



# OSHE

# Newsletter

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## 'Work together to bring rights and justice'

**Fifth anniversary of Rana Plaza tragedy**





## Remembering Rana Plaza victims

# 'Work together to bring rights and justice'

Speakers in a human chain and discussion observing 5th anniversary of Rana Plaza accident on 24 April 2018 said that the victims should work together for ensuring rights and justice.

Commemorating the deadly disaster in the country's apparel industry, Rana Plaza Accident Victims Rights Network, Bangladesh Occupational Safety, Health and Environment Foundation (OSHE), Asia Monitor Resource Center (AMRC), Swiss trade union Solidar and Asian Network for the Rights of Occupational and Environmental Victims (ANROEV) participated the event at Savar near the place where the accident happened.

The activists paid tribute to the victims of the deadliest building collapse that robbed the happiness of hundreds of families as their bread earners were either killed or permanently lost their ability to work. The search for the dead ended on 13 May 2013 with a death toll of 1,138. Approximately 2,500 injured people were rescued from the building alive.

Around 150 survivors and members of the deceased family of Rana Plaza Accident Victims Rights Network along with representatives of the ANROEV, AMRC, Suisse Solidar and OSHE representatives were present in the site to pay tribute to those who lost their lives in this tragedy.

A human chain was formed demanding workers rehabilitation, social protection, and alternative employment opportunity for injured workers, medical support and legal justice for the victims through a coordinated way by the representatives of the network and its supporters. Victims demanded that ensuring fair compensation, social protection, medical treatment, rehabilitation and justice are still needed for the victims as they are in dire need of support. Asian Monitor Resource Center (AMRC) program coordinator Omana George, OSHE executive director A R Chowdhury Repon, OSHE foundation chairperson Saki Rezwana, Solidar Suisse Asia regional coordinator Sanjiv Pandita, Solidar Suisse Asia desk officer Bernhard Herold, Federation of Garments Workers (FGW) general secretary China Rahman and members of Rana Plaza Accident Victim's Rights Network also joined in the program.



### *Speakers and network members keep silence remembering the victims of Rana Plaza tragedy*

Speakers at the human chain urged meaningful action for workers' rights. They also called for transparency in the actions taken by the Government to address the needs of the workers, building safety and social protection of all industries in Bangladesh. Later in the afternoon, Rana Plaza Accident Victims Rights Network and ANROEV organized a discussion session on the compensation and rehabilitation status of Rana Plaza victims.

Omana George said Rana Plaza Victims Network must be active to bring the justice and dignity. The network should fight for equal compensation.

Sanjiv Pandita mentioned that victims network should organize as a group to fight against injustice.

A R Chowdhury Repon opined that victim network should transform as an institution for serving and supporting the members. All of the speakers highlighted the urgent necessity of alternative employment for workers and social protection. At least 40 family members of the victims and injured workers took part in the discussion. They sought alternative employment opportunities, prompt and sustained medical treatment for the injured workers.

Jewel Sarker, who was working at the 8th floor of Rana Plaza as sewing operator, demanded treatment for his eyes and alternative employment. Wahidul Islam, convener of Rana Plaza Accident Victims Network, urged to provide more support to accelerate the network for bringing justice. The demands of this tragic accident victims are yet to be properly settled.



## Study circle on organising and social dialogue

OSHE foundation organised a study circle on organising and social dialogue with Tajreen Fashion Fire Accident Victims Rights Network at Ashulia on 29 June 2018 under OSH capacity building program. 15 victims from Tajreen fire accident participated the study circle. The study circle was conducted by Arifa As Alam with the support of support of Kamal Hossain, Network member.



## Asbestosis lung diseases check-up camp for shipbreaking workers

A total of 75 shipbreaking workers were taken under Asbestosis lung disease check-up camp held on 30 March, 13 and 27 April, and 4 May 2018. OSHE shipbreaking project organized the camps in its labour welfare center at Sitakundu in Chattogram. Out of 75 patients 69 completed all the steps and other 06 completed all steps except PFT in these four camps. These camps were conducted by a specialized medical team led by Dr. Faizul Ahsan Shubro. Other team members are Dr. Md. Shariful Alam, Dr. Ezaz Zahidul Islam, Md. Syfur Rahman, Fahim Jahed, Md. Masudur Rahman, Laila Siddika and members from OSHE Dr. Tapan Kumar Das, Md. Shazzad Kabir Bhuiyan and Saiful Mahmud.

## Health camp for shipbreaking workers

Several indoor health camps were conducted by OSHE shipbreaking project in Chattogram. A total of 73 patients attended the camps and received free medicines and treatment. Dr. Tapan Kumar Das, medical officer of OSHE, provided medical treatment to the patients.



## Awareness raising meeting on labour rights

OSHE foundation organized several yard level awareness raising meetings on labour rights for shipbreaking workers. A total of 16 workers from different yards took part in the meeting at OSHE Bhatiary office in Chattogram on 25 May. Introduction to labour laws, rights issues and safety committee were discussed in this meeting. Labour leader Abdur Rahim Master was present as resource person while OSHE program officer Shazzad Kabir coordinated the meeting. A total of another 15 workers from different shipbreaking yards took part in the meeting on 28 May at the same venue. Labour leader Md. Nurul Absar was present as resource person. On 27 June, another awareness raising meeting was organized by OSHE shipbreaking project team where 15 yard level workers took part.



