

Workers affected by Dubai fire get interim relief

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Dubai, May 20 (IANS) Over 600 workers, a majority of them Indians, who lost their livelihood in a market fire here last month, have been given interim relief. On the instructions of Deputy Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and president of the Red Crescent Society UAE Sheikh Hamdan Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the workers affected by the fire at Naif Souk April 2 were each given 1,000 dirhams (\$272.2) at an event in the Al Ahli stadium complex here Tuesday.

The relief package was arranged at the initiative of the Indian consulate here.

“As so many workers were affected by the fire, we approached the Red Crescent Society to see if any interim relief could be arranged. They responded immediately and got in touch with Sheikh Hamdan Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who then directed that the relief package be arranged,” India’s Consul General in Dubai Venu Rajamony said at the event.

“The relief package not only covers Indians, but workers from other nationalities as well,” he said.

“We thank the Red Crescent Society and Sheikh Hamdan for this.”

Around 183 shops in the market were gutted when the fire broke out in the early hours of April 2. Most of the shops sold readymade garments, toys and perfumes.

The consul general clarified that the relief package was meant for workers in the shops and not the owners.

“The Dubai government has announced that it will compensate the owners and the compensation package will come within two months from the date of the incident,” Rajamony told IANS.

Mohammed Abdullah Alhaj Al Zaroni, manager of the Red Crescent Society UAE’s Dubai branch, said that with the Dubai government promising the compensation package, this would definitely come.

“After all, these are the people who have helped build this nation. We are not looking at nationalities or religions while helping those affected,” he said.

Around 300 workers were present at the event.