

Recent Progress of Trade Union Functions and its Significance in Readymade Garments Industry of Bangladesh.

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Abstract

- *Readymade garments (RMG) of Bangladesh is powered by young, Urbanizing, workers, where most of them are women.*
- *(Mercury shirts) to the European market in 1965-66, which was produced from Karachi.*
- *About 30 million people of Bangladesh are engaged with the RMG sector directly or indirectly. RMG sector helps in creating employment, reducing poverty and empowering rural women. Though the primary stage of the sector was not bright enough, nowadays it is flourishing very rapidly. The research is based on a developing country like Bangladesh as it has specialization in the area of garments sector. There are scarcity of research on the growth and contribution of Bangladeshi RMG sector encompassing both qualitative and quantitative research perspectives. The most lucrative sector of the country is garments industry. Since the sector contributes 80% of the national GDP.*

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What is called CBA?

- CBA-Collective Bargaining Agents.
- CBAs –Collective Bargaining Agents are attempt to arrange a written , legally enforceable contracts between management and employees for a specified period.
- The collective bargaining process is generally contract by trade union, and both to agree on what they need from each other.

The RMG Sector of Bangladesh

- The “Made in Bangladesh” tag also bought glory for the country.
- Bangladesh which was once upon a time “bottomless basket” has now becomes a “basket full of wonders”
- RMG industry which is now the single biggest export earner for Bangladesh.
- The sector accounts for 83% of the total export earning of the country.
- The apparel industry of Bangladesh started its journey in the 1980s and has come to the position it is in today.
- Since the early days , different sources of impetus have contributed to the development and maturity of the industry.
- The MFA quota was a blessing to our country to take root , gradually develop and mature. While the quota was approaching an end in 2004. it was predicted by many

How unions to negotiate collective agreements

The most that period workers will have to benefits that they asked for , and management will have The peace of mind that the workers are not going to ask for anything more. There will significant benefit of a CBA is that workers and management have what they need during be no strikes, no illegal demands, no unrest, It is some times of a guarantee of better conditions for everyone.

I. Back Ground

- The current labor law was established in 2006., back when the industry was much smaller. A lot has been changed over the past year, not least the apparel sector’s exponential growth. When the labor law still provides various benefits, unions and collective bargaining agreements are needed to fit the gaps.

The process of CBA negotiation

- A series meeting held by following establishments and agenda:-
- # A meeting which is involving between 20-100 workers.

Workers needs and establishments submitted to the managements. # Needs are generally includes salary , increases, incremental increases, festival bonuses.

Moreover 30 in total or more compile a list approximately 14 most of the common needs are the same across all factories.

List is than submitted to the factory management.

For more effectiveness a copy is sent to the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and also Exporters Association(BGMEA).

Another copy is also sent to Department of Labor under Ministry of Labor and Manpower of Bangladesh.

A first meeting is held with in 15days between the letter submitted to themanagements.

First meeting is held in the public place like canteen where all the worker attended.# At first meeting the factory staff and workers aim to dialogue each other.

A second meetings held between the factory management and union leaders aboutthe needs of workers.

The whole process usually results in an increase of benefits in a numbers of areas Including attendance bonuses. Festival and medical leave and festival allowances.

The negotiation of every meeting is different, because the level of knowledge and the attitude of the management in each factory is different. The smaller factory is not every time able to fulfill the demandof union.

But the higher profit holder factories have more space to financial Implications.

CBA s is an opportunity to identify rights which have not been prioritizedin the labor law and create systems to ensure them.

The outcomes of CBA negotiation

- In Bangladesh Union negotiated seven CBA's through the Sommilito Garment Sramik Federation over the last three years. While Union have been falsely accused of forcing factory into signing agreements, in some cases leading to theillegal termination of union leaders, while union have also seen workers and managements collaborating more closely infactories, workers leading better quality lives and factories running smoother –for everyone.

Realizing the rights to associate, assemble ,organize, and bargain collectively

- Government and non government organizations of Bangladesh are working to create an enabling environment for worker organization ,freedom of association and collectivebargaining at factory level.

- The dialogue between employers and workers , particularly at workplace level, is still limited. Approximately 500 new

workers' unions have been formed since Rana Plaza collapsed,workers who organize unions are still confronted with threatsand intimidation.

