



The Importance of Trade Unions/Labor Unions in Companies

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Abstract

An employment relationship occurs if there are elements of orders, wages, work carried out between the employer and the worker/laborer. Once there is an employment relationship, workers/laborers have the right to establish a workers/labor union within the Company. After workers/laborers have a trade union/labor union organization in the company, the worker/labor union has rights that must be accepted by the company in order to achieve dynamic work relations within the company. The rights of workers/labor unions that must be accepted after being established in a company are; represent workers/laborers to negotiate with employers, make collective work agreements, fight for share ownership for workers/laborers in the company and fight for the rights of every worker/laborer as regulated in labor legislation. Employers should not be arbitrary in providing every right to workers/laborers in the company because the rights of every worker have been regulated in legislation, for example regarding the Regency Minimum Wage (UMK) which has been regulated by the Governor's Regulation. Every company must comply with it to pay wages for its employees according to the UMK. . UMK is a safety net for workers to earn wages in order to achieve peace of mind at work. Even though wages are determined every year, if employers want to pay above the minimum wage, it is also permissible because workers/laborers are company assets that need to be looked after in order to make the production process more productive. But sometimes entrepreneurs underestimate workers/laborers because there are many workers out there who are unemployed, so between support and demand, supply and demand are not balanced, the bargaining position of workers/laborers is very low. So, to protect workers/laborers, it is absolutely necessary to have a workers/labor union in the company to act as a representative in every industrial relationship with the employer. One of the roles of trade unions is to represent workers/laborers when facing employers' lawsuits, whether regarding employment disputes or other disputes. One of the dispute claims that is submitted must be carried out by bipartite efforts first between the worker/laborer and the employer after which mediation is carried out by the department that handles employment issues.

Keywords: *Bipartite, Mediation, Mutual Agreement*

A. Introduction

That in the labor relations system in a company cannot be separated from the parties consisting of entrepreneurs (employers) and workers/laborers who have entered into an employment relationship. It is said that there is an employment relationship according to Law no. 13 of 2003 concerning employment, article 1 paragraph 15, namely:

"The relationship between entrepreneurs and workers/laborers is based on a work agreement, which has elements of work, wages and orders."

The weak bargaining position of workers/laborers results in high retention rates or disadvantages of workers/laborers in work relations in the company. Moreover, if we look at it sociologically, workers/laborers and employers have different positions which results in workers/laborers being very weak in front of employers/employers. If viewed from the position before the law (*equality before the law*), workers/laborers are the same as their employers, but in

¹. Collection of Legislation in the Field of Industrial Relations and Social Security. Law no. 13 of 2003 concerning employment, Central Java Provincial Manpower and Transduk Office, 2014, article 1 paragraph 15 p. 70.

fact, in practice, the same position before the law cannot be implemented in companies because of differences in social status.

In industrial relations, which is based on the mutual need between workers and employers, they must be able to sit in the same position in order to be able to solve all problems that arise in industrial relations. But in reality, if a company makes a lot of profit, it is said to be a quiet company, especially if the profit is small, it is said to be a loss. This usually raises suspicion from workers/laborers towards employers, which results in workers/laborers' productivity decreasing. Because the sense of ownership of the company is very low and workers do not have high motivation at work. This is due to the attitude of management who does not pay attention to workers/laborers and only thinks about seeking as much profit as possible. Apart from that, workers/laborers also think that the company they work for cannot be guaranteed to work until old age, especially if it is to improve the welfare of workers/laborers in meeting their daily living needs. Such things cannot yet be expected by workers/laborers in the context of harmonious and dynamic industrial relations within the framework of mutual need in the production process. Therefore, stability in the production process is very necessary in maintaining a balance between the company's rights and obligations, which must be in accordance with statutory regulations.

