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## National Convention to Present Workers' Manifesto Ahead of the 2026 Parliamentary Election

BILS, with the support of the ILO and on behalf of the National Workers' Rights Advocacy Alliance, organised a National Stakeholders' Convention titled "Presentation of the Workers' Manifesto for Inclusion in Political Parties' Election Manifestos for the 2026 National Parliamentary Election" on January 12, 2026, at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Center in Agargaon, Dhaka.

The programme was chaired by National Workers' Rights Advocacy Alliance Convener and BILS Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan. Welcome remarks were delivered by ILO Country Director Max Tunon, while the key contents of the Workers' Manifesto were presented by Alliance Member Secretary and BILS Executive Director Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmmed.



The convention was attended by representatives of major political parties, national trade union federations, workers' rights organisations, civil society, international organisations, diplomatic missions, development partners, and labour movement leaders. Among the speakers were Shramik Karmachari Oikko Parishad (SKOP) Joint Convener Abdul Kader Hawlader,

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami Assistant Secretary General Advocate Ahsanul Mahmud Zubair, Revolutionary Workers Party General Secretary Saiful Haque, Canadian High Commission Second Secretary Philippe Bernier Arcand, European Union Delegation to Bangladesh Trade Adviser Abu Sayeed Belal, Gono Forum General Secretary Dr. Md. Mizanur Rahman, ITUC Asia-Pacific Director S.M. Fahimuddin Pasha, World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) Deputy General Secretary C. Sreekumar, Bangladesh JASAD General Secretary Nazmul Haque Prodhan, Workers' Rights Council President Abdur Rahman, JSD General Secretary Shahid Uddin Mahmud Swapan, Islami Andolan Bangladesh Presidium Member Professor Ashraf Ali Akon, NCP Senior Joint Convener Ariful Islam, Member of the Political Council of Ganosamhati Andolon Taslima Akter, Democratic Revolutionary Party General Secretary Mosharrefa Mishu, BASAD (Marxist) Member Rashed Shahriar, Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) General Secretary Abdullahil Kafi Raton, BASAD General Secretary Bazlur Rashid Firoz, BNP Standing Committee Member Dr. Abdul Moyeen Khan, Workers' Safety Forum Acting Member Secretary Sekendar Ali Mina.



The programme aimed to present the Workers' Manifesto, developed by the National Workers' Rights Advocacy Alliance based on the recommendations of the Labour Reform Commission and the nine-point demands of SKOP, for inclusion in the election manifestos of political parties contesting the 2026 National Parliamentary Election. The convention sought to ensure that workers' rights, aspirations, and welfare remain a central component of national political commitments and governance agendas.

## **\*LABOUR MANIFESTO**

The Labour Manifesto for the 2026 National Parliamentary Election calls on political parties to prioritize workers' rights and social justice as essential foundations for building a fair and discrimination-free Bangladesh. It highlights that despite workers' historic contributions to the country's political movements and economic development, most still face low wages, unsafe working conditions, weak legal protections, limited social security, and barriers to unionization. The manifesto stresses the need for labour reforms, including a national minimum wage, stronger trade union rights, workplace safety, social protection for all workers, and special support for women, migrant, indigenous, disabled, and informal-sector workers. It also urges the government to address unemployment, protect workers in emerging digital and platform-based jobs, and fulfill Bangladesh's constitutional and international commitments to labour rights, equality, and decent work.

At the press conference, a **15-point Workers' Manifesto** was proposed, including the following recommendations:

1. Ensuring Legal Recognition, Registration, and Protection for All Workers through Necessary Amendments to Labour Laws
2. Ensuring the Right to and Opportunities for Decent and Dignified Work
3. Ensuring Fair Wages for All Workers that Uphold Human Dignity and Enable a Decent and Progressive Life
4. Ensuring Safe and Healthy Working Conditions and Adequate Compensation
5. Social Security and Welfare
6. Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining
7. Promotion of Industrial Relations, Workers' Participation in Policy-Making, and Establishment of a National Social Dialogue Forum
8. Establishing Administrative and Judicial Mechanisms to Address Violations of Workers' Rights and Ensure Fair Entitlements
9. Equality, Non-Discrimination, and Inclusion
10. Child Labour and Adolescent Workers
11. Labour Administration, Inspection, and Accountability
12. Just Transition in the Context of Climate and Technological Change, Automation, and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and Responsible Business Conduct
13. Rights, Safety, and Protection of Migrant Workers
14. Workers' Rights, Skills Development, and Employment in EPZs and Foreign Investment Contexts
15. Establishment of a Permanent National Labour Commission

