

We Need Active Trade Unions and an Electoral Alliance to Win Workers' Demands!

Experience across the world has repeatedly shown that we can only improve our lives and those of the working peoples when there is an active alliance between the trade unions and a Labour Party or a similar party. Even when a pro-labour party is successful in the elections, trade union action is necessary to ensure that the pro-worker manifesto is actually implemented.

Recently we have seen major strikes in the area councils of the FCT and in Ogun State. In each case, implementation of the national minimum wage was one of the core demands. In a number of other states the minimum wage has yet to be im-



plemented, over a year after it became law. This clearly demonstrates that we need trade union action including strikes and widespread solidarity action to ensure that pro-worker laws are actually implemented promptly.

We need to demanding a closer and more active alliance between the Labour Party (or alternative coalition) and the trade unions including the NLC and TUC. We need to demand that this alliance is introduced at every level within the two organisations. We need the trade unions to be actively working to re-build such a coalition at all levels and we need the coalition to adopt and

actively support the implementation of the NLC's *Charter of Workers Demands* and Chapter 2 of the Federal Constitution.

The *Charter of Workers Demands* covers Education, Health Care, Living Wages, Prioritization of Workers' Welfare, Management of Nigeria's Natural Resources, Industrialization of the National Economy, Physical Security, Social Protection and Good Governance.

On the minimum wage the Charter demands a: "Reasonable Living National Minimum Wage for Nigerian Workers and the Review of the same periodically as the national economic situation demands."

This demand requires the full implementation of the \$\frac{1}{2},000\$ minimum wage now! We also need a cost of living allowance and an annual uplift of the minimum wage at least in line with the cost of living. We need the trade unions and the NLC/TUC to provide the necessary solidarity to ensure that it is implemented in all states.

Such an active alliance between the trade unions and an electoral coalition is necessary if we are to reduce poverty, inequality, corruption and the resulting high levels of insecurity. We need active trade union support to enable the Labour Party or similar coalition to win elections. We then need active campaigns by the trade unions to ensure that any elected representatives are held to account and implement the agreed manifesto including the full *Charter of Workers Demands* and Chapter 2 of the Federal Constitution. Experience has shown that we will also require robust trade union strike action with appropriate active solidarity to ensure that laws like the minimum wage are fully and promptly implemented in all states.

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Ogun State General Strike – could wider solidarity have achieved more?

A fter a fairly successful week long general strike, the trade union leadership of Ogun State signed an the agreement with the State Government. This addressed the major issue of the backlog of pension contributions, but did not cover other issues. These included:

- i) consequential adjustments on the minimum wage
- ii) payments for promotions in 2023 and 2024
- iv) payment of eight years of leave allowance.

For 14 years, the State Government did not remit over N82 billion to the pension scheme. This is the contributory pension deductions from the workers and the State's own contributions. The new pension scheme should have been implemented with a transitional period from the beginning of 2008 to full implementation from July 2025.

This is one of the risks of moving away from the traditional defined benefit pension schemes. In addition, the contributory schemes are more complex, the final pensions are less secure and the funds are subject to the risk of theft. This has happened with several pension schemes including the Police Pension Fund.

The funds that Ogun State owes to the pensions funds are huge, but the State has a lot of money. At the end of the first quarter of 2025 it had N54 billion in its bank accounts. The State could easily pay the balance of the pension contributions this year by reducing its fantastic levels of capital expenditure. Unfortunately, the State has only agreed to pay its arrears over the next eight years and pay the workers promotion arrears from 2024 only in December of this year.

The strike united the trade union members of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Trade Union Congress (TUC) and the Joint Negotiating Council (JNC) of the State. As a result, activities in Ogun State Government offices, agencies, schools, local governments, hospitals and the courts were all paralysed. But the strike was restricted to the public sector. The electricity was not cut off, the banks, shops and petrol stations remained open.



Unfortunately, the strike only received ambiguous support from the national trade unions and the NLC/TUC. The Ogun trade unions said in their press statement announcing the suspension of the strike:

"The interventions of our revered Paramount Rulers, National Leaderships of our various Unions, and esteemed Labour Veterans both at home and abroad played pivotal roles in shaping the course of this struggle."

