

LABOUR NEWS

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Contents

Labour news- May, 2020

ARTICLE

03

WORKPLACE SAFETY IN A TIME OF COVID-19



HOME NEWS

07

INFLOWS OF REMITTANCE GREW BY 16.15% IN THE FIRST NINE MONTHS



STATISTICS

17



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

09

PHILIPPINES: REMITTANCES REACH US\$8.2 BILLION IN Q1



ILO NEWS

13

COVID-19 MORE THAN ONE IN SIX YOUNG PEOPLE OUT OF WORK



ARTICLE

WORKPLACE SAFETY IN A TIME OF COVID-19

By Rich Blake

With a distribution facility in Wuhan, China, XPO Logistics XPO saw the novel coronavirus coming. In mid-February, Brad Jacobs, CEO of the third-party transportation and logistics behemoth – with some 97,000 employees at 1,506 locations in 30 countries – had just two questions, asked, in deliberate order, of senior leaders:

- How do we keep our people safe?
- How do we ship our customers' products?



XPO activated at the end of February its 10-person Business Continuity Response Team to develop a coordinated effort to rise to those challenges, drawing together the necessary constituencies – technology, operations, communications, human resources – and then decisively hammering out, from scratch, a uniform set of step-by-step blueprints – processes, policies, procedures – for site managers. Just within XPO's contract logistics business unit in North America, for example, that would mean retooling some 310 facilities comprising 92 million square feet of warehouse space.

“There was not any debate whether this was real, nor did we ever question how hard or expensive it would be,” said Erik Caldwell, Chief Operations Officer of XPO's Supply Chain Business. “Our culture is very safety conscious and collaborative.”

And while the leadership and can-do attitude came from the top down, “some of the best ideas,” Caldwell said, “came from our people on the ground.”

For example, associates at some distribution centers with specific clustered areas (e.g. bottling stations) requested, for peace of mind, protective barriers. The response, Caldwell recalled, was, overwhelmingly, “yes, of course, let's make it happen” and the barriers were quickly conceived and constructed using PVC pipes and stretch wrap; and then instructions, specifications and components were shared with site managers across the globe.

Crude, perhaps, but effective for a company that prides itself on getting the little things right – which is not to say XPO doesn't take big, bold steps too. It has embraced advanced automation. The company had previously invested in industrial robots (i.e. caged robotic arms) and also uncaged collaborative robots, or cobots, which in some cases were redeployed to new assignments, such that if employees must stay at home in self-quarantine, due to potential community exposure to the virus, the cobots help pick up the slack. Programmed cobots work alongside humans to lift and move product, not only reducing the physical burden on employees but also optimizing efficiency. And there's no need for social distancing.

Across the globe, many manufacturers, shippers and handlers of products – essentials, such as food and medicine, durable goods, anything, everything – have taken workplace safety to impressive new levels, forced,

in a time of Covid-19, to be vigilant, get creative and combine lots of small, practical steps with an array of exciting new technologies.

Some tech-based solutions, such as XPO's cobots, are of a brave-new-world varietal; other innovations are more basic, though no less ingenious.

At a Ford factory in Plymouth, Michigan, workers pioneered the use of watch-like wearables that vibrate when employees come within six feet of each other, according to Bloomberg.

A spokesman for Samsung Electronics North America said the company's repurposing of its Galaxy Watch Active2 came via collaboration with a team from Ford, i4D Systems and Radiant RFID. Radiant's software pairs with Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) technology to auto-notify wearers within close proximity of one another.

"We were able to jointly deliver a simple yet effective social distancing solution in a very short time," the spokesman said.

In May, Gap Inc. GPS fast-tracked its rollout of warehouse robots for assembling online orders, a move to help the company limit human interactions, signaling that the pandemic may be speeding up automation.

Amidst outbreaks, and facing a backlash from warehouse employees (and large institutional investors flexing socially responsible muscles), Amazon AMZN, on May 19, announced it had set aside some \$4 billion for COVID-related initiatives, an aggressive inoculation strategy to include providing more personal protective equipment, enhancing the cleaning of facilities, adjusting work stations to allow for effective social distancing and developing COVID-19 testing capabilities.

Last month, on June 18, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration released its "Guidance on Returning to Work." Non-binding, noticeably late, the guidance nevertheless does give employers a storehouse of information – covering, among other categories, basic hygiene, distancing, isolating sick employees and training – to safely facilitate re-openings of non-essential businesses.

OSHA had co-authored some interim guidance for meatpacking plants in April. The more recent OSHA guidance supplements prior guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), along with Health and Human Services (HHS).

"I would say at most companies, before the pandemic, workplace safety was a huge priority," said Kylene Zenk, who heads the manufacturing practice at Kronos, which provides workforce management and human capital management (HCM) software solutions. "The pandemic has put the issue front and center."

Since the early spring, she said, a large percentage of the manufacturers that use Kronos software have taken steps to implement a range of proactive virus-mitigation solutions: staggering shift starts to reduce the number of people at the door; adding extra time between shifts for enhanced sanitation of plants and equipment; scheduling employees by groups and restricting movement within the plant to reduce the likelihood of spreading illness; and gathering real-time feedback from employees on health and safety status or other operational issues.

Most companies are building out, or at least exploring, contingencies for handling outbreaks within their own workforce. That includes introducing new policies around employee contact tracing and using digital tools to automate certain aspects of that process, Zenk said.

