



COVID JABS
Help nations reach targets
PM tells dev partners to contribute more to Covax facility



UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the development partners to increase their contributions and vaccines to Covax Advance Market Commitment (AMC) for helping all countries reach vaccination targets.

"I call upon all stakeholders to work together to help reach vaccination targets in all countries. I also urge the development partners to increase their contributions and vaccines to Covax AMC," she said.

She made the plea in a video statement at Covax Advance Market Commitment (AMC) Summit organised by Germany and GAVI.

Hasina reiterated that Covid vaccines should be considered a global public good.

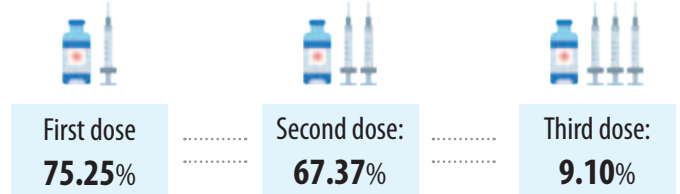
"Unfortunately, there are some countries who still remain far from achieving their vaccination targets. These countries deserve special attention and support from the international community," she said.

She also ensured the world that Bangladesh is ready to do its part to ensure vaccine equity and committed to work with GAVI and Covax AMC.

The prime minister said the pandemic has reinforced the need for

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Percentage of population that received vaccine in Bangladesh (as of Apr 6, 2022)



Total doses administered **22.97 crore**
Bangladesh did better than lower middle income countries' average - **60%** of population

Projected Population 2022
170,366,017

Projected vaccine eligible population (70% of total)
119,256,212

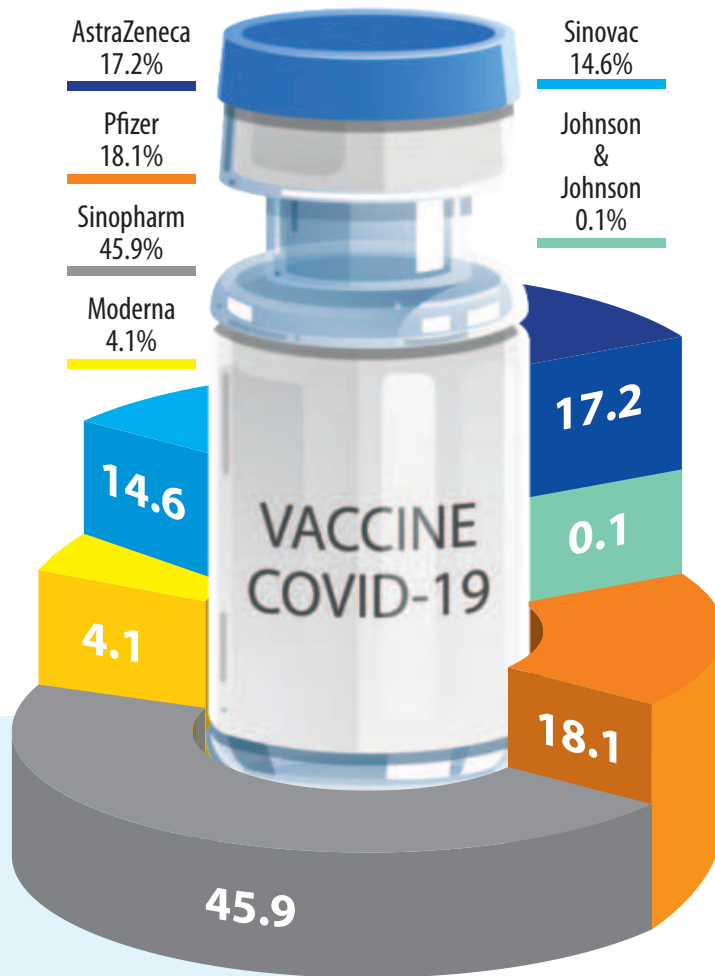
Bangladesh ahead of

India, Pakistan, Indonesia, US, EU, Russia, Mexico, Turkey, Philippines, UK, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, Poland, Netherlands, Sweden, Greece, Ethiopia, Austria, Switzerland, Romania, Hungary, Norway in percentage of population fully vaccinated

SOURCE: BLOOMBERG VACCINE TRACKER

AstraZeneca 17.2%
Pfizer 18.1%
Sinopharm 45.9%
Moderna 4.1%

Sinovac 14.6%
Johnson & Johnson 0.1%



COVID-19 VACCINATION

Bangladesh a role model

REJAU KARIM BYRON and WASIM BIN HABIB

Bangladesh's Covid-19 vaccination campaign has so far turned out to be quite a triumph.

