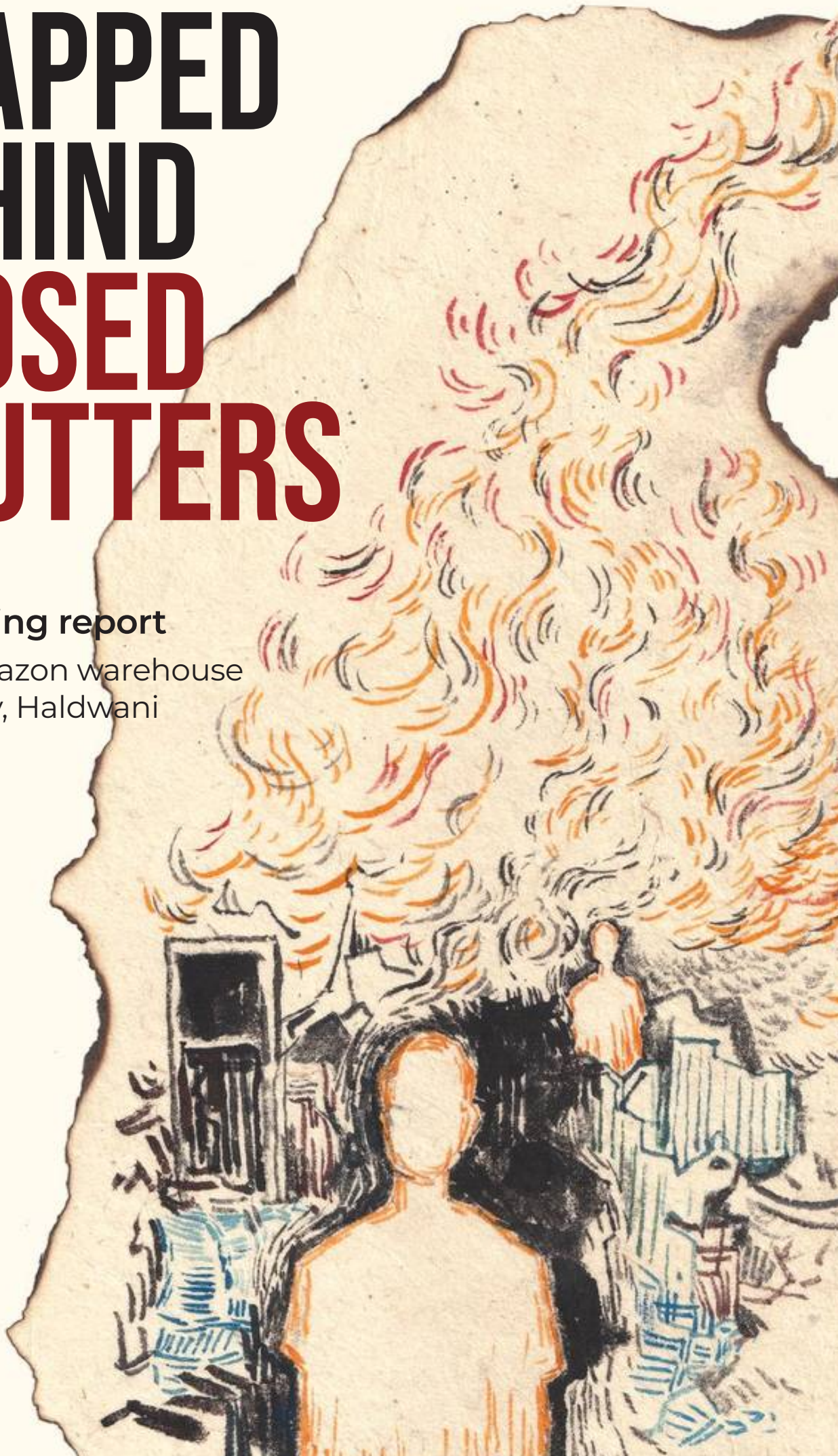


TRAPPED BEHIND CLOSED SHUTTERS

Fact Finding report

On the Amazon warehouse
fire tragedy, Haldwani



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Introduction

On Friday, 5 June 2026 an Amazon warehouse located opposite Sheetal Hotel on Rampur road, Haldwani caught fire and two workers tragically lost their lives.

According to news reports, the fire erupted at night and was first noticed at around 11:30 pm. According to the Police, fire brigade personnel and administrative officials rushed to the spot. But the fire spread very quickly which made firefighting operations difficult.

