

# Report: Research Mission on the situation of Shipbreaking workers in South Asia

research period: 4-8 November 2013

## 1. PAKISTAN

### People we met

**National Trade Union Federation Pakistan-NTUF** (affiliate to IndustriALL)

Rafiq Baloch, President

Nasir Mansoor, Deputy General Secretary

Mushtaq Ali Shan, editor "Union News"

**Ship Braking Mazdur Union Gadani** (member union of NTUF)

Basheer Mehmoodani, President

Tahir Khan Sawati, General Secretary

and other office bearers and shipbreaking workers

### Local government

5 Regional Officials of labour welfare and inspector of factories,

Ministry of Human Resource Development, Hub district, Balochistan

### General information on the yard

- Gadani shipbreaking yard is the third largest shipbreaking yard in the world.
- The yard consists of approximately 130 ship-breaking plots located across a 10 km long beachfront at Gadani, Pakistan, about 50 kilometres northwest of Karachi.
- Gadani has capacity of breaking ships of all sizes, including supertankers, with a combined LDT of 1,000,000 tons.
- The yard directly employs 20,000 workers at its peak period, normally around 15,000 workers.
- The plots are owned by 40 different companies, with 100 plots owned by private land owners and 30 plots owned by state.
- The workers are mostly migrants from other states, 60% from Khayber Phakhtoon Khawa(KPK), 20% from Punjab, 20% from local area(Balochistan and Sindh).

### Wage and working condition

- The workers' (average)wages per day are PKR400(2.67euro) for un-skilled(helpers), PKR500-600(3.33-4euro) for middle-skilled(e.g. gas cutter on the beach), and PKR800-900(5.34-6.01euro) for skilled workers inside the ship.
- The minimum wage(in June 2013) is PKR10,000/month. (e.g. if un-skilled worker work 30days/month, the worker earns PKR12,000/month. But to fulfill the basic needs of the worker, the living wage should be PKR25,000/month.)
- Standard working hours are 8hours/day, from 7am to 4pm; however the workers often continue working until 7pm-10pm.
- The workers usually work 7days a week and no paid holidays are given.
- Most of workers has no written contracts and they are not registered for social benefit.

### **Safety and Health**









- According to NTUF, personal protective equipments(PPEs) such as safety shoes, safety wears, goggles, masks and gloves are rarely provided. The mission team visited two plots(one state owned, one private owned), but there were only few workers who wears gloves and goggles and almost no helmets.
- No climbing gears or safety belts are provided. As the results, the workers on the ship often fall down from top of the deck to the sea/beach.
- Asbestos taken from ships are made a big heap on the beach with no protection. Children often play around the mountain of asbestos and swim in puddle with toxic substances.
- No proper safety training is provided by the employers. No license/certificate is required for gas cutters/welders and heavy machine operators. The workers just learn from what others do.
- No first aid equipment can be seen. No safe drinking water is provided.
- One hospital for the shipbreaking workers and their families is located in the yard. But there was only 2 beds out of 20,000 workers. The doctors irregularly come to the hospital(once or twice a week or less) and the workers are not informed when they come. When the mission team visited the hospital, the windows were broken, no doctors could be found, and the inside was ruined.
- Full equipped emergency hospital is located in Karachi, which is 50km away.
- Ship Breaking Mazdur Union Gadani is making efforts to record the situation of accidents as much as possible. According to the union, 19 workers died at the yards by accidents last year from June 2011-June 2012.

### **IndustriALL affiliate Union of shipbreaking workers**

#### ***Ship Breaking Mazdur Union Gadani - NTUF, IndustriALL affiliate***

- The union was formed after the former union-Gadani Ship Breaking Democratic Workers Union was cancelled its registration by the government in 2009.
- Although the union is officially registered by the authorities, Pakistan Ship Breakers Association(PSBA) does not recognize the union as negotiating partner of collective bargaining agreement(CBA).
- The union has officially 850 members and 8,000 hidden members. The hidden members are the workers who are not able to resister as official union member because they will be dismissed by the employers if they do so.
- The hidden members irregularly pay membership dues to the union and often come to the union asking for consultation/assistance/help.
- The union dues is PKR20(0.13euro)/per 15 days. The union collect the dues twice a month when the workers receive their wage per 15 days.

