

NEWS

BULLETIN

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EDITORIAL

We are pleased to publish the fourth issue of the quarterly Legal Counsel News Bulletin with some important updates amid the current crisis situation. Stay home and stay safe.

NEW LEGISLATION (APRIL 2020-JUNE 2020)

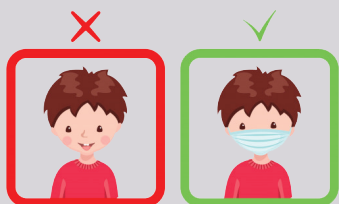
No new legislation has been enacted in the Parliament during the second quarter of 2020, except the Finance Act 2020 (National Budget).

ON A SERIOUS NOTE

A man went to a lawyer and asked what his fee was. "\$100 for three questions," answered the lawyer. "Isn't that a little steep?" said the man. "Yes," said the lawyer. "Now, what's your third question?"



DO YOU KNOW ?



• According to a Circular issued by the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), not wearing a mask while in public is now illegal and punishable with a maximum sentence of 6 (six) months or Taka 1 (one) lac fine or both.



• The Contagious Diseases (Prevention, Control and Eradication) Act 2018 contains penalties, for example, persons assisting in spreading contagious germs, being aware of its consequences and hiding the risk of infection with a maximum term of 6 (six) months' imprisonment or a maximum fine of Taka 1 (one) lac or both.



• No child under the age of 14 can be employed to work as per the 2018 amendment of the Bangladesh Labour Act 2006.

THE NEW NORMAL



Second quarter of 2020 has seen people's lives and lifestyles, organisational strategies and practices, working methods and the economy itself, change drastically across the world. Organisational downsizing and commercial restructuring have meant that there is significant rise in unemployment rates globally, putting those still with jobs at a constant pressure to outshine their roles. From the ever-so-usual 'going to office' model, most establishments have already successfully reformed in to 'work from home' (WFH) attitudes. This, apart from having both positive and negative impacts on domestic lives and relationships - now that people are home all the time - is also giving rise to various, new technical and professional challenges. Being informed and taking the right action at the right time can safeguard against such complications, as this WFH becomes the 'new normal'. Also, staying relevant is the key, and for such, adapting to the growing changes is essential.

The uncertainty of the prevalence of this situation continues, with no direction as to when things will get back to the 'old normal'. Hence, organisations, which have not already done so,



must ensure, secure and effective communications while they continue to require their employees to WFH. Introducing, or strengthening existing, internal IT and communications policies, using encrypted or secured communication tools/apps, introduction and use of e-signature etc., are important. Organizations and individuals must understand that not all communications IT tools/apps are secure, putting their confidential information at high risk. The very concept of WFH itself may also adversely affect official confidentiality by exposing them, albeit unintentionally, to the other members of the family. A cross-check with the cyber and digital security laws of the country, i.e. the Digital Security Act, 2018 and the Information and Communication Technology Act, 2006, Data Protection laws (draft) is viewed as essential now.

Being the only green law firm of the country, Legal Counsel has been advocating for 'going green, digitalization and cyber security' for years, and it firmly believes that now is the time for all organisations to take these seriously.

Organisations may consider to offer additional allowance to employees, so that they obtain increased bandwidth and have better connectivity for smooth and uninterrupted WFH process.

Alternatively, an otherwise irrelevant allowance in the given context can be temporarily converted to achieve the above, for e.g. transport allowance becoming IT allowance. Besides, addressing mental health is an important aspect of employers' responsibility. Organizations that do not suffer from liquidity crisis, may also invest into capacity building of the employees by offering virtual workshops and trainings conducted by professionals.

CURRENT AFFAIRS



- Bangladesh Bank has allowed non-bank entities to operate automated teller machines (ATM) across the country with specific focus on spreading banking network in rural areas at an affordable cost.

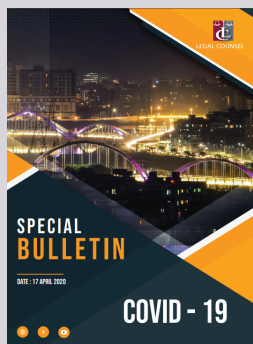
- The government on 21 June, 2020 signed a loan agreement of \$250 million (budget support) with the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank Group to finance the “Second Jobs Development Policy Credit (DPC-2)” program. In this context, the government and the World Bank Group (WBG) got engaged in a 03 (three) year program of reforms for the period of 2018-2021 and the WBG agreed to extend financial assistance of \$750 million in this regard. The first program in the series (Job DPC-1) was completed in FY 2018-2019 where IDA provided \$ 250 million and as its continuity, WBG has agreed to provide another \$ 250 million in the second program (Job DPC-2) in the current FY 2019-2020.



