

Press Release

Workers at Japanese plant protest government and management connivance

Sunday 13 August 2006, by [Partido Manggagawa](#) (Date first published: 10 August 2006).

Around 150 workers of a Japanese semiconductor plant in the industrial suburbs of the Metro Manila in the Philippines together with allied groups Partido ng Manggagawa (Labor Party) marched today to protest management's refusal to accept back the protesting laborers. The union at the Japanese plant that is located inside the prestigious Laguna Technopark (an export processing enclave in Southern Luzon part of the Philippines just outside Metro Manila) comprise some 289 regular employees of the manufacturer of copper foil used in semiconductor chips.

The march started as early as 6:30 am today at the Coke Sta. Rosa plant and proceeded to the Laguna Technopark where the plant of Nikko Materials Phils. is located. The protest ended at 11:30 am today after a program where speakers denounced the management and the Department of Labor and Employment. "The more labor is repressed, the greater the eruption of the social volcano in our country," declared Ronnie Luna of the Partido ng Manggagawa (Labor Party).

"Management is illegally refusing to implement the back-to-work order issued by the office of the labor secretary of almost one year ago. And the labor department is being inutile in executing its own order," insisted Darwin Valenzuela, union president of NMWAP-SUPER (Nikko Materials Workers Association of the Philippines-Solidarity of Union of the Philippines for Empowerment and Reform).

The October 7, 2005 order of the labor secretary mandates that all striking employees should go back to work and for management to accept them back on the same terms and conditions of employment prior to strike. Management only accepted back about half of the striking workers and terminated the 150 workers who led the march today.

The dispute at the Nikko Materials Phils. started over a deadlock at the negotiations for a new collective bargaining agreement, forcing the workers to conduct a sit-in strike and the labor department granting management's request for an assumption of jurisdiction.

Valenzuela stated, "Our struggle shows clearly the connivance between management and government and the double standard of our laws. The labor department lost no time in enjoining our strike using the assumption of jurisdiction and then dragged its feet in implementing the back to work order-both to management's benefit and labor's disadvantage."

He recalled the circumstances of the strike-"Out of 19 points in our collective bargaining proposal, management only wants to talk about two-wage increase and sick leave/vacation leave. They are throwing loose change to workers who have sweated to make the company productive. Management is offering a package worth only Php14 million for the next two years compared to workers demands valued at Php80 million which is a drop in the bucket given that Nikko Materials had sales accruing to Php8 billion in the last three years. Workers are asking for a wage increase of Php150 per day in the 4th and 5th year of the CBA which is not extreme considering that Nikko Materials is a high

value-added manufacturer in the profitable semiconductor industry.”

Partido ng Manggagawa (Labor Party-Philippines)