



Legal Counsel

BARRISTERS-ADVOCATES-LEGAL CONSULTANTS



SPECIAL BULLETIN-2

Date : 8 September 2020

COVID - 19



www.legalcounselbd.com

PREFACE

As the COVID -19 pandemic continues to hamper the economy and up-end business as usual, many of our client organizations are grappling with the big questions of how to move forward with their existing set ups, promote sustainability and to continue with their business. As a responsible law chambers, during this unprecedented time, Legal Counsel has felt that certain legal information and relevant data could be one of the greatest assistances to its valued clients, relevant stakeholders and to its recipients at large. In pursuit of achieving the objective of disseminating key information and views, Legal Counsel has published a twenty-eight page 'Special Bulletin on COVID-19' on April 19, 2020, which is till date the only such publication by any law chambers in Bangladesh. With the great response from the readers, we endeavor to publish this 2nd Special Bulletin, with ongoing legal updates as to how the current world is dealing with this new normal. We shall try to ensure that you continue to receive the regular quarterly bulletins at the end of each quarter.

HEALTH

CURRENT GLOBAL CORONA & HEALTH STATUS

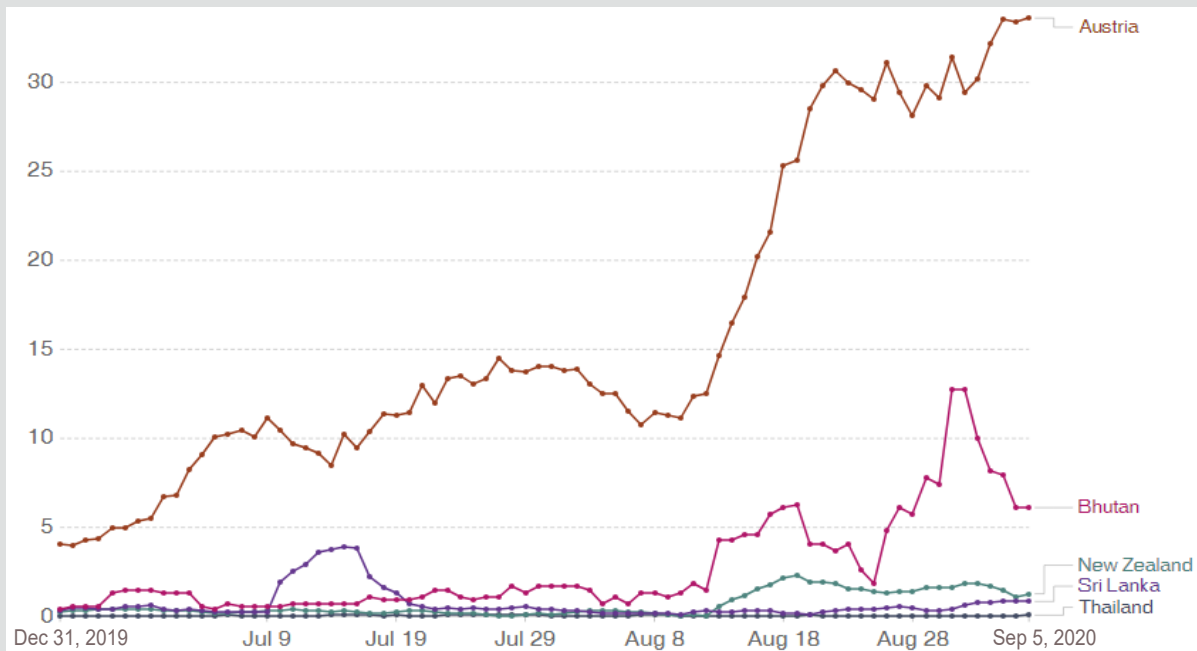
World has been experiencing an unprecedented shift in the way of life amid COVID-19. From December 31, 2019, Chinese media reported for the first time on an outbreak of viral pneumonia in the city of Wuhan. Since then it has brought about a catastrophic and deathly impact all over the world. Public health authorities say the number of infections has been accelerating and the peak still lies ahead. In early September 2020, the world finds itself at a vague stage: past the shock of the pandemic but without a clear end in sight. The said chart shows the numbers of confirmed cases, death and recovery of 25 countries have been recorded as of September 05, 2020.

