



NEWSLETTER

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JILAF Campaign to End Child Labour

World Day Against Child Labour

June 12 is designated "World Day Against Child Labour" by the International Labour Organization (ILO), and every year on this day many people around the world take part in various events in an effort to help eradicate this serious problem.

According to the ILO's report, "The End of Child Labour: Within Reach," published in May of this year, there were, in 2004, an estimated 218 million child labourers aged between 5 and 17 worldwide - one out of every seven children in this age group. Compared with the year 2000, when this ratio stood at one in six, the total had fallen by 28 million (11%). The report identifies the headway made by Latin American countries to eliminate child labour as one of the most important reasons for this impressive decline. In Brazil, especially, the creation of the National Forum for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labour, a four-party forum, proved instrumental in establishing the new Constitution, which makes primary education compulsory and has radically improved the school enrolment rate. The trade unions of Brazil also played an important role in reducing child labour by sponsoring a series of seminars, campaigns, and consciousness-raising programs to encourage their members and society to address this issue.

The ILO report points out, however, that in areas outside Latin America, efforts to end child labour have produced only limited results, and there are many regions of the world where child labour remains prevalent. Still, in light of the encouraging results attained thus far, the report states that, if the ongoing rate of reduction of child labour is sustained, we can expect to eliminate the "worst forms of child labour" in the next ten years. The report concludes with a call for stepped up efforts to trans-

form this possibility into reality.

7-Member South Asia Team Joins the "World Day Against Child Labour" Activities

Seven unionists of the South Asia Team were invited to Japan as part of JILAF's invitation program so that they could take



▲A Indian child labourer working in a quarry

part in events held on and around June 12, 2006, the "World Day Against Child Labour." On June 11, they attended a screening of the documentary film "Stolen Childhoods" (the Japanese title is "We Want to Learn, Too: Children and Workers Fighting against Poverty"). The film show was sponsored by the NGO-Trade Union Forum for International Collaboration on MDGs and the Child Labor Network in Japan (CL-Net). Afterwards, members of the audience took to the streets of downtown Tokyo for a "Walk Rally for World Day Against Child Labour." Although it was raining, all the participants called out to passers-by at the top of their lungs, "Give Education to Every Kid in the World!"

The South Asia Team also received lectures from staff members of the ILO Office in Japan as well as from representatives of Japanese unions active in the campaign to end child labour. This helped deepen their understanding of the issue worldwide and offered a glimpse into the efforts being made to deal with the problem.



▲Members of the JILAF South Asia Team take part in the "Walk Rally for World Day Against Child Labour, carrying their own hand-made placards and chanting "Give Education to Every Kid in the World!"

JILAF's School Projects

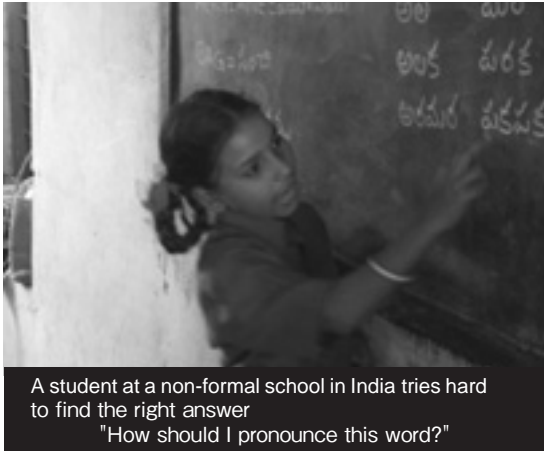
As one of its field projects, JILAF has been operating non-formal schools in Nepal and India in order to address the child labour issue. Many child labourers cannot attend school because of their poverty. Determined to offer some of these children a chance to receive a primary education, JILAF, in FY2006, in collaboration with local trade unions and the national centers of Nepal and India, is operating nine non-formal schools in Nepal (with a combined total of 450 pupils) and one in India (with an enrolment of 240). The

schools in Nepal have started to achieve impressive results. The graduates include young people who, after having transferred to public schools, have earned the School Leaving Certificate (comparable to the Japanese university entrance exam), and are now enrolled in colleges and universities. (*See a letter printed below from one such graduate.)