We can imagine, that as usual the role of the traditional rulers

would have been to encourage a settlement as soon as possible. Complete victory in this strike would have been dependent on full solidarity from the NLC/TUC nationally and the leadership of the various industrial unions. A more comprehensive victory would have been possible if this solidarity had been stronger, the strike had been extended to the private sector and involved the more active participation of the trade union members themselves.

The issue of pension contributions is an important issue in many other states from Abia to Zamfara. We hope that the strike in Ogun State will encourage the trade unions in these states to actively take up this issue. But important lessons need to be learnt, wider solidarity and more active membership participation are necessary for the complete victories that we so desperately need.

Three Month FCT Area Councils Strike Ends With Some Gains



After three months of indefinite strike, the strike of primary school teachers and workers in primary health care centres was suspended towards the end of July. Whilst the full demands of the strike have not been won there have been some significant gains. The minimum wage is being implemented and workers have received three months of the salaries that they were owed.

The chairs of the area councils did not have the confidence to stop the workers' pay during the strike. This is a good start to negotiations over the other demands.

Unfortunately the NUT suspended the strike before consulting with the other unions. NULGE and NAN-NM suspended their strike from 15th July.

The workers in the area councils should be congratulated for sustaining the strike for over three months. Although it does not end in complete victory, some significant gains have been achieved. Much more could have been won if the strike had received the necessary solidarity action from the wider trade union movement.

We should remember that el Rufai was defeated in only three days in May 2021 by a total general strike. This should have been repeated in the FCT when the strike had not won after the first month. The strike in Kaduna was victorious because it was an active strike with protests through the middle of the city each day led by the then President of the NLC in person.

Workers in other states should gain confidence from this victory. There are many other states where robust action is needed to win the implementation of the minimum wage. This should be easy, if strike action is taken, because all states have plenty of money to pay a minimum wage of even more than ₩70k.

For more details on this strike see: https://tinyurl.com/57p98ip3

Retired Police Officers Protest in Abuja and States Over Low Pensions

Retired police officers and Take-It-Back (TIB), on 21st July, marched from the National Assembly and shut the main gate of the Police Force Headquarters in Abuja for hours demanding increased pensions. They were eventually addressed by the Inspector General of Police. Similar protests were held in Cross River, Edo, Kwara and Oyo states.

The retired police officers were demanding to be removed from the Contributory Pension Scheme. They are also complaining about small pensions, delays in payment and arrears of their pensions. They alleged that the scheme was characterised by fraud and corruption.



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In 2018, an Assistant Director was accused of stealing ₦32.8 billion from the Police Pension Fund. He was eventually sentenced to six years in prison.

In June there was public outrage over a viral video, in which a retired Deputy Superintendent of Police who served for 35 years rejected a ₦2 million terminal benefit paid to him nine months after retirement. He said his monthly pension was only ₦19,000.

Protest is a Constitutional Right – Andrew Emeziele is Innocent!



Andrew Emeziele, National Coordinator of the Federal Workers Forum, was detained illegally by the DSS in Ibadan for two weeks. His "crime" was organising protests which are his Constitutional right as recently confirmed by the Federal High Court in Kano – https://tinyurl.com/2jsa4prn This detention continues a worrying trend that anyone attempting to organise protests is "invited" by the Department of State Services (DSS). Similar harassment has been suffered by journalists who are critical of the President or governors. We need action from the trade unions to defend our Constitutional rights.

Andrew Emeziele is the former Chair of the Trade Union Council (TUC) in Oyo State. For several years, Andrew has successfully built the Federal Workers Forum as a pressure group within the Federal workers' trade unions. It now has thousands of supporters across the country. The Federal Workers Forum has been calling for further robust action over the trade unions' demands. Most recently, they called for protests in Abuja on 1st July. These were over demands that Federal workers should be paid their various allowances and pay awards that have formally been agreed with the Federal Government.

These demands include the following:

- 1. Full implementation, non-taxation, and consequential adjustment of the new national minimum wage.
- 2. 30% of consolidated salary as Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) to cushion the effects of inflation.
- 3. Immediate payment of all promotion arrears owed federal workers across various ministries, depart ments, and agencies from 2021 to date.
- 4. Settlement of all peculiar allowances and salary reviews (25% 35%) owed to sectors such as Health, Federal Teaching Institutions, and others.
- 5. An end to persistent salary payment delays, especially in tertiary institutions.
- 6. Full payment of the remaining wage awards and en-

titlements.

