

About the complainant	
Name of the organisation's filing the complaint	Grameenphone Employees Union (GPEU).
Registration number	B-2201
Postal address	GP House, Bashundhara Dhaka
Street address	Bashundhara R/A, Dhaka 1229
Website	https://www.facebook.com/gpeu.bd
Email address	info@gpeu-bd.org
Telephone number	+8801977977222
Contact person I	
Name	Adeeba Zerine Chowdhury
Position	Communication Secretary
Telephone number	+8801977977222
Email address	adeebazerinchy@gmail.com
Contact person II	
Name	Rasulul Amin Murad
Position	Vice President
Telephone number	+8801708111777
Email address	rasulul@gmail.com
Are you complaining on behalf of your own members/or on behalf of others?	I (as a direct victim) and my union members
If your organisation is filing a complaint on behalf of others: How would you describe your organisational mandate to represent the allegedly affected party in this case?	As a founding leader and Communication Secretary, I am directly affected by the anti-union dismissal and represent the broader grievances of the union membership.
What does your organisation hope to achieve by filing this complaint?	To achieve personal reinstatement with full back-pay and to compel Telenor ASA to cease its systemic union-busting and judicial delay tactics in Bangladesh.
Co-complainant (if relevant)	
Contact person I	
Name	Rasulul Amin Murad
Position	Vice President, GPEU
Telephone number	+8801708111777

Email address	rasulul@gmail.com
About the company	
Name and Address of the main office of the company against which the complaint is being filed	Parent Company: Telenor ASA, Norway.
If the complaint concerns a subsidiary or similar entity: Name and address of the entity and its affiliation with the parent company (if this information is available)	Subsidiary: Grameenphone Ltd., Bangladesh.
About the complaint	
In your opinion, which provision or provisions in the OECD Guidelines have been breached by the company concerned?	Chapter IV (Human Rights): Violation of my right to freedom of association and denial of an effective remedy. Chapter V (Employment): Direct retaliation and termination for union activities. Chapter II (General Policies): Using improper influence to cause judicial delays.
Give a specific, detailed account of the issue/practice, including information about where the activity or activities have taken place.	Section: Detailed Account of the Issue/Practice 1. The Genesis: Mass Retaliation (July 2012) The case centers on Grameenphone, Bangladesh's largest telecom operator, and is a subsidiary of Telenor ASA. In 2012, we, the workers, formed the first independent union in the country's corporate telecom sector. Within 24 hours of submitting the registration paperwork on 24th July 2012, seven union committee members, including the president, vice president, and communication secretary, and over 200 members were illegally terminated. The company later forced many to resign, offering to withdraw termination but threatening to withhold provident fund, gratuity, and other benefits. All resigned except three union leaders: Adeeba Zerin Chowdhury (Communication Secretary), Rasulul Amin Murad (Vice President), and Omer Faruk (President). We challenged the terminations in court in 2012, a case that remains pending, with slow proceedings and repeated company tactics to delay justice.

Legal action taken:**The Civil Case: 14 Years of Judicial Torture**

Following the illegal terminations, the three leaders filed civil cases. Subsequently, 19 other members (from the group of 200 forced to resign) also filed suits.

Grameenphone spent 11 years solely contesting the 'Maintainability' of the cases to prevent the trial from even commencing. They systematically utilized delay tactics, such as repetitive time petitions and frivolous discharge applications. It was only in 2023, after fighting through every level of the judiciary, that the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh finally declared the cases maintainable.

However, the harassment continues. As of 2026, the company still employs the same delay tactics, filing time petitions at every hearing. Consequently, the proceedings in the Labour Court are still not completed. Even if we prevail in the Labour Court, we anticipate they will drag the matter through the Tribunal, High Court, and Supreme Court for another 10–20 years. This is not a legal defense; it is a 'war of attrition' designed to exhaust the resources and resolve of a single mother.

