

BILS Organised Commemorative Discussion Meeting on 11 years of Rana Plaza Collapse

Trade union and civil society leaders and officials from public and private organisations in a discussion meeting said that learning from the post-accident experience of the garment sector and using the success of multi-faceted



Senior Leadership with the guest in discussion meeting

cooperation and compliance at national and international level, other workplaces should also be made safer in the future. For that, it is necessary to enable tripartite structure comprising government, employers and trade unions. This discussion meeting titled "Achievements and Challenges of Safe Workplaces: Experiences of Post-Rana Plaza Initiatives" was organised by BILS on 23 April 2024 at Tofazzal Hossain Manik Mia Hall of the National Press Club in the capital. BILS Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan delivered welcome address in the discussion meeting, while BILS Chairman Md. Habibur Rahman Shiraz was on the chair. BILS Executive Director Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmed was present at the meeting as Moderator. Among others, BILS Vice Chairman Anwar Hossain, Joint Coordinator of Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SKOP) Noor Kutub Alam Mannan, Joint Coordinator of Garment Sramik Sramik Oikya Parishad-GSCOP Naimul Ahsan Jewell, Industry-All Bangladesh Council-IBC General Secretary Shahidullah Badal,

Deputy Director of Fire Service and Civil Defense Md. Kamal Uddin Bhuiyan, Deputy Director of Labour Department Rokhsana Chowdhury, Joint Inspector General of Health and Safety Research Institute Md. Mahfuzur Rahman Bhuiyan, Project Officer of ILO Maurice Lane Brooks, Senior Advisor of GIZ Aminul Islam along with officials of government and non-governmental organisations, representatives of national and international human rights organisations, and leaders of national trade unions and employers organisations also spoke on this occasion. The speaker pointed out that the initiative taken to ensure safety in the clothing sector in return for the sacrifice of the killed workers has turned around the garment industry of Bangladesh. The main goal of sustaining this initiative by all parties is to adopt a truly united labour movement and a contemporary program led by that labour movement with all the other collaborators and partners under the national program. They said that industrial relations should be developed by ensuring the rights of workers by empowering trade unions. They emphasised that fire service personnel should be increased and modernized to make it capable of dealing with disasters and



Discussion meeting on 11 years of Rana Plaza collapse

in addition, experience from disasters should be used to deal with disasters in the future. Apart from this, they also emphasised on providing

services to injured workers through the development of Employment Injury Scheme. The speakers also suggested creating volunteers from within the trade unions to apply the education and training received from the country and abroad in dealing with disasters.

Capacity Building Training for Youth & Women Leadership

BILS organised a couple of capacity building trainings for organise and development youth and women leadership under 'Building a Sustainable Leather Sector in Bangladesh' project on April 26, 2024 and June 28, 2024, held at BILS seminar hall, Dhaka.

Capacity Building Training- 1: (April 26, 2024)



Capacity building training-1

Abdul Malek, Tannery Workers Union General Secretary, delivered the opening speech while Tannery Workers Union President and BILS Secretary Abul Kalam Azad chaired the said programme. Alam Hossain, Director of OSHI Foundation discussed the project activities in detail and also discussed the responsibilities of the 5 partner organisations' in the project. POJF Project Coordinator AMM Khairul Anam and Head of Programme Khandkar Ahmed Saheed welcomed everyone and informed everyone about their activities and roles of the project. BILS Director Nazma Yesmin provided the welcome speech and explained BILS activities. Chowdhury

Borhan Uddin, coordinator of the project shared the objective of the event and project activities.



Capacity building training-2

Capacity Building Training- 2: (June 28, 2024)

Tannery Workers Union President and BILS Secretary Abul Kalam Azad presided over the training. Abdul Malek, Tannery Workers Union General Secretary, delivered the opening speech while Nazma Yesmin, Director, BILS provided the welcome speech. Chowdhury Borhan Uddin, coordinator of the project shared the objective of the event and project activities.

Khandkar Abdus Salam and ABM Sajjad Hossain, Senior Trade Union Trainers were present there as resource person and they facilitated the training programme respectively.

Recommendations:

- Participants were eager to learn more about leadership & Labour Law which is linked with their practical life.
- To make the participants capable, this type of training is needed more for them.
- Youth and women leaders should be engaged more to protect labour rights at the field level.

Study Circle on Workers' Rights in Tannery Sector

BILS organised two different Study Circles on basic rights, organizing workers, union formation, OSH and collective bargaining on May 10, 2024 and June 7, 2024 under 'Building a Sustainable Leather Sector in Bangladesh' project held at

Tannery Union Office, Hemayetpur, Savar, Dhaka.