SL NO.	COUNTRY	CONFIRMED CASES	DEATH	RECOVERY
01.	Bangladesh	323,565	4,447	217,852
02.	India	4,113,811	70,679	3,180,865
03.	China	90,026	4,728	84,840
04.	Japan	70,876	1,349	61,445
05.	South Korea	21,177	334	16,146
06.	Singapore	56,982	27	56,267
07.	Malaysia	9,391	128	9,113
08.	Thailand	3,444	58	3,281
09.	Pakistan	298,509	6,342	285,898
10.	Sri Lanka	3,121	12	2,918
11.	Nepal	27,241	107	17,495
12.	Bhutan	228	0	150
13.	Maldives	8,486	29	5,822
14.	Australia	26,278	753	22,330
15.	Iraq	256,719	7,422	195,259
16.	Germany	251,056	9,401	226,208
17.	Norway	11,296	264	9,348
18.	Russia	1,020,310	17,759	838,126
19.	New Zealand	1,772	24	1,632
20.	Italy	276,338	35,534	209,610
21.	Spain	517,133	29,418	150,376
22.	France	335,620	30,879	103,484
23.	United Kingdom	346,507	41,635	57,794
24.	USA	6,450,270	193,314	3,710,132
25.	Canada	131,495	9,143	116,136

Source: <https://www.trackcorona.live/?referrer=stanforddaily.com>.

From the above data, it seems that the least affected countries are Bhutan, Sri Lanka, New Zealand, Thailand and Australia. The recovery rates of the said countries are higher than the other countries since COVID-19 has registered as an urgent threat.

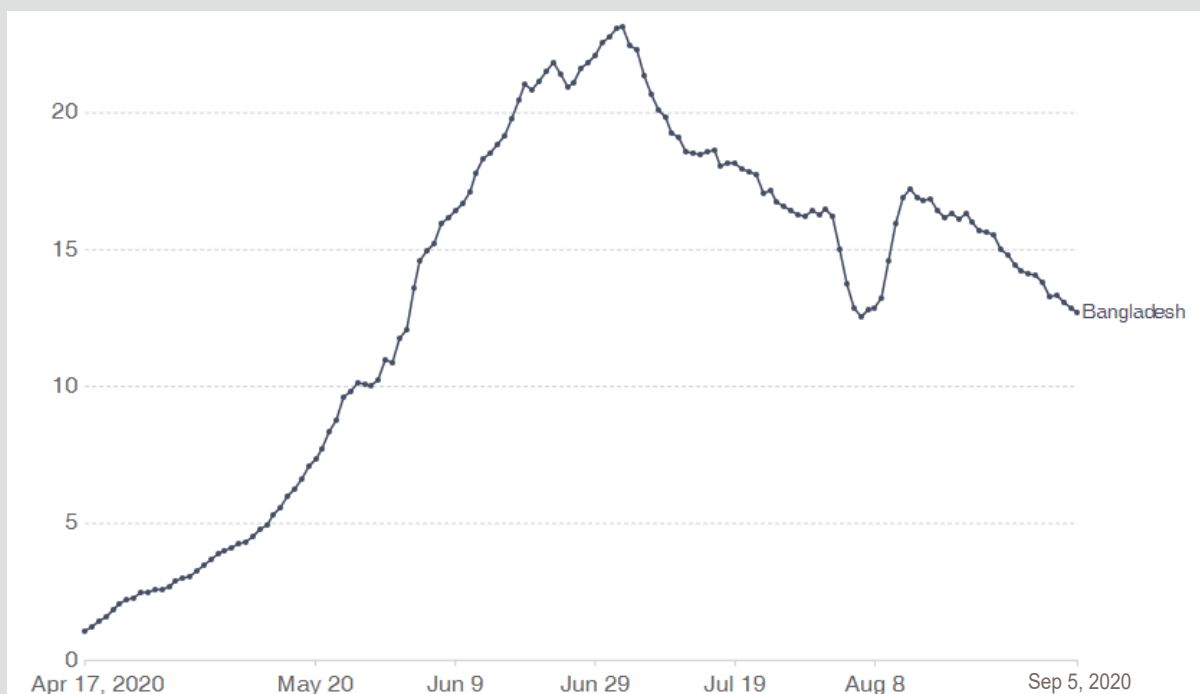
DATA 1: THE CHART BELOW SHOWS THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CONFIRMED, DEATH AND RECOVERY OF 5 (FIVE) COUNTRIES.



