



News Letter

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Social Awareness and Voluntary Education (SAVE)

SAVE (Social Awareness and Voluntary Education) is a registered Indian Non-Governmental Organization, promoted in the year 1993, as a growing response to the challenge of preventing the child labor practices. Internalizing the fact that the issue of child labor needs to be addressed in a multipronged strategy SAVE expanded its intervention among women and textile and garment industry workers focusing promotion of the comprehensive rights of the garment and textile industry workers and empowerment of women. Currently SAVE reaches out to children, young women, women, textile and garment workers including the migrant workers.

Since 1995, SAVE has been carrying out programs among children in distress primarily among the children working in textile and hazardous industries with specific emphasis on promotion of health and educational rights through special schooling for the drop out children and child labourers and through vocational training support. Community sensitization is one of the main activities towards prevention of child labor. SAVE initiated campaigns and advocacy strategies could mainstream the issues of child labor and the plight of young girls in the garment and textile industry. SAVE has the unique credibility of being the champion organization in exposing the child labor issues in Tirupur.

TIRUPUR UPDATE: A NEWSLETTER OF SAVE

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SOCIAL AWARENESS AND VOLUNTARY EDUCATION (SAVE)

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Garments

NO FREQUENT CHANGES IN THE LAWS – THE DEMAND BY THE INDUSTRIALISTS

Daily Thanthi January 5, 2017

Tirupur: About three lakhs of people directly and two lakhs of people indirectly are entertaining employment opportunities in Tirupur due to the development of its garment industry.

For a long time, the industrialists of Tirupur have been making demands to the central and state governments to prepare suitable rules and regulations to promote the garment industry with the consultation of industrialists there.

However, the view has been held that frequent changes to the labour law are too difficult to manage in practice. Because of it, the industrial conditions have worsened in such a way that they have collapsed and in some cases have even been closed down. As a result, the labourers depending upon the garment industry stand to lose their jobs.

That said, there are changes being made to the law now and then. As a result of changes in the law, the industrial entrepreneurs are subjected to a lot of difficulties in running their industries and consequently lose their self-confidence and their businesses. A special officer must be appointed for the maintenance of laws in the industry. Moreover, new schemes must be introduced with the help of experts. To achieve this, a monthly consultation meeting must be organised at the district level.

The industrialists of Tirupur have been expecting that both the state government and district administration will take necessary steps in the near future.

WE REQUIRE THE INFRASTRUCTURE TO KNOW THE GRIEVANCES OF LABOURERS

Dinamalar January 8, 2017

Tirupur: The Chief Minister of CII said that the garment industrialists must arrange an infrastructure so as to enable an environment where they can listen to the grievances of workers.

The Indian Industrial Institute of Tirupur's District Council has conducted a seminar on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment in the auditorium of the Exporters Association. Raja Shanmugam, the President of Tirupur Exporters Association presided over the event and Vijayakumar, and the General Secretary participated in it.

Sikar Jain, the Chief Trainer of CII delivered his speech.

The international brands compel garment-manufacturing companies to follow the rules and regulations especially those related to child labour, sexual harassment, and other social welfare issues. Companies have to adhere to these regulations.

There is a wide gap between the manager and labourers. A committee to prevent sexual harassment has to be established wherever women are employed. Regarding the work conditions, the complaint from the women must be collected and a solution found. Labourers from the other states do not express their grievances as readily. Therefore, the formation of a Grievance Redressal Committee is mandatory.

The garment industrialists of Tirupur have to ensure the infrastructure of the building is adequate for the safety and security of the workplace. This is important in India, since it can cause a lack of business. For example, many brands have stopped placing orders in Bangladesh since they do not comply with safety measures.

SALARY TO THE GARMENTS COMPANY WORKERS ONLY THROUGH THE BANKS – THE TIRUPUR EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION DECISION

Daily Thanthi January 11, 2017

Tirupur: A large number of garment companies are operating in Tirupur. Lakhs of workers, not only from the Tamil Nadu but also from the other states, have been employed in these companies. At this juncture, the central government has issued an order with the intention of promoting the digital transactions of salary accounts. That is, that salaries must be made only through the banks.

At present, the salaries to both the regularised works and the contract workers are being paid directly in cash. It was only in the cases of certain export companies that the payment of salary to the regularised workers was made through the banks.

