

A Correspondent

Rangamati: Amid the growing number of confirmed coronavirus cases in the country, traders in Rangamati opened for business after over a month.

Traders took advantage of government announcement and reopened shops but customers were scant and sales were low.

During a visit to Banrupa market and Reserve Bazaar on Thursday, this correspondent saw traders clearing their shops and showrooms and passing a busy time displaying their products. Some traders attributed the low turnout on coronavirus pandemic.

Mozammel Haque, a trader of BM Shopping Complex, said, "The shopping mall remained shut for a long period. We've counted a huge loss during this period. Although we can't run our business, we have to bear the salary of staffers and pay shop rent and other expenses."

Kamal Uddin, general secretary of Rangamati Traders Federation, said they have given limited opportunity to the trader to open their business establishments from May 13 after maintaining health issues. Federation and association leaders are also providing guidance and assistance in complying with these health directives of the government.

Necessary steps were taken to ensure mask wearing by the shopkeepers, hand gloves, using hand sanitizers, and ensure spraying of disinfectant before entering the store, he said.

He also claimed that the number of customers is poor and this time they may suffer a lot due to restriction on vehicle movement.

Deputy Commissioner AKM Mamunur Rashid said the traders can open their business establishments following the government directives. Besides, they will have to follow the directives given by the local administration as well.

The government has recently allowed businesspeople to keep shops and shopping malls open for six hours from 10am to 4pm every day after maintaining health guidelines during the general holidays.