“Keeping people safe ultimately comes down to a lot of small actions, all feasible, but you need to have a plan, policies, and procedures, with every employee on the same page,” she said, referring to new adaptations being articulated and widely introduced in a synchronized way. Take time clocks, for example.

They’ve come a long way since the days of manila cards that got stamped and tucked in a metal bin on the wall near the door. Now, employee arrival and departure information is captured digitally on modern, easy-to-use devices that emulate a personal mobile phone, enabling touchless capabilities for employees to clock in and out of a shift with smartcard/proximity cards, or even use a mobile app to do so.

Coronavirus isn’t clocking out any time soon, it would seem. Shifting to a baseball analogy, the innings of this game will likely drag on (one noteworthy epidemiologist put the pandemic perhaps in the fourth inning) which means there’s still time to innovate in key areas such as digital contact tracing.

In a private company setting, where privacy issues are less thorny, contract tracing, done in a cutting-edge way, could go a long way to help workers begin to feel some greater sense that the virus can be confronted proactively, said Jason Cottrell, CEO of Toronto-based Myplanet.

“A vaccine, available and distributed to everyone around the world – an end to this pandemic – could be at least couple of years away,” Cottrell said. “One of the key elements of returning to normality is the improvement of digital contact tracing tools.”

Myplanet’s team of developers, specializing in AI solutions for large companies, is working on tracing apps that can be used by private networks, whether companies or perhaps, say, school districts.

“Now is the time for action,” said Zenk. “Whether a manufacturer never shut down or is just starting to bring teams back to the plant, ensuring a safe working environment while maintaining business continuity is more important than ever.”

At XPO, much of the playbook is still being written. It leans heavily on small, common-sense steps. Among the practices and protocols XPO has adopted since March:

- Entering and exiting the facility now has a standard operating procedure associated with it, including a mandatory six-foot physical distancing policy; first stop once inside: mask-pickup station;
- Before the pandemic, new shifts started with a tier-board meeting, where managers communicate with associates regarding quality analytics, inventory metrics, delivery numbers and productivity goals. Now the meetings feature a major emphasis on safety protocols. Enhanced cleaning steps are confirmed at these meetings. Additionally, five COVID-19 “declaration statements” are read and everyone must affirm clear understanding of those statements. In fact, this falls under re-emphasis, because the statements are also affirmed in order for anyone to enter the building.
- Hand-sanitation stations are located throughout the facility.
- Operationally, layouts have been, in many cases, reconfigured in order to adhere to the six-foot physical distancing guidelines.
- Floor markings assist associates along an assembly line to uphold distancing.
- Digital monitors and posters communicate the importance of physical distancing, mask-wearing and hand-washing.

New break rooms have been built outside. Flooring around hand-washing sinks are marked with six-foot-rule reminders. Caldwell: "All ideas were welcome and no step was deemed overkill."

In March, XPO's Data Analytics Team developed a daily report to allow leaders to track Covid-19 cases, so as to spot trends ahead of the general public. When data suggested a hot spot was developing in Atlanta, XPO was able to more proactively deploy extra resources to its more than 20 facilities in that area.

"Our infection rate has been lower than the national average," said Caldwell, referring to the handful of cases found within XPO's contract logistics workforce of more than 25,000 full- and part-time U.S. employees.

Globally, XPO, handles supply chain operations for more than 50,000 customers, including many Fortune 100 companies. Headquartered in Greenwich, Conn., XPO has major hubs in Eastern Pennsylvania and Northern New Jersey as well as in Memphis, Dallas and Columbus, Ohio.

"We have always taken pride in our safety record," Caldwell said, referring to a one-third-lower-than-national-average number of reported injuries, compared to data kept by OSHA. Most workplace injuries owe to accidents involving traditional equipment such as forklifts, and the majority of those are due in large part to either inexperience or complacency i.e. something becomes so rote that an employee lets their guard down. Training and not over-stressing people, so they are not driving around too hurriedly, is the key, said Caldwell, who is based in High Point, North Carolina, which is the global headquarters for XPO's Supply Chain Americas and Asia Pacific.

A West Point graduate with a knack for making sure best practices get shared companywide via social media, Caldwell sums up the company's approach this way:

"You have to get the small things right. Otherwise, you won't get the big things right."

Source: <https://www.forbes.com>

HOME NEWS

INFLOWS OF REMITTANCE GREW BY 16.15% IN THE FIRST NINE MONTHS

The inflows of remittance during the first nine months of the current fiscal year (July-March of FY20) grew by 16.15 percent. However, inflow of remittances during January-March (Q3 of FY20) increased slightly by 0.07 percent to US\$4.38 billion from US\$4.37 billion in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal year as the pandemic coronavirus (COVID-19) brought the global economic activities almost to a halt.

Monthly Trends in Remittances

Month	Remittances (million US\$)		Change (%)
	FY20 ^P	FY19 ^R	
July	1598	1318	21.24
August	1445	1411	2.41
September	1477	1140	29.56
Total of Q1	4520	3869	16.83
October	1642	1239	32.53
November	1555	1180	31.78
December	1692	1207	40.18
Total of Q2	4889	3626	34.64
January	1638	1597	2.57
February	1452	1318	10.17
March	1287	1459	(-) 11.79
Total of Q3	4377	4374	0.07

Notes: P=Provisional; R=Revised

Source: BB

In March 2020, year-on-year, remittances registered a negative growth of 11.79 percent, for the first time in the fiscal, to US\$1.29 billion from US\$1.46 billion. Similarly, the inflow of remittance in March fell by 11.36 percent from the previous month, as expatriate Bangladeshis sent US\$1.45 billion in February 2020. Restrictions on international travel, enforcing complete lockdowns and closure of remittance houses, banks and business centers in countries where most of the Bangladeshis were employed were the key factors behind the slump of inbound remittance.