What started amid a cloud of scepticism about 14 months ago forged ahead, thanks to the government's quick thinking, smart diplomacy and people's enthusiasm in getting the jabs that would offer them protection against severe disease from coronavirus.

The World Health Organisation has set a target to vaccinate 70 percent of the global population with a two-dose regimen by the middle of 2022.

As of April 6, Bangladesh has administered one dose of the Covid-19 vaccine to 75.25 percent of the population, two doses to 67.37 percent and three doses to 9.10 percent -- figures that are the envy of many upper middle-income countries.

"People are saying that the government's vaccination programme has been a success," Health Minister Zahid Maleque told The Daily Star recently.

It is because of the success of the vaccination campaign that the economy is roaring, shops are buzzing with customers, students are back in the classrooms and social and religious activities are taking place unhindered, he said.

And despite the return to normalcy, infections and fatalities have remained low. For instance, Bangladesh yesterday reported just 48 fresh infections and, for the fourth day in a row, no deaths from Covid-19.

"The way we have been able to operate the vaccination programme is an example for the world. I don't know if any country in the world could administer one crore doses of vaccines in a single day," the minister said, adding that almost all eligible persons have received two shots of the vaccine.

But it has not always been smooth-sailing.

Bangladesh's vaccine roll-out began in January last year with AstraZeneca doses purchased from Serum Institute of India by way of Beximco Pharmaceuticals and commitments of 6.8 crore doses from Covax, a WHO-backed programme to

provide shots to developing nations, by 2021.

After providing less than a third of the three crore doses agreed upon earlier, Serum discontinued supplies in April last year following an export ban slapped by the Indian government in the wake of a devastating wave of coronavirus cases in the neighbouring country.

Covax's pledge to supply vaccines to low-income countries also fell short due to "vaccine nationalism" by the high-income countries.

The twin developments had put the government's vaccination programme in a pickle.

But it compelled the government to dig deep for a new strategy. It courted nations through the diplomatic channels for shots, particularly of the AstraZeneca vaccines, and also decided to purchase 7.7 crore doses of the Sinopharm vaccine from China.

Soon, the vaccines started trickling in and the campaign picked up pace.

Supplies are only one part of a

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'I accept Supreme Court's decision'

Says Pak PM, warns he won't recognise any 'imported govt'; no-trust vote today

AGENCIES

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan yesterday said he would accept the Supreme Court's verdict on a no-confidence motion, but added he would not recognise an opposition government if it succeeded in an attempt to oust him, the latest twist in a political crisis engulfing the nuclear-armed nation.

The country's top court ruled late on Thursday that Khan must face the no-confidence vote, which he is widely expected to lose, meaning he would be ousted from office.



A session of the lower house of parliament has been called for 10:30 am (0530 GMT) today, the speaker's office said in an order paper. The vote, brought by the opposition leader Shehbaz Sharif, is the fourth point on the agenda.

The opposition says it has more than 172 votes in the 342-seat assembly, which needs a quarter of members

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HARASSMENT OVER 'TEEP'

Police probe finds allegation against constable true

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A police probe has found authenticity in the allegation that a constable on April 2 harassed a teacher of Tejgaon College for wearing "teep".

A police official close to the probe committee yesterday said it found that constable Nazmul Tareque, now suspended, broke the rules that day, rode his motorcycle on the wrong side of the road and provided "false information" to his senior officials after the incident.

The official, however, declined to divulge further of the probe report.

On the day of the incident, the teacher, Lata Samaddar, filed a general diary with Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station, saying a policeman harassed and verbally abused her after seeing a teep on her forehead while she was going to the college campus.

Contacted, Snehshish Kumar Das, an assistant commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police and a member of the investigation committee, said the probe

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