

HEALTH AND SAFETY

'Overloading' angle eyed in lift plunge probe

Six construction workers died on 13th September after falling 17 storeys down a lift shaft in what is set to become Hong Kong tallest skyscraper.

The workers were on a platform on the 27th floor when it gave way, plunging down to the 10th.

The 118-storey International Commerce Centre (ICC) in Kowloon's Tsim Sha Tsui district will become the world's fourth tallest building when finished in 2010. Only the Burj Dubai, the Shanghai World Financial Centre and Taiwan's Taipei 101 will be taller.

Why six workers were working together on the platform and whether they were wearing safety belts?

The safest way to build a temporary working platform is to support it with three steel I-beams. Covered with metal boards are usually used because they provide firmer support.

According to our understanding on this rare industrial accident on suspicion of negligence of the contractors should identify into four areas of studying :



The International Commerce Center

1. Workbench irregularities

Workstations running board covered by the bamboo and wood are not strong enough to comply with waste dump overweight with six workers working on board. According to the guidelines for works inside the "lift shaft", the general approach would first take up the scaffolding in the lift shaft, and then supported by structural steel framework. However these solid workbench and scaffolding are collapsed because of erosion.

2. Workbench overweight

Under the existing provisions, the site must comply with the Buildings Department to build workbench guidelines, bearing capacity calculations by a registered engineer, and the workbench should braced by structural steel to stabilize the bottom to ensure that the required weight-bearing platform is loaded safety. Very few will be used for storage of construction wasted weight on the platform. It is difficult to understand why the workers will carry heavy debris on the job stage.

3. No "life-saving rope"

According to existing legislation, the scope of work at height should wear helmets, reflective vests and safety belts to avoid falling from temporary platform. Six workers falling straight down to the lift shaft bottom, is very likely that everyone not wearing a seat belt.

4. Inadequate monitoring

This is the "blood lesson", accident or negligence and supervision related to the temporary workers are not familiar with the work environment, as site managers do not work on Sunday, supervision may be loose on the accident-prone. This accident may not be occurred if under the presence of supervisory personnel on site, The reason is the workers has been underestimated the weight of accumulated waste, leading to bench Overweight collapse..

No one can be survived at the fall of 120 km/hour

Six dead fall, together with the crushed debris falling from 30th floor straight to the lift shaft bottom with up to 120 kilometers per hour, the moment of impact force up to about 20 tons for just 3 seconds.

