

Adidas and Mizuno involved in unfair dismissal case



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Every week, a large group of workers who stitched sport shoes for adidas and the Japanese brand Mizuno protests outside the PT Panarub Industry building demanding reinstatement and compensation for the loss of income.

The group of mostly female workers has been trying to get their jobs back ever since 1300 of them were fired in July 2012 by the management of the PT Panarub Dwikarya Benoa company. Just before they lost their jobs, 2000 workers held a strike to demand the right to freedom of association and a back payment of the legal minum wage. After the unfair dismissals, the factory continued with intimidation of striking workers.

Kokom Komalawati, president of the union SBGTS-GSBI told CCC how in 2012 police used tear gas against the striking workers, including pregnant women. She also says how local thugs, supervisors and management have attempted to force workers back to work and workers have been told that if they want to return to work they had to resign from the union, decline from being involved in strike action and say they were forced to join the strike by her.

In August, the group took to the Japanese Embassy in Jakarta to demand their immediate reinstatement.

"The PT Panarub Dwikarya case is a proof that the workers in Indonesia have no guarantee of a decent life and well-being. Adidas and Mizuno have the responsibility to ensure these workers get their jobs and livelihoods back, and until they do so, we will keep demanding our rights," says Kokom Komalawati, president of the union SBGTS-GSBI.

Panarub has a history of labour violations. Since 2000, five factories were involved in labour violations, with violations ranging from obstruction of the freedom of association to unequal wages. Adidas was involved in all



The group of mostly women protest at the Japanese Embassy in Jakarta.

cases.

PT Panarub Dwikarya Bena is a factory of PT Panarub Group based in Bena Kota Tangerang, Banten Province that produces footwear (shoes) for sports brands Adidas and Mizuno, with Mizuno producing in the factory for years and adidas being a long term buyer from the Panarub Group. The factory where the violations occurred, was subcontracted to produce sport shoes for adidas.

In addition, adidas signed the Freedom of Association Protocol in Indonesia, agreeing to uphold the right to freedom of association at its supplier factories. However, the Freedom of Association Protocol does only regulate 1st tier suppliers, and in this case adidas does not acknowledge that other factories belonging to one of their primary suppliers in Indonesia would need to follow the FOA protocol. This leaves many workers without the protection against the obstruction of their freedom to organize. Mizuno has not signed the Freedom of Association Protocol.

All this time, adidas and Mizuno have not brought a solution closer, leaving the workers with no other option but to continue their struggle.

Many of the dismissed workers had been working for the company for years, with some of them working there for over a decade. One worker allegedly died as she could not afford her medication, and others were left by their husbands after not being able to provide an income. Two workers were evicted after they could not pay their rent and several workers kept being intimidated by their new employer to resign their union membership, with some of them losing their job.

During the protest the workers spoke out about the labour violations in their factory, while others **held banners** saying 'Mizuno does not take responsibility for firing 1300 PDK workers!'

The workers keep urging adidas and Mizuno to resolve this case as soon as possible.

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