



# Socialist Bulletin

**A Monthly Publication from Socialist Labour**

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#ENDSARS: Protest as a form of political Engagement  
Page 3

What is the Balance sheet of Doctors' Strike?  
Page 5

What is the root cause of Physical Insecurity?  
page 6

Summary of workers strikes and protests  
Back page

## Socialist Labour Calls for Solidarity with Public Sector Strikers of Cross River State

Socialist Labour Calls for Solidarity with Public Sector Strikers of Cross River State

Like many states, Cross River has plenty of money, but its priorities do not include the state and local government workers nor the pensioners.

As a result, from 12th October the state and local government workers have been on indefinite strike, led by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trades Union Congress (TUC).

The price of crude oil is now around \$85 a barrel, more than twice the level expected for the 2021 budgets. The revenue for Cross River State has increased by around 60% over the last four years. As a result, almost three quarters of its budget for this year is to be spent on capital projects. Whilst less than a fifth of the budget is for paying workers' salaries and pensions for its former staff.

In the first six months of this year, according to the state's budget performance report, Cross River State Government collected over 80% of its expected revenue, but spent not much more than half of its personnel budget for the period. The State is grossly over spending on capital and refusing to pay its workers as agreed - we need nurses as well as new health centres; teachers as well as new schools.

The state has failed to fully implement the N30,000 minimum wage, failed to implement promotions or annual increments and failed to pay its pensioners as required.

In addition, teachers have suffered from loss of tax exemptions and allowances. The state has also illegally not remitted deductions from workers' salaries. For these reasons, the workers of Cross River State need solidarity from across the country. In a related issue, 352 interns at the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital have not been paid their allowances for the last year. Over 20% of the interns are now homeless due to inability to pay their rents. They held peaceful demonstrations in April and October and are seeking support from various trade unions.

In addition, the street sweepers of Calabar



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have not been paid their wages for the last six months. These amount to a miserly N7,500 a month – less than the legal figure of N30,000. We congratulate them for their protests on Wednesday, 20th October and we are disgusted to hear that these women were attacked with tear gas by the police.

Socialist Labour offers its full support to the working peoples of Cross River State at both state and local government levels. We applaud the joint leadership of the NLC and the TUC in leading this strike and call for the action to be continued until justice and full victory is achieved.

However, the experience of other strikes in recent years suggest that a stay at home strike is not enough. The trade unions need to organise protests and town hall meetings to galvanise public support and put pressure on the State Government. They also need to call for solidarity action in other states where the workers are suffering similar problems. The NLC and TUC in Cross River also need to provide full support to the hospital interns and the women street cleaners of the state.

Socialist Labour calls on its supporters to provide the necessary support and solidarity for the workers involved. We solidarity messages from as many trade union branches as possible. We also call on the NLC and TUC at the national level to continue to provide support for this important dispute and to offer the necessary solidarity action if the government refuses to settle in the very near future.

**Messages of support for this important strike and to the hospital interns can be sent to:**

•**Cross River State NLC via WhatsApp on 0803 733 2676 or 0806 497 0121**

•**University of Calabar Teaching Hospital representative for Interns via WhatsApp on: 0806 425 6797**

## CAMPAIGN TO GET ALL DETAINEES RELEASED



Around 300 #EndSARS protestors are said to be languishing in prison, over a year after they were detained. This is part of a wider problem of poor people being held for months or even years before having their cases dealt with in the courts. The National Bureau of Statistics says 72% of those in prison are awaiting their court cases.

This was highlighted recently when 857 awaiting trial inmates escaped from the Abolongo Correctional Centre in Oyo Town. This prison was opened in 2007 with a capacity of 160 inmates, but held 907 at the time of the attack. Of this number,

less than 10%, only 64, had been convicted, the others were still presumed innocent, not having been proved guilty in court.

According to Sahara Reporters many of those detained during the #EndSARS protests were still being held in prison. These include, for example, Kpanou Robbert, Aletile David, Peter John, Muri Garuba, Garfar Olalere, Sunday Okoro, Augustine Chukwudi, Lateef Segun, Yakubu Jimoh and Nasiru Danjumo were arrested at different locations in Lagos after the October 2020 protests and have been languishing at the Kirikiri Prison in Lagos.

