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Your Right to Know

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**"It is a scope for Myanmar to make repatriation happen. If they do it, all others will be with them."**  
FOREIGN MINISTER AK ABDUL MOMEN



**"We are going to work to undo the moral and national shame of the previous administration..."**  
US PRESIDENT BIDEN ON REVERSING TRUMP IMMIGRATION POLICIES



**"Allowing the majority of the world's population to go unvaccinated will not only perpetuate needless illness... spawn new virus mutations."**  
WHO CHIEF TEDROS ADHANOM GHEBREYESUS

ONLINE REGISTRATION FOR VACCINATION

## Plan revised as response poor

Govt cuts inoculation target to 35 lakh shots from 60 lakh in first month; Covax to give 12.8m shots by June

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The government has decided to inoculate 35 lakh people, instead of 60 lakh, against Covid-19 in the first month of vaccination apparently due to a lukewarm response to online registration.

With the mass inoculation scheduled to start on Sunday, around 80,000 frontline workers from different professional groups and people over 55 completed the registration online till yesterday, according to official data.

It is only 2.29 percent of the revised target of 35 lakh doses.

Meanwhile, the country is expected to receive 12.8 million vaccine doses under the Covax programme by mid-2021, according to a statement.

The Covax programme for Covid-19 vaccines published its first distribution list yesterday, planning enough doses for dozens of countries, to immunise more than three percent of their populations by mid-year. It broke down for the first time how the programme's initial 337.2 million doses will be distributed, with first deliveries expected late this month, AFP reported.

- Around **80,000** people so far registered online
- Only **2.29%** people of revised target registered
- Slow registration may affect first phase vaccination
- Mass vaccination scheduled to start on **Feb 7**

Talking to The Daily Star, several healthcare officials said poor response to the mass inoculation campaign's online registration played the key role in revising the number of doses, but government officials said the plan was changed keeping in mind any unexpected delay in the arrival of the second consignment of shots from Serum Institute of India.

"We need two vaccine shots for each person. If we administer 60 lakh doses in the first month and there is a delay in receiving the second instalment, the whole vaccination process might witness a

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**A woman removing the labels and caps from single use plastic bottles she and others have collected in the capital's Meradia area. Plastic recyclers buy these bottles from her. She says her monthly earnings range from Tk 5,000-7,000.**

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

PROJECT DELAY, COST HIKE

## Take legal action against culprits

PM slams flawed designs, frequent revisions; Ecneec okays Tk 5,433cr rise in cost for 2 projects

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and HELEMUL ALAM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed displeasure over frequent revisions of projects and directed the authorities to take legal action against those responsible for flawed project designs that ultimately push up costs.

"Identify those whose negligence resulted in flawed designs of projects, wasting our time and money. Take legal action against them and apprise me of what action has been taken," she was quoted as saying by Planning Minister MA Mannan.

The PM's directives came after proposals for raising costs and time of two projects were placed at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec).

She joined the meeting virtually from the Gono Bhaban. Mannan briefed reporters later. The proposals were approved by the



Ecneec. The costs of the two projects went up to Tk 14,608 crore from 9,175 crore due to faulty designs and delays.

One of the projects was "Construction of Important Bridge on Rural Roads" taken up by the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) in 2013.

The four-and-a-half-year project involving more than Tk 3,900 crore got the Ecneec nod in January 2017 and was scheduled to be completed in June this year.

As of now, the project has seen only 13 percent progress.

The other project is Dhaka Environment Sustainable Water Supply Project of Dhaka Wassa in Narayanganj's Gandhobpur area. The project was approved at the end of 2013 but it has so far seen only 28 percent progress.

The Ecneec yesterday approved the proposal for raising the project cost and also for extending the deadline for its completion.

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## Saw all, heard all; what will we do?

STAR ANALYSIS

All the Prime Minister's Men Tuesday reminded readers, to some extent, of All the President's Men, a book based on epic investigative journalism that revealed the Watergate scandal of President Richard Nixon.

The word "Prime Minister" replaces "President"; the year is 2021, not 1972, the government machinery involved is Bangladesh's, not the US', and it's the investigative report of Doha-based news channel Al Jazeera, not of The Washington Post in America, that went on to rock a government.

The target character of the two stories is similar: a mighty official, who is found to be abusing the government power and going beyond the line of law to sponsor or get involved in criminal activities. The US President was found guilty of trying to cover up a crime and Bangladesh character is accused of corruption.