Source: <https://ourworldindata.org>

DATA 2: THE PICTURE OF BANGLADESH AMID COVID-19:

The following chart shows the Cumulative confirmed COVID-19 deaths per million people in Bangladesh



Source: <https://ourworldindata.org>

HEALTH

THE 'NEW NORMAL' AND HEALTH -SAFETY GUIDELINES

We are living in a disrupted state of all forms of settings and practices, starting from general practices of humans at home to state machineries. It has made us wonder that although we have evolved and now live in an era where technology and science has successfully made advancements, it has all been disrupted through a virus that is invisible to the naked eye. It has adversely affected economies worldwide, and has brought about considerable impact on healthcare and education systems of all the countries. At first, many countries have been locked down in order to minimize the spread of the virus and developed countries have further lifted the lockdown and resumed their normal lives, rigorously taking into account the safety measures. Likewise, Bangladesh declared 'General Holidays' in March 2020 and by the end of May and during early June, the Government allowed the reopening of offices, providing safety guidelines and measures to be followed by all.



People have psychologically become more concerned about health, hygiene and cleanliness. Usage of masks, sanitizers, frequent handwashing, wearing PPE, maintaining social distance is gradually being practiced regularly by concerned people and many have formed the aforesaid as a habit. It should also be noted that not everyone in the country makes use of mask, sanitizers and maintain social distance; in certain areas, a lot of people are also found not caring about safety measures and roaming around freely. However, along with the safety guidelines, both general and concerning offices, the government on July 21 has also made the wearing of masks mandatory, failing which penalties follow.

With regard to offices, the government has initially provided a safety guideline, which includes:

- ✔ Storage and supply of essentials like mask, liquid soap for hand wash, disinfectant etc.
- ✔ Management planning regarding the steps to be taken in an emergency situation.
- ✔ Establishing emergency waste disposal system.
Training of staffs on matters like proper use of mask, etiquette of sneezing and coughing, physical distance, washing of hands and disinfection.
- ✔ Establishing a Health Monitoring System and recording the health status of the staffs on a daily basis.
- ✔ Installing temperature monitoring equipment to take staffs' temperatures before entering the office building.
- ✔ Increasing ventilation in the office, keeping frequently contacted areas (e.g. doors, knobs, etc.) disinfected and keeping office places clean.
- ✔ Use of Masks and maintain social distance.
Avoid using of uncleaned/unwashed hands on nose/mouth.
- ✔ Sick, pregnant and persons with vulnerabilities should not attend the office.

On July 18, 2020, the DGHS further published elaborated guidelines for offices, which provides the following:

- ✓ No one should be allowed to enter office premises if they are not wearing masks properly.
- ✓ Hand soaps, sanitizers and other disinfectants (as approved by WHO) should be present at the entrance.
- ✓ If an employee has fever and is ill, arrange COVID-19 tests (if necessary). Strictly disallow employees to visit office if they have fever.
- ✓ Sanitize office premises, chairs, tables, lifts, etc. with disinfectants (as approved by WHO).
- ✓ Sanitize door knobs, lift buttons more than once in a day.
- ✓ Increase in the use of e-documents and online meetings.
- ✓ Reduce number of visitors.
- ✓ If lunch is supplied to the employees, social distance should be maintained.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further brought in considerable changes to the way in which workplace functions have been carried out for all this time. For example, a lot of organizations have adopted the roster schedule, whereby a certain number of employees are asked to attend office physically, while work the rest of the days from home, in order to reduce human contact and spread of COVID-19. Many offices have also stopped providing food and transportation at the moment. Some offices have also recruited employees where their workstation would be their home and they shall not have to take the risk of physically attending office. Although taking extra precautions and providing essentials can be seen as an addition to the expenses of an organization, on the other hand, elimination of food and transportation facilities and home-based recruitments have, indeed, enabled organizations to cut their costs, provide employment opportunities and continue its operations amidst the pandemic. Many organizations have also resorted to outsourcing employees. However, in terms of outsourcing, where organizations are able to enjoy the advantages of reduced costs, increased efficiency and faster delivery of work, it also brings the disadvantage in the form of reduction of quality control, security risks, etc.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a havoc on mankind across all countries. It has led to the government to reformulate its programs and policies in light of the pandemic, with the view to minimizing the devastation and providing a way to combat the deadly virus. Likewise, organizations have also resumed its activities, taking into account all sorts of precautionary measures. Similarly, the common people have also adopted the measures and brought changes to their lifestyles and way of living.

