

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Ministry of Labour and Employment**

Implementation Status of National Action Plan (NAP) on the Labour Sector of Bangladesh  
(2021-2026)

**INFORMATION ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NAP**

1. During the 9<sup>th</sup> session of the EU-Bangladesh Joint Economic Commission held in October 2019, the Government agreed to develop a National Action Plan (NAP) on the Labour Sector of Bangladesh (2021–2026). The Final Action Plan was developed in consultation with the European Union (EU) and was shared with the EU on 1 July 2021. The NAP is a commitment of the Government of Bangladesh to uphold labour rights and workplace safety in the country. The NAP contains specific actions on legal and administrative reforms as well as enforcement of laws, capacity building and promotional activities. There will be a strong engagement of the tripartite constituents through its implementation process; and, where appropriate, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and other development partners will be engaged in implementing the specific actions of the NAP.

2. The NAP has been developed under nine broad areas with a series of specific actions set against timelines, which are as follows:

*Action 1 Bring Bangladesh labour laws in compliance with ILO standards on freedom of association and collective bargaining*

- 1.1 Amendment of the Bangladesh Labour Rules (BLR), 2015;
- 1.2 Amendment of the Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006 (as amended in 2018);
- 1.3 Amendment of Bangladesh Labour Rules, 2015, after BLA amendment;
- 1.4 Adoption of EPZ Labour Rules;
- 1.5 Amendment of Bangladesh EPZ Labour Act, 2019.

*Action 2 Eliminate child labour in all its forms by 2025<sup>1</sup>*

- 2.1 Regulatory and policy framework for the elimination of child labour;
- 2.2 Strengthen investigations and increase the number of convictions for child labour;
- 2.3 Projects on (hazardous) child labour/child labour survey<sup>2</sup>;
- 2.4 Awareness raising action and process.

*Action 3 Combat violence against workers, harassment, unfair labour practices and anti-union discrimination*

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<sup>1</sup> The Government of Bangladesh will continue to implement the action points regarding school participation and quality of education (annexure 02 as furnished by EU) under its Education Sector Plan as a means to combat child labour, with the support of relevant international development partners including EU.

<sup>2</sup> EU has expressed interest in supporting new projects to continue work on elimination of child labour.

- 3.1 Preventive measure;
- 3.2 Investigation of violence and harassment against workers, anti-union discrimination and unfair labour practices;
- 3.3 Ensure timely and dissuasive sanctions/convictions and related information;
- 3.4 Promoting Social Dialogue.

*Action 4 Increase the success rate of application for trade union registration (paper and online)*

- 4.1 Explore and implement ways of further simplifying the registration process;
- 4.2 Giving training to the workers and employers on Trade Union Registration Process (including online registration system) and providing regular training to relevant officials (DOL, Registrar, divisional and regional officers) on handling of registration applications to ensure rapid and efficient handling and to avoid arbitrary denial of applications;
- 4.3 Publicly accessible online database to be made fully operational and regularly updated by providing sufficient human and financial resources;

*Action 5 Eliminate the backlog of cases at labour courts, including in the Dhaka Metropolitan Area*

- 5.1 Take steps to make the three newly established Labour Courts fully functional;
- 5.2 Establish new labour courts in Narayanganj, Gazipur, Cumilla and Faridpur districts;
- 5.3 Deploy one Additional Judge (Member) to the Labour Appellate Tribunal;
- 5.4 Establish pilot processes to classify and reduce cases in consultation with the Judges of the Labour Courts;
- 5.5 Independent conciliation and arbitration system as a means of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR);

*Action 6 Set up an efficient system to follow-up on worker's complaints received through helpline*

- 6.1 Continuation of the helpline (16357) under revenue budget of DIFE;
- 6.2 Establish a complaint management cell to follow up the cases directly by the labour inspectors;
- 6.3 Develop a database of the complaints covering relevant information;
- 6.4 Organise regular training programme for all service personnel/officials receiving complaints via the helpline on Standard Operating Procedure of grievance handling;
- 6.5 Establishment of the Helpline for all workers in EPZs.

*Action 7 Provide for new labour inspectors and ensure full functionality of labour inspectorate*

- 7.1 Filling vacant posts of Labour Inspectors by recruitment;
- 7.2 Creation of new posts and recruitment of Labour Inspectors;
- 7.3 Full application of Labour Inspection Management Application (LIMA) digitalized labour inspection system in 23 DIFE offices;
- 7.4 Developing the competencies of Labour Inspection staff through regular training and capacity building measures and creating more senior positions;
- 7.5 Promoting an effective sector-specific labour inspection approach;
- 7.6 Formulating a DIFE inspection modalities for EPZs in coordination with BEPZA;

7.7 Incorporating the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on Labour complaints and investigation in the BLA.

*Action 8 Ensure proper work for the Remediation Coordination Cell and transition to Industrial Safety Unit (ISU)/Ensuring close cooperation of the RCC/ISU with the RMG Sustainability Council (RSC)*

- 8.1 Remediation of factories under the national initiative for fire, electrical and structural safety;
- 8.2 Enhancing quality control and transparency of the RCC;
- 8.3 Establishing a transition plan to graduate RCC to ISU;
- 8.4 Development of a framework for RSC coordination/monitoring.

*Action 9 Ratify ILO Convention on minimum age and Forced Labour Protocol*

- 9.1 Ratify Protocol of 2014 to ILO Convention on forced labour (P29);
- 9.2 Ratify ILO Convention 138 on minimum age.

3. Subsequently, the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MOLE) has formed a 'Tripartite Implementation and Monitoring Committee'(TIMC) by a circular dated 11 August 2021. The responsibilities of the TIMC include: (1) Monitor the progress of implementation of the time-bound actions contained in the National Action Plan (NAP), shared with the European Union (EU) as well as Roadmap shared with ILO; and (2) Provide overall directions for the implementation of both the documents. In the meantime, three meetings of the TIMC have been held so far.

4. Operationally, to support the implementation process, six thematic sub-committees were formed on 28 September 2021, with responsibilities to implement the actions in specific thematic areas under the National Action Plan (NAP)/ Roadmap. The sub-committees are: (1) Labour Law Sub-Committee, (2) Export Processing Zones (EPZ) Labour Law Sub-Committee, (3) Social Dialogue and Labour Administration Sub-Committee, (4) Labour Inspection and Industrial Safety Sub-Committee, (5) Social Protection Sub-Committee (only for the Roadmap), and (6) Child Labour Elimination Sub-Committee. ILO may provide technical assistance for the work of the TIMC and sub-committees, as required and mutually agreed.

5. For effective coordination and to support the work of the TIMC and six thematic sub-committees, a Reform Implementation Coordination Unit (RICU) within MOLE has been set up.

