



Humaira Azam  
breaking barriers  
as the first female  
CEO of any  
commercial bank  
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## VACCINATION CHALLENGE FOR GOVT First jab to go on despite shortage

*Experts suggest its suspension until arrival of next consignment*

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Despite the uncertainty over getting Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine from India, the government is adamant on giving people their first shot of the Covid vaccine while administering the second shot to those who received their first jab earlier.

Experts disagree.

They called for the immediate suspension of giving the first dose until the country received vaccines, be it from Serum Institute of India or from other sources.

The government has around 27 lakh doses of the vaccine remaining.

An official of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) said those would run out within 10-12 days if the vaccination went on at this pace.

Iqbal Arslan, president of Swadhinata Chikitshak Parishad or Swachip, said, "I don't think that we will get the vaccines soon. So my personal opinion is that administration of the first dose should be stopped. If we cannot administer the second dose, then the first shot will be a waste."

Md Sayedur Rahman, chairman of pharmacology department at the BSMU, said, "The government should focus on the second dose. If needed, the government should purchase the Oxford vaccine from other sources at higher prices. The inoculation of first dose should be stopped right away."

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Bangladesh captain Mominul Haque drives one on way to a maiden Test hundred on foreign soil during the second day of the first Test against Sri Lanka at the Pallekele International Cricket Stadium in Kandy yesterday. Mominul scored 127 and Najmul Hossain Shanto made 163 as Bangladesh piled up a mammoth 474 for 4 stumps were drawn prematurely due to bad light.

PHOTO: SLG

CASES OVER MAYHEM

## 3 more Hefajat leaders arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three more Hefajat leaders were arrested in cases filed over violence in 2013 and March this year while five, including four arrested earlier, were placed on remand yesterday.

Meanwhile, 16 cases filed after the recent violence by Hefajat-e-Islam in six districts were transferred to the Police Bureau of Investigation.

Rab arrested Khaled Saifullah Ayubi, joint secretary general of Hefajat, in Manikganj early yesterday. He is accused in a case filed with Paltan Police Station after the violence in March this year, Commander Khandaker Al Moin, Rab's Legal and Media Wing director, told The Daily Star.

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ANNUAL TARGET TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE

## Hasina pushes for \$100b funds

*Calls for special attention to the vulnerable communities*



DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has put forward four suggestions at the Leaders Summit on Climate, including cutting global emission, transferring technology and ensuring attainment of the annual target of mobilising \$100 billion as committed by developed countries.

The developed countries had made the commitment to mobilise \$100 billion, Green Climate Fund, per year by 2020 for climate actions in the developing countries, but only \$30 billion could be mobilised so far.

Stressing the need for the fund, Hasina said it should be balanced 50:50 between adaptation and mitigation with special attention to vulnerable communities.

Presently, a major portion of the \$30 billion is spent on mitigation projects, whereas the developing countries need adaptation more than

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## Earth Day summit lifts climate hopes

*US pledges to cut emissions by 50-52pc within 2030*

AFP, Washington

President Joe Biden yesterday doubled US ambitions on slashing greenhouse gas emissions, leading Japan and Canada at a summit in making new commitments that bring the world closer to limiting the worst climate change.

Putting the United States back at the forefront on climate, Biden told a virtual Earth Day summit that the world's largest economy will cut emissions blamed for climate change by 50 to 52 percent by 2030 compared with 2005 levels.

"The cost of inaction keeps mounting. The United States isn't waiting," Biden told a two-day summit of 40 leaders including the presidents of rivals China and Russia. "We have to step up," Biden said. "We have to take action -- all of us."

Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide

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## Food stock now only 4.62 lakh tonnes

*Govt focuses on procuring more food grain from farmers, millers by raising prices*

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and PINAKI ROY

With only around 4.62 lakh tonnes of grains in the public food stocks, one of the lowest in years, the government has moved to procure paddy, rice and wheat from local farmers and millers at prices higher than last year's.

In a virtual meeting held yesterday, the Food Planning Monitoring Committee (FPMC) decided to collect 10 lakh tonnes of boiled and 1.5 lakh tonnes of non-boiled rice from local dealers. The committee also decided to buy 6.5 lakh tonnes of paddy from the farmers.

"We are going to purchase 11.5 lakh tonnes of rice and 6.5 lakh tonnes of paddy in the current season. The details will be disclosed in a day or two," Food Minister Sadhan Chandra Majumder told The Daily Star after the meeting.

Agriculture Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque, who attended the meeting, told



this daily that they primarily decided to buy boiled rice at Tk 40 per kg and non-boiled rice at Tk 39.

An official, who was also present at the meeting, said the price of paddy would be fixed either at Tk 27 or Tk 28 a kg.

Apart from rice and paddy, the government will also collect one lakh tonnes of wheat from the local market, said meeting sources, without disclosing anything about the prices.

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## Another new Covid variant detected in Bangladesh

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

Scientists have identified another new variant of novel coronavirus in the country with potentially worrying mutations.

Known as B.1.525, the variant was first detected in the UK on December 15 and Nigeria in December last year.

According to the Global Initiative on Sharing All Influenza Data (GISAID), eight cases of this variant have so far been found in Bangladesh by different laboratories.

Of them, six were detected by the scientists at Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, one by the scientists at Institute for Developing Science and

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Roksana Begum cries beside the body of her husband Abdul Matin, 55, inside an ambulance in front of the emergency unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital around 1:00pm yesterday. Matin, who used to run a grocery store in Modonpur area of Narayanganj's Sonargaon, was rushed to the hospital around an hour earlier with breathing difficulties. His condition deteriorated fast and he died within minutes after he was admitted to the hospital. Even around half an hour before his death, Matin had complained of shortness of breath when this photographer enquired him about his health. He had asked why getting him admitted to the hospital was taking so long.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

SURVIVORS OF RANA PLAZA COLLAPSE

## 57pc still unemployed

*No govt aid for 92pc during pandemic: survey*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 57 percent of the survivors of the Rana Plaza building collapse -- the deadliest industrial disaster in the country's history -- have remained unemployed during the pandemic, a study finds.

Meanwhile, around 92 percent of

them did not get any support from the government during the pandemic, according to a survey done by ActionAid Bangladesh.

Some of the respondents received food and health and hygiene material support from local-level groups and individuals, it said.

The findings of the survey were

revealed yesterday at a virtual dialogue on "Covid-19: Challenges for the Rana Plaza Tragedy Survivors" organised by the ActionAid, marking the eighth year of the Rana Plaza disaster in Savar on April 24 in 2013 that left at least 1,138 people dead and 2,500 injured.

The physical and mental states

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