Solidarity with Trade Unions

So far, during FY2006, JILAF has taken part in events in Osaka on May 21 and in Yokohama on June 4 as part of the

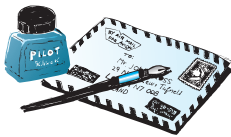
"Campaign to Eradicate Child Labour," which is sponsored by the All NTT Workers Union of Japan. We have also carried out public actions to tell as many people as possible both about the current situation concerning child labour, and about the efforts JILAF has been making to eliminate it. JILAF would like to continue to work in solidarity with various trade unions and international agencies to eliminate child labour through a wide range of activities and programs.



A student at a non-formal school in India tries hard to find the right answer
"How should I pronounce this word?"



▲Pupils in a classroom of the non-formal school in India raise their hands to answer a question posed by their teacher.



~I Owe What I am Today to
JILAF's Support.~



Ms. Santoshi Shrestha
1998 Enrolled in the NTUC/JILAF Bhaktapur School
1999 Graduated from the above school, and transferred to the fifth grade in a public school
2005 Admitted into the Padhama Kanya Women's Junior College in Kathmandu

A Letter from a Ms. Santoshi graduating from the NTUC/JILAF Bhaktapur School in Nepal

I was unable to go to school because my family was poor and I had to work. Whenever I saw children of my age going to school in the morning in their uniforms, I wondered secretly how happy I would be if I, too, could be a student like them. But I could never reveal my secret desire to anybody.

One day, the Director of the Bhaktapur Division of the Nepal Trade Union Congress (NTUC) visited the house where I was working as a live-in maid, and told my employer's family about the non-formal school due to be opened with JILAF's support. The Director tried to convince the family that they should allow me to study in the school. I will never forget how I felt at that moment. I felt as if God was finally granting me my wish. Impressed by the Division Director's enthusiasm, my employer's family agreed to allow me to attend the school.

I started commuting to school in high spirits. When I earned the best grades in my class, everybody in the family was delighted. Had it not been for JILAF's support, I would never have had the chance to receive an education. When I transferred from the NTUC/JILAF school to the regular public school, my employer, with his deep understanding of the importance of education, provided me with all the money I needed for the uniform and school supplies. When I earned the best grades in the fifth grade, too, I was surprised to see everyone around me so pleased with my achievement that it seemed as if it was their own. That experience kindled the desire in me to continue my education at higher levels. I passed the graduation examination at the tenth grade, and, the following year, upon passing the examination for the School Leaving Certificate (SLC), a requirement for admission into a college or university, I was admitted to the Padhama Kanya Women's Junior College in Kathmandu, where I am now a student.

There are many, many children in Nepal who are in much the same situation as I once was, and I strongly wish that all of them should have the chance to receive an education. Personally, I wish to pursue my education at still higher levels and land myself a job that will enable me to work in the service of many people.

「Weighing the Full Value of JILAF Invitation Programs」

In the year that I have spent at the RENGO Office in Europe, in Brussels, Belgium, I have had to attend a number of national trade union congresses on the continent. Unlike RENGO, which holds its congress every other year, many national trade union federations in Europe convene their congresses only once every four or five years. Many national congresses, therefore, tend to last a long time, with 100 or more foreign guests in attendance, including those representing union organizations in developing countries. It is a pleasant surprise to meet quite a few such unionists who, upon discovering that I am Rengo staff, joyfully recount the fine memories they have of their visits to Japan. Many of those who traveled to Japan did so as part of JILAF's invitation programs. It is easy to see from talking with them that their two-week stays in Japan have been among the most important experiences in their careers as union leaders.

Among the more than 1,900 foreign union leaders who have taken part in JILAF's invitation programs since they were launched in 1989, some have already started to climb to top leadership positions in their respective union organizations. There is no denying the importance that these and other participants in the programs attach to having had the chance to experience firsthand the labor movement in Japan, industrial relations, the social security system, and other facets of Japanese social life, and I think that this is bound to prove increasingly valuable not only for JILAF, but also for RENGO, as it will have to remain active in the international labour movement, which is bound to become more and more globalized.