The *Federal Workers Forum* can be joined from the following links:

Telegram - https://t.me/+GznxwTNcWSUyY2U0 Email: allworkersconvergence@gmail.com

WhatsApp Channel: https://tinyurl.com/44fvy3t7

Andrew was arraigned in Court on 24th July. The stress that he has been subjected to resulted in him collapsing during the hearing at the Federal High Court in Ibadan. He still faces a four-count-charge of an alleged injurious statement against the Federal Government, the threat to protest at Aso Rock and declining a DSS invitation.

Socialist Labour condemns this harassment of an active trade union leader. We call on the trade union movement to send solidarity messages and to take action over this attack on our democratic rights. An attack on one is an attack on us all! We all need to argue for a more active response by the trade union movement to ensure that the minimum wage and other agreements are fully implemented. We encourage our members, supporters and all Federal Government employees, where relevant, to be active members of the Federal Workers Forum.

The Passing of Peter Adejobi



It was with a heavy heart that we announced the sudden death of Peter Adejobi (PK) in the middle of July. PK was an active and reliable socialist for many years. For some time he was the full time organiser for the SWL in Abuja. He then worked doggedly for the Labour Party and Peter Obi's attempt to

become President. He was a regular visitor at the NLC offices in Abuja where he was known by all.

It is sad, that like millions of others in the popular classes, he never lived to see the benefits of all his hard work. He also suffered, along with us all, the disappointment of the election results in 2023.

Our thoughts go out to his wife and children who are still in school.

Rest in Peace Comrade! The struggle continues!

We must redouble our efforts to achieve the dreams of PK and millions like him.

Undemocratic Constitution And Elections In Nigerian Union Of Teachers: A Call For Reform-Murtala Muhammad Gidado



The Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT), a body established to defend the interests and welfare of all teachers across the country, was founded on the principles of equity, justice, and solidarity. However, over the years, cracks have appeared in its constitution and leadership structure—cracks that have widened into systemic injustice, especially against secondary school teachers.

One of the most glaring inequalities lies in the union's constitution, which gives undue advantage to primary school teachers in vying for leadership positions at the national, state, and local government levels. Secondary school

teachers are deliberately sidelined, despite their equal contributions to the union in terms of monthly dues and professional services.

As the July 5th, 2025 local government congress approached, reports from across several states indicated a pre-arranged outcome. Candidates who are perceived as "favourites" of the Local Government Education Secretaries are tipped to win—not because of competence or popular support among teachers, but because of backdoor endorsements and selection.

This charade, where elections are reduced to political theatre, further alienates the ordinary teacher and strips the union of its credibility. When true representation is replaced with handpicked loyalists, accountability is lost, and the interests of teachers become a bargaining chip for political appearament.

CONSEQUENCES OF AN UNDEMOCRATIC UNION

- 1. Silencing of teachers' voices: With leadership positions reserved for a selected group, the voices of thousands of secondary school teachers remain unheard. Their issues—ranging from poor funding, delayed promotions, lack of resources, to unsafe working conditions—go unaddressed.
- 2. Perpetuation of poverty and frustration: When those at the helm are more loyal to political handlers than the union members, teachers' welfare becomes secondary. This is why teachers continue to languish in abject poverty, earning meagre salaries with no hope of improvement.
- 3. Erosion of solidarity: The union, which should symbolize unity and collective action, is now a house divided. When one segment (primary school teachers) holds the keys to power, and another (secondary school teachers) is denied, resentment builds, and the foundation of solidarity crumbles.
- 4. Loss of Morale and Commitment: Teachers who feel marginalized and ignored become demoralized. This lack of motivation affects their output in the classroom and ultimately reflects in the deteriorating quality of education in the country.

CONCLUSION AND CALL FOR ACTION

It is time for a total review of the NUT Constitution. The discriminatory provision that restricts secondary school teachers from aspiring to leadership roles must be abolished. Leadership must be open to all dues-paying members—whether from primary or secondary schools.

Furthermore, the culture of stage-managed elections must stop. If the NUT truly wants to be the voice of all teachers, it must return to the path of internal democracy, accountability, and transparent leadership selection.

