

# LABOUR NEWS

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BANGLADESH EMPLOYERS' FEDERATION



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## ARTICLE

### 15 EFFECTIVE WAYS TO BOOST EMPLOYEE MORALE IN 2021



Morale. It's that extra kick employees have so that they don't show up to work looking like a zombie. It's what keeps them productive and engaged. It's what keeps them at your company for longer. It's what helps them deliver exceptional customer service day in, day out.

What Is Employee Morale Really?

Forbes magazine defines it as, "...the attitude, satisfaction, and overall outlook of employees during their association with an organization or a business." As a manager, the responsibility falls in your lap to hire good people and to create a space where everyone feels confident to perform at their very best.

#### **The Impact of Positive Employee Morale**

First, positive employee morale leads to an increase in productivity and efficiency in the workplace. When employees genuinely enjoy the work atmosphere, they are motivated to work more efficiently and productively. Whenever employees have high morale, they will enjoy going to work and on top of it all, their quality of work is much higher.

Second, when employees have positive employee morale, they give the company a competitive edge. Think of it this way, if your company is facing bankruptcy then one of the easiest ways you can pull through that crisis is when employee morale is high. Your employees will put their heads together, push on, and will strive to avoid the apocalyptic end of the company.

Positive and high company morale will lead you to attract and retain top talent. Employees will be far more likely to remain loyal to the company when they have a good and healthy work environment which in turn leads to higher employee morale and that positive energy will help attract and retain talent.

Lastly, positive employee morale helps reduce costs. Think of this domino effect: high employee morale helps reduce workplace accidents which leads to fewer absences and helps lower stress which then leads to less paid time off.

#### **Causes of Low Employee Morale in the Workplace**

##### *Lack of Growth*

Employees need personal growth just as much as the business does. When the company isn't growing, employees can grow bored and unmotivated. Research has proven that employees need growth to stay engaged and motivated because, without growth, they will become disengaged and will eventually leave for a more challenging role. This is the opposite of staff morale.

##### *No Clarity*

If employees don't know what you expect of them or they aren't aware of what's going on in the company, they won't be motivated to get the job done to the best of their ability.

You have to set clear and realistic goals for each employee. Schedule one-on-one meetings to track progress and to clear up any confusion.

### *Leadership Changes*

Change can be hard to handle but it's a necessary evil. Whether there was a merger or a new hire at the top level, morale can take a hit when confidence is shaken, because if the company culture changes, so does morale. It is best to monitor employee morale when a change is implemented.

### *Leadership Problems*

More often than not, poor leadership causes low employee morale. Those in leadership positions must understand how their behavior affects the team. If they don't, morale will gravely suffer and if nothing gets addressed, morale will only plummet.

### *Issues With The Company Itself*

Build up the employees' attitude toward it and that attitude can be designed long before the interview process. Sometimes, a reputation precedes you and your company image, so make sure it's an image that draws employees in instead of scaring them away.

We've compiled 15 easy and creative ways you can boost employee morale, today. Don't wait to implement these at your company, your employee morale needs to keep going up and not down so let's get to it!

## **15 Ways to Boost Employee Morale**

### *Be Transparent*

Don't attempt to hide problems or avoid conversations when morale is low. You have to remain transparent to boost staff morale. Your employees will respect honesty while you work together to fix any issues. Inform them about company updates, new protocols, customer feedback, and more.

### *Communicate Often*

Going off the last tip to boost employee morale, be sure to communicate! Share positive company announcements, like a new product in development

or a glowing customer review. Your employees are human beings too and you need to treat them that way too. Communicate and loop them into a conversation that can directly affect them.

Additionally, you should check in with your employees on a frequent basis, ask them:

- How are you feeling about your job/manager/co-workers?
- Are you facing any challenges? How can I help?
- Are you happy at work? How can I help?

You have to provide open, regular communication about issues and achievements that are important to your employees. As far as boosting staff morale goes, this one is huge.

### *Use The Right Tools*

With all of the information we've outlined so far, it can seem a little daunting to make employee morale a priority at your company. However, studies prove that a positive work culture leads to more productivity than those that aren't.

Now, as a manager, you're already juggling a dozen tasks (and then some). But knowing that, we're well into the technological era and there's an app for that! Connecteam is a leading employee app that offers a powerful and flexible, mobile-first communication and engagement platform for your team.

Take a look below at how organizations just like yours are utilizing Connecteam to boost employee morale in the workplace:

- **Recognize Employees:** shout it from the rooftops! Be sure to send updates to the company to celebrate new hires, personal milestones like anniversaries, create an employee spotlight and allow employees to nominate their peers for awards. Then allow employees to comment and like the updates to drive additional engagement.

**Share Success:** send updates on business milestones like bringing new customers, a new location, smashing the goal or KPI set, etc. Also celebrate success stories from customers with

letters, pictures, videos, a story and more.

- Put Employees Front & Center: make decisions based on in-organizational surveys, launch a suggestion box to gain feedback and insights and introduce an open-door policy so employees can directly approach HR or senior management.

Wellness & Benefits: provide all necessary information under one roof that employees can access whenever they need and allow your team to register for company events right from their mobile phone.

- Non-serious Communication: use nice GIFs for interactive content, allow people to like and comment to be part of the discussion, but in a structured safe organized environment. You can even start funny polls like who's your favorite superhero?

A Personal Touch: from senior leadership all the way down, you can share videos from the CEO to every last employee. This is an easy way for front line employees to approach senior management in a structured and controlled environment Connecteam is the perfect tool to establish a regular drumbeat to drive morale that's infused in your company culture.

#### *Give Employee Recognition*

Focus on the good! When employees feel truly appreciated, they have more self-worth and become more productive employees.

How Full Is Your Bucket proves that employees who receive regular, positive recognition will experience:

- Higher productivity
- Better engagement levels
- More loyalty to the company
- Higher morale
- Better customer satisfaction.

