

BILS English Bulletin

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BILS Survey: Workplace accidents killed 1,053 in 2021

A total of 1,053 workers were killed and 594 others injured in workplace accidents across the country in 2021. 147 workers were tortured to death and 125 were injured at their workplaces due to violence. There were 431 incidents of labour unrest in different sectors, of which 162 were in the readymade garments sector.

Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies-BILS published the report on January 9, 2022 titled “Newspaper-based BILS survey on labour and workplace Situation in Bangladesh in 2021”. The survey report made on the basis of news published in different national newspapers regarding workplace accident, violence and workers’ unrest.

According to the survey, 1053 workers died in workplace accidents in 2021, of which 1003 were male and 50 were female. According to the sector, the highest number of 513 workers died in the transport sector. The second highest number of 154 workers died in the construction sector. The third highest number of 87 workers died in the agricultural sector. Besides, 55 food processing workers, 46 day labourers, 27 in fisheries and fisheries workers, 24 in water transport workers, 18 in migrant workers, 12 ship breaking workers, 11 in electric sector, 4 RMG workers and in other 102 workers were

Workplace Accident (Death)	
Sector	Number
Transport	513
Construction	154
Agriculture	87
Food Processing Industry	55
Day Labour	46
Fisheries and Fishing Workers	27
Water Transport	24
Migrant Worker	18
Ship Breaking	12
Electricity	11
RMG	4
Others	102
Total	1053

Workplace Accident (Injured)	
Sector	Number
Fisheries and Fishing Workers	176
Transport	80
Construction	45
Ship Breaking	44
Food Processing Industry	35
Water Transport	35
Chemical Factory	23
Dyeing Factory	22
Manufacturing Industry	22
Agriculture	19
Day Labour	19
RMG	5
Others	59
Total	594

killed such as brick kiln, hawker, rice mill, steel mill, mechanics, Etc. sectors. It may be mentioned that in 2020, 729 workers died in various sectors due to workplace accidents, out of which 723 were male and 6 were female.

Workplace Accident (2015-2021)		
Year	Death	Injured
2021	1053	594
2020	729	433
2019	1200	695
2018	1020	482
2017	784	517
2016	699	703
2015	363	382
Total	5848	3807
Source: BILS Newspaper Survey		

In 2021, 594 workers were injured in workplace accidents, of which 471 were male and 23 were female. A maximum of 176 workers were injured in the fisheries sector. In the second highest 80 workers injured in transport sector. Third highest 45 workers were injured in construction sector. Besides, 44 in ship breaking industry, 35 in food processing industry, 35 in water transport sector, 23 in chemical industry, 22 in dying industry, 22 in manufacturing industry, 19 in agriculture, 19 in day labour, 5 in RMG and 59 workers were injured in other sectors.

It may be mentioned that in 2020, 433 workers were injured in various workplace accidents, out of which 387 were male and 46 were female.

Road accidents, electrocutions, thunderstorms, fires, falling from above, falling object, toxic gases, wall/roof collapses, cylinder explosions etc. are some of the causes of accidents at workplaces.

Workplace Violence (Death)	
Sector	Number
Transport	76
Agriculture	15
Security Guard	14
Domestic Worker	12
Construction	5
Fishing and Fisheries worker	5
Others	20
Total	147

Workplace Violence (Injured)	
Sector	Number
Domestic Worker	24
Transport	19
Fishing and Fisheries worker	19
Press and Media	18
Security Guard	11
Agriculture	7
RMG	4
Others	23
Total	125

According to the survey, 91 workers were killed and 114 injured on their way to work in 2021. Of these, including 12 women workers, 62 workers were killed on their way to work and including 4 women workers, 29 workers were killed on their way back from work. On the other hand, 97 workers including 21 women workers were injured on their way to work and 17 workers were injured on their way back from work.

According to the survey, at least 286 workers, including 232 males and 54 females, were tortured at their workplaces in 2021. Of them, 147 died, 125 injured, 6 were missing, 2 committed suicide, 5 were rescued and 1 did not mention the type of torture. The highest number of 99 workers was victims in the transport sector, of which 76 were killed, 19 injured, 2 were missing, and 2 abducted workers were rescued by the police with their hands and legs tied. The second highest number of 38 workers was victims in the domestic workers, of which 12 were killed, 24 were injured, 2 committed suicide. Third highest number of 28 workers was victims in fisheries

and fishing sector, of which 5 were killed, 19 were injured, 4 were missing. In the security guard 26 workers was victims, of which 14 were killed, 11 were injured and 1 were rescued by the police with their hands and legs tied. In agriculture sector 22 workers was victims, of which 15 were killed, 7 were injured. It may be mentioned that in 2020, 232 workers was victims in workplace violence.

