



TSAYA LETSATSI LA LEAVE BULLETIN

AUGUST 2020

Introduction

The national union (NEHAWU) from its founding has always been in the forefront of leading workers struggles and community struggles, this is informed by our historical orientation of being rooted in the traditions of the “political” or “community” trade unionism, were we linking the workplace struggles with the wider community struggles. Workers and the broader community are at the current moment confronted with a struggle against the novel coronavirus pandemic that requires an active citizenry in efforts against the virus.

The red, transformative, militant and fighting union of Bheki Mkhize and Yure Mdyogolo has been in the forefront in championing and fighting for better working conditions faced by workers and the broader society since the outbreak of the coronavirus in the country. The national union has since March 2020, been occupied with fighting for the protection of workers against this deadly virus and calling on the government and employers to provide the necessary measures to protect workers from being exposed to the virus and these amongst others entail: provision of Personal Protective Equipment, Compliance with Occupational Health and Safety Act, and the creation of a safe and conducive workplace.

Context of Tsaya Letsatsi La Leave

The national union having noted the government’s inadequate response in efforts against the coronavirus embarked on a programme of site-visits in the health districts that are the epicentres of COVID-19 to accurately and concretely verify what was transpiring on the ground and the conditions faced by workers especially those in the frontline in efforts against virus. The findings in almost all the institutions that the union visited, a similar pattern of existed with lack PPEs, Non-compliance to OHS Act, shortage of staff amongst others and non-implementation of Resolution 1 of 2018.

Lack of Personal Protective Equipment

In almost all healthcare institutions that were visited there were generalised shortages of the PPEs many months later since the union had first highlighted to the government about the shortage of PPEs and we were told by government that there were enough PPEs in stock.



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Non-Compliance to OHS Act

In all healthcare institutions that were visited, there was generally non-compliance with the OHS Act. This is despite the fact that at the national and provincial departmental levels, as well as at institutional level, there are officials that have been appointed specifically to deal with health and safety imperatives. The union found that authorities at institutional level shockingly demonstrated complete ignorance of the OHS Act as well as the departmental guidelines that have been issued since the outbreak of the COVID-19

Shortage of Staff

In all healthcare institutions that were visited, the shortage of staff was one of the primary factors and this is a chronic problem across the public service since the austerity measures that were implemented in the 1990s.

Non-Implementation of Resolution 1 of 2018

Our members in the public service and entities that are linked to the bargaining processes of the public service have not been spared the wrath of government as evident with the government dishonouring the PSCBC Resolution 1 of 2018 and in the process undermining collective bargaining in the public sector. Our members in the public service have since April called on the government to implement the agreement to the latter i.e. across the board adjustment on the cost of living by CPI plus 1% for salary level 1 - 7, CPI plus 0.5% for salary level 8 - 10 and CPI for salary level 11-12.

National Programme of Action

Based on the findings, the national union at its Special National Executive Committee in July 2020 adopted a national programme of action after the government's failure to protect workers against the novel coronavirus and the non-implementation of Resolution 1 of 2018, as such the national union will roll out its national programme of action commencing with tsaya le tsatsi la leave.

Tsaya le tsatsi la Leave - 24th August 2020

The failure by government to respond adequately to our demands of protecting workers from the coronavirus pandemic has necessitated that we embark on the national programme



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of action and as such we call on all our members and workers to join the programme commencing with “Tsaya le tsatsi la Leave”.

On the 24th August 2020, the union will roll-out its “Tsaya le tsatsi la Leave” programme, whereby we call and encourage all our members and workers to flock the offices of the employer and all apply for a day leave which will be on following day on the 25th August 2020. This forms part of our strategy to cause disruptions across workplaces until the employer addresses our demands of protecting workers from the virus, putting in place Occupation Health and Safety measures and importantly creating a healthy and safe workplace.

Our members and workers have been subjected to uncondusive work conditions for far too long and we have been very patient with the government, employers and we are no longer going to standby whilst workers are on the receiving end of the pandemic. We have witnessed in the past couple of months since the first reported case in the country how employers have neglected their role of providing a safe workplace environment for workers and this has exposed workers to the virus with many contracting it and others succumbing to the virus. NO worker should be exposed to the virus because of complete negligence on the side of the government/employer.

We call on all our members and workers to join “Tsaya le tsatsi la Leave” on the 24th August 2020.

Forward to the National Programme of Action Forward!!!!

Forward to Tsaya le tsatsi la Leave Forward!!!!

Forward to 3rd September 2020 - National Day of Action Forward

Amandlaaaa!!!!!!!!!!

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