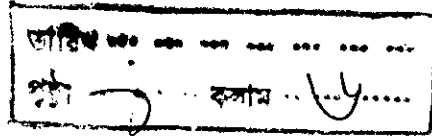


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569,114 students to appear **HSC exams begin today**

The Higher Secondary Certificate examinations under the country's seven education boards begin today amid stepped up efforts to stem unfair means in the exams, reports BSS.

A total of 569,114 students will write the examinations this year across the country, Dhaka Board Control Room sources said. They said a total of 164,574 examinees are appearing in the examinations this year from the Dhaka Board while 169,441 from Rajshahi Board, 67,235 from Chittagong Board, 71,458 from Jessore Board, 45,230 from Comilla Board, 34,085 from Barisal Board and 17,091 from Sylhet Board.

The examinations will be held in 982 centres including five centres abroad.

Besides, the Ministry of

Education has taken a set of measures for peaceful holding of the examinations and checking copying. Paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) troopers along with police personnel will be deployed in "examination centres vulnerable to cheating to prevent a breach of the peace," ministry sources told BSS.

Earlier, the ministry on the basis of the reports of the education boards had singled out 61 upazilas across the country as "copying-prone" areas for special attention.

"More vigilance teams would be sent to such centres to check unfair means in the examinations", sources said.

The sources said stern actions would be taken against teachers, helping students in copying.