

Asia Pacific Labour Law Review

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Workers' Rights for the New Century

Asia Monitor Resource Centre

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AMRC's main goal is to support democratic and independent labour movements in Asia and the Pacific.
In order to achieve this goal, AMRC upholds the principles
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Labour and Law in Pakistan

Kamran Sadiq

Section I A contemporary snapshot

Background

The labour policy of Pakistan laid down parameters for growth of trade unionism, protection of workers' rights, settlement of disputes, redress of individual grievances of workers, as a result of six policies announced in 1949, 1955, 1959, 1969, 1972 and 1988, after which no further labour policy was formulated.

Labour laws in British India such as the Trade Union Act 1926 and the Industrial Disputes Act 1947 were generally adopted intact. Pakistan's first Tripartite Labour Conference was held on 8-9 February 1949. It comprised legislative and administrative measures by federal and provincial governments as amendments to the Workmen's Compensation Act 1923, the Factories Act 1934, and the Mines Act.

After an upsurge of protest by workers, a formal industrial relations policy for Pakistan was elaborated in August 1955 containing policy provisions 'to encourage the growth of genuine and healthy trade unions in order to



promote healthy collective bargaining on the part of labour’.

Martial law was imposed in Pakistan in October 1958; in February 1959, the new Government announced a new industrial relations policy. A programme of action included labour policy based on ratified International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions and Recommendations, and the belief that the growth of healthy trade unionism is essential for a stable social structure.

Pakistan returned to rule by martial law in 1969. At a May 1969 tripartite labour conference the Government admitted past failures and announced a new industrial relations policy beginning on 5 July 1969 stating, ‘the Government is aware that the previous labour policies have failed because adequate machinery for their implementation has not existed’.

1969-71 labour policy included the usual lofty principles, acknowledging that earlier policies had failed for lack of implementation machinery. The IRO, promulgated on 23 November 1969, provided compulsory recognition of representative trade unions, joint consultation between employers and workers, definition of unfair practices, settlement of grievances through labour courts, introduction of a ‘check-off’ system, determination of collective bargaining agents, and protection of union officers during the period of application for registration. In addition the Workers’ Welfare Ordinance (2 December 1971) provided residential accommodation and other facilities for worker, but it was never implemented.

A progressive new president, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was elected in 1972, on a pro-labour platform. He announced an ambitious new industrial relations policy on 10 February 1972, which included:

- workers’ participation in management of industry;
- increasing workers’ share in profits from 2.5 percent to four percent under Companies Profits (Workers Participation) Act;
- shop stewards in each factory department;
- Labour Court decisions within 20 days for individual cases;
- either workers or employers permitted to take matters to the Labour Court;
- creating a quasi-judicial body to promote genuine trade unionism to help form industrial union feder-

ations, at national level to deal with victimisation cases and unfair labour practices.

These measures were largely implemented through amendments to the IRO, the West Pakistan ICEO, the Enactment of Workers’ Children Education Ordinance 1972, the Employees Old-Age Benefits Act 1976, and the Employees Cost of Living (Relief) Act 1973.

The elected government of the Pakistan Peoples’ Party was toppled by a 5 July 1977 military coup d’état and for the third time martial law was imposed. Labour policy from 1977 to 1988 became an exercise in suppression. Reinstatement began in 1989 along with a review of the minimum wage. A number of union leaders were arrested in February 1991 for opposing privatisation plans. In 1996, the general system of preferences (GSP) agreement with the USA was revoked for ‘failure to make progress on worker rights issues’. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the European Trade Union Confederation submitted a GSP case against the Government of Pakistan in 1995 concerning issue of bonded labour. It is still pending.



Karachi docks. (Credit: J Maillard. Copyright: ILO)

The new military regime which took power in October 1999 has initiated a labour reforms programme focusing on an institutional and legislative framework as well as improving the industrial relations environment. Wide ranging consultation took place between all stakeholders culminating in the Tripartite Labour Conference in July 2001 after a lapse of 13 years.

