

Families of migrant workers in dire straits

Their avg monthly household spending fell to Tk 7,300 from Tk 17,000, says report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The average monthly household expenditure of migrant workers' families has dropped to Tk 7,300 during the Covid-19 pandemic from Tk 17,000 earlier, said a report.

The report of Bangladesh Civil Society for Migration mentioned that 61 percent of 200 households surveyed did not receive any remittance over the last three months.

The amount of remittance the rest families received was on an average Tk 30,000, which was Tk 47,000 per quarter in normal time, it said.

Findings of the report were disclosed during an e-symposium on "Impact of Covid-19 on International Migrant Households", jointly organised by BCSM and Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) yesterday.

The e-symposium was part of RMMRU's similar events under the banner "Build Back Better" on Covid-19 and migration.

The survey was conducted in 21 districts through telephone interview.

Interviews were taken of members of 100 migrant workers' families including families of 26 female migrants, and the other 100 were arbitrarily returned migrants including two female returnees.

The report said for 57 percent families, remittance is the only source of income.

Three-fourth of 18 percent household's income comes from remittance and for 14 percent households, remittance constitutes half of the family income, it said.

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Bangladesh Railway receives one of the 10 broad gauge locomotives through the Gede-Darshana border.

PHOTO: AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU

Be part of decision-making process for a resilient future

PM urges youths while virtually inaugurating 'Dhaka -- OIC Youth Capital 2020'

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the youth to be part of the decision-making steps with their ideas and innovations to build a future which would be resilient and sustainable both at this Covid-19 pandemic period and also the post-pandemic one.

"Covid-19 is forcing both the pace and scale of workplace innovations. These silver linings are thin compared to the scale of the disruptions though," she said.

The prime minister said this while virtually inaugurating "Dhaka -- OIC Youth Capital 2020" and its first event the "Resilient Youth Leadership Summit" from her official residence Gono Bhaban, connecting youths from OIC countries and beyond.



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Govt mulls shortened primary school syllabus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is planning to shorten the primary school syllabus as coronavirus pandemic is badly affecting academic activities and with no certainty over school reopening.

To this effect, the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) and National Academy of Primary Education [NAPE] are working.

NAPE and DPE are preparing a short syllabus prioritising the important chapters and class-based basic competencies of the students, considering that the schools will reopen in September.

"We have asked the DPE and NAPE to shorten the syllabus after calculating on how many classes the students can get if the schools reopen in September," said State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Zakir Hossen yesterday.

Addressing a webinar organised by Education Reporters Association of Bangladesh on the challenge of Covid-19 on primary education, Zakir Hossen also said DPE and NAPE are working on how the Primary Education Completion and other final exams can be taken.

He said NAPE and DPE were asked to emphasise taking measures so that students can achieve class-based fundamental competence and to identify the important chapters that have co-relation with topics of next classes.

The government extended closure of all educational institutions, which have been closed since March 17, until August 6 as a preventive step against the novel coronavirus outbreak.

On April 27, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said the educational institutions may stay closed until September if the Covid-19 situation does not improve.

Educational activities of about 1.5 crore primary level students are being hampered due to the coronavirus crisis.

The pandemic has also caused a delay in holding the first terminal exams of primary schools.

Many guardians worry about the Primary Education Completion examination and other final exams.

"We are yet to take any decision on reopening schools," said Zakir.

"We do not want to cancel PEC exam so

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A mark of enduring friendship: Momen

Bangladesh Railway receives 10 locomotives from India

STAR REPORT

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen yesterday said leaders of Bangladesh and India pledged on the noble vision of inclusive socioeconomic development, scripting a golden chapter in partnership over the past few years.

"Over the last few years, India and Bangladesh have scripted a golden chapter in partnership under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi," he said during a virtual handing over ceremony, where 10 broad gauge (BG) locomotives were virtually flagged off to Bangladesh by Indian External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar and Minister of Railways and Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal.

Bangladesh Railway Minister Md Nurul Islam Suhan and Indian Minister of State for Railways Angadi Suresh also joined, reports UNB.

Dr Momen thanked India for offering Bangladesh 10 broad gauge diesel locomotives as a mark of enduring friendship.

Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Muhammad Imran and Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Riva Ganguly Das also joined the event.