➤ For more information click the link below:

<https://bilsbd.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Labour-Manifestos-final-1.pdf>

# Workers' Manifesto for 2026 Election Unveiled at Dhaka Press Conference

BILS, with the support of the ILO and on behalf of the National Workers' Rights Advocacy Alliance, organised a press conference on the "Workers' Manifesto for the 2026 National Parliamentary Election" on January 7, 2026, at a hotel in Dhaka.



The programme was addressed by National Workers' Rights Advocacy Alliance Convener and BILS Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan, Alliance Senior Joint Convener and the National Labour Alliance President Mesbah Uddin Ahmed, and Alliance Member Secretary as well as BILS Executive Director Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmmed, who presented the key contents of the Workers' Manifesto.

The press conference was attended by prominent trade union leaders and civil society representatives, including Shramik Karmachari Oikko Parishad (SKOP) Joint Coordinator Abdul Kader Hawlader, Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal President Anwar Hossain, National Labour Alliance Bangladesh President Saifuzzaman Badsha, Bangladesh Free Trade Union Congress President A.R. Chowdhury Ripon, Sammilito Garments Workers Federation President Nazma Akter, Socialist Labour Front General Secretary Ahsan Habib Bulbul, Workers' Safety Forum Acting Member Secretary Sekendar Ali Mina, BILS Executive Council Secretary Shakil Akhter Chowdhury, National Labour Alliance Bangladesh General Secretary Badal Khan, Socialist Labour Front President Rajekuzzaman Ratan, Bangladesh National Labour Federation President Shamim Ara, Bangladesh Trade Union Centre Finance Secretary Kazi Ruhul Amin, Bangladesh Labour Federation Vice President Syeda Azizun Nahar, National Labour Federation President A.S.M. Zakaria, BLAST Director Advocate Barkat Ali.



The programme aimed to present a 15-point Workers' Manifesto to political parties participating in the 2026 National Parliamentary Election, with the objective of ensuring the inclusion of workers' rights and labour issues in election manifestos and securing national political commitment to labour reforms. The manifesto called for legal recognition and protection of all workers, decent work opportunities, fair and living wages, occupational safety and health, social protection, freedom of association and collective bargaining, workers' participation in policymaking, gender equality, elimination of child labour, accountability of

labour institutions, just transition in the context of climate and technological change, protection of migrant workers, trade union rights in Export Processing Zones (EPZs), and the establishment of a National Permanent Labour Commission.

The programme highlighted the need to ensure a national minimum wage, eliminate wage discrimination, strengthen social protection systems, promote peaceful industrial relations, and create national minimum standards for labour rights and welfare. Speakers emphasized that workers' voices and interests must be reflected in public policy and political commitments, recognizing workers' contributions to economic and social development. The press conference also underscored the importance of building a more equitable, inclusive, sustainable, and competitive Bangladesh by addressing labour inequalities, ensuring fair entitlements, and advancing workers' rights as a key national policy priority.

## National Dialogue on Workers' Manifesto for the 2026 Parliamentary Election Held in Dhaka

BILS, with support from ILO and allied trade union and civil society organizations, organised a discussion meeting titled "National Workers' Rights Advocacy Alliance Dialogue on the Workers' Manifesto for the 2026 National Parliamentary Election" on 2 February 2026 at the CIRDAP Auditorium in Dhaka.

The programme was moderated by Alliance Member Secretary and BILS Executive Director Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmmed. It brought together academia, media personalities, researchers, trade unions representatives, civil society representatives, labour rights groups and national and international development partners to discuss the Workers' Manifesto, its implementation framework, challenges, and future actions.



