

FAWU BULLETIN

Newsletter For Members and Staff

13 March 2009

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Worker Suspended For Wearing ANC T-shirt

A shop steward and employee of the Rainbow Chickens plant in Worcester, Zolani Newu, was suspended on Wednesday 4 March 2009 after wearing an ANC t-shirt to work.

FAWU is shocked and outraged that this type of discrimination still exists in a free and democratic society. We will do everything in our powers to see that our members are not intimidated at their workplaces. Workers are entitled to the basic right of freedom of association and to support a political party of their choice. These rights should be protected especially in the run up to the elections. To this effect, FAWU calls for the immediate halt of any action against the worker by this company and enjoys the support of COSATU in the matter.

The company claims that the workplace is "politically neutral" and would therefore not allow it to be used as a platform to campaign.

Workers at this plant normally turn up for work in their own clothes before putting on safety wear for factory hygiene and safety purposes.

FAWU Western Cape chairperson -Pieter Dirks- says, " The company is sending a very specific message of political intimidation to workers and we will not allow this".

The company is adamant to proceed with a disciplinary hearing. Meanwhile COSATU the province and the local ANC branch has also been involved in pressuring the company to halt all disciplinary action.

FAWU Statement on Liquor Bill

Fawu believes that there must be a process of licencing granted to shebeen and tavern owners before implementation of the bill;

- There should be meaningful engagement and consultation with these shebeen and tavern owners in terms of the requirements of operating a shebeen and tavern;
- Tavern and shebeen owners should be allowed a reasonable period to meet the aforementioned requirements for operating e.g.

Also, we think it unreasonable to expect the shebeen or tavern owners to be operating their business from a different place than their dwellings as many of them don't have that much money to acquire a piece of land in prime business spots.

R 50 Million Project To Target HIV Among Farm Workers

A three year programme by the International Organisation for Migration(IOM) and US Agency for International Development (USAID) was recently launched in South Africa's Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces. The programme, called Ripfumelo (meaning "believe" in isiTsonga) will target about 20 000 farm workers with the aim to provide prevention and care services as well as to address factors contributing to the spread of HIV. The project will also target migrant farm workers.

According to the IOM, recent studies conducted show that farm workers are prone to engage in high risk behaviour such as low condom use and multiple sexual partners. A representative of USAID agrees and added that all efforts to curb the spread of HIV normally remains mainly medical issues while other factors such as alcohol abuse and life skills and other factors takes a back seat to medical care.

The programme " Ripfumelo" therefore seeks to address lifestyle issues such as promoting healthy recreational activities, financial literacy and workplace policies. It seeks to adopt an integrated approach to deal with all issues that play a role in the spread of HIV among farming communities.

The organisations stated that they plan to work with various stakeholders and organisations in the implementation of the programme.

Chokka Strikers Frustrations Lead To Arrests

About three hundred striking fishing workers and their families participated in a sit-in in at the Department of Labour's Port Elizabeth offices on Wednesday, 11 March 2009. They have since been arrested and released on warning. The workers held the protest demonstration in an attempt to speak to a senior official or the Minister himself.

Frustrations are on the rise for these workers who have been on strike for almost six months due to employer organisation's (EOCAF) refusal to grant workers a basic salary as the union's principle demand. Strikers feel aggrieved that the Minister can talk to domestic workers (seen as a vulnerable worker sector) about a sectoral determination, whereas they have been neglected in this regard.

"The workers have not informed union officials of their intentions to stage a sit-in and the union does not condone the actions of workers" says cde Mbalisi Tonga, provincial secretary of the Eastern Cape.

FAWU feels that the Minister of Labour should do everything in his power to ensure that vulnerable workers, and in this instance fishing workers, have a sectoral determination. The employers no longer cares as they are making use of scab labour. There seems

to be no end in sight for the thousand workers on strike and the positive intervention of the Department of Labour is sorely needed.

So far, workers and their families have made due with food parcels from the Social Security Agency of South Africa (SASSA) as special assistance. FAWU plans to stage a march later this month to bring attention to the plight of these workers and the fishing industry as a whole.

!!!! VACANCY!!!!

BENEFITS COORDINATOR

Based in our Satellite Head office in Johannesburg

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Coordinate the union's bargaining strategy on improvements in members medical aid and provident fund benefits
2. Attend to all provident funds and medical aid board of trustees meetings or coordinate the union's participation in those
3. Negotiating and/or initiating the establishment of provident funds and medical aid schemes for our members
4. Negotiating or initiating the introduction of funeral schemes for our members
5. Developing position papers on how best can the union improve these benefits or get to achieve them from companies for our members
6. Writing reports and presenting those to the General Secretary and the National Executive Council meetings

REQUIREMENTS OF SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS

1. Matric or Equivalent (Recognition of Prior Learning)
2. Post-matric qualification or studies will be an added advantage
3. Driver's Licence (Code 8 Equivalent)
4. Basic Knowledge of Retirements Laws

5. Basic knowledge of Medical Aid laws
6. Experience in Negotiating & Introduction of Funds & Schemes
7. Experience in Participating in Board of Trustees Meetings
8. Basic Knowledge of Social Health Insurance and Retirement Laws Reforms
9. Basic Knowledge of Social Security Debates at Nedlac

All applications must be accompanied by a covering letter, curriculum vitae and certified copies of qualifications/proof of registrations and be sent to the General Secretary by fax at 021 637 6164.

Closing Date: 27th March 2009

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