

From Asia/ India

There is a way out...

As part of the same campaign (above), the National Campaign on Labour Rights (NCLR) has brought out a small booklet titled 'The Story of Suja Abraham'. We carry an excerpt from this.

Suja Abraham was like any of the thousands of young women workers who migrate from Kerala every year to work in the fish processing industry in Maharashtra and other coastal states. Normally, she would work for ten months, go back to her family for a month or so, and again join back on work for the next season. This cycle would go on for years without leaving any trace or record of her existence as a worker in the unit concerned or anywhere else for that matter. She would become just one of the countless and faceless workers as if she had no identity.

Thanks to a combination of various factors, including the timely and effective intervention of trade unions and other organizations, and her own extraordinary perseverance, Suja Abraham could survive the torture meted out to her and even fight for what was due to her. In the process, she has unwittingly become the symbol of the struggle carried on by women workers in the fish-and seafood-processing industry across the country. The landmark judgement by the Mumbai High Court, on the writ petition filed by Suja together with the organizations supporting her, is a major step in the struggle, while highlighting at the same time the sheer magnitude of the task still remaining.

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