

International Women's Day: 8 March 2009

Working men & women demand fair distribution

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Today as we celebrate International Women's Day, Party Socialist Malaysia (PSM) recognizes the contribution of the many women and men who struggled to bring changes to this world and those who had tirelessly worked towards the liberation of women from the dominant classes.

Industrial Revolution in Europe has led the path for women to come together and demand for equal rights and better working conditions. Among the significant events are the strike by garment workers in New York city on 8 March 1857 and the strike on 8 March 1908 by women workers in needle trade in New York who demanded right to vote and an end to child labour. In 1910, the Second Socialist International adopted the proposal from German socialist Clara Zetkin to proclaim 8th March as International Women's Day to honor the working women in the world.

152 years later, women all over the world have advanced in many fields from education, skills, profession including politics. More and more women has joined the work force over the century and they have become the back bone of economic development in agricultural, manufacturing and service sectors in both developed and developing countries. In Malaysia, female population is estimated 13 million and about 3.8 million are in the labour force compared to men 6.8 million. 26% are professionals & officials, 13.6% are skilled workers while another 60% women worker are in the clerical, service and production sectors. According to government statics two years ago, 3.4% women are unemployed. Overall women's contribution to labour force is 36% in comparison to men workers. These official statics of course does not take into account the numerous labor done by women at home eg domestic work, child care etc.

The on going global economic crisis is said to be the worst since 80 years ago. The working class is the most affected. The greediness of a few profit orientated businessmen and speculators is making millions of workers to suffer from extreme low wage, huge debt, unemployment, discrimination and poverty. Women workers would be the most affected since they would be the first to lose their jobs. The crisis would further degrade both women and men.

In addition millions of women are already suffering from gender based violence, discrimination, exploitation and the market system has made them into another commodity for profit, especially by the media moguls and human traffickers. In many countries religion and feudal practices continues to subjugate women to man. The challenges women are facing is immeasurable.

As socialists, we seek the liberation of the working class and we strongly believe both women and men should unite on class basis to overthrow any system and faith that dehumanizes and oppresses. Both women and men should unite to attain the power that would ensure production by needs, democratic decision making, fair distribution of wealth and free access to basic needs.

Down with Discrimination, Down with Sexism, Down with Capitalism,

Long live Class Revolution!

Released by,

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