The meeting was attended by ILO Bangladesh Country Director Max Tunon, Manusher Jonno Foundation Executive Director Shahin Anam, Economist Professor M.M. Akash, Senior journalist and columnist Sohrab Hassan, Alliance Senior Joint Convener Mesbah Uddin Ahmed, CPD Additional Research Director Towfiqul Islam Khan, Awaj Foundation Executive Director Nazma Akter, Nagorik Uddyog Executive Director Zakir Hossain;

BIGD Researcher Mahin Sultan, Economist, academic and Researcher Rashed Al Mahmud

Titumir, Environmental activist Sharif Jamil, Domestic Workers Rights Network Coordinator Abul Hossain, and Workers Welfare Federation General Secretary Advocate Atikur Rahman. At the event, remarks were delivered by Tripartite Body Vice President Anwar Hossain, Socialist Labour Front President Rajekuzzaman Ratan, Socialist Labour Front General Secretary Ahsan Habib Bulbul, Workers' Safety Forum (SNF) Acting Member Secretary Sekendar Ali Mina, Kormojibi Nari Additional Executive Director Sanjida Sultana, Jagannath University Associate Professor Mustafiz Ahmed, ILO EII Project National Coordinator Nowshin Shah, Media Personality Abu Sayeed Khan, Bangladesh Workers Federation General Secretary A.A.M. Foyez Hossain, Bangladesh National Workers Federation President Shamim Ara, BILS Executive Council Member Pulak Ranjan Dhar, Bangladesh Free Trade Union Congress General Secretary Ripon Chowdhury, Bangladesh Mukta Sramik Federation General Secretary Md. Shahidullah Badal, BLAST Director Md. Barkat Ali, Trade Union Centre Finance Secretary Ruhul Amin, National Workers Alliance Joint Secretary Saleh Ahmed, FES Programme Advisor Arifa As Alam, BILS Director Kohinur Mahmood and Nazma Yesmin.

The programme aimed to strengthen national dialogue on the Workers' Manifesto for the 2026 National Parliamentary Election, which was developed to ensure the inclusion of labour rights and workers' demands in political party manifestos. Participants emphasized the importance of holding political parties and elected governments accountable for implementing labour commitments, ensuring decent work, fair wages, occupational safety, social protection, gender equality, rights of informal workers, and just transition in the context of climate and technological change.

## Presentation of Research findings on Climate Change, Green Transition, and Labour Impacts in Bangladesh

BILS, in collaboration with the Tara Climate Foundation, organised a consultative meeting and presentation of research findings titled “Analysis of Climate Change and the Real Situation of Green and Just Transition and Its Impacts in Bangladesh’s Ready-Made Garment and Rice Milling Industries” on 23 February 2026 at a hotel in Dhaka.



The programme was chaired by BILS Advisory Council Member Mesbah Uddin Ahmed. It brought together economists, trade union leaders, researchers, government officials, international development partners, and civil society representatives to discuss the future challenges of Bangladesh’s garment and

rice milling industries in the context of climate change, technological transformation, and just transition.

The meeting was attended by prominent speakers and participants, including BILS Executive Director Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmmed, Tara Climate Foundation Director Dr. Shaukat Ara, Professor and RAPID Executive Director Dr. M. Abu Eusuf, ILO Technical Officer on Just Transition Elisa Benistanti Fremigacci, Solidarity Center Country Programme Director A.K.M. Nasim, CPD Research Associate Md. Takrim Hossain, DIFE Legal Officer Md. Masum Billah, IBC President Kutub Uddin Ahmed, Socialist Labour Front General Secretary Ahsan Habib Bulbul, Bangladesh Employers' Federation representative Mahbubur Rahman, BILS Executive Council Secretary Shakil Akhter Chowdhury, and BILS Director Kohinur Mahmood.

The programme aimed to present the findings of a participatory research study on climate change impacts, green transition, and just transition in Bangladesh's two major labour-intensive industries—ready-made garments and rice milling. The study highlighted workers' vulnerability to climate change, occupational health risks, job insecurity due to automation, and the urgent need for a fair and inclusive transition process.

#### Key Research Findings:

- Climate perceptions show a clear seasonal shift in Bangladesh, with only three dominant seasons now (summer, winter, and monsoon) and a significantly longer summer period.
- Awareness of green energy transition is low: 66.7% of workers are unfamiliar, while 33.3% have some knowledge. The rice milling sector shows almost no use of green energy, while only a few garment factories have limited solar energy adoption.
- Understanding of just transition is also limited, with 61.8% of workers completely unaware and only 38.2% having some awareness, indicating that the concept is still emerging among both workers and trade unions.
- Regarding climate and environmental rights, 46.6% of workers are unaware of trade union capacity, while 36.5% consider unions capable and about 10% view them as weak. Trade unions are largely absent or ineffective in the rice milling sector.
- Overall, the findings highlight significant gaps in awareness, limited green transition practices, and weak institutional capacity to support climate-related labour rights.

