



# Socialist Bulletin

*A monthly publication from Socialist Labour*



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June 2021

N100

## NLC KADUNA STATE STRIKE, FUEL PRICE INCREASES AND THE MINIMUM WAGE: THE WAY FORWARD

We were impressed that the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) organised and implemented the general strike in Kaduna State. Not only this but they organised growing mass protests on each of the three days of the strike. We were also impressed by the action of individual unions, for example, the electricity workers who switched off the light from early on Sunday morning.

*Socialist Labour* commends the courage and sacrifices of the workers of Kaduna State, led by the NLC, in withstanding the vicious attacks by armed thugs of the Governor of Kaduna State. The strike has shown the power of Labour in sustaining society with all necessities of life. For the three days of the warning strike, water, electricity, schools, offices, trains, airlines, banks and more all came to a standstill. It shows that when the workers move in unity, everything grinds to a halt.

Hell Rufai could not even get the support of his fellow governors nor Federal bodies like the police and DSS in Kaduna State. In contrast the NLC received letters of international support and promises of national strikes from electricity workers, AUPCTRE, NUPENG and others.

Yet none of the demands of the strike have been achieved. The strike was suspended to attend the meeting called by the Minister of Labour. Here the NLC agreed to “no further industrial action on these issues”. The outcome of this meeting was a committee with six members from Kaduna State Government and only three representatives from the NLC. This meeting is to report next Tuesday, the same day that the NLC National Executive Council will have its first opportunity to meet and deliberate on the outcome of the strike.

The Governor of Kaduna State continues to show his disdain for organized labour. The day after the meeting, he claimed that no amount of pressure from the NLC will make him back down on his move to sack civil servants and that the NLC should be punished for the strike.

We have to learn the lessons and agree on the way forward, primarily by increasing democracy across the trade union movement. Strikes should only be suspended by the proper democratic structures of the trade unions. Giving up strike action for negotiations is not an uncommon approach by trade union leaders – but it provides a weak position for negotiations. It would have been prudent for the NLC to welcome the meeting called by the Federal Government, but to say that the strike could not be suspended before meeting by the National Executive Council (NEC) could be called to consider and ratify this action.

The sacrifices, including the injuries sustained during the three-day warning strike by peaceful protesters must not be in vain. To this extent, *Socialist Labour* supports the earlier declaration of the NLC leadership that a national strike would follow if the Kaduna State Government remains adamant to continue redundancies or job losses.

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In order to enhance the success of the national strike, other wider issues touching the wellbeing of the popular classes should be added to the demands of the Kaduna State workers. Top on this list should be opposition to fuel price increases and a fight for a living minimum wage. The Nigeria Governors' Forum has recommended a rise in the fuel price from the current average of N162 per litre to at least N380 per litre - a rise of well over three hundred per cent. Inflation since 2011, when minimum wage was increased to N18,000, is now also officially over 300%. So the minimum wage needs to be at least N54,000 to have the same value as a decade ago. Not only do we need the full implementation of the N30,000 minimum wage but we need a further substantial increase to be applied this year.

Demands along these lines would help to combat the pervasive poverty, inequality, corruption and physical insecurity. These demands can effectively unite the masses of whatever state, ethnic group or religion against the ruling class. The NLC should endeavour to carry along the TUC in the event of a nationwide action predicated on the suggested demands. It is only through unity that the working class can win its demands.

Currently we need massive support for the national indefinite strikes by JUSUN, PASAN and ASUP. We need regular town hall meetings and mass protests (as were held in Kaduna) to ensure that these strikes end in victory with full implementation of their demands.

Socialist Labour demands the following:

- no more redundancies in Kaduna State and payment of terminal benefits for all workers who have lost their jobs back to and including the four major textile factories closed in the early 2000s
- a national strike led by the NLC and TUC over the demands for no more price increases for fuel or electricity and a living minimum wage for all
- improved democracy across the trade union movement including the demand for all strikes to be suspended only with the full authority of the national executive council or similar body.

## **National Day of Action Against Insecurity and Governance Failure - Monday, 31st of May, 2021**

We note the existential threat to our people by the combined and endemic crises of poverty, hardships and insecurity. Life for the working people has indeed become short and brutish.

