

קו לעובד Worker's Hotline س عنوان العامل

This month's news: a study published by the Bank of Israel reveals the scope of the phenomenon of Palestinian workers paying brokerage fees for the "right" to work in Israel. Of course this is not the only way to steal workers' money - a UN committee opposes yet another "creative" way of stealing workers' money and recommends the repeal of the "Deposit Law" that enables the daily theft of one-fifth of asylum seekers' wages. And sad news: it's two months before the end of the year and already the number of people killed in construction work accidents exceeds the total number of fatalities last year. It is hard to believe, but September is over. It consisted moments of grace, hope, excitement and joy, but also of frustration and difficult departures. We choose to share with you, our partners and friends, a selection of these moments - reminding ourselves that - if a tree falls in a forest and no one hears it, it is as though it never fell.



More than 20,000 Palestinians paid about 480 million NIS to brokers and employers for Israeli work permits. This shocking figure is **reported** in the Bank of Israel's study published in late September. This illegal phenomenon, which Kav LaOved has been repeatedly warning about, is only expanding. In **Amira Hass's article covering the issue in Ha'aretz**, one interviewee relates: "To the best of my knowledge, no Palestinian worker doesn't pay for the right to work in Israel... They were all forced to buy their entry permits from Israeli permit contractors." The data show that workers' salaries are reduced by thousands of shekels each month. Average permit prices range from 1987 NIS per month in agriculture, industry and the service sector to 2102 NIS per month in the construction sector. And for which sector were most of the permits purchased? For the construction sector, which sadly leads us to our next update.



Kav LaOved monitors work accidents in the construction sector in addition to other sectors as well. In the last week of October, the number of fatalities due to construction work accidents in 2019 surpassed the sector's total death toll in 2018. As of the end of October, the death toll was 40 workers, compared to 38 fatalities in 2018. A year ago, last November, the Histadrut (Israel's main labor union) signed an agreement with the Ministry of Finance, which included various agreed upon measures to improve worker safety. There were many statements and expectations, but a year after the agreement was signed, and after two election cycles, it turns out that much of what was signed was not implemented. In a nutshell: recommendations to require construction sites to install safety netting have not been implemented; enforcement of the Work Hours Law to ensure workers do not work more than required has not happened; and legislative amendments for crane maintenance requirements (see the crane that collapsed in Tel Aviv in October, in the photo above) have not been passed. And the list goes on, **you can read it all here (hebrew)**.



And some good news too: remember the Deposit Law under which employers steal refugee and asylum seeker workers' money daily (**\$700 million as published in Calcalist**)? The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights **recommends repealing it**. Thus it joins the Trafficking in Persons Report of the US State Department released in June, **which also recommended the repeal of the law**, which in practice robs 20% of asylum seekers' wages (if you've forgotten the essence of the law, **go here**). The world realizes that this law - which violates the right to a minimum wage and results in employers deducting money from workers' wages without placing it in their deposit fund - should end. Meanwhile, the High Court of Justice delays its decision on our petition on this issue. The last hearing on the Deposit Law was held in May 2019 and the Court promised to make a decision. But, in the meantime, there is no decision and no justice, and the day-to-day theft enabled under the law by employers who deduct workers' money but do not deposit it, continues. These are wages that in many cases will never be returned to the workers who earned them.

Thank you for reading, and do not hesitate to share!
Yours,
Kav LaOved - Workers' Hotline
Protecting workers' rights

Continue helping us show workers they are not alone in their fight for just employment! A monthly donation to Kav LaOved will assist workers in standing up for their rights throughout the year.

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Contact us via email at email@kavlaoved.org.il

All donations will allow "Kav LaOved" to help workers get their rights at work and the money taken from them by their employers. Even a fixed contribution of 10 NIS per month. To donate by direct debit bank or credit card deposit contribution [click here](#). Association account: Bank Hapoalim branch 781 Account 431095 in the name "Kav LaOved". To send a check to the offices of the association via mail: Kav LaOved PO Box 2319 Tel Aviv 61022. Donations to Kav LaOved within Israel are income tax deductible under Section 46. Tax-deductible donations from abroad, by New Israel Fund. For more info: hagar@kavlaoved.org.il

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