Government realised the era of globalisation needed emphasis on good governance and improvement of socio-economic conditions of labour. Access to foreign markets is increasingly dependent on adherence to labour standards.

Labour policy 2001

The government is committed in its 'Draft Labour Policy 2001' to support the constitutional and international rights of labour to freedom of association and collective bargaining and to enable harmonious relations between labour, employers, and the government, to design and implement a labour policy that fosters the goal of productive employment and poverty reduction, provide freedom of association and social protection to the labour force both in the formal and informal sectors including agriculture.

To achieve these objectives labour laws are being consolidated and rationalised in the light of the report of the Commission on Labour Laws and the recommendations of the Tripartite Labour Conference held in July 2001. There will be six new laws which will replace the existing plethora of labour enactments. In particular, the IRO, which is the basic law for industrial relations, is being reviewed. The new laws to be enacted are:

- the IRO 2001;
- the Wages Ordinance 2001;
- the Conditions of Employment Ordinance 2001;
- the Human Resource Development Ordinance 2001;
- the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance 2001;
- the Labour Welfare and Social Safety Ordinance 2001.

These ordinances await Cabinet approval even though some provisions like minimum wages have already been enforced.

Major labour legislation

Current welfare laws

Employees Old-age Benefits Act 1976

The Employees Old-age Benefits Institution (EOBI) registers workers where ten or more are employed, for pensions and other benefits. The EOBI is managed by a governing body which has equal representation of both employers and workers, but government officials have the commanding number.

Employees Social Security Ordinance 1965

Covering maternity, sickness and injury benefits, compensation for loss of wages during sickness, and disability and death pension, it is applicable where ten or more workers are employed. Registration under the scheme is a must for claiming benefits. All the dispensaries or hospitals are controlled by provincial social security institutions. It is managed by a governing body with equal representation for both employers and workers, however the proportion of officials is preponderant.

Workers Welfare Fund Ordinance 1971

Represented by both workers' and employers' representatives in the provincial welfare boards with a high proportion of government officials. The key benefits offered by the fund are schools for the workers' children as well as housing for deserving workers and their families.

Workers Children's Education Ordinance 1972

The law binds the employer to contribute Rs. 100 per worker towards the education expenses of up to two children per family.

Maternity Benefits Ordinance 1958

Almost all the benefits and facilities under this law are now covered by the social security scheme.

Welfare reforms

Improvement in labour welfare is the cornerstone of Government labour policy. A package of reforms was announced on 30 April 2001. These reforms were given legal coverage through an amending Ordinance 2001 involving the following:

- 100 percent increase in compensation in case of death or permanent disablement of workers under the Workmen's Compensation Act 1923;

- enhancing the coverage of Payment of Wages Act;
- increasing the rate of maternity benefit;
- introducing a self-assessment scheme in respect of social security and old-age benefits;
- coverage extended to include banking, financial and commercial businesses in profit; and
- broadening the scope of Workers Welfare Fund.

The minimum pension under the Old-Age Benefit will increase from Rs.630/-to Rs.700/- per month to allow subsistence to low paid pensioners.

A minimum wage of Rs.2,500 per month for unskilled workers was approved by the Cabinet in August 2001. This will become the National Minimum Wage for unskilled workers, as it will be applicable without restriction on number of employees working in an establishment.

It is estimated that as a result of these changes approximately six million workers and their dependents, as compared to 3.8 million hitherto, will benefit from labour welfare measures.

Human resource development is an important feature of Government labour policy. Pakistan is a labour intensive country. Greater emphasis is to be put on improving the coverage of the Apprenticeship Scheme. National Training Board (NTB) will be restructured to make it more efficient.

Skill development councils have been established in the four provinces and the capital territory of Islamabad which are employer-led autonomous organisations as joint ventures of the Government and Employers' Federation of Pakistan.

The Overseas Pakistanis Foundation was established in 1979 to advance the social welfare of the Pakistanis working or settled abroad and their families in Pakistan. Its services include housing, education, health, vocational training and the economic rehabilitation of disabled returnees.