The two workers who lost their lives were reportedly sleeping inside the warehouse. When the fire erupted, they couldn't come outside and according to an FIR registered on 11 June, 2026, it was found that the door of the warehouse was intentionally locked out from the outside. The workers, thus, couldn't escape and succumbed to fire burns and suffocation due to the smoke.



Primary Findings

Primary findings indicated that the warehouse did not have required fire NOC.

It had no emergency exits and a shutter served as the sole outlet.

By the time the fire brigade reached inside the warehouse, the workers had already lost their lives.

The exact cause of the fire is still unknown, at the time of writing this report. Some sources have claimed that it could be due to a short circuit however nothing has been confirmed as of yet. An investigation by the police is currently being carried out to determine the exact causes of the fire.

The deceased workers had been working with Amazon for the past 10-12 years. Both of them worked both day and night shifts at the warehouse. Considering the gravity of this devastating incident a fact-finding team visited the warehouse on 7 June, 2026. The team documented the physical condition of the premises and interacted with nearby workers to reconstruct the sequence of events and understand the working conditions prevalent at the warehouse. An FIR was registered on June 11, 2026 which revealed conditions of the warehouse, and details about the accused for this incident. The details of the FIR are mentioned in the last section of this report.

Objectives

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- 01.** This document will understand the factual sequence of events. what happened before, during and after the fire based on relative materials like news reports, videos online, site observations and interviews of workers who work in the same warehouse.
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- 02.** To assess and understand workspace safety and physical conditions of the warehouse. To look deeply into factors that may have put workers' lives at risk. Additionally also to have an understanding of occupational safety measures and whether there were measures for workers safety prevalent from the company's side.
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- 03.** To document and understand the nature of work that is performed and how that may have been a contributing factor to the incident. At the same time also hear and give workers a space to share their experience as workers working in the same warehouse post the fire incident.
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- 04.** To record and capture the impact on workers and their families. To cover all lenses, social, economic, and emotional.
-
- 05.** Identify potential policy and structure issues with the warehouse. Concerns related to emergency protocol, warehouse operations and safety compliance.
-
- 06.** Develop a practical set of recommendations that will aim at preventing such incidents from happening again.
-

Methodology

The team investigated the cause of the fire and attempted to reconstruct the sequence of the events as well as the severity of the damage caused by the fire.

- A thorough site inspection of the warehouse and nearby areas was carried out.
- Testimonies of warehouse workers and nearby BlinkIt workers were taken.
- Testimonies of families of the deceased were taken.
- Engagement with the fire department was carried out.
- Secondary research and media reporting was conducted.
- An FIR was registered at the Haldwani Police station and findings from police investigation added to the overall narrative.

The Site, Location And Area

On 7 June 2026, the fact-finding team visited the warehouse located in Jeetpur Negi, Haldwani, Uttarakhand and the nearby area to enquire about the warehouse, status of the locality, and regulatory provisions and gaps. The site inspection revealed severe fire damage across the warehouse premises. The interior walls were heavily blackened with soot deposits extending up to the roof, indicating intense heat generation and widespread smoke accumulation. The corrugated metal roofing sheets and supporting steel trusses displayed visible signs of exposure to prolonged high temperatures.

Large portions of the floor remained covered with burnt debris, including damaged packaging material, metal structures, and unidentified remnants of stored goods.

A severely burnt two-wheeler was found inside the warehouse premises. The vehicle had been reduced almost entirely to its metal frame, with complete destruction of its seat, wiring and plastic components. The presence of a delivery vehicle within the warehouse raises important questions regarding the storage of vehicles inside enclosed spaces, particularly during non-operational hours.

The shed of the warehouse is made of tin however even though most of the structure is tin some of it is also made of plastic. Several areas of the warehouse contained remnants of burnt packaging materials, including cardboard and plastic storage containers used in sorting and handling parcels. The complete melting of multiple plastic crates indicates exposure to extremely high temperatures.

Similarly, the presence of burnt paper and packaging materials points towards the existence of combustible materials that may have accelerated the spread of the fire once ignition occurred.



Insides of the warehouse showing the burnt scooter which was parked inside.

Violation Of Workers Rights

The fact finding team met with some workers who were employed in the same warehouse. The testimonies were collected from various sources, including, videos available online, news reports, interviews and field observations. The testimonies that were collected cover concerns around not just the incident but also about workplace safety, safety training and measures from Amazon, working conditions in that warehouse, working hours and other aspects related to the workers who work in the warehouse.



Walls of the Amazon warehouse covered with black soot and other burnt materials.