Criminal case:

As this is a Criminal Offense in Bangladesh, we filed criminal cases against top management, including CEO Tore Johnsen (Norwegian) and CHRO Haroon Bhatti (Pakistani). After court summons were issued on 27/08/2012, these foreign nationals obtained bail and immediately fled the country. They used GP's legal power to secure a Stay Order from the High Court, which has frozen this criminal case for 14 years, ensuring they face no accountability.

Legal Ground:

Section 186 (Labor Act Bangladesh-2006). Conditions of service shall remain unchanged while the application for registration is pending.

No employer shall, while an application for registration of a trade union formed in his establishment is pending, alter

	the terms and conditions of service of any officer of that union, without prior permission of the Director General, to the disadvantage of such officer. Notwithstanding anything contained in section 26, no employer shall, while an application for registration of a trade union is pending, terminate the employment of any worker under that section who is a member of such trade union. Retaliation, Forced Poverty, and Mental Trauma As a single mother, this prolonged retaliation has caused devastating financial and mental hardship. When I was terminated, I was a single parent to two school-going children (who are now in University). I have been unable to work for 14 years, denied final salary, provident fund, and gratuity. And thus forced to depend on family, sell parental property, and take substantial personal loans just to survive. Years of uncertainty and institutional inaction have caused severe mental trauma and suffering.
Please provide/list documentation, reports, testimonies or other types of evidence that support the allegations of practices that are in breach of the Guidelines.	Document 1: Applied for union registration on 23 July 2012 Document 2: My specific termination letter is dated 24 July 2012. Document 3: Received Union Registration is dated 06 March 2019. Document 4: Criminal case against the CEO & CHRO & court order Document 5: ITUC letter to Telenor & Grameenphone in 2012 Document 6: My case in the ILO report with a news report. Document 7: General diary (GD) to the police station Document 8: Image of Police attack on peaceful Demonstration.
Is the complaint relevant for other countries' National Contact Points, and if so, which countries? And why?	Yes, the complaint is directly relevant to the National Contact Point (NCP) of Norway.

	Countries: Norway (As the home country of the parent company, Telenor ASA). Why? Parent Company Responsibility: Grameenphone Ltd. is a subsidiary of Telenor ASA, which is a Norwegian multinational enterprise Telenor is partially owned by the Norwegian State (Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries). Under the OECD Guidelines, the parent company is responsible for ensuring that its subsidiaries overseas respect human rights and labor standards. Norwegian State Ownership: Since the Norwegian state is a major shareholder, the case raises serious questions about Norway's commitment to its own Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) framework and the Norwegian Transparency Act. Failure of Due Diligence: The systemic 14-year judicial obstruction and the use of political shielding in Bangladesh indicate a total failure of Telenor ASA's due diligence and ethical oversight. Transnational Impact: The decisions to linger the court cases and refuse ADR in Bangladesh were likely influenced or sanctioned by the high-level management strategies of the parent group, making it a matter of Norwegian corporate accountability.
What in your organisation's view should the company do to remedy the situation described in the complaint?	Remedy Sought: - I demand immediate reinstatement with full back wages, including interest adjusted for the time value of money. This must include all statutory and consequential benefits covering the 14 years of my illegal termination. Furthermore, I seek full compensation and penalties for mental agony, career damage, social harassment, and the ongoing threats to my future career prospects. - An immediate halt to all judicial delay tactics by Grameenphone in the Labour Court. - Resolution of all broader systemic grievances (Profit sharing and 2021 terminations) as evidence of good-faith business conduct.