Until then, the union risks becoming a toothless body—more of a tool for political convenience than a platform for real advocacy. And as long as teachers are denied a voice, they will continue to suffer in silence—overworked, underpaid, and misrepresented.

To read more on the Constitution of trade unions see: https://tinyurl.com/3b385pnx

Beyond the Ethnic Veil: Unmasking the Real Roots of the Farmers-Herders Conflict -Bashir Bello



In recent months, we have witnessed an alarming upsurge in violent clashes, some laced with ethnic and religious overtones. At first glance, these confrontations seem to pit communities along tribal or faith lines. However, a closer look reveals that behind the inflammatory headlines and chauvinistic rhetoric lies a deeper, more dangerous trigger: poverty, aggravated by corruption and a failure of governance.

It is important to draw a clear distinction between the actions of secessionist agitators and the pastoral conflict ravaging rural communities. Nnamdi Kanu's declaration of a Biafran Republic and the calls to arms by IPOB/ESN

represent a direct confrontation with the Nigerian state. The violent face-offs between IPOB/ESN and security agencies are issues of state security and should not be confused with socio-economic conflicts that have deeper roots in our everyday national dysfunction.

While the farmers-herders conflict may wear an ethnic mask, it is essentially a battle over dwindling resources in a country where corruption has hollowed out state capacity. Communities fight not because they are Hausa or Tiv, Fulani or Igbo, Christian or Muslim, but because the resources that they rely on are shrinking. Add unemployment, illiteracy, and weak institutions to the mix, and what you get is a combustible society looking for someone to blame.

Theories about foreign jihadists invading Nigeria's forests have gained currency, but they remain largely unsubstantiated. So far, no concrete evidence has emerged to support these claims. These stories, peddled by politicians and echoed by ethnic champions, serve as smokescreens, shifting the focus away from our internal failures. It is easier to blame "outsiders" than to confront the elite complicity in land grabbing, poor policing, and the neglect of rural communities.

Relating to herders invasion, before colonization and modern veterinary science, Nigeria's southern forests were largely off-limits to nomadic herders due to the prevalence of the tsetse fly, which decimated cattle. The discovery of an antidote expanded the reach of herders beyond the Benue and Niger rivers. Grazing routes were mapped out; reserves were created. This was not just for convenience but conflict-prevention strategy.

Today, those grazing routes have disappeared under the weight of population growth, political neglect, and elite land encroachments. The bush paths have turned into battlegrounds, not because herders and farmers are destined to fight, but because systems designed to manage their coexistence have collapsed.

Our greatest threat today is not the Fulani herder or the Tiv farmer. It is the ethnic entrepreneur who promotes divisions to maintain power. These are elites who unite to loot the national treasury but divide us when it suits them. Ethnic chauvinism has become a political tool, a way to rally blind loyalty and distract the masses from demanding accountability.

If we are to overcome these conflicts, we need, mainly:

- 1. A return to well-managed grazing reserves and protected farmlands;
- 2. Stronger local governance and security architecture;
- 3. Policies that empower rural communities economically;
- 4. And most importantly, a national consensus to resist the manipulations of ethnic bigots in high places.

Until we unmask the triatomic enemy of poverty, corruption, and elite exploitation, violence will remain our national language.

For more background on this topic see: https://tinyurl.com/ajmuc5ct

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The Labour Movement Today and the Lessons from Karl Marx and V.I. Lenin-Jatau David Polang



The corrupt elite is involved in intense political activity to form coalitions and strategize for the 2027 presidential elections. In this situation, it is important to remind the trade unions and the labour movement of their key objectives. These should be based on their place in the socio-economic structure of our class based society. More so, with the removal of the petroleum subsidy on 29th May 2023, there is no longer a middle class. What we have, as succinctly put by Lenin (1903) is a society

where: "Tens of millions of people work on this land and at these factories and workshops, but they are all owned by a few thousand... of rich people, landlords, merchants, and factory owners."

Karl Marx postulated that class struggle has been inherent in societies and institutions throughout history. In the present capitalist society, controlled by the bosses, the workers always have to struggle to emancipate themselves from the firm control of the exploitative capitalists. This idea is captured in the Communist Manifesto (1848) thus:

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new conditions of struggle in place of the old ones... society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes, directly facing each other.

