

No sale of antibiotics without prescription

February 7, 2023

Online Desk: The Cabinet on Monday gave the final approval to the draft of Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 2023 banning the sale of antibiotic drugs without prescription from a registered doctor. The approval came from the weekly Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office. “As per the draft law, the antibiotic drugs can’t be sold without the prescription of any registered doctor and it’ll be a punishable offence,” said Cabinet Secretary Md Mahbub Hossain while briefing reporters at Bangladesh Secretariat after the meeting. He said if the antibiotic drug is sold without the prescription, the shopper will be fined Tk 20,000.

The Cabinet Secretary said the matters of monitoring and controlling the use of antibiotics were included in the proposed law as prevention of the antimicrobial resistance (AMR) has now emerged as a big challenge. Now there are two drug laws, which are Drugs Act, 1940 and Drugs (Control) Ordinance, 1982. But the two laws focused only on drug issues, not cosmetics. “In the proposed law, the cosmetics issue has been included,” said Mahbub Hossain. In the proposed law, some 30 types of offences were cited and the maximum punishment would be life-term imprisonment for several offences like production of fake and adulterated drugs as well as creating artificial crisis of drugs, he said.

Some new issues including development of drugs, vaccines and medical devices were incorporated in the draft law, he said adding that the WHO guidelines will have to be followed in case of drug issue. Mahbub said the government will fix the prices of some drug items as per the draft law. The meeting also gave the final nod to the draft of the Copyright Act, 2023 keeping punitive provisions to check piracy.