



HIGH COMMISSION FOR THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
CANBERRA

No.: Pol-119/20

04 April 2020

Dear Members of the Bangladesh community in Australia,

We are passing through an extra-ordinarily challenging time, owing to CORONA virus outbreak. Hundreds of visitors from Bangladesh are stranded, thousands of our students barely continuing online classes with no jobs for sustenance. Australia authorities are alluding to their limitations to support them and in a way encouraging them to return, while return immediately is impossible owing to near-collapse of air-connectivity. Thousands among our Bangladesh community (with various legal status in Australia) have lost casual, part-time jobs and full-time gainful employment and are now solely dependent on Australian public assistance.

In such a trying time, many of our community members and organisations have come forward with innovative ideas to extend support and implementing some of them. These include information sharing; peer conversation, telephone consultation for medical advice, and ways to extend community mental health support; modest survival (food and essentials) packs; and even financial assistance. Bangladesh Association in Brisbane (BAB) and many others are initiating pioneering voluntary works, within the limitations of local restrictions and their capacity to mobilise resources.

Similar noble activities were also undertaken during the devastating bush-fire season. But, the present extra-ordinary situation demands much louder expression of support for humanity and greater mobilisation of resources.


Efforts are also being undertaken to mitigate sufferings of the affected people in Bangladesh in particular day labourers, employed in informal sector and other vulnerable groups at a time when the global economy is entering a period of hibernation of sort. Unemployment of millions of people at home and jobless millions abroad are at the focus of our immediate and medium-term measures. However, the gravity of our challenges may not allow our Government to extend immediate support to Bangladesh expatriates abroad and evacuate the needy ones.

In such a time of need, I encourage, and rather urge, community associations, socio-cultural entities, professional bodies and favourably situated and capable individuals to come forward and play their due role in protecting the vulnerable in whatever manner possible.

While you undertake such humanitarian initiatives and measures voluntarily to mitigate sufferings of some in desperate situation from among the Bangladesh community in Australia, you may keep the High Commission in Canberra and Consulate General in Sydney informed.

Follow local advices, stay safe and stay connected.

With best wishes,


(Mohammad Sufiur Rahman)
04.4.2020