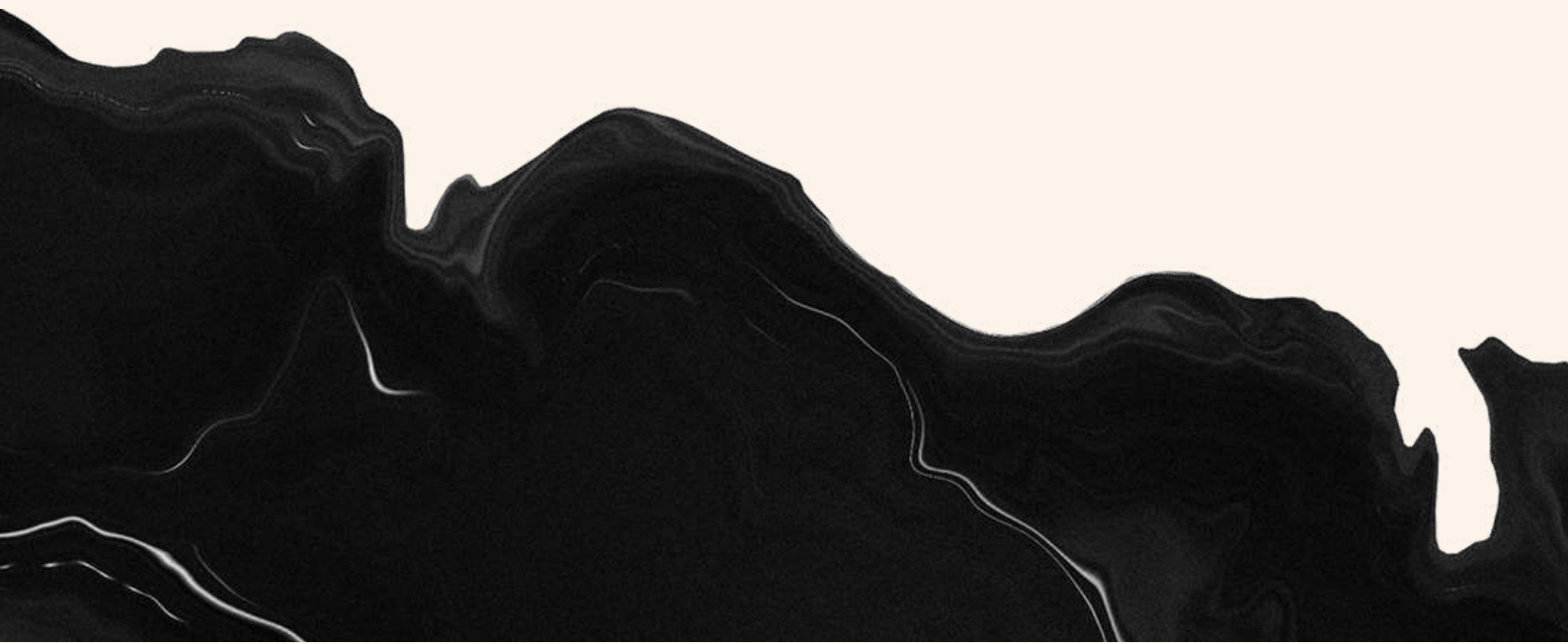


SOUTH ASIA QUARTERLY UPDATE

34



VISION & MISSION

Vessels are recycled in facilities that ensure clean, safe, and just practices that provide workers with decent jobs. Vessels will be toxic-free and no longer cause harm to workers, local communities, or the environment at end-of-life.

To act as a catalyst for change by effectively advocating for clean, safe, and just ship recycling globally. This necessitates denouncing dirty and dangerous practices, such as the dumping of end-of-life vessels on the beaches of developing countries. Our commitment to finding sustainable global solutions is based on the respect of human and workers' rights and the principles of environmental justice, producer responsibility, 'polluter pays', and clean production.

JULY 2023
SAQU #34

In this quarterly publication, we inform about the shipbreaking practices in South Asia, providing an overview of accidents that took place on the beaches of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, relevant press media as well as research. We aim to raise public awareness about the many negative impacts of shipbreaking in South Asia as well as developments aimed at the protection of workers' rights and the environment.



at least

7

*workers suffered an accident
while scrapping ships on
South Asian beaches*



81%

*of ships ended up on South
Asian beaches*

03

SHIPBREAKING RECORDS



TOTAL
98 SHIPS DISMANTLED WORLDWIDE
MARCH - JUNE 2023



ON THE BEACH

OFF THE BEACH

04

ACCIDENTS

BANGLADESH

On 1 April, Babul (45) got injured when using an electric cutting machine while dismantling the vessel CARIBBEAN ENERGY (IMO 7619575), owned by South Korean Sinokor. The accident took place at Kabir ship yard - Baraulia Unit. Babul received treatment from the yard doctor.

