

# Covid-19 vaccines in Bangladesh?

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Virtual Dialogue

**Access to COVID-19 Vaccine in Bangladesh: Who, When and How?**

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*In Association with*

BANGLADESH  
HEALTH WATCH

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Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh  
এসডিজি বাস্তবায়নে নাগরিক প্ল্যাটফর্ম, বাংলাদেশ

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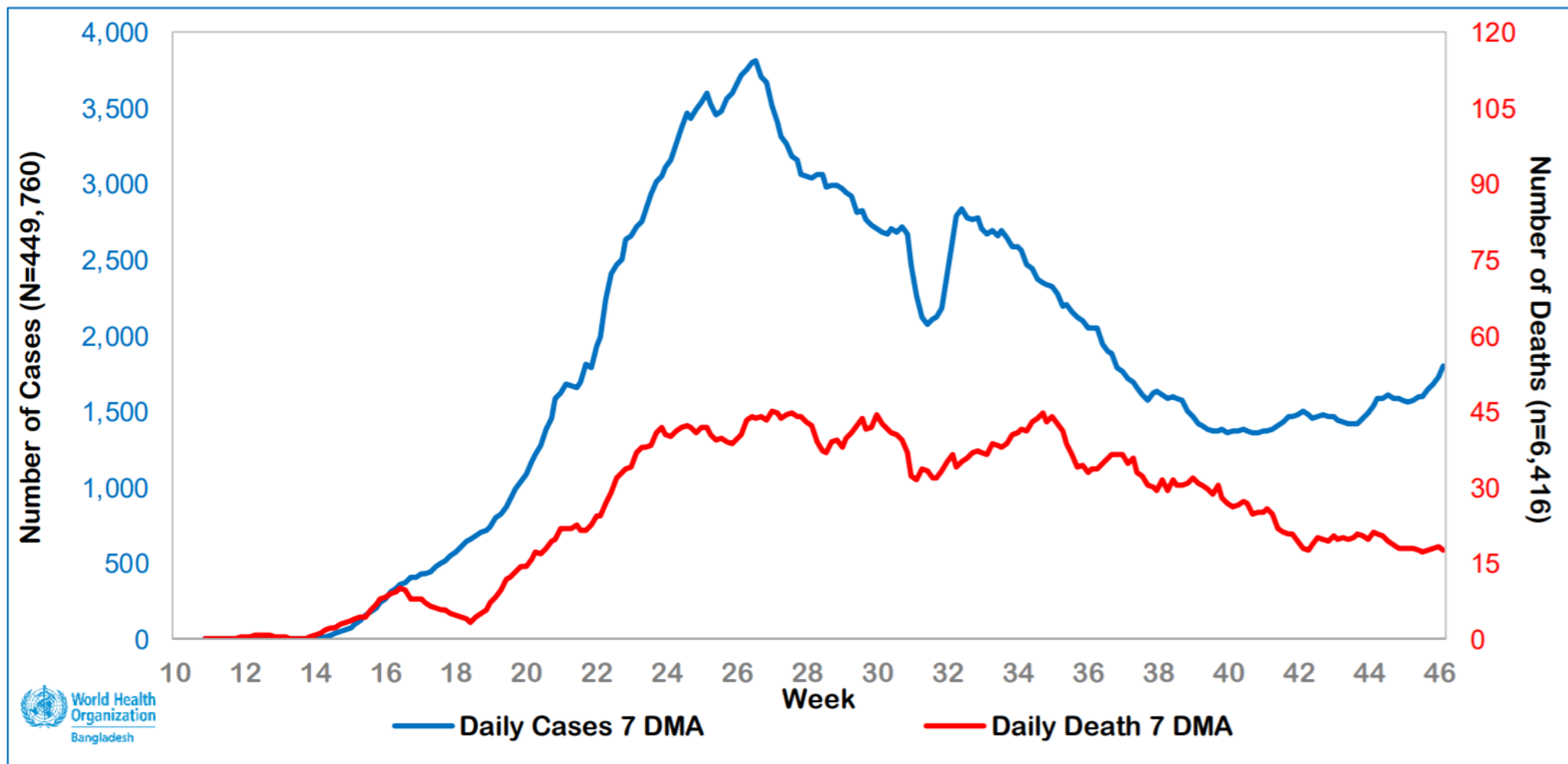