These multiple crises whose devastating impact is measured in tens of millions of people being jobless, homeless, hopeless and going to bed hungry; as well as the thousands abducted and the tens of millions whose livelihoods and jobs have and are being daily destroyed. This is the direct result of the crass failure of the ruling class in Nigeria to govern in the interest of the masses; and a direct consequence of the inability of the ruling class to ensure the delivery of accessible, affordable, available and quality basic social services.

In reality, without the working masses of Nigeria taking political power, and the control of the economy under democratic management and ownership of the working people and labouring masses, the challenges of meeting and provisioning the security, welfare and basic needs of the people cannot be fully addressed, nor can the conditions of living and existence of the people and the country be radically and qualitatively transformed. The National Day of Action Against Insecurity and Governance Failure, is scheduled for Monday, 31st of May, 2021.

**31  
MAY**

**CAMPAIGN AGAINST INSECURITY**

**NATIONAL DAY  
OF ACTION AGAINST  
INSECURITY  
IN NIGERIA**

**PEACEFUL PROTEST RALLY**

**ABUJA, LAGOS, KANO, IBADAN, BENIN, EKITI, OSUN,  
BAUCHI & TARABA**

**NATIONAL PROTEST COORDINATOR:  
FEMI FALANA, SAN**

# JUSUN and PASAN Correctly Continue their Strikes

Despite having signed an agreement with the Federal Government and the governors, the trade unions for the judiciary and legislative workers, JUSUN and PASAN, are, quite correctly, continuing with their strikes. *Socialist Labour* congratulates PASAN and JUSUN for this consistency and leadership. Other trade unions should learn the lesson that is not necessary to call off their strikes for negotiations to take place and agreements to be signed.

Trade union leaders often see their role as negotiating with management. It is not unusual for strikes to be stopped once such negotiations are started – as with the recent NLC strike in Kaduna. But this is one of the reasons that workers do not gain so much from strikes and have lost so much over recent years in Nigeria – for example the minimum wage can only buy half the sacks of rice that it could buy in 2011.

We need massive support for the national indefinite strikes by PASAN, JUSUN and ASUP that have lasted for around two months now. We need regular town hall meetings and mass protests (as were held in Kaduna) to ensure that these strikes end in complete victory. The calls from the Federal Government and governors for JUSUN and PASAN strikes to end should be resisted until at least the key elements of financial autonomy have been implemented for the most recent FAAC allocations.

We welcome the resolve of the leaderships of PASAN and JUSUN to continue their strikes until reforms are actually implemented. We believe the democratic and inclusive nature of these unions has helped the strikes to continue.

## HOW DID WE GET HERE? Why are public services so poor?

### - Jaye Gaskiya

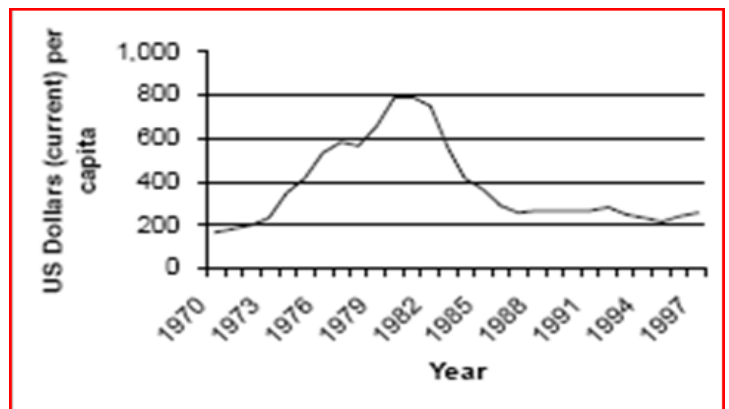
The public perception of the state, governance and public service delivery have not always been poor. In the hay days of the period of self-government just before independence, in the immediate post-independence era, and even through to the second republic, the public perception of the state and public service was more positive; precisely because efficient and quality public services were being delivered, and public investment in the public sector was substantial, enabling the development of the capacity of the public service.

Public railway services, public housing, public education, public healthcare, public energy provision, public business support services to industry and to agriculture etc were all thriving, and were accessible to all.

Then the economic crisis and the response of Structural Adjustment hit in the 1980s. The effect in Nigeria is shown dramatically in the following graph:

#### Per capita income in Nigeria 1970 - 1997

This economic reversal had a devastating effect on the quality of the Nigerian government's services. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2007) less than a third of heads of households had received no education in 1980. By 2002 this had increased to over two thirds. The level of reported poverty also increased very significantly, "in absolute



terms the population of the poor Nigerians increased four-fold between 1980 and 1996".

