

Staff Reporter The disbursement process of the ILO-managed Rana Plaza Trust Fund to compensate the Rana Plaza victims will be started by this month, said the apparel trade body chief here on Saturday. "I had a discussion with the ILO country director 10 days back. They'll start the disbursement process by December," Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) President M Atiqul Islam told a press conference at the BGMEA conference room. The BGMEA arranged the press conference to brief the media about the preparations of the first-ever Dhaka Apparel Summit beginning in the city on Sunday. BGMEA first vice president Nasiruddin Ahmed Chowdhury, second vice president SM Mannan (Kochi), vice president M Shahidullah Azim and other BGMEA leaders were present. Atiqul Islam said the International Labour Organization (ILO) has so far got a fund of US\$ 21 million to be disbursed among the victims. "They're in discussion with us on the disbursement process." The BGMEA Chief said they urged ILO Country Director Srinivasa Reddy to take initiative for early completion of the disbursement process. He informed that the BGMEA has already spent Tk over 15.5 crore after the Rana Plaza building collapse. There supposed to be a fund of US\$40 million as promised by international retailers and brands. Earlier, a three-member delegation of the German parliament while visiting Dhaka expressed dissatisfaction over non-payment of adequate compensation to the victims of the Rana Plaza building collapse even one and a half years after the incident. "It's a shame for everybody -- factory owners, international buyers and the government --as the victims have not received the compensation as per the commitments given to the workers after the accident," delegation leader Dr Sascha Raabe told reporters on October 21. Rana Plaza, a building that housed five garment factories in Savar, collapsed on April 24, killing 1,134 people.