6. The implementation of the NAP will impact all economic sectors of Bangladesh and involve a wider engagement of stakeholders across all industrial sectors.

7. Technical assistance of both ILO and the development partners is crucial to ensure the successful implementation of the NAP/ Roadmap over a period of time. The Government of Bangladesh has started engaging with ILO and the EU in this regard.

## 8. **NAP Actions and Progress Made**

The 1<sup>st</sup> report was published on 13 April 2022. The following 2<sup>nd</sup> progress report was shared with tripartite constituents and subsequently was discussed at TIMCat its meeting on 24 August 2022 under the Chair of Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment (MOLE).

### ***Action 1 Bring Bangladesh labour laws in compliance with ILO standards on freedom of association and collective bargaining***

#### ***1.1 Amendment of the Bangladesh Labour Rules (BLR), 2015***

- Upon recommendations by the TWG and the Tripartite Committee, the draft amendment proposals of BLR were finally endorsed by NTCC on 3 March 2022. After that, the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs vetted the draft on 20 March 2022.
- Later on the MOLE requested for re-consideration of an amendment proposal. Final vetting by the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs was received on 8 August 2022.
- The amended Rules has been published through gazette notification on 1 September, 2022.

#### ***1.2 Amendment of the Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006 (as amended in 2018)***

- While submitting the 1<sup>st</sup> report, amendment proposals were received from eleven government, employers' and workers' organizations.
- Later on, timeline to receive amendment proposal and recommendations was extended up to 7 July, 2022. By this time amendment proposal has been received from 17 stakeholders. The working group will compile and send the proposal to the tripartite committee by 30 October, 2022.
- TLRC will have further discussions on the compiled recommendations to be forwarded to it by TWG.
- Upon completion of the work by TWG and TLRC, NTCC will be in a position to take up the issue of the BLA, 2006 amendments.
- A meeting of the TWG was held on 23 August, 2022. The next meeting held on 14 September, 2022. Subsequent meeting was held on 23 October, 2022.
- The MOLE is engaged with ILO to align Bangladesh Labour Act with relevant International Labour Standards. Stakeholders' meeting/consultation workshops on gap analysis were organized during 25-29 September, 2022.

#### ***1.3 Amendment of Bangladesh Labour Rules, 2015, after BLA amendment***

- After the amendment of BLA in 2022, further new amendments to the Bangladesh Labour Rules will be considered through the tripartite mechanism.

### ***1.4 Adoption of Export Processing Zone (EPZ) Labour Rules***

- The draft was forwarded to the Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs for vetting on 6 March 2022.
- The proposed draft Rules contain 15 Chapters, 319 Rules, 4 Schedules and 106 Forms. It includes, among other issues, provisions related to prevention of discrimination and conducting investigation against anti-Workers' Welfare Association (WWA) activities, formation of workers' federation, procedure of formation of employers' association, modalities of DIFE inspection in EPZ, and preventing misconduct against female workers including sexual harassment and violence etc.
- The final vetting of the EPZ Labour Rules by the Ministry of Law has been received on 10 August 2022.
- The Bangladesh EPZ Labour Rules, 2022 has been published in the Bangladesh Gazette on 4 October, 2022 (S.R.O No-295).

### ***1.5 Amendment of Bangladesh EPZ Labour Act, 2019***

- Following the work on the Bangladesh EPZ Labour Rules and its impact analysis, the work on amending the Bangladesh EPZ Labour Act, 2019, will start in July 2023. It is envisaged that the whole exercise will be completed by June 2025. Previously it was proposed to be completed by December, 2026.
- The Tripartite Standing Committee (reference Action 1.4 above) is also expected to work on the Bangladesh EPZ Labour Act, 2019. It will initiate the preparatory work soon after the adoption and publication of the EPZ Labour Rules (as stated above).
- BEPZA is closely engaged with ILO for improvement of labour standards in EPZs. On 4 August 2022 a meeting was held between ILO, Dhaka and BEPZA wherein regarding amendment of EPZ Labour Act, 2019 among other issues has been discussed.
- Following the same, a review discussion meeting was held on 7 September 2022 with the ILO officials in Dhaka in this regard. Accordingly, the next meeting will be held by the end of September 2022 with officials of ILO including an expert of ILO from Delhi.

## ***Action 2 Eliminate child labour in all its forms by 2025***

### ***Action 2.1 Regulatory and policy framework for the elimination of child labour***

#### ***Action 2.1.1 Ratification of ILO Convention 138***

- After approval of Cabinet on 24 February 2022, the instrument of ratification of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) was deposited by the government with the International Labour Office on 22 March 2022 and was registered by ILO on the same day. The relevant details concerning the process is furnished under Action 9.2 below.

#### ***2.1.2 Modification of the National Plan of Action to Eliminate Child Labour***

- The National Plan of Action (NPA) to Eliminate Child Labour (2021-2025) was

published on 12 December 2021.

### ***2.1.3 Updating the List of Hazardous Jobs***

- On 29 April, 2022, a list of 43 sectors has been declared by Gazette Notification as *Hazardous Jobs* for Children. In the list 5 new sectors have been included which are: (a) Dry fish manufacturing related work, (b) Informal pathway related work, (c) Production and collection or transportation of bricks or collection and transportation of stone related work, (d) Informal /local tailoring and garment sector work and (e) Garbage and waste management related work.

## ***2.2 Strengthen investigations and increase the number of convictions for child labour***

### ***2.2.1 Improve the labour inspectorate/other public authorities who investigate cases of child labour and ensure convictions***

- As a first step, initiatives are underway to increase the number of labour inspectors, which is detailed under Section 7. The issue of allowing labour inspectors to impose administrative fines is projected to be placed before TLRC for consideration during the further amendment process of the Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006.
- In the meantime, MOLE and DIFE prepared an annual plan of action on 3 March 2021 towards eliminating child labour in hazardous jobs in Dhaka Division. This plan has also been extended upto 2022. Another special annual plan of action was formulated with a view to eliminating child labour in the Keraniganj area.
- 79 cases against Factories/Establishments have been sued to the Labour Court for the employment of child labour Still May/2022 (2021-22 fiscal year) and 12 cases already resolved. Total 161 case resolved out of 544 upto June 2022.
- Regular training activities are going on. In FY 2021-22, 27 training accompanied with 761 inspectors & staff and 7 workshop accompanied with 197 inspectors & staff (one inspector attended two or more training counted separately) through GoB Funded.
- However, 25 training accompanied with 555 inspectors through GIZ. Moreover, ILO has given a special master training to 23 engineers of DIFE about Fire, Electrical and Structural Safety. Beside Two foundation training course with 60 inspectors completed in FY 2021-22.

