

# RMT's Mick Lynch calls for urgent meeting with Prime Minister Rishi Sunak in bid to resolve rail dispute

Rail union leader Mick Lynch has asked Prime Minister Rishi Sunak for an urgent meeting to find a deal to end the long-running rail strikes.

Members of the Rail, Maritime and Transport union (RMT) have been striking for months in a dispute over pay, jobs and conditions. There are [two 48-hour strikes set for this week](#) and more set for over Christmas and for January.

Now RMT general secretary Mr Lynch says the best chance of making progress would be a direct meeting between him and the Prime Minister.

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He said that based on what he had heard from the press, from the Rail Delivery Group's negotiators and from Transport Secretary Mark Harper's appearance at the Transport Committee this week, Number 10 was "directing the mandate for the rail companies and has torpedoed the talks".

He wrote: "There is no reason why this dispute could not be settled in the same way that RMT has resolved disputes in Scotland and Wales.

"Where the Scottish and Welsh governments have had responsibility for mandates, pay settlements for 2022 have been agreed and neither of these settlements have been conditional on cutting staffing, and eroding safety, security

and accessibility.”

Mr Lynch added: “It is already a national scandal that your government has been paying the train operating companies not to settle the dispute, indemnifying them to the tune of £300m so that they have no incentive to reach a resolution.

“It’s not clear to me why, on top of this, your government has now torpedoed the negotiations, but I now believe that a meeting with yourself represents the best prospect of any renewed progress.

“We have a duty to explore every possible option for settling this dispute and I’m willing to do my part. I hope you will agree to meet me.”

A Government spokesperson said: “It’s incredibly disappointing that, despite a new and improved deal offering job security and a fair pay rise, the RMT continues to hold Christmas hostage with more damaging strikes.

“The Government has played its part by facilitating a fair and decent offer and the RMT and its members should vote this deal through and end this harmful disruption.”

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