At least 300 workers, including 215 males and 85 females, were tortured at out of workplaces in 2021. Of them, 191 died, 70 injured, 3 were missing, 26 committed suicide, 8 were rescued and 2 were not mentioned. The highest number of 87 workers was victims in the RMG sector, of which of which 30 were killed, 37 injured, 2 were missing, 13 were committed suicide, 3 abducted workers were rescued by the police with their hands and legs tied and 2 were not mentioned. The second highest number of 45 workers was victims in transport sector, of which 38 were killed, 3 were injured and 4 were committed suicide. Third highest 36 workers were victims in agriculture sector, of which 31 were killed, 4 were injured and 1 were committed suicide. In the construction sector 14 workers was victims, of which 13 were killed and 1 workers were committed suicide. In the manufacturing industry 14 workers was victims, of which 7 were killed, 3 were injured and 4 were rescued by the police with their hands and legs tied. It may be mentioned that in 2020 364 workers was victims in out of workplace violence.

In 2021, a total of 431 workplace unrest took place in different sectors. The highest number of 172 workplace unrest took place in the readymade garments sector. The second highest number of 50 workplace unrest took place in the transport sector. Third highest number of 36 workplace unrest took place in Jute industry. Besides, 23 in press media, 21 in Agriculture, 18 in suger mill, 12 in textile industry, 9 in biri industry, 9 in railway, 6 in food processing industry, 5 in hawker, 5 in migrant workers, and 66 in others industry.

Causes of Unrest	
Sector	Number
Due Wages	126
Placed Demands	115
Rights & Claim	74
Demands for Reopening Factory	27
Lay Off	26
Allowance	22
Bonus	16
Others	29
Total	431

Sector wise unrest	
Sector	Number
RMG	172
Transport	50
Jute	36
Press and Media	23
Agriculture	21
Sugar Industry	18
Textile	12
Bidi	9
Railway	8
Food Processing Industry	6
Hawker	5
Migrant Worker	5
Others	66
Total	431

During the workplace unrest, 6 workers were killed including 1 female, while 163 workers were injured. Among the injured workers, 122 were male and 41 were female. The highest 137 workers were injured in garments industry during unrest.

According to the survey, a maximum of 126 unrest took place for due wages. Besides, 115 for workers dissatisfied with their demands, 74 with their rights, 27 with demands for reopening closed factories, 26 with their demands for lay-offs, 22 with their demands for allowances, 16

with their demands for bonuses, and 29 with other demands. It may be mentioned that in 2020, a total of 593 workplace unrest took place in different sectors. Highest number of 264 workplace unrest took place in the readymade garments sector. Second highest number of 49 workplace unrest occurred in jute industry.

Seven percent workers still jobless, income decreased by eight percent: BILS Study

During the COVID-19 pandemic, 87 percent of Dhaka city workers lost their jobs in transport, shops and hotels and restaurants due to the lockdown. Seven percent of the workers who lost their jobs are still unemployed and their average income has decreased by 8 percent. The data came from a research report by the Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies-BILS titled "Study on the status of social protection and job security of private-sector workers; experiences amid Covid-19 pandemic and way forward".



The report was presented at a research briefing with media on January 13 2022 at BILS Seminar Hall, Dhanmondi, Dhaka. BILS Deputy Director (Research) Md. Manirul Islam presented the findings of the study. BILS Vice Chairman Amirul Haque Amin, Director Kohinoor Mahmood and Nazma Yesmin were also present at the briefing session.

BILS conducted the research from April 5 to August 10, 2021. According to the research report out of the 87 percent job losers, 95 percent workers are from transport sector, 83 percent from shops and 82 percent from hotel and restaurants. Some 93 percent of job losers were reinstated after lockdown. 7 percent of the workers are still unemployed. However, part-time jobs in these sectors rose as high as 215 percent during the lockdown period, the survey revealed.

On the other hand, 73 percent working days declined in three sectors during the lockdown with transport sector losing the highest 92 percent working days. In the aftermath of the lockdown, however, the workload has increased, and working days and working hours have increased.

According to the survey, average income of these three sectors' workers dropped by 81 percent during the lockdown. Transport workers saw 96 percent income decline and hotel-restaurant workers lost 83 percent of their income. Before the lockdown, a worker had earned Tk 13,578 per month, but it came down to Tk 2,524 during the lockdown. Again, the income surged to Tk 12,529 after the lockdown. There is a deficit of 8 percent income even after the lockdown.

The deficit between the worker families' income and expenditure was 77 percent. Transport workers' families saw the highest 97 percent deficit while it was 46 percent among retail shop workers. At that time, 20 percent workers managed their living cost by selling properties, decreasing food intake and sending their under aged children to work. Some 80 percent workers met their living cost through borrowing and spending from their savings. After lockdown, their savings declined by 64 percent and number of workers able to save money declined by 50 percent.

According to the survey below 1 percent workers of these three sectors received government incentives. These include low-cost food aid and cash. According to the study, 36 percent of workers have been vaccinated against COVID and 64 percent are still unvaccinated.

BILS made 10-point recommendations, including preparing full database of private sector workers, introducing identity card for all employees, creating an institutional framework to help workers during natural disasters, providing corona vaccine, and providing compulsory insurance facilities.

Visit to Ministry of Labour and Employment

A team of BILS-SUNITI Project personnel, PIC and BILS officials, and partners representatives visited the Ministry of Labour and Employment and met the Minister and the secretary on March 30, 2022.