# Covid-19 in Bangladesh and neighbouring countries: Cases, Deaths and Tests done

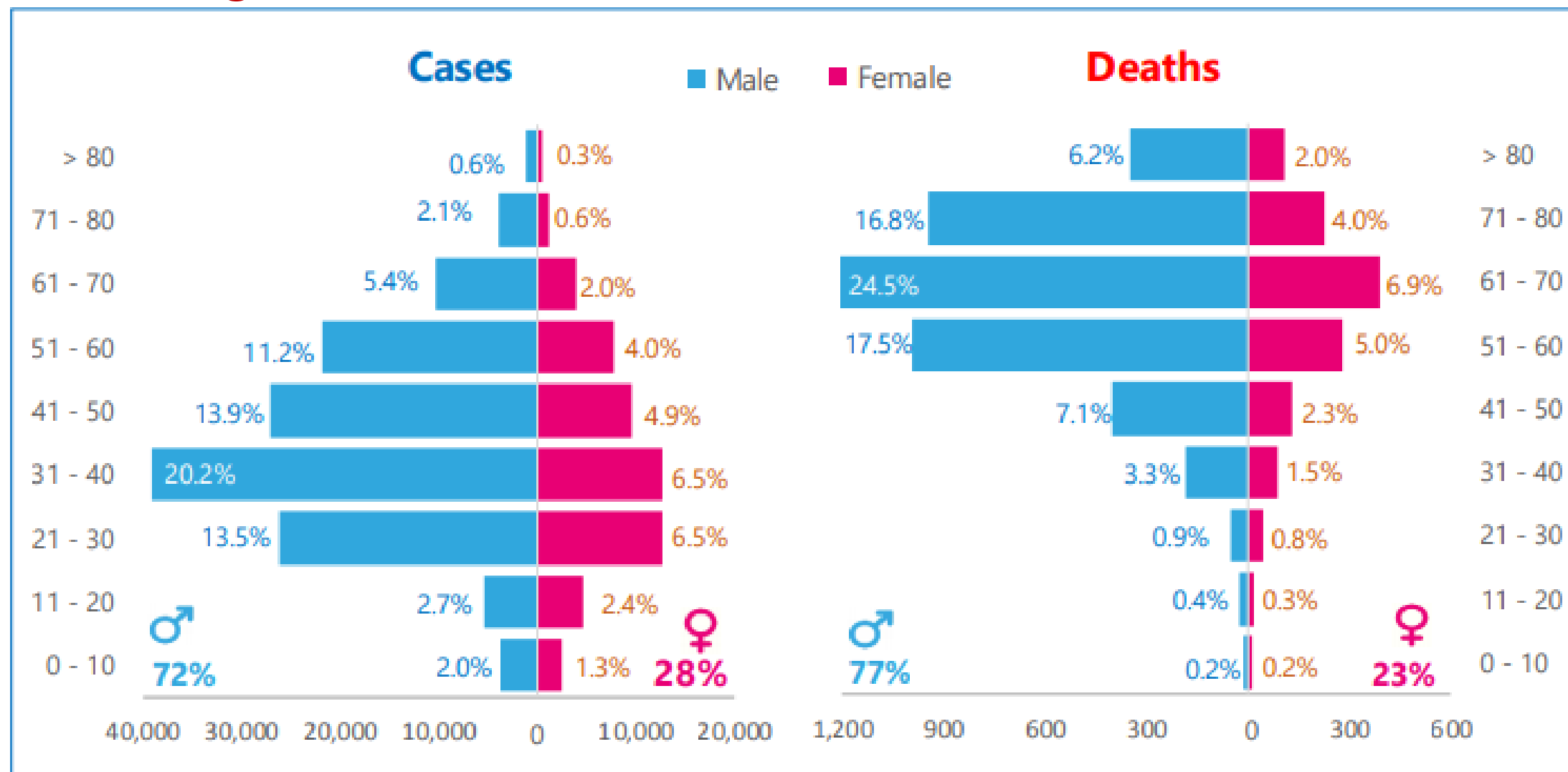
Country	Cases per million population	Deaths per million population	Tests per million population	Total Population (in millions)
India	7,236	105	115,477	1,380
Pakistan	2,040	42	28,105	222
Sri Lanka	1,709	8	50,620	21
<b>Bangladesh</b>	<b>3,019</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>18,509</b>	<b>165</b>
Thailand	62	0.9	17,427	70
Vietnam	14	0.4	14,646	97
Cambodia	22	-	15,779	17

