

Widow's plea over cash aid

The widow of a construction worker killed in an industrial accident yesterday asked the Government to speed up the processing of her compensation payment claim.

Mrs Ng Lau Kwei-fung was left with three children aged between one to five after her husband's death.

Mr Ng Man-bun (31) plummeted to his death on June 17 from a Tuen Mun industrial building after the scaffolding he was working on collapsed.

Mrs Ng, who attended yesterday's ceremony for the formation of the Association for the Rights of Industrial Accident Victims, said she has not received any compensation.

She said she has to rely on a monthly loan of \$1,000 from the construction company to support her three daughters.

She said the hearing for the employee compensation was fixed for January 18 — seven months after the tragedy.



Mrs Ng weeps as she talks to reporters after the meeting. She is carrying her year-old daughter Yuen-ting.

Accident victims blame employers

By OLIVIA SIN

Most industrial accidents are not accidents at all but the result of negligence by employers.

And the Government and employers are not doing enough to prevent industrial accidents or to compensate the growing number of victims, a newly formed association of accident victims charged yesterday.

Speaking at its inaugural ceremony, the chairman of the Association for the Rights of Industrial Accident Victims, Mr Lo Kam-woon, said it is aimed at helping victims fight for their rights.

The association — under the Christian Industrial Committee — will also serve as a watchdog on employers to ensure their workers' safety.

Mr Lo said the group will report irresponsible employers to the Labour Department.

He also asked workers to value their lives more and not to take any risk.

Industrial accidents have been increasing in Hongkong, he said, and the rate is alarming.

About one quarter of a million workers were injured on the job over a five-year period from 1975 to last year.

A total of 1,328 workers died in the same period, he said.

"This means about one in 10 workers has received injuries over the five year period and the figure is alarming.

"Because of employers' negligence, a lot of workers lost their lives.

"We must not allow this appalling situation to go on."

He pledged that the association will see that no worker loses his life or is injured while doing his job.

Mr Lo said the association has about 100 members — either industrial accident vic-

tims themselves or relatives of victims.

Mr Lo listed four major work areas of the association:

- Starting a hot-line service next month to deal with complaints about dangerous working situations and queries on all aspects of the labour law. The telephone number is 3-665860 or 3-665965.

- Repeal of the present law regarding employee compensation and industrial accident compensation and submitting a report to the Government in the first half of next year.

- Running courses for members on industrial safety and distributing pamphlets to workers.

- Keeping surveillance on the Government and employers to see that workers' safety is guaranteed and victims are reasonably compensated.