## OHS Initiative project launches training of trainers on OHS

OHS Initiative for workers and community project organised 20 days long training of trainers for the second batch on 30 June 2018 at Gonoshasthaya Kendra at Savar in Dhaka. OHS Initiative governing board member secretary and OSHE executive director AR Chowdhury Repon, board member and Gonoshasthaya Kendra chief executive officer Dr. Manzur Kadir Ahmed joined the inauguration session while OSHE chairperson Saki Rezwana chaired the session. Belgium based international charity organisation World Solidarity (WSM) Asia coordinator Bruno Deceukeller was present as special guest.

The basic ToT was participated by 29 OHS trainers from six member organisations -- IBC, Naripokkho, GK, BCWS, BILS & OSHE. BILS member and master trainer Shakil Akter Chowdhury facilitated the session. The ToT consists 15 different modules on OHS which will be covered during 20 day long intensive training. The first module of the course is basic ToT which is covered in 5 days residential program as Gonoshasthaya Kendra from 30 June to 4 July 2018. OHS Initiative project coordinator Md Masud Parvez coordinated the program.

## USDCl students appear board exam

USDCl students took part in the examination under Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB) at Habiganj Poly-technique Institute on 29 June 2018. A total of 30 students enrolled in three different trades - computer office application, graphics design and multimedia and dress making and tailoring. USDCl center manager Asad Uddin supervised the examinees. Union Skill Development and Certification Institute (USDCl) is a joint initiative of Bangladesh Free Trade Union Congress (BFTUC) and OSHE foundation aiming to flourish income generating skills among youth community of Habiganj district.





## Training on collective bargaining for RMG workers

OSHE foundation organised a training course on collective bargaining and negotiation for the ready-made garments workers in Dhaka on 11 and 18 May. Workers from different factories of Mirpur took part in the training. The two days long training was inaugurated by OSHE chairperson Saki Rezwana. 'Jukta Hoe Mukta' project coordinator Nur Alam conducted session as a lead facilitator. Jatio Sramik League relief and rehabilitation secretary Promila Poddar, BFTUC secretary Arifur Rahman, BFTUC youth committee secretary Asaduzzaman and Federation of Garments Workers education secretary Tasmin Jahan conducted other sessions as facilitators. The participants were imparted knowledge on bargaining with mid-level management into the factories, nature and legal frame of collective bargaining, importance of trade unions and leadership, role of participatory committee and role of CBA in mitigating industrial disputes. were discussed in the training.

## RMG workers group mobilization

Jukta Hoe Mukta (United we stand) project of OSHE foundation conducted several field level mobilization meeting for RMG workers groups in Dhaka and Gazipur. Field organiser Md Monir Uddin and Iffatara conducted the meeting. Rights issues of labour laws, safety committee, gender based violence at work, maternity benefit, leave and wage issues were discussed in the meeting.



## Training on labour law

OSHE foundation organised an orientation program on Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 and Bangladesh Labour Rules 2015 for the ready-made garments workers in Dhaka on 6 April.

Workers from different factories of Mirpur took part in the training sessions. 'Jukta Hoe Mukta' project coordinator Nur Alam and field organiser Iffatara conducted the sessions on safety committee, occupational health and safety rights, compensation policy, collective bargaining etc.



## Awareness raising campaign on OHS by DIFE, OSHE

Speakers in a campaign program underscored the need for mass awareness on occupational safety and health as well as the OSH schemes initiated by the Government of Bangladesh. Overcoming the information gap is important for better understanding on the issue. The views were expressed in an awareness raising campaign jointly organised by Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE) and Bangladesh Occupational Safety, Health and Environment Foundation (OSHE) jointly organised the campaign in Dhaka on 25 April.

As part of this campaign, DIFE and OSHE officials distributed awareness leaflets among the city dwellers from a truck show.

DIFE additional inspector general Md Anwar Ullah, joint inspector general Md Shamsul Alam Khan, deputy inspector general Sheikh Asaduzzaman and Soma Roy joined the campaign.

## Training on trade union and participatory committee

OSHE foundation organised an orientation program on trade union and participatory committee for the workers of ready-made garments in Dhaka on 29 June. Workers from different factories of Mirpur took part in the training. 'Jukta Hoe Mukta' project coordinator Nur Alam and field organiser Iffatara conducted the sessions on role and responsibilities of an organiser for trade union formation, structure of participatory committee and leadership.





## OSHE celebrates World Day for Safety and Health at Work

OSHE foundation formed a human chain and rally in front of National Press Club in Dhaka on 28 April marking World Day for Safety and Health at Work. National labour rights activists, trade unionists and civil society members participated the program. OSHE executive director A R Chowdhury Repon spoke on the occasion while OSHE vice chairperson Dr S M Morshed, Federation of Garments Workers secretary general China Rahman, Bangladesh Free Trade Union Congress (BFTUC) secretary Pulak Ranjan Dhar among others were present.

## Workplace accident kills 547 workers in last 6 months

547 workers (87 in formal industry and 460 in informal industry) were killed and 176 workers (66 in formal industry and 110 in informal industry) were injured in different workplace accidents from 1st of January to 30 June 2018. OSHE revealed half yearly workplace accident report after analysing fifteen prominent national dailies and gathering field level information from its staff during the said period. Highest number of casualties happened in informal transport sector, where 152 workers lost lives and 20 severely injured; second highest number of life loses recorded in informal construction sector where 84 workers lost their lives. 37 informal sector day labourers died in this period. Due to workplace accidents 15 and 14 workers lost lives in the shipbreaking sector and ready-made garments sector respectively. The major causes found for these deaths and injuries are road accident, lightning, electrocution, fall from height and hit by construction material at workplaces.



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