Others in the prison facility include Adebayo Usman, Aderoju Theophilus, Ayobami Saheed, Akinyemi Bolaji, Olagoke Adewale, Ganiu Ambali, Seyi Awobola and Damola Leigh.

We need a campaign to ensure that all the #EndSARS protestors are released. We similarly need a campaign to ensure that only exceptionally are people detained in prison before their trial in court.

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## #ENDSARS: PROTEST AS A FORM OF POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT: By Jaye Gaskia

It is one year since the mass youth rebellion of October 2020. The protests began as a revolt against police brutality in general and against the dreaded special unit – SARS - in particular. It soon became a revolt against bad governance and failed ruling class leadership.

Such is the nature of mass actions - active direct mass action on the streets, including active mass strikes. The intensity of the dynamics of the moment create an enabling environment for a rapid rise in levels of political awareness, political education and political consciousness among the masses - this time, the youths in revolt.

A significant number of young activists who participated actively in the #EndSARS mass protests have recognised the necessity for active and conscious political engagement.

This is a huge leap forward, a level of political education which could have taken years to acquire, but which a moment of struggle helped to realise in a relatively short period of time.

The emergent challenge is that the contradictory evolution of consciousness is still in its infancy, and thus not yet fully formed.

Newer layers of activists have embraced the necessity for conscious political engagement. This is on the back of a momentous protest, and the brutal repression of the mass protest. But there is a tendency to separate protests from political engagement. The two can be opposed as mutually exclusive. As a result, conscious political engagement may be avoided.

This is where our role as socialists, the role of our organisations and political movements continues to be necessary and decisive. We need to help to chart the path of development of the new consciousness among the newly and recently radicalised.

Protests, and particularly mass protests against the state and the ruling class, their policies or their institutions, are inevitably political actions. It is the level of political awareness and consciousness of the masses in revolt, their leaders and their organisations, that determines whether these mass protests become consciously or unconsciously political.

Mass actions, and mass protests are some of the most active forms of political engagement. They are an essential component of a conscious project of active political engagement and participation. This aims not only at influencing policies and governance, but also aims to challenge for political power. Mass protests are prerequisites for such a political project.

Yes, #EndSARS was a spontaneous revolt, that caught us off guard; and yes we were too small, and too dispersed as left forces to have played a more decisive role in deepening the protest and transitioning the protest from a revolt into an uprising. Nevertheless, our conscious presence and active political engagement with the moment contributed, and has continued to shape the evolution and development of political awareness and consciousness.



ment of political awareness and consciousness.

This is a role we must continue to play - to facilitate the deepening of emergent political consciousness; even as we continue to organise to actively build our movement, and bring in more and more newly and recently radicalised into our movement.

Understanding that we have to engage politically is very key, but understanding that this political engagement must be aimed not just at achieving reforms, but also at taking power so that we can reorganise society in our own interests, is even more important.

Ultimately, given the power that the ruling class has over society, its hegemony, and given the character of the state as one that protects the interest of the ruling class; neither transitional reforms, nor revolutionary reorganisation of society will be possible without the active direct mass activities of the poor, the working classes, and the toiling masses.

Our strategy should therefore not be to replace or exchange protest with political engagement, or to abandon protest for political participation. Our strategy should be to find ever newer and more innovative ways to deploy mass protests, and utilise direct mass action to enable us bring the social weight of our class to shift the balance of forces politically in our favour, and make it possible for our class to take and exercise political power.

This is why we are urging all the young persons who participated actively in the #EndSARS protests, who continue to be angry at the conditions of our people, who are desirous of changing this system and addressing this systemic failure, to come and join up with us. We can then organise and mobilise together, to bring an end to our sufferings, and to challenge the ruling class politically for power.

Join The Peoples Alternative Political Movement (TPAP-M) directly, or through any of its affiliates (including Socialist Labour); or if you have an organisation already, through affiliating your organization with TPAP-M. We also need all Socialist Labour supporters to be active in TPAP-M. Email [tpapsnigeria@gmail.com](mailto:tpapsnigeria@gmail.com)

## CHRONICLE OF DEGREE DENIALS BY UNILORIN : A COMPLETE SYSTEMS FAILURE Poju Akinyanju

From 1997, the broad goal of Vice-Chancellor Abdulraheem of the University of Ilorin and subsequent vice chancellors, was to destroy the progressive forces on the campus. To this end he withheld the degrees of many students, some are mentioned here.