BANGLADESH EYES AFRICA AS MIDDLE-EAST JOB MARKETS SHRINK

Bangladesh has now decided to resume efforts to explore job markets in Africa against the backdrop of mass deportation of foreign workers from the Middle-East (ME) countries. Earlier, a written proposal was submitted to the government two years back to start negotiation with the African countries with serious labor short-age, especially in farming sector. The basic idea of the proposal was to take lease of vast tracts of African farmlands, which has been unused due to labor shortage, and then employ Bangladeshi farmers there.

ONLINE CLASS: THE 'NEW NORMAL' IN TVET

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a unique set of challenges to all types and all levels of education, including schooling, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), apprenticeships and skills development. The Skills 21 Project with the Government of Bangladesh set-up an e-campus for TVET. The e-campus is a platform to host and run distance learning courses/training to

both TVET students and teachers. It is operated by an online learning management system (an app for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, and delivery of educational, training, learning and development programs). There are number of e-learning materials developed by the trainers. Teachers are piloting these courses in the classroom. The e-learning materials are based on four skills qualifications - welding, machinist, electrical installation & maintenance and graphic design. In addition to that, there are number of e-learning materials available for trainers and assessors programs. Interested users can visit <https://ecampusvtti.itcilo.org/> to create an account and do self-enrolment for each course.

WORKERS RESOURCE CENTRE GOES DIGITAL AMID COVID-19



The Workers Resource Centre (WRC) in Bangladesh launched a website to inform and serve workers' organizations online. WRC is a joint platform of two leading worker organizations - National Coordination Committee for Workers Education (NCCWE) and the IndustriALL Bangladesh Council (IBC).

Established in 2017, the WRC serves a one-stop-shop for workers needing information, education and assistance on labor-related grievance. The WRC also supports and promotes social dialogue and alternative dispute prevention and resolution, and builds the capacity of trade unions to operate more efficiently. The WRC is supported by the ILO's SDIR project financed by the Governments of Denmark and Sweden.

GRAMEENPHONE CONTRIBUTED TK 30 CRORE TO THE BANGLADESH WORKERS WELFARE FOUNDATION FUND



Grameenphone Limited contributed Tk 30 crore to the Bangladesh Workers Welfare Foundation Fund for the welfare of workers during COVID-19 challenges. A three-member delegation from Grameenphone led by its Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) Mr. Syed Tanvir Husain handed over the cheque to the Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Employment Mr. K M Abdus Salam at the Secretariat recently. Grameenphone has so far deposited TK 151.61crore to the Fund. Under the Bangladesh labour law, domestic and foreign companies contribute one-tenth of 5% of their profits to this fund at the end of the year. So far, 165 companies have contributed a certain portion of their profits to this fund.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

PHILIPPINES: REMITTANCES REACH US\$8.2 BILLION IN Q1

Personal remittances or the money sent home by overseas Filipinos amounted to US\$2.652 billion in March 2020, down 5.2 percent year-on-year, the Philippine central bank Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said in a report. The amount brought the total remittances for the first quarter of 2020 to US\$8.218 billion, up 1.5 percent year-on-year.

Similarly, the BSP said the overseas Filipinos cash remittances that were coursed through banks declined by 4.7 percent to US\$2.397 billion in March 2020 from \$2.514 billion in March 2019. The decline in cash remittances in March was largely due to the fewer number of Filipinos deployed overseas in the first three months of 2020 relative to the comparable level last year, the BSP statement said.

However, the decline in March cash remittances for the first quarter of 2020 managed to post a modest increase of 1.4 percent to \$7.403 billion from the same period last year. The government estimates the number of overseas Filipino workers at 12 million, accounting for one-tenth of the country's population.

SAUDI ARABIA: INCREASING PENALTIES ON MIGRANT WORKERS

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia should reconsider its policies governing migrant workers, especially Yemeni nationals, to take into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their humanitarian and economic situation, says the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor. Currently, many workers cannot meet their financial commitments, including fees imposed on migrants and their families by the government, and thus are in danger of being expelled from the kingdom.

In 2017, Saudi authorities began adopting tougher restrictions on migrant workers, including tighter residency procedures and higher taxes on workers and their families. The most vulnerable among the migrants are Yemenis, who fled their country as a result of the war that has raged since 2015. Saudi Arabia is currently hosting around 1.8 million Yemeni workers, most of whom suffer due to delays in receiving work permits, high fees charged for their companions and low wages. The coronavirus crisis has hit the labor sector hard, especially those who rely on daily wages.

PAKISTAN REMITTANCES FALL 18.6% TO \$1.87 BILLION IN MAY



Remittances from overseas Pakistani workers in May 2020 fell 18.6 percent to \$1.87 billion compared to \$2.3 billion recorded in May 2019, according to data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). However, remittances received in May rose by 4.6 percent, compared with \$1.79 billion remittances received in April 2020. Meanwhile, remittances received during the first 11 months of the current fiscal year stood at \$20.65 billion, an increase of 2.7 percent or \$551.5 million compared to \$20.1 billion received during the same period of last year.