Employee recognition is a no-brainer when it comes to creative and easy ways to boost employee morale. In fact, Gallup found that "Workplace recognition motivates, provides a sense of accomplishment

and makes employees feel valued for their work. Recognition not only boosts individual employee engagement, but it also has been found to increase productivity and loyalty to the company, leading to higher retention."

At the end of the day: employee recognition is low cost and high impact. As mentioned in the point before, Connecteam's employee all-in-one communication app allows you to share employee recognition with the tap of a button. For example, shine the spotlight by telling fun and engaging stories of employees and their successes, celebrate personal milestones together like meaningful anniversaries, newborns or adoption, or even birthday wishes, allow employees to nominate their peers for awards, and even welcome new team members.

#### *Get Employee Feedback*

Getting employee feedback is a great way to boost employee morale. When you show employees that you're listening, they will feel heard and are far more likely to be motivated. But it isn't enough just to collect feedback, you need to act on it as well. Even if you don't implement each piece of feedback, be sure to thank your employees for sending in their thoughts and suggestions.

To further support the importance of employee feedback, studies have found that

- 87% of employees report they want job development but only 1/3 receive feedback they need
- Gallup estimates that disengaged employees cost companies in the United States \$450-550 billion every year in lost productivity
- Gallup also found that employees who aren't receiving feedback are 40% more likely to be disengaged
- 78% of employees said receiving recognition motivated them to do their jobs
- And going off the last point, motivation pays off because companies with more skilled workers experience two times revenue growth and profit margins.

All of the above proves that implementing and fostering a culture of employee feedback is not just a “nice to have” or something that happens during the annual performance review — employee feedback is a vital aspect of year-round performance management and development.

#### *Offer Employee Growth*

Boost employee morale by giving them a sense of purpose so they have a goal to work towards and something to look forward to. It doesn't have to be a job promotion. Instead, you can send them to a course or conference to improve their professional skills. Employees want to feel a sense of growth to be truly motivated.

#### *Run A Calm, Healthy & Organized Company*

Sure, pushing yourself and your team to the limit sounds like the right thing to do and is inspiring, but it won't work in the long run. Your goal should be to reduce stress, maintain a healthy work-life balance, and to run a calm, healthy, and organized company.

Offer an EAP (employee assistance program) that helps employees work through problems and stress, whether it's work or home-related. An EAP is designed to help your team work through issues that may impact their health and wellness, or even their work performance.

#### *Train Managers*

If managers are not the direct cause of the low morale, the responsibility to fix employee morale is. Be sure to train all your managers in emotional intelligence, communication, giving feedback and recognition, and different leadership styles.

Managers can directly impact engagement and morale, so investing time in training them is one of the most important strategies for fixing low morale.

Chron, a small business publication, found that “job satisfaction generally increases and self-esteem improves when employees better understand the workings of the company. Training can also enhance morale on the job and loyalty to the company. Workers who believe their company offers excellent training

opportunities are generally less likely to leave their companies within a year of training than employees with poor training opportunities.”

#### *Organize Team Building Activities*

What's the importance of team building games? For starters, it leads to collaborative and motivated work culture, aids in problem-solving among team members, fosters meaningful and open communication among peers, leads to creativity and out-of-the-box thinking, enhances productivity, boosts employee morale and it helps to keep creative juices flowing!

Make team building games enjoyable and education at the same time, that's a surefire way to lift employee morale for the time being. (This isn't a long term solution but it can do the job just the same).

If you have remote workers, then look into these team building games made especially for remote workers!

#### *Provide Amazing Employee Incentives*

Now, this isn't a long-term solution, but when morale is low, dishing out some fun employee incentives can do the trick. Bring in some puppies from the local shelter, give out some scratch-offs, let employees work from home for the day – it's amazing what these employee incentives can do.

OR, you can develop something that can help your employees evolve personally and professionally. Sign them up for a course that ties to their professional responsibilities or give them helpful books to read to develop their skills further. Studies have also found that the longer you stay at work, the more important it is to get outside of the office, even if it's just for a few minutes because creativity can take a hit when you don't change environments.

#### *Encourage Genuine Breaks*

Research has found that only a mere one in five people take a lunch break and that white-collar workers are actually the least likely to take a break. That means that there are far too many staff members eating lunch at their desks!

We know that creativity and innovation happen when people change their environment, and especially when

they expose themselves to a nature-like environment, to a natural environment. So staying inside, in the same location, is really detrimental to creative thinking. It's also detrimental to doing that rumination that's needed for ideas to percolate and gestate and allow a person to arrive at an 'aha' moment.

Encourage your employees to get away from their desks, at least for five minutes every hour. For example, grab a cup of coffee, take a walk outside for some fresh air, stretch your body, and more. When you make this a habit, you are happier and can contribute greatly to the bottom line because you're refreshed.

#### *Promote Workplace Diversity*

By promoting workplace diversity your employees will feel and understand that thinking outside the box or being different is an asset to the company. A Forbes article notes that "teams and companies that make diversity a priority offer a variety of ideas, perspectives and learning opportunities. Diverse employees can bring together their different talents, experiences and various skill sets to come up with creative and inventive solutions, whereas another group made up of people with similar backgrounds and skill sets may decide to solve a dilemma in the same way they always have". The bottom line is that workplace diversity brings your employees together; getting more work done as a team and boosting the company morale!

#### *Let Go Of Workplace Bullies*

No one likes getting bullied, and this is especially true when it comes to the office or any workplace. A Forbes article mentions that "workplace bullying not only impacts one's happiness but injures their health, productivity and self-confidence leaving victims feeling stuck and powerless". Workplace bullying definitely can and will impact your company's morale. It's important to make sure that all your employees understand that there is a zero tolerance policy for workplace bullying and to actually stand by these words to make sure no one feels they're being treated unfairly in the workplace.

#### *Buy Some Green Office Plants*

Sounds silly, right? WRONG! Research from Live Science has shown that "people who toiled in offices with plants and window views reported they felt better about their job and the work they performed compared to those in windowless offices without shrubbery around".

