



NEWSLETTER

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Toward the Elimination of Child Labor in India - School Project Begins -

India has more child laborers than any other country in the world, with estimates reaching more than 100 million. Many children cannot go to school and are forced to work under poor working conditions. Some ingredients in causing child labour are poverty and conventions.

Of course, trade unions in India have been working energetic efforts to deal with this problem. For example, they have carried out a campaign to raise awareness on child labor and conducted a survey to reveal the reality of child labor in the cooperation with the ILO. JILAF has also cooperated in activities to eliminate child labor through a joint project with the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC). Specifically, in response to a proposal by INTUC, JILAF launched an informal school project against child labor in Markapur, Andhra Pradesh.

If you travel north about 300 km along the shore from Chennai in South India, and then take a two-hour drive into the upcountry, and you will reach a small town called Markapur. It is located in a rural area, and the countryside is covered with tobacco and cotton fields, as well as a quarry. At the quarry, many children work under very low wages on a piecework basis. They do work such as carrying the quarried stone and cutting it into small pieces. The quarry site is a steep cliff, and is a very dangerous place to work. Lung and bronchial diseases are also common, due to dust and other causes. Many other children are engaged in domestic labor or rag picking because their families live in poverty. They do not attend school and are, in fact, given no opportunities at all for education.

Under these circumstances, to begin by giving children educational opportunities, JILAF school was opened in Markapur in September 2004. This school aims to provide primary-level education under a three-year curriculum. It is also intended to get



children away from child labor by giving them the opportunity to receive basic education. The school, which is managed by a trade union, has adopted a unique curriculum that makes it possible for children to gain broad knowledge of social problems and children's own rights. The first group of enrollees consists of 82 boys and girls aged 7 to 10. When we visited the school to see its activities, the children seemed to be enjoying studying immensely. Classes begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 4:00 p.m. Meals are provided during a lunch break.

JILAF's school project is very small in scale, so obviously it cannot make a major contribution to the elimination of child labor. We believe, however, that grassroots projects are important. We hope the project will not only continue to provide educational opportunities to even a small number of children, but that it will also have spillover effects on the community. In fact, the local trade union played a significant role in opening the school. It had repeatedly called quarry workers together and held

meetings to raise awareness of child labor. Since the school opened, members of the local trade union have also made visits to pupils' homes and stressed the importance of education. These efforts are expected to help change the thinking of community residents about child labor, as well as the government's attitude. Fortunately, both the local trade union and INTUC President Sanjeeva Reddy are actively involved in the project. In close cooperation with INTUC, JILAF will continue to strive for its further development.

In closing, we would like to express our appreciation to all of the organizations for their cooperation and understanding of the project. We would like to give particular thanks to the Confederation of Japan Automobile Workers' Unions, the Toyota Motor Workers' Union and the Tokyo Electric Power Workers Union, which provided financial assistance for the activities in 2004.

Women's Unionists Training Team Visits Japan

Carries Out Exchanges with Japanese Female Union Leaders

JILAF invited a Women's Unionists Training Team to Japan from October 21 to November 3, 2004. Unlike other Invitation Program teams, this team is comprised of only women. The team this year consisted of eight persons: two each from China, South Korea and India, and one each from Malaysia and Sri Lanka. The Women's Training Team visits Japan every year, in time to attend the RENGO Central Women's Rally. Again in October 26, 2004, the Women's Team participated in the RENGO Central Women's Rally, held at the "Tokyo Big Sight" Tokyo International Exhibition Center. At a workshop under the theme of "A role of women in Economic Globalization: Exchanges of Activities for Decent Work," the participants made presentation on efforts of trade unions to gain decent work in their respective countries, and then exchanged views with their Japanese counterparts. The team members seemed to be greatly stimulated by the lively discussion among Japanese female union leaders and their positive attitudes.

The other programs were the same as those for regular teams. The participants attended lectures on labor-related issues given at the JILAF office, and visited the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, RENGO Headquarters and Local RENGO (Kyoto). The team members listened attentively to information on the childcare system, RENGO's efforts to expand women's participation, and the problem of sexual harassment, and exchanged information.

We very much hope that the participants will carry out their



Participants give presentations at a workshop at the RENGO Central Women's Rally

determination to promote the trade union movement, which was renewed through their exchanges with Japanese female union leaders, make use of the valuable experiences they got through the program in Japan, and act as female union leaders for women in their own countries.