HEALTH

VACCINE UPDATE

Medical researchers around the world are working tirelessly for inventing a COVID-19 vaccine. About 140 vaccines are in early development stages and 27 vaccines have managed to reach the human trials and 1 has been approved for military use in China.

Russia as the first country in the world has approved a vaccine on 11th August 2020,



named, Sputnik-V being developed by Moscow's Gamaleya Institute. Russian officials have said mass vaccination to be started in October, 2020 in Russia with the production to be commenced within even a few days. However, WHO has insisted Russia to follow international guidelines for producing a vaccine against COVID-19 as the vaccine has alleged to have been cleared without phase-3 human trials. It is likely to have the Phase-3 testing this week with 40,000 volunteers. Meanwhile, promising results have been published in the medical journal, The Lancet, on 04 Sept 2020 highlighting the fact that the Russian vaccine induces immune response and is safe.

China's pharmaceutical company, Sinovac Biotech has got the approval to conduct its phase I and II clinical trials in China. Bangladesh Government has given the approval to phase-III trial. Around 4,200 healthcare workers of 7 COVID-19 devoted hospitals in Dhaka will be vaccinated during the trial period and if it succeeds, then Bangladesh will be in a pole position to get the vaccine for free or at a low price, according to the sources.

A Bangladeshi pharmaceutical company, Globe Biotech Limited has claimed to have developed a vaccine against COVID-19 after conducting successful preliminary trial on 5 rabbits from June 10 to June 28 this year. The animal trial stage is likely to be completed within September and then it will go on human trial. They are expecting that the vaccine made by them shall be in the market by end of the year.

Sinopharm, another Chinese Company, began world's first phase-III clinical trials of COVID-19 vaccine in mid-July in Abu Dhabi, UAE using up to 15,000 volunteers from different parts of the world and of variable races, colors and ethnicities etc.

In developing the vaccine, Oxford University is leading the world. Its vaccine is in a joint phase II or III trial in the UK and recently went into phase III trial in South Africa and Brazil. The medical experts around the world are eagerly awaiting a successful completion of all necessary protocols and mass production of this vaccine.

The US-based company, Moderna has also developed a vaccine, which is in final stage of human trials, and is anticipated to be ready for approval by early 2021.

The WHO has aimed at providing easy and rightful access to COVID-19 vaccine across the globe. The COVID-19 global vaccines facility will raise funds from richer countries to develop the vaccine and allocate it evenhandedly around the world.

LAW

SPOTLIGHT ON CYBER SECURITY: THE DIGITAL SECURITY ACT 2018

CCOVID -19 has vividly shown us how deeply we have become dependent on digital technologies and how far this global 'digitalization' has been merged with our 'human' life. Within the course of time, we have gradually integrated our lifestyle with digitalization and rapidly such automatic transformation has taken a big stake in every aspects of our activities. From social life to work life, from shopping to schooling, from financial transactions to court proceedings, every segment of human activity has now directly synchronized into this enormous web of digital platforms and this vast digital global network is mainly rooted in usage and application of diversified information; and eventually, information itself has now turned into the new currency of this digital era.



From a bright perspective, such advancement of technology has immensely contributed in growing the economy and has a huge impact in the structural development of a state, but in certain ways digitalization has thrown a huge challenge to us in protecting and securing our personal data and information and its privacy. Undoubtedly, Google, Facebook, e-Banking, e-Commerce, e-mails, and millions of other digital platforms have made our life easier, but at the same time, we need to be mindful about the fact that, while opting into these services, we are consenting access to our personal data and sometimes perhaps to sensitive data. For example, sensitive data may include banking details, financial transactions, locations, photos, videos, professional information, contacts, correspondence and many other information which are very private and confidential to any person or organization. In one sense, we have provided our consent to the digital networks to access our information and in return taking facility of digitalization. Therefore, every individual and organization need to be very careful in providing and sharing information to protect itself from unwanted misuse of information.

Highlighting data and information privacy as a center of emphasis, most of the developed countries have already adopted efficient and modern cyber security management systems with the enactment of compatible legal structures and policies to protect and secure data and information. Taking such models into account, Bangladesh has also recently enacted Digital Security Act 2018 to secure and implement a workable cyber-security system. Beside this, we have the Information and Communication Technology Act (ICT) 2006. Both the Acts address and incorporate wide range of cyber crimes with the enactment of numerous central digital security measures. This new Act has become the ultimate legal instrument against those so-called cyber-hackers, cyber bullying and troll perpetrators, online frauds, impersonators, misusers of information and overall, every kind of cyber offender. The maximum sanction for cyber offence, as per this law, is life imprisonment and the maximum fine has been fixed to BDT five crore on a perpetrator.

