

December 2013

Global Labour News  
Special Newsletter No. 1:  
Solidarity Activism

# Global Labour News



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## *Special newsletter on Solidarity Activism*

The GLU students & alumni network is growing: we are a group of individuals across the world who are committed to the cause of labour through research and activism.

For this reason, this year's summer school took the decision to create a new group. The Solidarity Activism Group (SAG).

We are dedicated to creating a platform for alumni to give voice to the struggles they are part of.

To join the SAG group, send an email to [rhea.aamina@gmail.com](mailto:rhea.aamina@gmail.com).

This newsletter aims at:

- ◆ Increasing the visibility and offer support to local labour struggles
- ◆ Enhancing networking among GLU alumni
- ◆ Offering an international voice for struggles which don't make it to big online campaigns
- ◆ Increasing the scope of existing online campaigns.

In solidarity,  
The editors

***Go global with your struggle***

⇒ Send a summary of your struggle with proposed solidarity actions to [tandi-we.gross@gmail.com](mailto:tandi-we.gross@gmail.com)

⇒ The struggle can be an international campaign or a local struggle but you as a GLU student or alumni should be somehow involved.

**Look at the protest of GLU Alumni against the Brazilian „Precarisation Bill“:**

(<http://www.cut.org.br/acontece/23858/luta-da-cut-contra-o-projeto-da-terceirizacao-conquista-apoios-internacionais#ad-image-2>)

## *GLU alumni against Precarisation in Brazil*

One of the greatest current challenges for Brazilian trade unions is outsourcing. While current legislation does not allow outsourcing in core work, the proposed law **PL 4330 would allow full outsourcing even in core work**. The Brazilian labor movement fears this

would lead to deteriorating working conditions and wages. GLU alumni from various countries have supported the protest against the proposed bill as you can see here: This solidarity action has contributed to achieving more visibility and support inside the Bra-

zilian Parliament. **Thank you!** The struggle goes on!



## Solidarity Fund: Struggles supported in 2013



The participants of the Applied Alumni Research Summer School (AARS) 2013 in Mumbai have decided to increase the scope of the GLU alumni solidarity fund. Besides supporting personal emergencies of GLU Alumni, the Fund should from now on also be used to support labour-related struggles worldwide in which GLU alumni are involved. The procedures for supporting struggles have been laid down in the Guidelines for the Solidarity Fund (p. 4).

Since this year's summer school took place in India, it was by the participants that this year three labour struggles in India should be supported:

- 1) Regular solidarity support: Trade union *Kachara Vahatuk Shramik Sangh (KVSS)* which organizes garbage contract workers in Mumbai (upper picture on the left)
- 2) Regular solidarity support: *All Mumbai Asangathiit Kamgaar Union* which

organizes informal daily wage workers in Mumbai (lower picture on the left)

- 3) Emergency solidarity support: *Maruti Suzuki Workers Union*, a trade union struggling for justice at the Indian Maruti Suzuki plant (see article below).

The first two unions were visited by the Summer School participants in Mumbai, and provided an impressive insight into their work.

## India: Maruti Suzuki Workers stand up for Justice

Since July 2012, **147 workers** of the auto company Maruti Suzuki **are in jail** without bail, their families without income and the workers facing the risk of getting up to 14 years of prison.

They are accused of having murdered a Human Relations manager who supported the workers struggle when violence erupted during workers protests for union recognition in the Maruti Suzuki factory near Delhi on 18th July 2012. The violence erupted after years of struggle for the recognition of an independent trade union in that factory with massive anti-union behaviour of the management.

On 18<sup>th</sup> July 2012, the management sent local thugs dressed as workers into the factory to instigate violence. There has **never been an independent investigation** into the how the manager died and it is most unlikely that these workers have actually killed him

since he had actually helped the workers to get the union registered at the state level. In addition to the arrest of 147 workers, **2346 workers were laid off** after the violent incident in 2012. Peaceful protests of the workers and their families are answered with massive police repression.

More information on (<http://www.indiaresists.com/maruti-suzuki-workers-in-india-a-tale-of-exploitation-and-suppression/>)

The Alumni Summer School 2013 has agreed to support the Maruti Suzuki Workers with 500,- Euros which will be used to support the families of the workers in jail. In addition to that, numerous Alumni have contributed individually to support the the struggle.

Sanober Keshwaar, Associate Professor at TISS Mumbai, is organizing a sale of artwork postcards to support the workers.

### Take a Solidarity Picture of yourself

"YOUR NAME, YOUR COUNTRY supports Maruti Suzuki Workers: Release all 147 Workers and reinstate all workers!". Send it to [fahimnaushad@gmail.com](mailto:fahimnaushad@gmail.com).

### Sell Artwork solidarity postcards

Contact Sanober Keshwaar at [ksanober@gmail.com](mailto:ksanober@gmail.com)



## Russia: Union Suppression at Antolin plant

The struggle for union recognition at the Antolin plant in Russia began in February 2013 when the Interregional Trade Union of Autoworkers (ITUA) began organising at the plant in St. Petersburg, Russia. The union covered more than half of the workers employed at the plant at that time and thus started collective bargaining activities in May. However, the management did not bargain in good faith and constantly dawdled during negotiations.

In September of this year management activities became aggressively anti-union. In response to management repression the union called for two days of work-to-rule during the G20 summit in St. Petersburg.

However, this received no attention from the management. The union therefore escalated its struggle by calling a strike on 15 October. As a result the employer, Grupo Antolin St. Petersburg and the ITUA signed the agreement according to which Antolin workers could elect their representatives to the workers' representative body for collective bargaining at the plant on 24 October 2013.