Collective labour rights

Current Industrial relations laws

The Factories Act 1934, the Shops and Establishments Ordinance 1969, and the ICEO generally determine the terms of employment for groups of employees based on the number working in the workplace. Standing Orders cover gratuity benefits (S.O.12) at 30 days' wages for each complete year of service.

The Companies Profit (Workers Participation) Act 1968 applies to factories where 100 or more workers are employed, there are strong demands from workers and employees to reduce the number of employees to ten and workers in office, sales, and financial institutions should also benefit. Under the law the employees are entitled to five percent share in the profits of the company. The upper limit of salaries to receive benefits was raised from Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 5,000 per month. The ratio of workers share remains un-revised since 1972.

Both bipartite and tripartite bodies have been established under the legislative and administrative system to deal with labour matters. Bipartite bodies include Works Councils, Joint Management Boards, and Management Committees, whereas tripartite bodies are the Pakistan Tripartite Labour Conference, the Standing Labour Committee, the Advisory Board, and the National Tripartite Minimum Wage Council. Statutory tripartite bodies include Board of Trustees in the EOBI Governing Body, and Workers' Welfare Boards under the Workers Welfare Fund Ordinance and Governing Bodies under the Provincial Social Security Ordinance 1965 and Minimum Wage Boards under the Minimum Wage Ordinance 1961.

Emphasis is shifting from state intervention to bipartite systems. This trend is considered to be helpful for the improvement of economic conditions of a firm as it strengthens trust relationships. A bipartite strategy built on the following premises can be adopted to strengthen relationships between workers and employers for attainment of organisational and national goals:

- evolving bipartite codes of conduct at national and industry levels between leading trade union organisations and employer bodies;
- state to act as a facilitator in industrial relations;
- adopting bilateral approach at the plant level;
- encouraging employees-involvement-schemes to increase production and improve quality of products and services.

The Workers-Employers Bipartite Council of Pakistan created in 2000 is a historical and unique development in the field of industrial relations in Pakistan.

Devolution Plan

The devolution plan of the Government finds its genesis in the need for genuine democracy at the grass-roots level. The election at union council level were held between December 2000 and August 2001.

Thirty-three percent of seats at union council level and five percent of seats at Tehsil and District Council levels are reserved for workers and peasants in the devolution plan.

Trade union law

Industrial Relations Ordinance 1969

This Ordinance (IRO) amalgamated the Trade Unions Act and the Industrial Disputes Ordinance.

Previously the industrial disputes laws authorised five elected worker representatives to issue notices of strike. Under 1968 amendments in the Industrial Disputes Ordinance, the general secretary of a registered trade union was authorised to sign and issue notice of strike.

The IRO gave the right of raising industrial disputes with the General Secretary of the Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA). The Agent is determined by ballot between two or more workers' unions. If any establishment has only one registered trade union then the Registrar may certify it as the CBA for a term of two years. The IRO restored the right to strike.

Under previous industrial disputes laws conciliation was compulsory and after the failure of conciliation proceedings the conciliation officer issued a failure certificate.

Trade unions were allowed only on plant/establishment level until now, when an Industrial Relations Law is on the table, which concedes trade union formation on an industrial/trade basis and at national level.

Occupational health and safety legislation/law

Occupational Health and Safety: There are many laws on hazards but only Chapter III of the Factories Act 1934 binds employers to provide favourable health and safety measures including clean drinking water, bathrooms, and latrines. It also suggests measures to avoid any injury or accident to the workers. It has very poor implementation machinery due to lack of funds and the incapacity of the labour department.

Gender-related labour law

There is no gender-related law. The government ratified ILO conventions 100 and 111 in 2001 without enacting legislation.

Effectiveness of labour law

The ICEO lays down the procedure for punishment and dismissal.

Employers were disturbed by the ICEO requirement to assign a reason for termination of service in the ICEO, but they continue with arbitrary decisions. However, the worker has the option of the labour courts to seek redress, which annoys the employers.