The above situation can be found across our society and economy, whether public or private. This situation gave rise to the emergence of a working class. Modern society, according to the Marxist strand of thought, has already been engulfed in class antagonisms. The workers must therefore strive to escape from the dehumanizing conditions of their working lives. This they cannot do without attacking the interests of the bosses who are exploiting them.

The only option is for workers to unite to form trade unions and associations through which they can articulate their demands. The workers interests inevitably clashes with that of the management or bourgeoisie (in Marxist parlance). The bourgeoisie defends its interest with the material power at its disposal and by the authority of the state which it controls. The relationship that ensued subsequently between the workers and their employers, according to Marx, is rooted in the material conditions of life. These two classes enter into defined and continuous relations independent of their wills.

According to Lenin, typical capitalist societies are divided in to 'two nations' or irreconcilable classes. In the workplaces, there are few employers and many wage workers. The exploitation of working people has brought workers of all kinds to the realization of the need for effective and combative organizations in the form of trade unions. These are essential to break the stranglehold of capital and improve their own lot (Osoba, 1980). This became the guiding principle for the existence and operation of trade unions. This is the compass that the Nigerian labour movement should be guided by.

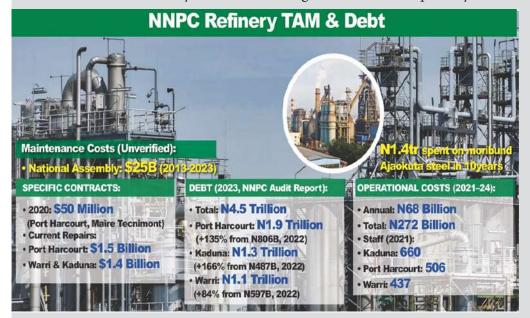
To read more on these issues from the same author, see: https://tinyurl.com/6cckv2nn

Nigeria's Contractocracy: How Capital Spending Fuels Corruption-Tina Nkechi

Capital contracts are the main mechanism for looting by the corrupt elite. Every contactor has to pay 20% or more of its value to win a contract. They then have to make more settlements to actually be paid for their work. That is why every state spends so much on capital and yet we still see so little actual development.

Many states spend more than half of their expenditure on capital contracts. Some of these states are yet to fully implement the Minimum Wage so they have been operating illegally for nearly a year. Gombe State, for example, has yet to implement the Minimum Wage. It can easily afford to pay for minimum wage arrears back to July 2024. Gombe has begun the construction of a \$\frac{10}{2}\$ Toban modern secretariat complex. This money is the same as the whole budget for salaries etc for the state for 1.5 years or a quarter of the whole capital budget for this year.

Yobe State announced in May that it is increasing the salaries for its primary school teachers and primary health-



care workers to \$\frac{1}{4}\$5,000 a month. Last year it spent more than half its expenditure on capital spending which was three times its salary expenditure. At the end of the first quarter of this year its salary spend was only as much as its balance in the bank at the end of the quarter.

International experience suggests that government capital spending should form no more than 15% -20% of public sector total expenditure (the average

for sub-Saharan Africa is less than 15% and it is less than 10% in South Africa). In the 1950s the Nigerian Government was only spending a third of its money on capital projects and most of this was done through its Public Works Board rather than private building firms.

For more on this topic see the following article: https://tinyurl.com/3r7h23ha

Similar massive looting is also clearly happening at Ajaokuta Steel and the state owned refineries in Kaduna, Port Harcourt and Warri. For a recent analysis see: https://tinyurl.com/53rtyfee

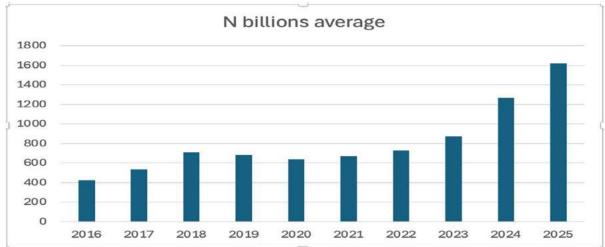
If you would like a financial briefing for your state, then please contact Tina Nkechi via WhatsApp on

+44 7301 902 643

FAAC Distribution July 2025 Meeting

The July 2025 FAAC meeting distributed the highest ever amount of ₹1,818 billion to governments across Nigeria. This was almost 10% more than the month before and 12% more than the average for the first six months of this year. It was also over a third higher than a year ago.