On 29 May, there was a reported accident onboard an unidentified ship at Four Star Shipbreaking yard. Shahab Uddin (35) lost his life and Md Mosharof Hossain (39) got injured. Both were working in the cutting group inside the ship when they fell. The yard confirmed that they will provide financial assistance to the family of the deceased worker and to the injured worker according to the Labour Act.

On 10 June, Md Azam (35) was injured by an iron plate while working as a cutter man on board an unknown ship at H.M. Shipping Lines yard. The worker was transferred to Chattogram Medical College Hospital.



05

On 15 June, two workers got injured. Malik (34) fell on iron plates and injured his leg while working at Zree Subather yard on board the vessel VIR (IMO 9209491), owned by GSPL DMCC from the UAE. The worker received treatment and medicines from the yard but no salary was paid. He claims that the treatment was not adequate. On the same day, Biddut (43) fell from around 10 feet height and was transferred to a medical center in Chattogram. The vessel he was working on was the SALAMIS, (IMO 9165281) owned by Greek company Polys Haji-Ioannou Group.

On 19 June, Jamal (35), a cutter man, had his hand fractured while cutting an iron plate on board a ship at K.R. Steel – Fozderhat. The worker was transferred to Chattogram Medical College Hospital and the yard paid for his treatment.



DEVELOPMENTS IN BANGLADESH

SHIPBREAKING YARD OWNERS FLEE THE COUNTRY DUE TO UNPAID LOANS

The owner of ARL Shipbreaking yard, Mr. Maheen, has left Bangladesh despite of a travel ban issued by the Chattogram Money Loan Court. Maheen has obtained several loans from different banks and left the country without paying back a massive Tk2000 crore (around 164 million EUR) he had received from 10 banks and financial institutions. According to a former bank's manager "*Maheen was able to obtain this loan by using his connections with the higher-ups and without adhering to any legal procedures*". The loans were taken in the names of Maheen Enterprises, Grand Trading Enterprises, ARL Shipbreaking, and ARL Garments. In 2018, Maheen was able to obtain a Tk175 crore (around 14 million EUR) bank loan for his shipbreaking business – Grand Trading Enterprise. Initially, the loan was repaid, but later he failed to repay the price of several ships worth Tk185 crore (around 15 million EUR). In the last decade, around 33 business people in Chattogram left Bangladesh with millions of euros in bank debts.

INDUSTRY'S PRESSURE TO CLASSIFY SHIPBREAKING AS A "LESS HAZARDOUS" ACTIVITY

Under the Environment Protection Rules 1997, the shipbreaking industry in Bangladesh was first classified as a less hazardous industry (category Orange-B). Later in 2007, an executive order reclassified the industry as a highly hazardous industry (category Red) and stricter measures were introduced. In November 2021, following strong opposition from yard owners and a recommendation from the Ship Recycling Board under the Ministry of Industries, the Ministry of Forest Environment and Climate Change again downgraded the shipbreaking industry from Red to Orange-B category. In early March 2023, thanks to NGOs' pressure, the sector regained the Red category in the Environment Protection Rules 2023. This means that yard owners have to obtain separate environmental clearance documents for each vessel before dismantling operations start. Consequently, the Department of Environment should scrutinise all applications and inspect the ships before giving any clearance. Previously, the required clearance could be obtained in only 48 hours.

07

HONG KONG CONVENTION ENTERS INTO FORCE

On 26 June, Bangladesh ratified the Hong Kong Convention (HKC) for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships. As the second-largest flag State in terms of tonnage and commonly used as a flag of convenience, Liberia has also ratified the Convention. With the ratifications of Bangladesh and Liberia, the convention's ratification requirements are met and the HKC will officially enter into force on 26 June 2025.