### ***2.2.2 Cooperation with different public authorities***

- There are National and Divisional Councils as well as District and Upazila level committees to streamline collective efforts to eliminate child labour. These councils and committees, comprising representatives from NGOs and CSOs, hold regular meetings to take account of and follow up on the progress achieved.
- There is a National Monitoring Core Committee responsible for formulating national level policies to eliminate child labour, with representations from NGOs and CSOs. In

addition, relevant Ministries and Departments also hold inter-ministerial coordination meetings on issues under their respective mandate.

## **2.3 *Projects on (hazardous) child labour/child labour survey***

### **2.3.1 *Implementation of a Government funded project***

- The government has funded a project titled “Eradication of Hazardous Child Labour from Bangladesh (4th Phase)”, initially for the duration from January 2018 to December 2021. According to the work orders issued on 17-22 October 2021, a total of 112 NGOs were designated for area-specific work under the project. Later, in presence of the Hon’ble State Minister for Labour and Employment, agreements were signed with all the NGOs on 26 October 2021.
- Afterwards, MOLE sent a proposal to the Planning Commission to extend the project duration by two years till December 2023, which has now been revised accordingly. It is expected that by the end of its duration, the project will be able to relieve 0.1 million children from child labour.

### **2.3.2 *Conduct a child labour survey by Bangladesh***

- MOLE held meetings with the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) and ILO regarding the child labour survey, and accordingly BBS commenced its work on the same. It is expected that the survey report will be made available by December 2022.

### **2.3.3 *Design and implement programmes of action***

- With the publication of NPA, the planned actions/ projects are expected to gain traction, including through inter-ministerial coordination and NGO consultations as well as necessary budgetary allocation.

### **2.3.4 *Enhance Child Labour Unit of MOLE***

- Previously an administrative section at MOLE was designated as the Child Labour Unit, headed by a Senior Assistant Secretary/ Assistant Secretary. Recently, a post of Deputy Secretary has been created to lead the Unit where the total manpower has also doubled.

## **2.4 *Awareness raising action and process***

- As part of awareness raising on child labour, 20,000 posters, large banners, diaries, calendars and other publication materials were prepared and distributed throughout the country.
- Commemorating the World Day Against Child Labour on 12 June 2022, special supplements were published in eleven (11) national newspapers containing the messages from the Hon’ble President and Hon’ble Prime Minister.
- All the television channels (both public and private) were requested through the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to broadcast the TVC on child labour prepared by

MOLE.

- In addition to conducting regular meetings at the national, divisional and district levels, MOLE is mobilizing Upazila Committees for awareness campaign at the grassroot level.
- Every year, MOLE allocates financial resources from its revenue budget to Divisional and District level committees to organise meetings, seminars and workshops.

***Action 3 Combat violence against workers, harassment, unfair labour practices and anti-union discrimination***

***Action 3.1 Preventive measures***

***3.1.1 Conduct regular training for awareness raising for responsible factory security staff, police and employers to prevent violence, harassment, unfair labour practices and anti-union acts***

- From July 2020 to 30 September 2022, DOL has trained 21644 workers, management staff, and government officials through its four Industrial Relations Institutes (IRIs) and 32 Labour Welfare Centres (LWCs), with nearly 45% of female participants.
- A pool of 30 DoL officials have received a 3 days ToT on “Gender Equality and Elimination of Violence and Harassment in the workplace” from ILO on 25-27 June 2022. These master trainers will also provide training on GVB for rest of DoL’s staffs through ten day-long training sessions in collaboration with ILO.
- From January 2021 to July 2022, the Industrial Police has conducted 3,738 hours of training for its personnel. Among them, 1,985 were male and 175 female. All training courses included, among other issues, Labour Act, 2006, human rights, labour rights and other topics concerning industrial relations management.
- From January 2020 to June 2021, BEPZA conducted training for workers, management, and security personnel on the EPZ Labour Act, 2019, Prevention of discrimination against anti WWA activities, Fire Safety, Health & Hygiene, Nutrition, Awareness on COVID-19, and related topics where a total 40 (forty) thousand participants attended.
- During June 2021-July 2022, BEPZA has trained 3752 participants including workers, management, and security personnel on EPZ Labour Act, 2019, Prevention of discrimination against anti WWA activities, Human Rights, Effective Workplace Co-operation, and Awareness of Safe Pregnancy.
- From May-August 2022 BEPZA in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce conducted skill development training programmes for female workers/employees in 4 (four) EPZs wherein 225 participants have been trained.
- On 4 August 2022 a meeting was held between ILO, Dhaka and BEPZA wherein regarding training on the following issues among others have been discussed:
  - Workplace cooperation and communication



- Grievance handling procedures at factory-level.
  - **Collective bargaining and best IR practices**
  - Awareness on International Labour Standards
  - Promotion of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) management systems
  - Prevention of Gender Based Violence (GBV) at workplace, etc.
- On 7 September 2022 the follow-up meeting was held with the Technical Committee of ILO. In the meeting the technical committee of ILO has informed that they will design and share with BEPZA the course curriculum, module, etc. and accordingly the training programmes will be initiated by October, 2022.
  - On 8 September 2022 BEPZA has exclusively trained 45 participants of Industrial Police and Security Personnel on EPZ Labour Act, 2019, Prevention of discrimination against anti WWA activities, Human Rights and Effective Workplace Co-operation.

***3.1.2 Develop and regularly update (online) databases to provide an overview of number and nature of training programmes as well as number of trainees among factory security staff, police, employers and workers***

- Database for training related information has been developed and linked to DoL's website. Instructions have been given to the IRIs, LWCs so as to furnish participants' information segregated by name, designation, factory/trade union, age, sex and so on.
- Discussions are being held to explore the possibility of including information on Industrial Police training in the proposed online database.
- The BEPZA is working to establish an online database with relevant information of the trainees (segregated by name, designation, factory/ WWA, age, sex etc.) and the same will be completed within the stipulated timeline 2023. At present, information of training is being maintained manually.
- A separate database is being maintained by Home Affairs and Ministry of Law.

***3.1.3 Continue to train and provide clear instructions to the industrial police and relevant LEAs on the use of minimum force, respect of human rights and labour rights, including on trade union rights and civil liberties during labour protests***

- The concerned Ministries, i.e. MOLE, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs continue to provide instructions to their subsidiary agencies regarding handling of cases, including those involving alleged acts of violence and harassment against workers.
- The judiciary, prosecutorial services and law enforcement agencies receive regular training on these issues as part of their mandate. Further customized training may be provided based on specific needs and with ILO's technical support.
- DoL has provided training on SoP for ULP and Anti-trade Union Discriminations for the representatives of workers federations, employers' organizations and industrial police on 04 September 2022.

