

Getting Voices Across:

Mirpur Bhitro is a Tehsil of Thatta District. People from the outskirts and neighboring villages come to the main market of the city to buy their day-to-day needs. The daily wagers including hawkers, cart-carriers, sales-men and general laborers of the market would neither get equally rewarded for their services nor would be treated as equal human beings by the shopkeepers and daily market visitors/the customers. Nobody would appreciate their needs and rights as equal human beings. Their exploitation was at its ultimate heights.

This was a point of serious concern for SPO; hence, it decided to intervene in it. With the support of over 60 local laborers, a local labor union called 'Goth Sidhar Sangat' was activated. Under the umbrella of this union, the local laborers were gathered and sensitized regarding the latest labor laws of the country. They were informed about the current government's recent notification for minimum salary package of 7000 rupees per month for laborers/workers. They were sensitized about 'the change' they can induce through peaceful advocacy for the realization of their basic rights. They were persuaded to demand from the trade union, raise in their daily wages from 100 PKR to minimum of 200 PKR per day.

After this, the labor union felt empowered and decided to put their demands before the trade union. Initially the trade union resisted believing that the laborers would return to work in couple of days when their families starve in the absence of daily earning by their sole bread-winners. However, despite the anguishes of their innocent children and other family members, the laborers decided not to get exploited by the trade union. Their consistency in their approach earned them dividends as the trade union felt handicapped in the absence of their business drivers -the workers. They faced severe difficulties in handling day-to-day affairs of their businesses including clients, stores and shops handling. This made them realize that it's their workers who are in fact earn living for them and their respective families and therefore their concerns must be respected and addressed at merit. The trade union accepted the demands of the labor union and agreed to implement the state laws related to labor in letter and spirit in future as well.