That workers/laborers in terms of receiving wages, which as a safety net apply the district/city minimum wage (UMK), are sometimes still far from being roasted, meaning they are still far from expectations. Because the company applies wages based on the Governor's regulations made by the provincial government at the suggestion of the Regent/Mayor once a year. This is what triggers workers/laborers to be less enthusiastic about working because the wages between those who have worked for one year and those who have worked for five years are the same. In determining the minimum wage, a mechanism has been created through the regional wage council to determine wages each year. For wages in 2024 now, for example, a survey has been carried out in 2023 which pays attention to economic growth and inflation. But if it is done honestly, it is no longer fair to apply because the survey was the previous year while the UMK was applied the year after. This means that when the survey is carried out to be implemented the following year it is no longer relevant. Because the inflation rate is different and national economic growth is also different from the previous year. But because the norms are like that, workers/laborers don't have to obey and implement these norms. As stated in *the Minister of Manpower and Transmigration Regulation Number 7 of 2013 concerning Minimum Wages Article 15*

- (1) *Employers are prohibited from paying wages lower than the stipulated Minimum Wage.*
 (2) *Minimum Wage only applies to workers/laborers who have worked for less than 1 (one) year.*²

Apart from the issue of Regency/City minimum wages, problems related to workers' normative rights are overtime pay, annual leave that has not been taken for six years can be taken in parallel, but so far middle to lower companies rarely provide these rights. For overtime pay, even though workers who have fulfilled their working hours in a 6-day week work 8 hours per day and have 1 hour rest. Meanwhile, those who work 5 days a week work 9 hours per day and have a one hour break. However, companies rarely apply these norms even though these regulations already exist in Law No. 13 of 2003 concerning employment. Therefore, workers/laborers are very weak when dealing with company leaders because workers/laborers do not yet have a platform that can accommodate their aspirations in fighting for their rights in the company. Just talking about normative rights is sometimes difficult to realize, especially if we ask for other rights which are only regulated in ministerial decrees or circulars whose legal force is very weak and difficult to realize.

Apart from the problem of normative rights not being granted, there is also a problem which to this day is still not in favor of workers/laborers, namely if workers/laborers are in conflict with the law, for example Termination of Employment Relations (PHK) workers are very difficult for the company to face for all kinds of reasons and this is difficult for them to avoid. workers/laborers whose layoffs will be a disaster for workers/laborers because the income they have received and used to support their family, namely their children and wife, stops. Because entrepreneurs usually when they are not suitable and are not happy with the workers/laborers, entrepreneurs take shortcuts in laying off the workers/laborers concerned. Therefore, as stated in law number 13 of 2003 concerning employment, article 151 paragraph 1 reads:

*"Employers, workers/laborers, trade unions and the government must make every effort to prevent termination of employment."*³

The words of this article are that it is hoped that all parties related to labor, starting from employers, workers/laborers, trade unions and the government, will make every effort to prevent layoffs from occurring. For entrepreneurs, they can implement efficiency within the

². *Minister of Manpower and Transmigration Regulation Number 7 of 2013 concerning Minimum Wages. Article 15 paragraphs 1 and 2*

³. *Op.cit* article 151 paragraph 1. Page 116

company while the workers/labourers are willing to accept the conditions under which the new company implements efficiency while the government becomes a place to provide mutual understanding about labor regulations to both parties. This is very important to do so that the production process can run without reducing workers/laborers.

Therefore, the presence of workers/labor unions in companies is very necessary in fighting for the rights of workers/laborers as representatives or directly facing company leaders, whether regarding rights disputes or other disputes in industrial relations. This also includes fighting for improving the welfare of workers/laborers in companies where the issue of worker/labor welfare is the company's obligation through social security for workers as stated in law number 13 of 2003 concerning employment article 99 paragraphs 1 and 2;

1. *Every worker/ laborer and their family have the right to obtain labor social security*
2. *"Social security for workers as intended in paragraph (1), is implemented in accordance with applicable laws and regulations."*⁴

Therefore, in this article, workers/laborers are normatively obliged to be included in the social security program, even though the process of including them is gradual. This is in addition to rights, it is also to improve the standard of living of workers/laborers so that their future is more secure and when carrying out the industrial relations process or working in a company it is calmer, which ultimately results in increased productivity.