- In collaboration with ILO, DoL will organize training for 90 Industrial Police personnel ranked from Superintendents of Police (SP) to Sub-Inspector of Police (SI) from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022.
- In collaboration with Industrial Police, DoL will arrange a ToT on preventing unfair labour practice, violence and harassment for Industrial Police personnel by December 2022.
- Both DOL and DIFE are entrusted with monitoring the case proceedings and management, including for those concerning alleged acts of violence and harassment against workers.

***Action 3.2 Investigation of violence and harassment against workers, anti-union discrimination and unfair labour practices***

***3.2.1 Continue to provide regular training and clear instructions (including monitoring of instructions) for all DOL staff handling complaints on how to comply with the SOPs on anti-union discrimination and unfair labour practices against workers***

- Training programme on the SOPs on Unfair Labour Practices and Anti-Union Discrimination was organized from 12 to 14 October 2021.
- The three-day intensive residential training programme was attended by 30 DOL officials, with particular focus on facilitating both investigation and resolution of cases related to unfair labour practices and anti-union discrimination.
- Again, a three-day second round training on the SoP for Unfair Labour Practices and Anti-Union Discrimination was held from 20 to 22 August 2022.

***3.2.2 Continue to provide regular information to all workers on their rights and to complain and access legal support in case those rights are violated/ abused***

- The DOL officials are responsible for providing regular information to workers on labour rights by attending the Trade Unions' general meetings. Such information include ways and means to lodge complaints and legal redress in case of alleged violation/ abuse. DOL will be further updating its information checklist with ILO's technical support, if required.
- DOL has already initiated the system of submitting complaint and suggestions through a web portal.
- If the employer does not comply in a timely manner with the resolution recommended by DOL regarding unfair labour practices and anti-union discriminations, DOL lodge a case before Labour Court on behalf of workers.
- In collaboration with ILO, DOL has provided training on SoP for ULP and Anti-trade Union Discriminations for the representatives of WRC-Workers Resource Centre, a platform of IBC- IndustriAll Bangladesh Council and NCCWE- National Coordination Committee for Workers Education, on 09 August 2022.

***3.2.3 Continue to sensitise managers/ employers, security staff on how they can support the***

### *investigations*

- DOL has been providing training to the security staff, managers/employers of factories through IRIs and LWCs. Such training includes basic information concerning complaint management and investigations. The number of training programmes conducted by IRIs and LWCs have been furnished earlier
- In every complaint of unfair labour practices/ anti-union discriminations, DOL notifies both employer and complainant in writing seeking their cooperation in the investigation process.
- The Industrial Police also continues to engage with employers and factory management to sensitize their respective security personnel about prevention of violence and supporting investigations in case of alleged violence and harassment.

### ***Action 3.3 Ensure timely and dissuasive sanctions/convictions and related information***

#### ***3.3.1 Compile and regularly update statistics on complaints received and of alleged incidents of violence and harassment, their follow-up including remedies for victims and sanctions/convictions imposed***

- The full record of proceedings of unfair labour practices and anti-union discrimination is maintained in the publicly accessible database managed by DOL.
- According to SOPs on unfair labour practices/anti-union discrimination, DOL recommends solutions to be complied by employers.
- From 2013 to 30 September 2022, a total of 199 complaints on anti-union discrimination and unfair labour practices were submitted to DOL. Of all the complaints, 186 have been settled (173 complaints have been amicably disposed of, and 13 cases were filed in Labour Courts). Investigations are ongoing on the remaining complaints.
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### ***Action 3.4 Promoting Social Dialogue***

#### ***3.4.1 Developing institutional mechanism and capacity building for national and sectoral Tripartite Consultative Councils (TCCs)***

- The Bangladesh Government has formed a 60-member National Tripartite Consultative Council (NTCC) with equal representation from workers, employers and government to deal with the national level labour issues through meetings at regular intervals. In 2021, 3 meetings of TCC were held while 4 meetings have already been organized in 2022.
- Moreover, an RMG Tripartite Consultative Council (TCC) has been formed with equal representation from workers, employers and government in order to address various issues related to the country's RMG sector with a special focus on industrial relations. During May 2021 to June 2022, five meetings of RMG TCC have been organized.
- The government is working to further develop institutional mechanisms and capacity building for national and sectoral TCCs, with ILO's technical support as required.

- The issue is being discussed with ILO to develop a roadmap on social partners' awareness and capacity building for social dialogue and collective bargaining at all levels. The roadmap will include training sessions, workshops, focus group discussions, information sessions etc.
- The awareness-raising and capacity building events will be held in tripartite settings with the support of ILO.
- In June 2022, initial discussions were held with ILO-HQ for an assessment mission of social dialogue mechanisms/ institutions (SDI). The mission is expected to take place after 346<sup>th</sup> session of the ILO Governing Body. Through this mission a work-plan will be developed by the constituents with recommendations to strengthen the practices of social dialogue after conducting a self-diagnosis engaging the self-assessment method for social dialogue institutions (SAM-SDI) tool/methodology developed by the International Labour Organization.

***Action 4 Increase the success rate of application for trade union registration (paper and online)***

***Action 4.1 Explore and implement ways of further simplifying the registration process through tripartite consultations***

***4.1.1 Overhaul the existing online Registration System***

- The digitization of the trade union registration process under the Department of Labour (DOL) has been completed on 27 October 2021 in order to provide trade union registration facilities to the door-step of the workers. This simplification process has been undertaken under myGov Platform which is an integrated system encompassing a wide range of government or public services.
- With backup support provided by the a2i (Access to Innovation) Programme, ICT Division of the Government of Bangladesh, which is in charge of the myGov Platform, the digitized system has been made active for users **on 1 April 2022**. This comprehensive online trade union registration system will be regularly reviewed and updated based on stakeholder feedback.
- Meanwhile, DOL has undertaken necessary preparations for conducting training on the digitized systems for its relevant officials from the headquarters and its regional offices.
- In collaboration with ILO, DOL conducted training on online trade union registration system for the representatives of WRC-Workers Resource Centre, a platform of IBC-IndustriAll Bangladesh Council and NCCWE- National Coordination Committee for Workers Education, on 08 August 2022.

***4.1.2 Establish a pre-application service at the Department of Labour (DOL)***

- A pre-application service desk was established in every office of the Registrar of Trade Union (RTU) under DOL in January 2021 to ensure smooth registration through quality applications.