VIETNAM: CONVENTION 105 ON ABOLITION OF FORCED LABOUR RATIFIED



Vietnam ratified the ILO Convention 105 on Abolition of Forced Labour. The move will bring the total ILO

fundamental conventions ratified by Vietnam to seven out of eight. Vietnam's National Assembly voted overwhelmingly for ratifying Convention 105. Once it has deposited the required instrument, the country will officially have ratified the convention. This fundamental labor standard will come into force after one year. Convention 105 compliments Convention 29 on Forced Labour, another core convention which Vietnam already ratified in 2007.

SPAIN: JOBLESS CLAIMS SURGE IN APRIL DUE TO CORONAVIRUS EFFECTS



March and April are normally two of the best months for the Spanish labor market, but the coronavirus crisis turned them into a nightmare. During this two-month period, the number of people filing for jobless claims surged by nearly 600,000 (slightly over 300,000 in March and 282,291 in April), for a total of 3.89 million individuals out of a job.

Meanwhile, Social Security system affiliations – considered a measure of job creation – fell by nearly a million people (close to 900,000 in March and 49,071 in April), according to new figures released by the Labor and Social Security ministries. There are now 18.4 million people in Spain paying in to the Social Security system.

The joint ministry statement notes that the impact of the coronavirus lockdown began to be felt on March 13 and became especially intense during the Easter holiday, which is normally a peak season for tourism. Broken down by activity, the biggest drops in April

Social Security affiliation were seen in retail trade and education, while there was growth in agriculture, said the ministry statement.

AUSTRALIA: CORONAVIRUS HIT JOB MARKET HARDER THAN UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES SUGGEST



National unemployment figures released recently are some of the most confusing in Australia's history. They're also dire. The labor market in Australia is in worse condition than the official unemployment rate suggests. The unemployment rate jumped to 6.2 percent in April, from 5.2 percent in March. However, the surprisingly small rise in the unemployment rate has obscured the reality of what's happening on the ground because of the way it's calculated.

Officially, total employment fell by 594,300 persons in April (to 12,418,700 persons), or by 4.6 percent, while the number of unemployed persons rose by just 104,500 (to 823,300 persons). How could that be? Because 490,000 persons left the labor force altogether. That means they may have become too discouraged to bother looking for work, or they're unable to work because they've been forced into a caring role at home, for instance. Since they're not actively looking for work, they're no longer being counted as officially unemployed – they've disappeared from the official figures.

But that doesn't mean they're not hurting. If those 490,000 persons who dropped out of the labor force in the month were still actively looking for work, the

number of officially unemployed persons would be nearly half a million higher, at around 1.3 million. And that means the official unemployment rate would be 9.6 percent, rather than 6.2 percent.

ITALY: UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DROPPED STEEPLY TO 8.4% IN MARCH



Italy's unemployment rate dropped steeply to 8.4% in March 2020, the lowest for almost nine years, as people stopped looking for work due to the coronavirus emergency. In March 267,000 fewer people were looking for work than in the month before, ISTAT said, accounting for the drop in the unemployment rate, which measures active job-seekers.

March is the first month of jobs data to reflect the impact of Italy's outbreak of coronavirus which first came to light on Feb 21. The government's lockdown measures aimed at containing infections have brought the economy to its knees, shuttering all firms except those deemed essential for the national supply chain.

Until the virus outbreak the Italian labor market had held up relatively well, despite an economy which has been broadly stagnant for over a year and contracted by 0.3% in the last quarter of 2019 compared with the previous three months.

USA: LABOR MARKET IMPROVED UNEXPECTEDLY IN MAY



The US labor market improved unexpectedly in May raising hopes that economic damage tied to the pandemic will be less harmful than feared. The unemployment rate fell to 13.3 per cent, down from 14.7 per cent in April, as businesses started hiring again, reports BBC.

Firms in the hospitality, construction and health care sectors took on staff. In total, employers added 2.5 million jobs, with the education and retail sectors also recruiting. It came as most US states started rolling back some of the tough measures put in place to control the spread of the coronavirus. As businesses start reopening, firms are beginning to rehire their employees.

CANADA: UNEMPLOYMENT RATE REACHES RECORD 13.7%



Statistics Canada reports a record high unemployment rate of 13.7 percent in May 2020, topping the previous high of 13.1 percent set in December 1982 in more than four decades of comparable data. The increase

in the unemployment rate came as more people started looking for work.

The economy added 289,600 jobs in May, with businesses reopening as authorities eased public health restrictions linked to the novel coronavirus pandemic. The increase in the number of jobs comes after three million jobs were lost over March and April, and about 2.5 million more had their hours slashed. Statistics Canada says the number of people who worked less than half their usual hours fell by 292,000 in May.

HSBC: CUTTING AROUND 35,000 JOBS RESUMES



HSBC is resuming a redundancy plan it put on ice after the coronavirus outbreak, and will cut around 35,000 jobs over the medium term. The bank will also maintain a freeze on almost all external recruitment, Chief Executive Noel Quinn said in the memo, which was sent to HSBC's 235,000 staff worldwide. A bank spokeswoman confirmed the contents of the memo. HSBC had postponed the job cuts, part of a wider restructuring to cut \$4.5 billion in costs, in March saying the extraordinary circumstances of the coronavirus pandemic meant it would be wrong to push staff out. The bulk of the job losses are likely to fall in back office roles in HSBC's Global Banking and Markets division, which houses its investment banking and trading businesses, a senior HSBC executive familiar with the plans said. HSBC sees natural attrition of up to 25,000 roles each year but redeploying all affected staff to those roles was unrealistic, the executive said.

