

Migrant workers' advocate still facing trial



[Share in WhatsApp](#)

Several hearings in the defamation case against human rights defender and activist Charles Hector have taken place since our last update. On June 10, 2011, the High Court judge refused the application filed by Charles Hector to join 31 Burmese migrant worker as parties in the defamation case against him. This would protect these workers against possible deportation. Charles Hector has appealed this decision at the Court of Appeal, but the court refused to grant a stay of the proceedings until after this appeal has been heard.

Update (August 2, 2011) Full trial postponed until August 24

Several hearings in the defamation case against human rights defender and activist Charles Hector have taken place since our last update. On June 10, 2011, the High Court judge refused the application filed by Charles Hector to join 31 Burmese migrant worker as parties in the defamation case against him. This would protect these workers against possible deportation. Charles Hector has appealed this decision at the Court of Appeal, but the court refused to grant a stay of the proceedings until after this appeal has been heard.

However, the court did grant adjournment of the full trial. The new date of the trial has now been set for 24, 25 and 26 August 2011.

Your pressure helps

Charles Hector's campaign team believes this postponement is a direct result of the international spotlight on the court to ensure a fair and open trial. In addition to the various petitions against the company and its buyers, [Human Rights Watch](#), [Frontline](#), [Article 19](#), the [Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders](#)



and the [International Metal Federation issued public statements](#). The European Union has been attentively following the legal proceedings so far. Representatives of the Norwegian and Danish embassies in Malaysia have been present at hearings.

Suggested support actions:

- Join [GoodElectronics](#) and write to Hitachi – key customer of Asahi Kosei - to drop the case.
- Visit [Change.org](#) and sign petition to pressure Asahi Kosei's customers - to stop the legal proceedings.
- Join Frontline and write to the Malaysian prime minister - to call for a fair trial.
- Join the Asian Human Rights Commission and call upon Asahi Kosei and the Malaysian government - for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of legal action.
- Donate to the Charles Hector Legal Defence Fund via Aliran Kesedaran Negara. Bank account number: 507 246 118 995. Malayan Banking Berhad, Green Lane branch, Penang, Malaysia. SWIFT code MBBEMYKLM. Stating it is a donation to Hector's Legal Defence Fund.

(end updated text)

The trial against human rights defender and activist Charles Hector is rapidly approaching, but Asahi Kosei still refuses to drop the case and none of the companies involved has done the right thing.

Many of you have already responded to the call to write to Hitachi, who sources from the electronics company Asahi Kosei in Malaysia. Asahi Kosei sued Charles Hector to stop him from writing about the threats to the 31 migrant workers working there who complained about disproportional wage deductions and lack of sick leave. In response to their complaints they were threatened at their hostel, and four were immediately taken to the airport to be deported.

Charles Hector risks an outrageous penalty of approximately 2.3 million euros, and an effective gag on further publication of any information about the migrant workers at Asahi Kosei.

Despite thousands of emails sent to Hitachi, they have not responded nor pushed their supplier to withdraw the case.

The next hearing is June 10th and the trial is June 28-29, so immediate action by the buyers is needed to halt the proceedings. .

So far the judge hearing the case appears to not recognise Charles Hector's rights as human rights defender, and there are serious concerns that the 31 migrant workers will not be added as parties to the suit which would protect these workers against possible deportation. For the five workers who are willing to testify about the working conditions at Asahi Kosei, this means a real risk of losing their work visas, and consequently facing possible arrest, detention and deportation to Burma.

Filed under: [Charles Hector](#) [Malaysia](#)



About CCC

- Mission
- How We Work
- Local CCC's

At a glance

- The Issues
- FAQ
- Get Active
- Stay Informed

Living Wage

- Why a living wage?
- Asia Floor Wage
- Sign the Living Wage petition

Contact

- Contact Information
- For the Press
- About this site