The first victim was Victoria Oyalana (degree withheld for two years). She went to the High Court which found in her favour, ordering her results to be released and awarded her damages. The case was appealed to the Supreme Court. The University subsequently settled out of court awarding the degree and paying N350,000 in early 2002. The judge stated: "it is my considered view that the Respondents [the University] have exhibited undiluted arrogance and gross indifference". Sadly, she died in a motor accident on the way to court from her NYSC post.

Tosin Akinrogunde (degree withheld for over five years). He was a politically active medical student. He was



prevented from writing his examinations, suspended, rusticated, prosecuted in court and finally had his result seized. He won his case at the High Court, the Court of appeal and the Supreme Court. The judge stated that the University: "went about playing a cat and mouse game with the plaintiff's legal and constitutional rights".

The cases of Rasheedat Adesina and S. Lanre Akinola (degrees withheld for 14 years) went to court. Finally, in 2014, the Supreme Court awarded punitive costs against the University. Rasheedat was called to the

Nigerian Bar in August of this year.

Femi Dunmade and Demola Jolayemi (degrees withheld for over 13/12 years respectively). The courts found in their favour and punitive costs were awarded against the University. In Dunmade's case the judge commented on: "the wrongful and oppressive manner in which the [University] deprived the plaintiff of his PH.D. degree".

The University system is run on a committee system peaking with the Senate and Council. All these committees failed. They gave in to the tyranny of the VC. Senior academics lost their voice in the Senate and some of them went to court to perjure themselves.

Universities have an auditing system, the Visitor reviews the activities of the universities. The above cases went before the panels sent by the Visitor. The panels took representations from the victims but rarely made recommendations. In the case of Rasheedat and Lanre, a special Visitation panel (Committee on Politically Victimized Students) made recommendations to the University which the VC refused to implement.

One of the planks on which the VC hung his impunity was that the students have no right to participate in the struggle against fee increases that were ordered by their national association. Indeed national officers of NANS who came to supervise the protests were railroaded into jail and were there for 30 days.

ASUU, the trade union of the academics was also remiss as they did not take action in this situation. Unions have a duty to show more sensitivity to broad issues of rights and adherence to laws and regulations.

All the cases of victimization recorded here and many others were initiated by Shuaib Oba Abdulraheem, but many succeeding Vice-Chancellors: Shamsudeen Amali, Ishaq Oloyede and Abdul Ganiyu Ambali continued to sustain these injustices.

All the personnel who were involved in the victimization of these students have been rewarded with other appointments. One became Vice Chancellor of another university. Others were appointed as chief executive of important national agencies.

Such tyrannies are designed to scare the students into becoming Zombies deprived of their youthful zest and energies. And in this the tyrants have succeeded. That is why in the face of the ongoing national catastrophe, our students and their organization are found missing in action.

This is a summary of a more comprehensive article which is available on the Socialist Labour website: <https://socialistlabour.com.ng>

## WHAT IS THE BALANCE SHEET OF THE DOCTORS STRIKE?

*Socialist Labour* congratulates the doctors, members of the National Association of Resident Doctors (NARD), for their steadfastness and tenacity in maintaining their strike for over two months from 2nd August 2021. We admire the way that they have stood up against the insults and threats from the government. They also faced criticism from the more senior doctors in their parent body, the Nigeria Medical Association. The doctors' strike did not receive any formal support from the trade union movement. They also faced appeals from the Sultan of Sokoto and other traditional leaders to end their strike. Despite the National Industrial Court ordering members of NARD to return to work, the doctors continued their strike.

The NARD strike has now been suspended for six weeks. The government should implement their demands before the middle of November.

### **Doctors won some of their demands**

The doctors are still negotiating with the government. "Some of the demands we made before we went on strike have been met and some are yet to be met," said Dr Alapa of the Federal Medical Centre, Makurdi. There is an undertaking that no work no pay will not be applied, but Government was not ready to put this down in writing.

