

Lisbon Subway Workers Go On Renewed Day-long Strike



Lisbon, June 19 (RHC)-- The Lisbon subway workers went out on a 24-hour strike, the seventh time this year, in protest at the Portuguese government's plan to privatize the company. Thursday's walkout is expected to be followed by another strike on June 26th against Portugal's center-right coalition government's privatization plan.

Despite opposition from Portugal's labor unions, the government says it plans to privatize some of the unprofitable and indebted public transport companies, including national airline TAP Air Portugal.

Companies from Britain, France and Spain have already submitted their bids to operate the Metropolitano de Lisboa subway. The government will name the winner next month.

Portugal's economy plunged into recession in 2011, compelling the country to negotiate with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Union for a bailout loan. In return for the bailout, Lisbon had to impose a number of austerity measures, including more public spending cuts and tax rises, which triggered nationwide protests.

Portugal has been the scene of strikes since the start of year. In mid-May, public sector workers stopped work in protest to job cuts triggered by the government's austerity measures.

In early May, TAP Portugal pilots staged a 10-day strike against government's privatization plan.

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