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DSA CASES STUDIED IN LAST 20 MONTHS

# Only two out of 668 disposed of

ZYMA ISLAM

Think-tank Centre for Governance Studies says it tracked details of 668 out of more than 1,500 cases filed under the controversial Digital Security Act in the last 20 months or so, and found that only two of the cases have been disposed of.

The DSA came into force on this day three years ago and it has come under severe criticism for several of its sections which rights activists say curb people's freedom of expression and target independent journalism.

One of the two cases solved was filed against policemen, the CGS said based on the data logged between January last year and September this year.

A cloth merchant had accused Kotwali Police Station Sub-Inspector Pabitra Sarkar, SI Khaled Sheikh, Assistant Sub-Inspector Shahinur Rahman, constable Mizanur Rahman and informant Motaleb of threatening him with "crossfire" and demanding extortion money from him.

Politicians were the most accused, followed by journalists

1,543 individuals accused, 1.17% of them indicted

13 of the accused were under 18

In most cases, accuser was not a direct victim of the incident

The five have been acquitted.

The other case was against Sirajum Munira, a former lecturer of Bangla department of Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur. Law enforcers had arrested her on June 14, 2020 on charges of posting a "derogatory status" on Facebook about Awami League leader Mohammad Nasim. She was acquitted last week.

On the other hand, scores of DSA cases against journalists, teachers, politicians and

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Vehicles stuck in traffic on the street in front of Dhaka Medical College Hospital's emergency unit. The vehicles included several ambulances which were carrying critical patients to the public hospital. The photo was taken around 2:00pm yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

PREVENTING RUMOURS

## JS body wants fact checking cell under PID

RASHIDUL HASAN

A parliamentary body at a meeting yesterday recommended that the information ministry takes effective measures to stop the spread of rumours and fake news on social media.

The parliamentary standing committee on the information and broadcasting ministry also asked the ministry concerned to set up a "fact checking and counter narrative of the fact cell" under the Press Information Department (PID) within seven days.

The meeting was held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban with former information minister Hasanul Haq Inu in the chair.

Meanwhile, Information and Broadcasting Minister Hasan Mahmud said unregistered news portals will be shut down in phases.

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## A murder well-planned

Investigators suspect Rohingya leader Mohib Ullah was killed by people known to him; outrage, frustration grip refugee camps

MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAT and FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

Fear, frustration, and anger gripped refugees in Cox's Bazar as the identity of the gunmen and their motive behind killing Rohingya leader Mohib Ullah remain unknown.

The leading representative of the Rohingya cause might have been killed by individuals he knew because no one stopped them when they walked into his office in Kutupalong camp around 8:30pm on Wednesday, law enforcers said.

However, Mohib's grieving brother Habib Ullah claimed that Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) was behind the assassination, which prompted Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and UNHCR to call for an investigation.

The 48-year-old chairman of the Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights was buried at Charmukh graveyard inside the camp yesterday evening amid heightened security.

His namaz-e-janaza was attended by thousands



Naimul Huq of Armed Police Battalion-14 in Cox's Bazar.

If they were outsiders, Mohib Ullah's supporters would have stopped them, he said, adding that the murder was executed in a well-planned manner.

Police are examining the bullet shells found at the scene, officers said.

Soon after the killing, the local administration and police issued an alert as residents of the world's largest refugee camp became tensed. Additional

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## 'A liberal voice for Rohingyas silenced'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mohib Ullah was a strong liberal voice for the Rohingyas, and his assassination is yet another setback to the long-stalled repatriation process, experts say.

His death is a great loss not only for the Rohingyas living in the Kutupalong refugee camps in Cox's Bazar but also for the Bangladesh government, as there is no alternative to him for now.

The experts think the government should beef up security measures at the camps, as Mohib Ullah's death may trigger unrest there.

Mohib Ullah was working for a dignified

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## Shots fired on farmers

Seven hurt as 'contractor's men' attack them

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Chattogram

At least seven people sustained shotgun pellet wounds as "men of a Water Development Board contractor" opened fire during a heated debate with farmers over keeping dredging machinery on their land in Satkania yesterday morning.

Locals alleged that Ruhullah Chowdhury, brother-in-law of Awami League lawmaker Abu Reza Muhammad Nezamuddin Nadvi (Chattogram-15, Satkania), led the attack in Tulatoli village of the upazila.

Ruhullah, son of a former Jamaat-e-Islami leader, however, reportedly refuted the allegation. According to locals, he introduces himself as the general secretary of Charati union unit of Bangabandhu Parishad.

The WDB has tasked the contractor with dredging the Sangu river to improve its navigability.

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EMBEZZLING GOVT FUNDS

## ACC charges former DGHS boss, 5 others

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday pressed charges against former director general of Directorate General of Health Services Abul Kalam Azad and five others in a case filed over embezzling government funds.

The five others are: Regent Group chairman Mohammad Shahed, DGHS former director (hospitals and clinics) Dr Aminul Hasan, deputy director (hospital-1) Dr Md Younus Ali, assistant director (hospital-1) Dr Md Shafiqur Rahman and research officer Dr Md Didarul Islam.

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While waiting for his turn to provide biometrics information, Abul Kalam Azad, a 63-year-old partially paralyzed patient, is lying on a stretcher left on the ground in the regional passport office in Khulna yesterday. Abul had to travel 70 kilometres in an ambulance to go to the office as he desperately needs his passport for treatment in India. His relatives said had they been able to submit the information at the local level, Abul would not have to suffer this way.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## Expressing opinion not a crime

Says a defiant Jhumon Das



DWOHA CHOWDHURY, Sylhet

"I don't believe that expressing an opinion can be considered a crime. I still believe in freedom of speech."

Jhumon Das is unwavering in his beliefs even after six months imprisonment without trial.

His detention and time spent in jail, however, had many turns of events.

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