Whilst the problems with shipbreaking in the intertidal zone are ignored by the HKC, several yards in South Asia have received the so-called "Statements of Compliance with the HKC" (SoC) without impermeable flooring also in the secondary cutting zone, where hazardous materials are simply left to accumulate in small storage facilities onsite. In Alang, India, European Union audits have identified serious problems at yards that have SoC, including lack of capacity to properly manage several hazardous waste streams, a lack of appropriate medical facilities for emergencies and systemic violations of labour laws. It is evident that the issuance of SoCs with the HKC, carried out by private companies, do not guarantee that the recycling operations are conducted sustainably and in line with both national and international environmental and labour rights' regulations. In Bangladesh, so far three shipbreaking yards (PHP, Kabir Ship Recycling - Shitalpur and S.N. Corporation Unit 2) have obtained SoCs with the HKC despite the fact that operations still take place on tidal mudflats and there is a lack of proper infrastructure to contain pollutants and to manage several hazardous waste streams. The absence of nearby hospitals to handle emergencies, poor occupational health and safety practices, systemic labour rights violations, and a lack of transparency from the industry further compound the problems associated with shipbreaking in South Asia. These aspects highlight the need for stricter enforcement of international waste and labour laws and improved oversight in the shipbreaking industry. Whereas almost all yards in Alang, India, have obtained SoCs with HKC, as many as 10 more yards in Bangladesh are expected to receive it shortly. NGOs globally have warned that the HKC will fail to ensure sustainable practices. Efforts should be made to ensure that shipbreaking operations adhere to stringent environmental and labour standards, safeguarding the well-being of workers and minimizing the impact on surrounding ecosystems. Governments, international organizations, and industry stakeholders must collaborate to address these issues and promote sustainable practices in ship recycling that takes place in contained and properly equipped platforms.

08

“

The entry-into-force of the flawed Hong Kong Convention is not a time for celebration, but it will allow for the reopening of the text. We will be calling for changes so that it meets expectations of environmental justice, labour rights and circular economy objectives, and calling on the European Union and responsible ship owners to ensure that the shipping sector does not get away with green-washing the current deplorable practices that would never be allowed in their home countries.

”

Rizwana Hasan

Supreme Court lawyer and Director of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA)

DEVELOPMENTS IN PAKISTAN

Since last year, Pakistan has been under a serious economic and political crisis, obliging the country to seek emergency funds from the International Monetary Fund. The current crisis has limited the issue of letters of credit by the banks for import of end-of-life vessels by the yards in Gadani. According to local sources, there are currently no ships beached at Gadani shipbreaking yards and the industry has been almost inexistent for the past 12 months.

09

THE SHIPBREAKING INDUSTRY IN BANGLADESH

Shipbreaking in Bangladesh has exponentially grown over the decades along the coastal area of Chattogram in Sitakunda. More than 50% of the gross tonnage dismantled globally is handled on the beach of Chattogram, a “toxic hotspot”(1). The country does not have the capacity to properly manage the extremely dangerous toxic materials that generate from the dismantling of end-of-life vessels on the beach, outside a contained zone. At the yards, toxic exposure is accepted as the price for domestic economic development and employment, while allowing ship owners from the Global North to exploit weak laws and externalize costs.

In Sitakunda, Bangladesh, local people are heavily exposed to environmental pollution in water, soil and air. In the last decades, Sitakunda has often been in the headlines for its rapid and unplanned industrialisation as well as for accidents inside shipbreaking yards, steel re-rolling mills and other manufacturing plants.

The NGO Shipbreaking Platform visited the Sitakunda area earlier this year and spoke to workers, local villagers, Occupational Health and Safety experts, medical staff and local campaigners that have followed the shipbreaking sector for decades.

(1) LERNER, STEVE. 2010. SACRIFICE ZONES: THE FRONT LINES OF TOXIC CHEMICAL EXPOSURE IN THE UNITED STATES. CAMBRIDGE, MA: MIT PRESS.



10

The people coming to work at the yards in Chattogram are mainly migrants from the northern villages of Bangladesh, such as Bogra, Kurigram, Sillet, Rongpur and Noakhali. Generally, they leave their native villages to work at the shipbreaking yards during specific seasons, attracted by higher financial gains compared to other seasonal occupations in the agriculture or construction sectors. Shipbreaking workers (2) are often illiterate with some having attended school up to Class 10. Most of them had to leave school earlier to financially support their families and started working at the yards from a young age. Karim (3), who is very close to the workers, said: ***“this is actually the scenario in the shipbreaking sector. The workers cannot continue their studies because they have to support their families. They don’t have money to start a small business...”***. Only few of them keep studying while working. Imran (23) for example started working at the yards with one of his brothers at a very early age (8-9 years old). He has completed Class 10 at the age of 15 whilst working night shifts, but then stopped studying because he needed to earn more money than what he earned during only night shifts to support his family. Imran is currently working at Kabir Steel-Shitalpur full-time.



KURIGRAM, 2023



RONGPUR, 2023

(2) From individual interviews of 20 shipbreaking workers working at different shipbreaking yards between 16-19 February , 2023 and 3 group discussions from 3 different home villages (Bogra, Kurigram and Rongpur) between 22-24 February, 2023.

