

Voice of the Workers: Ms. Papassorn Tasanasuwan

# **Stamping dates on product packages 1,500 times in one hour**

Sunday 5 February 2006, by [TASANASUWAN Papassorn](#) (Date first published: January 2006).

**Ms. Papassorn Tasanasuwan is a 33 years old worker in the Navanakorn Industrial Estate in Pathumthani province. Following is the story of her working life. [Thai Labour Campaign]**

"I have worked for 12 years stamping dates on product packages. This work has lead to an occupational problem. I use my right arm for stamping, and I use my left hand to press and change each package, which requires much strength and strain on muscles in my left arm. In one hour, I have to finish 1,500 packages; the daily target is 12,000 packages.

In the beginning, I could stand the pain. But for several years the pain has been increasing. The muscle is in pain as my left tendon is stuck due to the working position, which requires that I have been sitting at work in the same position for the past 10 years. When I work, I have to lean to the left all the time while pressing the packages so that they do not slip away. My left [arm] muscles are stiff, causing my neck to bend to the left and inflammation around my shoulder blade. In 2003, I went to a hospital to seek help, as is my right under the Social Security Act.

After one year of treatment, I filed a form to the Severance Fund at the Social Security Office to claim my rights for the treatment. But five months later, the doctor of the Severance Fund gave his diagnosis: that my sickness is not work related, despite the fact that the doctor who treated me at the hospital said that that my sickness is work related. After I submitted the complaint to the fund, my employer found out and got angry. He threatened me by saying that I wasn't sick from working, and that I would see him in the court. He said that the complaint damages the company's image, and ordered me to cancel the complaint.

I made an appeal against the fund's diagnosis on the 10 th June 2005. It has been three months now without any progress; I would like justice and someone to be responsible for my sickness. My employers do not take any responsibility and the fund also rejects my complaint. For twelve years, I have worked hard for the company. Now I am sick and unable to work in other companies, and cannot work hard anymore. As time goes by, I have more and more pain and my mind is also negatively affected.

If I win the case by submitting my case to the fund, I would have the right to be treated until healthy again. During that time I would receive monthly compensation, at rates from 60 per cent of my past monthly wages. If I cannot become healthy again through the treatment, another solution would be found [such as disability compensation, or other treatment]. At the moment, the doctor who is treating me said that I have to take an extended rest. If I am still working, my problem cannot be cured.

I would like the government to establish the Institute to protect workers' occupational health and

those victimized by work related diseases. They need to advise and help workers as they suffer very much. I have seen that the officials in the SSO work quite slowly. For example, the diagnosis took more than 5 months but in the end it states that mine is not work related. So I have to make an appeal again which is taking several months. If a patient waiting this long to exercise their rights is in serious condition, it would be very bad for them.

Also, I would like to say to employers that they need to take care of their workplace. Sometimes, the speed of work is too much for workers. For me, I have worked for 12 years; even a machine can be broken so why not an ordinary human? When we are sick, I would like the employers to take better care of their workers. There are many workers falling into the same situation as me but do not dare to fight, as they are afraid of trouble with employers. **Think of raising your hand up and down 1,500 times in one hour, it is very difficult. I worked this way 8 hours a day for 12 years. "**

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**P.S.**

\* Testimony published on Thai Labour Campaign website.