



COVID-19 JABS Special drive to continue today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The health directorate will continue its special campaign on the weekend today to administer the first doses of Covid-19 vaccines before the programme ends tomorrow.

The decision was taken considering the heavy rush in countrywide vaccination centres, said Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) yesterday.

On February 15, the DGHS announced the special drive to vaccinate one crore people by February 26.

Prof Meerjady Sabrina Flora, additional director general (planning and development), DGHS, said, “We want to achieve the target of inoculating 70 percent population with the first dose.”

On Saturday, the DGHS arranged around 24,500 makeshift vaccination centres across the country.

Meanwhile, the Covid death toll exceeded 29,000 mark with 10 deaths yesterday.



Packed like sardines, people wait in front of Savar's Institute of Health Management to be vaccinated against Covid-19 yesterday. People in Savar, a garment factory hub, are thronging vaccination centres after the government recently decided to close administration of the first dose from Sunday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

13 YEARS OF BDR MUTINY

Justice tangled up in lengthy procedures

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Thirteen years have passed after the BDR mutiny, but the victims' families and the accused in the carnage case are still waiting for justice due to the lengthy legal process and the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is uncertain when their wait would be over as 69 appeals in the case are pending with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

Besides, the trial court could not finish recording statements of witnesses in another case filed under the Explosive Substances Act in connection with the same incident.

Despite having served their jail sentences, many convicts in the carnage case cannot walk out of jail as they stand accused in the second case which is currently under trial.

A total of 74 people, including 57 army officials, were killed in the mutiny that took place at the Pilkhana headquarters of

the erstwhile Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) on February 25-26, 2009.

The mutiny had left the nation benumbed, as people stood aghast at the extent of the barbarity perpetrated at the headquarters of the paramilitary force, later renamed Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB).

A total of 829 people, mostly BDR members, were accused in the carnage case.

On November 5, 2013, a Dhaka court awarded death sentence to 150 BDR members and two civilians, and life imprisonment to

160 others for their role and involvement in the carnage. A total of 256 people, mostly BDR soldiers, were handed rigorous imprisonment.

The court acquitted 278 others, but the prosecution later appealed against the acquittal of 69.

The HC in January 2015 started hearing the appeals of the convicts and pronounced its verdict on November 27, 2017 confirming death penalty of 139. It

upheld life sentences of 185 and three to 10 years' imprisonment of 256.

The court acquitted 209 accused.

The execution of the death row convicts now depends on hearing on appeals by the Appellate Division and its verdict.

Attorney General AM Amin Uddin on Friday said, “The BDR mutiny case is a major case. Both the prosecution and the defence have filed appeals with the Appellate Division challenging the High Court verdict. The apex court will decide when it will start hearing the appeals maintaining the serial number of the cases.

He said he could not say how much more time would be needed for completing the hearing on the appeals and when the verdict would be implemented.

BEHIND BARS BEYOND JAIL TERM

A total of 256 convicts in the carnage case are behind bars beyond their jail term as the trial of the second case filed under the Explosive Substances Act is yet to be completed.

Public Prosecutor Mosharraf Hossain Kajol said the accused in the BDR carnage case, who have already served their jail sentences, and those acquitted by the trial court and HC, cannot be freed as they are arrested in the second case.

The trial of the second case was delayed

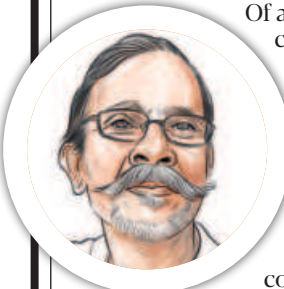
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DSA CASES

Only 18 percent filed for actual digital crimes

SoMaSHte reveals on writer Mushtaq Ahmed's first death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Of around 250 Digital Security Act cases analysed, only 18 percent were filed for actual digital crimes, found Society for Media and Suitable Human-Communication Techniques (SoMaSHte).