Study Circle 1 (May 10, 2024)

Tannery Workers Union Office Secretary & Trainer Sheikh Akram Hossain, Co-Secretary & Trainer Md Kamal Hossain & Nurul Amin Babul, Secretary Abdul Rahim, Organiser & Trainer Md.



Study Circle Meeting, 10 May 2024

Humyun and Mamun were present in the study circle programme. Project Coordinator, Chowdhury Borhan Uddin, shared about BILS and the activities of the project with the participants, as well as the objective of this study circle.

Study Circle 2 (June 7, 2024)



Study Circle Meeting, 7 June 2024

Abul Kalam Azad, President of the Tannery Workers Union and General Secretary Abdul Malek was present at the programme. Tannery Workers Union General Secretary Abdul Malek requested to the participants to share the content and the lesson learning of the study circle among the other workers who could not get opportunity to participate the said programme. The main objective of the study circle was educating the participants about the legal rights of the workers.

BILS Research Inception Meeting

BILS organised a research inception meeting under the BILS-Mondiaal FNV project "Effective Social Dialogue for Decent Work in RMG Industry" was scheduled on last 19 May 2024 at CIRDAP Auditorium, Dhaka. The title of this research is 'Unlocking the Pathways of Advancing Human Rights Due Diligence in Bangladesh's RMG Industry: Scope and Opportunities of Trade Union'. The inception meeting The core objectives of this research is to analyse the international policy instruments related to Human Rights Due Diligence, identify and analyse the best human rights due diligence practices for Bangladesh's RMG industry.

The programme was chaired by Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmmed, Executive Director-BILS. The



Inception Meeting

Human Chain and Mobile Information Centre on May Day

event was facilitated by Shakil Akhter Chowdhury, Secretary-BILS. The event was successfully accomplished by the participation of national leaderships from SKOP, IBC and BILS associates TU leaderships.



Human Chain, Mobile Information Centre & Cultural Programme on May Day 2024

On the occasion of the May Day, a human chain was organised in front of the National Press Club on May 1, 2024, on the initiative of Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies-BILS. Leaders of the National Trade Union Federations expressed solidarity with the human chain. Besides, a mobile information center was set up at the venue from where researched information and awareness publications on labour rights were distributed.

BILS Vice Chairman Anwar Hossain, General Secretary of Bangladesh Sramik Federation AAM Fayez Hossain, BILS Executive Council Member Umma Hasan Jholmol, Nasrin Akhter Dina, Shamim Ara, BILS Executive Director Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmmed, Director Kohinoor Mahmood and Nazma Yesmin spoke in solidarity with the human chain.

The speakers referred to the history of the spirit and glory of the May Day and said that it is possible to develop fair industrial relations by building a truly united labour movement based on the motto of May Day and ensuring the rights of the workers through the empowerment of trade unions. They said, along with infrastructure development, the development of workers should be ensured, laws and regulations should be used optimally, occupational health and safety of workers should be ensured, especially chemical, electrical and fire safety systems in the workplace. They mentioned that in addition to ensuring the representation of the workers through the union, it is also important to empower the workers for the purpose of economic development. They also said that automation

should not be placed at the expense of the workers, but efforts should be made to reduce the suffering of the workers through it. Speakers pointed out that it is possible to practice sustainable development in the industrial sector through responsible production, including reducing carbon emissions, waste management, proper use of electricity and water, encouraging the use of renewable energy, and for this, green social movements and dialogue of workers are required. Mass music and recitations were performed by BILS Cultural Group at the Mobile Information Centre.

BILS May Day Commemorative Speech

BILS organised May Day commemorative speech to mark the historic May Day: International Workers Day this year on May 19, 2024 (Sunday), from 10.00 am to 05.00 pm at CIRDAP Auditorium, Chameli House, 17 Topkhana Road, Dhaka. BILS always organise this event every year to uphold the national trade union movement which is dedicated for ensuring the well-being of the workers in the country with the spirit of May Day and to take future directions. Traditionally, nationally/internationally recognized prominent persons have enlightened this event by delivering speeches and directions. This year the historic May Day commemorative speech was delivered by the country's eminent economist and development think tank DR. Kazi Khaliquzzaman



May Day Commemorative Speech

Ahmad. The event was chaired by Nazrul Islam Khan, secretary general-BILS. High-level representatives from the Embassies, Trade Unions, Employers Groups, Civil Society Organisations, NGOs and Media joined the event.