The residency training allowance payment is to continue to be paid. The Federal Ministry of Labour is to interface with state governments on their responsibilities. House officers are already being paid the arrears of their salaries.

### **Solidarity could have won greater gains**

The doctors' strike demonstrated that one section of workers cannot win alone. We can only end mass poverty, inequality, unemployment and corruption if a culture of solidarity is re-developed. We need other trade unions and especially NLC and TUC to openly support all and every strike by their members and other groups of workers. We also need strikers to reach out for solidarity from the wider trade union movement and civil society.

NLC and TUC should have been defending their members' health and fighting against the deplorable state of public health services. They did not provide any public solidarity to the doctors of NARD. This disunity is unfortunate. As the saying goes, "the workers united will never be defeated – divided we fall".

The NARD leadership could have reached out to other trade unions for support, issued more press releases and held town hall meetings and so on to mobilise public support.

### **JOHESU needs to fight for its demands**

In these circumstances, it is unfortunate that JOHESU postponed its planned strike whilst the doctors

were still on strike.

It is now well over a year since the JOHESU's one week strike was suspended in September 2020. Since then, very few meetings have been held with the Government and almost no progress has been made with negotiations and the unions' demands. The government is only proposing to spend 5% of its budget on health in 2022, compared to the international target of 15%.

### **NARD could develop into a trade union for doctors**

Doctors are in different positions. Resident doctors have just finished their medical studies. They work hard and are not paid so much. In contrast, some members of the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) are medical directors of large public hospitals or run their own private hospitals.

Members of NARD acted like a trade union. But there is a conflict as some see themselves as professionals with prospects of becoming senior managers or private bosses.

It is wrong of some health workers to see all doctors as being part of the problem. Some medical directors may be, but equally many members of NARD showed that they see themselves as workers – solidarity action would have strengthened this idea.

### **Conclusions**

The striking doctors of NARD have yet to win their key demands despite a fantastic strike of over two months. Solidarity from the wider trade union movement could have led to victory as the first step to re-building public health services. Strikes are needed to change the chronic state of underfunding of the public health sector. Health services have effectively been privatised over the last generation and the public now pays at least 80% of the cost of their health services from their own pockets.

We hope that the doctors of NARD and other health workers represented by JOHESU make gains from their current negotiations with the government. But we believe that the fundamental change needed to the health sector will only be achieved through joint strike action of all health workers, with full solidarity of the wider trade union movement.

This is an edited version of the statement available on the Socialist Labour website: <https://socialistlabour.com.ng/2021/10/26/what-is-the-balance-sheet-of-the-doctors-strike/>





## THE CRITICAL QUESTION WE MUST ASK IS WHAT IS THE ROOT CAUSE OF PHYSICAL INSECURITY?

### Femi Aborisade

The root cause of physical insecurity is economic insecurity, poverty and inequality. Therefore, the challenge is how to ensure income redistribution and eliminate or drastically reduce income inequality.

The national minimum wage per month of N30,000 has yet to be implemented in many States. In contrast, the monthly earnings of a Senator are 1,000 times higher at N31million. This is one of the highest rates of income inequality in the world.

Wages and pensions are not paid as and when due in many states. In many cases, arbitrary portions of wages are paid at the whims and caprices of the rulers. Yet, the cost of living rises by the day. Fuel price and electricity tariffs continue to be raised. Workers are being compulsorily retired, terminated and/or dismissed arbitrarily in total disregard of the public service rules and without payment of their terminal benefits. Kaduna State appeared to have been leading this onslaught on the rights of workers. Other States, such as Plateau, Benue and Cross River state, have begun to emulate these obnoxious policies.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics, inflation which averaged 9% in 2015 rose to 18% as at April 2021. The unemployment rate of 9.9% in 2015 is now 33.3% (March 2021). In fact, the Minister of

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Labour and Employment, Senator Chris Ngige, once disclosed that, at least, 100 million people are without decent jobs. According to the Minister,

“Nigeria is over 200 million and about 60 percent are youths who need employment. Unfortunately, only 10 percent have decent jobs.”

Hunger is pervasive as five million people in the North East States of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe face acute food insecurity. Indeed, since May 2015, the World Food Programme (WFP) has been supporting displaced persons in Nigeria with food assistance.

