



Socialist Bulletin

A Monthly Publication from Socialist Labour

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WE NEED AN INDEFINITE GENERAL STRIKE NOW!

As we go to press with this month's Socialist Bulletin it is not clear what the outcome of the minimum wage struggle is. Over three weeks ago the NLC gave the Government a week's notice to resolve the issue, but nothing has happened.

It is clear that only a robust and indefinite general strike will win the national living minimum wage we so desperately need. The organized private sector is claimed to align with the Federal Government in the resolve to peg the new National Minimum Wage at N62,000, while the Governors are claiming they cannot even afford that amount. The NLC and the TUC are currently sticking to N250,000, therefore; the tripartite negotiation has hit a debacle leaving the expectant Nigerian workers in utter bewilderment as their collective fate is left to hang in limbo.

The situation has been allowed to drag and fester by the labour leaders who amidst the prevailing impasse left the country to attend the ILO Annual Conference in Geneva. This action of the Labour Leaders has not only occasioned delay in organize labour's appropriate action against the recalcitrant posture of the government in the obviously duplicitous Tripartite Committee in which the government is using the organize private sector as mere cannon fodder for its anti-worker gambit, it left the very expedient matter in the realm of spreading doubt and uncertainty.

We need resolute leadership and a clear declaration that the strike will now continue until our victory is achieved.

We are poor people living in a rich nation – we have to use our collective power to force a change. Sitting for months in the Minimum Wage Committee did not produce a decent minimum wage, it was only the threat of a general strike that brought some movement. A robust indefinite strike is the only way for us to achieve a decent minimum wage.

We desperately need the 'relaxed' general strike to be re-started as soon as possible. It is clear that Tinubu is not going to deliver on the expectations of the NLC/TUC for a minimum wage of N250,000. We need the strike to start again before Tinubu sends his proposed law to the National Assembly. Waiting will only demoralise workers and further reduce the momentum of the campaign.

We need workers and trade unionists to demand immediate action from their leaders at branch, state and national levels. We need to flood the trade union leaders with letters and motions demanding immediate action until the NLC/TUC demands are met in full.

Further details are available from:

<https://www.nationalrecord.com.ng/we-need-to-return-to-an-indefinite-general-strike-as-soon-as-possible-by-alex-batubo/>

Visit: socialistlabour.com.ng

Rising Voices: Workers' Unity and the Fight for Justice

Goodness Oga



From the bustling streets of Lagos, across the land to the oil-rich fields of the Niger Delta, Nigerian workers stand at the heart of the economy, yet often find themselves overlooked and undervalued.

The words of Rosa Luxemburg resonate deeply in our current reality: “A better life will not be donated to us; we have to fight for it.”

The disparity between those who govern and those who toil is glaring. While senators and officials revel in allowances running in millions, the average worker is told to

be content with crumbs. The government’s views workers as mere cogs in the machinery, easily replaced and rarely rewarded.

How can a nation flourish when those who drive its industries are denied their fair share of the prosperity they create?

Consider this: an average worker is expected to earn N62,000, in the face of rising costs and inflation.

Amidst this disparity, lies a profound truth: workers hold immense power. The recent strike action vividly demonstrated this.

Estimates suggest that Nigeria lost approximately N148.8 billion in oil revenue during the strike. This figure shows that without the workers, the government cannot function.

How then can workers transcend this shackles of exploitation?

How can they cease to feed the mouths that bite their hands?

The answer lies in solidarity and collective action. Great movements throughout history have been sparked by the unyielding resolve of people united by a common cause. The workers of Nigeria possess this same potential.

The journey begins with awareness—awareness of the power that resides in unity, and awareness of the injustices that must be confronted.

Nigerian workers must recognize and harness their collective strength. We must:

- Collaborate with other groups—students, activists, and community leaders to negotiate fairer wages and better working conditions.
- We should learn about our rights, labour laws, and the benefits of standing together. Workshops and discussions empower us.
- We should plan our strikes and protests strategically. When we stand united, we demand attention and respect.
- We should spread our message, coordinate actions, and reach a broader audience through social media.
- We should commit to our cause for the long term. Organize, educate, and mobilize for lasting change.