POSITIVE Launched in Vietnam

50 Trainers Complete Program in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh

JILAF began the full-fledged implementation of the POSITIVE (Participation-Oriented Safety Improvements by Trade Union InitiateVE) program in Vietnam with Vietnam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL). Vietnam is the eighth country to introduce this program. It has been adopted in seven other Asian countries, including Pakistan.

Since the adoption of the Doi Moi policy in 1986, Vietnam has shifted its focus to a market-oriented economy and experienced high growth. On the other hand, however, it has seen an increasing number of industrial accidents and deaths resulting from them. The adoption of POSITIVE aims to raise workers' awareness, reduce risk factors and improve workplace conditions.



A seminar in Hanoi

To develop core trainers, JILAF held an introduction seminar in Ho Chi Minh from November 1-4, 2004, and in Hanoi from November 8-11. Fifty persons in charge of occupational health and safety from various private companies attended the seminar. It was largely based on the regular program, but some games were also incorporated into it. The checklist exercise was conducted at a measuring instrument plant and an electric fan manufacturing plant; "good examples" and "cases to be improved" were collected. Based on these examples, the participants proactively held group discussions and presentations and were able to learn how to make improvements at low cost. On the final day of the seminar, they gave many suggestions about "good points" and "improvements" to the employers they visited. The employers commented that they would like to make use of these suggestions for future health and safety activities. Moreover, the participants drew up an action plan and presented activities they would promote themselves in their workplaces. At the closing ceremony, Mr. Do Minh Nghia, head of the VGCL's Occupational Safety and Health Department, expressed high praise for the POSITIVE program, saying, "There will be more and more industrial accidents. A participatory seminar is better suited for Vietnamese culture. We would like to learn more from Japanese experiences."

This seminar was able to produce satisfactory results thanks to the cooperation of many parties. Working with the VGCL Departments of Occupational Safety and Health and International Affairs, we would like to follow up activities of the newly born 50 POSITIVE trainers and further develop the program, for instance, by making effective use of the overhead projector supplied for it.

The International Trade Union Movement Is on the Side of Developing Countries

In June 2004 I was invited to be a panelist at a conference organized by the German Ministry of Economy and Labor. The theme was "Policies for Growth and Employment." There, I argued that "stable and high-quality employment is not a by-product of growth but should be the core of all public policies. A steady increase in real wages is an essential factor for growth." In opposition to this, an official of the German employers' federation offered the typical corporate logic of profit orientation, stating, "In order to lower education and training costs and social security expenses, the government should make the labor market more flexible. It is only with the growth of enterprises that we will be able to create employment and improve working conditions." I didn't have to argue back against him, as the governments of developing countries offered vehement protests.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the governments of developing countries tried to forge a path for survival in the global market by capitalizing on cheap labor and low social standards. They began to realize, though, around the time of the 1997 financial crisis in Asia, that this approach might be wrong: Only advanced nations and big corporations reap the benefits of globalization. The only way to truly benefit from globalization is by building mechanism through which trade and investment can really create employment and improve wages and other working conditions.

One of the resolutions adopted at the ICFTU World Congress,

PROFILE



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"Globalization, Decent Work and Sustainable Development," proposes building links with the governments of developing countries (G20), which oppose the formulation of trade rules that are advantageous to advanced nations, in order to strengthen the social dimension of trade rules, such as employment and basic labor rights. What is important for realizing this is that trade unions in developing countries gain greater ability to participate in policy decision making both domestically and internationally. I hope that JILAF will take further actions in this area.

9th JILAF Training Program for Young Japanese Trade Union Leaders Begins

Ten Trainees Complete the 8th Program

This program aims to nurture young Japanese trade union leaders who can play an active role in the international labor arena in the future. To this end, the program is designed to help trainees improve their English proficiency, which is a basic skill for international activity, receive practical training on field projects, and acquire knowledge about the national and international trade union movement. The one-year course includes English-language training through special materials developed for the program, labor-related lectures, and visits to global union federations (GUFs).

The opening ceremony for the 9th Program was held on November 8. The seven trainees were Yasuko Tani and Toshiyuki Wakatsuki from RENGO; Makiko Hasumi from the All-Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers Union; Mika Fukushima from the All Japan Postal Labour Union; Hiroaki Matsuo from RENGO-RIALS; and two JILAF staff members: Miki Hatsuzawa (seconded from the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training) and Toshihiro Motobayashi (from JOHO-ROREN). So far, a total of 70 trainees have completed the program. Many of them are now actively working in places such as the ICFTU, GUFs, and Japanese embassies abroad. The graduation ceremony for the 8th Program was held in October 2004 for the ten trainees who completed the program.