(3) The names used in this publication are all pseudonyms in order to protect workers from retaliation. All interviews in this publication are documented.

11

Despite the high level of attention and scrutiny surrounding the shipbreaking industry in Bangladesh, the conditions continue to represent a threat to the health of workers and surrounding communities as well as to the environment.

Rasel (25), a former cutter helper, said that ***“when the vessels come to Bangladesh, they are not pre-cleaned so when the vessel is beached and the cutter man is torch-cutting, dirty fumes are released”***. He also told us that he is able to recognise oil and other chemicals as well as glass wool, which causes ***“itchiness”*** on his skin. ***“All those hazardous materials are floating on the sea water. That's why the sea creatures are dead”***, he added. Rasel's father is a fisherman. As the sea is polluted, fishermen sail into the deep sea and only come back with 2 to 3 small baskets of fish, not a full boat as it happened few decades ago. Noa (27), a fisherman from Bhatiary, said that in the past within 0,5-1 km from the beach they could easily catch fish. ***“Now we need more fuel for the boats than normal to be able to go further out at sea. Our expenses have increased”***, he added. Noa explained that they now sail about 20 to 25 km from the coast. ***“The nets from the fishermen are also broken and damaged due to the propellers of the ships, and when we claim compensation from the yard owners, they refuse to pay it.”***, he revealed.



12

WORKING CONDITIONS

As a result of working in hazardous conditions, shipbreaking workers are more likely to suffer accidents. These accidents are rarely officially reported due to the lack of transparency on the part of employers and the government. Accidents are commonly caused by fire and explosions, falling of heavy objects, electrocution, falls from height as well as mental and physical stress and fatigue. Other significant factors that contribute to the high accident rate are the lack of safety and health trainings, poor work organisation, inadequate housing and sanitation, inadequate emergency, first-aid and rescue facilities, lack of medical facilities and social protection.

Arif (22), a cutter man working during the illegal night shifts at Premier Trade Corporation, said that, when an accident occurs, it is difficult to get a car or ambulance to rush the victims to the hospital. Other workers mentioned that only a few yards, namely PHP, Kabir, Masters & Brothers, K.R. (Kumira) and S.N. Corporation (Shitalpur), have ambulances to transport the workers to the hospital in case of emergency.

Aabir (50), who has worked at around 20 shipyards over the course of 35 years, said: ***“On board the ship there are some dangerous oils. The cutter men know that they have to be careful when they are cutting as there are some fuels inside. When torch-cutting the body of the vessel, this process will create fire or explosions, which is dangerous for the workers”***. Aabir started working as a helper at the age of 15 and then changed to the cutter group before he became a foreman. No training was ever given to him. Rahman (26), who lost his leg in an accident at Jamuna shipyard in 2017, claimed that ***“If you go to the yards for inspection, they will show a list of trainings but it is actually mere paperwork that has no practical value”***. In 2020, Imran received 3 trainings at Kabir Steel – Shitalpur of two hours each after his working day. According to the ILO Guidelines of 2009, *“training should be provided to all participants at no cost and should take place during working hours”*. Imran also received training at Arefin yard. He, however, never received certificates. He said that the trainings gave the workers information about the safety equipment and some instructions before the cutting process starts.

13

As per the Ship Recycling Rules 2011, “no person shall allow to be employed in ship breaking yard without appropriate training certificate”. Imran further explained that when workers are cutting and start working according to the training they have received, the supervisors tell them to not follow the rules but instead to work faster. He added that **“at PHP, the training officer said that when I have to cut inside the ship, I have to take precautions because a fire can start. He told me to bring water mixed up with some specific product to extinguish the fire”**. One of the workers’ leaders, Sharmin, added that **“only at PHP and Kabir Steel they give instructions before the works start. This doesn’t happen in the other yards”**. Most of the shipbreaking workers interviewed for this publication (4) were not provided with adequate protective equipment (PPE), training, or tools to safely perform their jobs.

Sharmin mentions that when a cutter man works inside the ship, he needs at least three helpers to manage the work, and, at the yard level, he needs at least two helpers. The yard owners constantly tell them that **“if you want to work here, you have to collect the helpers yourself. We are not recruiting helpers”**. Sharmin further explained that **“this puts a lot of pressure on cutter men. Sometimes the workers cannot work because of this. Whether the cutter man is working for the yard authority or for a contractor, they have to find helpers on their own.”**. Furthermore, Sharmin adds that **“before 2010, there were no toilet facilities at any yard but, after the 2009 BELA's judgement, all yards are setting up toilets. However, toilets are very bad and, when I work inside the ship, I use the toilets of the ships because they are in better condition.”**. Habib (26), who worked at the yards for 16-17 years, said that **“if a worker wants to take 15 min rest, he has to lay down on the ground. There is no place for resting”**.