As we look towards the horizon, let us envision a nation where workers are respected, rewarded, and empowered. Let us envision a future where the wealth of the nation is shared equitably, where the labour of every Nigerian is valued, and where justice is not a privilege but a right. This future is within our grasp, but it requires courage, determination, and above all, unity.

Let us stand united, shoulder to shoulder, in the fight for a better tomorrow—for ourselves, for our children, and for generations to come.

In unity lies strength, and in strength lies the power to change the world. The workers of Nigeria have the power. The time to wield it is now.

Join the Movement. We Can Build a Brighter Future.

#jointheresistance

Report on 12th June, protest in Kano-MUSA ABDULLAHI PINDAR

This year democracy day was different, the hardship is at its peak, access to basic amenities like education and healthcare is becoming very challenging, workers are turned to beggars by the ruling elites, they can no longer afford two square meals for their families.

In Kano there was a successful protest organised by some left organisations including the PRP Vanguard and Socialist Labour.

Early on Wednesday 12 June 2024, left groups, civil society organisations, local unions, students and concerned individuals started to converge at Zoo Road. More than 200 people attended the protest. This included some left groups including Socialist Labour and War Against Injustice and a few individuals.

Close to the end of the protest, different individuals addressed the gathering. One of the speakers was among the coordinators of the protest who emphasized on the need for leftists to coordinate themselves with the poor majority to vote for a socialist alternative government in the next general election.

Update on the warning strike embark by the two state owned universities in Kano-MUSA ABDULLAHI PINDAR

On 30th May the two state owned universities in Kano, that is Kano University of Science and Technology, Wudil and Yusuf Maitama Sule University, Kano embarked on two weeks warning strikes. This was over poor funding, non-payment of earned academic allowances, 35% wage increment for academic staffs and payment of consequential salary arrears.

On the fourth day of the strike a meeting was held with the state executives and the union leaderships of the two universities and agreement was reached which led to the suspension of the strike.

The state government agreed to include the 35% salary increment which will be effective from June, 2024. The Governor has approved the payment of nearly N500 million as allowances to staff of the two universities in Kano in fulfilment with the agreement with ASUU.

Academic activities have resumed in the universities and students are now writing their exams in Yusuf Maitama Sule University, Kano.



WOMEN AND THE INFORMAL ECONOMY IN URBAN AFRICA: FROM THE MARGINS TO THE CENTRE-MARY NJERI KINYANJUI 2014 BY ZED BOOKS

Market women are an important part of the common masses in all African countries, including Nigeria. In this book Mary analyses the history and challenges that market women played in the capital of Kenya, Nairobi.

During the colonial era, Nairobi was developed as a white city with local workers restricted unless they were essential. Women in particular were excluded. In the first two decades of independence, some progress was made. But it was the action, tenacity and organisational ability of women that allowed them to successfully enter the city as informal workers, some organising international trade.

Structural adjustment during the 1980s destroyed the formal sector. The informal sector, including many women, has remained the dominant mode of employment in African cities. Women in particular were and continue to be discriminated against. "It was not until 1979 that women were issued with identity cards." As a result, it was almost impossible for them to run formal businesses or to own property.

As the conclusion to the book, copied below, shows, women "have agency and can direct and configure change in their lives and environments." It is from this perspective that this book is written rather than from the view of the city planners and others in authority.

Many of the conditions that women face in Nairobi are reflected in the lives that their sisters face and struggle against in the major urban conurbations of Nigeria. This book should encourage market women and other urban based women to continue their collective struggle to improve their lives and those of their families. It also gives us a glimpse of the lives that they lived and demands that we respect and give solidarity with their struggles.

An extract of this book is available from Iva Valley Books

#jointheresistance

MULTIPLE TAXATION TO KILL THE WORKING PEOPLE-BY BIODUN OLAMOSU



Tinubu has a penchant for multiple taxation, especially for low income earners. This was the practice throughout his eight years as governor of Lagos State (1999 - 2007). Under his watch, motor bike riders were rounded up for various types of taxes; so were motor transporters.