Legal Counsel has organized a webinar on Data Protection and Privacy on 12.07.2020. A distinguished expert panel shared their opinions in the webinar. Mr. Syed Almas Kabir, the President of BASIS (Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services), the Hon'ble Minister Mr. Mustafa Jabbar (Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology), the CEO of Bkash Mr. Kamal Kadir and both the partners of Legal Counsel were present in the webinar. From an organizational point of view, all of the participants agreed on the following points as part of measures to protect data and to ensure cyber security:

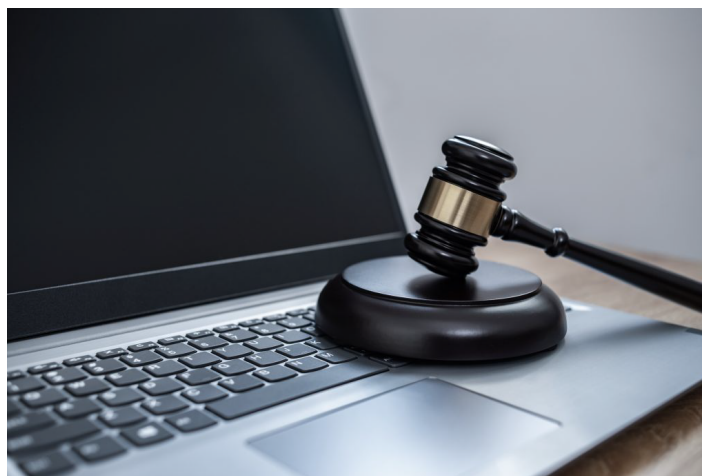
1. To make a modern Cyber Security Policy for every organization and training up every employee about the basic cyber security system.
2. To trace and define sensitive data and making a Manual to use sensitive data and if possible, to implement a strong Information Security Management System.
3. Creating device awareness and disseminate knowledge on secured device usage.
4. Restriction on access to sensitive information and allocating separate officials to deal with confidential information and keeping log of access to data.
5. Creating awareness on digital finance and financial crimes.
6. Creating awareness among the children, youth and tentative clients about data privacy.
7. Creating awareness about the Digital Security Act 2008 and its implications on different circumstances.

Surely, there is no alternative to opting to digitalization to keep pace with this fast-moving era and it is also undeniable that, to avail the facility of digital platforms we need to compromise personal information in a great extent. However, as the system can be misused by the dishonest persons, therefore ensuring a secure system has become a need for every organization and also in personal level; and cyber awareness in light of Digital Security Act can ensure prosperous cyber system of Bangladesh and be able to defend the cyber offences in large scale.

LAW

VIRTUAL COURTS: A NEW DIMENSION IN THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM

The world is in chaos just after the outbreak of coronavirus. As we know due to this current pandemic situation, since 26 March 2020 all the courts of Bangladesh have ceased their physical court operations. Considering the urgency and need to operate the courts even during the pandemic, an ordinance called "Use of Information and Communications Technology in Court, Ordinance 2020" was promulgat



ed by the President of Bangladesh, allowing the courts to run their proceedings using information and communication technology. The main objective of the ordinance was to empower the court to enable virtual attendance of the parties for the trials and allow the courts to hold trials, inquiry, hearing on appeals, recording testimonies, arguments and deliver judgment etc. ensuring the rule of law and continuing access of the people to justice. Noteworthy, generally the Parliament passes the laws and are called as 'Act' but when immediate action is needed, the Constitution of Bangladesh allows the President to promulgate ordinances when the Parliament is not in session. Nevertheless, the Appellate Division, the High Court Division and the subordinate courts started its journey of conducting judicial proceedings in virtual courts via video conference and other digital media on a limited scale.

Initially lawyers, Judges and other officials of the courts were struggling to adjust to the virtual court system as they were not very much familiar with the technology and not well equipped also. But, eventually the lawyers, judges and other officials have adopted the new approach/procedure.