In Kaduna State, the three-day warning strike led by the NLC in May recorded several victories. In spite of the State Government that mobilized hoodlums to attack the workers' rallies and the threats of victimizing workers who took part in the protest, the following gains have been won:

- Since the strike there have been no redundancies and thousands have been recalled. The Water Agency tried to retrench 200 people, but this was over-turned.
- Tens of thousands of workers are now receiving their entitlements for previous redundancies - including teachers made redundant in 2017.
- About three thousand local government

workers who were sacked in 2021 have been recalled.

- The dismissed ASUU members at Kaduna State University (KASU) have been recalled.
- The nurses who were sacked on the false accusation of yanking off oxygen from a child at Barau Dikko Hospital during the strike have been exonerated by the Hospital's Disciplinary Committee and recalled.
- Nobody has been victimized for taking part in the strike.

The generalized lesson we can draw from the experience of labour, nationally and internationally, is that employers of labour, either in the public or private sector, never grant workers their right without a fight. The NLC and TUC should learn the lessons of the Kaduna State strike and others like the ones in Nasarawa and Cross River states. Active strikes can win significant demands which will in turn reduce the level of insecurity.

## Civil Society and Trade Union Staff should join Trade Unions

Many civil society organisations, including trades unions, organise to try improve the world, especially for the mass of poor people. However, some of these organisations are not good employers, they may not treat their workers well and the CEO or Chair is the boss and can be a dictator.

These organisations still want their workers to work long hours, including working in the evening and at weekends. They may not pay their staff well or on time and in some cases even pay less than the legal

minimum wage. Promotions and increments may not be paid on time and pensions and gratuity may not be paid as and when due.

For all these reasons, staff of trades unions and other civil society organisations should organise to fight for their rights as members of their own trade unions. For example, staff of the NLC are members of the Nigerian Civil Servants Union and are organised in their own branch with a chair, secretary etc.

## Free Electricity in South Africa

In South Africa, 50-kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity are provided free every month to poor households (Free Basic Electricity). This saves the cost of collecting small bills from poor people. Not much more than half the population of Nigeria has access to electricity and not much more than 20% in rural areas.

## Strikes in South Africa Win Three Year Pay Deals

The National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (NUMSA) has won a three year above inflation deal for its members. This is after an almost three week strike from 5th October. Inflation in South Africa is only 5%, but NUMSA won annual increases of 6% each year for the lowest pay grades and slightly less for the higher grades.

The National Union of Mineworkers also recently won a two year pay deal. The main trade union federation, COSATU organised a day of protests on 7th October against the rise in unemployment from the

Covid-19 lockdowns last year.

Three months ago public sector trade unions also agreed pay increases for this year with another pay increase promised for next year.

Trade unions in South Africa often agree three year pay increases. This is much better than the increase in the minimum wage in Nigeria that is supposed to happen every five years, but the last two increases were implemented in 2011 and 2019! We need increases in the minimum wage more frequently, especially when inflation is so high.

## **Socialist Labour Depends on its Supporters for Finances**

Socialist Labour depends on its members and supporters for funds. We need more financial support so that we can be more active, expand and grow. If you are able to make a modest financial contribution that would be really helpful. We would also like all readers of this Bulletin to consider fully joining Socialist Labour by paying monthly subscriptions.

The standard rate is N1,000 a month, with a lower rate of N500 for students or unemployed and N5,000 for higher paid comrades. We can all afford something - every little helps.

Please make your contributions to the following bank account:

**First Bank Nig. Ltd. Account No. 3158880328**

**Account Name: Aborisade Albert Femi**

The account is only used for Socialist Labour purposes.

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## **Nigeria's Poverty Trend (2016-2030)**

From 2016 till date, approximately 14.8 million Nigerians have been pushed into poverty. Over 6.5 million Nigerians were pushed below the poverty line in 2020 which makes it the highest number of people pushed into poverty in a period of a year.

