

# AGITATIONS OF WORKERS AROUND THE WORLD

## Agitations of Garment Sector workers

**In Cambodia:** More than 200 workers from Kbal koah garment factory and top world garment Cambodia factories demonstrate on national road I in Phnompenh's Chbar Ampor district on 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb 2014 demanding their unpaid wages for December 2016. They sought government intervention for the payment of unpaid wages. The owners of both the factories have disappeared on the pretext of a bankruptcy.

Around 600 workers from Body Kids Fashion in Phnompenh held a two day protest at their factory on March 10, after not receiving their wages for February. They fear that the owner has absconded claiming a false bankruptcy.

Around 1,100 workers from International Fashion Royal factory in Phnomphen walked out on June 21, to protest the dismissal of a union leader. US own 80% of the factory and supplies garments to the retail giant K.Mart.

Workers claimed that the leader was fired because he was demanding the management to implement an Arbitration Council ruling for workers' overtime meal allowances to be paid weekly instead of monthly, maternity leave be paid to pregnant workers before they take leave and for a day-care centre at the factory.

**In Burma:** The workers of the Chinese owned Hundred Tex garment, Yagon went in to strike on January 30, in protest against firing upon their union leader, when he reported to work after two weeks of sick leave.

After that workers have been holding demonstrations in Feb. 2017 over the sacking of their union leader. Workers also complain that they have been paid less than the daily minimum wage and have not been receiving overtime payment, and the customary skills bonus payable according to the law. The company had locked-out the factory. On Feb 23 the workers attempted to occupy the factory.

**In Vietnam:** Around 1,000 workers at Indonesia owned Mai Sheng Textiles in Ba Rina-Vung went on strike on April 3 demanding the sacking of the newly appointed manager over new work rules he imposed. He limited food and water that workers take to work and banned pregnant women from bringing milk. Working hours had been extended. Huge amounts of fines and wage cuts imposed for violation of rules.

**In Bangladesh:** Several hundreds of SBH garment Workers in Khilgaon chowdary pura, Dhaka protested outside the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association office on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2017 over the sudden closure of their factory. They demanded their legal termination entitlements and back pay or the factory be reopened.

## Agitations in the Mining sector

**In New South Wales:** The contract workers at the South 32 coal mine in APPIN of South Sydney have been on a protracted strike for nearly 3 weeks in Feb 2017 demanding job security and wages and entitlements on par with full-time (regular) workers. They are also demanding for regularisation of their jobs after completion of 12 months service. They were protesting against the intentional wage-cuts by the management to axe permanent and contract jobs by June 17.

**In Mexico:** Mine workers at one of the Mexico's main gold and silver mines, Primero Compania Minerva in Tayoltitla walked off their duty, downing their tools on Feb 16 (2017) as a section to

the company's stated to lay off 300 workers. The Canadian-owned firm employs 1000 union members and 500 contract workers.

**In Mullan, Idaho:** The miners of Luck Flyday Silveo mine in Mullan, Idaho are in a protracted 3 month long strike from March 13 against HECLA Mining Company. They are protesting against Hecla Company attempting to force through a proposal to cut health care benefits, vacationing and bonus pay. Workers are worried that in the new contract (agreement) management will reduce the safety regulations in the main, especially for the newest shaft which reaches almost two miles underground.

**In Indonesia:** At PT Freeports' Gravery mine in Papua, Indonesia more than 8,000 permanent and contract workers went on strike from May 1, and continued it by extending for one more month from July 1<sup>st</sup>, after the management laid off around 10% of its 32,000 work-force. The company has issued "Voluntary resignation" notices to striking workers, in effect sacking 3,000 full time employees and 1,000 contract workers. While there are only 12,000 permanent workers in the employ of the company, the remaining 20,000 are contract workers.

**In South Africa:** In the last week of June 2017, when the workers at Sibanye Gold's Cooke gold mine went on a wild cat strike over the reduction of food they are allowed to take down the pit, the management had sacked 2000 workers out of 4,000 work-force claiming that the miners were using to feed criminal gangs that are known to stay underground without surfacing up to a month.