Project Orientation Meeting with Trade Union Leadership

Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies – BILS and ILO have launched a project 'Support to enhance TU capacity to engage care workers for recognition and representation towards effective participation of workers in social dialogue, skills, and entrepreneurship development for decent work'. BILS organized a project inception workshop with Trade Union Leadership on 26 June 2024 at BILS Seminar Hall, Dhanmondi Dhaka. Leadership from National Coordination Committee for Workers' Education (NCCWE) and BILS-associated National Trade Union Federations joined the workshop. The workshop was moderated by Shakil Akhter Chowdhury, Secretary of BILS. BILS Executive Director, Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmmed, Director, Nazma Yesmin, ILO National Program Coordinator, Anne Drong, Chowdhury Ashiqul Alam, NCCWE Member Secretary addressed in the event, among others.

Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmmed, Executive Director of BILS kept welcome remarks towards the participants. He said a few words about the emerging care economy in Bangladesh and Trade Union's role. In this rapidly expanding

sector, the workers need care first and foremost. He defined the objective of this initiative, which is to introduce this new issue to Bangladesh Labour Movement, so that Trade Union can engage in this discourse, create arguments, and take initiatives.

Pedro Jr. Bellen, Chief Technical Advisor of the PROGRESS project to say a few words. He thanked BILS for implementing the project which is a great start at realising ILO's vision of the care sector in Bangladesh. In the 112th session of the International Labour conference, the care economy was a major highlight. He emphasised the importance of such interventions which is aimed at liberating women from the burden of reproductive roles and support them engaging in other economic activities.

Anne Drong, National Program Coordinator, shared ILO's vision for Care Sector in Bangladesh. She mentioned that this is the very first step and a small-scale initiative to enhance the understanding of the care economy in Bangladesh. The broader goal is to create care provision for everyone in the country as well as to ensure decent work for care workers. Care should be a public good, and everyone has the right to receive care. Households, Employers and the State all should be responsible in this case. In addition to ensuring decent work for care workers, another element of the project is skill and entrepreneurship development. Trade Union can shape dialogue concerning the care sector in



May Day Commemorative Speech

Bangladesh and advocate for the decent work for workers involved in Care.

Chowdhury Ashiqul Alam, NCCWE member secretary shared the challenges to ensure the rights of all types of care workers and stressed working on this issue from a mindful position. He expected that through this project the status of care work would be revealed. The findings will support Trade Union in organizing care workers as well as build their awareness about decent work.

The participants hoped that the care worker's platform which will be created under the project can be mobilised to get the recognition of the Care Workers. BILS Executive Director emphasised that this project is SKOP and NCCWE's and the results of the project is also for their use, where BILS and ILO are ready to give them the technical support.

Core Group Meeting to Strengthen Due Diligence Process

Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS) organised the first core group meeting of the "Strengthening Due Diligence process implementation in the Textile Sector in Bangladesh" under FEMNET e.V project at BILS Seminar Hall, Dhanmondi, Dhaka, on April 22, 2024. The purpose of the workshop was to establish a core group and contact among the members and discuss the project activities.



Core Group Meeting to strengthen Due Diligence Process

The event was chaired by BILS Advisory Council member and Joint Coordinator of SKOP and G-SKOP Naimul Ahsan Jewel and moderated by Nazma Yesmin, Director, BILS. One of the most important objectives of the programme was to familiarise the core group members with the project and get recommendations for the activities for the next few months. The discussants throughout the programme provided their recommendations regarding the activity planning and implementation.

Workshop for EII on Workers' Rights and Social Security



Workshop on Employment Injury Insurance

BILS organised two different workshops on Employment Injury Insurance on Workers' Rights and Social Security in the Tannery Workers under the 'Building a Sustainable Leather Sector in Bangladesh' project on May 11, 2024, and June 8, 2024, held at the Tannery Workers Union Office, Hemayetpur, Savar. The sessions were facilitated by Co-General Secretary and Trainer TM Liaqat Hossain, Co-secretary and Trainer, Md Kamal Hossain, Md. Humayun Kabir, and Nurul Amin Babul. The project coordinator, Chowdhury Borhan Uddin, informed the participants about BILS, the activities of the project, and the purpose of the Employment Injury Insurance (EII).

The main objective of the events was to inform them about the scheme of EII and another social



Workshop on Employment Injury Insurance

protection scheme for the workers as per law and other provisions. The workshop supported the participants to know the enrolment process with the scheme and the benefits of them with regard to short-term or long-term injury or any other disease and illness.

