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Shipbreaking workers die dismantling ships owned by Teekay, NOL and FESCO

09/04/2014

9 April 2014 – Several shipbreaking workers have already been reported as killed since the start of this year as a result of accidents in the shipbreaking yards of South Asia. Some of these accidents took place onboard ships beached by well-known shipping companies.

On 19 January, two shipbreaking workers' hands and faces were severely burned in a tank explosion onboard the Aspire, an oil tanker owned by Norwegian company Teekay Corporation. The workers, Tapan Jaladas, 28 and Md Lalu, 19 were rushed to Chittagong Medical Hospital and are still being treated for their injuries. The accident happened most likely

due to the lack of procedures to ensure proper safe-for-hot-work conditions.

The accident was reported in the Norwegian newspaper DN (<http://www.dn.no/nyheter/naringsliv/2014/02/06/teekayskip-hugges-opp-pa-stranden>). Teekay has thanked the Platform and our Norwegian member organisation Bellona for revealing this information. Teekay director Ingvild Sæther announced that her company will improve its ship recycling policy.

Only six days later, on 25 January, another worker was killed in a Bangladesh shipbreaking yard when a steel plate fell from a ship and crushed him. Babul Das, who was 25 and used to be a fisherman, was rushed to the hospital but could not be saved. The containership from which the plate fell, called President 1 belonged to Singapore-based shipping company Neptune Orient Lines (NOL) and its subsidiary APL.

In March, the NGO Shipbreaking Platform called on Singapore shipping companies (<http://www.shipbreakingplatform.org/press-release-ngos-call-on-singapore-ship-owners-to-end-dangerous-shipbreaking-practices-and-embrace-modern-ship-recycling/>) to change their practices.

On 3 April at least four workers died in Chittagong poisoned by toxic gases. Jasmin, Faruk, Arif and Gias Uddin inhaled gas coming from a gas cylinder that exploded onboard the ship Kapitan Lyashenko, owned by Russian shipping company FESCO. Another three workers were rushed to hospital for further treatment. The contractors have been accused of accidental death due to negligence and are currently on the run. The Platform issued a press release following the fatal accident (<http://www.shipbreakingplatform.org/press-release-lack-of-safety-kills-four-shipbreaking-workers-in-bangladesh-yard/>) on 4 April.

Neither NOL nor FESCO have so far replied to the Platform's requests for information.

Being crushed to death by falling metal plates is a continuous risk shipbreaking workers are exposed to when dismantling ships on a beach, not only in Bangladesh but in every yard where the so-called "gravity method" is being used. In India, two workers, Bensu Pradhan Odiya, 20 and Vishwanath Gaud, 25 were crushed by metal plates falling from end-of-life ships. They both succumbed to their injuries on 11 March. The accident occurred on plot number 20 in the Alang shipbreaking yards, located in the state of Gujarat.

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