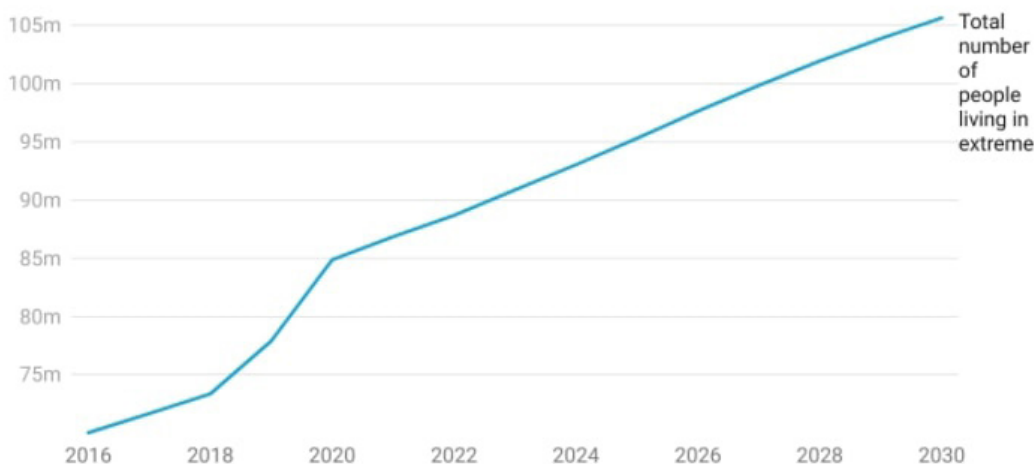


Chart: Dataphyte • Source: World Poverty Clock • Created with Datawrapper



# WE SHOULD ALL BE SOCIALIST FEMINISTS!

## - Omole Ibukun

For feminists trying to understand socialism (or socialists trying to understand feminism), a short introduction:

- ⌘ Communism is to socialism what gender equality is to feminism.
- ⌘ Communism is the goal. Socialism is the path to that goal. Gender Equality is the goal. Feminism is the path to that goal.
- ⌘ Socialism is biased for collective society over individuals. Feminism is biased for women over men.
- ⌘ Socialism is biased in the sense that the society is the guiding voices in socialism, not some individuals. Feminism is biased in the sense that the feminine gender are the guiding voices in feminism, not men.
- ⌘ This is because capitalism subjects the society to the dictates of the profit interests of some individuals, and patriarchy subjects women to the dictates of the sexist interests of men.
- ⌘ Socialism is based on the assumption that the world has enough for everyone to live a good fulfilled life. The problem of the world is accumulation of wealth that is controlled and wasted by the few, while most of us face scarcity.
- ⌘ Feminism is based on the assumption that we can all love and respect one another without feelings of superiority.
- ⌘ Socialism is about cultural solidarity, economic equality and political equality. It means working people who produce value should be in control of their labour.
- ⌘ Feminism is about social, economic and political equality of each gender. It means women should be able to control their bodies. They should decide when or if they become pregnant.
- ⌘ Saying China practices socialism or communism is like saying there is gender equality in a certain religion. Even while some Christians claim to be feminists, they still have patriarchal laws and structures in the rules they follow from the bible. The same way China only uses socialism for propaganda. In the constitution of China or Russia, power and control of the economy does not lie with the mass of the people.
- ⌘ Communism cannot be dictated by a state authority, similarly gender equality cannot be dictated by any religious authority. They both have to come from the voluntary consciousness of the people internationally. Those who tried having a communist state ended up with a totalitarian state capitalism. Also those who try to have a feminist religion end up with matriarchal spiritualism. Totalitarian state capitalism has brought some success economically, especially with China. In the same way, womanist identity politics can achieve some temporary success – for individual women, like Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala. But most Chinese and women and still suffering oppression and inequality.
- ⌘ Capitalism puts the greed of the few over the welfare of the majority of the working masses who produce value. In the same way, patriarchy puts the urge for sex and reproduction above the welfare of women who carry the burden of reproduction.
- ⌘ This how much socialism and feminism have in common. This is why you should never be a bourgeois feminist (just wanting some women in high positions) or a patriarchal socialist (who do not recognised the importance of the fight for women's rights). We should all be socialist feminists.

