

RECTIFICATION WORK COMPLETED ON 5 FORCED LABOUR INDICATOR CLAIMS, SAYS TOP GLOVE

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Top Glove managing director Datuk Lee Kim Meow said the company had taken corrective action plans on all the indicator findings by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) -NSTP/ASWADI ALIAS.

KUALA LUMPUR: Top Glove Corp Bhd has completed rectification work on five forced labour indicators; and it is confident the United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) will revoke the Withhold Release Order (WRO) status on its products once verification of these efforts are completed next week.

Top Glove managing director Datuk Lee Kim Meow said the company had taken corrective action plans on all the indicator findings by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), namely retention of identity documents, deception, debt bondage, physical and sexual violence as well as intimidation.

When elaborating on the rectification on debt bondage aspect, Lee said a four-month remediation payment had given to workers in lump sums, amounting to RM150 million on April 2.

Lee said these outcomes signified the end of the issue as the company had fulfil their part as promised to the CBP. He said it was now awaiting independent consultant, Impactt, to verify the payment with the workers.

Impactt is an independent consultant which specialises in ethical trade practices, human rights and labour practices.

It was engaged by Top Glove last year to assess the group's ethical trade, human rights and fair labour practices; propose corrective action plans and monitor its implementation.

On other rectifications, Lee said one of them involved getting recruitment agents to return personal documents to workers.

The company had also beefed up its systems to check and take action against cases of abuse or sexual harassment.

He said for physical and sexual violence, the company beefed up its system by enhancing sexual harassment policy, prevention of bullying at workplace policy and grievance procedure.

He said this has led to townhalls as well as the setting up of an Impactt Helpline for workers to report or raise any case of abuse or harassment.

Lee said the company also amended its recruitment advertisements in relation to the deception indicator in the findings.

"So now, the ball is in the court of Impactt to verify the rectifications. We have done exactly what the CBP has asked, which was more remediation and rectification.

"Verification will be done next week and we have asked Impactt to speed it up. We are confident that we have done all the necessary, which were not difficult to accomplish.

"Once all these are verified, we believe the CBP will be happy to take the necessary action and move on to Phase 4 (where the CBP will either modify or revoke the WRO," he said today.

Late last month, the CBP ordered personnel at the US ports of entry to seize Top Glove's gloves made in Malaysia over allegations of forced labour, which fuelled concerns over its Environment Social and Governance practices in the industry.