



Workplace accidents claim 898 lives in 2018

Fatality less than previous years

A total of 898 workers were killed and 341 others injured in workplace accidents across the country in 2018. A total of 157 workers were killed in formal sector accidents while the rest 741 in informal sector.

The number of death victims declined in the outgoing year than that of the previous couple of years - 1,242 in 2017 and 1,240 in 2016. OSHE revealed the figures in a report that was placed at a press conference on 27 December. The highest 281 workers were killed in transport sector, 163 in construction sector and 28 in apparel sector. Besides, 108 death victims were from agriculture sector, including those killed in lightning strikes, 19 shipbreaking workers, 12 domestic workers, seven steel and re-rolling mill workers, and 206 from other sectors.

According to the report, the causes of casualties were road accidents, lightning strikes, electrocution, soil or stone pressed, collapse of building materials, toxic gases, suffocation, fire, physical abuse and metallic injuries.

OSHE recommended beefing up the security measures and surveillance, increasing boiler inspections and transforming the boiler inspection department into a directorate to improve the workplace safety.

The report recommended increasing the number of specialised doctors for medical treatment for the workers and establishing a separate hospital for the garment workers. It also stressed the need for providing financial assistance to the victim families and the injured workers in the informal sector from the Bangladesh Workers' Welfare Fund.

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Round table discussion on status of OSH and gender based violence at RMG industry

OHS Initiative for Workers and Community Project of OSHE foundation organised a round table discussion on status of occupational health and safety and gender based violence at RMG industry on 24 November at a city hotel. Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE) deputy inspector general (safety) Md. Mahfuzur Rahman Bhuiyan was present at the event as guest of honour. Professor of Development Studies at Dhaka University Dr. Shuchita Sharmin presented a keynote speech in the discussion. OHS Initiative member secretary and OSHE foundation executive director A. R. Chowdhury Repon moderated the event while OHS Initiative chairperson and Naripokkho member Tamanna Khan was present. OSHE foundation chairperson Saki Rezwana, Gonoshasthaya Kendra director Golam Mostofa Dulal, Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) director Towhida Khandoker, Naripokkho member Rowshon Ara, and Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS) member Hamida Khatun spoke as panel discussants at the program.

Speakers at the program called for proper monitoring and reporting of violent incidents and accurate data on gender-based violence at workplaces so that the government and employers can improve working environment and ensure safety for working women. They urged proper documentation of sexual harassment incidents, hassle-free complain filing mechanism, formation of anti-harassment committee at every workplace and strict enforcement of high-court directives as prerequisite to ending violent incidents against working women. They said ending violence against women and girls is not a short-term endeavour. It requires coordinated and sustained efforts from all stakeholders. Participants from OSHE foundation, Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS), Gonoshasthya Kendra, Naripokkho, IndustriALL Bangladesh Council and Bangladesh Center for Workers Solidarity (BCWS) were attended the program. OHS Initiative for Workers and Community Project coordinator Md. Masud Parvez coordinated the program.



Sharing session of challenges & way forward of promoting OSH at workplace in Bangladesh

The OHS Initiative for Workers and Community Project of OSHE foundation organised a discussion meeting on challenges and way forward of promoting safety and health at workplace in Bangladesh on 18 November at BRAC CDM conference room in Savar, Dhaka on the occasion of 4th International People's Health Assembly (PHA).

California based non-profit health information and health education source Hesperian Health Guides managing editor Todd Jailer moderated the event.

OHS Initiative governing board member secretary and OSHE foundation executive director A. R. Chowdhury Repon conducted the first session on challenges of infrastructure of OHS in Bangladesh. During the discussion he said the present OHS infrastructure developed by the government of Bangladesh is at the primary stage in terms of workers' welfare, health and social protection coverage though the country is moving towards more workers friendly labour laws, effective labour inspection and institutional capacity building.

OHS Initiative governing board chairman Tamanna Khan shared her experience on women in garment industry and role of gender in trainings within the country perspective at the second session. Naripokkho member Rowshon Ara joined with her to share the findings of a study on workplace gender issues in RMG industry.

Session on 'Importance of OHS experience to health education and public health practitioners' had been conducted by Gonoshasthya Kendra assistant director Dr. Mahjebin Chowdhury where she shared her experience of field level training on OHS for RMG workers.

OHS Initiative Project coordinator Md. Masud Parvez conducted the last session on 'The challenges and satisfaction of organising and carrying out an OHS program at the grassroots'. While delivering his experience he also presented a short documentary video of ongoing factory-level training for RMG workers.

At the experience sharing session, A garment worker from Mirpur based RMG factory, Soma Akter, also the president of workers' union of the factory, shared her opinion how the field level training on OHS made them confident in assessing workplace risks, taking basic safety precautions, minimising health hazards, ensuring industrial hygiene and OHS rights.