The team submitted the Monitoring Mechanism on Monitoring Mechanism of National Action Plan on Implementing DWPWP, 2015 to the Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Employment Md. Ehsan-E-Elahi. At the same time, the team placed some demands such as, accept the Monitoring Mechanism so that through this, the Progress of implementation of NAP could be monitored; Inclusion of domestic workers in the Labour Law; Including domestic workers in the coverage of Labour Force Survey (LFS) under the Bureau of Statistics (BBS).



Trade Union Centre General Secretary and BILS Joint Secretary General Dr. Wajedul Islam Khan, BILS Executive Council Secretary Md. Alauddin Miah, Domestic Workers Rights Network (DWRN) Acting Coordinator Abul Hossain, OXFAM in Bangladesh Project Coordinator Gita Rani Adhikary, BNWLA President Adv. Salma Ali, Nari Maitree Executive Director Shaheed Akter Dolly, Karmajibi Nari Director Sunzida Sultana, BLAST Deputy Director Mahbuba Akhter, Hello Task Executive Director Mahmudul Hasan Likhon, BILS Director Nazma Yesmin, Project Coordinator Md. Yousuf Al-Mamun was present.

Inclusion of domestic workers in labour law demanded

BILS Securing Rights Project organized Human chain and rally on the occasion of International Women's Day 2022

Trade union leaders have called for inclusion of domestic workers in labour law to ensure their rights, dignity and security. They placed this demand at a human chain and rally organized today (8 March 2022) at Shahbagh on the occasion of International Women's Day 2022.



Speakers at the human chain said that incidents of torture, killings and human rights violations against domestic workers have increased alarmingly in recent years. They claimed that domestic workers should have fair rights and right to dignity as human being. Therefore, they demanded for the implementation of 'Domestic Workers Protection and Welfare Policy, 2015', through the protection and welfare of domestic workers, above all, with establishing their dignity, protecting from torture and violence and ensuring fair wages, compensation and decent working environment.

Acting Coordinator of Domestic Workers Rights Network Abul Hossain conducted the human chain, while among others, President of Bangladesh Labour Federation Shah Mohd Abu Zafar, General Secretary of Jatiya Sramik Jote Bangladesh Naimul Ahsan Jewel, Acting President of Jatiya Sramik Jote Md. Abdul Wahed, General Secretary of Jatiya Mahila Sramik League Kazi Rahima Akter Sathi, President of Bangladesh Jatiya Sramik Federation Shamim Ara, Acting General Secretary of Bangladesh Mukta Sramik Federation Shahidullah Badal, BILS Director Nazma Yesmin, General Secretary of National Domestic Women Workers Union Morsheda



Akter Nahar and others spoke on the occasion. Leaders of the BILS affiliated national trade union federations, DWRN, civil society and project partners were present at the event. During the event, a signature campaign was conducted by CAMPE demanding the rights and dignity of domestic workers.



In addition, on the occasion of Women's Day, the project has organized van rallies in different areas of Dhaka city at the initiative of Nari Maitri, a discussion meeting in Mirpur at the initiative of USEP Bangladesh, a discussion meeting with the employers of domestic workers at the initiative of Hellotask and a social media campaign at the initiative of Red Orange.

International Women's Day-2022: Human chain, Rally and Discussion meeting held at Chattogram

BILS under its' DGB-BW organized a human chain, Rally and a discussion meeting to mark the International Women's Day-2022 on March, 8 2022 at Chattogram.

Participants, mostly females from different trade union federations gathered at the premises of Chattogram Press Club and formed a human chain in protest of violence against women and children. It was presided over by BMSF Women Committee Chattogram president Nazma Akter



and was conducted by BLF women committee organizer Jannatul Ferdous. Speakers in the human chain said that now-a-days the violence against women of all ages has increased. We have to take proper action against the criminals. In workplace and other places women are being physically and mentally abused. These are needed to be stopped.

Later a rally started from Chattogram press club premises and ended up at the premises of J M Sen Hall Chattogram.

The discussion meeting held at J M Sen hall was presided over by Nasrin Akter, President-Women's Committee of JSL, Chattogram and was conducted by Shahenewaj Chowdhury-President-Women's Committee of BJSD, Chattogram. Eminent Educationist, Writer and Human Rights Organizer Dr. Anwara Alam was the chief guest. The discussion was addressed by BILS LRSC Chairman A M Nazimuddin, LRSC Member Secretary Md. Safar Ali, and LRSC Member Tapan Dutta as special guest.



The discussion meeting was addressed among others by Nazma Akter of BMSF, Kohinoor Akter Koli of TUC, Tamanna Binte Azad of BFTUC, Amena Begum of BLF and Munni Akter of BJSF.

Chief Guest and others said, Women in our country are playing a pivotal role in all walks of life. International Women's Day is a great inspiration for all. It encourages us to come forward and fight all the obstacles. If we fail to ensure safety and better opportunity for women, we cannot assure a brighter, democratic and Bangladesh-she said.