ILO NEWS

COVID-19 MORE THAN ONE IN SIX YOUNG PEOPLE OUT OF WORK



More than one in six young people have stopped working since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic while those who remain employed have seen their working hours cut by 23 percent, says International Labour Organization (ILO).

According to the ILO Monitor: COVID-19 and the world of work. 4th edition, youth are being disproportionately affected by the pandemic, and the substantial and rapid increase in youth unemployment seen since February is affecting young women more than young men.

The pandemic is inflicting a triple shock on young people. Not only is it destroying their employment, but it is also disrupting education and training, and placing major obstacles in the way of those seeking to enter the labor market or to move between jobs.

At 13.6 percent, the youth unemployment rate in 2019 was already higher than for any other group. There were around 267 million young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) worldwide. Those 15-24 year olds who were employed were also more likely to be in forms of work that leave them vulnerable, such as low paid occupations, informal sector work, or as migrant workers.

“The COVID-19 economic crisis is hitting young people – especially women – harder and faster

than any other group. If we do not take significant and immediate action to improve their situation, the legacy of the virus could be with us for decades. If their talent and energy is side-lined by a lack of opportunity or skills it will damage all our futures and make it much more difficult to re-build a better, post-COVID economy,” said ILO Director-General.

The Monitor also updates the estimate for the decline in working hours in the first and second quarters of 2020, compared with the fourth quarter of 2019. An estimated 4.8 percent of working hours were lost during Q1 2020 (equivalent to approximately 135 million full-time jobs, assuming a 48-hour working week). This represents a slight upward revision of around 7 million jobs since the third edition of the Monitor. The estimated number of jobs lost in Q2 remain unchanged at 305 million. From a regional perspective, the Americas (13.1 per cent), and Europe and Central Asia (12.9 per cent) present the largest losses in hours worked in Q2.

The Monitor calls for urgent, large-scale and targeted policy responses to support youth, including broad-based employment/training guarantee programs in developed countries, and employment-intensive programs and guarantees in low- and middle-income economies.

INFORMAL SECTOR WORKERS CONTAGION OR STARVATION



COVID-19 lockdown and containment measures threaten to increase relative poverty levels among the world's informal economy workers by as much as 56 percentage points in low-income countries, says a new briefing paper issued by the ILO.

As many as 1.6 billion of the world's two billion informal economy workers are affected by lockdown and containment measures. Most are working in the hardest-hit sectors or in small units more vulnerable to shocks. These include workers in accommodation and food services, manufacturing, wholesale and retail, and the more than 500 million farmers producing for the urban market. Women are particularly affected in high-risk sectors, the report says.

In addition, with these workers needing to work to feed their families, COVID-19 containment measures in many countries cannot be implemented successfully. This is endangering governments' efforts to protect the population and fight the pandemic. It may become a source of social tension in countries with large informal economies, the report says.

With most informal workers having no other means of support, they face an almost unsolvable dilemma: to die from hunger or from the virus, the briefing says. This has been exacerbated by disruptions in food supplies, which has particularly affected those in the informal economy.

More than 75 per cent of total informal employment takes place in businesses of fewer than ten workers, including 45 per cent of independent workers without employees.

Among its recommendations, the report highlights the need for policies that reduce the exposure of informal workers to the virus; ensure that those infected have access to health care; provide income and food support to individuals and their families; and prevent damage to the economic fabric of countries.

GREENING THE TRANSPORT SECTOR: UP TO 15 MILLION JOBS COULD BE CREATED WORLDWIDE



The recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic cannot be a return to business as usual. It must be an opportunity to push the advancement of the sustainable development agenda. A structural transformation of the transport sector will be needed if environmentally sustainable, green economies are to become a reality. This could lead to the creation of millions of new jobs, say the authors of a new study, *Jobs in green and healthy transport: Making the green shift*.

The report examines the employment implications of four "green transport" scenarios in 56 countries in North America, Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, which are members of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

The study finds that 10 million additional jobs could be created worldwide – 2.9 million in the UNECE region – if 50 percent of all vehicles manufactured were electric. In addition, almost 5 million new jobs could be created worldwide – 2.5 million in the UNECE region – if UNECE countries doubled investment in public transport.

The report says that greener transport systems produced by changes like these would also result in reduced greenhouse gas emissions, air and noise pollution, and traffic congestion – which could lead to fewer road accidents.

To make the most of the employment opportunities associated with greening the transport sector, the report recommends the implementation of

a comprehensive range of policies. These would include skills development, social protection, labor market policies, and the promotion of social dialogue and fundamental rights at work.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE DEFERRED UNTIL 2021 DUE TO COVID-19



The Governing Body of the ILO deferred the upcoming session of the annual International Labour Conference – originally scheduled for 25 May to 5 June in Geneva – due to the spread of COVID-19.

Its decision was taken in the light of severe worldwide travel restrictions due to the pandemic, and the need to ensure the health and well-being of delegates and staff. The 109th session of the Conference will now take place in June 2021. As a consequence of this decision, the associated 338th and 339th sessions of the ILO Governing Body, scheduled for 25 May and 6 June 2020 respectively, will also not take place.

