

Demanding better working conditions in the “Cukaru Peki” copper mine in Serbia, Chinese workers protested in front of the Zijin company announcing that when they return to China, they will sue Zijin because they have been working almost non-stop since April, they have no heating in their dormitories, they eat poorly, they are often thirsty and they are not allowed to go outside, to the city, so they feel like prisoners. The situation was further complicated by the fact that among them there are those who are infected with COVID 19, they are placed in a kind of improvised quarantine, but the work they performed spilled over additionally to the remaining workers.

- They are foreign citizens without any protection here, they only have the company they work for and it makes a living over them. Some have been in Bor for more than 13 months, they only know about work and accommodation, when they can't go out to buy what they need. They are like in a camp, they have one or two Chinese who sell them groceries and cigarettes, that is all their contact with the outside world. They want to go home, they have had enough of everything, but the company does not let them go, they are forcing them to work - says a Danas source known to the editorial office, who did not want his name published due to possible consequences.

He adds that not only Chinese workers have difficult conditions, but also domestic ones, and confirms that they work overtime, too much for a salary of 700 euros, and that they can't even complain about that.

- The Chinese have only one option: “Work or don't”. If you do not accept such conditions, you are fired and you get blacklisted, which means that you cannot get a job in any company that cooperates with them, because they immediately cancel her contract. That's how far it goes - says our interlocutor and adds that such difficult working conditions are related for now only to Rakita, where Zijin is a 100% owner, while the mines and the smelter are in a different regime, but it is not known until when.

Namely, the collective agreement, in cooperation with our authorities, was terminated half a year before the expiration and now negotiations on a new one are in progress. Our interlocutor fears, however, that the unions will not be able to fight for a more favorable status of employees because they are Zijin workers themselves, so that the “work ethic” from Rakita will probably spill over into the mines and the smelter.

“The fact that they said that Zijin's salvation for Bor is a pure lie, and if 5,500 people continue to be silent, it will be better for us all to move out of here,” he says.

The problem with the violation of labour rights did not reach the Bor public for the first time. It was confirmed today that the labour inspections, as well as the mining ones in charge of safety in the pits, controlled the business on several occasions, including the violation of labour rights, of which the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy was informed. It is not known yet what the reaction will be after the previous and after the last findings, everything is in the hands of the Ministry.



In Cukaru Peki mine in Serbia, Zijin workers kept in inhumane conditions

Source: danas.rs