On the other hand, the big investors were given preferential treatment like tax holidays that provided them freedom from taxation for years after the start of the business. This was a clear vindication that the primary purpose of government is to service big owners of capital while suffocating small-scale businesses out of existence.

Tinubu did not hide his disdain for working people as he proclaimed in the course of the electioneering campaign that he would carry through his anti-poor poli-

cies whether people were opposed to it or not. Without mincing words, he rolled out serially different forms of taxes that have caused untold hardships on the lives of the working people. These included hikes in the price of petrol and other petroleum products.

The failure of the policy and its consequences on the life of the working people did not stop the government in imposing other taxes such as increasing school fees. The same scenario played out in the electricity industry that the price of consumption of energy has been increased even when there is short supply to households and industries.

The latest in this pattern of fiscal policy of the Tinubu led government is to introduce cybersecurity tax as well as taxing financial transactions made online. Some argued in favour of this as a means of taxing the rich. But the fact remains that if this is allowed to pass, the poor will later become victims.

If the government is serious in taxing the rich why are they afraid of doing this directly by taxing their properties, businesses and individual income; rather than using this alibi for their policy of hiking in the price of fuel, electricity and online banking.

Tinubu is not troubled by taxing mass of unemployed people that account for over 150 million Nigerians. Tinubu and his ruling class friends don't mind the youth being involved in 'yahoo-yahoo', rituals, kidnapping, banditry, etc as long as they are able to pay their tax obligations.

In turn, the bourgeoisie are able to rip off the poor working masses and their own treasury thereby making sure that they can take care of paying their children's school fees (in millions of Naira) in advance and servicing their fleet of executive jets.

There cannot be freedom without resistance. This oppression is too much. Within a year of this government, we've experienced not less than five categories of taxation; whereas the wages of the working people remain stagnant. The minimum wage of workers in the 1980s stood at 200dollar, today this has fallen to only 20 dollars per month. These anti-poor policies in the name of taxation have to stop.

Socialist Reading and Training

We have to try and understand the world to be able to change it! It is important that socialists educate ourselves by reading at least a few basic socialist booklets.

Below we have provided a list of booklets and other resources that we can recommend to read to gain a basic understanding of the world, our history and how we can help to build a better society.

<https://socialistlabour.com.ng/2024/06/18/we-have-to-try-and-understand-the-world-to-be-able-to-change-it/>

Free online training is available for comrades who want to be able to organise better at work. See the following web page for details: <https://workerorganizing.org/training/>

Socialist Labour Movement Kano Hold a Roundtable Discussion



Comrades attending Socialist Labour round table in Kano on the minimum wage

The topic of discussion was **MINIMUM WAGE SAGA:** Can NLC/TUC bargain for decent living emoluments for Nigerian workers? The meeting was held on 23rd June 2024, at the Centre for Human Rights and Social Advancement, from 10:00am.

Minimum wage is the minimum amount of money paid to an employee for the work performed during a given period. The purpose of minimum wage is to protect workers from unduly low pay and unnecessary deduction of wages by their employer.

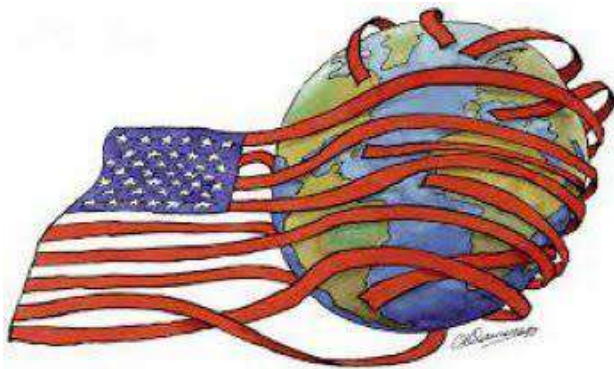
In Nigeria, history will never forget the struggle of the then labour leader, comrade Hassan Sunmonu who strongly advocate for new, decent and acceptable minimum wage under president Shagari. Over decades adjustment of the minimum wage was influenced by economic conditions and the collective struggle of workers.