B. Research methods

The approach used in this type of research is *Normative Juridical*, namely research carried out by examining secondary legal materials or research based on standard rules that have been recorded and discussing legal principles and legal synchronization.⁵

The research specifications used are *descriptive analysis*. What is meant by research specifications is the special nature/characteristics or uniqueness of a research. In this case, in the case of legal research in law, the law has special properties/characteristics or uniqueness. Namely as norms or rules that guide or benchmark human behavior in interacting with each other. Data collection techniques or types use observation techniques on literature and books that are relevant to regional autonomy. Reference books really support the repertoire in writing writing. Apart from the techniques and types of observation, interview techniques are also used with primary sources so that the resulting data is more valid. Data analysis methods Data

⁴Op. Cit, article 99 paragraphs 1 and 2 p

⁵Soerjono Soekanto and Sri Mamudji, *Normative Legal Research*, PT Raja Grafindo Persada, Jakarta, 2004. Pg, 13.

processing is the heart of research because processing this data will provide recommendations for output from research. This research uses a qualitative data analysis method, which is a method that focuses on explaining words and does not contain numbers. The data obtained in qualitative data analysis is subjective because it comes directly from source sources. This means that each person who is an informant in the research has a different perspective when asked about questions related to the research. Even though the data is in the form of words, the researcher actually needs to carry out further in-depth research regarding the results of the interview. Qualitative data is definitely will provide a lot of treasures if researchers are smart in processing the data well.

C. Discussion

That in establishing a trade/labor union in a company there are conditions that must be fulfilled so that problems do not occur in the future which are in conflict with the law because the trade/labor union in carrying out its duties is guided by the applicable legal regulations. In the formation of trade/labor unions as in Law Number 21 of 2000 concerning trade/labor unions article 5 paragraphs 1 and 2;

1. *Every worker/laborer has the right to form and become a member of a trade/labor union.*
2. *Trade unions/labor unions are formed by at least 10 (ten) workers/laborers.*⁶

This means that every worker/laborer has the same rights in establishing a worker/labor union within the company because the Indonesian state has ratified the ILO convention, which every country that has ratified the ILO convention must obey and submit to follow. In fact, the requirement that only 10 (ten) workers can establish a trade/labor union in a company is very helpful for workers/laborers who wish to establish one. Therefore, phenomena that occur in the field in one company make it possible for more than one worker/labor union to exist in one company. Therefore, the rights and obligations are regulated further in the regulations of the Minister of Manpower and Transmigration. In fact, during the New Order era, the Indonesian people preferred that only one trade/labor union existed in a company, as was the case during the New Order era, when at that time the only trade/labor union that existed was SPSI (All Indonesia Workers' Union). Because if there is only one trade union/labour union, it is easier to control.

⁶. Collection of Legislative Regulations in the Sector of Industrial Relations and Social Security Law No. 21 of 2000 concerning SP/SB, Central Java Provincial Manpower and Transmigration Office, 2014, Article 5 paragraphs 1 and 2 p. 4.

However, now during the reform era, many trade unions/labor unions are standing in companies which are not affiliated with the central organization, namely the Confederation, but can also be done in companies. Furthermore, after the trade union/labour union is established in the company, the obligation that must be carried out is notification or recording to the service or agency that handles employment issues. The government, through the office that handles employment, can record and provide proof of its recording to the relevant trade/labor union if the trade/labor union has officially received proof of recording from the service or agency that handles employment matters. So that the trade union/labour union in the company can be known by the company, after the trade union/labor union receives proof of its registration, the trade union/labor union will notify its existence to its partners, the company leadership of the company, which will be copied to the department or agency that handles employment. Apart from notification via letter, workers/labor union officials can also go directly to the head of the company to convey their existence that a workers/labor union has been established in the company.

After the trade union/labor union obtains a registration number from the service or agency that handles employment matters, the trade union/labor union has the rights in accordance with law number 21 of 2000 article 25 paragraph 1.

- (1) *Federated and confederation trade/labor unions, trade/labor unions that already have a registration number have the right to:*
- a. *Make a collective work agreement with the entrepreneur*
 - b. *Represent workers/laborers in resolving industrial disputes*
 - c. *Represent workers/laborers in employment institutions*
 - d. *Establishing institutions or carrying out activities related to efforts to improve the welfare of workers/laborers*
 - e. *Carry out other activities in the field of employment that do not conflict with applicable laws and regulations.*⁷

Such is the strategic position of trade unions in companies that they have various rights in industrial relations. Don't let the trade unions/labour unions that have conveyed their existence to employers actually become allergic to the existence of trade unions/labor unions and then there will be a ban or rejection of trade unions/labor unions within the company. A term that is often experienced by friends of trade unions is *union basting*, eliminating existing trade unions/labor unions. Therefore, trade unions/labor unions are required to be able to read the situation and conditions of the company, moreover, they must master the laws and