The workers of the Medo Coal mine in Mpumalanga province went in to strike from June 20 opposing the breaking up of national bargaining forum at the chamber of mines

**In Pakistan:** Salt and gypsum mine workers in Karak district walked off the job on July 3, to demand compensation or the death of a co-worker and another who was seriously injured in mining accident. In May a 24 hours strike was conducted over the same issues concerning workers safety.

**IN INDIA:** Fifteen workers at Mowgha Coal mine in Kalakote tehsil, Rajauri dist of J&K state are occupying the mine by going 'deep underground' demanding permanency of casual workers, increased D.A and promotions, in the last week of Jan 2017.

### **Agitations in the Auto sector:**

**In India:** Truck and bus assembly workers at Ashok Leyland's unit II plant at Hosur of Karnataka began a protest strike on March 10 demanding wage parity with the fellow employees at the neighbouring sister plant. 1,600 workers are working in Hosur plant.

300 workers at Hyundai Motors plant in Sriperambudur of Tamilnadu went in to a sit-in demonstration on March 20 to protest against the decision to deny two workers' entry to the factory, who were suspended on the pretext that they had instigated a strike in 2012, and reneged its promise to present any move to suspend the workers to the Joint Labour Commissioner before enforcing it.

A group of Pricol auto-parts manufacturing workers in Chennai demonstrated at the company's chepauk plant on June 30 to oppose disciplinary action imposed on 840 workers. Pricol withheld eight days pay from each worker for participating in a one-day strike in April in support of demands by local farmers.

**In USA:** On March 4, thousands of workers held a protest rally at quantan of Mississippi state in front of NISSAN Motor Company, demanding to allow them to form their union. American senator Berry Sanders has expressed his support to workers to form their union.

**In Slovakia:** Around 10,000 of the workers of the Volkswagen factories in Slovakia went in to a 12 day strike demanding 16% pay rise. This was the first strike at the plant which was set-up in 1992, manufacturing 1,000 vehicles each day.

**In Puertorica:** Drivers for the Uber ride service went in to strike on Feb 13, to protest a recent reduction imposed by the company.

**In Italy:** Italian taxi drivers held six days of strikes from Feb 18 in protest against car-hire vehicles using e-hailing apps such as Uber to ply for hire. They complain that they have to operate at fixed tariffs where as Uber drivers can set their charges at will.

**In Melbourne:** More than 2,000 Uber registered drivers in Melbourne and Brisbane participated in a “NO- UBER TUESDAY” log-off protest on March 14, against the Uber paying them significantly below the minimum wage.

Uber drivers in major cities like Newyork, New Delhi and Banglore have also been protesting against the US based company’s decision to reduce fares.

**In India:** Drivers and assistants for about 4,900 petroleum tankers in Assam operating out of depots and refineries of IOC, BPCL and HPCL went on strike from March 20 demanding mandated minimum wage and other state entitlements.

The workers of Haryana State Road ways stopped work on April-10 to oppose a government decision to allow private operators to run buses on 273 routes. Around 3,500 state buses were grounded by the walk-out.

**IN GUYANA:** Cargo truck operators and drivers gathered in Georgetown, Guryana highlighting the problems they are facing in the last week of June 2017. They protested against deplorable roads condition causing astronomical expenses for repairs and maintenance of their vehicles. They complain that the deteriorating condition of the roads is causing heavy delays in their trips. Trips that used to take a couple of days now take a week.

#### **Agitations in Other sectors:**

**IN U.K.:** Around 600 staff employed in UK Nuclear weapons plants at Aldermaston and Burgh field in Berkshire went in to a 2 days strike from Jan 20<sup>th</sup>. They were protesting charges to their pension scheme which would result in inferior pension rights.

Again they went in to a 24 hours strike on Feb 21<sup>st</sup>. Workers from the two sites held a March in London, including a protest March to the offices of the Ministry of defence.

Again they started a series of strikes beginning with a one day strike on 29<sup>th</sup> June. The other strikes will take place on July 3, 13, 17 and 27; August 10,14 and 24 and September 7, 11 and 21. They also began a continuous overtime ban from 29<sup>th</sup> June.