- Now a days the workers are very much census about therights.

Negotiating a CBA and formation of Factory level Union.

- At the initially the factory owner and management worried about the formation of union. But after showing our contribution to a peaceful factory environment by acting as abridge between management and workers,they we able to get on board.

- The Union is run by women of 20 people 13 are women – because union believe that female factory workers will feel more comfortable approaching a female union representative to talk about their problems.

Union submitted the needs to the managements after formation of Union. People realize the union that what is the union and what they do, and some workers are started to coming to union with their concerns.

CBA gathered everyone's needs. Prioritized them based on majority vote and submitted the needs to the management

14 issues union rose through the CBA, factory managementsagreed to 11, and the remaining three were up for consideration.

Some of the needs they agreed to raising the salaryincrements from 5 percent to 7 percent.

Festival bonus rose to 100 percent for workers who have worked for a year, 75 percent for six moments and 40

percent for three months. Our food allowances rose from 15 to 20 taka , and the finishing sector's night halt allowance rose from 30 to 50 taka.

Workers are also entitled to 15 days sick leave instead of 14 and 14 festival leave days instead of 11. The factory now also provides expecting mothers with 500 taka for an ultrasound.

If any unrest happened in the factory CBA sat with the workers and mediate with management .Some people still wanted to protest ,but union talked to them and eventually they continued working peacefully.

Union process of selecting a new committee before bringing a new set of needs to managements. There has been a definite knock-on effect; workers from factories close by have started bringing similar needs to their managements and met with success.

Salary and leave related queries are the most common .

To have had training sessions to help us understand the needs of union members, as well as factory managements.

Training help the how productions run and what are the exception of managements.

General workers do not understand that, so that union can help them consider the factory's needs as well as their own when they ask for anything.

Management have also had training which has resulted in a greater understanding of needs and makes coming to a solution a far smoother process.

General workers are now can sit in front of Chairman and talk about their needs and they also know that CBA are doing something for the general workers.

Dialogue between The factory Management and CBAs

- CBA news came to the factory Management like a shock and unwanted elements .There is long unbelievable history in Bangladesh and now a days there is a problematic history and negative perception of CBAs and unions, Factory owner are scared of them , because of what happened in the past.

- But CBA minimize the gap between the workers and factory owners.

- In Bangladesh the unrest of 2016-17 is an example of how unions and CBAs can results in positive change. Factory owner did not stop there production for a minute during the unrest.

- It is very important that the production line made up 75 people ,and it costs BDT 120,000(USD \$1430.00) to run per day and if anybody is absent or less productive than normal, it brings down the performance systems. Factory management spoke the same language and they represent the rest of the employees. Factory owner represent to highlight the positive outcomes of CBAs to the factories.

- RMG factories of Bangladesh are in difficult situation .Buyers are reducing prices everyday. Factory owner are losing BDT 50 million if production stops for a week, Then there is the same reputation damage with buyer and also shipment costs. Late deliveries can cost five times more than regular deliveries . Factory management saved 270 million BDT BY continuing production during the unrest in Ashulia, Savar, Dhaka.

The export

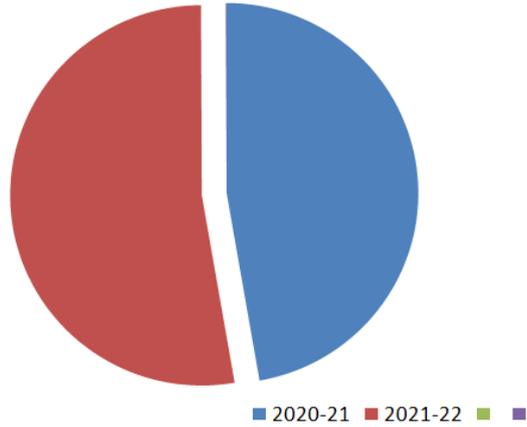
figure of RMG sector from July-September, 2021

- 2020-21-----812.63 crore us\$
- 2021-22-----905.94 crore us \$

Source: Export Promotion Barue

{These figure are shown in pie chart of the nextpage }

The export figure of RMG sector



Some ancient advertisement and photos shown in the next pages of 50 years ago in the Textiles sector Anower Group of Industries of Bangladesh and than there were not any Garments Factory in Bangladesh.