## BILS- ILO Project Orientation Meeting Held in Dhaka

BILS, with the support of ILO Bangladesh, organised a half-day Project Orientation Meeting under the project titled “Awareness Raising of RMG Factory Trade Union Workers on EIS Pilot” on April 12, 2026, at Hotel Asia & Resorts, Dhaka.

The initiative, being implemented from October 2025 to July 2026, aims to bridge the information



gap among workers in the RMG sector regarding their rights and entitlements under the national Employment Injury Scheme (EIS). The meeting brought together representatives from trade unions, labour federations, the EIS Governing Body, ILO Bangladesh, and labour rights organizations to discuss project implementation strategies, worker awareness, and the future direction of the Employment Injury Scheme in Bangladesh. A total of 44 participants attended the programme, including 33 male and 11 female participants.

The programme was chaired by BILS Chairman Mojibur Rahman Bhuiyan, and moderated by EIS Governing Body Member Md. Towhidur Rahman. The orientation meeting was attended by Chief Technical Advisor for the EIS Pilot at ILO Bangladesh Syed Saad Hussain Gilani; Advisor for Knowledge Management at SoSi GIZ, Nakib Rajib Ahmed, BILS Executive Director Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmed, BILS Director Kohinoor Mahmood, Project Coordinator of the BILS-ILO EIS Project Monirul Kobir, National Project Coordinator of the Employment Injury Scheme at ILO Bangladesh Noushin Shah, SLF trainer Rukhsana Afrooj Asha, NCCWE Chairman Chowdhury Ashiqul Alam, IBC President Kutubuddin Ahmed, and BILS Advisory Council Member Mesbahuddin Ahmed.

The programme aimed to brief the leadership of NCCWE and IBC on the activities and implementation strategies of the BILS–ILO Employment Injury Scheme (EIS) project, while gathering recommendations from trade union leaders and stakeholders to support its effective implementation and enhance awareness among RMG workers about the EIS Pilot.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT ORIENTATION MEETING

- To brief the leadership of the National Coordination Committee for Workers' Education (NCCWE) and the Industrial Bangladesh Council (IBC) on the activities of the BILS-ILO Employment Injury Scheme (EIS) project.
- To gather consultations, recommendations, and suggestions from these leaders to ensure the effective implementation of the project.

## Dissemination Event on Quality Childcare Services in Bangladesh Held at BCFCC

BILS with support from the International Labour Organization Bangladesh and in collaboration with LightCastle Partners organised a dissemination event titled “Keeping Childcare in the Picture: Towards Quality Childcare in Bangladesh” on March 12, 2026, at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Center, Agargaon, Dhaka.

The programme was attended by representatives from government institutions, trade union federations, employers' organisations, civil society organisations, childcare practitioners, and national and international



development partners, with a total of 154 participants, including 82 women and 72 men. The event commenced with a welcome address by BILS Executive Director Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmmed and opening remarks by National Project Coordinator of ILO Bangladesh Anne Drong. Presentations on childcare policy, quality guidelines, and statutory childcare provisions were delivered by Co-founder and Managing Director of LightCastle Partners Zahedul Amin & Senior Business

Consultant of LightCastle Partners Ainan Tajrian, Consultant of BILS Mehedi Hasan, and BILS Secretary Shakil Akhter Chowdhury. Key speakers included Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Employment Md. Humayun Kabir, Additional Secretary General of the Bangladesh Employers' Federation Md. Saiful Islam, Joint Coordinator of the Shramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SKOP) Ahsan Habib Bulbul, BILS Advisory Council Member Naimul Ahsan Jewel, and Project Manager of the ILO Neeran Ramjuthan.

The programme aimed to highlight the current state of childcare in workplaces across Bangladesh and to present ways to improve service quality. It focused on research findings, national minimum standards, experiences from community-level pilot projects, and policy recommendations in light of the Bangladesh Labour Act (Amendment) Ordinance 2025.

## Consultation Meeting on Bangladesh Labour Act (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025

BILS organised a consultation meeting titled “Consultation Meeting on Bangladesh Labour Act (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025: Expectations and Necessary Actions” on March 15, 2026, at the BILS Seminar Hall, Dhanmondi, Dhaka.

