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**BANGLADESH
UPDATE**

930
New cases in 24hrs

20,995
Total cases

314
Deaths

4,117
Recoveries

**GLOBAL
UPDATE**

310,081
Deaths

4,673,195
Total cases

REMITTANCE INFLOW

Eid may tick it up this month

SHARIFUL HASAN, writes for The Daily Star

Two years ago, Bazlur Rashid of Bogura went to Saudi Arabia to work as a farm labourer. He now sends Tk 15,000 to Tk 20,000 in remittance every month.

His wife Mahbuba Begum said although her husband could not send her the money in March due to lockdown in Saudi Arabia among other reasons, she received Tk 20,000 in April. The family back home in Bangladesh totally depends on Bazlur's income.

Shahadat Hossain of Madaripur lives in Dubai. There, he runs a small business employing a few other Bangladeshis.

He said he remitted Tk 14 lakh in March and Tk 9 lakh in April to his family and other relatives, taking the ongoing coronavirus crisis into consideration.

Shahadat sent the money from his savings. Since the business is now closed due to the pandemic, he does not know how much he will be able to remit in future. He also claimed that more than half of the Bangladeshis in Dubai have no job right now. The future seems bleak.

Like Bazlur and Shahadat, more than one crore Bangladeshis are currently working in other countries. Around 75 percent of them are in the Middle East.

Remittance from expatriates is one of the main pillars of the Bangladesh economy. Last year, the expatriates sent \$18.3 billion of their earnings in remittance through the banking channel.

But this time, the Covid-19 pandemic has thrown them in uncertainty as economies remain under severe strain.

Many saw their wages were cut, while many lost job opportunities. Many countries went into lockdown and houses for facilitating remittance went shut.

Left with no job, many had to return home.

Yet, the expatriates did not completely stop sending remittance. They are doing their best, even borrowing, so that the remittance inflow does not stop.

In fact, the flow is likely to rise ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr.

In total, expatriates sent \$606 crore or Tk 51,510 crore between January and May 12 this year, said Bangladesh Bank sources.

BB sources also said from July last year to April this year, expatriates sent \$1,485.60 crore in remittance. However, following the coronavirus outbreak in December, the remittance flow started to decline from January.

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RELATED STORY PAGE 3

BACK TO THE BATTLE ... Nusrat Jahan, a doctor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, has a broad smile as she comes back to the front line after several weeks in quarantine with Covid-19. Nusrat and 39 other health workers joined the facility yesterday after recovering from the disease.

PHOTO:
ANISUR RAHMAN

SAVING THE VULNERABLE WFP appeals for \$320m for Bangladesh

Says pandemic may reverse the dev gains made in 50 years

UNB, Dhaka

Issuing a warning that Covid-19 threatens to reverse development gains made by Bangladesh in the last 50 years, World Food Programme has appealed for \$320 million to help the most vulnerable.

"The World Food Programme, for its part, issued an urgent call for \$320 million to provide food and cash transfers to the most vulnerable families in Bangladesh in the midst of the pandemic," said Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for the UN secretary-general, on Friday.

Some \$200 million of this funding is required for the agency's Covid-19 response in Bangladesh and the remaining \$120 million is needed to help the ethnic Rohingya for the next six months, according to the United Nations.

"Lockdowns and restrictions on movement are affecting livelihoods of millions across Bangladesh, especially

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12 densely packed city areas worst-hit

Infections there now 30 times higher than five weeks ago; 930 new cases; 16 die

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

Covid-19 cases have risen 30 times in 12 densely populated areas in the capital over the last five weeks, according to data from the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research.

The spike could have been averted if the government enforced strict restrictions in these areas, experts said, adding that curbing further spread would require prompt steps.

Meanwhile, at least 930 people tested positive and 16 died in the 24 hours since Friday morning, said Prof Nasima Sultana, additional director general of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The death toll now stands at 314, she told the daily briefing yesterday afternoon.