After four months of physical closure, courts have finally resumed physically on partial basis on 5 August 2020. Although the Appellate Division is conducting fully virtually, the High Court Division is conducting both virtually as well as physically. The pre-scheduled vacations of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh for the rest of 2020 have been cancelled. The Supreme Court of Bangladesh has issued a directive for the interest of the lawyers and litigants, extending the tenure of filing all kinds of cases till 31 August 2020 for which the period of limitations had expired on or after 26 March 2020 this year. The Supreme Court of Bangladesh has also issued 14-point instructions stipulating guidelines for maintaining health and safety at the courtrooms and the court premises.

Undoubtedly the introduction of virtual courts is considered to be a historic decision for our judiciary considering our current situation with all the possible limitations.

LAW**CLEARING BACKLOGS INCREASED BY COVID CLOSURE
BY IMPLEMENTING DIFFERENT APPROACHES:**

A huge backlog of around 3.6 million cases are pending in all the courts of Bangladesh including the Appellate Division, the High Court Division and the subordinate courts. We have such a large number of cases piled in all the courts waiting to be disposed of but the cases remained stuck since our judiciary lacks an appropriate number of judges in different courts to clear this backlog. In such a situation, Negotiation, Mediation, Arbitration and Restorative Justice could have been a great solution if the same can be implemented.

Negotiation:

Negotiation is a strategic discussion between the parties in order to resolve the issue(s) among themselves in a way that is beneficial and acceptable for all the parties involved or just for any/some of them. The parties involved will not argue with each other rather each party will try to persuade the other to agree with his/her point. The parties will compromise to agree on matters of mutual interest. To be able to achieve a desirable outcome it is useful to follow some structured approach by the negotiators such as preparation, discussion and clarification of goals, etc. A successful negotiation shall conclude with signing a deed or memorandum of settlement.

Mediation:

Mediation is a process in which the parties will have informal discussions with the assistance of a mutually selected impartial and neutral third-person, who will eventually assist them in reaching a settlement in the negotiation. The cost of mediation is comparatively much lower than the usual cost for hiring a lawyer for conducting a case in the court and does not require a hefty amount of time to resolve it. The mediation leaves the decision power totally with the parties and not with the mediator. Therefore, the mediation could be used as an alternative resolution to reduce the burden of the court or rather reduce the backlog created during this pandemic because it is no time consuming and less costly.

Arbitration:

Arbitration is a form of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) through which a dispute is resolved outside the courts by an impartial adjudicator whose decision is final and binding upon the parties. Arbitration is governed by the Arbitration Act 2001. In most of the arbitrations, each party shall appoint its arbitrator and the 2 (two) arbitrators so nominated shall jointly appoint the third member of the tribunal, who shall be the chairman of the tribunal. Institutional arbitration is also getting popularity in the recent years.

Restorative Justice:

Another way this backlog could have been avoided precisely is by implementing the restorative justice. Restorative justice is a spontaneous and natural approach to justice that considers crime or wrong doing as an offence against individual or community rather than the state and emphasizes highest victim satisfaction and offender's accountability. Village court is seen as one form of restorative justice and other informal dispute-resolution mechanisms includes the traditional shalish and NGO-reformed shalish etc.

In light of the above, it is necessary to think of new approaches, looking at the huge amount of pending cases in court.

TECHNOLOGY

HEAVY INTERNET DEPENDENCY IS HERE TO STAY

The pandemic has surely disrupted the way people live their lives and such an effect has been witnessed worldwide. As the world has been fighting the pandemic, doing almost everything online has eventually turned to be the 'new normal'. Previously, where an average employed person used to start his/her day by travelling from home to their workplace, amidst the pandemic, s/he has started



his/her day by logging in to work from online and mostly working from home. School and university going students who previously got up in the mornings to go to their respective schools and universities, are now doing their classes online. From groceries to medicines and clothes, use of internet for all the regular works is seen to have increased quite a lot during this pandemic.

However, one might wonder that did we not have a heavy use of the internet previously, before the outbreak? If we look keenly into our activities, we might as well realize that even before the outbreak, people were generally dependent on the internet. Using internet during work, for school projects, at home were already prevalent before COVID-19. Nevertheless, now if we pay a closer look, we can see that people from all over the country are using the internet, not only to connect with others, but also do other fruitful things, like selling foods and other essentials online and making a living out of it. It has further been witnessed that people living in remote, underdeveloped areas have developed mobile apps and made arrangements for ordering groceries and other essentials in places where, previously, such advantageous arrangements were not available. Further to that, it should also be noted that although TV channels have telecasted news on COVID-19, however, through online platforms, official and timely information and further instructions and safety guidelines about the same have been successfully disseminated to people all around the globe. Use of internet, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital data has further assisted firms to release free apps for early diagnosis and assessment of virus symptoms.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, use of advanced technology, which rose to 15% during March 2020, eventually increased to 50% by June 2020. Bangladesh is an excellent example of how, through the use of information technology, an economy can keep going during disasters and pandemic and this can be a driving force of economy and life in the long-run.