There is a direct correlation between employee morale and greenery in the workplace. Not only do they clean the air from harmful pollutants, but research shows that "plants are one of the least expensive, most useful ways to improve your employees' experience at the workplace. Unlike traditional air filters, they continue to work better over time as they grow, and are more cost effective in the long run". Run down to your local nursery and buy some plants that don't require lots of water or sun!

#### *Make A Designated Decompression Room For Breaks*

Create a separate space for employees to go to and relax for a few minutes every day or when they need to take a break. Jeff Pocheban, president of StrongProject, notes that these decompression or recharge rooms "are more than a simple café or chair grouping in a convenient place for conversation between colleagues or that morning java that gets the juices flowing. They're rooms where employees can take a few minutes of downtime to zone out, relax, stretch, nap, or even meditate". Make a comfortable, separate space where employees can take a minute to relax and recharge but also talk, discuss and exchange ideas, all while simultaneously boosting company morale!

#### **The Bottom Line On Employee Morale**

The second you recognize that your employees have low morale, from high turnover to less collaboration and little conversation, it's time to take a stand. The best thing you can do for your company and your team is to embrace changes that positively benefit all before low morale hits. Offer any of the 15 tips we have outlined above and office morale is sure to increase.

Source: <https://blog.smarp.com>

## BEF EVENTS



### STRENGTHENING BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR PERSPECTIVE

Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF), and Business and Human Rights in Asia (B+HR Asia) UNDP jointly organized a roundtable discussion titled "Strengthening Business and Human Rights from the Private Sector Perspective" on 18 December 2021. The purpose of this event was to disseminate the UNDP-CPD study findings on "Enhancing Stakeholder Engagement for Business and Human Rights in Bangladesh" and engage with the private sector to receive significant input to develop the National Action Plan in this regard. Dr. Harpreet Kaur, Business and Human Rights Specialist, UNDP Asia Pacific; Mr. Mohammad Hatem, Executive President, BKMEA; and Ms Shusmita Anis, Vice-President, BEF and Managing Director, ACI Formulations Limited attended the event as special guests. A total number of 30 participants representing various business entities participated at the roundtable discussion.



Participants at the roundtable discussion held on 18 December 2021



### **INCUBATING ENTREPRENEURS “PITCH WORKSHOP” WITH STARTUP ENTREPRENEURS**

BEF, in collaboration with Gaibandha Technical Training Center, with the technical support from Skills 21 Project of ILO, Dhaka, organized and conducted day-long Incubating Entrepreneurs “Pitch Workshop” with startup entrepreneurs on 1 December 2021 at Conference Hall, TTC, Gaibandha. The objectives of the program were to (i) present business ideas by the startup youth entrepreneurs in front of an expert panel including bankers, employers, BSCIC and Govt. official (ii) learning and experience sharing from boot camp by the participants to pitch their business plan. Mr. Joha Jamilur Rahman, Senior Training Coordinator, BEF and Mr. Ruman Ishtiaq, CMSME Specialist moderated the workshop. Mr. Md.Towhidul Islam, District Police Super, Gibandha, inaugurated the program as chief guest. Mr. Md. Ziaul Haque Kamal, Secretary, Gaibandha Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Mr. Asif Mahmood Prodhan Tomal, President, Employers Forum, Mr. Md. Masum Hakkani, Chairman, Kholahati UP, Mr. Gunjan Dallakoti, Deputy Country Director, ILO and Mr. Md. Anisuzzaman, Program officer, ILO were present as special guests. Engr. Md. Abdur Rahim, Principal, Gaibandha TTC chaired the workshop session. A total of 25 participants presented their business ideas and plans.



### **INCUBATING ENTREPRENEURS “BOOT CAMP” WITH STARTUP ENTREPRENEURS**

BEF, in collaboration with Gaibandha Technical Training Center, with the technical support from Skills 21 Project of ILO, Dhaka, organized and conducted a 10-day long Incubating Entrepreneurs “Boot Camp” with startup entrepreneurs during 21-30 November 2021 at Conference Hall, SKS INN, Gaibandha. The objectives of the program were to (i) mentor incubates for developing business incubation center (ii) process designed to nurture businesses from idea generation to start-up companies through a comprehensive business support program and also help them establish and accelerate their growth and success. Mr. Joha Jamilur Rahman, Senior Training Coordinator, BEF and Mr. Ruman Ishtiaq, Consultant, facilitated the program as resource persons. Mr. Md. Siddiqur Rahman, Deputy Commissioner, Gaibandha, inaugurated the program as chief guest, while Mr. Gunjan Dallakoti, Deputy Country Director, ILO, and Ms.Ligaya Dumaoang, Skills specialist, ILO attended the program as special guests. A total of 25 participants participated in the program as Incubatees.

## HOME NEWS

### ADB APPROVES \$150 MILLION FOR SMALL ENTERPRISES TO CREATE JOBS



The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the government of Bangladesh signed agreements for \$150 million loan to provide financing for cottage, micro, and small-sized enterprises (CMSEs) to create jobs for promoting socio-economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic. The assistance under the Supporting Post-COVID-19 Small-Scale Employment Creation Project will rejuvenate CMSEs operated by youth, rural entrepreneurs, returning migrant workers, particularly women, who have been hit hard by the pandemic. The project will create at least 45,000 employment opportunities by December 2025.

### MALAYSIA DECIDES TO REOPEN LABOR MARKET TO BANGLADESH



Malaysia has agreed to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Bangladesh to resume the recruitment of Bangladeshi workers. Malaysian

Minister of Human Resources Seri Saravanan Murugan will sign an MoU with Bangladesh's Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Imran Ahmed in this regard soon. A meeting of the Malaysian cabinet decided to open recruitment of Bangladeshi workers to all sectors including plantation, agriculture, manufacturing, services, mining, construction and household service. The Southeast Asian country suspended hiring Bangladeshi workers in September 2018 over allegations of malpractices in the recruitment process and high recruitment costs. Since then, Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment has been negotiating continuously with the Malaysian authorities to reopen the market.