**Photos of Gadani shipbreaking yard**

	
<p><i>No safety procedure such as notice, warning sound/lights, etc.</i></p>	<p><i>There is no ladder. The workers walk on the steel chains to get inside of the ship.</i></p>
	
<p><i>The workers are carrying the steel plates with bare hands.</i></p>	<p><i>The operators has no licence with no training.</i></p>
	
<p><i>No helmets and no safety shoes.</i></p>	<p><i>Mountain of asbestos without any proper care.</i></p>
	
<p><i>The cut steel block is just dropped from the top of deck without any warning.</i></p>	



*The workers' beds for rest and sleep.*



*Sanitary facilities in the plot.*



*Kitchen of the workers' residence*



*Stained goggles.  
No new goggles are provided.*



*Office of Ship Breaking Mazdur Union  
Gadani*



*The union leaders and members.*



*Hospital in the yard. The windows are broken.*



*No one use the building.*



*No doctors available.*



*Dental facility but nobody knows how to use.*



*Injured workers are waiting for the doctor, but they never know when he/she come.*



*Only 2 beds for 20,000 workers.*

## 2. INDIA

### People we met

***Steel, Metal & Engineering Workers' Federation of India-SMEFI  
Mumbai Port Trust Dock&General Employees' Union-MPTDGEU***

***Alang Sosiya Ship Recycling&General Workers Association-ASSRGWA***

(affiliate to IndustriALL)

S K Shetye, General Secretary, MPTDGEU

S R Apraj, Secretary, MPTDGEU

V V Rane, Vice Presiden SMEFI, Secretary MPTDGEU, GS ASSRGWA

M K Vishwasrao, Secretary, MPTDGEU

Vijay Randive, Secretary MPTDGEU

Vikas Nalawade, Treasurer ASSRGWA

Vithoba Pawar Vice President, MPTDGEU

and other office bearers and shipbreaking workers

### ***Local government***

Praful U. Kamble, Assistant Docks Manager, Mumbai Port Trust

***\*from SAO, Fahimuddin Pasha joined the mission team.***

### **General information on the yards in Alang-Sosiya and Mumbai**

- Alang-Sosiya shipbreaking yard is the largest shipbreaking yard in the world. The yard has approximately 10 km. long sea front on the western coast of the Gulf of Cambay adjoining to Alang-Sosiya village is developed as ship recycling yard. By road, it is about 50 km from Bhavnagar.
- The Alang-Sosiya yard consists of approximately 170 ship-breaking plots and has capacity of breaking ships of all sizes including large supertankers, car ferries, container ships, and a dwindling number of ocean liners
- Mumbai shipbreaking yard has 19 ship-breaking plots and has capacity of breaking ships of middle class sized ship. Recently, the yard have been approved to break Panamax class oil tanker.
- The yards directly employs 60,000 workers in Alang-Sosiya and 6,000 in Mumbai at its peak period.
- The all plots are owned by respective states authorities, Gujarat Maritime Board in Alang-Sosiya and Mumbai Port Trust in Mumbai. The plots are rented to private shipbreakers.
- The workers are mostly migrants from other states, mainly Orissa, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh.

### **Wage and working condition**

- After long time effort taken by the affiliate unions- MBPTDGEU and ASSRGWA under the FNV-IMF organizing project since 2003, the working condition has improved.
- The workers' (average)wages per month are IND5,000(59.6euro) for un-skilled, IND7,500(89.4euro) for middle-skilled and IND10,000(119.2euro) for skilled workers. (the living wage in India is IND16,380(195.3euro)/month.)
- Working hours is still long. Most of workers compulsorily have to work for more than 8 hours. Some who live very near to the yard continue to work beyond 12 hours.
- Many workers has no written contracts; however, the unions issue ID cards with blood type for the union members.

For more information is available on "Research On Spending Pattern of Ship Breaking Workers" produced by SMEFI in 2012.

### **Safety and Health in Mumbai shipbreaking yard**

- After MBPTDGEU started organizing the workers, the OHS has dramatically improved.
- The research mission team has confirmed that all the workers are provided Helmets and gloves, and goggles for gas cutters. Many of them were wearing safety shoes. However, no climbing gears or safety belts are provided.
- Periodical OHS trainings are done by the unions. FNV Bondgenoten has been also providing OHS trainings (twice in 2012 and in 2012) for union officers who are trainers of the workers.
- Safe drinking water and first aid equipments are also placed in each plots.
- However, continuous training and improving the OHS are needed as the situation is still far behind the international safety standards.

