



#UNITEDAGAINSTTHEDRAGON

In Dhaka (Bangladesh) around 6.000 - mostly unionised - textile workers of the so called "Dragon Sweater factory" are taking to the street. They have been layed off under the pretense of the Corona crisis. At the same time owed wages, compensations and benefits are being held back.

Dragon Sweater supplies textiles to retail businesses like LIDL, NewYorker and Walmart.

The local workers are not giving up. Let's support them here as well by putting pressure on the retailers and fighting for our common interests.

#UNITEDAGAINSTTHEDRAGON



What can I do?

Express your solidarity with the workers on social networks and spread the hashtag to generate publicity for the cause:

#UNITEDAGAINSTTHEDRAGON

Take part in our e-mail campaign:

unitedagainstthedragon.info



With just 2 clicks you can send a precomposed e-mail to one of the responsible businesses - easy for you, annoying to them!

Current info on the topic can be found here: globalmayday.net

VS.



What happened so far..

1994 Dragon Sweater and Spinning Limited incorporated as a private limited company in Bangladesh. This is the period when many of the experienced workers who have recently been fired entered the workforce.

2012 Dragon Sweater (Dragon Group) becomes a public limited company with shareholders.

February/March 2020 Dragon Group management, in contravention of Bangladesh Labor Law, illegally lays off a majority of workers (around 6,000), citing 'economic losses' from the COVID-19 pandemic as a reason. Management terminated the workers without compensating years of back pay and benefits on which many workers depend.

Sidenote: The vast majority of workers were organized in the fighting union Garment Workers' Trade Union Center (GWTUC) by then. One might assume that union busting was a driving force behind the owners decision to lay off almost everyone.

Firing unionised workers under false pretense is an example of a tactic called "Union Busting".

March 2020 The Dragon Sweater workers start demonstrating at the factory in Malibag (a district of Dhaka) and in front of the National Press Club to hammer home their demands.

June 2020 The textile workers lay siege to the Labor Ministry. There is also a siege of the Prime Minister's office in conjunction with workers from other factories agitating for their wages and benefits.

June 2020 Dragon Sweater management notices the international attention and reaches out to the International Confederation of Labor (ICL) and Global May Day to justify their behaviour. ICL and GWTUC openly respond.

June/July 2020 Among others, the Free Workers Union (FAU) in Hamburg and Freiburg as well as the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in Hamburg and Bristol hold solidarity rallies in support of the workers. And also the textile workers in Dhaka take to the streets again.

July 2020 New Yorker contacts the FAU Hamburg and the GWTUC saying that under these circumstances they will blacklist Dragon Group. However, we are still waiting for a public statement! There has been no meaningful response from Walmart nor Lidl, yet.

July 2020 The labor union FOB (Brazil) joins the movement. The ICL working group Asia together with GWTUC and IWW Ireland decide to call for a *Global Month of Solidarity with Workers at Dragon Sweater!*

#UnitedAgainstTheDragon is born.

August 2020 The pressure is showing first results. Workers, owners, and the government sit for ongoing tripartite negotiations. However, the owners still continue to stall proceedings and deny workers their legally-owed arrears. The talks (and actions) will continue...

What do workers in Bangladesh have to do with us?

As consumers we are an important link in the value-chain. It begins with the harvest on the cotton fields, continues in spinning mills, sewing rooms and dyeing factories and ends after extensive logistic efforts in our wardrobes. The largest profits are made here - where all the things are being sold. Therefore we have the potential to put some pressure on this chain to support the textile workers at Dragon Sweater.

The capitalist system operates world wide and so there are exploitative conditions everywhere. Sure, the conditions under which we live vary widely, but we all need to sell ourselves to the labour market and offer up our time in energy, just to fulfill the bare necessities; i.e. having access to shelter, buying food for our children or simply being able to go to the doctor. Even though many of us here will be caught by social security systems if need be, these securities are only available to those who submit to certain rules. So in the end we are all in the same boat, no matter whether we are here or in Dhaka.

And if we collectively refuse to play the game we can change the rules. **Let's not let ourselves be divided! One World - One Struggle!**

With this event we are taking part in the Global Month of Solidarity with the Workers at Dragon Sweater (15.08. - 15.09.2020). As such it is internationally coordinated. In many regions of the world events like this are taking place in front of Lidl, New Yorker and Walmart. You can find out more about what is happening elsewhere here:



This tower in Dhaka, Bangladesh, is not only home to the Dragon Group's corporate division, but also houses several factory floors on which the workers sew textiles for businesses like LIDL, New Yorker and Walmart.

www.globalmayday.net



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