For the government, this resulted in the abandonment of public provisioning of basic services, a drastic reduction in public investment, in provisioning social infrastructure and services, and an attack on the foundation of the state as the primary agent of human and national development.

It was the notion of the state as the engine of growth and development, the developmental state, envisaged by the provisions of chapter two of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, that determined the size of the state. Governance then meant identifying priorities for national and human development, developing appropriate strategic plans and frameworks to realise this, generating resources, and appropriately allocating funds in investments to realise these plans.

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It was on the basis of this that the size, structure and function of the state was determined, and the foundation upon which the public service was established and was evolving. But now shun of content, we expect the retained form to deliver as in the past, and we undertake ceaseless reform initiatives to get the carcass to work and walk?

The Agriculture ministry for instance has about 18 research institutes. This is good. But what do they do? How are they linked with and connected to farmers and other agriculturalists who require their services? How are their research efforts informed by actual needs on the farms if these linkages are not there? How are their research outputs connected to industry for the purposes of manufacturing and mass

production? How are their research interests determined? And how are their research products utilised and taken up?

Why have we not become leaders in the field of alternative energy sources, in particular in solar and wind energy generation given our gross energy deficit, and the abundance of these other sources of energy? It is developmental questions such as these that the state is meant to respond to through the public service. And it is this, rather than a fixation on

some arbitrarily determined cost and size of government that should determine the nature, scope, scale, character and coverage of the public service and of the state

## **In Her Words by Zainab Haruna and other African Women**

Introducing her new book on African woman, *In Her Words*, Zainab Haruna argues the collection is the first attempt to chronicle the diverse perspectives and experiences of African women. Haruna asks what does liberation for the African woman look like? <https://roape.net/2021/04/27/in-their-own-words-african-women-speak/>

In recent times, feminism has been lauded as a Western concept, an idea that is often leveraged to denigrate contemporary African feminists and the critical work that they do to further the cause of women and girls and promote gender equality in their countries and spaces.

But as history will show us, feminism is anything but 'unAfrican'. In March 1923, the Egyptian feminist Huda Sharaawi founded the first national feminist movement in Egypt and called it al-Ittihad al-nisa ī al-misri, the Egyptian Feminist Union. The Union fought for the equal participation of women in politics including the right to vote, the rights of girls to an education, targeted healthcare for women and girls, and the reform of family law. After years of activism, primary education was mandated for girls as well as boys in 1925 and Egypt granted women the right to vote in 1956.

The Nigerian feminist and women's right activist, Margaret Ekpo, was a force of nature who was instrumental to the assimilation of women into the political landscape in Eastern Nigeria particularly, equal rights to education, the need for women on corporate boards, in addition to specific developmental markers for women in her Eastern region of Nigeria. In January 1959, alongside Janet Mokuolu, Ekpo was one of the first two women appointed as a Special Member to the Eastern House of Chiefs.

Across the length and breadth of Africa, women fought for the nationalist ideals of their countries from colonial rule and simultaneously rallied against a system that posited them as second class citizens in the new order that was being worked towards.

While reading through the submissions, it was easy to weave a thread through similar themes in the experiences of women across the continent including but not limited to incessant gender-based violence, female genital mutilation, early and forced marriage, lack of access to formal education, and economic sidelining.

But it is not all gloom.

The threads of sisterhood, resilience, digging for better and quite frankly, refusing to accept only what society deems as sufficient for you was palpable through these different stories. We saw how women from generations past created better for themselves even without the buffer of formal education that more of us have today. And so we know that it is our responsibility as African feminists in this day to elongate these threads, to push for more equitable societies where women can thrive without having to leap through hurdles that exist solely as a result of their gender.

The book is available for free download - <https://agbowo.org/in-her-words/>

# WOULD A YORUBA/OODUA REPUBLIC PROVIDE DECENT JOBS ON A LIVING WAGE? - Femi Aborisade

The continued peaceful co-existence of peoples and societies is conditioned upon the collective defence of universally recognised human rights. But these are not recognized in Nigeria. The National Bureau of Statistics estimated that 40% of Nigerians existed below the poverty level. 60% of the population struggled to get enough to eat during the lockdowns last year. Most people do not have access to decent health facilities. More children are out of school than in any other country.