All governments in Nigeria now literally have so much money that they do not know what to do with it. Many states are spending over half their money on capital contracts. They also have massive amounts of money sitting in their bank accounts. And yet many states have still not fully implemented the ₹70,000 minimum wage. We need more action from the trade unions.



Average monthly distribution by the FAAC Committee over the last decade (₦ billions)

For a briefing on the growing economy whilst we suffer in poverty see: https://tinyurl.com/mryvxss4

Women & Children Dying Without Clean Cooking -Tina Nkechi



A cross Africa, four out of five households still rely on rudimentary cooking methods, often based on wood, charcoal, or agricultural waste. In Nigeria, the position may slightly better. This is usually gas, as kerosene burns with high emissions of soot and particulate matter.

According to a recent International Energy Agency report, as many as 815,000 premature deaths per year in Africa are linked to indoor air pollution, largely caused by these traditional cooking methods. This may include perhaps 125,000 early deaths in Nigeria each year.

Women and children are the primary victims, forced to devote hours each day to collecting wood and tending fires, to the detriment of their health, education or paid employment. Respiratory problems, skin cancer, eye problems, food poisoning, and threats to women's safety result from overexposure to unhealthy cooking fuels. This includes greater incidence of miscarriages and premature babies.

Only 0.1% of the global energy investments planned for 2025 would largely address this problem. Use of firewood for cooking means that Nigeria suffers from one of the highest rates of de-forestation in the world making climate change worse.

This is a small part of the silent deaths from poverty and inequality across Africa. With the increase in poverty in recent years, especially in Nigeria, it is expected that this problem will get worse.

Summary of Workers Strikes - July 2025

We need your assistance to ensure that this monthly report is comprehensive. Please submit details of any strikes in your state or community. All these strikes need our support and solidarity. We call on all trade union branches to send messages of support and to organise solidarity visits to any strikes in their localities. To read more about how to organise effective strikes, see: https://tinyurl.com/solidarityunity

Ogun State NLC and TUC called a general strike from 15th July over failure of the state to pay pension contributions for 14 years. Other issues include non- implementation of the national minimum wage, non-payment of eight years' leave allowances and deferment of promotion benefits for workers. State offices, schools, local governments, hospitals and judiciary all closed. The strike was suspended after eight days after agreement was reached on payment of pension contribution arrears.

Members of the Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT), Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE), Medical & Health Workers Union (MHWUN) and National Association of Nigeria Nurses and Midwives (NANNM) in the area councils of FCT continued their indefinite strike that started on 24th March. All the primary schools and primary health care centres have been shut for more than three months. NUT suspended the strike on 10th July. Other unions suspended it on 15th July.

There were also strikes and protests by **Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) workers.** They closed Wike's office for a third day (with some support from the students' NANS President) on Wednesday 2nd July. They are demanding arrears of promotions, allowances etc. Most of these demands had not been met as the 21-day ultimatum expired towards the end of the month.

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) declared an indefinite strike in the **local governments of Osun State** from 17th February. This was in protest against the planned resumption of sacked All Progressives Congress (APC) council executives, who were reinstated by a Court of Appeal verdict.

Doctors of the Medical Guild working for Lagos State Government started a three day strike on 28th July. This was over deductions from their salaries and salary arrears owed to consultants at Lagos State University Hospital.

Members of the National Association of Nigeria Nurses & Midwives (NANNM) started a seven day national warning strike at midnight on 29th July in all Federal Government owned health facilities. This strike is over a list of nine demands that includes previous agreements, employing more nurses, increase in professional allowances and better recognition of professionalism of nurses.

Socialist Labour-JOIN US

The economic, environmental and Covid-19 crises show that society is a conflict between two classes: the vast majority who create the wealth, and a tiny minority who profit from our work. Reform attempts have failed: the only solution is 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 from 2019, begin to show what we need.

For more details of the basic ideas and policies of Socialist Labour see:

www.socialistlabour.com.ng/about-us/

Join the Socialist Labour supporters WhatsApp group by clicking this link:

https://tinyurl.com/JoinSocialistLabour

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.

Socialist Labour Depends on its Supporters for Finances

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