It was decided in the executive meetings of Tirupur Exporters Association ("TEA") that the payments of salary to the workers should not be made in the cash. Instead, the payment of salary to the workers must be made into their bank account by digital transaction methods.

Related to this, the executive of TEA expressed their views.

The central government has ordered employers to pay the workers' salaries by means of an online system. All the members of TEA must follow the method as per the resolution passed in the said meeting. Also, they said that the weekly payment of wages should be avoided and that the monthly payments of salary would be started.

Since the Odisha government has invited the industrialists to establish the industries in that state, the TEA would also take initiatives to guide the entrepreneurs who would come forward to do so. Again, they asked the members to implement new schemes of development by making use of the social welfare fund.

SECOND QUALITY GARMENTS SELLERS ARE WORRIED – SINCE NO SOLUTION FOR THE ISSUE OF CURRENCY NOTES

Daily Thanthi January 12, 2017

Tirupur: Both the garments manufactured for the local market and the rejected items that would have been for export are being sold in places like Kadharpet, the weavers' colonies including in the market of Coimbatore, and in Erode districts on a wholesale basis.

The big sellers of the other states as well as the sellers on the roadside are purchasing the garments required for them notably in Tirupur Kadharpet and the weavers' colony. The central government had announced the demonization of currencies such as Rs. 500 and Rs. 1000. After the event, a large number of people, including the sellers, are facing a number of problems everywhere.

Hence, the sellers of Tirupur garments are unable to promote their business due to this drawback of the central government. The sale of second quality garments valued at many crores of rupees has severely decreased. As a result, the manufactures of garments for the export and the local markets, the labourers, and the sellers of second quality garments are subjected to face the business crisis.

Relating to this they have said: "Though the steps being taken by the central government against the abolishment of the black money is good, the business people as well as the general public are severely affected. Notably, 80% of the sale of second quality garments has decreased by as much as 20% per day.

Also, the number of sellers coming from the other states to purchase the second quality garments has decreased day by day. Though the business transactions have been improved in the last weeks, the visiting of sellers is at a low level. The wholesale merchants in the Kadharpet have decided to close down their shops for the time being. Both the central and state governments must take the necessary steps to solve this issue.

GARMENTS WORKERS RETURN TO THEIR NATIVE PLACES

Daily Thanthi January 13, 2017

Tirupur: Lakhs of labourers from the other states as well as the other districts of Tamil Nadu are working in Tirupur. As usual, these workers are used to returning to their native places during their festival times. Accordingly, they are returning to their native places to celebrate the festivals such as Pongal and Deepavali.

Since they will have to celebrate the Pongal festival in the current year, the labourers of Tamil Nadu are returning to their native places. It is regretful that the garment business is already affected due to the demonetization of currencies. The business deals have already been held up due to labourers returning to their native homes. Hence, the works in many companies have been severely affected due to a lack of labourers. However, the orders received during this season have been completed at the earliest. The regular production in the companies will be possible only after this critical period of demonization and the loss of labour is rectified. Furthermore, the garment business will be affected in the future also.

Tirupur braces for tough task as ready-mades exports shrink

The Hindu January 18, 2017

Tirupur: Ready-made garment exports from India have seen only a tepid growth in the rupee and a negative growth in the dollar during the just completed first three quarters of the current financial year (December 31, 2016) vis-à-vis the corresponding period of the 2015-16 fiscal year.



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[http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-Tamil Nadu/Tirupur-braces-for-tough-task-as-readymades-exports-shrink/article17053143.ece](http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-TamilNadu/Tirupur-braces-for-tough-task-as-readymades-exports-shrink/article17053143.ece)

This overall scenario of exports from the country (knitwear and woven combined) has left the exporters in clusters like Tirupur with a daunting task in the ongoing fourth and last quarter of the financial year to make up for the sluggishness and surpass the last fiscal year's performance. Official statistics indicate that the exports stood at Rs.83,309 crore from the country during the first three quarters of the current fiscal year (April 1 to December 31, 2016); as against Rs.80,461 crore in the corresponding period last fiscal year, with a growth of 3.54%.

This growth rate was much lower compared to 9.16% achieved in the first three quarters of 2015-16, against the same period of the 2014-15 fiscal year.

In dollar terms, the growth was negative until December 31, 2016 and stood at minus 0.15, as against 2.48% during same period in the 2015-16 fiscal year.

