



Asia
Floor
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AsiaFloorWage



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May Day 2020

Defend Union Rights! Struggle for a Living wage!

COVID-19 disaster has ravaged peoples, nations and workers globally. It has starkly exposed the vulnerability of workers all around the world, more so in industries that are based on low wages and inhumane working conditions. The global fashion and apparel industry, driven by brands from the USA and Europe, promote industrial practices that are brutally coercive to workers who produce their goods. Poverty-level wages and a resultant state of indebtedness have pushed such workers to live in unhygienic and unsafe conditions which add to their misery. They, in turn, become highly susceptible to diseases, preventable accidents and avoidable deaths.

The COVID -19 crisis requires our governments to serve vulnerable communities and the working poor, and to bolster their confidence by being responsive, transparent and participatory. Instead, we see the rise of authoritarianism and undemocratic surveillance under the guise of safety and security. The battle against the virus has become a war against its own people.

Defend 8-Hour Workday Won by the May Day Movement!

Employers are using the COVID crisis to intensify their calls for banning of unions. Workers' unions are being repressed, with unionized garment workers getting thrown out of jobs, and union leaders facing retaliation. Governments, in an exclusive collusion with business, are using the moment to concede to employers' interests and to accelerate the passing of labour laws that down grade and deny labour rights. More specifically they are weakening the right to form unions, and to collectively bargain. The historically well-tested international framework of tripartitism for democratic regulation of industrial relationships is at risk. Even the historic win against slavery and for an 8-hour workday won through workers' blood, sweat and tears is being snatched away.

We Stand with Our Unions on May Day 2020!

Workers rely on mutual solidarity and unity, and build unions to collectivise their voice and power. We stand for our unions, and reaffirm our right to form unions and to democratically participate to shape our industry, society and state. May Day is an occasion to renew our commitment to building and strengthening the worker's movement locally and globally.

The post-COVID scenario might see the garment industry getting re-structured, leading to some bankruptcies but eventually a greater consolidation of big brands and retailers is bound to happen. Global fashion industry, with its deep financial pockets developed through decades of labour exploitation, will survive... with changes, but with assured profit.

Garment workers, on other hand have no savings and will emerge, more insecure and impoverished. Trade unions are needed more than ever to give voice and to secure a decent life for workers who have been trapped for decades in this cycle of unsafe and back-breaking work, poverty level wages, compulsion and intimidation.

Living Wage is the Only Way!

Asia Floor Wage Alliance has proven over ten years that minimum and prevailing wages in garment industry in Asia are ONLY ONE-THIRD of a Living Wage. We have to fight back and make sure that the changes that take place in export industries like the global fashion industry do not AGAIN plunge garment workers from the edge of precarious working and living to destitution, starvation and homelessness. We want Living wage and have to struggle to win it!

Unite, build and defend our unions to stop this super-exploitation!

Fight back to demand living wage and be recognized and respected as human beings!