The consultation brought together leaders of national trade union federations, labour law experts, labour rights activists, and relevant stakeholders to review and reflect on the provisions of the Bangladesh Labour Act (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025, and assess its implications for workers' rights and industrial relations in Bangladesh. A total of 25 participants attended the programme, including 19 male and 6 female participants.

The programme aimed to present the extent to which the recommendations of the Labour Reform Commission (LRC) had been incorporated into the Bangladesh Labour (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025, and to discuss the potential impacts of the amended labour law on workers' rights, industrial relations, and social protection. The consultation also sought to gather opinions and experiences from trade union leaders, labour law experts, and relevant stakeholders regarding the existing limitations of the amended provisions and to determine necessary actions and

policy directions for protecting workers' rights and implementing the recommendations of the Labour Reform Commission.

### **Outcomes of the Programme:**

- The observations and comments of the participants on the Bangladesh Labour Act (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025 were duly noted and documented.
- Strategic guidance and recommendations were articulated based on the concerns raised by the leadership of the National Trade Union Federations.
- Participants identified key provisions of the amended Labour Act that require reconsideration and further revision to protect workers' rights.
- Consensus was developed among trade union leaders regarding the need for coordinated and constructive advocacy on labour law reform.
- The consultation strengthened future advocacy efforts aimed at ensuring the effective incorporation and implementation of the recommendations of the Labour Reform Commission (LRC) through further amendments to the Labour Act.

## **Consultation Meeting of the Workers' Rights Advocacy Alliance on Post-Election Strategy and Future Action**

BILS organised a consultation meeting titled “Consultation Meeting of the Workers' Rights Advocacy Alliance on Post-Election Strategy and Future Action Plan” on March 28, 2026, at the BILS Seminar Hall, Dhanmondi, Dhaka.

The meeting was organized under the banner of the Workers' Rights Advocacy Alliance and brought together 30 participants, including trade union leaders, labour rights activists, civil society representatives, staff members, and resource persons, of whom 22 were male and 8 were female.

The consultation reviewed the Alliance's role after the election, assessed progress on the Workers' Manifesto, and explored strategies to strengthen advocacy and policy engagement. Discussions highlighted challenges such as weak grassroots mobilization, limited policy influence, inadequate legal advocacy, and concerns about workers' representation in Parliament.

### Action Points/Next Steps:

- Develop comprehensive policy recommendations based on the Alliance's 15-point demands (10 already in progress).
- Initiate engagement with Members of Parliament by sharing the Workers' Manifesto and policy briefs.
- Organize a policy formulation workshop by May 2026.
- Hold a May Day seminar titled "Workers' Manifesto: Expectations and Way Forward."
- Establish regular communication with the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour once formed.
- Strengthen outreach and mobilization at divisional, district, and sectoral levels.
- Integrate legal advocacy into the Alliance's broader strategy.

## Green Social Network Reunion and Discussion

BILS, with support from the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) and in collaboration with the Green Social Network, Tongi-Gazipur, organised the "Green Social Network Reunion and Discussion Programme 2026" on January 24, 2026, in Tongi, Gazipur.

The programme was moderated by BILS Programme Officer Zakia Begum Nilima and Green Social Network Member Al Amin Srabon. The event brought together workers, community



members, civil society representatives, environmental activists, cultural workers, and labour rights advocates under the theme "Strength through Greening, Liberation through Workers' Unity."

The programme was attended by distinguished guests and speakers, including BILS Advisory Council Member A.A.M. Foyez Hossain; BILS Executive Council Member Pulak Ranjan Dhar and Nargis Jahan; BILS Director Nazma Yesmin; BILS Deputy Director Yousuf Al Mamun. Among others Tongi City Corporation Official Tamanna Islam; Teachers A.S.M. Zakaria and Ziarul Haque; Cultural Activist Shekanul Islam Shahi; President of the Journalists Development Centre Olidur Rahman Oli; and Green Social Network members Shajahan Siraj, Sakhina Akter, M.A. Salam, Morshed Alam, Kawsar, and Masud Mondol were participated in the programme.

The programme aimed to promote workers' rights, environmental awareness, and social solidarity by creating a platform for dialogue and collective engagement. It emphasized the interconnection between sustainable development, environmental protection, and labour rights, highlighting the importance of building a humane, equitable, and environmentally sustainable society through workers' unity and active participation.