### SENDING WORKERS TO LIBYA TO BE RESUMED



Bangladesh has lifted the restriction on sending workers to Libya considering the improved political situation in the war-torn nation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a letter to the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment giving the nod to remove the earlier restriction on sending workers to Libya, and recommended that the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment start necessary actions to send workers to that job market. Referring to a letter of the Bangladesh Embassy in Tripoli, dated November 16, 2021, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in its letter said at present the political situation was gradually improving in Libya. There are a significant number of jobs in Libya, and the demand for Bangladeshi workers is good there.

## INFLOWS OF REMITTANCE FELL BY 19.97% IN JULY-OCTOBER 2021



The inflow of remittances in July-October of FY22 decreased by 19.97 percent to US\$7.06 billion from US\$8.82 billion in the corresponding months of the previous fiscal year. The decline in remittances is a reflection of the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic situation when many Bangladeshi migrants lost their jobs, some migrants were laid off by their companies. Besides, many others returned home but couldn't go back due to suspended international flights as a part of countrywide lockdown and unmet vaccination requirements.

### Monthly Trends in Remittances

Month	Remittances (million US\$)		Change (%)
	FY22 <sup>P</sup>	FY21 <sup>R</sup>	
July	1871	2598	- 27.98
August	1810	1964	- 7.84
September	1727	2151	- 19.71
October	1647	2102	- 21.65
<b>Total of July – October</b>	<b>7055</b>	<b>8815</b>	<b>- 19.97</b>

Notes: P=Provisional; R=Revised

Source: Bangladesh Bank

In October 2021, year-on-year, remittances dropped further by 21.65 percent to US\$1.65 billion from US\$2.10 billion. Also September's remittances decreased month-on-month by 4.62 percent from US\$1.73 billion (September 2021). According to some experts, higher gap in exchange rate of the US dollar against the local currency between formal banking channel and korb market has encouraged illegal 'hundi' activities in recent months.

## 30 FACTORIES GET GREEN FACTORY AWARD 2020



The Green Factory Award 2020 was given to 30 factories of the country from six sectors in recognition of their contributions to protecting the environment and creating jobs. Of the 30 factories, 15 are from the garment sector, four from tea sector, three each from food processing sector, plastic sector and pharmaceutical sector, and two from leather sector. Prime minister Sheikh Hasina virtually joined the award-giving ceremony from her official residence. On behalf of the Prime Minister, State Minister for Labor and Employment Begum Monnujan Sufian handed over the awards to the representatives of the factories at Osmani Smriti Auditorium.

## FIRST OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH PROFILE IN PLACE

The National Industrial Health and Safety Council approved the National Profile on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) for Bangladesh, which summarizes the existing policies, laws, institutions and situation on workplace safety and health in the country. The high-level council comprising of representatives from various Ministries as well as employers' and workers' organizations, academic and legal experts approved the OSH Profile for publication. The OSH profile was drafted by the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE), in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Employment, social partners and other relevant stakeholders. It was vetted in a tripartite context by representatives from the government, employers' and workers' organizations. The ILO's Improving Working Conditions in the Ready-made Garment programme funded by Canada, Netherlands and UK provided technical support in the development of this policy instrument.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### PAKISTAN: REMITTANCES SURGED 10.2% IN OCTOBER 2021



The remittances sent home by overseas Pakistanis surged 10.2% in October 2021 to \$2.5 billion from \$2.3 billion in the same month last year, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). This is the eighth consecutive month when remittances have been close to or above \$2.5 billion, SBP said in a statement. However, the inflows in October declined 5.7% from \$2.67 billion received in September 2021. According to the SBP, Pakistan received the largest amount of remittances (\$655.4 million) from Saudi Arabia in October 2021, followed by \$456 million from United Arab Emirates (UAE), \$346.7 million from UK, and \$231.8 million from the USA.

### INDIA: JOBLESS RATE ROSE AS UNEMPLOYMENT SURGED IN RURAL AREAS



India's jobless rate rose as unemployment surged in the nation's rural areas, even as non-farm jobs notch up gains with the economy emerging from pandemic curbs. Unemployment in October 2021 rose to 7.75% from a three-month low of 6.86% in September, according to data from Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE). Rural unemployment jumped to 7.91% from 6.06% the previous month, whereas urban joblessness dropped to 7.38% from 8.62%, the data showed.

### SRI LANKA: CLAMPS DOWN ON REMITTANCES AS IT BATTLES FOREX CRISIS



Sri Lanka threatened to freeze the bank accounts of Sri Lankans working overseas who send money back to the country using informal money changers, as depleted foreign exchange reserves drive a thriving black market for dollars. The pandemic has wreaked havoc on the country's economy, and the government has banned imports of food, vehicles and other items in an effort to shore up its stockpile of foreign currency. These restrictions have led to severe shortages of food, cooking gas and cement, and Sri Lanka was forced to shut its only oil refinery as the country ran out of dollars to import crude.

### PHILIPPINES: UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DECREASES TO 7.4% IN OCTOBER



Around 3.50 million Filipinos were out of work in October, down from the 4.25 million reported in September, according to a Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) survey. October unemployment rate, 7.4 percent, was the third lowest reported this year. The lowest reported was in July, estimated at 6.9 percent, followed by 7.1 percent in March. The unemployment rate was the highest in September at 8.9 percent.

### THAILAND: YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT HITS NEW HIGHS DUE TO COVID-19



Joblessness among young men and women in Thailand has reached a level unseen in recent years due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a new brief from the ILO. The Thailand labour market update found that youth employment fell by 7 percent in the first quarter of 2021 (from the fourth quarter 2019). The youth unemployment rate increased by 3 percentage points for both men and women, reaching a high of 6 percent and 8 percent, respectively. According to the report, pandemic-related restrictions particularly affected employment in smaller establishments with fewer than 50 workers. Youth employment in these establishments suffered the most, falling by 18 percent for young men and by 24 percent for young women.