A procedure has been laid down to issue 'show cause' notices, charge sheets, and subsequent domestic enquiries under the ICEO but the labour courts cannot interfere in the findings of domestic enquiries, which helps the employer and harms the workers.

Section II

Labour law and its implementation

The labour movement is fragmented into some 7,000 unions in over 1,000 federations. This represents less than 10 percent of workers in Pakistan. Teachers, agricultural workers, most civil servants, essential services, export oriented industries, and export processing zones (EPZ) are prevented from organising or bargaining directly. Workers' rights are given away to attract foreign investors' capital. Contract labourers, ranging between 70 to 80 percent in many industries, are deprived of pensions, benefits, and union rights.

The Government ratified ILO Conventions 87 and 98 four decades ago. However, violations of worker rights in Pakistan remain systematic and pervasive. The right to associate and bargain collectively continues to be a right reserved for a small minority of workers. Large sectors of the work force are prohibited from joining trade unions and engaging in collective bargaining. For years, national trade union centres, the international trade union community, and the ILO struggled to convince the Government to implement the kinds of legislation that would bring Pakistan into compliance with international labour standards. Although legislation exists to ban forced labour and child labour, it has not been implemented, especially in rural areas. Violations of existing laws are common throughout Pakistan.

As increasing priority goes to promoting economic growth through privatisation and attracting foreign investment capital, rights' violations grow worse. The Government exempted large sectors of the economy re-

lating to foreign-owned enterprises and EPZs, from the application of current laws. In addition, the minimum wage is not sufficient to provide for the average family. A tripartite Labour Task Force was created in the mid-1990s to advise on policy questions. However, the role of this group is uncertain and a basic lack of agreement among the social partners threatens its effectiveness.

Sector-related restrictions on organising

Coverage by the IRO is denied to all agricultural and educational workers as they are not legally considered as 'industry.' In addition, workers in various other categories and establishments are also excluded (Section 1(i) 29-h) from the rights defined in the ordinance.

In 1993, the ILO Committee on Application of Standards noted the lack of improvement in the right to organise and join trade unions. The following sectors were cited in which this right is either banned or not provided for in law:

- government services;
- self-employed persons;
- agricultural labourers;
- hospitals and clinics;
- educational institutions;
- EPZs and specific public sector enterprises.

The right to collective bargaining is not available to:

- all of the above;
- banks and financial institutions;
- 'essential services', which are determined by the Essential Services (Maintenance) Act 1952 (ESMA).

To further control workers and their trade unions, the government frequently subjects establishments to essential service restrictions. This occurred, for example, in Karachi in mid-1992 when the Port Trust, Electrical Supply Corporation, and Water and Sewerage Board all were placed under strict ESMA controls.

Section 2 (vi ii) c of the IRO contains a special provision allowing the government to restrict freedom of association for any category of workers by the issuance of notification which declares such a category to be servants of the state. Under Section 33 of the IRO the following services were declared public service utilities, meaning that workers in these industries are restricted by the ESMA:

- generation, production, manufacture or supply of electricity, gas, oil, or water to the public;
- any system of public conservancy or sanitation;
- hospitals and ambulance service;
- fire-fighting service;
- any postal, telegraph and telephone service;
- railways and airways;
- ports; and
- watch and ward, and security services maintained in any establishment.

Once a sector becomes 'administration of the State,' normal trade union activities are severely restricted. For each industry found subject to the ESMA, (which must be renewed every six months) a specific determination is made by the Government on the limits of union activity. In cases in which collective bargaining has been barred, individual wage boards decide wage levels. Disputes are adjudicated by the National Industrial Relations Commission.

Restrictions on termination of employment

A worker's right to resign may also be curtailed under the ESMA. A dismissed worker has no recourse to labour courts. Despite many years of urging from the ILO, the Government of Pakistan still has not repealed the ESMA, which limits workers' rights to leave their jobs and amounts to legalised forced labour, in conflict with ILO Convention No. 29. In 1990, the Government assured the ILO's Committee on Application of Standards that steps were being taken to remedy the problem of restrictions on rights to terminate employment. No concrete action has yet been taken to revoke these provisions.