During the training period of about one year, it is important for participants not only to attend training but also to have sufficient time for learning on one's own. Therefore, the understanding and support of organizations that send trainees are critical. We hope RENGO and GUFs will continue to cooperate with this program.



Displaying an Introduction to JILAF at the ICFTU World Congress

The 18th ICFTU World Congress was held in Miyazaki, Japan, from December 5-10, 2004. Approximately 800 foreign and 600 Japanese trade union leaders from 233 affiliated organizations in 152 countries attended the Congress, the first to be held in Asia. The Congress issued resolutions on the future direction of the international trade union movement, including the unification of the ICFTU and the World Confederation of Labour (WCL), and the goals of the movement, and was closed successfully.

JILAF set up an exhibition booth in a corner of the conference venue with the intention of introducing JILAF and responding to inquiries about trade unions in various parts of the world. Within the booth, a world map showing countries where JILAF has carried

out support activities was hung on the wall, photographs showing the Invitation Programs and the Field Projects were exhibited, and brochures introducing JILAF in more than ten languages, including English and French, were distributed.

Among the visitors were people who had been invited to Japan by JILAF, or who had some relationship with participants in the Invitation Programs. Many others visited from organizations that had not yet been invited to Japan by JILAF, and asked JILAF to give them the chance to participate in the Program sometime in the future.

Participants from nearly all organizations with which JILAF had undertaken Field Projects visited the booth, and had the opportunity to consult with JILAF staff members on plans for FY2005 and other matters.

The first issue of the Daily Bulletin, a public relations newsletter for the 18th Congress edited by the ICFTU Secretariat, carried an article giving an outline of JILAF and introducing the exhibited photos.

Most of the organizations that participated in the Congress visited the JILAF booth. JILAF had an unparalleled opportunity to introduce itself to trade unions throughout the world.



Mongolian Minister of Social Welfare and Labour and Others Visit JILAF

On December 17, 2004, Mongolian high officials visited JILAF. They included Minister of Social Welfare and Labour BAYAR-SAIKHAN, BATJARGAL, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Japan, and Vice Director TSOGBTBAATAR of the Labour and Welfare Service Agency, who were in Japan on at the invitation of Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Up to now, JILAF's Invitation Programs have brought more than 40 young Mongolian trade union leaders to Japan. In the Field Projects, JILAF has also held seminars on labor-management relations and POSITIVE. The Minister and other officials expressed their gratitude to JILAF and said the Mongolian government would like to

actively cooperate in its activities in close partnership with the Confederation of Mongolian Trade Unions (CMTU), the country's national center.

The minister showed special interest in the elimination of child labor. In Mongolia, children actually work in livestock farms and mines. In anticipation of a revision of labor-related legislation, the government is conducting a study from an international perspective. The government's four-year plan (2005-2008) includes "regular exchanges of views among government, labor and management." The role to be played by JILAF in Mongolia will surely increase in the future.

JILAF Calendar (December 2004 - February 2005)

1. Invitation Programs

- Asian Trade Unionist Training Team
December 4-11
- North American Team
January 18-27
- Russian and NIS Team
January 27-February 9
- South American Team
February 9-22

2. Field Projects

- Nepal NTUC POSITIVE Seminar and school monitoring
December 15-24, 2004; Kathmandu, Morang, Sunsari
- Indonesia ITUC Seminar on Trade Union Organization
December 19-24, 2004; Jakarta, Bogor
- Mongol CMTU National Conference

on POSITIVE

- December 22-26, 2004; Ulaanbaatar
- China ACFTU POSITIVE Follow-Up Conference
January 15-22, 2005; Kinhwa City, Chekiang Province
- India INTUC Monitoring of the School Project
January 29-February 1, 2005; Markapur, Kathmandu
- Zambia ZCTU National Seminar on HIV/AIDS
February 4-18, 2005; Lusaka
- Thailand TWFT/TWARO Workshops
Pakistan APFTU/APFOL POSITIVE Seminar
Thai UNI-TLC/UNI-LCJ Workshops
January 21-February 8, 2005 Bangkok, Lahore, Islamabad, Ayutthaya

3. Others

- 2nd Study Meeting on International Labor Issues "Economic Globalization and Various Issues Faced by the International Trade Union Movement"
December 21, 2004; at JILAF Conference room
- Commissioned Study on Industrial and Employment Problems "Employment Management in Information and Service Industries"
January 4-13, 2005; Aix-en-Provence, France
- International Forum "Challenges to the North American Trade Union Movement"
January 21, 2005; Sohyo Kaikan Hall, Tokyo