- In collaboration with ILO, DOL arranged a knowledge sharing workshop on pre-application services regarding application submission for the representatives of WRC- Workers Resource Centre, a platform of IBC- IndustriAll Bangladesh Council and NCCWE- National Coordination Committee for Workers Education, on 08 August 2022.
- Despite COVID-19 related complications last year, a good number of trade unions has been registered after submission of the Roadmap in and the success rate (calculated based on the valid applications) has also increased which is presented below:

Year	Registration Accorded	Success Rate (Average)
2020	290	88.69%
2021	380	89.0%
As of 30 September 2022	231	86.84%

#### ***4.1.3 Continuing with the provision for offline registration system***

- The offline trade union registration system is active in full swing. Up to 30 September, 2022, 9123 trade unions have been registered covering about 3.005 million trade union members.
- In the RMG sector, the number of trade unions has been increased from 132 in January 2013 to 1172 on 30 September, 2022.
- The number of national trade union federation and sector-wise trade union federation is 37 and 191 (including 56 garments sector federations) respectively.
- Based on regular feedback from the social partners, discussions are ongoing to explore the possibility of further simplifying both online and offline registration systems.

#### ***Action 4.2 Training workers and employers on Trade Union Registration Process***

- Regular trainings are provided to workers, management staff and government officials by DOL through its four Industrial Relations Institutes (IRIs) and 32 Labour Welfare Centres (LWCs).
- DOL has organized a refreshers' training session for its officials on SOPs on trade union registration from 27 to 29 November 2021, with support from ILO. A training course on SoPs on trade union registration for a new batch of 30 DOL officials has been conducted from 27 to 29 August 2022.
- In collaboration with ILO, DOL has arranged knowledge sharing workshop on SOP for trade union registration for the representatives of WRC-Workers Resource Centre, a platform of IBC- IndustriAll Bangladesh Council and NCCWE- National Coordination Committee for Workers Education, on 09 August 2022

- From July 2020 to 30 September 2022, DOL has trained 21644 workers, management staff, and government officials through its 4 Industrial Relations Institutes (IRIs) and 32 Labour Welfare Centres (LWCs), with nearly 45% of female participants.
- The Workers' Education and Industrial Relations courses cover training on trade union registration process, among other issues.

***Action 4.3 Publicly accessible online database on registration to be made fully operational and regularly updated***

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***Action 5 Eliminate the backlog of cases at labour courts, including in the Dhaka Metropolitan Area***

***5.1 Take steps to make the three newly established Labour Courts fully functional***

- There were 7 Labour Courts in the country. To expedite labour related cases and clear backlogs, three new Labour Courts were established in 2019 in Sylhet, Barishal, and Rangpur.
- Following setting up offices, recruitment of Judges, and getting nominations of representatives from employers and workers, the new courts are functional now. The issue of recruiting support staff remains under process.

***5.2 Establishment of new labour courts in Narayanganj, Gazipur, Cumilla and Faridpur districts***

- The proposal for the establishment of Labour Courts in *Narayanganj, Gazipur and*

*Cumilla* was approved by the “Secretaries Committee for the Administrative Development” on 15 December 2021. Subsequently, the Hon’ble Prime Minister, Government of Bangladesh has given approval to setting up the three new Labour Courts on 1 February 2022.

- The proposal on setting up a full-fledged Labour Court in Faridpur has not been approved at this stage. The matter may be pursued at a later on.

### ***5.3 Deployment of one Additional Judge (Member) to the Labour Appellate Tribunal***

- Consent has been received from the Law and Justice Division, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, on 29 November 2021 regarding the creation of a post of a Member of the Labour Appellate Tribunal. MOLE is working on further administrative processes regarding this issue.

### ***5.4 Establish pilot processes to classify cases in consultation with the Judges of the Labour Courts with a view to addressing case backlogs***

- Initially a workshop involving the Judges of the Labour Courts was slated to be held in the last week of December 2021, but had to be postponed due to the subsequent waves of COVID-19 infections.
- However, the workshop was organized on 13 August 2022. Hon’ble Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Hon’ble State Minister for Labour and Employment, Attorney General of Bangladesh, two Secretaries of the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, and Country Director of ILO were present. The Judge of Labour Appellate Tribunal and 13 Judges of 13 Labour Courts attended the workshop.

### ***5.5 Independent conciliation and arbitration system as a means of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)***

#### ***5.5.1 Establish a Conciliation and Arbitration Cell at DOL to provide secretariat service and monitor individual cases as need be***

- A three-member Conciliation and Arbitration Cell has been established by DOL on 29 September 2021. The Cell stands ready to extend secretariat service to the conciliators and the panel of arbitrators.
- During 2013 to 30 September 2022, a total of 112 conciliation applications have been submitted to the DOL. Of these, 105 industrial disputes have been settled through DOL’s conciliation mechanism, 05 industrial disputes have been ceased according to BLA and only 02 conciliation applications remained pending.

#### ***5.5.2 Develop an SOP for conciliation system through tripartite consultations***

- Since the submission of the roadmap, a number of consultation meetings (virtually on 22 August 2021 and 6 September 2021, and in-person on 30 September 2021, 10 October 2021, 27 November 2021, and 13 December 2021) took place between DOL and ILO towards developing a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Conciliation of Industrial

Disputes.

- Subsequently, in collaboration with ILO, a 3-day workshop with DoL officials on the development of the SoP for Conciliation has been organized from 22-24 March 2022. Through this workshop an initial draft for the SoP for Conciliation has been prepared and sent to ILO for providing comments on it. After compiling the observations from ILO, the draft is under consideration for framing and adopting the SOP through tripartite validation.

#### ***5.5.3 Appointment of conciliators through gazette notification***

- On 10 March 2022, through a gazette notification by MOLE, 15 conciliators has been assigned 15 specific areas with a view to settling industrial disputes.

#### ***5.5.4 Develop an SOP for arbitration system through tripartite consultations***

- DOL has started consultations with ILO to develop an SOP for arbitration. The provision regarding arbitration process of BLA needs to be adjusted to BLR. Work is in progress for adjustment to BLR through preparing a zero draft on arbitration process and its arbitrators' appointment.
- While developing the draft SOP, DOL and ILO will jointly consult with the social partners. The final draft will be sent to MOLE for approval and official notification.

#### ***5.5.5 Establish an arbitrators' panel***

- Tripartite consultative sessions will be organized with a view to establishing an arbitrators' panel comprising experienced lawyers and retired judges, among others, by December 2022.

