

# EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION

TEL: 8802-55662000

FAX: 880-2-9881677, 9885688

E-MAIL: [DhakaPA@state.gov](mailto:DhakaPA@state.gov)

WEBSITE: <http://dhaka.usembassy.gov>



## U.S. AMBASSADOR MARCIA BERNICAT'S STATEMENT ON THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF RANA PLAZA COLLAPSE

**DHAKA, APRIL 24** – Please find below a statement from U.S. Ambassador Marcia Bernicat on the third anniversary of Rana Plaza collapse –

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Three years ago the Rana Plaza building collapsed, crushing workers underneath and drawing the world's attention to the Ready Made Garment (RMG) sector in Bangladesh. In one day, Bangladesh lost more than 1,100 lives, and many who survived that day continue to struggle. Some lost loved ones. Others were injured for life. We grieve with them on this anniversary.

Rana Plaza's tragic collapse bequeathed to all of us a responsibility, a shared responsibility as government officials, workers, factory owners, and consumers to create safe working conditions and to ensure workers have a voice.

Over the last three years, more than 3,600 factories have been inspected for safety, and 39 dangerous factories have been closed. People all over the world can access factory safety information at <http://database.dife.gov.bd/factories>. The Ministry of Labor and Employment has hired and trained more than 200 inspectors, and launched a toll-free help line (0800-4455000). Thousands of factories have taken steps to improve workplace safety, and thirty-one factories have been fully remediated.

These are all tremendous accomplishments that may have saved lives.

We also believe it is critically important for workers to have a strong and powerful voice, to be able say we will not work in that building with a cracked wall, and to be heard and respected. The Government of Bangladesh has also registered hundreds of new unions, and we urge that workers democratically select representatives to create safety and health committees to ensure their safety continues.

We take a moment today to look back and remember those who lost their lives, their families, and those survivors who have suffered. We recommit ourselves to the future, to working together with Bangladesh – its workers, employers, and government – to prevent such a tragedy from happening

again, to building a better and more vibrant Ready Made Garment sector, and to demonstrating success goes hand-in-hand with workers' rights and safety.

For more information please see the links below --

<http://bangladeshaccord.org/remediated-factories/>

<http://www.bangladeshworkersafety.org/factory/factory-cap-completion>

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