### **IndustriALL affiliate unions of shipbreaking workers**

#### ***Steel, Metal & Engineering Workers' Federation of India-SMEFI***









(affiliate to IndustriALL) has two shipbreaking workers' unions which are

#### ***Mumbai Port Trust Dock & General Employees' Union-MPTDGEU***

#### ***Alang Sosiya Ship Recycling & General Workers Association-ASSRGWA***

- MPTDGEU has 3000 members and ASSRGWA has 10,000 members. The union's goal on organizing in next 3 years is to increase membership up to 30,000.
- Workers have been gaining courage to organize themselves and raise their voice against injustice.
- The unions has achieve followings so far;
  - ✓ increasing First Aid, raising awareness of the need to learn hazardous materials
  - ✓ learning more about workers' right and how to secure justice regarding their safety, health, welfare and service conditions
  - ✓ the training and educational programs for the workers
  - ✓ successful industrial actions such as strike and demonstration
  - ✓ achieving legal system to compensate for families of the workers who met with fatal accidents
  - ✓ the workers now have the right to claim the Statutory Minimum Wage and Social Security provisions.
- The unions are now aiming for achieving tripartite dialogue and collective bargaining on working conditions and OHS.

**Photos of Mumbai shipbreaking yard**

	
<p>All workers are wearing helmets and gloves. Certain improvement!</p>	
	
<p>In side of ship. The workers are working with sunbeams.</p>	<p>The materials are still not properly handled.</p>
	
<p>Diesel engine made in 1984, in Japan.</p>	<p>Tanker(behind) is now also broken at the yard.</p>
	
<p>Union member has ID card with blood type on.</p>	<p>Photo with union leaders and members.</p>



### 3. BANGLADESH

#### People we met

##### ***IndustriALL Bangladesh Council***

Nazrul Islam Khan, President BJSD, General Secretary BMF  
Roy Ramesh, General Secretary IndustriALL BC  
Mohammad Abu Taher, Coordinator for Metal-IBC

##### ***Bangladesh Metalworkers Federation-BMF*** (affiliate to IndustriALL)

A M Nazim Uddin, Chairman of the Shipbreaking Sector

##### ***Bangladesh Metalworkers League-BML*** (affiliate to IndustriALL)

Md. Mojibur Rahman Bhuiyan, General Secretary

##### ***Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies-BILS***

Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmmed, Asstant Executive Director  
Abu Eusuf Mollah, Programme Officer

##### ***Bangladesh Occupatinal Safety, Health and Environment Foundation-OSHE***

Saki Rezwana, Chairperson  
A R Chowdhury Repon, Executive Director  
Md. Omar Faruq, Program Manager

***\*from SAO, Sudhershnan Rao joined the mission team.***

#### General information on the yard

- Chittagong shipbreaking yard is the second largest shipbreaking yard in the world.
- The yard consists of approximately 140 ship-breaking plots located in the Fauzdarhat area along the 18 kilometres Sitakunda coastal strip, 20 kilometres north-west of Chittagong.
- According to the affiliate unions, the yard employs 40,000 workers. There are about 100 contractors who arrange workers depend on the need of the shipbreakers.
- The land of plots are 60% owned by state and 30% owned by private companies.
- The workers are mostly migrants workers from north west states.
- Another huge shipbreaking yard project has approved by the government. The yard will be developed in an island located western Bangladesh.

#### Wage and working condition

- The workers' (average)wages per day are BDT160(1.47euro) for un-skilled, BDT300(2.76euro) for middle-skilled(e.g. gas cutter on the beach), and BDT400-450(3.68-4.14euro) for skilled workers. (the living wage in Bangladesh is BDT 2,820(259.80euro)/month.)
- More than 70% of the workers are working 10-12 hours/day. Working shift is counted in general from 7am-7pm.
- Most of workers has no job guarantee(no written contracts) and ID cards are only issued for limited number of the workers.

### **Safety and Health**

- According to our affiliates, only 10% of the plots have first aid, and no fully equipped Hospital is located in the yards.
- Personal protective equipments(PPEs) are not properly provided; however, some plots have good practice of providing PPEs and OHS to get Green Dock Certificate in order to get tax reduction from the government.
- There is no dialogue between the unions and the employers on OHS.
- Since 2006, OHSE(supported by FNV) has been working on the OHS training on the shipbreaking workers. (e.g. training programme called Study Circle. 15 workers gathers on Friday and discuss rights of workers and OHS and also First Aid training programme.)
- BILS Information & Training center at Chittagong started under BILS/LO-FTF project since September 2010 and support workers/unions on raising awareness on labour rights&laws, OHS, working environment, providing legal assistance, etc.
- One clinic(supported by OHSE) is located outside of the yard. The clinic is open 3days a week with 2 hours a day. Doctor and the some medication is free of charge.
- According to OHSE monitoring, dead and injured in shipbreaking sector from January 2008 to June 2013 are 197(78 dead, 119 injured). But the figures are only reported by the 15 national newspapers, and OHSE estimate the real figures might be 20 times more.