## Discussion Meeting on Improving Labour Rights and Industrial Relations in the Tannery Industry Held in Savar

BILS organized a discussion meeting on “Improving Labour Rights and Industrial Relations in the Tannery Industry” was held on 8 February 2026 at the DTIEWTPCL Seminar Hall, Tannery Estate, Hemayetpur, Savar, Dhaka.

The meeting brought together tannery owners' representatives, trade union leaders, project partners, and stakeholders working on tannery sector issues. The session



was chaired by Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, President of TWU and Secretary of BILS, while Advocate Nazrul Islam facilitated the technical discussion. A total of 31 participants from 13 factories attended the meeting, including 27 male and 4 female participants.

The main objective of the meeting was to promote labour rights, decent work, and healthy industrial relations between employers and workers in the tannery industry through dialogue, cooperation, and mutual understanding. The meeting also emphasized workplace safety, workers' welfare, environmental sustainability, and social protection.

## Strengthening Collective Action in the RMG Sector Through Youth and Women Leadership

BILS, with the support of Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC), organised a meeting with the Trade Union Youth and Women Organisers Team on 25 February 2026 at the Dhaka Ahsania Mission Auditorium as part of its ongoing initiative to strengthen future mobilisation and advocacy in the RMG sector.

The meeting was attended by 34 participants, including 8 male and 26 female organisers, drawn from a pool of 49 youth and women organisers who had previously received training on Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) and labour rights through BILS programmes.



The programme aimed to formalise and engage the trained organisers as a coordinated Trade Union (TU) Organisers' Team for future advocacy actions, review the outcomes of a field-level checklist-based data collection assignment conducted by the organisers, and discuss future plans for local-level campaign and mobilisation activities. Participants shared their field experiences and reported that many workers had limited awareness and understanding of HRDD concepts and labour rights frameworks, which created challenges in collecting accurate information. They also observed that workers often reported an absence of labour and human rights violations in their workplaces, although organisers expressed concern that such responses might be influenced by fear or a lack of awareness.

## Youth Dialogue on Climate Change and Decent Work

BILS, with support from Mondiaal FNV and in collaboration with the Green Social Network, Tongi-Gazipur, organised a discussion meeting titled “From COP to Community: The Role of Youth in Climate Change and Decent Work” on January 24, 2026, in Tongi, Gazipur.

The programme was attended by representatives of workers, youth groups, civil society, local community leaders, and environmental activists. Among the speakers were BILS



Advisory Council Member A.A.M. Foyez Hossain; Members of the BILS Executive Council Pulak Ranjan Dhar and Nargis Jahan; BILS Director Nazma Yesmin; BILS Deputy Director Yusuf Al-Mamun; and Executive Coordinator of YouthNet Global Sohanur Rahman, who delivered the keynote discussion on youth engagement in climate action and decent work.

The programme aimed to raise awareness about climate change, environmental sustainability, and the role of youth in promoting decent work and social development. It sought to strengthen youth participation in climate action by encouraging inclusive engagement, evidence-based advocacy, community mobilization, and greater awareness of the links between environmental protection, workers' rights, and sustainable development.

## Strengthening Trade Union Youth Leadership Through Training on Labour Rights and HRDD

BILS, with support from Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC), organised two non-residential two-day trainings on “Labour Rights and Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD)” for trade union youth organisers from the National Trade Union Center (NTUC) affiliated with SKOP. The initiative aimed to strengthen participants’ understanding of labour rights, Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) principles, and trade union organising capacities within the ready-made garment (RMG) sector of Bangladesh.



The first training was held on 28–29 December at Dhaka Ahsania Mission, with participation of 25 trade union organisers, including 15 women and 10 men. The second training was conducted on 20–21 January and was attended by 24 organisers, including 16 women and 8 men. Both trainings brought together young trade union leaders engaged in the RMG sector under NTUC-affiliated federations of SKOP.