Interference in union registration

Prime Minister Sharif announced a new investment policy late in 1997. To improve working relations among employers and employees, it was decided that trade union activity would be industry-based and not factory-based. The new policy also decrees that, in order to check the growth of trade unions, unions receiving less than 20 percent of the votes in a referendum are to be dissolved automatically and their registrations cancelled. No action has been taken to implement these elements in the investment policy but should they be

enforced they would constitute a serious violation of trade union rights.

Denial of union membership by job reclassification

Systematic, artificial promotions of workers into management grades are used by both private sector employers and government to undermine the trade unions. In 1990, the Pakistan National Federation of Trade Unions, the ICFTU, and the International Federation of Commerce, Clerical, Professional, and Technical Employees (FIET) filed a complaint with the ILO (Case No.1534, April 1990) against the Government of Pakistan alleging that multinational corporations operating in Pakistan try to undermine union membership by offering ‘promotions’ to union members without actually giving them managerial responsibilities. This manoeuvre moves the worker into the category of ‘employer’ as defined in the IRO and forces them to give up union membership. The ILO requested the Government to take appropriate measures to modify the IRO in order to prevent employers from undermining the workers’ trade unions through artificial promotions. Such steps have not been taken. Again in 1992, using the IRO the Government redefined the status of ‘worker’ on the national railways. Employees in grades one to 16 became ‘supervisors’ and barred from all trade union activity.

Denial of civil servants’ freedom of association

The Civil Servants Act 1973 sets the terms and conditions of employment for this category of public sector workers. Employees may not freely engage in collective bargaining. Their organisations do not have the right to fully independent functioning and exist as associations, not trade unions. The Act does not allow civil servants to form and join trade unions (as defined by the IRO), to draw up constitutions and rules, or to organise their administration, activities, and programmes without previous authorisation.

Small enterprise workers denied legal protection

Large numbers of workers in smaller enterprises are also excluded from legal protection at work. The Factories Act 1934 applies only when there are 10 or more permanent staff and the Industrial and Commercial Employees (Standing Orders) Ordinance 1968 requires 50

or more workers in an industry and at least 20 in a commercial firm. Reportedly, employers avoid the application of labour laws by registering a number of small businesses rather than a single large one even where workers are employed on the same premises. Frequent use of temporary and contract labour allows many employers to avoid the terms of this legislation by staying within the limits specified by law. Poor health and safety conditions are common in smaller enterprises.

Restrictions on the right to strike

The IRO (Article 32-2) allows the Government to ban any strike causing ‘serious hardship to the country’ or prejudice to the national interest or, in any case, after 30 days. The Government may also dissolve a strike before the 30-day period elapses ‘if it is satisfied that the continuance of such a strike or lockout is causing serious hardship’. These overly broad restrictions on the right to strike have been the subject of repeated ILO complaints and rulings.

Trade unions argue that the right to strike is so constrained as to be almost non-existent. Unions are required to participate in conciliation proceedings and cooling-off periods. Faced with these complications, strikes are usually illegal and short. Using provisions of the Rules Maintenance Act 1952, all strike activity was blocked at the Pakistan Steel Mills, Sui Northern Gas, and the Pakistan Telecommunications, Post Office, and the Capital Development Authority (CDA) Employees’ Union.

The police commonly break up illegal strikes and demonstrations and few achieve their goals. ‘Illegal’ strikes give employers justification for lay-offs. Employers are limited in the right to lock employees out, but unions maintain that employers sidestep these limitations. Illegal firings and lockouts are common.