BILS Campaign Materials

Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies-BILS Published Three Posters & Three Leaflets on "Invest to advance women's equal rights and opportunities, Ensure health and safety of workers and working environment in the workplace as per labour laws and Social Protection on Employment Injury Insurance" The Campaign Materials published under the project of Building a sustainable leather Sector in Bangladesh.



International Day for Occupational Safety at Workplace

BILS-LRSC organised a human chain and rally on International Day for Workers Occupational Safety at Workplace that has been held on April 28, 2024 under DGB-BW project activity formed at the in front of Chattogram press club.

The day celebrated to raise safety awareness in workplace among the workers. A leaflet and a poster on the day also published and distributed among the workers and members of the NTUC. A total number of 112 participant from NTUC were attended in the event



Celebrations of World Environment Day with Campaign Activity



Campaign on World Environment Day

On the celebration of World Environment Day, BILS organised a campaign programme and distributed publications under 'Building a Sustainable Leather Sector in Bangladesh' on June 5, 2024 in Tannery State, Hemayetpur, Savar. The campaign activity was arranged by BILS in collaboration with Solidar Suisse and funded by the European Union. The Tannery workers of Hemayetpur Tannery State participated in the campaign and joined the publicity and publication distribution program spontaneously.

Leadership Consultation Meeting

BILS organised a leadership consultation meeting, which was held on April 18, 2024 at Hotel Rose Garden, Chattogram. The meeting was chaired by BILS-LRSC CC Committee Chairman and Labour Leader A M Nazimuddin.

The inaugural speech in the consultation was delivered by BILS-LRSC CC Committee Member-Secretary Md. Safar Ali. An audio-visual presentation on the 2nd quarter project activities was presented by BILS-LRSC senior officer Rizwanur Rahman Khan. The meeting was

moderated by BILS-LRSC senior officer Pahari Bhattacharjee.



Consultation Meeting

A total number of 22 Participants from different NTUC's took part in the consultation meeting. The meeting briefly discussed on the experience of 1st Quarter activities and focused on the major issues and priorities of 2nd quarter activities. Several recommendations were finalized in the consultation based on the opinion of the trade union leadership.

Centre Coordination Committee Meeting

A centre coordination committee meeting organised by BILS under DGB-BW project activity held on April 20, 2024 at BILS-LRSC Chattogram office. The meeting was chaired by BILS-LRSC



Centre Coordination Consultation Meeting

CC Committee Chairman and Labour Leader A M Nazimuddin. BILS-LRSC CC Committee Member-Secretary Md. Safar Ali, BILS-LRSC senior officer Pahari Bhattacharjee and Rizwanur

Rahman Khan, Admin Officer Mukta Acharjee, Accounts Officer Sudeep Daria were present during the meeting. The meeting was discussed on several agenda items, such as International Safe Workplace Day, May Day, and the BILS Internship Program 2024.

May Day Rally & Discussion Meeting

On the occasion of May Day 2024, BILS organised a discussion meeting held on May 6, 2024 at the Bangabondhu Hall of Chattogram Press Club. Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher, Vice



May Day Discussion Meeting

Chancellor, University of Chattogram was present there as Chief Guest while BILS-LRSC CC Committee Member-Secretary Md. Safar Ali presided over the meeting and the meeting was moderated by BILS Senior Officer Pahari Bhattacharjee.

The concept note presentation of the discussion entitled as “Spirit of International Labour Day: The implementation of Law” was presented by eminent Labour Researcher Professor Dr. Md. Shahin Chowdhury (Department of Law) University of Chattogram. Trade Union Leader Tapan Dutta, BILS-LRSC CC Committee Chairman and Labour Leader A M Nazimuddin, Kaji Sheikh Nurullah Bahar, Robiul Huq Shimul, Nasrin Akter, Minu Rani Devi and several local leaders of NTUC presented in the discussion meeting. The speakers of the meeting urged everyone to come forward and protect workers’ rights with the spirit of historic May Day.

Human Chain for Workers Friendly National Budget

BILS youth trade union network organised a human chain formation program as part of voice-raise for declaration of a pro-worker national



Human Chain for Workers' Friendly National Budget

budget that has been held on 2nd June 2024, in front of the Chattogram press.

BILS youth trade union network member Advocate Md. Iqbal Hossain presided over the human chain while it was moderated by BILS youth team member Fazlul Kabir Mintu.