The rest 82 percent were filed for expressing opinions online or for sharing news content, the organisation said in a press statement circulated yesterday.

It came up with the numbers after collating media reports.

Nearly half of all the cases were filed under section 25, which prosecutes publishing anything that is “offensive, false, or threatening in order to annoy, insult, humiliate or malign a person”.

Seventeen percent of the cases were filed for “hurting religious sentiment”.

In 153 of the cases, the accused were arrested immediately, said the statement.

Nearly half of all the cases were filed by

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Breaking the shackles

ROWSHON ARA BACHCHU

During 1948's language movement, I was a student of Barishal BM College. The wave of the movement also reached there and made me aware of the state language issue.

After getting into Dhaka University I, along with other female students, participated in the “no fee campaign”. We also participated in the provincial student convention. Gradually, a consciousness developed among us about the Language Movement. Society was very conservative back then and female students could not even talk to their male counterparts without the proctor's permission.

On January 27, 1952, the then prime minister of Pakistan Khwaja declared that Urdu would be the only state language of Pakistan. It shocked us to the core. We jumped into the movement ignoring the conservative environment.

According to the directives of the State Language Action Committee, we actively participated in organising female students of schools and colleges, drawing posters and raising fund.

On the morning of February 21, 1952, we brought out processions from different schools

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Star HEALTHLINE Managing symptoms of POLYCYSTIC OVARY SYNDROME

STAR HEALTH DESK

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is a common hormonal problem for women around the world.

It happens when a woman cannot ovulate because of the lack of a certain kind of hormone in her body. Ovaries develop many small cysts as a result. The cysts then increase androgen levels in women causing further problems.

The term “polycystic” refers to the multiple cysts of the ovaries most patients develop.

PCOS usually cannot be completely cured. But its physical symptoms – weight gain, hair growth, and acne, etc. – can be managed through medication and lifestyle changes.

A FEW WAYS TO MANAGE PCOS

Losing excess weight helps reduce symptoms. A healthy diet and more physical activity help in

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SI transferred over Wazir's death from 'custodial torture'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Sub-inspector Debashish Sutradhar was transferred from Santiganj Police Station in Sunamganj on Wednesday, two days after 40-year-old Wazir Mia died from alleged custodial torture in the police station.

Wazir's family claimed three sub-inspectors, including Debashish, tortured Wazir following his arrest in the early hours of February 10. He died of his injuries on Monday, sparking protests by locals.

The family members also claimed the custodial torture was plotted by Debashish over Wazir's feud with a local UP member, who is a relative of the SI.

“Debashish was transferred to the adjacent Dera Police Station because local people are furious after learning about the allegation against him. It was not possible for him to continue working at the police station anymore,” said Abu Sayed, additional superintendent of police (crime) in Sunamganj.

Two committees, formed to investigate Wazir's death, were supposed to submit their probe reports yesterday, which was the deadline.

Anwar-ul-Halim, head of one of the probe bodies, said, “We have almost finalised our report and hope to submit it within today [yesterday].”



A pair of playful red-crested pochards on the Tanguar Haor in Sunamganj. This diving duck is a winter visitor to Bangladesh. Bird-watchers say they have seen fewer pochards this year. The photo was taken on Wednesday.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MOSABBER HOSSAIN RIBON



Tigers eye series win

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After staging an incredible fightback to win the first ODI, Bangladesh will take on Afghanistan in the second match today in Chattogram with hopes of sealing the three-match series with a game in hand.

The match will begin at 11:00am BST.

Bangladesh have not lost a bilateral series at home since their 2-1 defeat to England back in October 2016. The Tigers will want to keep the winning streak intact and make it six bilateral series wins at home on the trot.

Bangladesh are already second in the ICC World Cup Super League table with nine wins from 13 matches. A win today will further solidify the Tigers' chance of qualification for the 2023 ODI World Cup.