

## **Response from Ananta Garments Ltd. to report about poverty wages in Bangladesh's garment sector**

**6 April 2021**

Business & Human Rights Resource Centre invited Ananta Garments Ltd. to respond to the following report by the Steelworkers Humanity Fund that explores how poverty wages in Bangladesh's garment sector affect workers' access to food, housing, and healthcare.

- [Report: "Not Even the Bare Minimum: Bangladeshi Garment Workers' Wages and the Responsibility of Canadian Brands"](#), January 2021, The Steelworkers Humanity Fund

Ananta Garments Ltd. sent the following statement:

"Ananta Garments Ltd. has been participating in ILO Better work program for the last 5 years. As a result of the participation with Better Work, the facility has steadily improved compliance with ILO core labor standards and national legislation covering improve working conditions and respect of labor rights for workers, and boost the competitiveness of apparel business.

The facility has been evaluated and certified under the vendor COCs by international reputed clothing brands, international audit firms, concerns government offices, and received letter of recognitions from Accord, Alliance and others for maintaining long term sustainability and coherent business growth. This has significantly improved working conditions and, at the same time enhanced factories' productivity and profitability. So, implementation of wages and benefits in place legally, no doubt.

We are deeply concerned after receiving the research report and it is not relevant to Ananta Garments Ltd. However, we have taken the research report very seriously & has also taken this as an opportunity to find if any such allegations really exist but we found nothing matched with the mentioned allegations. Please see our response below:

### **Research Report in Page no 30 & 34:**

As we move through many uncertainties due to COVID 19 pandemic since March 2020, the facility is running with 97-98% capacity and our top priority remains the health, safety, and well-being of our employees and to protect our business. It is now more important than ever to face the challenge together and employees are the key in creating a long-term competitive edge for our business. It's quite unfortunate for Ananta Garments Ltd., to receive any reports on Working hours stated in page 34 and living wages in page 30 as the facility provided wages that is above Govt. declared minimum wage. The facility also conducted routine survey on fair wage to meet its long-term sustainability goal.

Here reported workers work 2-5 hours overtime but we Ananta has an established overtime policy, expertise in planning and capacity to keep overtime in legal limit and regularly being audited by different national and international auditing firms and buyers itself which confirm us not violating the working hours both national and international standard level. So, as complying with all regulations, we strongly defy the above allegation regarding the excess working hours in our facility.

**Research Report in Page no 36:**

The report of additional 30-50 minutes work or stay after the shift not paid as regular Overtime is not authentic.

1. We have automated clocking (Face recognition punch) system which provides accurate IN-OUT data.

2. After each shift ends each floor responsible mainly Admin officer confirms the worker's safe departure and shut down the power.

So, there is no option to stay in the workplace after each shift ends.

**Research Report in Page no 48:**

Regarding few workers in the sample section of Ananta Garments Ltd, we communicated with the mentioned employees when it came to our knowledge and found that there were some gaps in communication. As a part of better industrial relationship, we requested workers federation to intervene to minimize the confusion and maximize understanding. Finally, the issues were resolved in presence of Labor union and Company management.

Please also be informed that the facility has a Functional PC elected by the workers on secret ballot (in presence of brands, development partners and relevant stakeholders) to ensure healthy relationship between workers and management.

We hope, provided evidence is strong enough to prove that the mentioned allegation is fabricated. On the other hand, the research report was published unilateral and without verifying with us. It is clearly understandable that someone from outside Ananta Garments Ltd instigate few people to prepare a report to deteriorate our company reputation in the market.”