CAMBODIA: PROMOTING DECENT EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUTH



The Royal Government of Cambodia and the United Nations in Cambodia in partnership with the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC), launched

the second phase of a joint program to promote decent employment for youth and reduce inequalities in the country.

The program offers out-of school and vulnerable youth with innovative learning packages to help them access quality employment. Packages include technical; entrepreneurial; soft and on-the-job skills as well demand-driven career guidance. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the program also responds to the emergency measures and supports recovery efforts of the government.

Over 170,000 young women and men will directly benefit from the industry-driven skills and competencies development initiatives; basic education equivalency and literacy in factory programs; entrepreneurship and enterprise development training and support initiatives; employment services; and youth rights at work awareness raising programs.

With a combined contribution of US\$4 million from SDC and US\$4.48 million from the four UN agencies (UNICEF, UNESCO, UNIDO and ILO), the Royal Government of Cambodia, and private sector, this four-year program will benefit from the involvement of the private sector, including the Cambodian Federation of Employers and Business Associations (CAMFEBA), in the mission to facilitate young people's school-to-work transition and contribute to reduce the skills mismatch in Cambodia.

MYANMAR RATIFIES THE MINIMUM AGE CONVENTION



The Government of Myanmar deposited with the International Labour Office the instrument of ratification of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138). Myanmar is the 173rd ILO Member State to ratify Convention No.138, a fundamental Convention which requires States party to set a minimum age under which no one shall be admitted to employment or work in any occupation, except for light work and artistic performances and to prohibit hazardous types of activities for young persons under 18.

With the ratification of ILO Convention No. 138, Myanmar, which has already ratified ILO Convention No.182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention in 2013, reaffirms its commitment towards the fight against the scourge of child labor and to protecting children from work for which they are too young and from work that jeopardizes their health, morals or psychological wellbeing as well as their access to education.

Moreover, by ratifying the Convention, Myanmar is moving ahead towards the achievement of decent work and the delivering at the country-level of the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG target 8.7, which aims at the complete eradication of child labor by 2025 and calls for immediate action to prohibit and eliminate its worst forms.

INDONESIA: STAYING COMPETITIVE DURING COVID-19 WITH DIGITAL SKILLS



Just like everywhere else in the world, retail industry in Indonesia also suffers from the economic slow-down caused by COVID-19 pandemic. Hundreds of shops are closed down due to lockdown and millions of workers are impacted. However, there is a growing need for information, communication and technology (ICT) skills as hundreds of retail companies, shops and stores, including small and medium retailers, have moved their services online.

Responding to this growing need, the ILO in collaboration with the Indonesian Retail Association (APRINDO) have launched two online training services on 13 May: Creating Online Shop Application Training and Online Shop Administration Training. Targeted to business owners and laid-off workers, these online trainings aim to develop knowledge and skills to create an online store application and to increase the employability of the participants in the retail sector for income generation and sustainable livelihoods.

More than 300 people nationwide registered with 87 selected participants, including two participants with disabilities. The majority of the participants were young people aged below 30 years old, of whom 60 percent were women.

The training programs are conducted by the ILO through its Women in STEM workforce readiness and development program. Funded by J.P Morgan Chase Foundation, the program seeks to provide women with critical soft and technical skills to help women gain quality employment and support career advancement of women, particularly in the fields of information technology. In the midst of COVID-19 pandemic and considering the skills requirements in this new context, the program expanded its scope to provide ICT trainings tailored for the needs of the retail sector.

STATISTICS

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX: NATIONAL

Base: 2005-06=100)

Period	Index by expenditure group									
	General Index	1. Food & Beverage	2. Non-Food	1. 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	181.73	193.24	166.97	179.66	155.61	195.33	159.66	159.34	157.23	182.54
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										
August	266.96	289.60	237.93	287.98	214.85	276.33	222.04	244.13	188.97	250.59
September	271.90	296.81	239.96	288.80	215.08	280.53	226.80	247.26	189.24	256.99
October	273.30	298.99	240.38	288.89	215.96	280.64	226.96	247.48	189.72	257.01
November	273.60	299.26	240.70	288.95	216.26	281.39	227.23	247.72	189.79	257.85
December	272.97	297.69	241.28	289.48	216.33	283.57	227.56	248.24	189.91	259.31
January	276.16	300.11	245.46	290.95	224.99	285.35	232.80	248.96	190.66	262.00
February	275.63	299.13	245.49	291.00	225.06	284.83	232.88	249.14	190.69	262.23
March	276.83	300.74	246.17	291.44	225.93	286.51	233.28	249.97	190.92	263.15
April	278.39	303.39	246.34	291.49	226.04	285.79	233.70	250.22	190.96	263.41

