

Hanjin, with total impunity, and with total tolerance from DOLE and SBMA, continued its overt anti-union activities

(an update report on AMAPO's organizing campaign
in Hanjin Heavy Industries and Construction-Philippines)

Frustration and anger could be seen on the faces of Hanjin workers inside and outside the polling area. We tried mightily, but our efforts were no match against the deceitful acts of Hanjin management. The tolerance and perceived bias of DOLE, SBMA, and the local government for Hanjin was visible.

We almost made it in the Zambanas elections; we were only short of 178 votes of the required 1,047 for the CE to be considered a success. Only 869 workers were able to cast their votes of the 2,096 in the voters' list. Those who voted did it, unmindful of the repercussions; only pure commitment and optimism to/for the critical changes that the union brings in their workplaces.

Total impunity

The Hanjin Zambanas workplace was both a detention center and a galley of slave labor, with freedoms and rights denied.

Hundreds of workers who worked the day before were 'detained' and were not let out. They were not given a choice. They were forced to work another day until voting hours ended. Hanjin management call it "overnight, overday" --a new union-busting scheme, another term for forced labor.

Identification cards of workers which they are used to pass through the turnstile gates were confiscated by Korean managers.

Reports received through text messages and facebook messenger from workers inside Hanjin described the situation they were in.

"Mga sir, 8pm daw pauuwiin mga Sambanaz mamaya. Bibitinin n nman sasakyan. Ay haharangin sa gate."
(Translation: "Sirs, Sambanaz workers will be allowed to leave later only at 8:00 PM. Transportation will be blocked and held at the gates.")

"Sa sobrang gulo paglabas, nasira harang nila sa gate2. Nag-over da bakod ako."
(Translation: "In the chaos on our way out, the doors at gate 2 were destroyed. I jumped over the wall.") A video posted on FaceBook by one worker showed the trapped workers in Hanjin. It can be accessed at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2029018257327994/>.

"Zambanas pre_painting at painting dock 6...10 pm ngaun uuwi ...panu makkboto nyan ngaun ..."
(Traslation: Workers at Zambanas pre-painting dock 6 workers will be let out only at 10:00 PM. How can they vote now?)

Situation reports, messages, photos, and videos by workers can be seen at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2029018257327994/> and <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=10001128356541>.

The day before, together with a group of some 60 workers who knew of Hanjin's plan, we reported this to DOLE. We were hoping that DOLE would do something so that Workers in Zambanas could participate in the CE. DOLE did nothing!

Worse than the CE for SuzhiCorp a day before, this time, Hanjin management implemented a "road blockade" with armed guards and the police.

We filed a police blotter at the Subic Police Station. The office-in-charge was hesitant to accept the file. The police confirmed that blockade and their participation saying that they are only acting on "intelligence report" of a possible disorder in the company.

The customary bus transportation services were not provided. Buses were delayed, stopped and checked for Zambanas workers; they were singled out, threatened and "asked" to get off. Many workers just walked.

We hired jeepneys and vans to pick stranded workers, and despite roadblocks shuttled a couple of hundred workers. Inside Hanjin, hundreds of Zambanas workers were detained to prevent voting.

Together with some union officers, I went personally to check the situation. We confirmed the road blockade with armed guards and police. We could not get closer than 700 meters from Hanjin. We could see only the closed gates. The situation was tense. There would have been violence if we insisted on going nearer.

A couple of hours before polling ended, as the number of voters was getting closer to quorum, Hanjin management ordered a total lock-down of the company until voting ended. Where the regular gates only were closed earlier, this time, the inches-thick main gate was closed. Hanjin made sure that no more Zambanas workers could go out and vote.

An Angelica bus --a Hanjin transport service contractor --barricaded the highway. The driver parked the bus in the middle of the road and just left.

The DOLE and SBMA knew that all these these things were happening. DOLE and SBMA did nothing!

The CE at Zamabanas, just like at Suzhicor the day before, was declared a FAILURE.

The Hacor certification election the next day was horrendous. Only 19 workers of about 340 workers made it to the election place. Hanjin made sure the near-miss at Zambanas will not be repeated.

AMAPO, citing Hanjin sins of commission and oppression, filed three petitions for new elections in the three contractors. AMAPO will file Unfair Labor Practice cases in DOLE this week against Hanjin for many acts of violation of national laws and regulations and workers freedom of association.

Our lawyers and paralegals are swamped with illegal termination cases and other abuses against workers, before, during and after the elections.

We will call on the ILO Direct Contact Mission to inquire into the despicable behavior of Hanjin, the DOLE, the SBMA, the police and others, the many violations of ILO Convention Nos. 87 and 98 on Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining.

We denounce this foreign Hanjin exploiting, abusing and enslaving workers in this our country the Philippines. We reserve the right to take bolder actions against Hanjin, its interests and agents in the country.

Thank you for your continued support and great interest in owe didn't ur campaign for decent work and social justice for workers in Hanjin. xxx