

Letter from to Factories, Boilers, Industrial Safety and Health Department, 20.11.2017 to Saroja K., Principal Secretary, Garment Labour Union.

Subject: Regarding complaint about Illegal extension of working hours to 9.30 hours by Messrs. Hinduja Processing and Finishing Unit (A unit of Hinduja Exports)

An investigation was carried out on 22.8.2017 after receiving your complaint and after finding violations of law, a case has been filed at the Hon'ble 3<sup>rd</sup> ACMM court against the management on 20.11.2017.

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To

Director,  
Factories and Boilers Department,  
Karmika Bhavana, Bannerghatta Road  
Bangalore-560029

From,

Saroja. K.  
Principal Secretary,  
Garment Labour Union  
No.176, Near Pantharpalya Railway Gate,  
Mysore Road, Bangalore-560039

I, the principal secretary of the Garment Labour Union, would like to state that we are a registered organisation fighting for workers' rights.

Workers from Hinduja Processing and Finishing Unit-2, located at 5<sup>th</sup> cross, Mysore Road, Bangalore-26, which belongs to Gokuldas Exports, are members of our union. They have complained to us that the owners have extended daily working hours which was from 9 am to 5.30 pm to 9.00 to 6.30 pm. This has been done illegally without seeking permission from appropriate authorities from March 2017 and workers are being forced to work for 9.30 hours.

When we raised the issue with owners, they did not cooperate and they are unnecessarily creating problems for workers who are part of our union.

We would like to draw your attention to the fact that according to provisions of Chapter 6 of the Factories Act, 1947, workers should not be pressured into working for more than 48 hours in a week. However, at the Gokuldas Exports's Hinduja Processing and Finishing Unit-2, the owners are in violation of the provisions of the law. Apart from the break given to workers for lunch, workers are not provided any other break and are being forced to work for 9.30 hours everyday, i.e. 57 hours every week in order to meet increased production targets. By

not providing workers with any allowance for working for more than 48 hours, they are violating labour laws and oppressing workers.

Gokaldas Exports has 22 factories across Karnataka state and is an export oriented company. By forcing workers to work for 9.30 hours every day and more than 48 hours, the company is in violation of labour laws, norms set by international labour organisations and the rules set by national labour authorities.

We request you to provide us justice by conducting an enquiry into Gokuldas Exports's Hinduja Processing and Finishing Unit-2, located at 5<sup>th</sup> cross, Mysore Road, Bangalore-26, and direct them to limit working hours to 48 hours and to punish and fine the management for violating laws regarding working hours.

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Unclear who the letter is from

When we went to visit Gokuldas Exports's Hinduja Processing and Finishing Unit-2 on 25.5.2017, many workers complained to us about problems in the factory. Many of them complained to us about the increase in working hours. But they refused to give a written complaint because they were afraid of the management. About 65 women workers from the Muslim community said that since this was the month of Ramzan, they were on fasting. But the company was not giving them permission to offer their prayers and to conduct their practices. Further, at the factory, production manager Chalapathi and quality manager Murthy have been subjecting them to sexual harassment and physical assault. 65 women have signed on a letter to Garment Labour Union stating these details and seeking protection in this matter.

On 26.5.2017, president of the Garment Labour Union spoke with Mahadeva Gowda, General Manager of HR and IR over telephone about the issues shared by workers. He assured us that he would warn the H.R. manager, production manager and Q.A manager and that he would pay a visit to the unit and resolve the workers' issues. On 26.5.2017 (not clear if it is 28), when we went to the factory for a gate meeting, workers told us that no issues had been resolved. On that day, Samira, the worker who submitted the complaint to us, was on leave and she had been called to the factory and told that she had complained to the union and forced to sign a resignation letter. On that day evening, GATWU members Madina, Ratnamma, Manjula and their EC members Bhagya, Kumbaresh, Chandramma and two others came to fight with us stating that we are putting workers up against the management. The company is giving us food and some woman has gone and complained, they said using abusive language and condemning workers. Also, are you going to get the company closed? You all get together, you see what is waiting for you inside. By that time, company H.R. manager Chetan came out with other people. Bhagya told Chetan that sir, see, they have complained to GLU that the production manager, quality manager, H.R.manager all of you scold and harass, you please get rid of them. Listening to this, the management also came to fight with us. On 29.5.2017, when Mary, a worker, came about five minutes late, she was made to stand outside the gate till 11 a.m. She called and told the union about this later. They

later took her inside and asked will you complain to H.R. G.M. and I.R. MadeGowda and we will target you.

On 28.6.2017, with regard to period of work, a complaint has been submitted to Factories and Boilers Department and assistance has been sought from WRC and CCC. The case is ongoing.