A total of 6,782 samples were tested since Friday, Nasima said, adding 235 others had recovered from Covid-19 in the same period.

According to IEDCR's Dhaka City Case Distribution, on April 9, the total cases in 10 of the 12 densely populated areas were between one and eight.

On April 9, a month after the first three cases were detected in the country, the number of coronavirus cases was zero in Malibagh while it was 23 in Mirpur.

On May 15, it was 93 in Malibagh and 215 in Mirpur.

In the other areas on May 15, the number of positive cases was 115 in Babubazar, 90 in Badda, 70 in Chowkbazar, 221 in Jatrabari, 117 in Lalbagh, 98 in Moghbazar, 223 in Mohakhali, 189 in Mohammadpur, 189 in Mugda, and 138 in Tejgaon.

Five weeks ago on April 9, there were only three positive cases in

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241 cops reported infected in 24 hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 241 police personnel were infected across the country in the last 24 hours till yesterday noon, taking the total number to 2,382, according to a tally of the Police Headquarters.

It is the highest ever number of positive cases detected among law enforcers in a single day, officials said.

Earlier, the record figure of infections in police personnel in 24 hours was 207, which was recorded on May 11.

Officials blamed overcrowded accommodation in police barracks and initial mismanagement and the nature of their duties that requires to come in close contact with people, among others, for the spread of the virus among the cops.

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Buy more this year

Ministry urges fruit processing companies, takes initiatives for smooth transport of produce

RASHIDUL HASAN

The agriculture ministry yesterday took some initiatives and put forth several recommendations to improve the transportation and marketing of seasonal fruits in an attempt to reduce food waste as well as the loss of farmers amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

The recommendations include reduction of the toll on Bangabandhu bridge for the empty trucks returning after delivering food items, assurance of smooth movement of traders from other districts to the fruit grown areas, and extension of banking hour in those areas.

The ministry came up with the major recommendations following a virtual meeting participated by several ministers, experts, economists and business leaders.

After the meeting, Agriculture Minister Abdur Razzaque announced the 10-point recommendations and initiatives.

He said free movement of trucks and other vehicles in different parts of the country for the transportation of seasonal fruits and agricultural products would be ensured.

The senior minister said trucks of Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation and parcel trains of Bangladesh Railway would be used to transport fruits.

The minister informed that they had urged several food processing companies, including Pran, Acme and Brac, to

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PLASMA THERAPY TRIAL Two doctors donate blood at DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two physicians, who are Covid-19 survivors, donated plasma at Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday for the trial of Convalescent Plasma Therapy (CPT) aimed at treating coronavirus patients.

They made this donation at the hematology department of the hospital under the supervision of Prof MA Khan, who heads the technical sub-committee on plasma therapy at DMCH.

"We will need one more week to start the therapy on ailing patients. We will continue to collect blood to extract plasma from other COVID-19 survivors to prevent waste of kits for this," Prof Khan, also chairman of the department, told The Daily Star.

At the beginning,

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Policemen wearing personal protective equipment pouring water on an elderly woman's head after she collapsed in the middle of the road near Matsya Bhavan in the capital after walking in the scorching heat yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Pay half of bonus now, the rest later

Govt asks RMG owners about Eid benefits of workers

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA


The government yesterday asked garment factory owners to pay the workers 50 percent of their basic salary as Eid bonus before the festival and another 50 percent after the festival.

The decision was taken at a tripartite meeting between factory owners, government high-ups and trade union leaders with Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal in the chair at his secretariat office in Dhaka.

In the meeting all representatives of the three bodies agreed on 50 percent of the basic of the salary as bonus before Eid.


However, the remaining 50 percent of one month's salary will have to be adjusted with the salary later, said China Rahman, general secretary to IndustriALL Bangladesh Council, a labour rights group.

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27 Celebrating
YEARS
of Togetherness

*On this special occasion
we express our profound gratitude
and best wishes to all of our valued
customers, patrons, stakeholders &
well-wishers for being with us.*



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