

CLEAN CLOTHES CAMPAIGN



*Improving working conditions
in the global garment industry*



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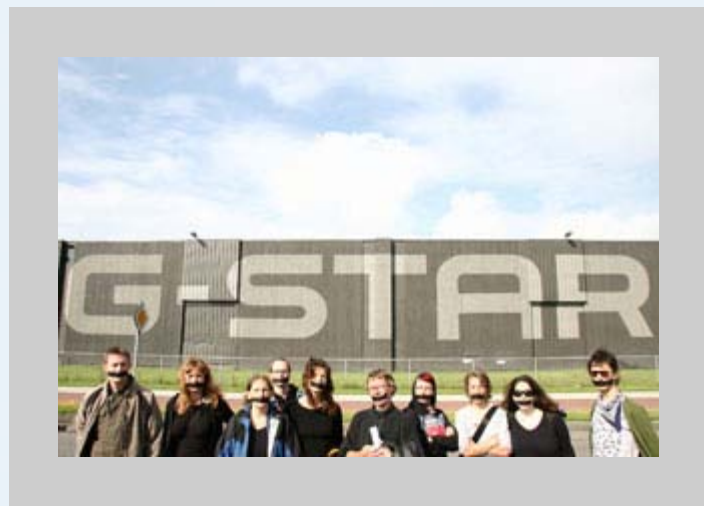
Publications

Codes of conduct

Make it clear that labour rights organisations will not be silenced - Support freedom of speech and freedom of association

Sept, 2007

■ Legal action is being used by a company producing garments in India to silence organisations in India and the Netherlands who are speaking out about severe labour rights violations in factories producing jeans for companies including G-Star, Armani, RaRe, Guess, Gap and Mexx.



June 25 2007, Action at G-star in Amsterdam

and labour relations, the jeans supplier is trying to stop labour rights groups from distributing information on the situation at FFI/JKPL and have filed restraining orders and libel lawsuits to silence them. The workers' rights advocates are committed to pursuing justice for the women and men who stitch our jeans, but support is needed in the face of the huge legal campaign mounted by FFI/JKPL.

How you can help

Support the labour rights organisations in Bangalore and abroad that are under attack by placing the urgent appeal on this case on your website, including the original report detailing the labour rights violations at FFI/JKPL facilities. By helping to post and distribute information on the FFI/JKPL case you can help

What happened before:

[Overview of the FFI case](#)

On September 26, 2007, the Indian court issued arrest warrants against seven staff members of the Clean Clothes Campaign and the India Committee of the Netherlands. Notwithstanding international pressure, FFI keeps refusing to engage with union and local labour rights organisations and stop legal action.

Instead of working with local organisations to improve labour conditions

make it clear that labour rights organisations will not be silenced, and that freedom of association and freedom of speech are fundamental rights.

Please also contact brands and factory owners to tell them "Enough is enough".
Take action now >>

Background: Workers' Rights Violated; Critics gagged

Since July 2006, the Garment and Textile Workers Union (GATWU), the New Trade Union Initiative (NTUI), the Civil Initiative for Peace and Development (CIVIDEP), the Women Garment Workers Front Munnade and the CCC Task Force Tamil Nadu have been subject to a local court injunction, prohibiting them from distributing information inside and outside of India about the working conditions at international jeans suppliers Fibres and Fabrics International and its subsidiary Jeans Knit Pvt Ltd (FFI/JKPL). Through this court order labour support organisations are effectively prevented from supporting the workers and the trade unions, GATWU and NTUI, are prevented from organising and representing the workers. The court issued a temporary restraining order on July 28, 2006, which was prolonged in February 2007. On August 2, 2007 the parties will have to appear in court again. In the meantime, the organisations involved went to the High Court to contest the case.

In late 2005, the Indian organisations Munnade, Cividep and the trade unions GATWU and NTUI reported on violations of labour rights in FFI/JKPL facilities including high workload, forced overtime, physical and psychological abuse, non-payment of overtime, and the non-issuance of identity cards and contracts (for more information see one of the reports:

http://www.schonekieren.nl/ftp/gatw_report-on-violations.pdf). Since then the company has dealt with a number of serious violations including physical abuse and non-payment of overtime, as documented in a second report

http://www.cleanclothes.org/ftp/06-08-Fact_Finding_Report-FFi.pdf) by local organisations. But systematic changes are still needed. At the same time the company started intimidating the local organisations by threatening some of their staff, watching their meetings, following their members and taking legal action against them; this is a clear signal to organisations and FFI/JKPL workers that the company will harass and intimidate any organisation and trade union that tries to support the workers and that they cannot freely speak out.

In May 2006, the Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) and the India Committee of the Netherlands (ICN) started a public campaign to support the FFI/JKPL workers and local labour rights organisations in their efforts to improve the labour conditions and labour relations at FFI and JKPL. CCC and ICN have strongly campaigned for FFI/JKPL to start a meaningful dialogue with the trade unions GATWU/NTUI and the labour support organisations Munnade and CIVIDEP to solve the outstanding issues.

Following efforts to draw attention to the labour rights violations at FFI/JKPL, the CCC and the ICN and seven of their staff members were summoned to appear in court in Bangalore on June 25, 2007. The Dutch organisations are accused of "cyber crime", "acts of racist and xenophobic nature" and "criminal defamation". Others accused of defamation and summoned to appear in court in June are the internet providers Antenna and Xs4all.

The court case of the CCC and ICN had been postponed until 24 September, 2007 when the court issued an arrest order against the 7 persons of the two organisations. The two organisations will appeal against the case.



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