⁷. Op. Cit, article 25, page 8.

regulations regarding employment matters. So that in every step you take to propose negotiations with entrepreneurs, you don't just ask or basically do it, but also based on existing laws and regulations. The next person can read the company's balance sheet so that every month the company's workers/laborers can follow the development of the production process which will ultimately result in a high profit within the company. Normatively, the protection of the right to organize has been regulated in Article 28 of the Trade Union Law, namely;

Anyone is prohibited from obstructing or forcing workers/laborers to form or not form administrators or not become administrators, become members or not become members and/or carry out or not carry out trade/labor union activities by:

- a. Terminate employment, lay off temporarily, demote positions, or carry out transfers;*
- b. Not paying or reducing the wages of workers/laborers;*
- c. Carrying out intimidation in any form;*
- d. Carry out a campaign against the formation of trade unions.¹⁶⁸*

This means that the protection of Law Number 21 of 2000 is very adequate from a regulatory perspective, but from an implementation perspective this is not the case. So it is hoped that fellow workers/labor union officials can really understand the conditions in the field so that in every fight for existing rights and norms they do not clash with their employers.

That in fighting for the normative rights of workers/laborers it is not only through official institutions but there are many ways that can be used by trade union officials/labor unions to fight for them. Namely through a *Bipartite institution*, where this *bipartite institution* is a forum that can have two meanings, namely the meaning of *Bipartite* as a system which means it is a place for consultation and communication between workers/laborers who represent fellow workers/laborers to sit in the institution with representatives from the company to discuss employment issues. . Meanwhile, *Bipartite institutions* as a system are a way to resolve industrial relations disputes. Therefore, *bipartite institutions* are very necessary in the production process within a company to prevent industrial relations disputes. In order for the management structure in bipartite institutions to be more balanced, it is regulated by Minister of Manpower and Transmigration regulation number 32/Men/XII/2008 concerning procedures for the formation and composition of membership of *Bipartite cooperation institutions*. That is :

⁸.Op.Cit, article 28, Page 9.

"The management of Bipartite cooperation institutions is determined from elements of entrepreneurs and elements of workers/laborers, trade unions/labor unions with a composition of 1:1, the number of which is according to needs with the provision of at least 6 (six) people."⁹

That Bipartite institutions are institutions within a company that can be used to improve the welfare of workers/laborers who work in that company. Therefore, those who sit in Bipartite institutions must be people who know labor legislation, so that in every negotiation they can have the same bargaining position so that they do not underestimate each other in decision making. Furthermore, the forum or institution that is outside the company is a tripartite institution whose membership consists of representatives of workers/laborers, representatives of workers/labor unions, representatives of companies and also administrators of the Indonesian Employers' Association (Apindo) as well as representatives of elements from the government who have a mandate. from the head of the department in charge of employment. The Tripartite Institution provides considerations, suggestions and opinions to the government and related parties in formulating policies and solving employment problems. Apart from these two institutions, industrial relations facilities can be used to promote harmonious and dynamic industrial relations. The means of industrial relations referred to according to law no. 13 of 2003 article 103 are;

1. *Trade unions/labor unions.*
2. *Employers' organization.*
3. *Bipartite cooperation institution.*
4. *Tripartite cooperation institution*
5. *Company regulations*
6. *Collective labor agreement*
7. *Labor laws and regulations and;*
8. *Industrial relations settlement institution"¹⁰.*

That industrial relations facilities can be used in order to achieve certain goals of each party, namely between workers/laborers, employers and the government because each party is given the opportunity to convey or express ideas and proposals in industrial relations. Therefore, from the worker/laborer's point of view, fighting for their aspirations is safer or can be maximized if within the company there is or stands a trade/labor union. Because trade unions/labor unions can be representatives in every negotiation, where up to now workers/laborers have not dared to face their employers directly even though in terms of *equality before the law*, the position before the law is the same. In fighting for the welfare of

⁹. Regulation of the Minister of Manpower and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia Number Per.32/Men/XII/2008 article 10.