(4) From individual interviews of 20 shipbreaking workers working at different shipbreaking yards between 16-19 February, 2023 and 3 group discussions from 3 different home villages (Bogra, Kurigram and Rongpur) between 22-24 February, 2023.

14

Besides not having appropriate training and PPE to correctly perform such dangerous procedures, the workers do not receive a working contract or letter of appointment. Hence, none of the workers have any social security and adequate access to healthcare. Imran, currently working at Kabir Steel-Shitalpur, worked at PHP in 2022 and said that the yard provides drinking water and access to toilets. Still, **"there is no working contract"**, he said. He further explained that **"shipbreaking yard owners often collect more than 10 signatures on blank papers and take pictures of the workers but no contract papers are given to us"**. Masul (38), working at SN Corporation (Madambibir), said that the company maintains a registration book with the names of the workers as well as a copy of their national identity cards or birth certificates to show the government that they are making employment legally but actually the workers don't have any working contract.

Arif, working at Premier Trade, told us that the yard gives an identity card for the entrance but no PPE is provided. Arif buys his own gumboots, gloves, masks, sunglasses and helmets. Sometimes the owners provide boots, though, these are not safety boots. He added that he has not suffered serious injuries but he has often sparkles on his hands and skin. Arif saw accidents happen in front of his eyes. **"Sometimes iron plates fell down on my colleagues"**. Kamrul (42), a cutter man working at Ferdous Steel, said that he is able to recognise asbestos, glass wool and other materials and is aware of the risks especially when the workers go to the engine room. He said that **"when they are cutting the wood boards, where there is asbestos inside, it creates dust and makes their breath difficult."** Imran revealed that **"when we are cutting the ship, we notice "colors" on the ship's body that create a kind of smoke. When we inhale the smoke, we feel pressure and pain on our chest."** Furthermore, and despite yard owners constantly denying it, all workers interviewed claimed that at night all yards are operating the secondary cutting areas. Arif said that he prefers to work at night **"because of the dust and heat during the day"**.

15

Mizanur (54) works as a foreman at night at Kabir yard (Madambibir) and earns around 19,000 taka/month (around 156EUR). In 2018, the Government of Bangladesh has declared a minimum wage of 16,000 taka/month (around 130EUR) for the shipbreaking sector. The official salary scale required by law range between 16,000 – 32,000 taka/month (between 130-262EUR), depending on the type of work (helper, cutter, carrier, foreman). However, the workers' average salary is between 250 – 600 taka/day (between 2-5EUR), which does not guarantee the minimum wage of 16,000 taka/month. The shipbreaking workers usually work 6 days a week in shifts of 8 to 12 hours. Their salaries are usually paid on a daily basis. Supervisors or Foremen receive their salaries on a monthly basis.

