بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Bangladesh's Garment Crisis: The Dead End of Capitalist Misrule

News:

Bangladesh's garment workers are demanding a monthly minimum wage of Tk 30,000, more than double the current Tk 12,500, as rising living costs make it increasingly difficult to afford basic necessities. Protests have turned violent, disrupting factories and prompting government concern. While factory owners warn that higher wages could threaten competitiveness, Al Jazeera highlights how inflation has eroded workers' purchasing power and calls attention to global fashion brands' responsibility for ensuring fair wages and decent working conditions (Al Jazeera).

Comment:

The growing unrest among Bangladesh's ready-made garment (RMG) workers reflects a deeper economic crisis. As Al Jazeera reports, rising living costs and stagnant wages have left workers struggling to afford basic necessities. Protests are turning violent, raising concerns that the unrest could threaten government stability. However, this is not simply a conflict between workers demanding higher wages and factory owners struggling to survive. Both operate within a global capitalist system shaped by international trade and unequal power relations. Global fashion brands demand cheap production, while workers and local manufacturers bear much of the pressure.

The RMG crisis reflects Bangladesh's unequal position in the global capitalist economy. Inflation, currency pressures and financial instability are not merely isolated problems; they are recurring features of a capitalist system that make long-term development impossible for countries like Bangladesh. Their costs fall disproportionately on ordinary people, while undermining the country's ability to invest in productive industries. Although garment exports generate jobs and foreign currency, Bangladesh remains dependent on low-margin products, while much of the value is captured by global brands.

Successive governments have failed to develop a long-term industrial strategy to reduce this dependence. Instead, they have maintained an economic model vulnerable to global market pressures. Wage increases and labour reforms are necessary, but they cannot solve the underlying crisis.

Bangladesh needs the promised Khilafah Rashidah (Rightly Guided Caliphate), guided by a clear vision for national development. This system must move beyond basic garments towards higher-value industries, invest in technology, skills and productivity, and strengthen domestic supply chains. It must also develop the capacity to produce heavy machinery, textiles and industrial materials, reducing dependence on imported inputs and limited export markets. The benefits of higher productivity must be reflected in better wages and working conditions for workers. The existing capitalist ruling regimes cannot deliver this fundamental transformation. Without a new political and economic direction that transforms Bangladesh's industrial strategy and position in the global economy, the country will remain trapped in a cycle of cheap labour, economic instability and recurring unrest.

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Irtiza Chowdhury – Wilayah Bangladesh