¹⁰. Op. Cit, article 103, p. 101.

workers/laborers, the most important thing is the rights that have been regulated in statutory regulations so that in fighting for them there is a basis for negotiating with employers, for example regarding the national social security system. This national social security system is the right of all Indonesian people to obtain it. As stated in Law Number 40 of 2004 concerning the national social security system:

Social security is a form of social protection to guarantee that all people can fulfill their needs for a decent life."¹¹

Of course, if we refer to the law, workers/laborers included in it must have the right to social security services. Technically, in this case, employers have an obligation to include all their employees through social protection called social security. Therefore, social security is mandatory for employers to include their workers/laborers in social security by means of employers contributing to the agency appointed by the government to carry out participation operations for the workers/laborers involved. In order to provide a decent living, at least workers/laborers in labor relations receive a decent wage in accordance with the Regency/City minimum wage (UMK) set by the government. Apart from that, regarding the future, if the worker/laborer is no longer able to work/enters retirement age, it is the responsibility of the entrepreneur to include the worker/laborer in an old-age insurance program or pension program.

In social security, the organizing body appointed by law to carry out the social mission is the social security administering body (BPJS), of which there are two programs, namely the health social security agency and the employment social security agency. The social security administering body (BPJS) as stated in Law Number 24 of 2011 concerning BPJS is:

The Social Security Administering Body, hereinafter abbreviated as BPJS, is a legal entity established to administer the social security program."¹²

The social security program related to employment relations is social security for workers, which includes work accident insurance (JKK), old age security (JHT), pension security and death security (JK). Therefore, employers are obliged to participate in this program so that the ideals

¹¹Collection of Legislative Regulations in the Field of Industrial Relations and Social Security, Central Java Provincial Manpower and Transmigration Office, 2014, Law Number 40 of 2004 concerning the National Social Security System article 1 paragraph 1.

¹². Collection of Legislative Regulations in the Sector of Industrial Relations and Social Security, Central Java Provincial Manpower and Transmigration Office, 2011, Law Number 24 of 2011 concerning Social Security Administering Bodies article 1 paragraph 1.

in the SJSN law are that workers/laborers at least get a decent life in which their basic and secondary needs can be met.

It is the obligation of employers to include their workers/laborers in the context of fulfilling the national social security system so that all workers can enjoy a more decent life. As stated in the Law on social security administering bodies article 15 paragraph 1 as follows:

*Employers are gradually required to register themselves and their workers as participants in BPJS in accordance with the Social Security program they are participating in.*¹³

Therefore, employers are obliged to involve workers/laborers in stages so as not to make the company's finances unstable. Employers who do not include their workers/laborers in the BPJS program may be subject to criminal offenses because it is regulated in law. Therefore, many workers' rights have not been granted and this must be fought for so that workers/laborers can improve their lives and achieve a decent life.

Whereas in enforcing normative rights that have been regulated in legislation, there is an institution that handles it, namely the PPHI (industrial relations dispute resolution) institution. This institution has three judges who decide cases submitted to PPHI. The three judges referred to are one ad hoc judge representing workers/laborers, an ad hoc judge from employers or Apindo and one career judge from the district court who is assigned to the industrial relations court. Furthermore, disputes that can be brought to the industrial relations court in accordance with the PPHI law are:

*Rights disputes are disputes that arise due to non-fulfillment of rights due to differences in the implementation or interpretation of the provisions of laws and regulations, work agreements, company regulations, or collective work agreements.*¹⁴

That rights disputes arise from non-fulfillment of workers' rights due to differences and misinterpretations of legislation. However, before the case enters the pphi, several steps must be taken so that the case complies with procedural law and does not accumulate dipphi, namely; bipartite stage between workers/laborers or through the power of trade union organizations and authorized by lawyers and employers. In Bipartite negotiations, if a collective agreement (PB) is completed, the parties will make a collective agreement (PB), but if not, the case will be escalated to mediation at the department in charge of employment. However, before entering the service that handles employment, minutes of the negotiations that have been completed

¹³.Op. Cit, Article 15 paragraph, Page 678.

¹⁴. PPHI Law, Article 1 paragraph 2, page 4.

must first be drawn up. Furthermore, in the mediation process, the person who becomes the mediator is the official employee in charge of employment who has received a mediator decree from the Minister of Manpower. In the mediation process between the worker/laborer and the entrepreneur, someone or several mediators mediate the case to be resolved. It is true that the mediation process is not enough to have one hearing unless the parties can immediately accept, but if the parties do not want to accept then mediation uses a half-room system with the technique of being called by one party first in turn and then when they have been called in turn then they are called together to be resolved. Once completed, a collective agreement (PB) is made by the parties to resolve the case and stop mediation. However, if it is not completed, minutes of negotiations and a letter of recommendation from the mediator are prepared, which are minutes of negotiations and recommendations from the mediator to continue the steps of the Dipphi dispute.

