



Workers and Farmers Solidarity League of Burma (WFSLB)

No. 1/2011(WFSLB)
Date.25.3.2011(Friday)

Demanding stipulation of minimum wage suited to times

1. At present both the SPDC military regime and the USDP parliament are trying to attract massive amounts of foreign investments to enter Burma. Even now business firms from neighboring and regional countries are taking positions in Burma's industry, energy and agriculture sectors.

2. In the current situation, the fruits of foreign investments are being enjoyed only by foreign investors, domestic tycoons and SPDC authorities. On the other hand, big business is confiscating farmers' ancestral lands and homesteads crookedly, in cooperation with authorities, and exploiting workers of their wages, work-hours and social benefits. The government itself is ignoring the plight of workers and peasants—what they are suffering is of no concern to the regime. Workers and peasants are bogged down in a vicious cycle of debts, undergoing all kinds of living and dying hardships.

3. It is claimed that Burmese people would get ample employment opportunities with the coming of foreign investments but the government has yet to pass stipulations on requirements of wages, work-hours and benefits on specific kinds of jobs for citizens.

The most vital and immediate necessity for Burma's working force today is official stipulation of minimum wages. Such a lack of provision has led to Burmese workers' becoming the lowest-paid underling classes at present toiling at factories and businesses owned by foreigners such as Chinese, Korean, Thai, etc.

4. Among regional countries, minimum wage for a worker is \$166 in Shanghai Industrial Zone, \$61 in Cambodian garment and footwear factories, \$43 in Bangladesh and \$123 in Indonesia but Burmese workers are currently receiving ten to twenty dollars a month only. This amount could not even meet the cost of daily meal under present prices, let alone raise the living standard.

5. USDP government head ex-Gen. President U Thein Sein has been specified to receive a monthly salary of Kyat 5 million, six chauffeur-driven automobiles and many benefits, vastly in excess of neighboring countries' Presidents. Meanwhile minimum salary for a government employee is Kyat 30,000 a month while an industrial zone worker earns Kyat 12,000 a month, less than half of neighboring countries' industrial workers. President's salary is 416 times higher than an industrial worker's and 166 times more than a civil servant. Such a mean allocation is not found anywhere in the world.

6. In specifying minimum wage, it has to be calculated correspondingly to provide livelihood security for housemaids, sanitation workers, night watchmen, brick and mortar haulers, etc. by comparing with international norms, current consumer prices and living costs.

Since garment and footwear factory workers, carpenters, masons and welders are semi-skilled workers who have to exert not only menial labor but also expertise, their minimum wage should be fixed higher and needs to be on a par with workers rates in neighboring countries. The World Bank has postulated minimum income for a man as two dollars. It also needs to review and revise the wages every five years as is the usual practice in the world.

7. Therefore, on behalf of government employees and working masses, we demand prompt promulgation of minimum wages and salaries for workers and civil servants at all levels corresponding to current consumer prices and enabling a decent living standard, in the same way as stipulation of salary and benefits for U Thein Sein who is working as a President.

Unite All Oppressed Workers and Farmers!

**Workers and Farmers Solidarity League of Burma (WFSLB)
Rangoon, Burma.**

To contact: wfslb2009@gmail.com