The event was addressed by Youth Trade Union Network members Syed Ahmed Badol, K M Shahidullah, Jaheduddin Shahin, Shahana Akter, Shamsul Islam Arju

Day Long Training on Labour Law

A couple of training on Labour Law took total 8 days long in 4 separated part and 2-days together organised by BILS in Chattogram under BILS-DGB BW project. Those training programmes were held on 27 and 28 June, 2024, 1-2, 6-7, and 9-10 July 2024. A total number of 79 participants from various unions of NTUC took part in the trainings.

8 separate sessions were conducted in each training programme on Labour Law and Rules. The major topic was recruitment, appointment letter, The process of dismiss, employer and workers relationship, working hour and leave, wages and other benefits, maternity related



Day Long Training on Labour Law

relation, OHS etc. The sessions were conducted by BILS core team members and the trainers Fazlul Kabir Mintu, Anwarul Azim Sobuz, Advocate Md. Iqbal Hossen and Lutfun Nahar Sonia.

The training programs were supervised by BILS senior officer Pahari Bhattacharjee and Rizwanur Rahman Khan.

Green Social Dialogue & Earth Day Celebrations

Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies - BILS organised 'Green Social Dialogue' Development Programme for Trade Unions in RMG sector, a rally, cultural program and assembly took place as part of celebrations of World Earth Day' held on May 17, 2024, at Bangladesh Open University

Bangmata Begum Fazilatunnessa Conference Hall and Training Center in collaborations with GIZ. The programme was chaired by former MP Shamsunnahar Bhuiyan, executive president of Mahila Sramik League. Md Motaleb Mia, Assistant Inspector General of Gazipur Factory and Institution Inspection Directorate was present there as special guest. Gazipur District Environment Directorate Research Officer Md Maqbul Hossain, Gazipur Press Club President Professor Md Masudul Haque, Garment Workers Union Joint Convener Naimul Ahsan Jewell, BILS Director Najma Yasmin and National Level Trade Union Leaders were present there and provided their valuable speeches. Many leaders from human rights organisations, public, private and professional organisations were took participations on the programme. They emphasised on formulating a strategy paper for the policy making stage based on the research report titled "Assessment of Climate Change and Environmental Issues on Livelihoods of Garment Workers and Determination of Trade Union Actions".

The speakers mentioned in their speech that awareness should be strengthened at the national level as well as at the grassroots level to deal with the crisis of climate change. He said that it is the responsibility of every person to keep the environment clean and tidy. They also emphasised that the trade union should take a leading role in creating awareness among the



Green Social Dialogue & Earth Day Celebrations

local people. They stated that the trade union should come forward to strengthen awareness to reduce the impact of environment and climate change in the garment industry. A total number of 459 RMG workers and Trade Union Activist attended the rally and assembly.

Inauguration of First Aid Training for Ship Breaking Workers

BILS organised an inaugural programme on first aid training for Ship Breaking workers at Sitakunda Upazila Conference Hall. Shipbreaking Workers Trade Union Forum convener Tapan Dutta presided over the training programme while

Station Nurul Alam Dulal and Senior Station Officer of Kumira Station Abdullah Al Mamun.

In the speech of the chief guest KM Rafiqul Islam, executive officer of Sitakunda, said that due to the inherently dangerous nature of work of shipbreaking workers, first aid training is very important. Shipbreaking workers are constantly at risk as they work in areas with heavy machinery, scrap metal and toxic materials. It is very important to provide immediate treatment to the workers working in this sector if they have an accident. Quick and effective first aid can play a long-term role in saving the lives of injured workers, reducing the severity of injuries, and preventing long-term complications. I feel that Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies-BILS is playing an important role in ensuring the safety of workers in the shipbreaking industry sector by



Green Social Dialogue & Earth Day Celebrations

Fazlul Kabir Mintu, coordinator of Ship Breaking Workers' Occupational Health and Safety Information Center moderated the programme. Sitakunda Upazila Executive Officer KM Rafiqul Islam was present as the chief guest and Professor Dr. Mohammad Shaheen Chowdhury, Law Department, University of Chattogram, Kohinoor Mahmood, Director, BILS, A. M. Nazim Uddin, Coordination Committee Chairman, BILS-LRSC Centre, BILS were presented there as special guest.

First aid training was provided by Senior Station Officer of Fire Service and Civil Defense Sitakunda

providing first aid training to shipbreaking workers. He lauded the research activities of the BILS in the labour sector, the various activities of the BILS to raise awareness about workers' rights.

It is to be noted that BILS plans to provide first aid training to 270 shipbreaking workers through 18 training sessions of 15 people per batch this year.

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