#### ***5.5.6 Promote conciliation and arbitration system as ADR***

- In general, DOL continues to provide training on conciliation, among other issues, to its pool of master trainers, who in turn disseminate such training to workers, DOL officials, and factory managers.
- In collaboration with ILO, DOL conducted a day-long training session for 15 designated conciliators (Please see 3.4.3 above) on Dispute Resolution and Conciliation on 25 August 2022. ITC-ILO will also facilitate a 3-day training session with the conciliators in September 2022.
- Upon finalization of the SOP on conciliation, a refreshers' training session for the conciliators will also be conducted with ILO's support.
- In June, 2022 the issue was discussed with the ILO-HQ experts for self-assessment of existing dispute resolution system in Bangladesh. The mission is scheduled during 23 to 27 October, 2022. During this mission the Constituent members will be consulted to diagnose the weaknesses of the existing dispute resolution system with the aim to adopt a self-developed work-plan to remediate the gaps or weaknesses.



### ***5.5.7 Provide information sessions on the conciliation and arbitration system to workers, employers and DOL officials***

- DOL, with ILO's support, will conduct information sessions/ focus group discussions on conciliation and arbitration for trade union leaders, employers and DOL officials during the rest of 2022. In collaboration with ILO, DOL conducted a day-long training sessions for 15 DOL officials assigned as conciliators along with another 15 senior officials of DOL (Please see 3.4.3 above) on Dispute Resolution and Conciliation on 31 August, 2022.

### ***Action6 Set up an efficient system to follow-up on worker's complaints received through helpline***

#### ***6.1 Continuation of the helpline (16357) under revenue budget of DIFE***

- The helpline activated in June 2020 continues to operate and receive complaints that are now managed through a database (Please see Action 3.3.3 below). A pool of 3 (three) Labour Inspectors are assigned to attend to the helpline.
- During July to **September, 2022**, a total of **1091 complaints** have been received. Among these, **199** complaints were received through the online website, helpline and emails, while the remaining **892** complaints were received through the conventional process.
- **1027 complaints** have been resolved by 30 September 2022. The rest of the complaints were under process.
- The officials dealing helpline are being trained regularly. The helpline officials **completed** training in Denmark from 20 August to 27 August 2022.

#### ***6.2 Establishment of a complaint management cell to follow up the cases directly by the labour inspectors***

- A Complaint Management Cell has been established at DIFE on 21 December 2020, with an update on 23 January 2022, consisting of eight Labour Inspectors to monitor the complaints received and addressed, update the number of complaints received and resolved, and to arrange training for Labour Inspectors.
- The Cell is authorized to co-opt additional members based on requirements, and continues to carry out responsibilities as directed by the competent authorities.
- Tripartite meetings are arranged by the Cell for disposal of the cases.

#### ***6.3 Develop a database of the complaints covering relevant information***

- A database of the complaints received via the helpline has been developed in December 2021. The Present Database system covers all complaint information including number and nature as well as resolved/ follow-up cases. The database includes information on complaints received both online and offline.

In Fiscal Year 2021-22 (July, 21 to June, 22), a total of 3,593 complaints have been received, out of which 601 complaints were received via the helpline.

- During July to **September, 2022, a total of 1091 complaints** have been received. Among these, **199** complaints were received through the online website, helpline and emails, while the remaining **892** complaints were received through the conventional process. Of the complaints 1027 have been resolved by **30 September 2022**. The rest of the complaints were under process.

#### ***6.4 Organise regular training programme for all service personnel/officials receiving complaints via the helpline on SOP on grievance handling***

- Regular trainings are being provided as per training need assessment.
- A 3-day long training has been provided to eight labour inspectors regarding receiving complaints via helpline from 26-28 December 2020.
- A day-long training programme was organized on 1 February 2022 for 16 labour inspectors including three responsible for receiving complaints via the helpline.
- Five labour inspectors of DIFE have been to Denmark in August 2022 for 7-days special training on complaint management.
- Five high level officials from MoLE and DIFE participated in study tour related to complaint management in Denmark in 15-21 May 2022 and in strategy meeting with ILO experts in Switzerland in 22-25 May 2022.
- Two officials from DIFE would participate in a TOT training on 'Building Modern and Effective Labour Inspection System' in 10-21 October 2022.

#### ***6.5 Establishment of the Helpline for all workers in EPZs***

- On March 28, 2021, the Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs inaugurated the BEPZA Helpline 16128. The helpline has been launched to ensure labour rights and to strengthen the existing grievance redressed system as well as to ensure prompt services for the workers of enterprises in the eight EPZs under BEPZA.
- The services that EPZ workers can get through the helpline are:
  - To inform any complaint or grievance and to get prompt services or advice or information from the concerned EPZ Officers/ Inspectors;
  - To receive immediate legal service/advice;
  - To get clear and transparent idea about legal rights and responsibilities etc.
- From 28 March 2021, the helpline is providing 24/7 hours services to the workers/ employees in EPZs. The calls so far received through helpline are for various purposes such as arrears of wages/salary, provident fund, earned leave encashment,

leave & holiday and information regarding plots, investments, etc.

- As of September, 2022 total 4825 calls have been received since the helpline was launched of which 4796 have been resolved and rest 29 are in resolving process

***Action 7 Provide for new labour inspectors and ensure full functionality of labour inspectorate***

***7.1 Filling vacant posts of Labour Inspectors by recruitment***

- Upon requisition for 140 inspectors, the Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) recommended 85 inspectors for DIFE of which 59 new inspectors joined DIFE. Eleven (11) existing staff of DIFE were promoted as Labour Inspectors (General).
- With this, at present a total of 366 inspectors are working in DIFE (upto 30 June 2022).
- Police verification and medical checkup of recommended candidates for 54 new posts is ongoing and hopefully these **inspectors will join within** a short time.
- In addition, **DIFE sent a requisition to MoLE on 26 July 2022** to recruit 46 inspectors by BPSC.

***Filling vacant posts by promotion***

- Meanwhile, gradation of Joint Inspectors General (JIGs) got finalized and the gazette notification was circulated by MOLE on 6 January 2022.
- Gradation of Deputy Inspectors General (DIGs) **was prepared in May 2021 and the process of hearing was completed. After that, it was sent to MoLE on 28 July 2022 for approval and gazette notification.** Gradation of Assistant Inspectors General (AIGs) is currently in process.

***7.2 Creation of new posts and recruitment of Labour Inspectors***

- A proposal for creating new posts for DIFE was sent to the Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA) on 18 August 2021 for approval. The concerned authorities, i.e., MOLE, DIFE, and MOPA, held a meeting on 31 August 2021 to assess the proposal.
- Creation of 345 posts including 175 posts for inspectors was recommended by MOPA on 28 November 2021.
- Of the 345 posts recommended by the MOPA, creation of 192 post including 136 posts for inspectors and 1 post for Legal Officer has been approved by the Finance Division on 19 April 2022 and 24 May 2022 in two different orders. After approval by the secretariat committee, the final office order for creation of 136 has been issued by the MOLE.