In the case of the Tirupur cluster, garments worth around Rs. 16,600 crore were exported between April 1 and December 31 in the 2016-17 fiscal year, as against the annual exports of Rs 23,050 crore attained during the entire 2015-16 fiscal year.

Negative market sentiments

Tirupur Exporters Association president Raja Shanmugam sounded optimistic about surpassing last year's performance by the end of this fiscal period. "Growth rate slowed a bit during the initial phase of this fiscal year due to negative market sentiments that created purchase contraction in global markets following Britain's referendum to exit from the European Union and also because of the greater penetration in global market share by countries like Bangladesh, Vietnam and Cambodia. With more industry-friendly policies/incentives, our exports will definitely scale higher", he said.

Incentivising exports a key textile industry demand **The New Sunday Express January 29, 2017**



<http://www.newindianexpress.com/business/2017/jan/28/incentivising-exports-a-key-textile-industry-demand-1564551.html>

CHENNAI: The textile sector nearly hit a standstill during the first few weeks after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced demonetisation. Many small garment units were unable to pay wages to workers and production, according to industry players, was affected by as much as half in some areas. However, with the situation improving steadily and the Union Budget coming up, the industry is optimistic about the year ahead. What Arun Jaitley announces on February 1 will determine whether the industry's optimism is warranted.

According to A Sakthivel, Chairman, Federation of Indian Export Organisations and textile industry veteran, the industry does not expect too many sops from the Union Budget. "There was a big `6,006 crore special package that was announced for the textiles sector in June last year. So we do not expect any major sops from the budget. The two key demands from the industry, submitted to the government, concerns the Goods and Services Tax (GST)," he pointed out.

The industry is lobbying hard, say analysts, to get the government to exempt exporters from the tax. "Another issue is that we transport a lot of products right through production. Something goes for printing outside of the primary factory, then comes back. We want this movement of goods to be exempt from the tax as well," pointed out Sakthivel.

Others however, have more specific suggestions on what the government's, and the budget's, thrust should be on. V D Zope, Chairman of The Textile Association (India), stressed that more focus needs to be put on the garments segment in particular, to boost exports. "The thrust should be on garments and we should also push for more polyester cotton consumption," he said.

But more important is what Jaitley is expected to give to exporters. According to Vope, it is the export section of the industry that focus needs to be on. "We need to incentivise exports more. Our industry is primarily export driven and not on domestic consumption. We already have enough inventories here," he said.

Manickam Ramaswamy, chairman and managing director of Loyal Textiles, also pointed out that the sector needs the government to even out the playing field as far as exporters are concerned. "This is not something that the Budget can address. But it is a pressing issue.

The Indian textile industry is burdened by customs duties we have to pay while exporting to most European markets. But our competitors, from everywhere in South and South East Asia, have negotiated for and got zero duty. The Commerce Ministry needs to address this issue. One or two sops from the budget will not help," he pointed out.

The FIEO, which has a significant percentage of textile industry representatives, has also submitted a wish list to the government that includes a demand to increase the limit under Credit Linked Capital Subsidy Scheme (CLCSS). “CLCSS has helped the small scale sector to modernize and expand their production. The CLCSS limit was fixed at `1 Cr about a decade back and therefore, the limit under CLCSS may be enhanced from `1 crore to `5 crore,” suggested the organisation.

The increase in the CLCSS limit would have a direct, positive impact on the sector, according to experts, since many textile units are small firms who are already beneficiaries. FIEO has also pointed out that countries across the world are supporting aggressive marketing to get limited orders available globally with the slowdown in global trade.

“The Government,” said the body, “should create an Export Development Fund for aggressive marketing particularly for MSME by providing a corpus of about 0.5 per cent of previous year exports as the present support through marketing scheme is inadequate.”

Aadhaar now must for pension scheme

The Hindu January 7, 2017

The subsidy, equivalent to 1.16% of the employee’s salary up to Rs. 6,500, paid by the Centre towards EPS, will no longer be credited until the Aadhaar number is shared with the authorities. At present, the minimum pension under EPS is Rs. 1,000 per month and an employee can receive pension only after a minimum 10 years of service.

According to the notification, until a subscriber is enrolled for Aadhaar, the government will provide a pension subsidy under the scheme only after certain documents are produced, including an ID certificate issued by the employer and a copy of the request made for Aadhaar enrolment.