Since the return of democracy in 1999, labour leaders have played a vital role in protecting the economic and political life of common people. The powerful NLC under Adams Oshiomole forced the Obansanjo government to provide an increment in the minimum wage in 2004. Abdulwahid Omar his successor spearheaded the struggle for a fair wage increment during Goodluck Jonathan's time. He championed one of the strongest protests and mass strikes in the history of NLC in 2012.

The current leadership of the organized labour seem to have been failing in their most important role at this critical stage, when most Nigerian workers do not have enough money to buy food, they have no access to school and health care. They look up to the labour leaders as their saviours in the hands of the capitalist elite governing the nation.

Comrade Abba Bello and Dr. Kabiru Haruna answered questions about reviving the politics of labour unions and the Labour Party and the need for organized labour to start talking to the masses not just the government alone.

Imperialism and anti-imperialism today -ASHLEY SMITH



The United States remains the world's most powerful state, in possession of the biggest economy, the most powerful military, the largest network of alliances, and therefore the greatest geopolitical power. But it faces imperial rivals in China and Russia and sub-imperial governments in every region of the globe.

Capitalism produces imperialism—the competition between governments and their corporations for the division and redivision of the world market. We need a strategy to build solidarity from below among workers and the oppressed against all the great powers and all the world's

capitalists states. We can then help forge a new international left committed to building solidarity from below in the fight against global capitalism and for international socialism.

For more details see:

<https://tempestmag.org/2024/05/imperialism-and-anti-imperialism-today/>

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The Predisposition and Possibilities of Crisis in the Sphere of Production -IZIELEN AGBON

In the last Socialist Bulletin, we examined the predisposition and possibilities of capitalist crisis during the first stage of the circulation of capital when the capitalist appears as buyer in the labour and commodity markets. Here we examine the predisposition and possibilities of crisis during the second stage, production, when productive capital (...P...) is combined with LP (labour power) in the productive process to create surplus value.

The surplus labour from LP is not paid for by the capitalist and ends up as surplus value. Thus, the commodity produced contains the value of LP and the means of production (MP) consumed in the production sphere plus the surplus value created during the production process. The production process brings together LP and MP to produce both the means of subsistence [C(ms)] and further MP.

There are many possibilities for Crisis in the Sphere of Production. The workers may refuse to work. It is one thing to hire workers, but it is quite another to make them work. Furthermore, even if the workers work, conflicts over how much work they do and under what conditions make the production process a terrain of protracted struggle. Work stoppages, slowdowns, strikes, sabotage and absenteeism can all disrupt the capitalist's plans. Even in the absence of such overt resistance, the workers might fail to produce surplus value because of their tendency to work no more than is necessary to still get paid. On the other hand, the MP might breakdown, leading to temporary work stoppages.

Class struggle at the point of production, either for higher wages or better working conditions, results in a tendency for constant capital (C) to be increased, leading to an increase in the technical composition of capital (MP/LP), in the organic composition of capital (C/V) and a fall in the rate of profit ($S/(C+V)$) where V is the variable capital and S is the surplus value.

The tendency of the organic composition of capital to rise results in a tendency for the rate of profit to fall and hence in a predisposition to economic crisis. However, there are offsetting circumstances such as the increased intensity of exploitation, depression of the wage below the value of LP, cheapening of the elements of constant capital, relative over-population, foreign trade and the increase in the stock of capital which all mitigate the tendency of the rate of profit to fall.

The increase in the organic composition of capital and the tendency for the rate of profit to fall involve great advances in the development of the productive forces, driving them into conflict with labour. Thus, in the long run, there is a predisposition to crisis in the sphere of production. Next time, we will examine the predisposition and possibilities of crisis in the sphere of realization during the circular movement of capital.