Heavy internet usage and reliance can further be seen in the reaction of the people and organizations all over the country when, recently, due to a cut in the fiber of the country's second submarine cable connection (SEA-ME-WE-5) during a construction work at Kuakata, the people of Bangladesh immensely suffered as they experienced slow internet connectivity. Due to this cut, massive disruption in carrying out significant activities has been witnessed by people and organizations all over the country.

On an ending note, it can be stated that internet dependency has rapidly increased during this time of crisis from every aspect. People have also been immensely benefited from its use. During this pandemic, the contribution of technology has been extremely positive, allowing us to have an optimistic view of the future of technology. Taking every change into account, it appears evident that heavy internet dependency is, indeed, here to stay. In fact, such increased usage of internet and technology are pivotal and are capable of facilitating global changes and economic activities. We at Legal Counsel are currently doing policy advocacy for further infrastructural advancement for increased capacity of bandwidth, smooth and enhanced connectivity and ensuring effective and efficient services by the key service providers.

EDUCATION

OPENING OF SCHOOLS ACROSS THE WORLD, VIS-À-VIS PICTURE OF BANGLADESH

Amidst the pandemic, there has been an inevitable dilemma in making economic and public policy decisions. Regard has been given to scientific evidence, health protection imperatives and minimization of damage to people's livelihood. Where it has been difficult to determine the ambit of exposure to the outer world and matters such as the reopening offices and formulating safety measures,



it has been equally difficult to determine the right manner and time for doing the same.

During March 2020, numerous educational institutions across the world closed down to protect pupils from the spread of COVID-19. In May, in Israel, schools were reopened, while classes in Japan, Denmark, China and Norway had already begun. By early June, more than 20 countries reopened schools, although some others, including schools in Taiwan, Nicaragua, and Sweden, were never closed. Strict limits on contact between children were imposed by some schools, while others allowed children to move freely, whereby the experiment was extensive and uncontrolled.

However, recently in UK, the Department for Education (DoE) has announced schools in Scotland to be reopened by mid-August and those in the rest of the UK to be opened in September, publishing separate guidelines for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland which are to be strictly maintained. In US, in late July and early August, schools were opened, which eventually led to switching to remote-only instructions due to students being tested positive for COVID-19. Some schools are planning to open having in person instruction, while others are offering options to study online or a hybrid arrangement. In India, Central/State Governments are scheduled to come with a set of guidelines by August 31 and so far, it has been observed that many State Governments are not in any hurry to reopen schools.

The Government of Bangladesh has allowed the reopening of offices and other economic activities, leaving out schools and educational institutions in June. In the beginning of the outbreak in March, the Government announced the closure of schools, later stating that the closure may continue till September. On June 14, 2020, the Ministry of Education (MoE) extended the closure of schools and the Prime Minister has stated that schools and colleges will only reopen after the COVID-19 pandemic is over. However, after the declaration of General Holidays, many schools and universities have resorted to taking online classes for children and students, attempting to ensure that education of students and children are not affected in this current pandemic situation.

Nevertheless, the government is now considering the reopening of schools, having regard to appropriate strategies to ensure proper education of children during this pandemic through improving online access and improvising physical class model. A hybrid education system has also been suggested, whereby both online and offline platforms shall be used. However, although strategies and consultations have been encouraged and conducted, it should also be noted that currently, the number of confirmed cases in Bangladesh till date has risen to 323, 565. Moreover, due to the rise in poverty in this pandemic, experts also fear that there is a possibility that more than 45% of the secondary-level students will not return to schools, if, after the COVID-19 shutdown ends on August 31, the schools reopen (the current dropout rate stands as 36%).

On a concluding note, it can be stated that as of now, no official declaration has been provided by the Government regarding the opening of schools. On the other hand, COVID-19 cases are rising each day. Thus, in this scenario, opening of schools is, indeed, a critical decision for the Government to make.