The cause of unemployment and poverty in the South West (and nationally) is the looting by members of the ruling class and the neoliberal policy of shifting responsibility for economic development on the private sector.

Those who enrich themselves and impoverish Yoruba masses in the South-West today are not Hausa/Fulani or Igbo. Those responsible for the unprecedented poverty in the South-West are predominately Yoruba members of the ruling class, who are individually richer than the states they govern.

They provide the Yoruba masses with collapsed hospitals. They would rather go abroad for medical care. They provide the Yoruba masses with piggery-like schools they cannot allow their children to use as restrooms. The Governors prefer to fly private or chartered jets rather than pay salaries.

The solution to unprecedented and pervasive poverty lies in the trade unions fighting for the basic needs and welfare of ordinary people. We need decent living wage, no retrenchments, no increases in fuel or electricity prices and proper education and health facilities that we can all afford.

I would also include policies that any elected public officer should earn no more than the national minimum wage plus incidental expenses; direct labor for execution of public projects, opposition to contractocracy, prohibition of medical tourism, children of elected public officers to access education only within Nigeria, reversal of privatization of public assets, etc.

**#jointheresistance**

## WILL ETHNIC NATIONALISM OR IMPROVED WELFARE AND SECURITY RESOLVE THE PROBLEM OF POVERTY?

The bane of socio-economic development in Nigeria is not ethnic pluralism. It is the existing unjust, inequitable, vicious and exploitative capitalist socio-economic system which prioritizes the greed of a few over the need of the poor who are in the majority.

The fundamental cause of poverty and degeneration in the society is not related to divisions between nations and nationalities but conflicting interests between the rich and the poor. The interests of the poor in all ethnic nationalities are the same, just as the interests of members of the ruling class of all nationalities are equally the same. But the arrangements being operated ensures that the rich classes not only monopolise societal wealth at the expense of basic needs of ordinary people, they also use their wealth to impose or capture political power and influence.

Leading members of the two major political parties, at all levels of government, legislative and executive, are from different ethnic groups. They are usually united against the masses in the imposition of obnoxious policies, earning of disproportionate salaries and sharing of contracts.

They are never divided on policies such as perennial increases in the prices of fuel; non-payment of national minimum wage; increases in electricity

tariffs, non-payment of salaries, and so on. On each of these issues, positions are taken, not on the basis of ethnic affiliation but on the basis of

class status.

The poor, including workers, the unemployed, farmers, artisans, traders, and so on, should therefore not be hoodwinked by the deceptive bellicose nationalism of the bourgeoisie or aspiring bourgeoisie.

## **THE PROBLEM OF ETHNIC MINORITIES.**

How will ethnic minorities be treated in a state that is built on the "Yoruba Nation"? States based on nations almost always emphasize ethnicity. This leads to greater conflict – like the break-up of the former Yugoslavia or the civil war in South Sudan. A Yoruba



**Femi Aborisade and others selling socialist papers at Oyo State May Day**

State could still have conflicts based on clans, who is 'really' Yoruba, Muslims and Christians etc. Will the Northerners and Easterners be expelled what will happen to the remaining smaller ethnic groups?

#### **UNITY OF THE WORKING CLASS IS ESSENTIAL**

The JUSUN, PASAN and ASUP strikes, like all other strikes, can only be successful if we have unity

between the different ethnic groups, religious affiliations and men and women. The labouring masses face huge economic challenges to their basic human rights. It is only by uniting that we can successfully challenge the money bags of every state, local government or ethnic group.

## **INFIGHTING FOR CONTROL OF ECONOMY BY THE MONEY BAGS - by Femi Falana**

The corrupt rulers have no real interest with ethnicity and religion, they just promote it to divide the working class.

Aliko Dangote and Samad Rabiu are the two richest Africans. They are both Muslims and Hausa/Fulani from Kano State. But they are fighting over the control of cement and other businesses.

Oba Otudeko and Mike Adenuga are both Christians and Yoruba from Ogun State. In fact, they are both Ijebu and high chiefs of the Awujale. But they are fighting over the control of First Bank.

When former CBN Governor Sanusi Lamido Sanusi sacked bank managing directors for monumental fraud in 2008 it was alleged that it was an anti-South and anti-Christian agenda. But the current CBN Governor, Godwin Emefiele who sacked the First Bank management for alleged insider loan of N75 billion given to Oba Otudeko is also a Christian from Delta State!