That the next dispute that can be brought into the realm of industrial relations dispute resolution (PPHI) is a dispute of interest. As stated in Law Number 2 of 2004 concerning PPHI, namely:

A conflict of interest is a dispute that arises in an employment relationship due to a lack of agreement regarding the creation of, and/or changes to, work conditions stipulated in a work agreement, or company regulations, or a collective work agreement.”¹⁵

Whereas in disputes of interest the problem is that there is no compatibility of opinion regarding the creation and/or changes to the work conditions stipulated in the work agreement, company regulations and collective work agreement. This results in differences of opinion regarding the rights of workers/laborers which are regulated in the realm of work agreements and company regulations. So, to be able to submit a dispute of interest to kepphi, it is the first and last dipphi. An example of a conflict of interest is regarding a worker who has worked for zero years and received a wage according to the minimum wage in his development for ten years. The worker/laborer has children and has an increased burden of responsibilities, for example regarding wives and children, then the worker applies for wife and child allowances. in work agreements, company regulations and collective work agreements.

The next dispute that can be submitted to the pphi is regarding employment termination disputes. In the layoff process, which I have written about on the front page, to carry out layoffs,

¹⁵.Op. Cit, Article 1 paragraph 3 p. 4.

employers, workers/laborers, trade unions and the government must make every effort to ensure that layoffs do not occur, and if for example layoffs occur, it is solely because of the various efforts that have been made. has not been successful and there is no word of suitability regarding the termination of the employment relationship. However, if there is no agreement then there will be a layoff dispute as stated in Law number 13 of 2003 article 1 paragraph 25, namely:

*Termination of employment is the termination of the employment relationship due to certain reasons which result in the end of the rights and obligations between the worker/ laborer and the entrepreneur."*¹⁶

That the dispute over termination of employment is because there is no agreement between each party to end the employment relationship because if only one party wants it, that is not true according to Law Number 13 of 2003 concerning Employment. In the layoff process, you must obtain a determination from the industrial relations dispute resolution institution. So the process of terminating a new employment relationship may be carried out by the entrepreneur in order to end the worker/laborer's employment at the company.

That the last dispute that can be submitted for a dipphi settlement application is a dispute between workers/labor unions in one company. In resolving this dispute Dipphi is the first and last because it cannot be appealed to the Supreme Court. Because this dispute is limited in Labor Law number 13 of 20003, namely:

*Disputes between trade unions/ labor unions are disputes between trade unions/ labor unions and other trade unions/ labor unions in just one company. Because there is no agreement regarding membership, implementation of rights and obligations of work unions."*¹⁷

That disputes between trade unions/labour unions in one company are due to a lack of compatibility of understanding regarding membership, implementation of rights and obligations of work unionism. For example, in one company there are three (3) trade unions/labor unions, in determining representatives in the company so that they can make a collective work agreement (PKB), the membership must be at least 50 plus one, then if there are three trade unions/labor unions whose membership has not reached the quota of 50 plus one then cannot submit negotiations to create a collective work agreement (PKB). So, in order to meet the quota determined by law, the trade unions join together to fulfill the quota that has been determined.

¹⁶.Op. cit, Article 1 paragraph 25 p. 71.

¹⁷.Op. Cit, Article 1 paragraph 5, p. 5.

Subchapters are written using Arabic numerals and are on the left side, according to the example:

D. Conclusion

That the role of trade unions, which are an important element of one of the industrial relations facilities, will be very useful in maintaining the conduciveness of the Company. Companies must understand the existence of sp/sb within the Company to facilitate the resolution of industrial relations. The way to establish industrial relations to resolve existing problems is through bipartite work within the Company.

Therefore, the Company must provide sufficient space so that every production process within the Company must be completed bipartitely. To achieve the bipartite path, the Company must understand and establish communication with sp/sb within the Company. Resolving every problem that arises is the best way compared to using litigation through industrial relations dispute resolution (PPHI).

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