

STAR WEEKEND

in other news...

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PHOTO: TASLIMA AKHTER

LEST WE FORGET

RANA PLAZA, FOUR YEARS ON

EDITOR'S NOTE

Rana Plaza. The murder scene of 1,129 Bangladeshi workers, and burial ground of numerous "missing". A national shame, an international spectacle.

Rana Plaza was an undeniable proof of the foundational cruelty of transnational capital(ism); a reminder of the treacherous promises of the global supply chain, and the unglamorous facets of 'fast fashion'. It was a watershed moment for major brands around the world, too, who found themselves unable to deny the fact that they were making billions off of Bangladesh's unsafe labour conditions. It was, despite the calamitous and the chaotic – or perhaps, precisely because of it – also a moment of

rupture, of possibility, of re-envisioning the existing world order.

And yet, four years, countless editorials, millions of dollars in private donations and international financing and funding later, what exactly has changed after Rana Plaza? What ruptures, if any, are noticeable in the global supply chain and relations of power? In what ways, if any, are the cheap, disposable, racialised bodies of the Bangladeshi RMG sector less precarious than they were in 2013?

In this special Rana Plaza issue, we explore some of these questions in an attempt to honour the lives lost and encourage sustainable changes to the sector. We question the processes through which a value is

assigned, not just on the workers' labour, but on their lives as well; we ask what is at stake when structural killings are disguised as accidents. We reflect on whether the reforms that have taken place since Rana Plaza have succeeded in challenging the networks of capitalist logics of production and consumption which are responsible for such large-scale disasters to begin with. We also consider how labour resistance post-Rana Plaza has been redefined, mediating who resists, against whom and on what terms.

Finally, we urge that we remember what is stake in forgetting Rana Plaza.

SUSHMITA S PREETHA
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