The trainings were attended and facilitated by a range of distinguished resource persons, trade union leaders, development partners, and labour rights experts. Among the key resource persons were Associate Professor at Mawlana Bhashani



Science and Technology University Aurongajeb Akond, Head of Partnership and Fundraising at Marie Stopes Bangladesh Monjur Nahar, BILS Deputy Director Adv. Nazrul Islam, and BILS Senior Advocacy Officer Adv. Tawfiq Imtiaz, who conducted sessions on labour rights, HRDD, international labour standards, and legal frameworks. The

programme was further enriched by contributions from Project Coordinator of the BILS-ILO EIS Project Monirul Kobir, and National Project Coordinator of the Employment Injury Scheme at ILO Bangladesh Noushin Shah, alongside SLF Trainer Rukhsana Afrooj Asha, who shared field-level insights. Prominent labour leaders and stakeholders included BILS Chairman Mojibur Rahman Bhuiyan, Md Towhidur Rahman, Member of the EIS Governing Body; Syed Saad Hussain Gilani, Chief Technical Advisor for the EIS Pilot at ILO Bangladesh; Nakib Rajib Ahmed, Advisor for Knowledge Management at SoSi GIZ; Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmed, Executive Director of BILS; Kohinoor Mahmood, Director of BILS; Chowdhury Ashiqul Alam, Chairman of NCCWE; Kutubuddin Ahmed, President of IBC; and Mesbahuddin Ahmed, Member of the Advisory Council of BILS, along with representatives from NTUC-affiliated trade unions under SKOP and other participating labour federation leaders.

The training aimed to strengthen trade union organisers' knowledge of labour, human, and gender rights, while enhancing their skills in grievance handling, advocacy, monitoring, and accountability to effectively address labour rights violations.

## BILS-ILO Organised Capacity-Building Training on Decent Work and Care Workers' Rights

BILS in collaboration with ILO organised a Capacity Building Training titled “Decent Work and Care Workers’ Rights at Work” on March 16, 2026, at the Conference Hall of Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Dhanmondi, Dhaka.

The day-long training workshop was attended by 22 members of the NCCWE Women Committee. The programme commenced with opening remarks by

Member Secretary  
of NCCWE  
Naimul Ahsan  
Jewel, while  
Director of BILS  
Nazma Yesmin  
provided the  
contextual  
overview of the



workshop and highlighted the objectives of the training initiative under the project. The training sessions were facilitated by General Secretary of Socialist Labour Front Ahsan Habib Bulbul, who guided the discussions and encouraged active participation throughout the programme.

The programme aimed to strengthen participants’ understanding of the rights of care workers within the framework of national labour laws, regulations, and relevant international labour standards. The training focused on enhancing participants’ knowledge of legal and institutional frameworks related to care work, promoting rights-based approaches to ensure safe, fair, and dignified working conditions, and improving understanding of collective action and organised representation for addressing labour rights violations and workplace grievances.

## Ensuring Job Retention and Just Transition Amid Technological Transformation, Automation and 4IR

Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies- BILS organised a consultation meeting titled Impact of Technological Transformation, Automation and 4IR on Employment and Ways Forward to Retain Jobs Towards Just Transition on March 04, 2026, at the BILS Seminar Hall, Dhanmondi, Dhaka.

The consultation brought together representatives from trade unions, management, labour rights organizations, researchers, and other relevant stakeholders to discuss the implications of technological transformation and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) on



employment and labour markets in Bangladesh. A total of 23 participants attended the programme, including 15 male and 8 female participants.

The programme aimed to gather insights and experiences from trade unions and relevant stakeholders regarding the impacts of technological transformation on employment and labour conditions in Bangladesh. The consultation also sought to identify the scope, priority areas, and key research questions for the proposed study on technological change and the future of work, while incorporating stakeholders' recommendations into the development of the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the proposed research.

## Ensuring a Just Industrial Transition for Sustainable Economic Growth

BILS organised a strategy workshop titled “Sharing Fair Future on Shaping a Just Industrial Transition in Bangladesh” on 28 March 2026 at the BILS Seminar Hall, Dhanmondi, Dhaka, with the support of the Lourdes Foundation.

The programme was chaired by Convener of the National Workers' Rights Advocacy Alliance and Secretary General of BILS Nazrul Islam Khan. The workshop brought together leaders of national trade union federations, representatives from civil society organizations (CSOs), and BILS officials to discuss the challenges and opportunities associated with industrial transformation and the need for a just transition in Bangladesh. Participants exchanged views on ensuring workers' rights, social protection, decent work, and inclusive development in the context of ongoing economic, technological, and environmental changes.



