

## **Update on the court cases against the owners and employers of the Rana Plaza building and factories**

### **April 2025, BLAST**

April 24, 2025, will mark 12 years since the Rana Plaza building collapsed. 1,138 workers were killed in the Rana Plaza building collapse, while another 1,169 workers were seriously injured and disabled. Even though an era has passed since the Rana Plaza collapse that killed thousands of workers, there has been no significant progress in the trial of cases related to Rana Plaza.

The Department of Inspections for Factories and Establishments (DIFE) is the complainant in eleven pending cases under the labour law against the owners/employers of the factories established in Rana Plaza. After twelve years, four cases are pending for the Execution Report (ER) with warrants of arrest having been issued against the accused persons and next dates are on 30/04/2025; three cases have been transferred to the Second Labour Court, Dhaka. However, after searching, found no information regarding the transfer, and for four cases, information has not been found in the court register.

There are three (03) criminal cases filed on the Rana Plaza incident. One case was filed under the Building Construction Act, 1952. The police submitted the investigation report (charge sheet no. 185, Savar Police Station) on 24.05.2015, which was accepted on 08.07.2015. The case was transferred on 14.06.2016 to the Court of the Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate, Dhaka, for trial. But all further proceedings of the case were stayed by an order of the High Court Division. The last date was fixed on 23.11.2023 for prosecution witness and HC order. The next date has not been updated in the cause list, as the record of this case has been sent to the Session Judge Court in Session Case No. 559/2016 for the purpose of conducting that case.

Another case was filed under the Penal Code, 1860. The police submitted an investigation report on 25.05.2015, and that was accepted on 18.07.2016. The remaining case was filed by the wife of a deceased worker under the Penal Code, 1860. The proceedings of both cases under the Penal Code were taken in parallel and have been transferred to the Court of District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka, for trial. On 15.01.2024, the Appellate Division directed to dispose of the case within 06 months.<sup>1</sup> But all the cases are still pending for prosecution witnesses, and 93 witnesses have already been examined. Next Date is on 15/04/2025 for prosecution witness.

A total of four writ petitions were filed, and one suo moto rule was issued, which are now pending in the Hon'ble High Court Division. The petitioners include BLAST, whose petition means to seek an investigation into the Rana Plaza Building Collapse, action against those responsible and compensation for the affected. All petitions are pending for hearing.

Most of the accused facing charges in criminal or labour court are currently out on bail or have outstanding arrest warrants against them. Building owner Sohel Rana is the only one awaiting the

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<sup>1</sup> Tribune Desk, [Rana Plaza owner's bail to remain suspended for 6 months](#), Dhaka Tribune, 10 July 2023.

outcome of the proceedings in custody. The prolonged trial has left the families of the victims and the injured wondering whether they will receive justice in their lifetime.

To ensure sustainable factory safety and a credible and effective state inspection system, it is necessary to ensure the speedy trial of Rana Plaza-related cases to bring those responsible to justice.

For a more extensive overview of the accused see the [previous overview of 2021](#).