Other information of relevance for the Contact Point’s consideration of the complaint.	Systemic Pattern of Exploitation: Profit vs. Human Cost Grameenphone currently faces over 1,500 labour-related cases. They have withheld the rightful dues of 4,000+ workers. Recently, a peaceful demonstration for these dues was met with water cannons and baton charges, leading to 11 arrests (including 3 women) and 29 false criminal cases filed by GP against the protesters. Grameenphone declared 180 permanent employees as “JD Less” in 2020 and dismissed 159 in 2021, violating Bangladesh labour law. Following the court order, tripartite conciliation began, but the company is still not cooperating. If it fails, the case will move to Labour Court, with delays likely due to the company’s tactics. The company’s growth has been achieved through severe labor exploitation and forced Voluntary Retirement Schemes (VRS), resulting in a massive reduction of the permanent workforce. <table><tr><th>METRIC</th><th>YEAR 2010</th><th>YEAR 2024</th><th>CHANGE/GROWTH</th></tr><tr><td>Permanent Employees</td><td>5,000+</td><td>1,289</td><td>75% Reduction</td></tr><tr><td>Subscribers</td><td>30 Million</td><td>85.3 Million</td><td>184% Increase</td></tr><tr><td>Net Profit</td><td>BDT 1,497 Crore</td><td>BDT 3,630 Crore</td><td>142% Increase</td></tr></table> Furthermore, the trade union has been deliberately suppressed despite the immense sacrifices and sustained efforts made by workers to build it. The company has effectively hijacked the union by promoting inactive, hand-picked committee members through incentives and undue advantages, while intimidating and threatening others to ensure silence and compliance. Democratic union processes have been systematically obstructed for years. Union elections have repeatedly been blocked through legal manipulation, including the filing of writ petitions to obtain court stay orders. Notably, the most recent election was halted when a writ was filed	METRIC	YEAR 2010	YEAR 2024	CHANGE/GROWTH	Permanent Employees	5,000+	1,289	75% Reduction	Subscribers	30 Million	85.3 Million	184% Increase	Net Profit	BDT 1,497 Crore	BDT 3,630 Crore	142% Increase
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	just two days before the scheduled vote, preventing workers from exercising their legitimate democratic rights. This is not an internal union failure, but a calculated strategy to neutralize collective worker representation and maintain control through fear, patronage, and judicial delay. The Political Shield & The “Shadow State” Tactics Grameenphone’s operations in Bangladesh reflect a calculated pattern of functioning as a “Shadow State”, where they systematically manipulate political transitions to maintain immunity from labor laws. Political Shielding under the Former Regime, to paralyze the judicial process and silence regulatory bodies, Grameenphone strategically hired Barrister Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh as their Legal Advisor. Taposh was a high-profile Member of Parliament, the Mayor of Dhaka South, and a nephew of the former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. By employing the most politically powerful legal figure in the country, the company ensured that the judiciary and law enforcement remained intimidated, allowing them to freeze our legal actions against the company. Following the recent political transition, the company has adapted its strategy. They are now allegedly leveraging the name and office of the Chief Adviser of the Interim Government to intimidate the administration into silence. Since Grameen Telecom (founded by the Chief Adviser Dr Yunus) holds a 34.2% stake in Grameenphone, the company uses this connection as a shield to bypass accountability and ignore ILO instructions issued in 2024. Furthermore, in a blatant display of power, Grameenphone has already started hiring influential legal professionals affiliated with political parties that are likely to form the next government as a form of future-proofing. This proactive hiring of influence ensures that regardless of which party is in power, the company remains protected by a political shield, making it impossible for
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	exploited workers to secure justice through the national legal system. This systematic abuse of political power is the primary tool used by Grameenphone to continue its labor exploitation. By ensuring the administration and judiciary are always compromised by politically-linked legal panels, they have successfully turned a legitimate labor dispute into a 14-year war of attrition. Norway's Ethical Responsibility: This case poses a fundamental question regarding Norway's ethical oversight of its state-linked enterprises. It challenges whether the much-vaunted principles of Responsible Business Conduct truly extend to foreign markets where profits and principles collide. State Duty to Remedy: As noted in local media reports, the state has a duty to investigate and ensure a remedy. By allowing its subsidiary to conduct a 'war of attrition' against vulnerable workers, Telenor is in direct violation of the OECD Guidelines and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
Contact with the company	
Has your organisation been in contact with, or taken the initiative to establish contact with, the company named in the complaint as regards this matter? If so, give an account of how this was done and the outcome of the contact. Provide any documentation such as minutes of meetings, etc.	Section: Contact with the Company & ADR Outcome Yes, our organisation has made significant efforts to resolve the matter through direct dialogue and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) with Grameenphone Ltd. Account of the Contact: In 2022, we participated in a formal ADR initiative with the company's Industrial Relations (IR) department that spanned nine months and included multiple high-level meetings. During these discussions, we presented detailed calculations and logical justifications for our claims regarding illegal termination, career loss, and damage to our professional reputations.