Todd Jailer, in the question-answer session opened the floor to the audience to express their opinion, views and experience.

Around 60 participants from USA, UK, India, Belgium, South Korea, Colombia, Croatia, Philippines, Nepal and Bangladesh took part in the event. People's Health Movement, a platform for global health activists, organised the four-day event in Savar, Bangladesh, which continue till 19 November 2018 with a call for coordinated effort to ensure quality basic healthcare for all.



Awareness building training for tannery workers on occupational health and safety

OSHE's promotion of decent work in leather supply chain project organized an awareness building training for tannery workers on occupational Safety and Health at the Tannery Workers Union meeting room at Hemayetpur, Savar on 19 October and 09 November 2018. A total of 34 tannery workers who are engaged with Tannery Workers Union took part in the training course.

OSHE director Alam Hossain made welcome speech and short brief about the project focusing the objective of the training in the opening session where Tannery Workers Union president Abul Kalam Azad, Bangladesh University of Health Sciences department of OEH faculty Sarmin Sultana, and OSHE admin & HR officer Hafizur Rahman were present. Tannery Workers Union president Abul Kalam Azad conducted the 1st session on rights of tannery workers as per Bangladesh Labour Act 2006. He discussed on appointment and contract of workers, wages, working hours, leave and minimum wage, compensation, welfare & social protection and bargaining & social dialogue. Dr. Nazmun Nahar, Assistant Inspector General (Health), Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishment (DIFE), Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh carried out the 2nd session on OSH at tannery industry.



She delivered a presentation on OSH for tannery workers, uses of chemicals and proper management, machine and electric safety, uses of PPE, industrial hygiene and cleanliness and common diseases of workers. She also shared the concept of OSH, why this is important for tannery workers and how the employers and workers can contribute for a healthy workplace. Legal provisions related to OSH of tannery workers in Bangladesh Labour Act and Bangladesh Labour Rules was also discussed. In 3rd session, OSHE admin & HR officer Hafizur Rahman took a session on safety committee. This session includes formation and function of safety committee and responsibilities of safety committee members. At the end of the session, Mr. Alam Hossain concluded the training course with vote of thanks.



Training of Trainers (ToT) on OSH for leather supply chain workers

Bangladesh OSHE foundation organized a two day long training of trainers for leather supply chain workers on occupational safety and health at the conference room of Young Women Christian Association (YMCA), Savar, Dhaka on 26-27 December 2018. A total of 25 workers from tannery, leather and footwear manufacturing sector took part in the training whereas 7 were female.

The objectives of the TOT are to create a core group of grassroots OSH trainers from tannery, leather and footwear factories with basic training knowledge and skill with aim to play the role of facilitation of training at factory level.

OSHE director Md. Alam Hossain moderated the training programme. The plenary session was facilitated by the resource persons from trade Unions, Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE) and OSHE Foundation. The 1st day training session was designed with topics on 'occupational health and safety' with facilitation by Md. Asad Uddin, master trainer on OSH. OSHE Core Trainer Ms. Arifa As Alam conducted session on

workplace safety management which included the machine safety, electricity safety, chemical safety and fire safety. Md. Alam Hossain conducted session on hazard mapping and risk assessment followed by last session on violence against women at work by Ms. Aria As Alam.

The 2nd day training session was planned with content on 'workplace Improvement with sub content on work ergonomics, materials handling & storage, work organization and Physical work environment' facilitated by Md. Alam Hossain. 'Organizing & conduction of a study circle at work' facilitated by Md. Asad Uddin. Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments deputy inspector general Md. Mahfuzur Rahman Bhuiyan conducted session on Bangladesh Labour Act 2016 with special focus on OSH rules and regulations and safety committee at work.

The closing session was chaired by OSHE executive director A. R. Chowdhury Repon with presence of Tannery Workers Union president Abul Kalam Azad. The guests awarded certificates among the participants.

Awareness training for footwear workers

OSHE foundation conducted an awareness building training on occupational safety and health for the footwear workers and mid-level factory managers on 22 December 2018 at the meeting room of BAY EMPORIUM, a leading footwear supplier at local market located at Jadurchar, Savar, Dhaka.

A total of 15 participants participated in the training course where 3 were female.

Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishment (DIFE) deputy inspector general Md. Mahfuzur Rahman Bhuiyan, assistant inspector general (health) Dr. Nazmun Nahar and DIFE inspector Md. Abdul Kader, OSHE director Md. Alam Hossain and OSHE admin & HR officer Md. Hafizur Rahman conducted sessions on labour laws, basic OSH, chemical and machine safety, and safety committee.