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[HTTP://WWW.THEHINDU.COM/TODAYS-PAPER/TP-NATIONAL/AADHAAR-NOW-MUST-FOR-PENSION-SCHEME/ARTICLE17002144.ECE](http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/TP-NATIONAL/AADHAAR-NOW-MUST-FOR-PENSION-SCHEME/ARTICLE17002144.ECE)

These documents will have to be submitted to the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) along with either of the following documents: voter ID card, passport, PAN card, driver's licence, or a certificate of identity approved by a gazetted officer.

Employees are automatically enrolled under EPS if they are members of the Employees' Provident Fund scheme.

"Too short a notice": "Not all workers have an Aadhaar number. We are not against the move to link disbursement of subsidy amount with the Aadhaar number, but the government has given a very short notice to get enrolled under Aadhaar," All India Trade Union Congress Secretary D.L. Sachdev said.

SPECIAL CAMP FOR SMART CARD TO THE PF PENSIONERS Dinakaran January 7, 2017

Tirupur: A special camp was arranged and conducted for the provisions of smart cards to the PF offices in Gandhi Nagar, Tirupur.

Related to this, Eswaramoorthy, the District General Secretary of CITU Textile Workers Union released a circular in accordance with the following:

"Those who have retained their service in the private textile mills within Tirupur district can participate in the camp and obtain the smart card by registering their names. The camp will continue until January 14th and the pensioners are asked to bring their Adhaar card, bank pass book, PF certificate and their cell phones."

All the details will be verified thereon and then the smart card number will be registered in the cell phone. Those who have registered their names in the camp will be provided the smart card later. Hence, the PF pensioners are asked to make use of this opportunity.

STEPS BEING TAKEN AGAINST THE COMPANIES THAT FAIL TO ENROL THEIR LABOURERS IN THE PROVIDENT FUND SCHEME- WARNING BY THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF COIMBATORE ZONE

Daily Thanthi January 12, 2017

Tirupur: Kalilur Rahman, the Deputy Commissioner of Coimbatore zone has warned companies which fail to enrol the names of their labourers in the Provident Fund Scheme.

A seminar was conducted yesterday regarding the registration of the names under the Provident Fund Scheme in the office of SIMA located near the railway station of Tirupur.

Easwaran, the President of SIMA, presided over the seminar and inaugurated it. Kalilur Rahman, the Kovai Zonal Deputy Commissioner of the Provident Fund, participated in the seminar and delivered his speech on the same subject.

He said that: "The awareness of the Provident Fund Scheme is being created among the labourers in Tirupur. A certain number of labourers have become aware of the Provident Fund Scheme. However, there are companies which do not deduct a certain amount of money from their salary. Therefore, the subscription for the Provident Fund Scheme for a labourer must be deducted... As per the rule, a company with 20 labourers must deduct an amount of rupees from the salary of a labourer. But, there are many companies that do not follow the rules as prescribed."

So, the companies that do not register the names of labourers are asked to make necessary arrangements to enrol the same. To such companies, the last date for the registration of the names of labourers is March 31.

Surprise visits of inspection will be practiced from the month of April. Necessary action will be taken against those companies that fail to abide by the rules relating to the Provident Fund Scheme.

An integrated number will be given to each labourer as to enable him to know the details of his Provident Fund. By making use of it, a labourer can get the details of his Provident Fund from the website. Again, necessary arrangements will be made as to enable the labourer to make use of his Provident Fund.

More firms come under ESIC scheme The Hindu January 13, 2017



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<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-Tamil Nadu/More-firms-come-under-ESIC-scheme/article17032007.ece>

Chennai: Around 1,425 commercial establishments have registered afresh and over one lakh employees have been covered so far in the southern region under the Centre's three-month amnesty scheme for registering under the Employee State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), a top official said.

The Centre had launched two amnesty schemes: one for ESIC and the other under the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO). The purpose was to enable firms that have not registered under the schemes to come on board.

The ESIC scheme was opened on December 20, 2016 and will close in March 2017, while the EPFO scheme was opened on January 1, 2017 and will close in March 2017.

Speaking to reporters in Chennai, M. Sathiyavathy, Secretary, Union Ministry of Labour and Employment, said that under the ESIC scheme, firms would be considered as registered on the date they register or as declared by them and previous dues would not be sought after.

