



08 May 2020

Press release

Stranded Bangladeshis return from Australia on special Sri Lankan Airline's flight

A total of 157 Bangladeshi passengers, who were stranded in Australia due to the ban on international flights amidst coronavirus outbreak, have departed Melbourne for Dhaka on a special Sri Lankan Airlines flight today afternoon. The flight will land at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at 00:40 hrs (local time) on Saturday, after a stopover at Colombo.

The High Commission for Bangladesh in Canberra facilitated the return with support from authorities of Bangladesh and Australia and with active cooperation from the Victorian Bangladeshi Community Foundation (VBCF) and Melton Travel Center who were assigned to coordinate with intending passengers and manage funds and ticketing tasks.

Initially at its "needs assessment" template in its website, the High Commission received requests of 340 Bangladesh origin persons in Australia who expressed willingness to return to Bangladesh. Based on this estimate of 300 plus stranded Bangladeshis seeking to return, the High Commission secured in principle approval of Bangladesh authorities to accept special non-scheduled flight from Australia and tried to charter a flight from Sydney to Dhaka.

Drastic reduction in demand from the stranded Bangladeshis compelled the High Commission to charter Sri Lankan Airlines to operate this flight from Melbourne. All passengers were notified to carry up-to-date COVID symptom-free or COVID negative certificate issued within 3 days before departure.

Bangladesh High Commission wishes to thank Victorian Bangladeshi Community Foundation (VBCF), Melton Travel Center, Bangladesh Consulate General in Sydney as well as Sri Lankan Airlines for operationalizing this non scheduled flight.