## Summary of Workers Strikes and Protests - October 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 [tpapsnigeria@gmail.com](mailto:tpapsnigeria@gmail.com)

**Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trades Union Congress (TUC)** have led a public sector strike by state and local government workers in Cross River from 12th October. The State has failed to fully implement the N30,000 minimum wage, failed to implement promotions or annual increments and failed to pay its pensioners as required. In addition, teachers have suffered from loss of tax exemptions and allowances. The state has also illegally not remitted deductions from workers' salaries. In addition, interns at University of Calabar Teaching Hospital have not been paid their allowances for the last 12 months and street cleaners of Calabar have not been paid their wages for the last six months.

Workers at nearly **70 research institutes united in the Joint Research and Allied Institutions Sector Unions (JO-RAISU)** started an indefinite strike from Wednesday 13th October over the Government's failure to implement its agreement of December 2010.

**National Association of Resident Doctors (NARD)** suspended their strike for six weeks from 6th October after 63 days on strike, one of the longest ever strikes by doctors.

**The Joint Union of the Academic Staff of Plateau State Owned Tertiary Institutions** embarked on strike action on Friday 15th September following the refusal of State Government to implement the agreement entered with the union. The chair of the union called for support and cooperation of parents and members of the public in the union's bid to salvage tertiary education in the state from total collapse at a press conference on 15th October.

**The joint action committee of the Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities and Non-Academic Staff Union of Universities at the Taraba State University, Jalingo**, on 18th October staged a protest against poor welfare. The two unions embarked on strike two weeks previously over poor welfare, non-implementation of promotion arrears and earned allowances, among others.

**The Academic Staff Union of Universities, ASUU, Taraba State University chapter** has declared indefinite strike from 25th October, due to the failure by the state and the university management to implement the MoU.

Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun state, shut down from 1st October, after protests over the death of a student and poor health facilities. Students blocked the main-gate and highways. Students union elected recently after a ban. Students ordered to leave accommodation by mid-day on Saturday.

**Scores of members of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and residents of Ogun State** on 6th October blocked the Sango/Ota section of the Lagos—Abeokuta Expressway in protest against the deplorable condition of the road. Further protests were planned for Wednesday, 27th October.

**National Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) Abia chapter** shut Aba North local government secretariat from 6th October over woman worker's assault by the chair. The head of the works department was hit with a plank and pipes by the executive chair of the local government.

6th October, **pensioners of Aggrieved Pensioners in Benue State** held a march in Makurdi to protest 33 and 74 months of arrears of pension and gratuity owed them at the state and local government levels respectively. A further statement was issued on 21st October explaining that each month the government pays less than the pensions due so the arrears are increasing each month.

**Elders of Ovia North East Local Government area of Edo State**, on 7th October appealed to Governor to allow for the completion of a health centre project sited in their community. They marched to Government House and the Oba's Palace. Building had been halted as it was allegedly built in a Forest Reserve.

Edo State pensioners protested their unpaid pensions and gratuities by the state government on 11th October. The flow of traffic at Ring Road in Benin City was disrupted. One protestor slumped and was taken to hospital.

**Journalists of the Nigeria Union of Journalists, FCT Council**, on Monday, October 25, 2021, protested at the Police Headquarters in Abuja, over the mysterious disappearance of their colleague, Tordue Salem, who reports for Vanguard Newspapers.

### Socialist Labour-JOIN US

The economic, environmental and Covid-19 crises have made clear that society is a conflict between two classes: the vast majority who create the wealth, and a tiny minority who profit from it. Attempts to reform this have failed: the only solution is to replace it with a truly democratic socialist society. The corrupt elite will only give up their power if forced to do so. We need a mass democratic movement to bring about socialism. Events, such as Russia in 1917, the January 2012 protests in Nigeria and the mass uprisings in Sudan and Algeria in 2019, show what we need.

For more details of the basic ideas and policies of Socialist Labour see: [www.socialistlabour.com.ng/about-us/](http://www.socialistlabour.com.ng/about-us/)

To join the Socialist Labour supporters WhatsApp group use the following link: [tinyurl.com/SocialistLabour](https://t.me/SocialistLabour)

We would love to receive letters, comments or suggestions from our readers. We want to hear from you with suggestions for articles for our future editions or questions on any articles in this issue.

We especially welcome news about protests and strikes in your community or town.