Awareness building training for leather goods workers

An awareness building training for the leather goods workers and management on occupational safety and health was held on 4 December 2018 at the meeting room of PICARD, an export oriented leather industry located at Ashulia, Savar, Dhaka under OSHE's Promotion of Decent Work at Leather Supply Chain Project.

A total of 15 participants whereas 11 workers and four mid-level factory managers participated in the training where 5 were female.

OSHE Director Md. Alam Hossain made welcome speech and short brief about the Project focusing the objective of the training in the opening session where Md. Abdul Kader, Inspector of for Factories and Establishment (DIFE) were present. DIFE assistant inspector general (health) Dr. Nazmun Nahar facilitated a session on occupation safety and health which includes he basic concept of OSH,



chemical management, machine & electric safety, uses of PPE, health hygiene and common diseases of workers.

DIFE deputy inspector general Md. Mahfuzur Rahman Bhuiyan took a session on Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 focusing OSH.

On behalf of OSHE, Md. Alam Hossain, Project Coordinator, conducted the session on safety committee.

OSHE interventions at garment sector

Mobilization meeting for garment workers

OSHE's Jukta Hoe Mukta - United We Stand project organized a total of 87 mobilization and sensitization meeting for 1651 ready-made garments workers of 600 factories in between October to December 2018.

Basic labour rights such as employment conditions, leaves, violence against women at workplace, maternity and service benefits, occupational health and safety had been discussed in these meetings.

Organising and leadership capacity building

OSHE foundation organised a leadership and organising capacity building training for RMG workers at Gazipur on 16 and 23 November. Some 31 female RMG workers took part at the training where DIFE labour inspector Shovon Das conducted the sessions. Jukta Hoe Mukta project coordinator Arifa As Alam inaugurated the training.

Strengthening negotiation and collective bargaining capacity

OSHE foundation organised a training on negotiation and collective bargaining at Gazipur area on 12 and 19 October where 30 female RMG workers participated.

The training programme were conducted by trained resource persons Ms. China Rahman, General secretary, Federation of garments Workers (FGW), Md. Shazzad Hossain Khan, Assistant Director, Divisional Labour Office, Dhaka of Department of Labour (DoL), and Mr. Shovon Das, Labour Inspector- Gazipur, Department of Inspections for Factories and Establishments (DIFE).

Awareness building on organizing trade union and participation committee

A total of 100 RMG workers took part in the orientation meeting on trade union and participation committee in between October to December 2018. OSHE's Jukta Hoe Mukta project organised the program to build awareness among workers on formation and function of trade union and participation committee as per the Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 and its successive amendments.





International Day for the Elimination of Gender based Violence Against Women observed

OSHE foundation observed the International Day for the Elimination of Gender based Violence Against Women on 24 November demanding a special ILO Convention and strong national legislation in this regard. OSHE foundation along with specialized membership based organization Labour at Informal Economy (LIE) organised a human chain in front of national press club, Dhaka on 24 November 2018. Women from different professions, including members of civil society and trade unions, and

a large number of female workers formed the human chain to express solidarity with the demand for a new legislation in line with the proposed 'Educational institutions and Workplace sexual harassment prevention and protection policy 2018'. OSHE chairperson Saki Rezwana, Federation of Garments Workers general secretary China Rahman, Bangladesh Free Trade Union Congress BFTUC secretary Pulak Ranjan Dhar, RGWF president Lovely Yesmin, and labour leader Md. Abul Hossain were present.

Refreshers leadership training for RMG workers

OSHE organised two day long refreshers leadership training at U-Multipurpose Hall, Mirpur on 12 and 19 October. The aim of the training is to build capacity among RMG workers group leaders to securing women workers' rights at workplace.

Saki Rezwana, Chairperson of OSHE presided the training whereas Md. Mahfuzur Rahman Bhuiyan, Deputy Inspector General at DIFE, Mr. Masud Parvez, Project Coordinator, OSH Initiative Project and Md. Omar Faruq, labour expert conducted the sessions.

OSHE interventions at shipbreaking sector

Training of trainers

OSHE's promotion of decent work in shipbreaking project organised training of trainers (ToT) on OHS for shipbreaking workers at its Chattogram Bhatiary office on 21 and 22 December.

Free health camp

OSHE also organised a total of 18 free medical health camps for shipbreaking workers at several outdoor and indoor setting. Outdoor camps were organized in 3 different places close to different yards. The places are Baro Awlia govt. primary school, Kumira government primary school and Kodom rosul govt. primary school. The indoor camps were at OSHE Training & Welfare Centre in Bhatiary. In indoor camps, 240 workers and in outdoor 180 workers came and received free health services under this coverage. The medical camps have been enabling the workers to get back to work in the shortest recovery time after any accidents at yards and help to get doctor prescription service and required medication.