	Outcome of the Contact: The outcome of these meetings revealed the company's systemic bad faith. In the last meeting, the Head of Industrial Relations (IR) of Grameenphone verbally admitted that our union's efforts had significantly benefited thousands of workers and acknowledged that our compensation claims were logically and ethically sound. However, he explicitly stated that Grameenphone would not settle the matter. He reasoned that the company's internal legal assessment concluded they could 'linger the case for many years in court' due to the slow judicial system in Bangladesh. Consequently, management felt they had no financial or strategic incentive to settle a rightful claim through ADR when they could simply exhaust the victims through decades of litigation. Documentation: To avoid future accountability and hide these admissions, the company intentionally refused to record or share any official minutes of these meetings, despite our requests. This underscores that the company did not engage in the ADR process in good faith, but rather used it to gauge our resolve while openly declaring their intent to abuse the judiciary as a tool for exhaustion.
Have you taken up the situation described in the complaint, or taken the initiative for taking it up in other forums? If so, give an account of any measures that have been taken on the basis of this. Provide any documentation such as minutes of meetings, etc.	Section: Measures Taken in Other Forums Yes, I have extensively raised this issue in several international forums since 2012. Below is a summary of the measures taken: ILO (International Labour Organization): In 2022, a formal complaint was lodged with the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association (CFA) through the ITUC. The case is now officially registered as CFA Case No. 3263. In 2024, the ILO issued clear recommendations to the Bangladeshi government to resolve the matter and ensure justice, which remain unimplemented by the company.

	ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation): I am in continuous communication with the ITUC's legal team, specifically Mr. Paapa Danquah (Legal Director) and Ms. Monica (Legal Officer). We have had several email correspondences and Zoom meetings to strategize on this systemic violation of freedom of association. ITUC has also previously issued notices to Grameenphone management in 2012 immediately after our termination. UNI Global Union: I have apprised UNI Global Union of the situation, highlighting the anti-union retaliation and judicial harassment faced by the GPEU leaders. Government of Norway: I formally contacted the Office of the Prime Minister of Norway (PMO). Recognizing the gravity of the case within Norway's responsible business conduct framework, the PMO has officially forwarded my complaint to the Norwegian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries (Reference: 26/00413) for further review. Contact with State and Regulatory Authorities We have extensively engaged with the highest levels of the Bangladeshi administration and regulatory bodies to seek a resolution. However, despite their full awareness, the result has been a persistent state of institutional inaction. Ministry of Labour and Employment: We have held formal meetings and submitted written petitions to the Labour Adviser (Minister), the Labour Secretary, and senior officials of the Department of Labour. They have been officially apprised of the case, specifically in light of the ILO's 2024 instructions (CFA Case No. 3263), yet no effective action has been taken to enforce the law.
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	Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs We have formally raised the issue of systemic judicial delays and 'war of attrition' tactics with the Law Adviser (Minister) and the Law Secretary, highlighting how the company uses procedural loopholes to deny justice for over 14 years. BTRC (Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission): As the primary regulator for the telecom sector, the BTRC has been informed of Grameenphone's systemic labor rights violations. Despite their mandate to oversee the conduct of licensees, they have remained silent, further enabling the company's immunity. Documentation: - I can provide the supporting or relevant documents upon request
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