory redundancies by the end of the current academic year. UCU members voted by 90 percent for industrial action. They fear the cuts would jeopardise the ongoing viability of sociology, fine arts and theatre and performing arts courses.

Stoppages are also scheduled for April 21-23 and 27-29.

Despite the sector-wide attack on higher education jobs, pay and pensions across the UK, the UCU is leaving affected workers isolated and fighting alone in disparate local disputes.

## **Passenger support staff at a London airport set to walk out over pay**

Around 100 staff working for ABM at London Stansted airport are set to begin a four-day walkout on Friday. ABM staff are responsible for assisting disabled passengers to safely board aircraft.

The Unite union members voted by 97 percent for the stoppage. They are protesting a pay offer from the company amounting to a 1p hourly increase this year and two to three pence an hour for next year. The workers are low paid, receiving less than the voluntary London Living Wage figure of £14.80 an hour.

Last financial year ABM, a global company, reported revenues of \$2.2 billion, a more than six percent increase on the previous year.

## **Bus drivers at east London company to hold further stoppages over fatigue fears**

Around 300 drivers working for the Stagecoach-owned East London Bus & Coach Company are set to walk out for the day on Friday. They are based at the Bow depot in east London, and the action will impact seven routes into central London and the Westfield Stratford City shopping centre.

The Unite union members are taking action over ongoing concerns of driver fatigue. They have to drive long distances with insufficient breaks, and increased weekend work leaves them no time to recuperate. In addition, meal breaks are not scheduled at the depot, so they have to take them at the side of the road or other unsuitable venues.

The drivers fear fatigue could lead to accidents putting drivers and passengers at risk. They previously took action over the same issue in March.

Further stoppages are planned for April 24 and May 15.

## **Further strike by teachers at London's Great Ormond Street Hospital over sacking of union representative**

Teachers and teaching assistants at the famous London Great Ormond Street Hospital for children were on strike Wednesday and Thursday.

The National Education Union (NEU) members were protesting the sacking of their NEU representative, Kate Williams, last year. They accuse management of bullying tactics. Prior to this week's action they have held 24 days of stoppages since September 2025 over the issue. To date management has refused to meet with NEU representatives.

Further stoppages are planned for April 20-21.

### **Judiciary workers in Abia State, Nigeria strike over pay and conditions continues into fourth week**

Judiciary workers in Nigeria's Abia State are continuing their indefinite strike, now entering its fourth week.

The Judiciary Staff Union of Nigeria (JUSUN) members walked out in mid-March after the government failed to implement longstanding agreements covering pay and institutional reforms. Court activities across the state have been paralysed.

At the centre of the dispute are unresolved issues dating back years, including non-implementation of the Consolidated Judiciary Salary Structure, unpaid allowances and the demand for financial autonomy for the judiciary. Workers point to a 2015 memorandum of understanding in which the government committed to these measures.

State governments in the public sector routinely make and then break agreements with unions, forcing workers into repeated industrial action over the same issues.

### **Ongoing pay strike by workers at CJA Telecommunications in Pretoria, South Africa threatens to spread**

The ongoing strike at CJA Telecommunications based in Silverton Pretoria, South Africa is threatening to spread to other major telecommunications corporations—Telkom, Vodacom, MTN and Cell C.

Around 120 Transport and Retail Allied Workers Union (TRAWU) members have been on strike since April 2 in a fight over pay. "The strike is following a deadlock on wage negotiations between the parties," TRAWU stated, pointing to the refusal of management to meet even basic demands, while operations continue under strained conditions.

Workers are demanding a 13 percent wage increase, a full thirteenth cheque bonus, regulated overtime, and fundamental safety protections, including security in dangerous areas. Workers are also opposing the imposition of polygraph testing linked to Huawei, which they view as an attack on their rights.

CJA, a key subcontractor servicing the telecom giants, responded with a derisory offer of 4 percent for the current year within a capped multi-year agreement. The union has rejected this outright, insisting on a one-year deal that addresses the immediate erosion of wages under rising living costs.

TRAWU is demanding South African telecommunication companies use home-based subcontractors rather than Chinese subsidiary Huawei South Africa, opposing the unification of workers across national boundaries in the fight over wages, jobs and conditions.

### **Union suspends strike by resident doctors in Nigeria**

Resident doctors in Nigeria were ordered to call off their nationwide indefinite strike by the Nigerian Association of Resident Doctors (NARD).

Following emergency talks and new assurances from the authorities, union leaders instructed members to resume duties, threatening further strike action on April 21 if their demands are not met.

The strike was launched in response to the government's decision to halt implementation of the revised Professional Allowance Table (PAT), a key element of previous agreements on doctors' pay and conditions.

The dispute centres on longstanding grievances over remuneration and welfare, including unpaid arrears, delayed promotions and funding for residency training. The PAT agreement, which includes provisions for improved allowances such as those for call duty, shift work and rural postings, had already been delayed multiple times before the government moved to discontinue it altogether.

The suspension highlights the role of the health unions in defusing unrest, while leaving the underlying conflict remains unresolved.

Also in Nigeria, lecturers at the University of Jos are continuing an indefinite strike begun early April, halting all academic activities over the non-payment of March 2026 salaries and the continued exclusion of earned academic allowances. Academic workers are withdrawing from lectures, examinations and all statutory duties, bringing teaching and administrative functions at the institution to a standstill.

The withholding of salaries and allowances comes amid a broader cost-of-living crisis, intensifying the financial strain on academic staff and exposing the deepening breakdown of Nigeria's public university system.

### **Union ends Liberian rubber workers' stoppage without resolving owed benefits**

Workers at the Cavalla Rubber Corporation (CRC) in Liberia returned to work after a two-day go-slow strike following intervention by the General Agriculture Allied Workers Union. Their core demands remain unresolved, while negotiations continue.

The action by rubber tappers, who are central to latex production, brought sections of the plantation to a standstill and exposed growing anger over the company's failure to implement the financial commitments made in a recent agreement.

The dispute centres not on basic wages but on outstanding benefits that workers insist are contractually due under a new agreement. Many workers point to the impact on their livelihoods in an already precarious economic environment. The brief shutdown disrupted production across multiple divisions, highlighting the strategic importance of plantation labour.



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