### **IndustriALL affiliate unions of shipbreaking workers in Chittagong**

***Bangladesh Metalworkers Federation-BMF*** (affiliate to IndustriALL)

***Bangladesh Metalworkers League-BML*** (affiliate to IndustriALL)

- The unions have been making effort to organize the shipbreaking workers and register the unions last 5 years.
- In October 2013, BMF has registered two unions(with membership of 513) and BML has registered one union(with membership of 220) for the first time. (In some views, IndustriALL's action on Bangladesh Accord gave good effects on the approval on their registration.)
- Up to now, the union dues could not be collected but it will be expect around BST5/month at beginning.
- The unions have strong intention to expand their organizing drive, but lack of resources(finance, facilities, training and human resource).

*There is also a movement on **cluster union initiative**: 6 national centers(JSL, BFTUC, BJSD, BMSF, TUC, and one more) work together in the field of the shipbreaking workers with unity concept.*

## 1. Key results from the survey/research

(can be also found at <http://www.industrial-union.org/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/Kan-meeting-DenmarkSHIP/introduction01.pdf> )



## BANGLADESH- BML

Union density: Metal Industry 3% - Shipbuilding/shipbreaking less than 1%  
(year 2013)

	No. of Employment	% of Women	% of Non-manual	Union membership	% of Women	% of Non-manual
Shipbuilding	22,420	-	-	500	-	-
Shipbreaking	38,680	-	-	220	-	-

### Shipbuilding

Name of company	% of work		Total No. of workers	No. of union members
	Commercial	Naval		
Chitagang Dry Dock		100%		500
Kamaluli Ship Builders	30%	70%		
Western Fisheries Ship Builders	10%	90%		
F.M.C. Ship yard	5%	95%		
S.N. Dock Yard	5%	95%		
Progressive Ship Yard		100%		
Khulna DockYard		100%		
Khaja Ship Builders	5%	95%		
Anand ship	10%	90%		

### Shipbreaking

Name of company	% of work		Total No. of workers	No. of union members
	Commercial	Naval		
SMI Subedar Steel Rolling Mills				220
M/S Kabir Steel Ship Yard				
M/S Kaising Steel Rolling mill				
M/S Janaka Holding				
M/S Laxmi Enterprise				
C.T. Co. Steel Ship Rolling yard				
M.K. Steel Ship Yard				
M/S Mahim Steel Ship breaking yard				
Four Star Steel rolling Mills				
M/S Dynamic Ship Yard				

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## INDIA - SMEFI

Union density: Shipbreaking 37.14%  
(year 2013)

	No. of Employment	% of Women	% of Non-manual	Union membership	% of Women	% of Non-manual
Shipbuilding	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shipbreaking	35,000	2.5%	2.5%	13,000	less than 1%	1%

### Shipbreaking

Name of company	% of work		Total No. of workers	No. of union members
	Commercial	Naval		
SHRI RAM GROUP	These are six major groups are existing in shipbreaking by forming various establishments/firms in India.			
BANSAL GROUP				
HARAYANA GROUP	-More than 35000 shipbreaking workers working in shipbreaking industry in India.			
JAIN GROUP	-80% of total workforce is distributed in these six groups. Because of casual nature of work and mobility of workers from one plot to another, it is difficult to figure out the company wise membership.			
AGRAWAL GROUP				
PATEL GROUP	-Majority of companies are in commercial business, last Naval vessel break INS SHAKTI in 2011 at Alang Plot No. 28 and Cost Guard vessel in 2012 at Alang Plot No. 29.			



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# PAKISTAN

Union density: Metal Industry less than 10% - Shipbuilding 65% - Shipbreaking 70%

(year 2013)

	No. of Employment	% of Women	% of Non-manual	Union membership	% of Women	% of Non-manual
Shipbuilding	3,000	1%	4%	900	-	-
Shipbreaking	20,000			(8,000)		

## Shipbuilding

Name of company	% of work		Total No. of workers	No. of union members
	Commercial	Naval		
Karechi Shipyards	80%	20%	2,000	100
Karechi Dockyard	-	100%	1,000	-

## Shipbreaking

Name of company	% of work		Total No. of workers	No. of union members
	Commercial	Naval		
(53 Private companies)	100%	-	20,000	(8,000)



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## Precarious Work 4 (SA)