I imagine that the invitation programs, with their emphasis on

PROFILE



Akiko Okubo

Representative, RENGO Office in Europe, Japanese Trade Union Confederation (JTUC-RENGO)

1995 Joined the staff of RENGO

1997-99 Worked at ICFTU-APRO

August 2005 Assigned to the present post

inviting union leaders primarily from developing countries, are beset with many difficulties, such as poor communications and the difficulties involved in obtaining visas for prospective invitees. Nevertheless, with the scheduled establishment of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) with its founding congress in November 2006, which will immediately follow the dissolution and merger of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the World Confederation of Labor (WCL), and which will draw in a number of new member organizations that have remained unaffiliated with either of the existing confederations, it seems very likely that JILAF's invitation programs will be expanded in the coming years. While I am well aware that political dynamics in and among union organizations can often prove very knotty, and are sometimes rather difficult to deal with, I sincerely hope that the invitation programs will continue to grow even richer in content and quality.

International Cooperation Efforts by Trade Unions – No.12

「International Activities to Promote Welfare」

Akira Yamaguchi

Senior Executive Director, Nissan Roren, LIC
Department (Social Welfare Department)

Since its establishment in 1955, the Federation of All Nissan and General Workers' Unions (Nissan Roren for short) has been engaged in mutual-aid and social service activities. With the establishment in 1976 of its Welfare Fund (financed by a donation of 100 yen a month from each member of the union), Nissan Roren dramatically stepped up its social service activities, expanding their scope to include the sponsoring of charity shows for children with disabilities, the offer of material help to welfare institutions, and extensive international cooperation, centered around the donation of "vehicles" to welfare institutions in Asia and other parts of the developing world.

Internationally, the Nissan Roren is now focusing on activities aimed specifically at promoting the welfare of persons with disabilities. For instance, through the mediation of "Wataboshi," a non-profit organization based in Japan ("wataboshi" means a "dandelion tuft" in Japanese), Nissan Roren paid part of the bill for the "Asia-Pacific

Wataboshi Music Festival" in Beijing in November 2005. The festival is devoted exclusively to the performance of songs based on poems or lyrics written by people with disabilities. Held once every two years in various parts of the Asia-Pacific area, the concert both enhances understanding about disabled people in Asia who suffer from the dual hardships of poverty and disabilities and expands networks of support on their behalf.

"Ever since we established our Welfare Fund," recounts Mr. Yamaguchi, "our activities have been guided by the idea that we must be ready to hold out a helping hand to people in need. There are limits to what a trade union can do in this regard, but we would like to tell as many disabled people abroad as possible that all of our union members care about them."



▲Asia Pacific Wataboshi Music Festival, 2005 (in Beijing)
Though often thrown into despair by the indifference of the general public, persons with disabilities, through this festival, were able to convey their message that "life is precious" and "all human beings are both fascinating and charming."

The Nissan Roren is losing members and may have to tailor its international cooperation activities to its shrinking financial resources, but it is determined to uphold the "spirit of mutual aid" which lies at the root of trade union activities. We very much hope that this spirit will reach many people around the world, and that Nissan Roren's international welfare activities will continue to thrive.

Economic Literacy Workshop Held in Pakistan

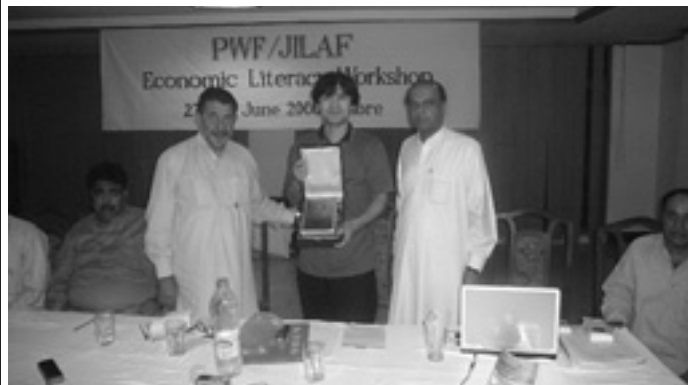
~Pakistan Workers' Federation (PWF)~

A three-day workshop for leaders of the Pakistan Workers' Federation (PWF) was held in Lahore, Pakistan, on June 27 - 29 as a JILAF field project, with Mr. Tomotaka Inoue participating as a group leader on behalf of JILAF.

