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ASIA/BANGLADESH - A missionary: "The collapse of the factory brings together the elements of discontent: explosive situation"

Dhaka (Agenzia Fides) - "The story of the collapse of the factory on the outskirts of Dhaka" has shocked the nation and has aggregated all the elements of discontent in society," says to Fides Agency Fr. Silvano Garello, a Xaverian missionary for 40 years in Dhaka. "There are situations and underlying tensions that can erupt at any moment and which affect the political sphere, religion, work," he explains. According to a report released by the authorities, about 3,000 workers are buried in the rubble, around 2,430 people (among those killed and wounded) have been found, the bodies found are 381, the rest are missing. Now bulldozers are at work, the hope of finding new survivors has been abandoned.
Fr. Garello recalls: "Those who work in the textile industry protest for the lack of security and for the little pay earned. In many situations there is no respect for the dignity of work and of life itself: the workers are treated like slaves. While Western companies - who commission work to local factories - have turned their head away, while in the past they had spoken excluding companies that employed child labor."
Meanwhile, "there are strong social and political tensions. Political parties cannot find any form of agreement for new elections, which should be later this year. The forces do not trust the government, there is no dialogue." In this scenario there are also "fundamentalist Islamic groups that promote laws which are typically Muslim, as the law of blasphemy, based on the Pakistani model. So far the country has given an example of a moderate Islam, we do not know in the future. In recent weeks there have been attacks on Hindu temples and Buddhist communities, this alerts religious minorities, including Christians. As Catholic missionaries, we peacefully promote Christian values of dialogue, fraternity, love of neighbor, with testimony and social work. " (PA) (Agenzia Fides 29/04/2013)

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