**In Thailand:** Over 2,000 migrant workers from Seafood exporter Sea value group, submitted a petition to management on Jan 30 calling for higher wages and better working conditions a rare stand in a country where foreign workers are banned from forming trade unions. Majority of these migrant workers are from Myanmar.

Over 800 Burmese workers at the Golden Prize fish Company in Mahachai demonstrated out-side factory on March 12, over the violation of worker’s rights. They demanded that they be allowed to apply for pass-ports and new identity cards, to stop unfair wage cuts, to repair toilets and to provide drinking water.

**In Sri Lanka:** Around 2,100 workers of out-sourcing company Heman Capital Solutions working for Sri Lanka Telecom walked out on December 26 (2016) to demand permanent jobs, adequate facilities and safety equipment. They are on an indefinite strike.

19,000 Sri Lankan postal workers walked off the job on July 4, on nationwide indefinite strike to oppose the government’s plan to sell the three heritage listed postal department buildings in Newara Eliya, Kandy and Galle in line with the privatisation programme demanded by the IMF.

**In South Korea:** Around 1,500 unionised workers at Hyundai Heavy industries (ship building workers) in Ulsan walked out on Feb 23, over failed wage negotiations and a proposed split of the firms non-ship building business.

**In Bangladesh:** At least 5,000 tea garden workers from Chunaughut in Habiganj district held a one day rally on March 11 opposing the government’s seizure of land for a SEZ. The tea workers have been holding strikes and demonstrations since December 2015 opposing the government’s

decision to establish 100 SEZs on publicly-owned land traditionally cultivated by locals to supplement their meagre wages.

**In Brazil:** Protesting against the intended labour-reforms to be implemented by the government agitations and demonstrations were conducted for more than 10 days in March 2017, throughout the country.

In Brazil the postal employees have participated in a general strike on 27<sup>th</sup> April opposing privatisation and job cuts and reforms of labour and pension schemes.

To protect their pension entitlements, members of the police unions held protest demonstrations before Brazil parliament and tried to enter in to parliament building in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of April. These protesting police officers around 500 in number were tear gassed by the parliament security forces.

**In Burma:** More than 1,000 workers from the EVER SUNNY FOODS FACTORY in YANGON's industrial zone walked out on strike on 19<sup>th</sup> March over the managements announcement that it was cutting the Myanmar New year holidays to just five days. Previously the management made them to work overtime including weed ends for the past month, without paying double wages but promised to give 15 days' holidays during Myanmar.

**In Argentina:** Opposing the (neo-liberal) liberalisation policies of the government a general strike was conducted throughout the country on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> April in which throughout workers, teachers, government employees, industrial workers and employees of various sectors participated. They demanded to end poverty and to immediately create jobs and employment to the unemployed.

**In Greece:** A nation-wide one day protest general strike was held in Greece on 18<sup>th</sup> May in which ten thousand workers participated opposing the austerity measures being implemented by the government. This is the 50<sup>th</sup> protest general strike held in Greece against austerity.

Municipal garbage workers in Greece have continued their nationwide strike for more than 2 weeks in June, and hold a massive protest demonstration on June 27. They are demanding for regularisation of the services of contract workers, but not extending their contracts as contract workers

**In France:** Workers of General Motor and Services automobile plant, which supplies machinery and parts to the Renault & TSA cars manufacturing plant were striking indefinitely from last week of May in Paris against the managements false claim that the factory was under bankruptcy and a new management has to be chosen.

**In Chile:** Workers of the H&M department store chain in Chile walked out on May 30 after the retail giant rejected their collective contract proposal.

**In USA:** 1,800 field and cable technicians of Spectrum Company in Newyork city and rotuern Newjercy on a protracted strike from Feb 2017 heading in to fourth month, which were separated from workers of AT&T and have been working without a job contract. The Newyork major is using the police to escort strike-breakers across picket lines.

**In Uruguay:** Workers of Montevideg refrescos, which bottle and distributes coca-cola in Uruguay went a strike on June 23 against the managements unfair labour practices, denouncing the HRD for setting up conversations with worker with the intent to convince them to take different position from the union regarding a re-structuring terms and acting in bad faith.

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