Elizabeth Adofo continues the SWP's Marxist Monday series by exploring why patriotism offers us nothing, and why socialists should oppose any attempt to rally behind their national flag - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mczXzarbTuc>

## **EDWIN MADUNAGU: AN OUTSTANDING MARXIST SCHOLAR AT 75 – Biodun Olamosu**

Politics started for Edwin Madunagu as a student at the University of Ibadan. Marxist scholarship and tradition was already prominent at UI in the 1970s

when Madunagu gained admission to the school. With his wife Bene and Eskor Toyo, they later made Marxism popular at the University of Calabar with the radical left organisation, Frantz Fanon Study Group.

Madunagu joined the service of the Guardian newspaper as a columnist and became a prominent member of its editorial board. Not a few people followed him with his socialist writings published every Thursday for many years.

Madunagu lent his voice to Trotskyist politics (of the former leader of the Red Army in Russia later exiled when Stalin came to power) and so boosted the morale of the extant Trotskyist youth organised around Labour Militant. This

was a time when his contemporaries from the Left were still enjoying their cordial relationship with the successive Stalinist governments in Russia and Eastern European countries.

As a teacher at the University of Lagos and Calabar, his role in identifying with the cause of the University lecturers, students and the working class organised under the platforms of ASUU, NANS and NLC respectively caused him his job in 1978; together with his other colleagues (including his wife) that were accused of teaching what they were not paid to teach.

Edwin Madunagu sincerity of purpose became obvious in his involvement in organising a peasant commune meant to challenge the government of the day with the ultimate goal of taking power from it. This approach of guerrillaism must have been influenced by the political developments in Latin America. The

project did not materialise before it was disbanded, but this remains a testimony to Madunagu's courage as a revolutionary ready to sacrifice even his life for the sake of the struggle.

Under the military rule led by Ibrahim Babangida local government elections were conducted across the country. The group that Edwin Madunagu belonged to in Calabar decided to test their strength by contesting. The result was favourable as members of the group won significant votes and mandates in Calabar metropolitan Local Government, where one of the leading members of the Organisation in person of Bassey Ekpo Bassey became the chair of the local government in Cross River State. This was a good example of how Marxists should participate in electoral politics. The local government led by Ekpo Bassey did not only lead by example but achieved welfare programme for the poor and citizens within his

## CONFERENCE ON EDWIN MADUNAGU @75

DATE: MAY 15, 2021  
TIME: 3:30PM - 6:00PM WAT

VENUE:  zoom

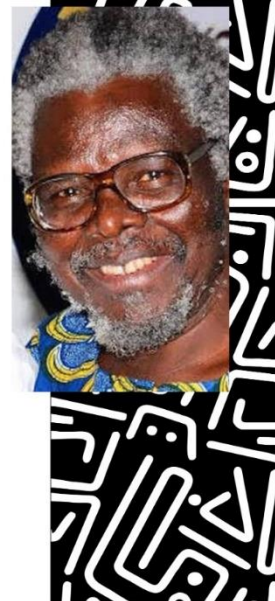
THEME:  
**PROGRESSIVE POLITICS  
AS THE ANSWER TO THE  
NATIONAL QUESTION:  
PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS**

KEYNOTE ADDRESS:  
**PROF. YAKUBU OCHEFU**  
Secretary General of the Committee of  
Vice Chancellors of Nigerian Universities


DISCUSSANTS  
**NGOZI IWERE & HAUWA  
MUSTAPHA**

CHAIR:  
**ODIA OFEIMUN**

CULTURAL PRESENTATION:  
**DR SOLA OLORUNYOMI**




Socialist Movement (1980), Problems of Socialism: The Nigerian Challenge (1983) and Nigeria: The Economy and The People The



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designated political constituency.

The bountiful writings of Edwin Madunagu apart from the column he maintained for three decades include: Tragedy of the Nigerian

political economy of state robbery and its popular-democratic negation (1984).

This tribute would not complete without reference to his wife, also a socialist, feminist

and scholar of the same degree. The relationship between them could best be compared between Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. The success they achieved in the world of struggle could be traced to their relationship and collaboration

### **Conference on Edwin Madunagu @ 75**

A major conference was held in mid-May to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> year of the Nigerian socialist Eddie Madunagu. This included both a physical

meeting and over 100 trying to attend the Zoom meeting.

