

Steps taken by Government and other Agencies after the incidents at Tajreen Fashions Ltd., Smart Garments and Rana plaza as of 05-06-2013

- a) Legal steps
- b) Administrative steps
- c) Safety and Welfare steps

a) Legal Steps

1. In relation to the fire incidence in the **Tajreen Fashions Ltd.**, criminal case has been filed against the liable persons and police has arrested some management personnel of that factory. The CID is investigating the case. In this connection the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE) has filed a case with the Labour Court against the owner. The case is under trial.

Ministry of Labour and Employment has suspended 4 Inspector level officers of the DIFE in connection with Tajreen incident and departmental proceedings has been started against them.

2. In case of fire incidence in the **Smart Garments** a criminal case has been filed against the owners of the factory and police has arrested them. The case is also under investigation. Apart from this The DIFE has filed 9 cases with The Labour Court against the owner in relevant sections of Bangladesh Labour Law. The cases are under trial.

In relation to Smart Garments fire incident two Inspector level officers of The DIFE have been placed under suspension and the departmental proceedings against them is under process.

3. Regarding **Rana Plaza** collapse criminal cases have been filed against the owners of the building and the owners of 5 garments factories housed in the building. The RAJUK has also filed a case against Savar Pouroshava. The police have arrested the owners of the building, owners of the factories and the Engineers of Savar Pouroshava. All the cases are under investigation. In addition to that The DIFE has filed 11 cases with The Labour Court against the owners of the building and the factories under the provision of Labour Law. The cases are under trial.

4. **Amendment of Labour Law 2006:** The Government has taken positive initiatives to amend existing Bangladesh Labour Law 2006. The Cabinet has given final approval on Draft Labour Law amendment proposal which has already been placed before the Parliament. The Amendment Bill has been sent to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Labour and Employment for scrutiny. The Amendment Bill contains the provisions which would allow workers' right to form Trade Union in the easiest way, ensure safety of the workers and factories, provision of compulsory insurance system, enhancement of gratuity etc.
5. The National Occupational Health and Safety (**OHS**) Policy are at final stage for adoption.
6. The registration process of Trade Union in the RMG sector has been improved and 22 trade unions (Dhaka 14, Chittagong 8) have been given registration in first five months of 2013.
7. Director ILO Dhaka office has been informed to initiate the Better Work Programme in full swing as the working environment has been improved to a great extent as a result of initiation of registering trade union and amending Labour Law.
8. The DIFE has formed 23 special inspection teams to inspect the RMG factories to find out the non-registered and non-compliant factories and to take appropriate steps accordingly. Based on the findings of inspection teams the operation of 20 factories has been suspended temporarily for the structural defects of the factory buildings. Moreover the Inspection Teams have visited 2847 factories of which 2586 in Dhaka and 261 in Chittagong and 179 cases have been filed against the non-compliant factories with the Labour Court of which 163 in Dhaka and 16 in Chittagong.
9. Government has declared Minimum Wage Board for RMG sector to review the salary and allowances of the workers considering the present cost of living.

b) Administrative Steps

1. After Tajreen incident on the 24th of April 2013 the Government has formed a 11-member **Cabinet Committee on RMG Sector** headed by the Honourable Minister, Ministry of Labour and Employment with 10 related Ministers to review the overall situation of the RMG sector, formulate policy guidelines and give necessary instructions to all concerns for improvement of this sector. Meanwhile the Committee assembled in meeting for 3 times.
2. After Rana incident on 24-04-2013 The Government has formed 18 (21) - member Special Committee to submit a report to the Cabinet Committee on protecting working environment, preventing industrial accident and ensuring labour welfare where the Minister for Textile & Jute is the Chairman to find out the non-compliant factories of the RMG sectors. The Committee has constituted 11 Sub-Committees headed by 11 Joint Secretaries/Equivalent officers of different Ministries/Divisions to identify non-compliant factories. The Sub-Committees have started their activities.
3. The Government has taken Special attempts immediately after the 2 devastating fire incident at Ashulia and Mohammadpur and building collapse at Savar to rescue the victims with the help of the Bangladesh Army, BGB, Police, RAB, Fire Service and local people.
4. The Government formed inquiry committees to find out causes of accidents to identify the responsible persons and to frame the future plan of actions.
5. The Government has started an independent survey with the help of BIDS to find out the real situation of the RMG factories and to have the possible solution by 30th June next.
6. The Government has taken step to establish Garments Industrial Park near Dhaka city to relocate the defective factories from residential and commercial areas of Dhaka city by acquisition of 532 acres of land. As part of acquisition notice has been issued under section 30 and the objection stage under section 7 of the concerned law is continuing.
7. The Government has taken steps to recruit additional 200 inspectors by 6 months. Moreover Government has taken steps to upgrade the Department to Directorate of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE) where there is a space for recruitment of approximately 800 inspectors. Meanwhile four Inspectors have been appointed with the recommendation of Bangladesh

Public Service Commission. Recruitment process of another 23 Inspector level officials under a project is ongoing.

8. The Government has taken step to strengthen inspection capacity of the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE) with the help of ILO through training and technical assistance.

c) Safety and Welfare Steps

1. With the assistance of ILO a “National Tripartite Plan of Action on Building and Fire Safety for the RMG Sector in Bangladesh” has been adopted. A Task Force named “Task Force on Building and Fire Safety in Readymade Garments Industry” has been formed headed by a Joint Secretary of Ministry of Labour and Employment to ensure safety measures in this industry relating to building and fire safety.
2. ILO has proposed for scanning the factory buildings with high-tech scanner by Team of experts led by BUET.
3. In the amendment of Labour Law 2006 provisions have been made to ensure workers' safety in the work places.
4. In case of Tajreen fire incident the relatives of the 99 dead workers have received compensation from the Honorable Prime Minister. The wounded workers received expenses of medical treatment from BGMEA and also received money from Government. In case of Smart Garments fire incident, the relatives of 8 dead workers have received compensation from the Honorable Prime Minister and the wounded workers also received expenses of medical treatment. Regarding Rana Plaza collapse the relatives of 1129 dead workers are getting financial support from The Honourable Prime Minister. Meanwhile 452 families of the dead workers have received this financial assistance as of 05-06-2013.
5. With the co-operation of ILO many buyers, international organizations and individual countries have come forward with proposals of assistance in promoting safety measures in factories, developing working environment to ensure the labour welfare. They have also expressed their keenness to assist the families of the deceased workers and provide medical assistance to the injured workers especially those who lost their limbs in Rana Plaza collapse. The Government has taken steps to provide artificial limbs to the disabled workers. Steps are also been taken for their rehabilitation and required

training. It is to be mentioned here that the Government of Thailand and the Government of India has proposed to transplant artificial limbs to the injured persons who have suffered by amputation. The proposal is under process of implementation.

6. BGMEA with the help of the owners and other stakeholders has paid all the dues to the workers in time in all the 3 cases. BGMEA has launched a crash programme for providing fire safety training to 35000 workers employees and owners.