

# HSC, equivalent exams begin amid violation of Covid health rules

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*Higher Secondary Certificate and equivalent examinations candidate and their guardians gather, defying Covid health rules and education ministry's instruction amid coronavirus surge, in front of Tejgaon College exam centre at Indira Road of Dhaka's Farmgate area on Thursday. | Md Saurav*

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The Higher Secondary Certificate and its equivalent examinations started on Thursday across Bangladesh amid gross violation of Covid-19 health rules.

A total of 19,759 candidates were absent and 43 candidates were expelled under the 11 education boards on the first day.

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Although wearing masks has been made mandatory for all candidates and staff members during the examinations and gathering near the exam centres had been discouraged by the education ministry amid a surge in Covid cases nationwide, gross violations of these directives have been seen in different districts, including Dhaka.

During a visit to an exam centre at the Vashantek Govt College in the capital, the education adviser to the interim government professor Chowdhury Rafiqul Abrar said that they had taken adequate preparations to prevent Covid-19 infection at the centres.

The government was also staying alert to prevent leaks of question papers, he added.

On Thursday, the Bangla first paper exam under nine general education boards, Quran Majid under one madrassah education board and Bangla under one technical education board started at 10:00am across the country.

Under the madrassah board, the highest number of candidates, 4,196, was absent and the highest number of students, 24, was expelled followed by 1,050 absent and 13 students expelled under the technical board on the day.

A total of 14,513 candidates were absent and six candidates were expelled under the nine general education boards out of which under the Dhaka education board the highest number of students, 3,326, were absent and under the Cumilla education board the highest number of students, three, were expelled.

In the capital Dhaka, some candidates were seen without masks while many guardians were seen without masks in different areas including Tejgaon, Farmgate, Azimpur, Malibagh, Shahjahanpur and Mirpur.

A huge number of guardians were also seen gathered in front of different centres after dropping off their children.

New Age correspondent in Barishal reported that most of the candidates were seen wearing masks while most of the guardians were seen without masks.

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New age fashion

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Professor Yunus Ali Siddiqui, chairman of Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Barishal, said that from the Nalchiti Girls School and College centre a student was expelled for adopting unfair means and six teachers were dismissed after they were found with mobile phones during duty.

New Age correspondent in Sylhet reported that a mobile court in Sylhet sentenced a female student of Madan Mohan College to one year non-rigorous imprisonment for her attempt to enter the Sylhet Government College centre with a fake admit card.

Sylhet district senior assistant commissioner Mahmud Ashiq Kabir confirmed the incident.

Shah Paran police station officer-in-charge Monir Hossain said that later the convicted student became sick and she was undergoing treatment in police custody at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical Hospital till evening.

New Age Chattogram correspondent reported that in the Chattogram city the candidates were seen entering the centres wearing masks but most of the guardians were seen without wearing ones.

The overall situation at all centres was seemed 'satisfactory', said professor Md Parvez Sazzad Chowdhury, controller of exams of the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Chattogram.

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New Age Munshiganj correspondent reported that most of the students and guardians were seen without masks on the first day at different exam centres in the town.

Munshiganj deputy commissioner Fatema Tul Zannat said that no untoward incident had been reported yet.

Rajshahi correspondent reported that most of the candidates and the guardians were seen without masks in the city.

This year, 12.51 lakh students are taking the examinations under 11 education boards at 2,797 centres across the country.