New hospitals

Interacting with reporters, the Union Labour Minister Bandaru Dattatreya said that under the ESIC, new 100 bed hospitals have been planned at Tirupur, Kanniyakumari, Sriperumbudur and Tuticorin.



THE CUT OFF A HAND IN THE CRUSH OF MACHINE

Dinakaran January 2, 2017

Vellakovil: There is a private spinning mill in Thottipalayam next to Vellakovil Muthur where Baskar aged 36 years from the state of Odisha is working.

It was on the day before yesterday, he was engaged in putting the cotton into the machine. On the eve of it, his hand was clutched in the spinning and so his hand was cut off by accident.

A complaint was made in the Vellakovi Police Station. The police personnel filed against a complaint against the proprietor, manager and the supervisor and thus the inquires are carrying on.



Spinning Mill

The warp and weft of exploitation **The Hindu January 8, 2016**

Women lured by the Sumangali Scheme to work in textile mills are overworked, underpaid and even sexually abused.

18-year-old Kala* has been working in a textile mill in Dindigul for the past three years. She leaves home around 6.30 a.m. every day, travels 45 minutes to the mill, starts working at 8 a.m., and is at it for the next eight hours. Many days, she ends up working another shift or at least a few hours of the next shift. Though the mill provides breakfast and lunch, the quality of the food is so bad that she prefers to skip meals.

Despite working long hours, Kala takes home a measly monthly wage of Rs3,000 /Rs3,500, after deductions. She is but one among a battery of women who are overworked, underpaid, and often abused in the spinning/textile mills of the State. Over 2,000 such mills in Tamil Nadu provide employment to nearly three lakh workers and almost half of them are women. The employment of women has grown by leaps and bounds in the last two decades. Ambitious schemes to draw them into the mills were hatched, all of them hinging more on promise than the actual payout.



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<http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/The-warp-and-weft-of-exploitation/article17006656.ece>

The more prominent among the carrots the mill owners dangled was the 'Sumangali Scheme'. It promised a lump sum payout which would enable the young woman to get married (hence, the term Sumangali). It had the following components: if workers were to be with a unit for three years or so, they would be paid in bulk (from Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 40,000) when they left. In addition, they would get about Rs1,000 for their monthly expenses while employed, and food and accommodation would be provided by the mill. Multiple variations of this scheme exist, but the basic lure is the lump sum payout. Another constant, if you go by the women workers, is exploitation.

Sujata Mody, President of the Garment and Fashion Workers Union, says one reason for the emergence and popularity of the Sumangali Scheme was the weakening of unions in the textile industry in the 1990s.

P. Latha*, who also works at a mill in Dindigul district, recollects an incident she witnessed a year and a half ago, when she was working in another mill, a sight she will never forget. She says she saw a girl throw herself off the roof of the mess hall after one of the supervisors allegedly pulled her skirt down in front of the others. "About 30 of us saw this, but we were scared. Since the police did not file a case due to the management's pressure, we did not think there was anything we could do."

The recently-released Fabric of Slavery report of the India Committee of Netherlands (ICN) gives expression to the exploitation through facts and percentages. The report, based on a study in 743 spinning mills in Dindigul, Tirupur, Namakkal and Erode districts, says: "Young women workers face intimidation, sexually coloured remarks and harassment, which they can hardly escape." The study was conducted between July and December 2015. Eight researchers and 40 volunteers interviewed 2,286 workers from these mills and held focus group discussions.

Many of these mills, the report points out, do not comply with Indian labour laws and international standards on forced labour, working hours, wages and social security. Only 39 of the researched mills paid the legal minimum wages. 91% of the mills covered in the study have some form of forced labour, with camp labour or a Sumangali Scheme. More than half the mills studied do not allow workers to leave the hostel after working hours.

In 351 mills, the Sumangali Scheme is still in vogue, and in 392 mills, freedom of movement is restricted. Further, a standard working week exceeds 48 hours in 706 mills and in 367 of these, a standard working week exceeds 60 hours. In group discussions, the researchers found that verbal harassment and intimidation happens at all the mills.

More than 100 km away, in Namakkal district, Priya* (23) from Paramathi Velur, has been employed with a mid-sized textile mill near Namakkal town for the past two years. Prior to this, she was with a mill in Erode that offered accommodation on campus. However, she quit her job soon as she was asked to do overtime regularly, was verbally abused by her seniors at work, and was paid very little. At the current place, she feels she is getting a better deal.