To celebrate this event, Iva Valley books re-issued, with the permission of the author, the nine articles that Madunagu has published over the last year. This pamphlet is available for free down-load from:

<https://ivavalleybooks.com/2021/05/15/edwin-madunagu-at-75/>

### **Other pamphlets for free-down load from Iva Valley Books:**

#### ***Palestine Resistance, revolution and the struggle for freedom***

Israel is a racist state, similar to the way that Apartheid South Africa was organised. The West Bank and Gaza Strip are like the South African Bantustans. Jews from anywhere in the world are free to live in Israel as full citizens.

More than seventy years have passed since Zionist militias began the process of ethnic cleansing which would force over 750,000 Palestinians from their homes and clear the way for the construction of the state of Israel. This process continues today. It was the ethnic cleansing of East Jerusalem that sparked the current rise in violence between the Palestinians in the refugee camp of the Gaza Strip and the Israeli state armed with nuclear weapons.

The truth is simple: the Palestinian people deserve the right to self-determination. But to get to that truth, you need to understand the history and politics of their struggle. This book is a tremendous roadmap to get to that truth. It is essential reading for anybody interested in understanding the past, present, and future of the Palestinian liberation struggle.

<https://ivavalleybooks.com/2021/05/15/palestine-resistance-revolution-and-the-struggle-for-freedom/>

#### ***The Prophet and the Proletariat - Islamic fundamentalism, class and revolution* By Chris Harman**

Islamic fundamentalism has emerged as the ideology that Western politicians and media pundits most like to hate. The kind of abuse once reserved for 'Communism' is now directed at the Islamic movements which threaten to destabilise key areas of Western influence in the Middle East and beyond. But the campaign against Islamism has found allies on the left among those fearful that it threatens an irrationalist, even fascist, backlash.

Chris Harman charts a careful course through the contradictions of Islamism, revealing its class roots and arguing that when the Islamists are in opposition the socialist attitude should be 'with the state never, with the Islamists sometimes'. He goes on to show in which circumstances Islamism plays a reactionary role and in which circumstances the Islamic challenge the establishment.

Download for free via this link: <https://ivavalleybooks.com/2021/05/07/the-prophet-and-the-proletariat/>

To join the Socialist Labour supporters whatsapp group, use the following link: [tinyurl.com/SocialistLabour](https://www.tinyurl.com/SocialistLabour)



# Summary of Strikes in May 2021



**We need your assistance** to ensure that this monthly strike report is comprehensive. Please submit details of any strikes or other protests in your state or community to the Socialist Labour WhatsApp group or to [socialistlabour.ng@gmail.com](mailto:socialistlabour.ng@gmail.com)

**The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) called a five-day warning general strike in Kaduna State from Monday 17th May.** For three days growing protests were held in Kaduna. Water, electricity, schools, offices, trains, airlines, banks and more all came to a standstill. The strike was suspended on Wednesday evening immediately an invitation to a meeting by the Minister of Labour was received. Here the NLC agreed to "no further industrial action on these issues".

**Members of the Parliamentary Staff Association of Nigeria (PASAN)** started a nationwide indefinite national strike 23<sup>rd</sup> March. This is over the lack of financial independence for State Houses of Assembly. All State Houses of Assembly are shut. Section 121(3) of the Federal Constitution and Presidential Order 10 of 2020 gave autonomy, but this has yet to be implemented as state governors want to hold on to their financial powers.

**Judiciary workers, members of JUSUN, started their national indefinite strike from Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> April.** This is over the same demands as the parliamentary workers – financial autonomy. The Federal Courts have joined this strike despite their agreement. The Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) has agreed to fully implement financial autonomy for state judiciary and legislature in May. But the union wants to see action over the distribution of the FAAC allocations made in May before calling off the strike.

**The Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics (ASUP) on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> April declared an indefinite strike** to demand the implementation of a new salary scheme for polytechnic lecturers included in the 2017/18 agreement with the Federal Government. The union is also demanding payment of salaries and promotion allowances owed lecturers by some state governments. Recently, the National President of ASUP said, "We want to see the funds released for the sector and we want to see some other items that require processes to be put in motion."

**The Joint Action Committee (JAC) of the Akwa Ibom State University re-commenced its suspended strike action over alleged nonpayment of at least 10 months' salary arrears and other issues on Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> April.** The JAC comprises the institutions' Academic Staff Union of Universities, Non-Academic Staff Union Universities, Senior Staffs Association of Nigeria Universities and the National Association of Academic Technologists.