PRO-BONO WORKS: PUBLICATIONS AND TV SHOWS (APRIL 2020-JUNE 2020)

LEGAL COUNSEL NEWS

- ✓ Legal Counsel has adopted “Work from Home (WFH)” policy since 19 March, 2020 and is continuing with the same by way of efficiently implementing required measures. We are also conducting cases in the Virtual Court.
- ✓ Legal Counsel is very pleased to be able to share with you the relevant Coronavirus related government circulars from time to time, both in the original version in Bangla and our translated versions in English and sometimes also in other languages like Japanese, French etc.
- ✓ We have been periodically conducting private webinars for our clients on different topics, followed by sending webinar notes and we wish to cover all our clients in due course.
- ✓ We have arranged a webinar on employment law and situation around the world, inviting lawyers from 05 (five) countries, which is so far the only legal webinar in Bangladesh broadcasted live in a satellite TV channel. You can watch the webinar at [<https://bit.ly/31ccITq>]
- ✓ We have arranged 21 (twenty-one) internal capacity building sessions (legal, technical, skill-based, professional etc.) for our lawyers during the last 03 (three) months.



- ✓ We have carefully prepared and shared with you a comprehensive Special Bulletin covering different aspects of laws in relation to the current corona situation. Please download at <http://legalcounselbd.com/special-bulletin-covid-19/>
- ✓ As a part of our decade long pro-bono efforts, we are continuing with our newspaper write-ups, TV shows and social media awareness campaigns such as especially focusing on the current contexts so that the people at large can be benefitted. We have also allocated a significant portion of our annual proceeds to provide pro-bono legal services to SMEs, young entrepreneurs, trade bodies, govt-agencies, etc.

OUR PUBLICATIONS

- ✓ Managing Partner of Legal Counsel, Barrister Omar H. Khan writes about the enforcement of quarantine related laws in Bangladesh during the outbreak of Covid-19 | the Daily Star | 14 April, 2020. <https://bit.ly/3dtTGuq>
- ✓ Special write-up by Partner of Legal Counsel, Barrister Miti Sanjana on the occasion of May Day 2020 regarding rights of workers’ during the Covid- 19 crisis | The Bangla Tribune | 01 May, 2020. <https://bit.ly/3fQ25tJ>
- ✓ Partner of Legal Counsel, Barrister Miti Sanjana answered 02 (two) of the selected questions among various legal issues faced by the readers in readers question section | Prothom Alo | 06 May, 2020. <https://bit.ly/3ethdNv>
- ✓ Partner of Legal Counsel, Barrister Miti Sanjana gave her valuable comment on Digital Security Act in an interview with Deutsche Welle | 08 May, 2020. <https://bit.ly/2CvpXo0>
- ✓ Partner of Legal Counsel, Barrister Miti Sanjana talks about the “Reopening of the Shopping malls can be catastrophic death traps” | The Bangla Tribune | 08 May, 2020. <https://bit.ly/2VtDZxl>
- ✓ Managing Partner of Legal Counsel, Barrister Omar H. Khan wrote against killing of dolphins in the light of the Wildlife Conversation Act | The Dhaka Tribune | 16 May, 2020. <https://bit.ly/2NrqljC>
- ✓ Partner of Legal Counsel, Barrister Miti Sanjana talked about women’s hope in relation to the upcoming Budget 2020-2021 | United News 24 | 10 June, 2020. <https://bit.ly/2BwxSBd>

OUR TV SHOWS AND INTERVIEWS

- ▶ Partner of Legal Counsel Barrister, Miti Sanjana, gave interview about her daily activities during this pandemic | United News 24 | 24 April, 2020. <https://bit.ly/3fNtZGA>
- ▶ Partner of Legal Counsel, Barrister Miti Sanjana virtually connected with DBC News Onopokkho to discuss about the rise in domestic abuse in the wake of the coronavirus emergency | DBC NEWS | 01 May, 2020. <https://bit.ly/319LMnl>
- ▶ Partner of Legal Counsel, Barrister Miti Sanjana discussed in an interview with Independent TV about the rise in domestic abuse in the wake of the coronavirus emergency | Independent TV | 09 May, 2020. <https://bit.ly/37TPI2w>
- ▶ Partner of Legal Counsel, Barrister Miti Sanjana talked about the laws related to retrenchment and lay off from services in Somadhan Sutro | DBC News | 17 May, 2020. <https://bit.ly/3hSouIR>
- ▶ Partner of Legal Counsel, Barrister Miti Sanjana talked in an interview about marital rape | DBC NEWS | 29 May, 2020. <https://bit.ly/37ZGhcA>
- ▶ Managing Partner of Legal Counsel, Barrister Omar H. Khan had a conversation with Legal Voice Foundation | 3 June, 2020. <https://bit.ly/31bwZJ2>
- ▶ Partner of Legal Counsel Barrister Miti Sanjana has been interviewed in a program by Radio Today in association with Voice of America about different legal aspects during the wake of the coronavirus emergency | 04 June, 2020. <https://bit.ly/2AXgs0G>
- ▶ Partner of Legal Counsel, Barrister Miti Sanjana sharing her views in an interview about inappropriate retrenchment of RMG workers | Ekattor Sokal | Ekattor Tv | 06 June, 2020. <https://bit.ly/2YsjFho>
- ▶ Partner of Legal Counsel, Barrister Miti Sanjana had a discussion on various aspects | Channel i | 10 June, 2020. <https://bit.ly/38dHbC8>
- ▶ Partner of Legal Counsel, Barrister Miti Sanjana discussed in an interview about the laws related to leave | DBC NEWS | Somadhan Sutra | 21 June, 2020. <https://bit.ly/2NEmTYX>