### LEBANON: A NEW NATIONAL DISABILITY ALLOWANCE LAUNCHED



The economic depression Lebanon is facing has led to rapidly rising vulnerability and exacerbating inequalities. This is specifically the case for vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities. On this year's International Day of Persons with Disabilities, UNICEF and ILO partnered with the European Union to strengthen the national social protection system and launch a new national disability allowance that will provide direct income support to people with disabilities living in Lebanon.

The initiative aims to reach around 20,000 people with disabilities, including Lebanese and non-Lebanese alike, provided that they be identified from existing databases as well as future applications across the country. Monthly cash grants will be provided directly to recipients in US\$. As a new national social assistance program, it will be established in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs as part of an expanding national package of social protection benefits.

### IRAQ: ACTIVITIES LAUNCHED TO COMBAT CHILD LABOR



Iraq's Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the ILO recently kicked off a series of activities that support a nation-wide campaign to tackle the worst forms of child labor in the country. The campaign, which will target over 10,000 children, their families and guardians, teachers, employers, and the media, includes awareness raising sessions in schools and districts where child labor is widespread and school drop-out is common. A team composed of representatives and experts from the Ministry has been established to undertake the activities in Baghdad and other cities across the country, in an effort to highlight the increasing dangers of child labor and the importance of education.

### AUSTRALIA: UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FALLS TO 4.6%



The jobless rate in Australia came in at a seasonally adjusted 4.6 percent in November 2021, down sharply from 5.2 percent in October, the Australian Bureau of Statistics said. The Australian economy also added 366,100 jobs in the month following the loss of 46,300 jobs in the previous month. The participation rate was 66.1 percent in November, up sharply from 64.7 percent a month earlier.

### ITALY: INSTRUMENT OF RATIFICATION OF THE VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT CONVENTION, 2019 (NO. 190) DEPOSITED



On 29 October 2021, Italy deposited the instrument of ratification of the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190), with the Director-General of the ILO, thereby becoming the ninth country in the world, and the second European country, to ratify Convention No. 190. Mr Andrea Orlando, Minister of Labour and Social Policies of the Italian Republic, deposited the instrument of ratification with Mr. Guy Ryder, ILO Director-General, in a ceremony held in Rome. Convention No. 190 is a landmark instrument, which is the first international labor standard to address violence and harassment in the world of work.

Together with Recommendation No. 206, it provides a common framework for action and a unique opportunity to shape a future of work based on dignity and respect. The Convention affirms that everyone has the right to a world – and a workplace – free from violence and harassment. It provides the first internationally agreed definition of violence and harassment in the world of work, including gender-based violence.

### USA: UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS DROP TO NEW PANDEMIC LOW



The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits fell to a fresh pandemic low, another sign the job market is healing after last year's coronavirus recession. Jobless claims dropped by 14,000 to 269,000. Since topping 900,000 in early January, the weekly applications have fallen more or less steadily ever since and are gradually moving toward pre-pandemic levels of around 220,000 a week.

The US job market has been rebounding since the pandemic struck the U.S. economy in the spring of 2020. The economy has recovered 17 million of the jobs lost to the pandemic, but the country is still 5 million jobs short of where it stood in February 2020.

### RENAULT: FEWER JOBS CUTS THAN INITIALLY PLANNED BY 2024



French carmaker Renault said that it had revised down its forecast for engineering and support jobs cuts in France between 2022 and 2024 to 1,700 from the 2,000 job losses previously expected. Renault, 15% owned by the French government, said in September it would start talks with unions on plans to cut up to 2,000 engineering and support jobs in France as it shifts into electric vehicles and hires for different posts.

## ILO NEWS

### ILO AND INTERPEACE SIGN MOU TO STRENGTHEN CONFLICT-SENSITIVE AND PEACE-RESPONSIVE PROGRAMMING



The ILO signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Interpeace aimed at “operationalizing the ILO’s conflict-sensitive and peace-responsive programming”. The MoU also aims at encouraging closer collaboration between the two organizations around the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus. The Nexus recognizes that policy and programmatic approaches to employment, decent work, and other interventions in conflict-affected settings do no harm and strengthen prospects for peace.

The MoU is in line with the UN Sustaining Peace agenda that recognizes that achieving development outcomes, and reducing humanitarian need, is dependent upon preventing and transforming violent conflict.

The UN Secretary-General has called on all UN entities to integrate the approach to sustaining peace in their strategic planning. “We know that there won’t be any sustainable development without peace, and there’s no peace without development. However, nobody can do it alone and so we need to join forces because peace is everybody’s business,” said the ILO Deputy Director-General for Policy Martha E. Newton. “I take this opportunity to thank Interpeace President Scott M. Weber and his staff for our excellent cooperation to date and look forward to continued strong ties between our two institutions.”

Interpeace is an international organization that prevents violence and builds lasting peace through in-country programmes, collaborative partnerships and high-level policy influencing. Interpeace has a strategic

mandate to build the peace responsive capacity of development and humanitarian organizations, in particular the United Nations. Interpeace’s work on peace responsiveness, and more specifically the collaboration with ILO, is made possible through the support of Global Affairs Canada.

### ASIA AND THE PACIFIC: MASSIVE COVID-19 IMPACT ON TOURISM EMPLOYMENT



The outsized impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment in the tourism sector in Asia and the Pacific has been confirmed by new research from the ILO.

Evidence from five countries where data is available – Brunei Darussalam, Mongolia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam – reveals job losses in tourism-related sectors in 2020 were four times greater than in non-tourism sectors.

Nearly one-third of total job losses were linked to the tourism sector with an estimated 1.6 million tourism-related jobs lost in these five countries alone. With many additional jobs indirectly linked to the sector, the real estimate of tourism-related jobs suffering the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region is likely to be much higher.

