

TOP GLOVE HAS REMEDIATED FIVE FORCED LABOUR INDICATORS — MD

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Top Glove has invested RM300 million on its workers' accommodation and RM50 million for infrastructure to provide better working conditions for its workers. (Bernama pic)

SHAH ALAM: Top Glove Corp Bhd is now in the third stage of the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) withhold release order (WRO) modification process.

Managing director Lee Kim Meow said the company has remediated the remaining five forced labour indicators, pending verification by the UK-based ethical trade consultant firm, Impactt.

The International Labour Organization has 11 indicators for best practices.

As verified by Impactt, Top Glove, the world's largest glove maker, has achieved six As and 5Bs.

The 5Bs need to be converted into 5As for the CBP to lift the WRO on it.

“Impactt is expected to give us the report by early next week. Then we will engage with the CBP again to let them know that we have done exactly what they have asked us so that they can lift the WRO, which is the fourth and final phase.

“So now, once Impactt verifies and confirms that Top Glove has all 11 As, we believe CBP will be happy to take the necessary action to lift the WRO,” he said during a walkabout with selected media at the workers’ quarters.

Lee said debt bondage was among the five indicators that Top Glove had completed by paying a total of RM150 million to its workers, accelerating the balance for four months as a lump sum on April 2.

“We have played our part, as we promised the CBP, to ensure that we remediate this area. So now there are no more issues,” he said.

Four other indicators that Top Glove had remediated were retention of identity documents, deception, physical and sexual (issues), and violence and intimidation.

According to Lee, the company has a special theme it focuses on every year. For 2021, Top Glove has declared it to be the year for environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues.

“This year, we have to pay more attention, particularly to ESG, so that we can continue to improve and eventually be taken as a role model for the industry as well as for Malaysia,” he said.

The company is also collaborating with independent migrant worker rights specialist Andy Hall in the interest of both the company and its migrant workers.

“Together with Hall, we will work together to become the leading manufacturer with the best possible ESG practices across the industry,” Lee said.

He said Top Glove had invested about RM300 million on its workers’ accommodation and RM50 million for infrastructure to provide better working conditions for both male and female workers.

The facilities include dormitory and non-dormitory accommodation (3.6m separation between workers), laundry and recreational rooms, and three subsidised meals daily.

Lee said there had not been any major problems at Top Glove’s hostels to date.

Meanwhile, the company plans to recruit about 9,000 Malaysians this year for executive and non-executive roles.

At the close today, shares of Top Glove rose 2.39% to RM5.57, with 29.10 million shares transacted.