The completed version of this article is available from:

<https://socialistlabour.com.ng/2024/06/26/the-predisposition-and-possibilities-of-crisis-in-the-sphere-of-production/>

A more detailed introduction to the economic workings of capitalism can also be found in this booklet:

<https://ivavalleybooks.com/2024/04/30/unravelling-capitalism-joseph-choonara/>

THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF THE ANC

For the first time in South Africa's 30 years of democracy, the African National Congress (ANC) failed to obtain a majority of votes in the late May elections leading to the formation of a coalition government with more right wing parties.

Biodun Olanosu reviews the South African elections and the lessons we can learn:

<https://www.nationalrecord.com.ng/south-african-general-elections-the-rise-and-fall-of-anc-by-biodun-olamosu/>

Luke Sinwell, in South Africa, considers the consequences, and discusses the emergence of a new party, MK, led by former president, Jacob Zuma. Sinwell looks at what has happened to the left, and its repeated failure to make any serious inroads into South Africa's political scene.

<https://roape.net/2024/06/06/the-beginning-of-the-end-of-the-anc/>

Solidarity for Africa from the Peoples of Europe and North America

-ALEX BATUBO

Sometimes it may feel that Europe and North America are working against Africa. But there are many examples of mass solidarity against racism and for the peoples of Africa in the fight against their oppression. Whilst the global ruling classes and the international companies are looting across Africa, the poor and oppressed of Europe and North America are expressing their horror of such actions.

In the United States, the American Committee on Africa, the Free South Africa Movement, organized labour, and university students led the foremost anti-Apartheid solidarity efforts, moving the issue of South African Apartheid from periphery to centre in US political discourse. They were so successful that on October 2, 1986, the US Congress voted successfully to override President Ronald Reagan's veto of the 1986 Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (H.R. 4868), which imposed sanctions against the Republic of South Africa for its Apartheid policies.

American dockers in San Francisco and Australian dockers in Sydney refused to work on South African boats in the 1980s. These actions were recognised later by Nelson Mandela himself when he visited these countries.

The international campaign against apartheid was one of the most widespread, sustained social movements of the last century. Mass campaigns were organised to boycott South African goods and Barclays Bank for investing in South Africa. There was a continuous picket of the South African embassy in London from 1986–1990. British socialists organised many trips to South Africa from the 1960s to the 1980s to secretly transport propaganda material and letters, see: <https://www.londonrecruits.org.uk/>

British students were at the forefront of Anti-Apartheid Movement campaigns. They collected funds for the Southern African liberation movements, campaigned against investment in apartheid and took action in solidarity with students in South Africa. In 1969/70 students took the lead in direct action and mass demonstrations against the rugby and cricket Springbok tours. In the 1980s, many student unions named buildings in honour of Mandela and initiated moves to grant him honorary degrees.

More recently, the Black Lives Matter movements in North America and Europe was one of the largest protest movements involving millions of white and black people across hundreds of towns and cities. This was initiated by the police killing of George Floyd, a black American in 2020. By the end of the year, over half of British people supported the campaign, rising to seven in ten for young people.

The two main parties in the US and Britain may have done next to nothing to end the apartheid regimes in southern Africa, but millions of the common people did play an active role in ending these racist regimes. Millions of people in North America and Europe are now continuing this tradition of international solidarity by attending hundreds of demonstrations against the violence in the Gaza Strip.

Mass Protests Win in Kenya



Towards the end of June there were again mass protests in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi and other towns and cities. This was over tax hikes on basic goods like bread, cooking oil and sanitary pads. Furious people were responding to Parliament passing a tax bill that will squeeze workers and the poor. Some proposals were dropped by the Government, but this was not enough to end the protests.

The President promised not to sign the Finance Bill the day after protestors stormed parliament and the police killed at least 30 people. But he also ordered the army to help to deal with the “security emergency”.

<https://socialistworker.co.uk/international/massive-resistance-as-kenya-revolts-over-tax-hikes/>

<https://roape.net/2024/06/27/uprising-in-kenya-thousands-protest-austerity-and-struggle-for-liberation/>

State Police – a comment - Okechukwu Nwanguma

State police may lead to increased xenophobia in states where only indigenes are likely to be recruited to tackle criminals usually believed to come only from non-indigenes.