Comparison is grossly unfair to make in a haste and without seeing the full evidence. Yet, if we have to quickly compare the two reports, we can safely conclude that All the President's Men thrived on the strength of evidence and All the Prime Minister's Men on sensationalising of evidence.

All the President's Men was the famous work by legendary journalists Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein for The Washington Post in 1972 that effectively proved the involvement of President Richard Nixon in the scandal and that eventually saw his back from the White House. That clinical work dominated headlines of the American and global media for years, led to the making of a critically-acclaimed movie and continues to inspire young investigative journalists across the globe till today.

By contrast, it was all quiet on Bangladesh front upon the airing of All the Prime Minister's Men. Some global media went gaga over it, yet the Bangladesh media heard no evil, saw no evil, spoke no evil. The government imposed no

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## AL JAZEERA REPORT Bangladesh mulls legal action: FM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criticising Al Jazeera for a recent report on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, top ministers of the government yesterday said they were mulling legal action against the Qatar-based international news organisation.

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen yesterday said Bangladesh is looking into legal action against Al Jazeera for "spreading misinformation".

"Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had never appointed anybody as her bodyguard. Her party [Awami League] men are always her bodyguards," said Momen referring to the August 21, 2004 grenade attacks.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal said Al Jazeera's report is not "factual".

It is yellow journalism and they (Al Jazeera) are not following the norms

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MYANMAR COUP

## Detained Suu Kyi faces charges

Police file case under import-export law; doctors, medical staff across Myanmar stop work to protest

REUTERS

Myanmar police have filed charges against ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi for illegally importing communications equipment and she will be detained until February 15 for investigations, according to a police document.

The move followed a military coup on Monday and the detention of Nobel Peace laureate Suu Kyi and other civilian politicians. The takeover cut short Myanmar's long transition to democracy and drew condemnation from the United States and other Western countries.

A police request to a court detailing the accusations against Suu Kyi, 75, said six walkie-talkie radios had been found in a search of her home in the capital Naypyidaw.

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## DEMOCRACY INDEX Bangladesh moves four notches up

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While a large majority of countries recorded a decline in their total score compared to the previous year, Bangladesh fared better in the Democracy Index-2020 released yesterday.

Bangladesh has ranked 76th on the latest index of Economist Intelligence Unit -- four notches up from last year's ranking.

But the country is still classified in the "hybrid regime" category, which means that substantial irregularities often prevent elections from being free and fair, according to the report by the research and analysis division of the Economist Group.

"Government pressure on opposition parties and candidates may be common. Serious

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**Bangladesh batsmen Shakib Al Hasan, right, and Liton Das walking off the field after the first day of the first Test at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram yesterday. The duo thwarted the West Indies bowlers in the last session and gave the Tigers a test advantage as the home side ended the day on 242 for five, with Shakib unbeaten on 39 and Liton batting on 34.**

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## Surveillance stepped up on Myanmar border

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal yesterday said border surveillance has been stepped up to prevent trespassing from Myanmar after the military coup in the neighbouring country.

What is happening in Myanmar is its internal matter, he told a programme at the capital's Police Plaza, adding that Myanmar had been under military rule before.

Myanmar army seized state power on Monday, detaining Nobel laureate Suu Kyi.

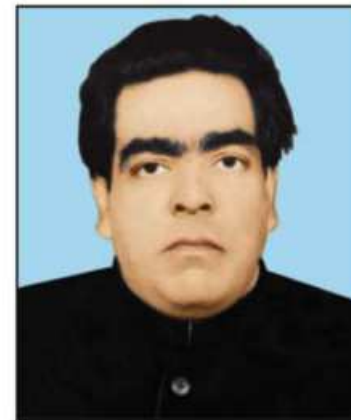
Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen at another event said Bangladesh secured the borders to make sure that any Rohingya influx is prevented.

There are fears among

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## 43rd Death Anniversary

(Abul Company) The founder of Abul Khair Group noted industrialist and social worker  
**Late Janab ABUL KHAIR**



Death: 4th February, 1978

In accordance with the will of Almighty Allah the Beneficent, you left this mundane world, leaving us and many of your relations overwhelmed by grief. In our everyday life your bright ideals serve as beacon. You are immortal in your death. We pray to Almighty Allah for the salvation of your departed soul.

May Allah the Beneficent bless you with the eternal bliss of paradise. Ameen.

Your loving  
Sons, Daughters and Relatives