Networking meeting

As part of increasing mutual relationship of the ship breaking workers and trade union leaders, a networking meeting with stakeholders was also organized on 30 November. Some 24 potential shipbreaking workers and trade union leaders participated in the meeting. The shipbreaking workers have been getting conscious of occupational health and safety issue by OSHE foundation which contributes to creating a sustainable OHS culture in this sector. To sensitize workers on OHS is still very crucial for this sector since a significant number of accidents happen due to workers unconscious behaviour towards OHS reality at work. The project interventions have been striving for preparing trainers and facilitators among union members and potential workers but because of their poor educational background, it is a much challenged job.





Orientation on prevention of violence against women for RMG factory managers

OSHE's Jukta Hoe Mukta - United We Stand project organized an orientation on violence against women for ready-made garments factory mid-level management at union multipurpose hall, Mirpur in Dhaka on 09 and 30 November 2018.

A total of 40 participants including 6 female from various garment factories attended the orientation. The day long orientation endeavoured reaction, discussion, shared the challenges regarding VAW issues. Discussing the challenges related to ensuring women friendly working environment and enabling dialogues between workers and employers by raising awareness on VAW is the main objective of the orientation.

The program was inaugurated by OSHE chairperson Saki Rezwana while UNDP national consultant and gender expert Dr. Rokeya Khatun conducted the sessions.

At the end of the day participants made factory-wise future plan to ensure stalk free working environment, encouraging environment for women workers, easy access to the complaint mechanism, organizing weekly awareness raising meeting, policy formation based on judgment of High Court directives, formation of anti-harassment committee by ensuring workers representation, ensure equality on recruitment process and encouraging women in supervisory position.

Special health camp for Asbestosis treatment

A special health camp for providing Asbestosis treatment support among shipbreaking workers was held at OSHE Bhatiary office on 6 December 2018.

A total of 17 patients attended the camp to get clinical service. Prior to that, doctors diagnosed a total of 101 patients in five camps under the promotion of decent work at shipbreaking project of OSHE.

Some 133 shipbreaking workers had been taken under X-Ray check-up to figure out lung dysfunction. From them 101 were taken under the Asbestosis health survey. The series of health camps were conducted by a doctor's team led by Dr. Faizul Ahsan Shubro. OSHE shipbreaking program officer Md. Shazzad Kabir Bhuiyan coordinated the health camps.



Orientation on labour laws for RMG factory managers

OSHE's Jukta Hoe Mukta - United we Stand project organized an orientation on Bangladesh Labour Law 2006 and its amendment 2013 for some selected ready-made garments factories mid-level management aiming to secure women workers' rights at workplace by enhancing knowledge level.

A total of 38 participants including 7 female mid-level managers took part in the day long orientation held at union multipurpose hall, Mirpur in Dhaka on 02 November and 07 December 2018.

The program was inaugurated by OSHE chairperson Saki Rezwana while Terre des Hommes Italia Project Manager Silvia Rovllie and MJF project coordinator Jafrul Hasan Sharif were present. Project coordinator Arifa As Alam moderated the program.

Department of Inspections of Factory and Establishment (DIFE) deputy inspector general Md. Mahfuzur Rahman Bhuiya and OSH expert Md. Omar Faruq conducted several sessions on labour laws and its latest amendments.

The main objective of the orientation was to discuss the challenges related to enforcing labour laws at factories level, and share strategies and success stories by initiating dialogues between workers and employers.

The orientation consisted of 4 different sessions following lectures, PowerPoint presentation, individual exercise, practical group exercises and question-answer methods.

OSHE has been implementing such kind of orientation and dialogue between mid-level management and women workers of RMG sector since the project's inception on August 2016.





OSHE awards certificates among OHS trainers

OSHE foundation awarded certificates among 29 master trainers in a closing event at its conference hall in the capital on 13 November. To enhance workers' capacity and knowledge on occupational health and safety, OHS Initiative for Workers and Community Project of OSHE foundation hosted the 20-day special training for these trainers in 2nd batch. In the 1st batch another 29 OHS trainers accomplished the of 20-day special training on OHS. Trainers from OSHE foundation, Naripokkho, Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies, Gonoshasthaya Kendra, IndustriALL Bangladesh Council and Bangladesh Centre for Workers Solidarity received the training.

OHS governing board chairman Tamanna Khan presided over the programme where Department of Inspection for the Factories and Establishments inspector general Md. Shamsuzzaman Bhuiyan was present as chief guest. OSHE chairperson Saki Rezwana, Todd Jailer, managing editor of Hesperian Health Guides of California, former director general of Fire Service and Civil Defence and member of National Industrial Health and Safety Council Brigadier General (ret'd) Abu Nayeem Md. Shahidullah and Gonoshasthaya Kendra chief executive director Manzur Kadir Ahmed, among others, were present as special guests.



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