The programme aimed to facilitate dialogue among key stakeholders on the concept and principles of a just industrial transition and to explore strategies for promoting a fair and inclusive future of work. The workshop also sought to gather recommendations from trade union leaders and CSO representatives on policy priorities, workers' participation, social dialogue mechanisms, and measures required to ensure that no worker is left behind during the transition process. The discussions and recommendations generated through the workshop will contribute to future advocacy, research, and policy initiatives on just transition in Bangladesh.

## Workshop on Occupational Health and Safety for Tannery Workers Held in Savar

BILS under the project “Building a Sustainable Leather Sector in Bangladesh,” organised a workshop on Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) for tannery workers was held on 23 January 2026 at the Tannery Workers Union Office, Hemayetpur, Savar, Dhaka.

The workshop was attended by leaders and organizers of the Tannery Workers Union. The session was inaugurated by Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, Secretary of BILS and President of the Tannery Workers Union, while Mr. Abdul Malek, General Secretary of TWU, highlighted the importance of workplace safety and health in the tannery sector. The technical session was facilitated by Advocate Nazrul Islam, Resource Person. A total of 30 participants attended the workshop, including 26 male and 4 female participants.



The main objective of the workshop was to raise awareness among tannery workers and union leaders about occupational health and safety, workplace hazards, risk assessment, occupational illnesses, chemical exposure, and preventive measures to ensure safer working conditions in the tannery industry.

## Enhancing Youth and Women's Leadership for Inclusive Development

BILS organised a day-long training program titled “Capacity Building for Youth and Women on Leadership” was held on 6 February 2026 at the BILS Seminar Hall, Dhanmondi, Dhaka.



The training was presided over by Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, President of TWU and Secretary of BILS. The sessions were facilitated by Mr. Abdul Malek, Mr. Abdur Rahim, and Advocate Nazrul Islam. A total of 22 participants from 11 factories attended the training, including 15 male and 7 female participants.

The main goal of the training was to strengthen the leadership capacity of youth and women trade unionists by enhancing their understanding of workers' rights, trade union organizing, collective bargaining, negotiation, and occupational health and safety, enabling

them to play an active role in protecting workers' rights and strengthening the union movement.

## Promoting Safe and Healthy Workplaces in Tannery Sector

BILS organised a workshop on Industrial Relation & Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) for tannery workers was held on 20 February 2026 at the Tannery Workers Union Office, Hemayetpur, Savar, Dhaka.



participants.

The workshop was attended by leaders and organizers of the Tannery Workers Union. The opening session highlighted the importance of occupational health and safe working conditions in the tannery industry. The technical session focused on workplace hazards, risk assessment, occupational illness, and industrial relations. A total of 27 participants attended the workshop, including 25 male and 2 female

The main goal of the workshop was to increase awareness among tannery workers and union leaders about occupational health and safety issues, industrial relations, workplace risks, and preventive measures to ensure healthier and safer workplaces.

## Strengthening Awareness on Basic Rights of Tannery Workers



BILS organised a Study Circle on Basic Rights for Tannery Workers was held on 25 February 2026 at the Tannery Workers Union Office, Hemayetpur, Savar, Dhaka.

The session was facilitated by Md. Abdur Rahim, Md. Shahid, and Md. Kamal Uddin of

the Tannery Workers Union Trainers Team, with participation from union leaders and organizers. A total of 16 participants from 9 factories attended the session, including 11 male and 5 female participants.

The main objective of the Study Circle was to enhance workers' understanding of labour rights, collective bargaining, trade union formation, appointment letters, wages, overtime, leave, and occupational health and safety, enabling them to better protect their rights and promote safer working conditions.

## Ensuring Maternity Rights, Gender Equality and Elimination of Child Labour at Workplace

BILS a Factory Level Meeting focusing on maternity rights, elimination of child labour, gender equality, and prevention of gender-based violence (GBV) was held on 25 February 2026 at the Tannery Workers Union Office, Hemayetpur, Savar, Dhaka.

The meeting was facilitated by Md. Shahid and Md. Abdur Rahim with participation from union members and factory-level workers. A total of 16 participants from 9 factories attended the meeting, including 11 male and 5 female participants.

The main objective of the meeting was to raise awareness among workers regarding women workers' legal rights, maternity protection, contract labour, child labour elimination, gender equality, and prevention of GBV at the workplace, thereby promoting a safe, inclusive, and rights-based working environment in the tannery sector.