Labour rights sacrificed to foreign investors

The EPZ Authority Ordinance 1980 (EPZAO) (Section 26) and the EPZ (Control of Employment) Act 1982 (Section 4) prohibits workers in EPZs from striking, going slow, refusing to work, and inciting or compelling others to do so. The EPZs are exempt from all labour legislation, including the IRO. In addition, the EPZAO (Section 25) specifically withdraws the coverage for:

- Workmens' Compensation Act 1923;
- Factories Act 1934;
- Payment of Wages Act 1936;
- Minimum Wage Ordinance 1961;
- Provincial Employees' Social Security Ordinance 1965;
- West Pakistan ICEO;
- West Pakistan Shops and Establishments Ordinance 1969;
- Employees' Old-Age Benefits Act 1976.

As part of 1992-1993 trade policy, the Government extended this prohibition to all export-oriented units that export at least 70 percent of their production. This leaves workers at the mercy of both local and foreign employers. The Finance Bill, 1992 (Item 14: Incentives to Private Investors) grants special privileges to foreign investors. Once official notification is issued, 'provisions of the IRO and other laws as the Government may specify shall not apply to the industrial undertaking or class of undertakings situated in the industrial zones specified in such notification'.

The Investment Promotion Board announced in July 1992 that twelve new industrial zones would be created throughout Pakistan. According to the All Pakistan Federation of Labour, conditions of workers at existing industrial areas such as Hattar and Gardoon Amazi are already dismal with minimal wages, frequent dismissals and employer hostility blocking union organising. Late in 1992 Finance Minister Sartaj Aziz, speaking to a group of Japanese businessmen in Tokyo, promised, 'Pakistan's labour laws will not be applicable in the special industrial zones being set up by the government.'

Restrictions on collective bargaining

Only about three percent of Pakistan's 'modern' sector workers are members of unions certified as collective bargaining agents (CBA). In order to engage in collective bargaining with an employer, a trade union must have CBA certification. If only one union is registered in an establishment, it is certified if it includes over one third of the workers. If there is more than one union, the CBA is determined through secret ballot, renewable every two years. The union receiving the highest number of votes is certified provided these total over a third.

If a single union is present in an enterprise, it is in a better position in collective bargaining and generally ob-

tains an agreement. In multi-union situations, however, only the certified CBA can engage in disputes. It often lacks support from members of other unions and this situation is frequently exploited both by the employer as well as the rival unions, weakening the strength of the CBA. The fact that some two-thirds of all organised workers are not included in CBA trade unions illustrates the labour movement's disadvantage in industrial relations.

In 1997 the Cabinet passed an amendment to the IRO stating that if trade unions form a federation, it cannot bargain with individual employers, each component union has to bargain for itself. This is an attempt to weaken the power of federations. The amendment was challenged by trade unions and, as a result, has not yet come into force.

Bonded labour

The Constitution provides sanctions against slavery, forced labour, and traffic in human beings. Pakistan has ratified ILO Convention 29 on forced labour. To give effect to the obligations under the Constitution and the Convention, Pakistan enacted the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act 1992 and framed the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Rules 1995 under the Act. The law abolished debt bondage and forced labour in all forms regardless of age, sex, race, colour, and religion. No person shall make any advance under, or in pursuance of, the bonded labour system or compel any person to render any bonded labour or other form of forced labour. Any violation is punishable with fine or imprisonment or with both. It is an infringement too of ILO Convention Nos. 29 and 105 on forced labour, ratified by Pakistan.

However, the provincial governments, which are responsible for enforcing the law, have failed to establish enforcement mechanisms. Hence, the law is largely ineffective.

The new legislation is not yet fully implemented but it offers a basis for court cases that could improve the bonded labour situation. Little progress is yet seen in industries employing bonded labour and employer resistance to the legislation is strong. Due to the lack of employment alternatives, many workers voluntarily return to bonded labour. The prevalence of bonded labour in the agriculture sector in Sindh province continues unabated.

Child labour

Although legally banned by the Child Employment Act 1991, staggering accounts of the prevalence of child labour still surface. The Act forbids the employment of children under 14 years of age and strictly prohibits the employment of all children in hazardous occupations.