Official word

The last official word from the government related to the employment of young women in textile mills was in August 2015 when opposition parties raised the issue in the Assembly and Textiles Minister O.S. Manian denied that there was any exploitation of workers.

Official sources acknowledge there are issues at spinning mills that need to be addressed, including employment of adolescent girls (aged between 15 and 18), overtime work and non-payment of minimum wages. Under the Factories Act, children above 15 years can be employed with certain conditions. But, according to ILO norms, only those aged above 18 can be employed and this needs to be addressed. Similarly, working hours stretch up to 10 hours in many units. Casual workers should be paid wages on a par with apprentice workers, say sources.

However, the Sumangali Scheme is not among the problems that officials count in the mills. They claim the scheme as such does not exist now, though there are schemes with other names, especially at mills in rural areas and small-scale mills. Many units are providing hostels outside the mill premises.

Government sources seeking anonymity express their unhappiness over the fact that mill managements do not allow even Revenue Divisional Officers (RDOs) and Labour Department officials to visit their campuses, saying only officials of the Industries Department have the powers to enter the factory premises. "If the mill management is transparent, why should they resist visits by even District Collectors? Why can't they install CCTV cameras in the campus so that allegations of sexual assault and other issues can be monitored?" one officer asks.

Mill owners have exploited the legal loopholes to avoid prosecution. For instance, many cases couldn't be tried under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976, as it applies only to cases in which an advance amount is received by workers. The Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service (Tamil Nadu) Rules, 1983, can't be applied in many cases, as owners claim it can be applied only in cases where a middle-man was employed to recruit workers. Likewise, certain provisions of the Apprentices Act, 1961, and Minimum Wages Act, 1948, are circumvented by not recording workers as apprentices and by not maintaining a roster of workers.

Root causes

A glaring lack of political will to tackle the menace is another major reason for the prevalence of the system, says S. Selva Gomathi, Deputy Director of SOCO Trust, a Madurai-based NGO. In many cases, the mill owners get the support of senior Ministers and MLAs from the area, she charges. "But the root causes, including poverty and social security, should be addressed. Most of these girls go to the mills despite knowing the truth about them because their fathers are alcoholics, mothers are unwell and they have to shoulder the family burden," she says.

According to S. James Victor of Serene Secular Social Services, an NGO working for women in textile mills, monsoon failure has crippled agriculture in most areas, and those otherwise employed on the fields have begun to look elsewhere for jobs. Families with three or four children send the girls to work after they complete Class VIII or X.

Though most of the women are not part of trade unions, M. Arumugam of AITUC says the body has started issuing notices to mills saying all workers should be made permanent, and accommodation should not be provided on the campus for young women.

Despite these issues, some workers seem to be happy at some of the mills. Devi from Tirupur completed Class X a year ago and has been working at a mill in Namakkal for the last eight months. "I lost my father. My mother works at a textile unit in Tirupur. My sister and I need to work to support our family. We do not want to work at a textile unit in Tirupur as we need a safe place to stay even when our mother comes late. My uncle lives nearby and suggested this mill and both of us joined here," she says.

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According to a Compliance and Status report filed by the State government in November last with the Madras High Court, the government will continue to review the work of field officials to ensure effective enforcement, and strive to ensure better work environs for women in spinning mills/textile industry through the continuance of district-level monitoring committees as per the orders of the court.

The owners of textile mills point out that the employment system has changed a lot in the last few years. In addition to women workers, many mills now employ day labourers, who travel to the mill every day and also migrant workers. The number of migrant workers (from States such as West Bengal and Odisha) is on the rise. In clusters such as Salem, most mills do not have the hostel system.

"The industrial associations also urge the member mills not to employ women in the adolescent age group. With buyers insisting on social norms and to sustain business, the employment system will change further in the coming years," says the spokesperson of one of the associations.

Further, the Central government has instructed all units to pay wages, even to migrant workers, through bank accounts, and this has left the mills with no option but to employ only those who are aged above 18 as only then can individual accounts be opened for each worker (and not a joint account with a family member). Some medium-scale mills have even installed complaint boxes at hostels and seem interested in redressing grievances

At the hostels, the facilities provided to workers include opportunities to continue higher studies, vocational training and healthcare. Some of the large-scale mills that have integrated facilities and supply to international brands have ensured several amenities for women workers and these are expected to motivate other mills to do the same, the sources say.

