

Date: 19-7-1988.

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To
The Hon'ble Chief Minister,
Govt. of Karnataka,
Vidhana Soudha,
BANGALORE - 560 001.

Dear sir,

- Sub.: 1) Seeking your kind attention & intervention against the new move in re-building the Gangaram complex without rendering justice to the accident victims families.
- 2) Redressal of grievances of Gangaram building collapse victims families.

We, the construction workers, who construct buildings, big and small, lay road, build bridges, dams and also engaged in quarrying stone breaking, stone crushing, brick-kilns etc., numbering around 15 lakhs in the state, would like to bring the following matter for your kind notice and immediate action.

It may be recalled that on the 12th September 1983, a Multi storied complex, nearing completion on the Subedar chatram road, collapsed like a pack of cards killing 120 people and injuring 130, most of whom were construction workers. Subsequently a Commission was appointed by the Govt. of Karnataka, headed by Justice R.G. Desai to enquire into the causes of the collapse. The enquire committee has submitted its reports in the govt. indicting Mr. Gangaram for the cause. Meanwhile Karnataka state construction workers central union had filed 34 cases under the Workmen's Compensation Act on behalf of the victims families. This case is pending in the Labour court almost for the past four years. So far Gangaram has not shown any interest to settle the cases. Government is also totally silent and apathetic towards this issue by not taking any action despite a clear report stating that the primary owner Gangaram, his architects, Engineers, are collectively responsible in causing this mishap and therefore they are at guilt. To us this appears to be a clear cut connivance between the state and the rich, propertied class.

More recently the debris on the site is being cleared and a proposal for constructing a commercial complex is pending approval from the Commissioner, Bangalore City Corporation. Despite killing many workers by flouting building rules, regulation and by-laws, today Gangaram is left scot-free to re-construct a new complex by sub-leasing the land. Is he above the law? Can the govt, shut its eyes to the rich man's blunders and manipulations against the poor and innocent? How long the victims families should wait for

compensation? Are we going to allow such accidents to occur time and again?

Hence the Karnataka State Construction Workers Central Union had organised a protest dharna in front of Mr. Gangaram's site on the 19th July 1988. Over 1,000 men, women construction workers affiliated to the Central union participated and demanded Mr. Gangaram to immediately stop his new proposal of re-construction, the amount of compensation entitled to the victims families have to be given immediately under the workmen compensation act etc. The dharna had been reported and published in all leading news papers, dated 20th July 1988.

We demand that:

1. Do not grant license or sanction plan to Gangaram or any other person to construct any kind of building on the accident site, untill they settle the compensation for the victims families and clearing all the pending cases of civil and criminal nature.
2. Earliest settlement of workmen's compensation cases to the victims families of Gangaram Building collapse.
3. We call upon government to implement Gangaram Building collapse enquiry commissions recommendations and punish the guilty.
4. Recover the expenditure incurred in clearing the debris from Gangaram and deposit the same towards the welfare of construction workers.
5. Enact a Separate Welfare Bill(Legislation) for construction workers to safeguard their rights and to regulate the industry which is the need of the hour.
6. Rs.10,000 to be given as death relief compensation to the construction workers families from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

We hope for an immediate action on the above demands.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

(FIROZ AHMED),
Genl. Secretary.

Cc. to:

1. The Hon'ble Minister for Labour, Govt. of Karnataka.
2. Labour Commissioner, Bangalore.
3. The Commissioner, Bangalore City Corporation.