Country	% of PW	Issues	Response/CBA
Bangladesh	Build- 95% Break- 98%	Employers prioritize to employ temporary and casuals workers. Their wages are low, no protection of job, no identity card, no attendance card are given by employers. No compensation for accidents, no health care centre in a ship breaking yard.	Demanding for permanent jobs and all benefits guaranteed by Labour Laws including appointment letter, health care facilities, Decent job etc.
India	Break- 98%	Shipbreaking work is carried by casual and workers in India.	Unions are liaison with government authorities and employers and their contractors to improve service conditions, supply PPEs, housing colonies for workers, implementation of social security benefits e.g. ESIS, P.F., Pension, compensation, etc. Government authorities are responding but implementation at local level/ plant level is little bit slow.
Pakistan	Build-60% Break- 95%	PWs in shipbreaking is increasing. No social benefit and exposed by hazardous materials.	Formed shipbreaking union a year ago and demand contract system, social security scheme and OHS, but the shipowners did not recognize the union until now.



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## Organizing/Union Building 2 (SA)

Union	Situation/Issues/Strategy
BML	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trying to organize in both ship building and ship breaking. Because of strong opposition by employers and negative attitude of labour department we are not getting registration. At present we are organizing in one ship building company, also trying to form union in one ship breaking industry.</li> <li>Employers engage miscreants, bribe the Labour Department. So that we face difficulty to form union.</li> </ul>
SMEFI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Due to continuous efforts of union activities we could succeed in provision of potable drinking water at residential palaces, training to workers free of cost, sanitation facilities, drainage system, street lights, payment of compensation, family pension. Also union have taken the issues of labour colony, education of children, unique identity card (AADHAR), etc.</li> <li>Unions are organising gate meetings, awareness camps, medical camps, cultural programmes, through which union is spreading her wings. The membership of unions is increasing but obstacle is fluctuation in business resulting in less no of employment to the workers.</li> </ul>
NTUF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The union in shipbuilding had CBA but the military government put ban on union activities. The case is in court.</li> <li>In shipbreaking, the union is in process to organize workers and conduct regular study circle on awareness of labour laws.</li> </ul>



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## Challenges 3 (SA)

Union	Challenges	Activities at national/international
BML	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lowest unionization rate</li> <li>Employers engage miscreants and looms to threaten workers to refrain from unionization</li> <li>Negative attitude of Labour Department to give registration</li> <li>Employers have money power</li> <li>Dismissal from job for any attempt to unionize</li> <li>Non-implementation of Labour Law in these two sectors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training and workshops to create awareness</li> <li>Providing all kinds of assistance including financial assistance be given to workers at enterprise level to organize unions</li> <li>Help financially who lose jobs for forming union</li> <li>Federations and National Centers take strong position to form union</li> <li>International Organizations can support financially for workshops, those who lose jobs and start giving drinking water, primary health care with medicing to workers at the enterprise level etc.</li> </ul>
SMEFI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representation of Shipbreaking workers at various government agencies.</li> <li>Competition from Bangladesh and Pakistan.</li> <li>Global financial crisis and fall of Indian Rupees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At domestic level to pressurize government as well as employes for representation at GMS, Minimum Wage Board, and other boards.</li> <li>Organising more and workers.</li> <li>Level playing field at regional level.</li> <li>Solidarity support at international level.</li> </ul>
NTUF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Union busting by employers and government</li> <li>Fear among workers to join the union</li> <li>Non availability of legal assistance, lawyerfee is very high and can not afford for it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need for strong international solidarity at/in time of need on emergency basis</li> <li>Well equipped legal aid system to help workers</li> <li>Awareness training programme</li> </ul>



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## Creating Trade Union Network 2 (SA)

Union	Opinion/priority
BML	All kinds of network are necessary for exchange of information on various fields- unionization, wage, freedom of association, labour law working & living conditions of workers. We shall gather information for unionization and decent work in these two sectors. We can go further to seek co-operation of each other to strengthen unionization, work and common agenda for the betterment of workers in these two sectors.
SMEFI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A series of meeting has been conducted by IndustriALL- South Asia Office between the shipbreaking Asian countries, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and planning to form a Regional Platform. (Bro. Rane has been asked to shoulder the responsibilities of Regional coordination of shipbreaking)</li> <li>We should keep pressure on shipbuilding companies to collect 'levies' when the ship is due for breaking . This fund should be used for the welfare measures, training and betterment of workers working in shipbreaking and members of their families. Trade unions should be a part of such schemes / Trusts with the participation of government and employers.</li> <li>Liaisoning &amp; coordinating with research institutions/reputed universities (vz. Malmo University).</li> </ul>
NTUF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The network should be regional basis and then have global structure.</li> <li>The first priority of the union in shipbuilding is to get workers rights back as it was banned by military government.</li> <li>In shipbreaking, network for organize workers and get union recognition by employers.</li> </ul>