If only the other mills are inspired.



ABOUT NINETY CRORES OF RUPEE WILL BE GIVEN TO FOUND THE EFFLUENT WATER TREATMENT UNITS IN TIRUPUR – ASSURANCE BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER K.C.KARUPPANNAN

Daily Thanthi January 4, 2017

Tirupur: Honourable Minister K.C. Karuppannan has made an assurance that the provision of an amount of 90 crores will be given to the Public Effluent Water Treatment Units.

On behalf of the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board, a meeting was held yesterday in a private hotel for the purpose of consultation with the dyeing factory owners and officials of Pollution Control Board. S. Jeyanthi, the district collector presided over the event. Adhulya Mishore, the chief secretary of Tamil Nadu Environment and also the president of Pollution Control Board and Sundara Gopal, the secretary of members participated in the event.

The Minister of Tamil Nadu's government on issues relating to the environment, Honourable K.C. Karuppannan participated in the event and listened to grievances of the dyeing and bleaching factory owners.

The owners of dyeing and bleaching units demanded the Minister to prevent the practice of taking the cloths to the neighbouring states for the dyeing processes in the illegal units. Also, they requested the Minister to arrange to supply the power to the public effluent water treatment units at the cost of Rs. 2 per unit subsidy.

We will consider the issues of the power supply at cost with the subsidy and take necessary action against the practice of taking cloths to the illegal dyeing units in the neighbouring states. Making wealth by hard work is not important. The environment of ours must be preserved in such a way the succeeding generation of ours can live in safety. Regarding Tirupur, about 90% of the dyeing factories are legal. The remaining 10% of dyeing factories illegally functioning must be identified and reported to the Pollution Control Board. Necessary steps will be taken against those involved in the illegal practice of dyeing processes. The public dyeing units will function with the legal methods.

The balance amount of Rs. 90 crore in the allotted amount of Rs. 200 crore will be given to the public effluent water treatment factories at the earliest. Again the steps are being taken to remedy the issue of sewage being let out from the dyeing units to supply to the garments factories. Moreover, the salt content being collected from the public effluent water treatment units will be sent to a dump in a place in Bangalore, Karnataka state. To do the same you will have to pay an amount of Rs. 2,000 for each tonne as a fare charge. Furthermore, the scheme of displaying the salt in the sea-water will also be implemented very soon.”

While speaking in the event Adhulya Mishore, the Chief Secretary of Environment and Forest proudly expressed his wishes by mentioning the storage of 10 crores litres of water from the public effluent water treatment units in the past five years.



WOMAN WORKERS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO STAY WITHIN THE PERMISES OF THE TEXTILE MILLS – AITUC MAKES DEMAND TO THE CHIEF MINISTER

Dinakaran January 12, 2017

Kovai: The AITUC has sent a petition to the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu demanding the prevention of female workers being employed within the premises of textile mills after their shift-work.

Related to this, Arumugam, the General Secretary of Kovai District textile mills under AITUC and also the former MLA of Tamil Nadu state has sent a petition to the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. There are 650 mills of small, middle and private textile mills including five nationalised textile mills in the Coimbatore district. The administrators of private mills appoint agents to collect the workers from the southern district and other states and appoint them as workers in their textile mills.

Again, they compel the women workers to stay within the premises of the textile mills and employ them with the no provision of safety measures for their health conditions or suitable residential accommodation.

Because of poverty, the said agents bring the workers below the age of 18 years to the textile mills for employment purposes. There is no secured measure for the workers coming from the other states. Furthermore, these workers are physically and mentally affected by the stringent restrictions imposed on them by the supervisors within the premises of textile mills. Since the female workers are in no way compelled to do work beyond the eight hour work day, it is requested that the Chief Minister issues an order that no female workers should be exploited. The mills that do not follow the rules and regulations on the labour welfare must be inspected and those who fail to do so must be legally punished.

THE LOSS IN THE IMPORTANCE OF WORKERS WELFARE-THE TRADE UNIONISTS OF GARMENTS INDUSTRIES WORRY

Daily Thanthi January 25, 2017

Tirupur: About 60% of garment workers come from the northern states. It is considered that without the presence of the northern state labourers, there would be no garments industry in Tirupur. Moreover, more and more labourers from the northern states are coming to Tirupur in search of employment. The trade unionists were complaining that the garment industrialists are not providing them with sufficient residential facilities and the other essential requirements.

