

# Workers strike spreads in industrial zone in Rangoon: Riot Police deployed

<http://www.mizzima.com/news/inside-burma/3501-workers-strike-spreads-in-industrial-zone-in-rangoon-riot-police-deployed.html>

Tuesday, 09 February 2010 17:01

New Delhi (Mizzima) – About 2,000 workers from three factories in the Hlaing Tharyar Industrial Zone continued their strike today, demanding better wages.

"The strike is on today but we are not aware what their demands are... Workers of three factories are staging the strike. The policemen are from police battalions and the Rangoon Division police force. The three factories are OPAL 2, Kyarlay and Taiyi," a duty officer from Hlaing Tharyar police station said, adding Police Chief Maj. Gen. Khin Yi arrived at the spot with a large contingent of police personnel. However, a duty officer of the Rangoon Police Head office refused to answer questions on the strike and



did not confirm whether Khin Ye was at the spot.

"The streets in Hlaing Tharyar Industrial Zone No. 3 have been cordoned off and we saw about 30 police vehicles on the roads," a woman school teacher from Hlaing Tharyar said.

The striking workers are demanding an extra Kyat 10,000 (USD 10) in wages and reduction of working hours from the current 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. They have also demanded that their work place and dining hall be made more hygienic with better sanitation.

Similarly about 1,400 workers from the South Korea owned 'Mya Fashion' garment factory in the Hlaing Tharyar Industrial Zone No. 3, staged a strike yesterday afternoon demanding better pay.

Residents around Hlaing Tharyar told Mizzima over telephone that they were not aware of any arrest or a crackdown by the police on the workers as yet.



About 100 workers from a prawn cold storage in Hlaing Tharyar Industrial Zone No. 2 and women workers from Weng Hong Hung garment factory in Hlaing Tharyar Industrial Zone No. 3 went for strikes on January 7 and 17 respectively.

There are 50,000 to 70,000 workers in Hlaing Tharyar, the biggest industrial zone in Burma. There are over 800 factories including cold storages, garment factories, foodstuff units, value-added wood industry, chemicals and general merchandise factories here.

According to the Hlaing Tharyar Industrial Zone management committee, of over 800 factories, only 400 are into manufacturing business.