Where decreases in tourism-related jobs were seemingly small, a deterioration in the quality of available jobs was still evident. Women workers appear to have been particularly hit with an increased concentration of women carrying out food and beverage serving activities, the lowest-paid jobs in the sector.

Working-hour losses in tourism are well above those estimated for other sectors with the magnitude of reduced hours from two to seven times greater than for non-tourism-related workers. In 2020, working hour losses in the sector ranged from 4 per cent in Viet Nam to 38 per cent in the Philippines. In addition, as formal jobs in tourism declined, workers have increasingly moved into the informal sector.

Even as borders re-open, international tourist arrivals are predicted to be slow in the near-term. In view of this, governments in tourism-rich countries are likely to seek broader economic diversification with the ultimate aim to create new employment opportunities in non-tourism sectors.

### **ASIA AND THE PACIFIC: 1.6 BILLION LACK ACCESS TO SOCIAL HEALTH PROTECTION**



An estimated 1.6 billion people in Asia and the Pacific lack effective access to social health protection, according to a new report issued by the ILO.

Despite more than three-quarters of the region's population being legally entitled to health protection, pervasive gaps in legal coverage, lack of awareness on rights coupled with practical difficulties and impediments to accessing services leaves huge numbers across Asia and the Pacific needing to pay to receive healthcare, often plunging them into poverty.

The first ever report on the extension of social health protection in Asia and the Pacific, *Extending social health protection: Accelerating progress towards Universal Health Coverage in Asia and the Pacific* highlights progress, challenges and coverage gaps in the region. Drafted against backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic,

the report also reveals the crucial role of social health protection to protect people's health, jobs and income in times of crisis and beyond.

The report identifies significant inequalities in health protection coverage within and across countries in Asia and the Pacific. Less than half the region's work force has their income security legally guaranteed when sick while just 45.9 percent of women are protected in case of loss of income during maternity.

Gaps in coverage also disproportionately affect women and men with unstable or irregular employment and incomes such as the self-employed, informal economy workers as well as migrant workers and their families. Agricultural and domestic workers and their families are especially hard hit.

The report recognizes that while many countries have made significant progress in terms of increasing social health protection coverage, the adequacy of benefits remains a challenge with underfunding or unpredictable funding a major issue. Meanwhile, a growing middle-class demand for higher quality services particularly from private providers who remain out of the scope of social health protection policies was also driving up out-of-pocket expense.

Recommendations include institutional strengthening as well as more efficient scheme design and administration to boost coverage and benefit adequacy. The report also calls for more public resources to make solidarity in financing a reality.

## CONSUMER PRICE INDEX: NATIONAL

(Base: 2005-06=100)

Period	General Index	Index by expenditure group								
		1. Food & Beverage	2. Non-Food	I. Clothing & Footwear	II. Fuel & Lighting	III. Household Equipment	IV. Medical Care & Health Expenses	V. Transport & Communication	VI. Recreation, Entertainment,	VIII. Misc. Goods & Services
2013-14	195.08	209.79	176.23	194.77	163.47	206.14	164.06	167.20	164.38	193.75
2014-15	207.58	223.80	186.79	204.50	171.80	214.45	180.77	181.78	168.02	204.21
2015-16	219.86	234.77	200.66	233.38	182.74	227.39	199.94	201.34	171.01	211.61
2016-17	231.82	248.90	209.92	243.56	194.01	235.85	206.70	210.78	177.56	217.51
2017-18	245.22	266.64	217.76	255.24	200.25	249.68	209.28	218.80	183.65	223.81
2018-19	258.65	281.33	229.58	277.64	206.98	265.25	215.31	235.23	186.72	239.87
2019-20	273.26	296.86	243.00	290.00	220.70	282.67	230.07	248.48	190.13	259.27
2020-21	288.44	313.86	255.85	298.14	228.29	298.15	247.86	271.45	193.61	288.53
2021										
April	293.88	320.28	260.02	304.23	229.44	305.00	251.50	276.02	195.95	299.67
May	287.92	308.41	261.65	305.17	225.90	306.46	251.53	294.86	195.99	299.99
June	291.70	314.19	262.87	306.00	226.63	308.95	251.90	297.31	196.54	301.82
July	293.19	316.02	263.93	307.11	227.12	310.07	252.47	300.58	197.00	302.72
August	297.73	323.04	265.28	310.34	228.06	311.90	252.66	301.81	197.47	303.97
September	304.22	332.58	267.85	313.63	230.62	316.69	252.89	303.73	199.55	306.12
October	307.49	337.70	268.75	314.48	231.64	316.85	252.99	306.31	199.71	306.66

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)