"We are indeed enjoying the best of relations," Dr

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DIAGNOSTIC CENTRES IN BARISHAL

Most run without licence

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

On July 22, a mobile court sentenced three employees of a diagnostic centre in Jordan Road area of Barishal city to six months' imprisonment. Not only the two owners and a physician were charged for preparing fake pathological reports in clear violation of health service guidelines, the centre did not also have proper documentation.

The mobile court sealed the diagnostic centre.

Three days later, in another mobile court drive in the city, executive magistrate Ziaur Rahman sentenced four people to three to six months in jail and sealed another diagnostic centre for similar offenses. These two stories far from being anomalies, Ziaur Rahman said, "We have received several complaints of diagnostic centres issuing fake reports and being run without licences. We will soon take action against them."

The issue of licences is being discussed widely after it became known recently that the DGHS signed an agreement with Regent Hospital while being fully aware that the hospital's licence had expired in 2014.

According to some experts, most diagnostic centres in the city operate like

this -- without proper documentation and are riddled with irregularities.

Clinics and diagnostic centres need environmental clearance, employee details, city corporation clearance, tax certificates and other documents to get their licence renewed every year, said Aminul Hasan, director of hospitals and clinics at the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Most of these facilities could not get their licence updated because they failed to provide those documents.

Dr Munshi Mubinal Haque, assistant medical officer of district Civil Surgeon's Office, said, "More than half of the diagnostic centres [in Barishal] do not have licences. They do not maintain any standard of diagnostic labs. Often, even the names of technicians and doctors are not correct. All they are doing is deceiving people."

Ensuring that these service centres meet the required standard in terms of practise, equipment and human resources is the responsibility of authorities that issue their licence, said experts.

Contacted, sources from the Divisional Health Office under the DGHS tried to

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Nearly half of the road adjacent to Baitul Muqarram mosque, as well as the footpath has been taken up by makeshift stalls and hawkers, with some vehicles parked here and there as well. Movement has become restricted to just one lane, creating heavy congestion. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Narcotics cases on the rise: Police HQ

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite law enforcers' vigilance, the number of narcotics cases are increasing across the country amid the pandemic.

According to a statement of police headquarters (PHQ) yesterday, 2,708 narcotics dealers and addicts were arrested by police between July 19 and 25.

During the period, police recovered 4.66 lakh pieces of yaba, 9,930 bottles of Phensedyl, 2.59kg heroine, 2,088kg cannabis, 1,207 bottles of locally-made liquor and 211 bottles of foreign liquor, and 1,908 cases were filed.

Just a week back, from July 12 to July 18, the number of arrests was 2,530 in 1,714 narcotics cases.

ERRATUM

A report headlined "Ensure access to general and reproductive health services for RMG workers during new normal", published in The Daily Star on July 27, 2020 wrote, "Interviewing 237 ready-made garments workers from 22 factories, SNV Netherlands Development Organisation found that four percent reported having been infected with Covid-19." It should have read, "Interviewing 237 ready-made garments workers from 22 factories, Working with Women Project-II of SNV Netherlands Development Organisation found that 3.6 percent of workers were infected with Covid-19 among 136 workers who were sick." We sincerely regret this inadvertent error.

FAKE COVID-19 REPORTS

Shahabuddin medical college MD sent to jail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Managing director of Shahabuddin Medical College Hospital Faisal Al Islam and two others were sent to jail yesterday in a case filed over using unauthorised Covid-19 test kits and forging Covid-19 test reports at the hospital.

The two others are: the hospital's assistant director Dr Abul Hasnat (52) and inventory officer Shahriz Kabir (33).

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Masud-Ur-Rahman passed the order after Md Moshir Rahman, investigation officer of the case, produced them before his court on completion of their three-day remand.

Moshir appealed to the court to confine the accused in jail until his probe is completed. The court directed jail authorities to provide treatment to Faisal in jail custody as per jail code, after his lawyer submitted a petition for his client's better treatment.

Rab arrested Faisal from a hotel at Gulshan on July 20, while two others were arrested during the drive at the hospital on July 19.

Nayek Subeder Fazlul Bari of Rab-1 filed the case with Gulshan Police Station.

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