- 8 new field level offices of DIFE in 8 districts have been establishment which are functional now. The MOLE on 22 September 2022 deployed 8 DIGs for 8 new field offices and 5 DIGs and one JIG for Head Office. They already joined in respective offices.
- Meanwhile, MOLE remains in communications with MOPA regarding the possibility of increasing the number of sanctioned posts. The current fiscal constraints, aggravated since the outbreak of the Ukraine war, poses practical challenges for such reconsideration.
- Based on the outcome of these engagements, the matter will be referred to BPSC for initiating the recruitment process.

### **7.3 Full application of Labour Inspection Management**

#### ***Application (LIMA) digitalised labour inspection system in 23 DIFE offices***

- Under the supervision of a Committee and with the support from ILO and GIZ, the technical issues involving SMS and Automated Payment Integration within LIMA have already been resolved.
- The User Acceptance testing has been completed on 11 January 2022 and 12 January 2022. Already five workshops on factories facing module have been organized with the support of GIZ.
- Online Licensing and OSH Module are ready in the present system. E-nothi (e-file) integration has also been completed. In addition, complain information can be stored by district offices in the latest version.
- All the 31 district offices of DIFE are gradually using the Labour Inspection Management Application (LIMA) system for inspection, licensing and other issues. In the Fiscal Year 2021-22 (July, 21 to June, 22), a total of 8,149 inspections carried out, 1,199 new licenses issued and 58 licenses renewed through LIMA. On the other hand, during July, 2022 to 30 September, 2022, a total of 4995 inspections carried out, 379 new licenses issued and 839 licenses renewed through LIMA.

Details of training on LIMA is presented below:

Training Date	Trainee Type
6 March, 2022	Factory Facing module workshop (Dhaka)
7 March, 2022	Factory Facing module workshop (Dhaka)
27 March, 2022	Factory Facing module workshop (Chattogram)
23-23 March, 2022	All DIGs of all District Offices of DIFE attended the training course
18-19 June, 2022	Admin panel Training (10 inspectors)
17-18 July, 2022	TOT training (46 inspectors from 23 DIG offices)

30 July,2022	Rajshahi Area Training (30 inspectors from Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Bogura, Sirajgonj and Pabna district offices)
31 August – 1 September, 2022	Dhaka area (50 inspectors from Dhaka, Narayanganj, Gazipur, Munshigonj, Tangail, Norshingdi district offices)
8 September, 2022	Remediation Tracking Module (RTM) Training
16-17 September, 2022	LIMA Training for 56 newly recruited DIFE inspectors from Head office and different DIG offices)

#### ***7.4 Developing competencies of Labour Inspection staff through regular trainings and capacity building measures and creating more senior positions***

- Regular training activities are going on. In FY 2021-22, 27 training programmes involving 761 inspectors and staff and seven workshops comprising 197 inspectors and staff (one inspector attended two or more training counted separately) were conducted through GoB funding.
- In addition, 25 training programmes involving 555 inspectors were conducted with support from GIZ. Moreover, ILO organized a special master training for 23 DIFE engineers about Fire, Electrical and Structural Safety.
- Besides, two foundation training courses with 60 inspectors were completed in FY 2021-22.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> SFTC (special foundation training) of two month with 30 inspectors is running at BPATC, Savar.

#### ***7.5 Promote an effective sector-specific labour inspection approach***

- The prioritization of sectors for the Labour Inspectors, in consideration of safety issues and targeting establishments, was completed in December 2021.
- About 5 to 8 sectors were prioritized depending on different safety issues, accident rates, and other factors relevant for each district level office of DIFE.
- In addition, a yearly Strategic Inspection Plan targeting the priority sectors was also developed. This will help identify the non-compliance issues in these sectors and monitor the progress of remedial measures on a regular basis.
- A database has been developed (Please see Action 7.5.2) factoring in information on prioritization of safety issues along with child labour issues.

#### ***7.6 Formulating DIFE inspection modalities for EPZs***

- Modalities of DIFE inspection have been incorporated in the draft EPZ Labour Rules.
- An Inspection Checklist was prepared and shared with DIFE on 1 December 2021.

- On 16 May 2022, a review meeting was held between BEPZA and DIFE (under the Chair of Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs) regarding a transparent and accountable inspection mechanism.
- In parallel, DIFE is carrying out inspections within EPZs, including by the DIFE Inspector General himself in one instance. As of 27 October, 2022, DIFE has already inspected 29 factories within EPZs. During such inspections, the overall compliance of the factories concerned have been found to be satisfactory in general.
- The IG, DIFE has inspected in two instances.

### ***7.7 Incorporating the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on Labour complaints and investigation in the BLA***

- This will be done while amending BLA, 2006.

***Action 8: Ensure proper work for the Remediation Coordination Cell (RCC) and transition to Industrial Safety Unit (ISU)/Ensuring close cooperation of the RCC/ISU with the RMG Sustainability Council (RSC)***

### ***8.1 Remediation of factories under the national initiative for fire, electrical and structural safety***

#### ***8.1.1 Completed development of a business plan outlining three categories of factories including timelines for remediation***

- This planning process was completed on 10 February 2021 by RCC, DIFE. The three categories are:
  - Category-1: Remediation of factories easily possible by factories owner considering their technical capacity **(150 factories)**.
  - Category-2: Remediation of factories possible **(276 factories)**.
  - Category-3: Remediation of factories challenging **(240 factories)**.

#### ***8.1.2 Implement the business plan on remediation of factories***

- The Remediation of Fire, Electrical and Structural safety issues is a continuous process of factories owner. To implement the business plan of category 1, DIFE has formulated a time bound Action plan to escalate the process.
- This plan consists of Motivational seminar, Drawing/Design Approval, Continuous Follow-up, Technical Discussion with consulting Firm and Implement of Escalation process with highest escalation Tools of closure of Factories production operation as per Labour Act. However, Based on above mentioned plan,
- The newly formed ISU described in 8.3.3 This unit already visited 38 factories of category 1 factories and Rest 112 factories visits will be completed within September, 2022 for taking final decision of those factories. After that DIFE will give Initial CAP completion certificate or escalate them in different Round for shifting those factories to category 1 or category 2. (The newly formed ISU described

in 8.3.3. This unit completed visit of 150 factories (Category-1) within September, 2022. Reports and CAPs are being reviewed, after that DIFE will give Initial CAP completion certificate or escalate them in different Round for shifting those factories to category 1 or category 2.)

