

PRESS RELEASE

Labour leaders demand making public Justice (R) Alavi Report on Baldia Fire Incident.

KARACHI, Sept. 6, 2013: The trade union leaders and civil society activists on Friday demanded the government to make public the Judicial Commission led by Justice (R) Zahid Qurban Alavi's report on Ali Enterprise, Baldia Fire incident and also urged to provide justice to the victims of Ali Enterprise Factory fire incidents by taking the responsible to the task and ensuring health and safety of the workers' at the industrial and commercial establishments.

Speaking at a joint press conference at Karachi Press Club, the leaders of trade unions and human rights organisations deplore that after passage of one year the accused including owners, officials of the labour department and other relevant government departments are at large. Besides making the judicial commission's report public, the nominated persons and officials in the judicial commission report under the chairmanship of Justice (R) Zahid Qurban Alavi be punished.

The labour movement of Karachi has chalked out a number of programmes to observe the first anniversary of the worst-ever industrial fire incident at Baldia town, SITE on September 11, 2012, in which about 256 workers had lost lives and 55 were injured. To mark the anniversary, on the evening of September 10, 2013 a memorial vigil would be held, where the trade unionists and civil society activists, members of the victims' families would gather at the site of the factory and observe one-minute silence.

On September 11, a labour rally would be taken out from Regal Chowk Saddar to Karachi Press Club, followed by a memorial reference at Arts Council of Pakistan. Trade union leaders, labour rights activists and members of the victims' families would speak on the occasion.

Noted singer Jawad Ahmed, who had earlier prepared and launched a video song to pay tributes to Baldia Factory fire workers, would present his songs on the occasion. A large number of the workers from various industrial areas of Karachi, victims' families members and civil society activists have been invited to attend the event.

At the press conference, the labour leaders gave details of the efforts made by their organisations to provide justice as well as compensation to the affected families. A number of civil society organisations including Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER), National Trade Union Federation, Hosiery Garments Textile General Union, Pakistan Trade Union Federation Sindh, Pakistan Fisherfolk forum, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, had filed a petition in Sindh High Court (SHC), seeking court's orders for compensation as well as fixing responsibility of the incident and bring the culprits to books.

With the efforts of the labour organisations, a German buyer of Ali Enterprises KIK had agreed to provide one million dollars as a compensation to the factory workers. The company has also agreed to support the victim families on longer terms. On the request of petitioners, the SHC constituted a Judicial Commission led by for Supreme Court Judge Justice (Retd.) Rahmat Hussain Jafari, which has almost

completed the process of compensation. The Commission has provide cash compensation of Rs. 500,00 to the families of 215 deceased workers. It has also provided cash compensation to 55 injured workers.