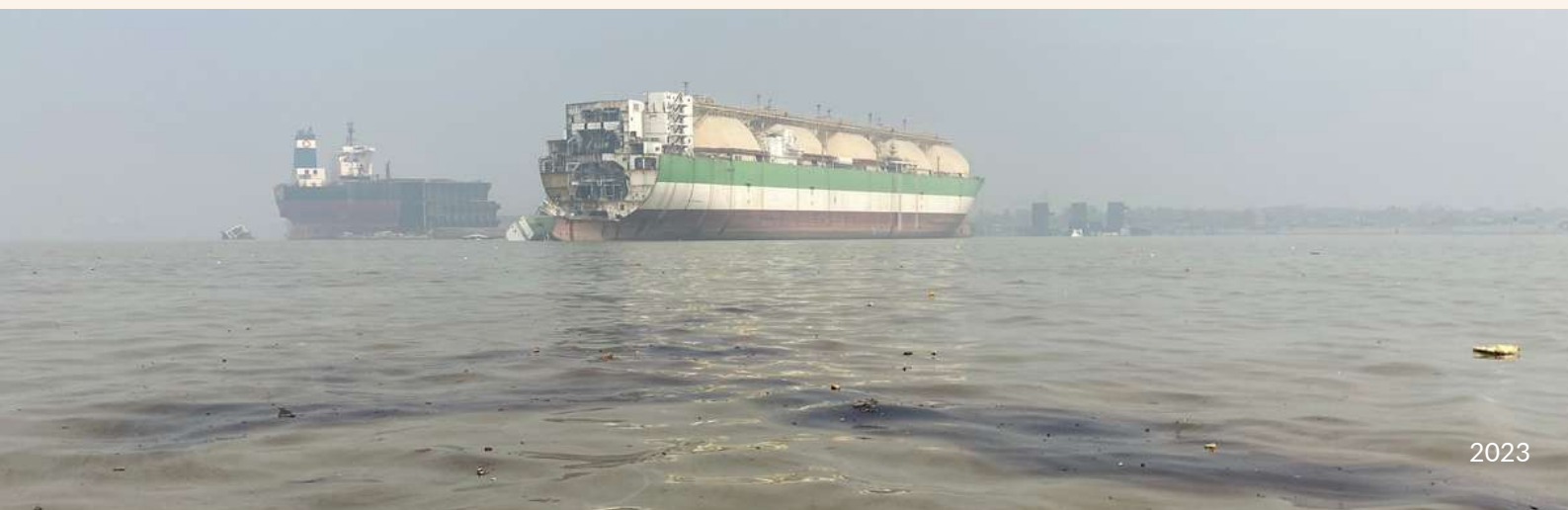


When the workers suffer accidents, the treatment is sometimes either partially or totally paid, depending on the yard owner. However, most of the time the workers do not receive any compensation even if they are not able to work anymore due to their injuries. Rasel was working as a cutter man at M.M. shipbreaking yard when he got injured in 2020. He claimed that the yard owner tried to convince the doctors at the Chattogram Medical College Hospital to stop his treatment, yet, he filed a complaint at the Labour Court and received some money to partially cover the treatment. Since then, Rasel is not able to work because he has never fully recovered. Mizanur, from Kabir Steel-Madambibir, said that ***“when an accident occurs, the labour inspectors are informed but the yard stays operational because the yard owners use bribes.”***

16

In accordance to the 2011 Shipbreaking and Recycling Rules, after an accident, a yard is supposed to immediately suspend operations for a week but this has not always happened. Nurul (45), a former cutter man who suffered an accident during a night shift in 2022 at Kabir yard - Madambibir, said that he has seen **“labour Inspectors coming to Kabir two to three times a year”**. He also added that **“they meet with the office staff and talk with workers near the office but the inspectors don’t really access the yard area”**.

All workers interviewed (5) mentioned that part of the hazardous materials that come out of ship dismantling are simply disposed of into the sea. **“Hazardous materials are floating on the sea water”**, Rasel said. Masul, working at S.N. Corporation, added that **“if the materials are in small quantities the workers throw them at sea. If quantities are larger, they store them in a room.”**. The workers said that this is similar in all yards **“with no exception.”**. Masul also explained that **“at some yards, the workers make a big hole to bury all the materials, including asbestos, mixing everything up with the mud”**. The workers claimed that some oils are taken into containers to be sold in the secondhand market and the rest are disposed at sea. **“The oil is going to be refined and re-used, which is illegal”**, Sharmin added. Moreover, Aabir, a former shipbreaking worker, told us that the ship parts that are in good condition are sold abroad, in the secondhand-market or to the re-rolling mills. The workers further explained: **“yard owners have made separate storage rooms for gathering the materials, chemicals and other wastes but most of the rooms are empty and locked from the outside”**.



2023

17

The health effects of the workers' exposure to poisonous fumes and chemicals, asbestos and various other unidentified pollutants remain unreported at the yards. Early studies showed that shipbreaking workers exposed to asbestos have an elevated increased mortality due to lung cancer and other cancers compared to the general population. Several shipbreaking workers have only now started to manifest symptoms of asbestosis (6) such as chest pain and lack of breath as asbestosis symptoms usually appear many years after the initial exposure to asbestos. Despite their weak health condition, most of the sick workers continue to dismantle vessels to feed their families. Their affected lung capacity reduction varies between 20-60%. Several of the workers who have been identified as victims of asbestos are currently facing phases of the disease that require urgent medical assistance and treatment. Asbestos was commonly used in the 1980s and '90s due to its thermal insulation and fire-resistant properties. While a commercial vessel could contain as much as 10 tons of asbestos containing materials (ACMs) in engine rooms, fuel lines, sea water lines and fireproofing material, and navy vessels such as the air craft carriers São Paulo and Clemenceau are estimated to have contained as much as 900 tons of asbestos and ACMs, most vessels are imported to Bangladesh with false accounts of being asbestos-free. Based on an asbestos survey done between 2011 and 2020, more than 55% of operating vessels and 50% of all new vessels were found to contain asbestos materials.