### ***8.1.3 Continue to work on remediation of factories under category 2 and 3, including with support from relevant international development partners***

- This is a long-Term target as the factories are very weak in resources, located in Rented building, very small and Subcontract factories. However, A new Project named “Risk Assessment and Remediation Implementation in selected factories to reduce accidents” has been initiated.
- This Project Cover category2and3 factories follow-up for remediation and Technical Guidance. Now it is in final stage in Planning Commission. In addition, DIFE send a specific proposal to ILO to give their assistance by strengthening ISU described in 8.3.3.

## ***8.2 Enhancing quality control and transparency of the RCC***

### ***8.2.1 Develop a quality assessment mechanism for remediation being monitored by RCC and apply it***

- ILO recruited UNOPS in September 2021 to ensure the quality of assessment mechanism for remediation being monitored by RCC. Currently UNOPS jointly with BV is doing the data verification and consolidation in order to provide a risk ranking of all active factories as part of the QA process.
- UNOPS will analyses and review completeness of the Curricula (content of the trainings delivered/to be delivered by BV) for the 24 DIFE engineers. They will produce advice and recommendations for training. They will also assess the current and forecasted capacity of the 24 DIFE engineers. The observation of training material and recommendations for improving the training scheme for the 24 DIFE engineers is another QA activity that feeds into their assessment of the capacities of LIs on building safety issues. That will inform their recommendations for an SOP. They will provide DIFE with recommendations on the development of SOPs.
- In a nutshell, the following deliverables will be provided in connection with 8.2.1:
  - Spreadsheet capturing consolidated data to provide a risk ranking of factories
  - Report on recommendations for DIFE to develop an SOP for LIs on building safety issues.
- However, ILO finalized the risk ranking of NI factories and hand over to DIFE in June, 2022.

### ***8.2.2 Ensure full application of Remediation Tracking Module (RTM)***

- Technical Work is completed. User Acceptance testing is ongoing. GIZ is supporting

to do that.

### ***8.3 Establishing a transition plan to graduate RCC to ISU***

#### ***8.3.1 Upon project completion, RCC to handover the remediation work to DIFE Safety Unit***

- This action was completed in December 2021.

#### ***8.3.2 Post Creation and Deployment of Labour Inspectors for the ISU***

- A proposal for creating 1791 new posts for DIFE was sent to the Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA) on 18 August 2021 for approval of 942 posts were for engineers (including 92 posts for ISU in 8 divisional offices with 80 dedicated engineers). The concerned authorities, i.e., MOLE, DIFE, and MOPA, held a meeting on 31 August 2021 to assess the proposal.
- Creation of 345 posts including 175 posts for inspectors was recommended by MOPA on 28 November 2021.
- Of the 345 posts recommended by the MOPA, creation of 192 post including 136 posts for inspectors and 1 post for Legal Officer has been approved by the Finance Division on 19 April 2022 and 24 May 2022 in two different orders.
- After approval by the **Secretary Committee**, the final office order for creation of 136 has been issued by the MOLE on 4 September, 2022 and 4 October 2022
- Establishment of 8 new field level offices in 8 districts has also been approved on 4 August, 2022 by MoLE.
- Based on the outcome of these engagements, the matter will be referred to BPSC for initiating the recruitment process.
- However, MOLE has sent a letter to MOPA to increase the number for reconsideration in 14 December, 2021.
- On 23 January 2022 the MOPA informed that no option for reconsideration right now.
- In addition, Secretary, MOLE has again sent a DO letter to Secretary, MOPA to increase the number in 19 June 2022. In reply to this, MOPA sent a letter in 07 July, 2022 to MOLE. However, DIFE will again sent a proposal very soon as per MOPA Requirements.
- The current fiscal constraints, aggravated since the outbreak of the Ukraine war, poses practical challenges for such reconsideration.
- However, in an alternative approach, DIFE already formed an ISU in head quarter on 21 March 2022 with the support of ILO. Presently 7 Engineers of DIFE, 6 ILO supported Engineers and 1 Data management officer are working in ISU.

#### ***8.3.3 Upon establishment of ISU, DIFE Safety Unit to handover the responsibility to ISU***



- Please refer to Action 8.3.2.

#### **8.3.4 Capacity building and training of DIFE's existing Engineers on building safety (fire, structure, electrical, chemical, boilers etc.)**

- Apart From Covid 19 Pandemic Situation, DIFE safety units consists of 24 Engineers Capacity building training has ended on 28 November, 2021 in First Phase. Second Phase training also ended in June 2022 consisting 23 Engineers. Those Engineers also taken special Master Training about Structural, Fire and Electrical Safety Issues with the help of ILO.

#### **8.4 Development of a framework for coordination with RMG Sustainability Council (RSC)**

- As per the conditions stipulated in the License issued in favour of RSC as well as Article 41 of RSC's Articles of Association, a Government Coordination Council (GCC) has been formed under the Ministry of Commerce.
- GCC is headed by Additional Secretary (Export), Ministry of Commerce, and comprises representatives from MOLE, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Jute & Textile, Ministry of Industries, BEPZA and Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA).
- GCC held its first meeting on 23 December 2021 and discussed its future course of action. The second meeting of GCC was held virtually on 1 February 2022, where representatives from RSC and DIFE also attended.
- A Draft Framework has been developed by DIFE for RSC coordination/ monitoring based on the terms and conditions of the licenses given to RSC by the Ministry of Commerce. The draft remains under consideration of MOC following a meeting with MOLE.
- In addition, a 10-member Review Panel for RSC headed by IG, DIFE, consisting of technical experts along with RSC representative, has been formed on 1 March, 2022 to address appeal applications received from the people who are aggrieved by the activities of RMG Sustainability Council (RSC) and for taking necessary actions as per laws.

### **Action 9 Ratify ILO Convention on minimum age and Forced Labour Protocol**

#### **9.1 Ratify Protocol of 2014 to ILO Convention on forced labour(P29)**

- Bangladesh has ratified protocol of ILO Convention 29 which was confirmed through an instrument of ratification submitted with ILO.
- The ratification was registered by ILO on 20 January 2022. It will enter into force for Bangladesh on 20 January 2023.

#### **9.2 Ratify ILO Convention 138 on minimum age (C138)**

- The instrument of ratification was deposited by the government of Bangladesh with ILO on 22 March 2022, and was registered by the Office on the same day. The link on this follows:

[https://www.ilo.org/global/standards/subjects-covered-by-international-labour-standards/child-labour/WCMS\\_840125/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/global/standards/subjects-covered-by-international-labour-standards/child-labour/WCMS_840125/lang--en/index.htm)

- Bangladesh has determined 14 years as minimum age for admission to employment.
- By this, Bangladesh has now completed ratification of all eight ILO Fundamental Conventions.

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