



# জাতীয়গার্মেন্টস শ্রমিক ফেডারেশন

## National Garments Workers Federation

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Reconsideration & increase of the declared wage, basic to be fixed at 70% and not 51%, immediate declaration of the wages for all other grades, annual increment to be fixed at 10% and demand for increasing the wages of other grades proportionately & fairly

### Garment Workers Hunger Strike, 12 October, 2018 in front of National Press Club in Dhaka

**Token Hunger Strike on 12 October, 2018 by the garment workers in front of National Press Club** on demand for Reconsideration & increase of the declared wage, basic to be fixed at 70% and not 51%, immediate declaration of the wage for all other grades, annual increment to be fixed at 10% and demand for increasing the wages of other grades proportionately. National Garment Workers Federation (NGWF) called for this program. The President of the federation Mr. Amirul Haque Amin declared this program from the Press Conference held at the auditorium of Dhaka Reporters Unity on last 4 October, 2018. During this the other central leaders were present.

As stated in the press conference, just after the formation of the wage board the owners of the garment factories arranged to reduce their source tax by the government on raising the issue of the wage increment of the workers. They are also trying to reduce other taxes, VAT, etc. as well as increase the cash incentive against their export. But against increasing the wage of the workers they are doing many tricks & malpractices to deprive the workers from their legitimate claim. From the press conference 5 specific demands were raised as stated below:



#### 1. The declared wage must be reconsidered and increased.

The minimum wage at 16,000 taka was the demand by the garment workers and all the labour federations. In the neighboring countries the minimum wage of the garment workers: China 165 USD, Vietnam 116 USD, Turkey 517 USD, Pakistan 119 USD, Sri Lanka 197 USD. The minimum salary of the government employees is 17,000 taka. The minimum wage of the labours of government sector is 15,000 taka. The wage of the tannery workers is 12,800 taka and that of the workers of ship breaking industry is 16,000 taka. But garment industry even being the largest of the

country, main key to the national economy and a profitable sector, on last 13 September, 2018 the minimum wage for the garment workers has been declared for 8,000 taka only. This is very insufficient & unacceptable. As such this declared wage is required to be reconsidered and increased.

**2. Demand for immediate declaration of the wages of all workers including operators.**

The declared wage for 8,000 taka on 13 September is for the workers of 7<sup>th</sup> grade means for the helpers. The helpers are 3% to 5% of the total workers of a garment factory. The main force is the operators for production of the garment factory. But unfortunately, though the wage declared for 3% to 5% workers but yet the wage for 95% to 97% workers including different categories of machine operators not been declared as of today. So we demand for the declaration of the wage for all workers including operators without delay.

**3. Basic wage not 51% rather we demand for 70%.**

The garment workers do huge overtime leaving aside their rest & recreation at the pressure of the garment owners & necessity of the industry and even for their own needs since their wage is very low. The wage for the overtime work is determined on the basis of the basic wage that means the double to the basic. The intension is the much the basic could be decreased the more they can deprive the workers. **The picture of the basic wage of the previous wage boards:**

\*In 1994 the basic was 600 taka against total wage 930 taka where the basic was 65% of the total wage.

\*In 2006 the total wage was fixed at 1,662 taka and the corresponding basic was 1,125 taka and that means the basic was 68% of the total wage.

\*In 2010 the total wage of the garment workers was 3,000 taka and the basic was 2,000 taka yielding the basic 67% of the total wage amount.

\*In 2013 the total wage was 5,300 as against of which the basic was declared for 3,000 taka means the basic was 57% of the total wage.

And in this year the total has been fixed for 8,000 taka while the basic has been determined for 4,100 taka which is only 51% of the total wage. As a result the overtime wage would be (51% X 2 = 102%) only 2% excess of the general wage. Not only the overtime wage of the garment workers but also including Eid bonus, compensation, service benefit, retirement benefits, etc. are determined on the basis of the basic wage. Thus the basic has been fixed at 51% of the total wage so as to deprive the garment workers in all respects of overtime, Eid bonus, compensation, service benefit, retirement benefit, etc. So we demand for the basic that is 70% of the total wage and not 51%.



**4. Demand for 10% annual increment.**

Every year the commodity price, house rent, etc. increase at multiple amounts. But at the last wage board the annual increment of the workers was fixed at 5% of the basic wage. This year in the declared wage structure the annual increment has not been mentioned. We demand for 10% annual increment of the wage of the workers.

**5. Nothing mere but the wages for other grades to be increased justified and proportionately.**

Though the garment workers have been divided into 7 grades basically grade 1 & 2 are various technical hands. Hence the workers of these two grades regularly negotiate their wage over discussions with the owners directly. Basically the workers under from grades 3 to 7 are directly under the control of the wage board. Among these grade 3 is for highly efficient operators and grade 7 is for the machine helpers.

The comparative picture of grades 7 & 3 in the previous wage boards as follows:

\*In 1994 the wage for grade 7 was 930 taka while that was for grade 3 was 2,100 taka which is 126% rate of increment.

\*In 2006 the wage for grade 7 was 1,662 taka and that was for grade 3 was 2,449 taka with rate of increment 47%.

\*In 2010 the wage for grade 7 was 3,000 taka and that of grade 3 was for 4,218 taka with the rate of increment 41%.

\*In the year 2013 the wage for grade 7 was 5,300 taka and that was for grade 3 was 6,805 taka that means the rate of increment was 28%.

It says in the year 1994 the wages of the other grades than the grade of the helpers (grade 7) were increased at logical rates. But later the wages of other grades were increased merely in comparison to the fixing of the wage for grade 7 under pressure.

In this year though the wage for grade 7 has been proposed for 8,000 taka yet the owners did not submit any proposal for the wages against grades 6, 5, 4 & 3. Hence we are demanding for the logically proportionate increased wages for other grades apart from grade 7.

**On the basis of the above mentioned 5 points of demand the program for Token Hunger Strike of Garment Workers on 12 October, 2018 in front of National Press Club in Dhaka has been planned for.**

(Amirul Haque Amin)

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