One of the major concerns that remains is the need for workers to spend nights inside the warehouse especially considering it's not well ventilated and made out of inflammable materials. Multiple sources indicate that the workers who lost their lives didn't just take night shifts but also day shifts which meant that they were working for almost 20 hours a day. Individuals who knew of the workers stated that the workers used to stay back and take shifts to sleep during their night shifts. They were also the only ones monitoring the warehouse. Such arrangements and setting raise serious concerns about not just extensive working hours but also inadequate attention to physical and mental health, additionally heavy mental load on the workers to keep the warehouse safe. Security related responsibility is not something they are trained for as they are just regular people who work as delivery agents and this raises multiple questions revolving around worker rights.

The fact-finding team was informed by Amazon warehouse workers about the absence of adequate safety training and measures at the warehouse. Workers employed at the facility reported that there had been a fire in the same building previously, before the facility was taken over for Amazon warehouse operations. According to workers, the building underwent minimal renovation after being taken over for Amazon warehouse operations, leaving it structurally inadequate and poorly equipped to ensure worker safety. Workers also reported that the company does not provide them with any protective gear. One worker mentioned that although the company provides online safety training videos, these are insufficient for two major reasons: first, workers often do not pay adequate attention to online videos, and second, in-person training is more practical and hands-on, enabling workers to better understand and respond to emergencies. Furthermore, despite being informed that they would receive updates regarding the incident, workers stated that no accident report or detailed information about the incident has been shared with them so far.

The incident raises many questions around compliance with the occupational safety, health and working conditions code 2020. An obligation on the employer to provide a safe working environment

which will be free of hazards causing harm or death, means of safe access and egress, proper safety training and information, and safe working conditions conducive to the health of the workers has been laid down under the Code. There are certain issues that might arise from the testimonies given during the process of fact-finding exercise that could have resulted in failure to comply with the above mentioned obligations. The situation at hand invokes certain constitutional rights that exist in favor of the workers. The right to life and liberty guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India has been interpreted by various judgments of the Supreme Court to mean the right to live with dignity and to work in humane conditions.



Constitutional Framework

In addition, Article 39(e) of the Constitution mandates the State to ensure that the health and strength of workers are not exploited, and Article 42 mandates the State to ensure the provision of just and humane working conditions.

Though the Directive Principles cannot be enforced directly, they form significant constitutional guidelines regarding labour regulation and workplace safety norms. The evidence gathered by the fact-finding team suggests conditions that do not conform to such constitutional principles. Further, the testimonies gathered seem to raise issues relating to lack of transparency and accountability on the part of the administration post the incident. According to the family members, they have not been allowed access to any footage from the cameras during the fire and that the surveillance systems were destroyed. This, of course, needs further confirmation, but it is certainly one of the reasons behind the uncertainty surrounding the incident amongst the affected families.

It is not the duty of the fact-finding team to assign liability, as this is done by the relevant investigative and judicial bodies. Yet, it can be concluded that there are major concerns related to labor protection, fire safety, emergency response, working conditions, and employees' ability to claim their rights without the threat of economic retaliation. The tragic deaths of two workers demonstrate the dire necessity to implement stricter labor protection laws, fire safety measures, and workplace health and safety norms in the logistics centers of the region.

Potential Legal/ Regulatory Issues

The results revealed possible non-compliance with the following laws and constitutional rights:

01. Section 105 of BNS which relates to offences related to the human body specifically culpable homicide.
02. Article 21 of the Constitution of India: Right to life and dignity, which includes the right to a safe working environment.
03. Article 39(e) of the Constitution of India: Safeguarding the health and strength of workers from exploitation.
04. Article 42 of the Constitution of India: Ensuring decent and human working conditions. The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 – Obligations of an employer for ensuring workplace safety, safe access and egress, safety training, prevention of hazards, and welfare of workers.
05. Fire safety norms and fire clearance requirements, including those pertaining to emergency exits, fire prevention mechanisms, and evacuation procedures at workplaces.



Inner walls of the warehouse covered with black soot and other burnt materials.

Interaction With Workers In The Area

There's a BlinkIt dark store situated approximately 50 metres from the warehouse. The fact finding team interacted with the workers employed at the BlinkIt dark store as well. Talking to workers revealed that they were the first ones to notice the flames engulfing the warehouse.

One of the workers had left for a delivery around 11:30 pm, while coming back around 11:45 pm he noticed the flames coming from the warehouse and heard loud screams.



The screams were so loud that we felt there were more than two people trapped inside.” The worker told the fact-finding team.

