

WORKERS' INTERVIEW REPORT

Factory Address:

Fibre and Fabrics International Private Limited
No:21-E1,2nd Phase Industrial Area
Peenya, Bangalore

Total Workforce: 1600 employees.

Date of Interview: November 19-22, 2005.

Interviewers: Ms. Prathibha, Ms. Yashoda and Mr. Jayaram.

Report Compiled by: Miss.Biji.P.Johnson

I. GENERAL INFORMATION:

Workers Interviewed:

Name	Age	Sex	Type of Job	No: of Years/Mon/ Days	Department	Union
1.xxx	26x	M	Brushing	4 Months	Garment Processing	No
2. xxx	25	M	Brushing	3 Years	Garment Processing	No
3. xxx	23	M	Brushing	1.5 months	Garment Processing	No
4. xxx	23	M	Brushing	15 days	Garment Processing	No

II. LABOUR STANDARDS:

The workers choose the employment and can leave of their own. Apart from legal deductions (PF, ESI) no other deductions are made.

The workers are subject to stringent security checks while entering and leaving the premises. Once they enter the premises, they have no means of communication to the

outside world. They are allowed outside provided they produce a permission letter from the supervisor to that effect.

a) No Discrimination in Employment:

There is no discrimination on the basis of caste, creed or sex in wages for same type and same amount of work. Apparently, on the basis of experience in the factory, salary differs from individual to individual. In this particular unit usually only males are employed due to the heavy nature of the work.

b) Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining:

The workers are generally aware about the unions but they are not members of any union outside the factory or within the factory. There is general fear among the workers that if they associate with any union, they will be dismissed from the employment.

There is no collective bargaining agreement. Due to the fear in their mind, they do not opt for a collective bargaining strategy and therefore all the decisions with regard to the employment conditions are taken by the management without any consultation or negotiation with the employees.

c) Payment of a Living Wage:

Payments are made monthly without any default. The minimum wage paid in this factory is 83 rupees and the maximum is 105 rupees. But the workers are unaware about the method of calculation of these wages. Most of the workers are the sole bread earning members of the family and they find the wages inadequate to meet the cost and expenses of living in Bangalore.

d) Working Hours:

The working hours of the factory are displayed on a board near the factory gate and as per this, the working hours are divided into three different shifts. There is no mention about the break timing in the shifts. The working hours is as given below.

- a) 1st shift- 7.00am -3.00pm
- b) 2nd shift-3.00pm-12.00am
- c) 3rd shift -12am-7.00am

Every worker in the garment factory is given a production target which they have to achieve within the 8 hour workday. due to the high targets and absence of any specific training they find it very difficult to achieve this within the normal working hours. As a result of this they end up in doing 2-4 hours overtime work everyday to complete the production targets. This extra work is never counted towards any overtime work and therefore no extra wages are paid to the workers. In some cases when the workers have

to attain higher production targets than the targets in the usual 8 hour day , then they are paid overtime. But even under these circumstances they are paid only on single hourly basis and not on double rates as provided by the law. As there no specific guidelines followed by this Factory with regard to overtime payments, the management exercises a lot of discretion on this aspect.

Though as per the records the night shift get over by 12, in order to meet the production targets the employees are made to stay till 2.00 am. after this there is no transportation facility available to the workers which put them to a lot of hardship in reaching their homes at night.

e) Health and Safety:

The industry has not given much importance in matters related to health and safety of the employees. Even though the workers deal with hazardous materials, they are not provided with rubber boots nor are they aware of health problems arising due to constant touch with these substances. Workers are not generally aware about the first aid box and no employee is trained in basic first aid. Even though the fire extinguishers are mounted in appropriate places the workers are ignorant about its use.

Workers have to undergo a lot of verbal and physical harassment at the hands of the supervisors in the factory. If they don't attain the production target on hourly basis, they are verbally abused and also severely beaten with sticks. Non-attainment of production target can also lead to termination of the worker without any notice or warning to that effect. There has been instances wherein a worker who questioned the supervisor for his alleged misdeeds has been severely beaten by the local gundas on the behest of the supervisor. Any worker who points a finger at the supervisor is either shifted to the night shift or immediately terminated from the employment.

f) Legally Binding Employment Relation:

The workers are generally not issued any appointment letters or any contract is signed by them. The workers are not generally given any notice or warning before their termination. Labor contractor does not play any role in the recruitment of the workers.

General Observations:

One of the main complaint of the workers is the violence employed to discipline them such as beating with wooden sticks for not achieving production targets. Another complaint of the workers is the non-payment of wages for overtime work. Even if they are paid it is only on an single hourly basis and not on a double rate. There has been a large turn over of the workers due to poor working conditions, harassment by supervisors and long working hours. The workers are terminated from the employment without any warning or notice.