PWF, the new national center of Pakistan, was founded in September 2005 through the merger of three national centers that used to be affiliated to ICFTU. In response to PWF's request for assistance in support of its efforts to train leaders as a prerequisite for solidifying the new national center's foundation, JILAF is financially supporting a total of seven workshops: five regional workshops for boosting the economic literacy of local union leaders, and two national workshops (one each on collective bargaining and industrial relations). The first regional workshop in June was attended by 20 unionists (including five women), one each from the twenty major unions in the central region. The workshop's program included lectures on the government's economic and financial policies by university professors, and presentations both on the role of trade unions and on the current situation surrounding privatization. There were also group discussions and presentations on a wide range of themes, such as household finance and jobs, and the role of international agencies.

Judging from many of the discussions, former participants in the

workshops held by the older national centers with JILAF's assistance were taking the initiative and making use of their skills as discussion leaders. In addition, the participants were evenly drawn from the three different groups of unions that used to belong to the former national centers. The new national center therefore seems to have made a successful start.



▲ Standing at the center of the picture, from right to left, are the President of PWF, Chaudhry Talib Nawaz, Mr. Tomotaka Inoue, and the General Secretary of PWF, Khurshid Ahmed.

JILAF Calendar

Activities Report

(June-September 2006)

1. Invitation Programs

- South Asia Team (June 8-21)
- English Speaking Africa Team (June 29-July 12)
- Asian Trade Unionist Training Team (July 23-29)
- Middle East and North Africa Team (August 31-September 13)
- French Speaking, Portuguese Speaking Africa Team (September 21-October 4)

2. Field Projects

- Nepal NTUC School Management Meeting (June 10-18, Kathmandu)
- Indonesia ITF/KSPSI Seminar on Transportation and Seminar for Women (June 18-24, Jakarta)
- Pakistan PWF Workshop and Thailand ITF Workshop (June 26-July 3, Lahore and Bangkok)
- China ACFTU POSITIVE Monitoring (July 2-7, Beijing and Nanjing)
- Philippine TUCP POSITIVE Seminars (July 4-14, Cebu and Quezon)
- India INTUC School Monitoring (July 18-25, Markapur)
- Vietnam VGCL Seminars for Training POSITIVE Core Trainers (August 6-13, Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City)

- Thailand UNI Seminars on Union Organizing, PSI Seminars on Occupational Health and Safety, and Collective Bargaining (August 6-13, Bangkok and Pattaya)
- China ACFTU Seminars for Organizing Workers in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (September 9-16)
- Mongolia CMTU POSITIVE Regional Seminar (September 10-17)
- Indonesia Seminars for Training POSITIVE Core Trainers (September 17-22)
- Vietnam VGCL Seminar on Union Organizing (September 25-30)

3. Other Projects

- 2006 Campaign for the Elimination of Child Labour (June 4, Yokohama, Japan)
- NGO-Trade Union Forum for International Collaboration on MDGs Study Tour to Cambodia (June 25-July 2, Phnom Penh and Siem Reap)
- 1st International Labour Issue Study Meeting (July 13, Tokyo, Japan)
- 15th ICFTU-APRO/JILAF/OTC Institute Advanced Leadership Course (July 18-August 3, Singapore)
- 2nd International Labour Issue Study Meeting (July 25, Tokyo, Japan)

- 14th ILO Asian Regional Meeting (August 28-September 1, Pusan, Korea)
- International Symposium on the Labour Movement in the Middle East and North Africa (September 6, Tokyo, Japan)

Activities Schedule (October 2006-)

1. Invitation Programs

- Central America Team (October 19-November 1)
- Europe Team (November 9-22)
- "Fighting Against HIV/AIDS at Workplace" Team (November 30-December 13)

2. Field Projects

- Philippine POSITIVE Monitoring (Mid-October)
- India INTUC School Monitoring (Mid-October)
- Vietnam POSITIVE Regional Seminars (Late October)

3. Other Projects

- ICFTU & ITUC World Congress (October 31-November 3, Vienna, Austria)
- International Symposium in the "Fighting Against HIV/AIDS at Workplace" (December 6, Tokyo, Japan)