According to the worker, the fire department was informed at approximately 11:50 PM, and emergency responders arrived within the following 10 minutes.

Interaction with the Fire Department

The fact-finding team also visited the fire department to talk with some of the officials about the fire incident at the warehouse. According to officials at the fire station, the department received information about the fire at around 11:51 PM. Fire personnel reached the site at approximately 12:02 AM. Officials stated that it took around 2 to 2.5 hours to completely extinguish the fire.

During the interaction, one fire department official remarked that there are several warehouses operating in the area under similar conditions and that many of them may not have the required fire safety clearances or No Objection Certificates (NOCs). The official stated that the department has started looking more closely at such warehouses following this incident.

Interaction with the Family Members of the deceased

The fact-finding team visited the homes of the deceased workers and spoke with the bereaved families. One of the deceased workers, Amit Arya, was around 25 years old. His father is bedridden and paralysed. The family consists of his parents, his younger brother, and two married sisters. According to the family, the younger brother is currently unemployed. Amit was one of the main earning members of the family, and his death has left the family in a difficult situation, both emotionally and financially.

The second deceased worker, Narendra Negi, was around 35 years old. He is survived by his wife, an 11-year-old daughter, and a 6-year-old son. The family informed the fact-finding team that they have agreed to accept ₹15 lakh as compensation from the management. They also stated that the management has promised employment to one member of the family. According to the family, they had initially demanded 1 crore as compensation. During negotiations, the amount came down to ₹10 lakh, and finally, they agreed to settle for 15 lakh.

When asked why they agreed to this amount, family members said:



Hum mein se koi bhi is ladai ko aage le jaane wala nahi hai. Na humare paas taqat hai aur na hi koi aisa aadmi jo isko lekar lad sake.
("There is no one in the family who can take this fight forward. We neither have the strength nor anyone who can lead such a struggle.")

Family members also shared details about the deceased worker's routine. They said that he would spend 8–9 hours doing delivery work during the day and would then stay back at the warehouse to work as a night guard.

According to them, the two workers who stayed overnight usually took turns sleeping.

The family said they received a phone call at around 1:30 AM, informing them that their family member had died in the fire. They further informed the team that a written samjhauta (settlement agreement) had been signed with the management. Apart from the compensation amount, the agreement reportedly states that until the child turns 18 years old, the family will receive ₹18,000 every month. The family also mentioned the assurance of a job to one family member. Family members also said they were never shown any CCTV footage related to the incident. According to them, the management informed them that the CCTV system had been destroyed in the fire.



*Ek din ek aadmi sota
tha aur doosra
dekhbhaal karta tha,
phir agle din woh
badal jaata tha."
("One person would
sleep while the other
kept watch, and the
next day they would
switch roles.")*

However, some family members expressed doubts about this explanation and said they felt that the management was reluctant to share the footage.

The families also stated that, to the best of their knowledge, the deceased workers had never received any fire safety training. They were not aware of any fire drills, emergency preparedness sessions, or instructions being given to the workers on how to respond in the event of a fire.



Outside of the Amazon warehouse.

Findings from the First Information Report

An FIR filed on 11 June, 2026 at Haldwani Police Station, district Nainital, Uttarakhand by Mr. Manoj Kumar states - "Upon investigation conducted regarding the said incident, site inspection, statements of witnesses, and review of available records, it was found that the said warehouse was being operated by M & M LOGISTICS SOLUTIONS Company, where storage and distribution of Amazon goods were carried out.

Preliminary investigation revealed that the warehouse operation did not properly adhere to fire safety standards and necessary precautions for human life safety. During the investigation, the following serious lapses have come to light:

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01. **The warehouse was being used for residential purposes,** and at the time of the incident, both security personnel/guards were living inside the warehouse.
 02. The main shutter of the warehouse was intentionally locked from the outside, due to which the persons inside tried to come out but could not because it was locked from outside, resulting in both persons being burnt to death.
 03. The necessary fire extinguishing/No Objection Certificate for operating the warehouse was not obtained. Fire alarms and smoke detection systems were not installed in the warehouse. Adequate arrangements for emergency exits and alternative safe escape routes were not available. Flammable insulation material was used on the inner walls and ceiling of the warehouse, increasing the possibility of rapid fire spread. There was no adequate ventilation and smoke exhaust system in the warehouse, due to which smoke filled the entire premises rapidly after the fire started.
-

FIRST INFORMATION REPORT
(Under Section 173 B.N.S.S)

प्रथम सूचना रिपोर्ट
(धारा 173 बी एन एस एस के तहत)

1. District (जिला): नैनीतालP.S. (थाना): हल्द्वानीYear (वर्ष): 2026

FIR No. (प्र.सू. रि. सं.): 0195Date and Time of FIR (प्र.सू. रि. की दिनांक और समय): 11/06/2026 18:27 घंटे

2.