In addition to its human impact, the shipbreaking industry in Chattogram is destroying environmental ecosystems in Sitakunda. Already in 2009, a total of 14,000 mangrove trees were illegally cut to expand the dirty and dangerous shipbreaking activities in Chattogram. They were never replanted despite a Court ruling ordering the yards to restore the forest. Mangroves are one of Bangladesh's most important natural barriers against climate change. More recently, the workers revealed that the shipbreaking yards are still illegally destroying the forest: ***"they come during the night to cut the trees so that the communities don't notice anything"***. This is the case for Kohinoor Steel, K.R. Steel and Simni yard, all located in Bhatiary. They cut down many trees overnight – ***"K.R. and Simni yards have appointed 500-1000 laborers to do so"***, Sharmin, a workers' leader, said. He added that if they cut trees during the day, people will notice and complain to the Forest Department. According to the workers, K.R. Steel is cutting the forest to build 2 new plots in Fozderhat whilst Simni intends to establish one plot in Bhatiary.

(6) Asbestosis is a chronic lung disease caused by the inhalation of asbestos fibers.

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A Right to Information Act (RTI) has been filed by Platform' member Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) regarding the illegal activities of these two yards. K.R. was recently visited by the Japanese Shipowners Association who have been pushing for Bangladesh to ratify the Hong Kong Convention which sets very low standards for scrapping operations.

OUTSIDE THE YARD GATE

The human and environmental impacts of the shipbreaking industry do not stop at the yard gate, as significant amounts of hazardous wastes originating from dismantling operations cannot be handled properly. Various toxic materials are re-sold in the secondhand market whilst most of the steel goes to the re-rolling mills, where extremely polluting methods such as hot cutting and cold re-rolling processes are used. Mitu (35), a steel-mill worker for the last 16 years, said that ***"In Chittagong, there are 365 re-rolling mills and more than 100 mills in Sitakunda."*** At the re-rolling mills, the conditions are similar to those experienced by the shipbreaking workers. The average salary is between 400 and 600 taka/day (between 3 and 5EUR). According to Mitu, the workers are fighting for their rights because they do not receive official minimum wages, do not have access to health facilities or the costs of their treatments covered. He added that there is no unity among the workforce because if someone raises his voice, the company or contractor pays them for their silence. Robiul (65), who worked as a contractor at the re-rolling mills, added ***"if there would be workers' rights at the mills and the rules and regulations set by the Department of Environment were followed, the situation would be better not only at the yards but also at the re-rolling mills. They are violating these rules. That's why there is no safety for the workers inside the mills. The owners of the shipbreaking yards are the owners of the re-rolling mills"***. The contractors provide the wages to the labourers but they are not responsible for anything else. He added that ***"there are no workers' rights inside the mills because the company bases the operations on the contractors"***. Mitu added that the work environment at the mills is ***"too noisy, there is too much heat"***. When they need help, they cannot hear each other. His eyesight is becoming weaker and when the winter comes he has breathing problems. He got injured several times and did not receive any support from the company. Robiul also mentioned that ***"the environment inside the re-rolling mills is very hot, that's why I cannot wear masks or boots. I only wear hand gloves."***

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As well as Mitu, Robiul's body reflects his 40 years working at the re-rolling mills and the various accidents he suffered. Anwar (35), a former shipbreaking worker, is currently working at Khawja re-rolling mill but he is recovering from an accident. He has neither a contract nor does he receive PPE because he is not a permanent worker. Those who work directly with the heat have to wear a napkin ("*cacsa*"), "***which is thinner than a towel***", he added. Anwar said that there is no washroom, no room for taking food or snacks and no drinking water available.

Asbestos is not only mismanaged at the shipbreaking yards, but also re-sold in the secondhand market in Bangladesh. It is easy to find a shop in Sitakunda exclusively selling products made of asbestos such as stoves – asbestos dust covers the area where families live close by. Around the shipbreaking area in Sitakunda, different types of dangerous materials, including also cooling powder from LNGs (7), are easily found in the surrounding communities. People are directly exposed to toxic materials in the air they breathe, the water they drink, and the food they grow and eat, impacting their health and livelihood.



(7) Tankers that transport liquefied natural gas.

