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Pilot 'Employment Injury Scheme' launched for RMG workers

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Workers in the export-oriented ready-made garment (RMG) sector are set to get enhanced social security through an income protection initiative, says the International Labour Organization (ILO) on Wednesday.

The Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) in collaboration with the ILO, the Netherlands and Germany (GIZ) officially launched the pilot of an "Employment Injury Scheme" to that end.

Advisor to Prime Minister Salman F Rahman inaugurated the event in presence of State Minister of MoLE Begum Monnujan Sufian, Secretary, MoLE Md Ehsan-E- Elahi, Country Director of ILO Tuomo Poutiainen, and higher officials from the German, Norway and Netherlands Embassy.

Senior representatives from BGMEA, BKMEA, workers' associations, development partners and other national stakeholders also participated in the ceremony.

Keeping in mind that workers in the ready-made garments industry play a remarkable role in the country's growing GDP, it is important to consider their rights and security on priority, according to ILO.

Poutiainen highlighted ILO's approach towards improved social protection for workers in Bangladesh.

He said the launch of 'Employment Injury Protection' scheme for RMG Workers in Bangladesh is an important and historic step in strengthening accident protection in the country.

"ILO is happy to support this effort and work with the Government, Employers and Workers to create a modern and contemporary compensation system for workers and their families that protect their incomes and living when they need it the most. Such a system also promotes sustainable business practices and provides right kind of signals to investors; as Bangladesh is step by step upgrading its social protection systems for the benefit of all."

Read: RMG workers stage demo for third consecutive day demanding pay rise (https://unb.com.bd/category/Bangladesh/rmg-workers-stage-demo-for-third-consecutive-day-demanding-pay-rise/94384)

Salman Rahman said social security is high on the agenda of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Ehsan-E-Elahi thanked ILO and said, "It is a historical day for as we launch the first-ever social insurance scheme, as envisioned in the 'National Social Security Strategy'. We have the privilege to ensure that the pilot is designed in line with the 'International Labour Standards', taking the national settings into consideration."

Speaking at the event, BGMEA President Faruque Hassan said the ready-made garments industry of Bangladesh has made significant progress in the areas of safety and sustainability, especially workers' welfare and industrial relations.

"The pilot of the 'Employment Injury Scheme' will contribute to the social well-being of workers and employers and above all improvement of the country's social security system. As we are committed to ensuring the safety, dignity and well-being of our workers, we look forward to collaborating in initiatives that benefit our industry and workers."

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