Despite a convincing win for the ITUA, the management refused to recognize the results of the workers' representative body elections.

The union called for a second strike on November 4 2013. This time, the workers had to stand up to man-

agement restructuring, threats by Criminal Intelligence and **police intimidation**, all of which they bravely faced.

However, **twenty workers who were on strike have been illegally dismissed**. This happened although Russian labour law assures that workers on strike cannot be dismissed and guarantees 20 day notice period before dismissal.

The right to Freedom of Association has been crucially violated at Antolin.

The workers at Antolin and ITUA, therefore, call on you to be part of an international campaign **demanding the reinstatement of the illegally dismissed workers**.

**Take a solidarity picture with a poster:**

"Stop police involvement in labor conflicts! Antolin: follow Framework Agreements! Stop pressure on Antolin union activists! YOUR NAME, YOUR COUNTRY"

Send it to  
naty\_nikulova@list.ru



## Global: Compensation and living wage for garment workers

### Compensations

Since 1990, according to official numbers, **more than 2146 workers died and 5.500 were injured** only in the garment industry of Bangladesh.

For compensating the victims of the atest major tragedy of the **Rana Plaza collapse** with more 1.129 deaths, an arrangement has been negotiated between the stakeholders, including IndustriALL and local trade unions, and the Clean Clothes Campaign. The following brands are still refusing to join the

Compensation Agreement Mango, Walmart, Auchan, Childrens Place, Carrefour and Kik. More information on [www.cleanclothes.org](http://www.cleanclothes.org).

### Living Wage

„While the clothing industry makes millions in profits each year, the workers producing the clothes are paid **poverty wages**. A living wage means that the wage a worker earns in a standard working week (never exceeding 48 hours) is enough to provide for them and their family's

them and their family's basic needs - including housing, education and healthcare as well as some discretionary income for when the unexpected happens.“

(<http://www.cleanclothes.org/livingwage/sign>)



**Sign the petition for a fair compensation of garment victims:**

(<http://www.waronwant.org/campaigns/love-fashion-hate-sweatshops/extra/extra/action/17951-demand-compensation-for-the-victims-of-the-bangladesh-building-collapse>)

**Sign the petition for a Living Wage:**

(<http://www.cleanclothes.org/livingwage/sign>)

## *Guidelines for the Solidarity Fund (shortened)*

### **A) Fundraising for the solidarity fund**

- Mandatory contribution of 30 € from each alumni who attends the summer school. In addition, people are invited to make additional voluntary contributions according to their financial capacities.
- If a member of the association comes to the summer school, the amount of his/her membership fee of that year is discounted from the 30 € for the summer school.
- The names of those who have paid the 30 € is circulated among the summer school participants.

### **B) Use of the fund money:**

- The solidarity fund money can be used (1) to support personal emergency cases of alumni and (2) to support labour-related actions/campaigns in which at least one alumni is involved.

### **C) Criteria for using solidarity fund money for campaigns**

- Money from the Fund may only be used for labour-related actions in which an alumnus or alumna is an active part; the alumni should be the link between the campaign and the alumni network).
- The application must include a proposal with the following elements:
  - a. What is the target of the campaign

- b. What is the action proposed and how much money is wanted for that
- c. How does the action promote the target of the campaign

- The reps are responsible for the application process by regularly sending out a call for applications. Applications can be sent to the reps throughout the year.
- The Solidarity activism group assists the representatives in gathering the applications.

### **D) Decision-making process on projects to be supported**

#### **aa) For regular cases**

- For regular cases, the reps send out a call for applications for the solidarity fund money. Applicants use the application procedure as described above. Reps make an oral summary of all the applications and present that summary at the summer school. At the summer school, the alumni vote about the projects to be given funding to (majority vote).

#### **bb) For emergency cases**

- In an emergency case, the reps are contacted by the respective alumni with a short form of the project proposal; the reps take a first decision on whether this case is eligible for receiving money. If yes, the reps send an email to all the alumni with a description of the case, and ask for objections within 1 week. If the reps receive objections from more than 10 % of the alumni to that project, then the project proposal is declined.
- Objections have to include a substantial reasoning on why the proposal should be rejected.

- The reps cooperate with the Solidarity Activism Group (SAG) if there are objections and try to find a solution.

### **E) Amount of funding for regular and emergency cases**

**Regular cases:** 1000 € per year can be allocated for regular cases. Per year, a maximum of 2 regular cases can be funded with 500 € each. A case can be funded several times by the regular procedure if it has been voted for by the summer school.

**Emergency cases:** 500 € per year can be spent on emergency cases. Within one year, one project can be funded one time by the regular procedure plus one time by the emergency procedure. Cases cannot be funded more than one time via the emergency procedure.

### **F) Transparency and reports about funded projects**

- The applicants who received money (both emergency and regular process) have to make a brief report on how it was used and on the progress of the action. The reps make a summary of that and give an oral report at the next summer school on the projects funded last year.
- The reps have to inform the alumni when an emergency project has been funded.

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([www.global-labour-university/  
alumni.org](http://www.global-labour-university/alumni.org))

## *Alumni Summer School and LabourStart Conference 2014*

### **May 2014 GLU Alumni Summer School in Berlin**

The next GLU Alumni Summer School will be held in Berlin in parallel to the ITUC World Congress to which an excursion is planned during the summer school. You can apply here until 15 January 2014: (<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/viewform?formkey=dDdfRVFLdDRKM0VoMzRBRVZhRFIsWVE6MA&fc>)

### **23 - 25 May 2014 LabourStart Global Solidarity Conference**

Register now on <http://www.labourstart.org/2014/sample-page/>