NEWS

LEGAL COUNSEL NEWS ON COVID RELATED ACTIVITIES

Legal Counsel has been pursuing several specific coronavirus related activities to provide its clientele with relevant information during the crisis. We have also been doing policy dialogue with the government and key-stakeholders offering suggestions on different aspect of the crisis. Following few links will be a source of information for you in relation to the activities done by us in relation to coronavirus since mid- March 2020:

- 1 **Special Bulletin on COVID -19:** The only COVID bulletin by a law firm in Bangladesh: 17 April 2020 [<https://legalcounselbd.com/special-bulletin-COVID-19/>].
- 2 **Public Webinar:** Legal Counsel has organized 3 (three) state of the art public webinars, each of them has been attended virtually by more or less fifty thousand audience. The same has been broadcast live at a popular private TV channel, channel -i and news have been widely published in different reputed dailies:
 - ✓ “Employment Situation around the World during COVID-19”: Speakers were lawyers from Australia, Bangladesh, India, Nigeria and Pakistan. June 2020 [<https://www.facebook.com/channelitv/videos/955879834842594/>]
 - ✓ “Mental Wellbeing of Professionals During COVID-19”: jointly organized by Pulse Health Care Services Ltd. 04 July 2020 [<https://www.facebook.com/legalcounselbd/videos/704848040353844/?vh=e&extid=srmxIO3LBWpNSVz9&d=n>]
 - ✓ “Digital Communication: Data Protection and Privacy”: Speakers were the hon’ble Minister, industry experts, lawyers etc. 12 July 2020 [https://www.facebook.com/channelilive/videos/3246737635386408/?vh=e&d=n,https://youtu.be/PMhw_xnWFbE]
- 3 **Speaker at webinars:** Different lawyers of Legal Counsel have attended different webinars organized by following reputed forums and presented on different important and relevant topics:
 - ✓ Magnum Management Consulting Ltd. Labour and Employment Law and Force Majeure and Arbitration. 4th May 2020.
 - ✓ Bangladesh Association of Software and Information System (BASIS): Employment Law. May 2020
 - ✓ Bangladesh Society for Human Resource Management (BSHRM): Labour and Employment Law, May 2020
 - ✓ Nordic Chambers of Commerce and Industry (NCCI): Presentation on Employment law and Contract Law. 3rd June 2020
 - ✓ Japan Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JBCCI): Presentation on Employment Law and Contract Law in the new normal. 29th July 2020.
- 4 **Media Presence:** TV Shows (British Broadcasting Corporation, channel-i, Duetsche Welle (DW) Germany, DBC News, Ekattor TV, RTV, Somoy TV) and newspaper publications (Daily Star, Dhaka Tribune, Prothom Alo, etc.): In addition to publishing the Bulletins, the partners of Legal Counsel have further been engaged in conducting various informative and enlightening webinars, write ups and TV shows on different corona related issues such as the impact of COVID-19 on business and SME businesses, RMG sector, medical treatment related laws, health safety related laws, contagious diseases laws, employment laws, start up laws, ICT laws, Data Protection and Data Privacy laws, domestic violence laws, digital security laws etc.

- 5 **Relief Work:** The partners and other members of the Legal Counsel have been involved in supporting different relief activities during the pandemic focusing on poor and marginalized population in terms of providing them with basic food, essential medicines, health-safety equipment including mask, handwash, sanitizer etc. and also support for the people who have also been hit by the flood specially in the northern part of the country.
- 6 **Pro-Bono Legal Support:** As a part of our Pro-Bono Policy, Legal Counsel is providing pro-bono legal support to individuals, who have been unfairly dealt with by reference to the pandemic and have limited means to avail professional legal support. Our associates are utilizing certain hours of their week for supporting these individuals in terms of issues such as domestic violence, unfair employment treatment including illegal retrenchment, illegal pay reduction, non-payment of salary, non-payment under small value contracts, unfair eviction, illegal possession of premises etc

TEAM LC

Editorial Board

Barrister Miti Sanjana, Partner
Barrister Omar H. Khan, Head of Chambers
Barrister Rabiya J. Firoz, Chief Executive Lawyer

Contributors

Barrister Moshfeque Rizvi, Partner (Development)
Barrister M. Salauddin Hassan, Senior Associate
Advocate Afrin Jahan Khan, Senior Associate
Advocate Anthonia Costa, Associate
Barrister Atmaja Bhattacharjee, Associate
Barrister Ishtiak Abdullah, Associate
Barrister Nuzhath Islam, Associate
Barrister Md. Shah Ifran, Associate
Farhana Azad, Associate