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# National Day of Action Urging Walmart to Free Bangladeshi Labor Advocates Actions in 40 Cities Across U.S., Canada, and U.K.

Date of publication: September 8, 2010

Source: Press Release

Washington, DC-- Labor rights organizations are organizing an International Day of Action today to urge Walmart to use its influence to free labor rights advocates in Bangladesh that have been in jail for over three weeks. Activists in cities across the U.S., U.K. and Canada will demonstrate in front of local Walmart stores in support of the jailed labor leaders. Key events will be held in Dayton, Austin and Milwaukee.

On August 13, 2010 Kalpona Akter and Babul Akhter of the Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity (BCWS) were arrested by the Government of Bangladesh on trumped up charges. These two individuals, who are respected labor rights advocates in Bangladesh, currently remain in detention, where Babul has been badly beaten. The charges that led to their arrest were brought by two leading garment conglomerates, Nassa Group and Envoy Group, which both source to Walmart.

The reason for these arrests lies in the Bangladeshi Government's recent crackdown on activists, union leaders, and workers who have been demanding an increase in the national minimum wage, which is currently \$0.12 per hour. This minimum wage level makes Bangladeshi workers the worst paid garment workers in the world. Workers have been striving to raise the minimum wage so that they can afford a better, more healthy life for their families.

Having significant influence over these two garment suppliers Nassa and Envoy, Walmart has the power to demand the release of Ms. Akter and Mr. Akhter. Walmart should suspend all orders with these two suppliers until the BCWS leaders' have been safely released from detention, the charges against them have been dismissed, and BCWS's license to operate has been restored.

On Wednesday, September 8, 2010, activists across the country will deliver letters to their local Walmart stores. The letters will be addressed to the local store manager, and encourage Walmart to take action against Nassa Group and Envoy Group. Activists will also hand out fliers in front of stores to let other shoppers know about the situation in Bangladesh.

Supporters will take part in these actions at local Walmarts in the following towns: Hadley and Northampton, MA; Austin, Humble and San Antonio, TX; Milwaukee, WI; Dayton, Cincinnati and Delaware, OH; Jacksonville, FL; Anderson, IN; Albany, Ithaca and New York City, NY; Williamsburg, VA; Oakland, Huntington Beach and Folsom, CA; Hanover Park and Chicago, IL; Falmouth and Ellsworth, ME; Salt Lake City, UT; Des Moines, IA; Charlotte, Goldsboro and Burlington, NC; Nashville, TN; Santa Fe, NM; Vancouver Island, BC, Canada; Toronto, ON, Canada; Winnipeg, MB, Canada; and Broadstairs and Portsmouth, UK.

International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF) is an advocacy organization dedicated to achieving just and humane treatment for workers worldwide. ILRF works to stop child labor, promote and protect the rights of working women, end sweatshop labor, and to end violence against trade unions. Through its SweatFree Communities campaigns, ILRF promotes labor rights of garment workers globally. Learn more at [www.laborrights.org](http://www.laborrights.org) <sup>[1]</sup>.

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Links:

[1] <http://www.laborrights.org>