Again, the trade union of garments industry lobbies for changes that would reduce the suffering of working that the government as well as the industry itself does not take.

Related to this, the trade unionists said: “The demands of providing residential apartments and special hospitals for female workers were already submitted to the government as well as the industrialists’ association. Many important demands placed before them still remain unimplemented. The progress in development is decreased. Regarding this, we have placed demands on the district administration now and then but no response has ever been made. So by taking into the consideration the workers’ welfare and the coming of new workers from Odisha, necessary action will be taken to promote the garments industry.”

Business success story

BY WORKING HARD ANYONE CAN BECOME A “KING” SUCCESS STORY BY VIKING EASWARAN

Dinamalar, January 8, 2017

Tirupur:

The success of Viking is one such example, whenever one speaks about innerwear garments, the name of Viking will be the first along with the name of Easwaran who is Viking’s President. This reputation is not gained by mere accident. The success and achievement of Viking is result of an endless effort through hard work.

Viking was started in 1964 as a small unit called Anand Hosieries. ‘Anand’ began to manufacture and market the innerwear and ‘jutti’ required for the market.

Each kind of product requires a specific quality. The materials such as cotton and yarn suitable for the manufacturing process were thoroughly scrutinised. As a result, the innerwear with the brand name of ‘Anand’ became popularly known for its high quality.

Another brand called Viking Textiles was started in the year 1974. Again, the company began to develop by establishing the windmill power station, textile mills, knitting, dyeing and tailoring units step by step. As a result, the specific reputation of the brand was gained in the local market. At present, Easwaran has been the President of SIMA – the mother association of all the other associations.

Relating to the industry, experiences progress and SIMA, Easwaran expressed his views: “Our family background was agriculture-oriented and so it is undoubtedly known that we were suffering from endless poverty. I could not complete even the first standard. In 1954, I started work as an assistant to a tailor in a company in Tirupur. I used to come to work by foot from Anaiputhur.

After three months, my parents purchased an old bicycle for me. I saved my earnings little by little. By making use of my savings I started my company Anand Hosieries in 1964. Honesty, faithfulness and quality are the main policies of mine. Personally, I saw the development of my company within two years. We manufactured quality innerwear and marketed them.

Because of my illiteracy, the trouble started in the marketing methods. I appointed a known person as a manager, but he cheated me and ran away. Somehow, I recovered myself. I went to many places in the states of Andhra and Kerala, met many persons and got orders by canvassing.

The quality as well as the reasonable prices of our products earned a good reputation among the people. When I went to an area the sellers compelled me to supply my products only to them. To avoid this and manage the business we had introduced a new brand in 1974 called Viking. Both the brands were successfully marketed in our country. Moreover, about 3,000 persons have been employed in our company.

The cotton we procure will be sent out as a garment. Not only do we manufacture the innerwear but also the garments suitable for men, women and children. The demand for our product in the local markets has increased. The difference between the production and the market demand is 25 percent. Our basic aim is to overcome the market demand for our products. To achieve this purpose we have planned to improve the knitting department.

Under the circumstances, we have founded the separate job work units infrastructure for our workers and arrange to get the finished products from them in order to maintain the quality.

Our focus is primarily on the domestic market. If we would concentrate on the export business we have to lose the local market for our products. Taking into the consideration of all these aspects, we concentrate only on the local market production.

At present, there is a heavy competition in the local market also. The requirements for our production are still high. Our company does not fix any target to attain. We like to maintain the regular production throughout the year.

The younger generations have also come to the garment industry. Though they have been educated in the foreign countries they are willing to concentrate on the local markets. The youths of our time are well educated but they lack in the industrial knowledge as well as the experiences. A lot of opportunities are available in the garment industry. Making a labourer an owner of an industry is the specific nature of Tirupur. For this achievement I am proof.

We have developed the garment industry to remarkable achievements with no infrastructure, distance communication, bank loan facilities, and advice of the government. A lot of opportunities are seen and the well-educated youths can become great through their own efforts.

A person can live even without food for a period but cannot live without clothing. Taking into consideration all these aspects, the central government must give exemption of GST to garments. The life standard of the downtrodden people will be improved. Even the foreign countries will appreciate our government.”



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