**Workers Memorial Day**

Every year more people are killed at work than in wars. Most don't die of mystery ailments, or in tragic "accidents". They die because an employer decided their safety just wasn't that important a priority. Workers’ Memorial Day (WMD) commemorates those workers.

Workers' Memorial Day is held on 28 April every year, all over the world workers and their representatives conduct events, demonstrations, vigils and a whole host of other activities to mark the day.

The day is also intended to serve as a rallying cry to “remember the dead, but fight for the living”.

Over 20,000 people die every year because of their work; most of these because of exposure to dangerous substances.

In 2015 the theme for the day is ‘*removing exposure to hazardous substances in the workplace’.* Hazardous substances are found in almost every workplace in the UK and many workers have no protection against the possible effects, despite the fact that tens of thousands of workers have their health destroyed by asthma, dermatitis, lung disorders and cancers due to exposures.

In addition to hazardous substances many unions and trades councils will be campaigning on the general theme of demanding better regulation, greater inspections and an end to the anti-health and safety rhetoric from the government and their allies in the press.

This Workers Memorial Day we will remember the awful incident in April 2013 where almost 1200 workers, most of them young women, lost their lives when the Rana Plaza factory building collapsed in Savar district, Bangladesh.

The Rana Plaza Trust Fund was set up and is a no-fault fund administered by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Any organisation can contribute to the fund, whether sourcing from Rana Plaza or not. The TUC has contributed £16,000 to the Rana Plaza Fund.

We are calling for all clothing companies that source from Bangladesh to make an adequate contribution to the Rana Plaza Fund. Full compensation for the victims should be raised by the second anniversary of the factory collapse - which was last Friday (24 April).

Almost 30 companies have publicly disclosed donations to the Rana Plaza Trust Fund while others have donated anonymously, however $7 million still needs to be raised.

It is shameful that two years after the Rana Plaza factory collapsed, some companies still have not donated adequately to the compensation fund. Workers and their families urgently need this money to pay medical fees and rebuild their lives after this horrific event. Companies have a moral obligation to put the livelihoods of those who make their clothes in Bangladesh first.

Beth Farhat

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