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# **Savar (Bangladesh): Death Toll 819 as of May 8 - Bodies coming out endlessly**

Wednesday 8 May 2013, by [Correspondent\(s\)](#) (Date first published: 9 May 2013).

## **BODY RECOVERED YESTERDAY 73**

### **DEATH TOLL 819**

For 15 days Hosena has been waiting at Adhar Chandra High School playground for her only daughter Marzina. She had hoped to find her alive but now, in tears, Hosena waits for the body. Marzina was the sole bread earner in the two-member family as Hosena's husband abandoned them a few months after Marzina was born. Photo: Sk Enamul Haq

The disaster management control cell, formed to coordinate the rescue work at Rana Plaza site in Savar, hopes to call off the operation in two to three days, subject to no more bodies are found in the rubble.

However, bodies are still being found. A total of 73 bodies was recovered yesterday, as of filing of this report around 9:30pm.

With this, the death toll of the worst factory disaster of the country reached to 819. Of them, 613 bodies have been handed over to their families.

An officer of the disaster management control cell said they would wait for the rescuers' final report before calling off their operation.

"If no more bodies are found, we will handover the responsibility of the operation to district administration, said Lt Col Saiful Islam, a member of the engineering rescue team.

He said that the rescuers had so far been able to reach 50 metres inside the rubble through the rear of the collapsed building and created access to the first and second floors through the front.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) continued to distribute salaries among the workers survived at Savar cantonment shooting ground.

However, BGMEA did not comply with workers' demanded for four months' salary for all workers irrespective of their joining date. This sparked dissatisfaction over the payment in the workers.

Abdul Ahad Ansary, chairman of BGMEA's standing committee for labourers' education and welfare, said they had decided to pay one month's basic salary for each of the year a worker had worked, basic salary and 60 hours' overtime for the month of April, one month's basic salary as notice pay, since the workers no longer have jobs.

As for their earned leave, they had decided to pay the arrear for a maximum of 40 days, added Abdul Ahad.

However, the conditions do not apply for those whose service tenure is less than three months. These workers will receive salary for the days they had worked in April and basic salary for one month.

At a press conference in Dhaka, BGMEA officials said they had paid wages of 1,776 workers on Tuesday night and yesterday.

Meanwhile, 15 days into the fateful tragedy, the bodies trapped under the rubble have become so severely decomposed that relatives can hardly identify their loved ones.

District administration sources said they were having a hard time handing over the bodies, as they needed to confirm that the bodies were going to the right families.

"I have been looking for my daughter since the tragic day [April 24] among the bodies recovered. But the bodies pulled out in the last two or three days were too decomposed to identify," said Ranjana Akhter, mother of garment worker Sheuli, who used to work on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor.

Now the bodies are being identified through their ID cards, mobile phones or clothes.

Yesterday, many people with photographs and ID cards of missing workers were seen waiting at Adhar Chandra High School playground yesterday for the remains of their lost ones.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

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**P.S.**

\* The Daily Star. THURSDAY, MAY 09, 2013:

<http://www.thedailystar.net/beta2/news/bodies-coming-out-endlessly/>