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	183.90	192.14	170.79	184.54	157.40	186.40	164.63	160.98	174.07	187.05
2013-14	196.90	207.72	179.69	200.61	164.05	197.62	168.87	166.01	179.72	199.74
2014-15	209.10	221.02	190.13	214.07	171.34	209.29	187.18	174.09	183.84	212.34
2015-16	220.10	230.31	203.86	242.26	179.19	222.11	211.04	188.69	187.84	221.12
2016-17	231.02	243.08	211.83	253.51	187.45	229.57	219.35	193.71	194.81	226.47
2017-18	244.17	259.86	219.21	263.96	192.89	246.23	221.15	197.24	201.31	233.72
2018-19	256.74	273.55	230.01	282.76	198.99	261.30	225.86	207.51	205.05	253.71
2019-20										
August	264.44	281.26	237.67	290.72	206.78	273.02	231.51	213.74	207.71	263.88
September	269.69	288.41	239.91	290.97	207.01	277.40	238.15	216.37	207.97	271.89
October	271.22	290.69	240.24	291.02	207.82	277.54	238.33	216.54	208.03	271.91
November	271.49	290.89	240.62	291.08	208.32	278.27	238.69	216.67	208.06	272.81
December	270.94	289.65	241.17	291.59	208.42	278.67	239.10	217.59	208.25	275.30
January	274.59	292.98	245.32	293.20	216.64	279.15	246.26	217.93	209.62	280.02
February	274.08	292.15	245.33	293.26	216.75	278.44	246.36	218.19	209.65	280.05
March	275.39	294.01	245.75	293.36	217.18	278.80	246.74	218.34	210.07	281.64
April	277.16	296.83	245.86	293.38	217.37	279.00	246.77	218.35	210.07	281.85

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX: URBAN

(Base: 2005-06=100)

Period	Index by expenditure group									
	General Index	1. Food & Beverage	2. Non-Food	1. 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	177.71	195.91	161.88	170.39	153.55	211.03	151.15	157.53	139.06	176.96
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										
August	271.61	309.93	238.28	282.79	224.21	282.14	205.85	277.62	168.74	234.19
September	275.98	317.31	240.03	284.69	224.42	286.05	207.38	281.30	169.03	238.59
October	277.16	319.24	240.56	284.83	225.38	286.09	207.50	281.57	169.97	238.62
November	277.51	319.69	240.81	284.91	225.47	286.87	207.62	281.94	170.08	239.38
December	276.72	317.30	241.42	285.47	225.49	292.19	207.80	282.01	170.12	239.57
January	279.07	317.51	245.64	286.67	234.67	296.24	209.78	283.17	170.20	239.77
February	278.48	316.16	245.70	286.71	234.69	296.07	209.81	283.25	170.23	240.24
March	279.49	317.16	246.72	287.79	236.05	297.33	210.25	284.82	170.26	240.32
April	280.66	319.39	246.98	287.91	236.09	297.72	211.35	285.35	170.33	240.64

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

Sector	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Jan'20	Feb'20	Mar'20	Apr'20
General	141.46	150.59	160.23	171.63	172.92	173.54	173.49
percentage change (Point to Point)	6.50	6.46	6.40	6.56	6.51	6.46	6.10
percentage change (over previous month)				0.76	0.75	0.36	-0.03
1. Agriculture	141.22	150.27	159.92	171.76	173.02	173.47	173.43
percentage change(over previous month)	6.59	6.41	6.42	6.74	6.65	6.58	6.33
percentage change(over previous month)				0.84	0.74	0.26	-0.02
i) Agriculture	141.19	150.23	159.91	171.80	173.07	173.51	173.48
percentage change (Point to Point)	6.60	6.40	6.44	6.77	6.67	6.6	6.35
percentage change(over previous month)				0.84	0.74	0.26	-0.20
ii) Fish	143.19	152.63	160.59	169.67	170.63	170.97	170.88
percentage change (Point to Point)	6.37	6.61	5.22	5.31	5.55	5.54	5.15
percentage change(over previous month)				0.72	0.57	0.2	-0.05
2. Industry	140.27	149.45	158.74	169.07	170.23	171.22	171.15
percentage change (Point to Point)	6.24	6.55	6.22	6.14	6.15	6.14	5.59
percentage change(over previous month)				0.62	0.69	0.58	-0.04
i) Construction	137.43	145.32	152.86	160.54	161.33	162.48	162.43
percentage change (Point to Point)	5.37	5.75	5.19	4.86	4.86	4.83	4.44
percentage change(over previous month)				0.32	0.49	0.71	-0.03
ii) Production	146.01	157.81	170.66	186.36	188.27	188.94	188.83
percentage change (Point to Point)	7.22	8.08	8.14	8.46	8.46	8.5	7.66
percentage change(over previous month)				1.15	1.03	0.36	-0.06
3. Service	145.01	154.44	164.78	176.29	177.90	178.62	178.58
percentage change (Point to Point)	6.60	6.51	6.69	6.52	6.53	6.52	5.99
percentage change(over previous month)				0.65	0.91	0.40	-0.02

AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES (OPEN MARKET) OF SELECTED COMMODITIES IN DHAKA CITY

SL. No.	Item with specification	Unit	2018-19	Feb'20	Mar'20	April'20
	1	2	3	4	5	6
I. Cereals :						
1.	Rice : Najershail/Minikat	Kg.	61.47	62.00	65.00	70.00
2.	Rice : Pajam/Equiv.	Kg.	57.77	59.88	64.00	66.25
3.	Rice : Irri/Boro	Kg.	48.40	44.05	48.00	52.08
4.	Wheat (atta), white,Pkt.	Kg.	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
II. Pulses :						
5.	Moongdal (husked)	Kg.	115.34	128.00	150.00	160.00
6.	Lentil (husked)	Kg.	108.62	118.54	135.00	150.00
III. Sugar & Molasses :						
7.	Sugar (white)	Kg.	57.70	65.00	68.00	70.00
8.	Molasses (sugarcane)	Kg.	98.29	105.05	109.02	110.25
IV. Protein Items :						
9.	Fish-Rohu-cut piece	Kg.	418.60	430.00	430.00	435.00
10.	Fish-Hilsa, medium size	Kg.	1960.58	1258.50	1258.90	1260.00
11.	Prawn/Shrimp, about 3" long	Kg.	741.27	758.48	758.50	760.20
12.	Barbel (Shing), about 50 gram weight each	Kg.	778.54	775.98	776.10	776.25
13.	Beef, best quality	Kg.	505.08	525.45	525.90	525.98
14.	Mutton, best quality	Kg.	762.42	740.52	742.00	742.50
15.	Fowl, alive	Kg.	411.04	420.38	425.00	425.20
16.	Egg (Hen), Farm	4 pcs	33.86	34.00	36.00	33.00
17.	Egg (Duck)	4 pcs	55.13	60.00	60.00	60.00
V. Edible oil :						
18.	Mustard oil, best quality	Litre	188.04	196.42	196.68	198.29
19.	Soyabean oil, best quality	Litre	96.66	98.20	100.00	110.20
V. Edible oil :						
18.	Mustard oil, best quality	Litre	188.04	196.42	196.68	198.29
19.	Soyabean oil, best quality	Litre	96.66	98.20	100.00	110.20
VI. Spices :						
20.	Chilli (dry), best quality	Kg.	220.04	215.98	220.20	250.00

21.	Onion (local)	Kg.	43.37	120.50	82.00	65.00
22.	Garlic (Local)	Kg.	94.38	175.05	180.00	190.00
23.	Turmeric (Local)	Kg.	169.27	150.10	155.00	160.00
24.	Ginger (Local)	Kg.	125.57	140.00	150.00	280.24
25.	Salt (fine)	Kg.	40.79	35.98	38.00	38.00
VII. Vegetable :						
26.	Potato, best quality	Kg.	20.30	20.00	25.00	28.00
27.	Brinjal, best quality	Kg.	60.54	50.00	50.00	45.50
28.	Lady's finger, best quality	Kg.	50.36	70.00	65.00	50.00
29.	Papaya (green)	Kg.	25.54	30.00	30.00	25.00
VIII. Milk :						
30.	Milk (Milk vita packet)	Litre	71.64	80.00	80.00	80.00
IX. Fuel & lighting :						
32.	Firewood (gazari)	Quintal	664.83	476.49	476.60	476.62
33.	Kerosene	Litre	74.95	80.00	80.00	83.54
34.	Matches (40 sticks)	Box	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
X. Clothing:						
35.	Long cloth (fine)	Metre	79.79	80.25	80.25	80.25
36.	Long cloth (medium)	Metre	75.74	76.40	76.40	76.40
37.	Saree (medium), white Tangail handloom: A451 80x80 count 5.5 yds.	Each	708.43	725.46	725.50	725.56
38.	Lungi (medium.) 48" handloom 60X60	Each	536.61	798.40	798.45	798.60
39.	Undershirt (genjee 100 c.m sleeveless)	Each	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
XI. Housing & Household Requisites:						
40.	Cement (local)	Bag of 50 Kg	453.15	450.00	450.00	450.00
41.	Aluminium (Degchi)	Gram	0.45	0.42	0.42	0.42
42.	Bamboo (mul) about 30 feet long	Each	146.72	189.25	189.35	189.42
43.	Enamel plate	Each	69.94	70.00	70.00	70.00
XII. Miscellaneous:						
44.	Coconut oil (unscented, imported)	Kg.	278.19	279.40	280.00	281.20
45.	Cigarettes (Star)	10 Sticks	60.00	70.00	70.00	80.00
46.	White paper	Quire	27.78	27.98	27.98	27.98
47.	Blade-Sword (stainless steel)	Each	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00

TRANSTEC

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২০০০ ঘন্টা জুড়ে নিশ্চিত করে একই আলো
Wide Voltage Range: 70-250V AC, 50Hz.



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ট্রানস্টেক CFL ৫w	২৯০	বালু ২৫w
ট্রানস্টেক CFL ৮w	৪৬০	বালু ৪০w
ট্রানস্টেক CFL ১১w	৬৪০	বালু ৬০w
ট্রানস্টেক CFL ১৪w	৮৩০	বালু ৬০w
ট্রানস্টেক CFL ২০w	১১৯৫	বালু ১০০w
ট্রানস্টেক CFL ২৪w	১৪৫০	বালু ১০০w
ট্রানস্টেক CFL ২৮w	১৭০০	বালু ১০০w
ট্রানস্টেক CFL ৩২w	১৯০০	বালু ১০০w



POWER CFL

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নিরাপত্তার জন্য FUSE WIRE ব্যবহার করা হয়েছে
ওয়াট সমূহ: ২৫W, ৪০W, ৬০W, ৯০০W ও ২০০W



Argenta

চোখের জন্য আরামদায়ক আলো
ওয়াট সমূহ: ৬০W, ৯০০W ও ২০০W



Candle & Lustre

৬ টি রঙের সমাহার
(ফ্লিয়ার, সাদা, লাল, নীল, হলুদ এবং সবুজ)



Anti-Insect

রাতে বিচরনশীল
পৌকামাকড় থেকে ঘরকে মুক্ত রাখে

Tube light

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সর্বাধিক লুমেন এবং ২০০০ ঘন্টা পরেও ৮০% এরও বেশি লুমেন



Watt Range: 18 Watt and 36 Watt



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WORN AROUND THE WORLD

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