A January 1993 report of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan indicates that children under age 14 make up an astounding 46 percent of the labour force. The Commission found an estimate of 7.5 million children at work. It further revealed that a quarter of the children were employed in fields categorised as bonded industries, like carpet-weaving, bricks, glass, and fishing. A 1992 ILO report on child labour world-wide; revealed that in Pakistan, about half of the children working in the carpet-weaving industry die before reaching the age of 12 due to malnutrition and disease. A later ILO report (1996) estimates that 3.3 million children are 'economically active'. The ILO's International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour is active in combating child labour through monitoring and rehabilitation. International trade union solidarity is mobilised in the struggle to eliminate the exploitation of children and has achieved significant success in the football and surgical implements sectors. The principle cause for child labour is poverty.

Compulsory prison labour

Although the ILO has exempted certain kinds of prison labour from the forced labour category, Pakistan has several current laws where authorities appear to have wide discretion to sentence violators to penalties that may involve compulsory labour of the sort that amounts to forced labour. These include provisions 10-13 of the Security Pakistan Act 1952, the West Pakistan Press and Publications Ordinance 1963 (sections 12, 23, 24, 27, 28, 30, 36, 56, 59) and the Political Parties Act 1962 (sections 2, 7). The Government has made no attempt to modify or abolish these laws.

Section III Major events/issues related to labour law

During the year 2000, there occurred four work stoppages (strikes and lockouts) involving 225 workers,

which resulted in 667 worker-days lost, in Sindh province (none in other provinces). The main causes of these work stoppages were shortage of raw material in two establishments and financial crisis in two other establishments.

During the year 2001, there occurred four work stoppages involving 711 workers and 7,078 worker-days lost in Sindh province (none in other provinces). The main causes of work stoppages were financial crisis in three establishments and in one establishment the work stoppages occurred due to non-availability of raw material.

Prior to March 1997 and October 1999, Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) was handed to the military, which dissolved the trade union, the Hydro-electrical Central Labour Union. Representatives of the Hydro-electric Union and the Pakistan Workers Confederation jointly arranged huge demonstrations in different towns. The General Secretary of the Hydro-electric Union has been a member of the Governing Body of the ILO for many years. The workers in WAPDA later showed a little reluctance in participating in demonstrations; they wanted direct action. On suppression of the unions in WAPDA and Karachi Electric Supply Corporation (KESC), the Workers Confederation, the National Labour Confederation, and the National Labour Federation (affiliated to a religious political party) stayed away from Tripartite Consultation on federal level, expressing united opposition to the Government's anti-labour stance. The regime of President Sharif scrapped the national holiday on 1 May (Labour Day).

The May Day holiday and the trade union in WAPDA were both restored. Military take over in WAPDA was ordered to gradually end, but not the ban on the KESC Union. There was a settlement between the management and workers of Ghazi Brotha Project. This is the case where international pressure influenced a settlement. The trade union in Italy, to which the management was connected, exerted pressure on the management in Italy to settle the dispute in Pakistan.

Appendix

Names and contact details of the key trade union federations

<p>All-Pakistan Trade Unions Organisation Room No. 3 Al-Amara Plaza 2nd Floor Opp. Capri Cinema, Karachi Tel: 092-21-7787966</p>	Mr. Said Pasha Lodhi, President
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<p>Pakistan Trade Unions Federation KMC Building, Khamosh Colony Karachi Tel: 092-21-5861160, 092-21-5872991</p>	Ms. Kaneez Fatima, President
<p>Pakistan National Federation of Trade Unions (PNFTU) 406, Qamar House, M. A. Jinnah Road Karachi Tel: 092-21-2313371</p>	Mr. Muhammad Sharif, President Mr. Abdul Ghafoor Baloch, Secretary General
<p>Pakistan Workers Confederation (PWC) Khyber Bazar Kabli Chowk Peshawar Tel/Fax: 092-91-218930</p>	Mr. Gul Rehman, President
<p>National Trade Unions Federation (NTUF) Bharoch Building, 2-B/6 Commercial Nazimabad No. 2 Karachi Tel: 092-21-628339, 092-21-6622361 (This organisation was established in 2000)</p>	Mr. Saleem Raza, General Secretary