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Compensation as per ILO Convention sought for victims of workplace accidents

The amount of compensation for deceased workers was set at Tk2 lakh in the amended labour law in 2018

TBS Report

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File photo. People mourn in front of the remains of their relatives, who died inside the rubble of the collapsed Rana Plaza building, in Savar, outside Dhaka, 25 April 2013. Photo: REUTERS

The Conscious Citizen's Forum, a platform of rights bodies, on Tuesday demanded that compensation for workers killed or injured in any workplace accident be set by international standards.

International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 121 should be followed while setting the compensations, suggested Hameeda Hossain, convener of Sramik Nirapotta Forum, in a discussion on 'Nine Years of Rana Plaza Tragedy: What To Do To Ensure Workers' Compensation'.

She said it has become an obligation for citizens to monitor whether government agencies like the fire service department, or the department of inspection for factories and offices responsible for overseeing factories, are doing their duty properly or not.

The amount of compensation for deceased workers was set at Tk2 lakh in the amended labour law in 2018.

Lawmaker and member of the parliamentary standing committee on the labour ministry, Shamsun Nahar Bhuiyan, said compensation of Tk2 lakh for a deceased worker is very insignificant.

If a person loses one of their limbs, this little amount of Tk2 lakh would be used up in treatment alone. The law should be amended to increase the compensation, she added.

Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS) Joint Secretary General, Wazedul Islam Khan, said victims of the Rana Plaza tragedy have not received compensation in the last nine years. If there is a set standard for compensation, civil society will not need to talk on the issue.

Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) Deputy Director Advocate Borkot Ali moderated the discussion where Acting Labour Adviser of the Bangladesh Employers Federation Habibur Rahman, Karmojibi Nari Executive Director Rokeya Rafiq Baby, Bangladesh Labour Foundation Executive Director AKM Ashraf Uddin, Awaz Foundation Chairman Momtaz Begum, and BILS Director Nazma Yasmeen spoke.

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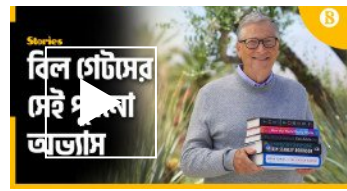
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Going against the grain: A worker at a warehouse sits with sacks of rice in the background in Mohammadpur Krishi Market in the capital. Regular activities at rice warehouses have slowed after the authority started drives at the country's mills and warehouses in a bid to stop illegal hoarding. Photo: Rajib Dhar

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The Business Standard

Main Office -4/A, Eskaton Garden, Dhaka- 1000

Phone: +8801847 416158 - 59

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