State police will enable the deepening of already existing ethnic and religious bigotry, hate, discrimination and persecution.

In the North, federal police still charge non-Muslims under sharia law even when the law says a non-Muslim should not be charged under sharia law unless he or she consents to be charged under that law.

In the South-East, a person from another ethnic group stands little chance of getting fair justice if a case is reported against him/her at a police station by an indigene.

In Lagos, the criminal justice system is unequally, discriminatorily and unfairly applied against so called non indigenes. The case of Fredrick Nwajagu who goes by the title, 'Eze Igbo' of Ajao Estate, Lagos, who threatened to invite IPOB to defend the Igbo against attacks by Yoruba ethnic bigots illustrates this. While the Nwajagu was arrested, charged and remanded in prison and still standing trial (he was detained for a month before being granted bail, but this was denied. He was in court in mid-February 2024), the Yoruba ethnic bigots who were captured in video repeatedly issuing threats and actually carried out attacks on Igbo people as well as those who looked Igbo, remain free. When taken to task, the Force PRO made excuses for the politically well connected Yoruba bigots, saying they were joking.

If all this is happening under the current Federal police arrangement, how much worse will it become if state police are created?



Our New National-Anthem-Pledge Mirror -Bode Ekundayo

Liegeria, we rail thee
Our own dire nathieves' land
Though tribes & tongues may differ
In bloodyhood we stand
Liegerians all are proud to shave
Our Foreigned Murderland!

The New Pledge:

I pledge to Liegeria, my CONtry
To be fretful, docile and funniest
To shave her with all my strength
Downhold her honour & glory
So, help us Ogun or Godallah!

Our flag has turned a rag symbol
That soot and injustice reign
In peace or battle, dishonour'd,
And these we count as gains
To hand on to our children
A banner strewn with red stains

O God of all creation
Grant our Pathology Inquest:
Help us to dissect our ill nation
Why we're stressed and oppressed
And why in overflow and plenty
Liegerians are so curs'd & depress'd!





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Summary of Workers Strikes - June 2024

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.

NLC and TUC called an indefinite general strike from 3rd June over the minimum wage. Active progress was made to grow the strike for the first day, but a joint National Executive Committee called off the strike the next day by mid-day after the government said that they would increase the minimum wage above N60,000.

ASUU, NAAT, NASU and SSANU members at Benue State University have been on strike since 2nd February. They are demanding increased funding for the university to address issues such as promotion, annual increments and earned academic arrears.

The **University of Abuja branch of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)** has begun an indefinite strike over the processes for the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor.

On 22nd May, **Oyo State members of the National Association of Nigeria Nurses and Midwives (NANNM)** started an indefinite general strike over an eight point ultimatum. This includes mass recruitment of nurses, implementation of 25% CONHESS adjustment and payment of promotion for 2018 – 2022. Still on strike a month later.

24th June **medical staff, members of MHWUN**, start a 7-day strike in **Oyo State**. The demands include the new hazard allowance in the state to be paid to all health staff, all staff to be paid from the consolidated health salary structure (CONHESS)

Delta State House of Assembly staff, members of PASAN, started an indefinite strike from 29th May. The strike is over the non-implementation of the new salary scale for three years, regularisation of casual staff, training and other issues.

Academic Staff of ASUU embarked on a two-week warning strike at the **Yusuf Maitama Sule University, Kano** and **Kano State University of Science and Technology, Wudil** in Kano from 30th May over poor state funding for the institution, improving staff condition of service and academic freedom. The strike was suspended after four days with promises from the State Government.

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://chat.whatsapp.com/KiOyN3OKGBllvtuh0ycDaU>

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. Please contact us via WhatsApp of 0916 693 3998

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

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.

Please join Socialist Labour, by submitting the following details:

Name: _____ **Email:** _____ **WhatsApp number:** _____

State: _____

Workplace address/university/school: _____

Trade union: _____

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