20

In the summer of 2022, Hasim, a 14 year-old boy, started working as a truck loader for the transport of steel materials from the yards to the secondhand market. He carried out the work according to the instructions of the truck driver. There was no fixed salary - if he charged or unloaded material worth an estimated 1.000 taka (around 8EUR) then he would get only 50 taka (around 0,40EUR) as a commission. On 30 November 2022, Hasim suffered an accident that caused the amputation of his left leg. When he noticed that the engine parts were falling from the crane, he knew he had to run to get away, but he could not avoid the accident. ***“My leg was nearly cut off from my body”***, he said. At first, he was taken half way by bus and the other halfway by private car to Chattogram Medical College Hospital, before being transferred to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The owner of the truck paid for his treatment during one month and then suddenly stopped. Hasim revealed there were two other children of his age doing the same job. Whilst Hasim’s accident did not happen inside the shipbreaking yard, the transport of metals originating from the ships is an integral part of the sector as the recycling activities do not stop at the yard gate. The violation of human rights occurs not only inside the shipbreaking yards but also during the downstream management of hazardous and non-hazardous materials from ships, including the secondhand markets and at the re-rolling mills.



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RESEARCH & READINGS

2022**Ananya Mukherjee and Bhavna Shri Harsha**

The article highlights already existent evidence on environmental pollution in India and analyses the weaknesses of Indian legislation regulating the industry ("Recycling of Ships Act" 2019) as well as the disconnection between ground realities and policies. The authors' recommendations include a possible relocation of shipbreaking yards; a public-private partnership to ensure a better standard of care and safety; extensive training and standardised protective gear; clean technologies; a strict adherence to approved channels of waste-management; interdisciplinary committees; learning from the EU SRR; a financial incentive; stricter penalties that need to be imposed by courts and enforcement authorities; and human rights' due diligence.

Marine Pollution and the Shipbreaking Industry – Challenges and Mitigation-Options"

Martin Diktof

The website and blog of Martin Diktof is a must-read for those interested in asbestos related issues as he offers valuable educational tools to deepen into the issue. His research on asbestos-related matters started after his father passed away from mesothelioma in 1981. Integrated in his Master in History at the University of Colorado, Martin has recently concluded his second research thesis entitled "Asbestos-Related Issues Impacting Bangladesh Shipbreaking Laborers". His first research thesis analysed whether the Space Shuttle Challenger's 1986 tragedy was caused by an asbestos substitute that failed.

22

Shipbreaking and asbestos related blog articles:

- [Asbestos Related Issues Impacting Bangladesh Shipbreaking Laborers: Any Input in Advance?](#)
- [Asbestos on Ships: Not just for insulation](#)
- [Asbestos: Developing Countries Versus Developed Countries. A Snapshot from 2000 for Bangladesh](#)
- [Breaking Ships and Asbestos](#)
- [Asbestos + The Most Dangerous Job on the Planet](#)
- [Why Ship Breaking is an Export for Developed Countries and an Import for those which are Underdeveloped: Asbestos Makes a Difference](#)
- [Ship Breaking in Bangladesh: Exporting the Asbestos Exposure with no Worker Safety](#)

The Asbestos Blog.

OUR REPORTS

NGO Shipbreaking Platform

[Breaking Out: Anchoring Circular Innovation for ship recycling](#) (2022)

[The Toxic Tide - Data and figures](#) (2021)

[Contradiction in terms: European Union must align its waste ship exports with international law and green deal](#) (2020)

[Study Report on Child Labour in the Shipbreaking Sector in Bangladesh](#) (2019)

[Behind the Hypocrisy of Better Beaches](#) (2019)

[Recycling Outlook. Decommissioning of North Sea Floating Oil & Gas Units.](#) (2019)



To ensure that safe and clean ship recycling becomes the norm, and not the exception, the Platform will continue to inform policy makers, financial and corporate leaders, as well as researchers and journalists. With a broad base of support both in orientation and geographically, including membership in ship owning as well as shipbreaking countries, the Platform plays an important role in promoting solutions that encompass the respect of human rights, corporate responsibility and environmental justice.

WILL YOU JOIN US?

**IF YOU SHARE OUR VISION PLEASE MAKE A DONATION
TO SUPPORT OUR WORK OR CONTACT US TO FIND OUT
HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER!**

**SUPPORT
OUR WORK**



Since 2009, around 7751 ships were scrapped in South Asia, causing at least 444 deaths and 392 injuries. The figures on accidents are likely to be much higher. Occupational diseases are not even registered in these statistics and are difficult to monitor.

WE ARE NOW CALLING FOR YOUR SUPPORT TO HELP INJURED WORKERS AND ASBESTOS VICTIMS IN BANGLADESH. CHECK OUT OUR FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN FOR MORE INFORMATION BY CLICKING [HERE](#) OR ON THE IMAGE BELOW.

FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

HELP PROVIDING TREATMENT TO
INJURED WORKERS AND ASBESTOS VICTIMS
IN BANGLADESH



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