**The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Ambrose Alli University, Edo State, on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March began an indefinite strike** over unpaid five-month salaries and remittance of over 13 months' unpaid check-off dues and other deductions from staff members' salaries.

**UCH chapter of the association of resident doctors(ARD) Ibadan on indefinite strike** from Mayday, over unpaid four months' salaries of some members. April salary was paid, but salaries owed for January, February and March. IPPIS is also affecting payment of their salaries.

# Socialist Labour- JOIN US

## **We are socialists and Marxists**

The economic, environmental and Covid-19 crises have made clear that capitalism is a conflict between two classes: the vast majority who create the wealth, and a tiny minority who profit from it. Attempts to reform capitalism have failed: the only solution is to replace it with a truly democratic socialist society. Capitalist rulers will only give up power if forced to do so. We need a mass democratic movement to bring about socialism. Events, such as the Russian Revolution of 1917, January 2012 in Nigeria and the uprisings in Sudan and Algeria last year, show what is needed.

## **The organised working class is the central force for change**

We believe that the organised working class (rank and file members of NLC/TUC) is the central force that can fight capitalism and build socialism. As Marx said, "the emancipation of the working class must be the act of the working class itself", so we do not believe that countries like China or the former USSR are socialist. We need the organised working class to lead the struggle for socialism, supported by the wider popular classes, the informal sector and market women.

## **We fight all forms of oppression**

Capitalist society rests on exploitation and economic injustice, but also generates oppression, including sexism and racism. We are committed to fighting for the full social and economic equality of women and building a movement where the fight against any form of oppression is at the centre of the struggle for socialism.

## **We are internationalists, not nationalists**

Capitalism seeks to divide us along lines of race, ethnicity, nationality and religion. We reject such divisions: we stand in solidarity with working people worldwide. We oppose imperialist wars and interference. We want a fairer world not just to develop the Nigerian economy. Issues like the environmental crisis and Covid-19 can only be addressed by pooling resources on a world scale.

## **A living and changing tradition**

We draw on the tradition of past socialists like Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky and Rosa Luxemburg. But the world is constantly changing. We need to discuss how those ideas should be reinterpreted and developed for the twenty-first century.

## **Space for discussion and action**

We aim to create space where ideas are discussed and acted on. We reject any sectarianism, or any claim that a small number of activists can substitute for a larger movement. We use the opportunities provided by social media to organise better. We want to create a group with a lively and democratic internal culture. We want to

discover, use and develop every member's skills. We aim to be accessible to people new to socialist ideas.

## **Working with others and learning from them**

We encourage our members to work in popular campaigns (like ASCAB) and, where possible, to organise joint activities with other left groups. We learn from mass protests and other writers and activists. We don't have all the answers. We expect all our members to be active in their trade unions and to actively support struggles of unions other organisations of the oppressed strata of society in support of demands including the following:

- minimum wage of N30,000 to be implemented and raised annually as inflation rises
- no job or wage cuts allowed in current circumstances
- palliatives to be provided to all those affected by the lockdowns including basic income for informal workers
- adequate funding to provide healthcare and education for all and personal protection equipment (PPE) for all workers
- opposition to medical tourism by top public officers at public expense
- opposition to privatisation of public enterprises, we demand the reversal of past disposals of public assets.

## **We welcome everyone who hates capitalism and oppression**

Everyone who agrees with our basic principles above is welcome to join Socialist Labour. We are more interested in men and women campaigning and discussing ideas than just joining us. In order to reach wider layers of society with our ideas, we will collaborate with other socialists in protests, social movements, alliances, campaigns and workplace struggles.

*If you would like to join Socialist Labour, then please submit the following details:*

**Name:**

**Email:**

**WhatsApp number:**

**Workplace address/university/school:**

**Trade union:**

**State:**

**Minimum suggested monthly  
subscription levels are:**

**Employed – N1,000**

**Well paid – N5,000**

**Unemployed/student – N500**

**EMAIL: [socialistlabour.ng@gmail.com](mailto:socialistlabour.ng@gmail.com)**

**TWITTER: @SocialistLabNg**

**FACEBOOK @socialistlabourng**

**WEBSITE: [socialistlabour.com.ng](http://socialistlabour.com.ng)**