**CONSUMER PRICE INDEX: RURAL**  
(Base: 2005-06=100)

Period	General Index	Index by expenditure group								
		1. Food & Beverage	2. Non-Food	I. Clothing & Footwear	II. Fuel & Lighting	III. Household Equipment	IV. Medical Care & Health Expenses	V. Transport & Communication	VI. Recreation, Entertainment,	VIII. Misc. Goods & Services
2012-13	<b>183.90</b>	<b>192.14</b>	<b>170.79</b>	184.54	157.40	186.40	164.63	160.98	174.07	187.05
2013-14	<b>196.90</b>	<b>207.72</b>	<b>179.69</b>	200.61	164.05	197.62	168.87	166.01	179.72	199.74
2014-15	<b>209.10</b>	<b>221.02</b>	<b>190.13</b>	214.07	171.34	209.29	187.18	174.09	183.84	212.34
2015-16	<b>220.10</b>	<b>230.31</b>	<b>203.86</b>	242.26	179.19	222.11	211.04	188.69	187.84	221.12
2016-17	<b>231.02</b>	<b>243.08</b>	<b>211.83</b>	253.51	187.45	229.57	219.35	193.71	194.81	226.47
2017-18	<b>244.17</b>	<b>259.86</b>	<b>219.21</b>	263.96	192.89	246.23	221.15	197.24	201.31	233.72
2018-19	<b>256.74</b>	<b>273.55</b>	<b>230.01</b>	282.76	198.99	261.30	225.86	207.51	205.05	253.71
2019-20	<b>271.20</b>	<b>289.08</b>	<b>242.74</b>	292.21	212.44	277.56	242.40	217.05	208.93	275.65
2020-21	<b>286.37</b>	<b>306.40</b>	<b>254.51</b>	298.86	220.23	286.65	264.04	234.11	214.52	305.80
2021										
April	<b>292.85</b>	<b>314.27</b>	<b>258.77</b>	303.82	220.74	293.87	267.78	237.86	218.67	319.94
May	<b>285.71</b>	<b>301.94</b>	<b>259.90</b>	304.76	215.65	295.17	267.79	257.41	218.69	320.49
June	<b>288.95</b>	<b>306.47</b>	<b>261.07</b>	305.46	216.70	297.57	268.29	258.73	219.52	322.27
July	<b>290.34</b>	<b>308.10</b>	<b>262.08</b>	306.64	217.46	298.65	269.03	260.86	220.08	322.84
August	<b>295.21</b>	<b>315.29</b>	<b>263.25</b>	308.15	218.83	300.24	269.06	262.52	220.27	323.49
September	<b>302.27</b>	<b>325.14</b>	<b>265.88</b>	311.22	221.60	305.23	269.29	264.50	221.93	325.75
October	<b>306.10</b>	<b>330.77</b>	<b>266.85</b>	311.93	223.17	305.04	269.32	267.33	221.97	325.94

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)

**CONSUMER PRICE INDEX: URBAN**

(Base: 2005-06=100)

Period	Index by expenditure group									
	General Index	1. Food & Beverage	2. Non-Food	I. Clothing & Footwear	II. Fuel & Lighting	III. Household Equipment	IV. Medical Care & Health Expenses	V. Transport & Communication	VI. Recreation, Entertainment,	VIII. Misc. Goods & Services
2013-14	199.73	214.85	171.61	183.66	162.80	221.11	155.82	168.52	147.83	186.37
2014-15	204.76	230.56	182.32	197.93	172.33	223.53	169.80	190.26	150.95	194.16
2015-16	219.31	245.66	196.39	216.50	186.86	236.67	180.93	215.50	152.84	199.87
2016-17	233.29	263.09	207.38	224.66	201.60	246.87	185.05	229.59	158.93	206.45
2017-18	247.17	283.19	215.83	238.67	208.77	255.74	188.96	242.55	164.59	211.57
2018-19	262.17	300.30	229.00	267.92	216.22	272.20	197.25	265.77	166.95	222.78
2019-20	277.06	315.83	243.34	285.82	230.27	291.66	208.97	283.12	169.81	239.06
2020-21	292.27	332.08	257.64	296.78	237.63	318.36	220.17	312.59	171.05	267.20
2021										
April	295.78	334.96	261.70	305.00	239.51	324.57	223.65	318.07	171.44	274.65
May	292.00	324.20	264.00	305.95	237.77	326.30	223.69	336.12	171.50	274.69
June	296.79	333.04	265.26	307.02	238.13	328.95	223.85	339.82	171.74	276.58
July	298.47	335.34	266.40	308.02	238.31	330.15	224.12	344.35	172.10	277.88
August	302.39	341.94	267.99	314.51	238.74	332.41	224.59	345.11	172.87	279.86
September	307.81	350.75	270.46	318.22	241.05	336.84	224.83	346.97	175.41	281.89
October	310.05	354.60	271.29	319.31	241.45	337.61	225.03	349.27	175.69	282.86

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)

**WAGE RATE INDEX BY SECTORS: BANGLADESH**  
(Base: 2010-11=100)

Sector	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	August '21	September '21	October '21
General	160.23	170.39	180.83	185.44	187.13	188.71
percentage change (Point to Point)	6.40	6.35	6.12	5.80	5.91	5.97
percentage change (over previous month)				0.36	0.91	0.84
<b>1. Agriculture</b>	<b>159.92</b>	<b>170.28</b>	<b>181.16</b>	<b>185.58</b>	<b>187.46</b>	<b>189.12</b>
percentage change (over previous month)	6.42	6.48	6.39	5.93	6.07	6.08
percentage change (over previous month)				0.30	1.01	0.89
i) Agriculture	159.91	170.32	181.23	185.69	187.58	189.27
percentage change (Point to Point)	6.44	6.51	6.41	5.96	6.12	6.14
percentage change (over previous month)				0.30	1.02	0.90
ii) Fish	160.59	168.58	177.84	180.13	181.16	181.19
percentage change (Point to Point)	5.22	4.97	5.49	4.24	3.40	2.83
percentage change (over previous month)				0.03	0.58	0.02
<b>2. Industry</b>	<b>158.74</b>	<b>168.24</b>	<b>177.52</b>	<b>182.16</b>	<b>183.43</b>	<b>184.92</b>
percentage change (Point to Point)	6.22	5.99	5.51	5.40	5.45	5.61
percentage change (over previous month)				0.41	0.70	0.81
i) Construction	152.86	160.17	167.24	170.28	171.40	172.59
percentage change (Point to Point)	5.19	4.77	4.42	4.04	4.01	4.21
percentage change (over previous month)				0.12	0.66	0.70
ii) Production	170.66	184.65	198.37	206.25	207.84	209.92
percentage change (Point to Point)	8.14	8.21	7.43	7.75	7.96	8.02
percentage change (over previous month)				0.89	0.77	1.00
<b>3. Service</b>	<b>164.78</b>	<b>175.33</b>	<b>185.99</b>	<b>191.48</b>	<b>193.13</b>	<b>194.48</b>
percentage change (Point to Point)	6.69	6.41	6.07	5.97	6.01	6.16
percentage change (over previous month)				0.56	0.86	0.70

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)

**AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES OF SELECTED COMMODITIES IN DHAKA CITY**

SL. No.	Unit	2020-21	August '21	September '21	October '21
<b>I. Cereals:</b>					
1. Rice: Najershail/Minikat	Kg.	68.15	69.50	69.73	69.77
2. Rice: Pajam/Equiv.	Kg.	65.63	64.67	64.81	64.84
3. Rice: Irri/Boro	Kg.	52.02	52.86	52.97	52.99
4. Wheat (atta), white.	Kg.	40.60	41.81	41.92	41.95
<b>II. Pulses:</b>					
5. Moongdal (husked)	Kg.	129.76	130.58	129.24	129.18
6. Lentil (husked)	Kg.	120.56	122.67	120.10	120.03
<b>III. Sugar &amp; Molasses:</b>					
7. Sugar (white)	Kg.	67.48	70.20	80.05	80.09
8. Molasses (sugarcane)	Kg.	111.75	112.42	113.17	113.22
<b>IV. Protein Items:</b>					
9. Fish-Rohu-cut piece	Kg.	398.66	350.00	343.70	340.10
10. Fish-Hilsa, medium size	Kg.	1187.36	1200.00	1170.00	1160.00
11. Prawn/Shrimp, about 3" long	Kg.	686.08	630.00	625.67	625.70
12. Barbel (Shing), about 50-gram weight each	Kg.	682.99	530.00	510.00	500.00
13. Beef, best quality	Kg.	545.80	580.00	570.00	567.33
14. Mutton, best quality	Kg.	750.33	780.00	785.70	780.00
15. Fowl, alive	Kg.	432.28	420.00	413.00	405.00
16. Egg (Hen), Farm	4 pcs	34.38	36.00	39.00	39.40
17. Egg (Duck)	4 pcs	56.85	52.70	53.34	54.17
<b>V. Edible oil :</b>					
18. Mustard oil, best quality	Liter	201.37	215.40	214.22	214.28
19. Soyabean oil, best quality	Liter	118.74	145.63	143.81	142.50
<b>VI. Spices:</b>					
20. Chilli (dry), best quality	Kg.	371.19	367.35	352.23	350.00
21. Onion (local)	Kg.	61.14	55.80	56.20	75.80
22. Garlic (Local)	Kg.	114.45	124.90	128.37	130.42
23. Turmeric (Local)	Kg.	170.25	193.61	196.15	197.55
24. Ginger (Local)	Kg.	151.55	129.00	130.36	131.71
25. Salt (fine)	Kg.	35.00	32.00	32.21	32.10
<b>VII. Vegetable:</b>					
26. Potato, best quality	Kg.	35.87	25.50	25.20	27.44
27. Brinjal, best quality	Kg.	66.57	50.00	53.00	56.00
28. Lady's finger, best quality	Kg.	59.47	55.00	57.00	60.00
29. Papaya (green)	Kg.	36.10	40.00	30.00	32.00
<b>VIII. Milk:</b>					
30. Milk (Milk vita packet)	Liter	75.38	70.00	72.00	70.00
31. Lactozen (full cream) (400gm)	Each	605.15	605.00	607.00	605.00

SL. No.	Unit	2020-21	August '21	September '21	October '21
<b>IX. Fuel &amp; lighting :</b>					
32. Firewood (gazari)	Quintal	489.46	495.22	495.97	498.22
33. Kerosene	Liter	81.46	76.25	76.38	76.47
34. Matches (40 sticks)	Box	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
<b>X. Clothing:</b>					
35. Long cloth (fine)	Meter	80.53	83.67	83.89	85.00
36. Long cloth (medium)	Meter	76.82	78.90	79.41	85.00
37. Saree (medium), white Tangail handloom: A451 80x80 count 5.5 yds.	Each	726.58	732.69	734.79	738.36
38. Lungi (medium.) 48" handloom 60X60	Each	799.50	800.00	803.10	805.65
39. Undershirt (genjee 100 c.m sleeveless)	Each	101.31	105.28	106.44	108.02
<b>XI. Housing &amp; Household Requisites:</b>					
40. Cement (local)	Bag of 50 Kg.	447.62	445.98	446.57	448.13
41. Aluminum (Degchi)	Gram	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.44
42. Bamboo (mul) about 30 feet long	Each	191.49	198.65	198.73	198.80
43. Enamel plate	Each	70.79	72.97	72.98	73.11
<b>XII. Miscellaneous:</b>					
44. Coconut oil (unscented, imported)	Kg.	280.20	282.18	282.36	284.40
45. Cigarettes (Star)	10 Sticks	80.23	80.57	80.63	80.67
46. White paper	Quire	27.36	28.00	28.47	28.55
47. Blade-Sword (stainless steel)	Each	3.01	3.00	3.05	3.03

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)

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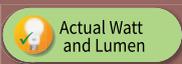
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# A BRIEF PROFILE OF BEF

Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF) is the national organization of employers. It represents all associations representing major industries in the country as well as established individual enterprises.

The objectives of the Federation are to promote, encourage and protect the interests of employers in industrial relations and, through such efforts, to establish good relations among employers and workers, which play a vital supporting role in the country's economic development.

BEF is well known as a progressive body, having a proactive approach on social issues. It is the only body of the employers recognized by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, and accordingly enjoys the sole representative capacity in the Tripartite Consultative Council, Labour Courts, Minimum Wages

Board, National Wages and Productivity Commission, etc. It closely interacts with the Ministry of Labour and Employment on all policy issues. Similarly, it maintains close touch with other relevant Ministries of the Government on issues concerning industrial relations, enterprise efficiency, competitiveness, etc.

BEF's activities cover a wide range of issues besides industrial relations. Training and skill development is a major activity along with enterprise level programs for productivity improvement, safety and health, good management practices, etc.

BEF has taken major initiatives to foster close relationship with the trade unions and it enjoys their goodwill and confidence on many issues.



**Bangladesh Employers' Federation**