

On the Labour Day, Fear Allah Regarding Labourers and Their Rights



On the first of May every year, there is renewed talk about work and its value, and about workers and their rights. Islam has raised the value of work up to a high and sublime status, as it placed good deeds in second place after belief in Allah – Allah Almighty said: {Indeed, those who have believed and done righteous deeds – indeed, We will not allow to be lost the reward of any who did well in deeds.} (Al-Kahf: 30).

And Allah made the physical work as a way of giving thanks (to Allah), the same as the work of the tongue (by expressing thanks), Allah Almighty said: { Work you, O family of Dawud (David), with thanks! But few of My slaves are grateful.} (Saba: 13).

On the Labour Day when the world celebrates workers and their role in people’s lives and building nations and societies, we feel pain when we look at the conditions of workers in our Muslim countries, especially in Egypt, where the values and rights of workers have declined, the social hierarchy has been disrupted, and workers have become at the lowest rung of the social ladder. They suffer from poverty, unemployment, poor wages, and forced exit from the labor market in various ways, without law protection, in a harsh form of the control of the rich and wealthy people over their food and livelihood. State policies – of selling factories, major companies, and others – have contributed to worsening workers' conditions; and Egypt has become repellent of distinguished professional workers.

On this occasion, the Brotherhood calls on the Egyptian state to respect the labourers’ rights guaranteed by the Constitution, and to seek to enhance the conditions of workers and support their right to fair and adequate wages, so that the worker would not suffer from the high prices resulting from the devaluation of the pound, without

intervention from the state; and the private sector and businessmen would not unilaterally dominate the workers and make them choose between low wages that do not meet their needs, or dismissal and unemployment. Trade unions must assume their responsibilities towards the rights of their members, demand fair rights and adequate wages for them, and not fail to defend workers' rights in every way and at every level.

We address our appeal to the workers of Egypt on their Labour Day, to preserve the values of Islam at work, and to work according to diligence, efficiency and quality, as Allah Almighty said: {... "Make you perfect coats of mail, balancing well the rings of chain armour, and work you (men) righteousness. Truly, I am All Seer of what you do".} (Saba: 11). The worker should know that demanding rights requires performing duties, and that neglecting rights does not mean wasting the values of work.

We also call on business owners to fear Allah regarding the rights of their workers, for these workers are a blessing from Allah to them, and if it were not for them, they would not have gained, and that Allah will question them about what He has given them. According to Sahih Al-Bukhari, it was narrated from Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: (Allah Almighty says: "I am the opponent of three on the Day of Resurrection, and if I am someone's opponent I will defeat him: A man who makes promises in My Name, then proves treacherous; a man who sells a free man and consumes his price; and a man who hires a worker, makes use to him, then does not give him his wages."

Allah Is the Greatest; and May Praise Be to Allah

Dr. Salah Abdel Haq

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