S.No. (क्र.सं.)	Acts (अधिनियम)	Sections (धारा(एँ))
1	भारतीय न्याय संहिता (बी एन एस), 2023	105

3. (a) Occurrence of offence (अपराध की घटना):

Day (दिन): शुक्रवारDate from (दिनांक से): 05/06/2026Date To (दिनांक तक): 05/06/2026

Time Period (समय अवधि): पहर 1Time From (समय से): 00:00 बजेTime To (समय तक): 00:00 बजे

(b) Information received at P.S. (थाना जहां सूचना प्राप्त हुई):

Date (दिनांक): 11/06/2026Time (समय): 18:06 बजे

(c) General Diary Reference (रोजनामचा संदर्भ):

Entry No. (प्रविष्टि सं.): 049Date and Time (दिनांक और समय): 11/06/2026 18:06 बजे

4. Type of Information (सूचना का प्रकार): लिखित

5. Place of Occurrence (घटनास्थल):

1. (a) Direction and distance from P.S. (थाना से दूरी और दिशा): दक्षिण, 05 कि. मी. Beat No. (बीट सं.):

(b) Address (पता): रामपुर रोड स्थित शीतल होटल के सामने अमेज़ॉन का गोदाम, हल्द्वानी, हल्का चौकी टीपी नगर

First Information Report

A separate detailed investigation regarding the causes of the fire and compliance with fire safety standards is being conducted by the Fire Department, whose report is awaited.

From the above facts, it is prima facie clear that the warehouse operation and management did not comply with fire safety standards and precautions required for human life safety, as a result of which the fire assumed a severe form and both persons trapped inside the warehouse died.

The conduct of the accused persons is alleged to constitute a cognizable offence, and a criminal case has been registered against the aforementioned accused.

TRAPPED BEHIND CLOSED SHUTTERS

Conclusion

This fact-finding report underlines critical issues related to worker safety, readiness in the event of a fire, poor working conditions, and violations of labor laws at this particular warehouse that claimed the lives of two workers. The testimonies and the First Information Report have shown that there were major lapses in terms of safety infrastructure, training, and emergency readiness plans. This report raises a serious issue of negligence on part of authorities and management. It also raises questions about accountability and adequate safety mechanisms. It underlines the critically unsafe working conditions under which a large number of workers are forced to work without knowing the severe risks it poses to their health, safety and lives.



Outside of the Amazon warehouse.



Recommendations

- **01.** The first and foremost task is to eliminate all kinds of collusion among officials of the industrial department, building and planning department, fire department, labour department, and police with companies.

- 02.** There is a need to ensure the enactment and enforcement of coherent and stringent labour laws and governance methods to protect workers' rights with these kinds of violations. There should not be any compromise on compliance with enforcement of the labour laws. Stringent punishment must be ensured for violators.

- 03.** Safety audits must be conducted to ensure the effectiveness of safety measures in warehouses. Formation of central, state and local level Monitoring and Enforcement Committees, should be done, which will consist of the aforementioned departments, trade unions, and labour rights NGOs necessary to investigate the violation of industrial and labour laws in the industrial areas. The committee must own the responsibility to sensitise workers on labour rights.

- 04.** Education and training regarding workplace safety, fire drills, etc should be carried out and safety kits should be readily available to all the workers to be used in times of emergencies.

- 05.** In case of such man-made industrial calamity or incident, the Central, State Governments, and management shall be held liable for compulsorily compensation payment to the families. In addition to adequate monetary compensation, survivors must receive free medical care and survivors and victims' families must be provided with psychological support.

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And other members of the joint fact finding team.

TRAPPED BEHIND CLOSED SHUTTERS

About AIWU

The Amazon India Workers Union (AIWU) is a union of Amazon India warehouse workers, initially formed by hundreds of workers from the Amazon warehouse 'DEL-4' located in Manesar, Haryana, India. AIWU is bringing together Amazon warehouse workers across India to fight for living wages, decent and safe working conditions, and comprehensive social security.

AIWU has emerged as a leading voice in shaping debates around the changing world of work. Through its persistent efforts, the union has secured significant improvements in working conditions at DEL-4 and beyond.

AIWU is affiliated with UNI Global Union and works closely with Amazon workers' unions and organizations in other countries to advance workers' rights globally.



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