

‘Drugs and Cosmetics Bill, 2023’ placed in JS

April 6, 2023

Online Desk: The ‘Drugs and Cosmetics Bill, 2023’ previously titled as the ‘Drugs Bill, 2022’ was placed in Parliament on Thursday allowing penalty of Taka 20,000 to life-term imprisonment for different offences. The proposed law incorporates cosmetics into its jurisdiction. It is initially framed for regulating the import, export, manufacturing and sale of medicines, with provisions of tougher punishments, reports UNB.

The bill proposed life-term imprisonment and a Tk 10 lakh fine as the maximum punishment for manufacturing medicines without registration or for producing fake medicines among others. The proposed law also included provisions for introducing a monitoring mechanism against antibiotic abuse and for imposing a Tk 20,000 fine for selling antibiotics without prescriptions from registered doctors to check the misuse of such drugs. The maximum punishment for such offences in the existing laws is three-year jail along with a fine of Tk two lakh.

State Minister for Public Administration Farhad Hossain in absence of Health Minister Zahid Maleque placed the Bill in Parliament and it was sent to the respective scrutiny committee for further examination. The committee was asked to submit its report within 30 days. The government decided to bring the production, import, marketing and sale of cosmetics under the drugs law in the wake of allegations that fake and adulterated cosmetics have flooded the country’s market, having injurious effects on public health.

The companies involved in manufacturing, importing, storing and selling cosmetic products would require obtaining fresh licences from the government. The Directorate General of Health Services and the Directorate General of Drug Administration will regulate the production, marketing, import and sale of the cosmetics as they do in the case of any medicines. The licensing authority will be designated in the rules to be framed under the law.

The bill also defined at least 30 offences, including the production, sale and marketing of fake and adulterated medicines and cosmetics injurious to the public health. The import, production and marketing of cosmetics – mixtures of chemical compounds used for personal care and skincare – are now regulated by the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution. As per the proposed law, there shall be a separate court in every district town to deal with the cases under the drugs law.