Focus on sovereignty blocks resolution to South China Sea dispute, writes Jerome A. Cohen and Jon M. Van Dyke

**Workers speaking as one drive a better bargain**

By **Albert Cheng**

Since the advent of the laws on collective bargaining for labour unions under the Employment Ordinance of 1957, the Labour Relations Board has been the single decision-making body to arbitrate on the rights of workers. This absence of collective bargaining is a fundamental limitation in Hong Kong as one of the world's most financial centres.

We have seen cases such as the seven worst injuries after the 1997 handover of the city. In those cases, the seriousness of the injuries could have been reduced if the city's labour laws were more effective. To this end, we need to consider that the fruit of economic success, the economics of the world, have brought significant challenges. That's why we have the introduction of a minimum wage in Hong Kong, a gross minimum wage figure of HK$350 per month.

The minimum wage figure was long awaited by workers and the increase has been welcomed. But some workers still fall below the minimum wage by receiving no benefits or being paid less than HK$350.

**Albert Cheng**

Workers face a range of challenges when trying to negotiate their rights with employers. Some employees, for example, may not be paid the minimum wage, or receive no benefits.

In Hong Kong, a city with a reputation for business, it can be difficult for workers to negotiate their rights with employers. The Labour Relations Board, however, provides a forum where workers can come together to negotiate their rights.

Without collective bargaining, workers, particularly workers who are more willing to negotiate, may be at a disadvantage when it comes to negotiating with employers.

In the absence of collective bargaining, the rights of workers may not be protected. This can lead to situations where workers are not able to negotiate their rights or are not able to negotiate effectively.

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