Source: Worldometer, accessed 20 Dec 2020

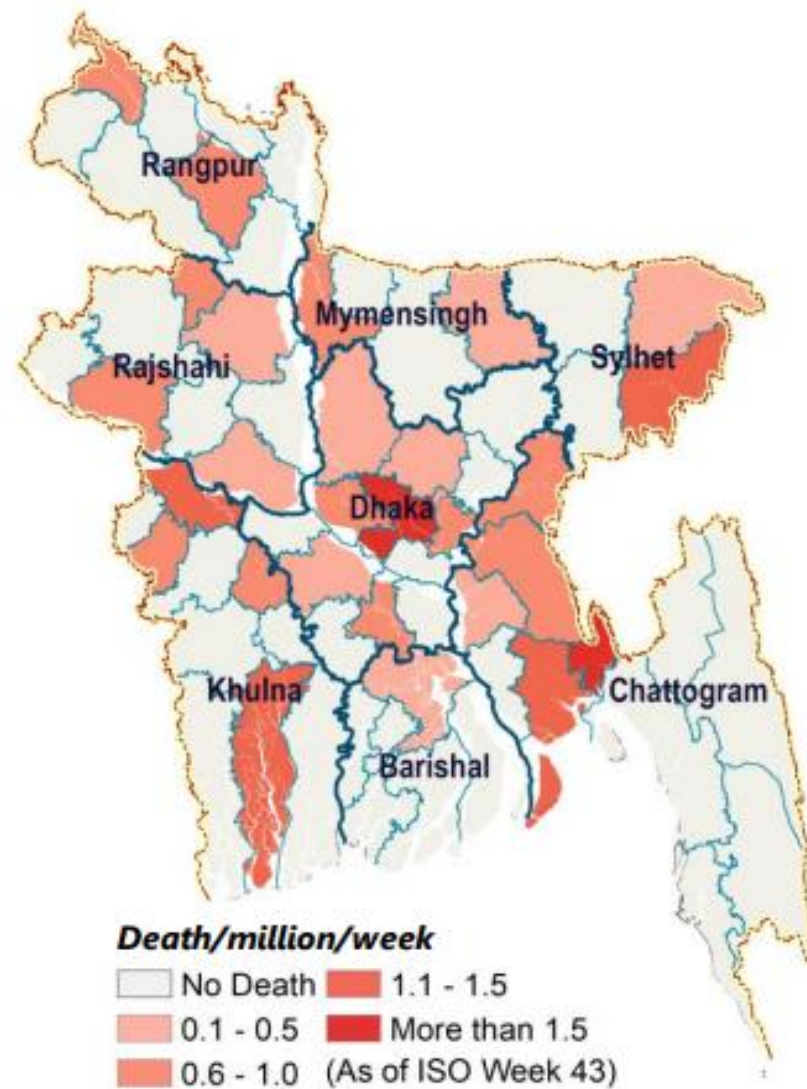
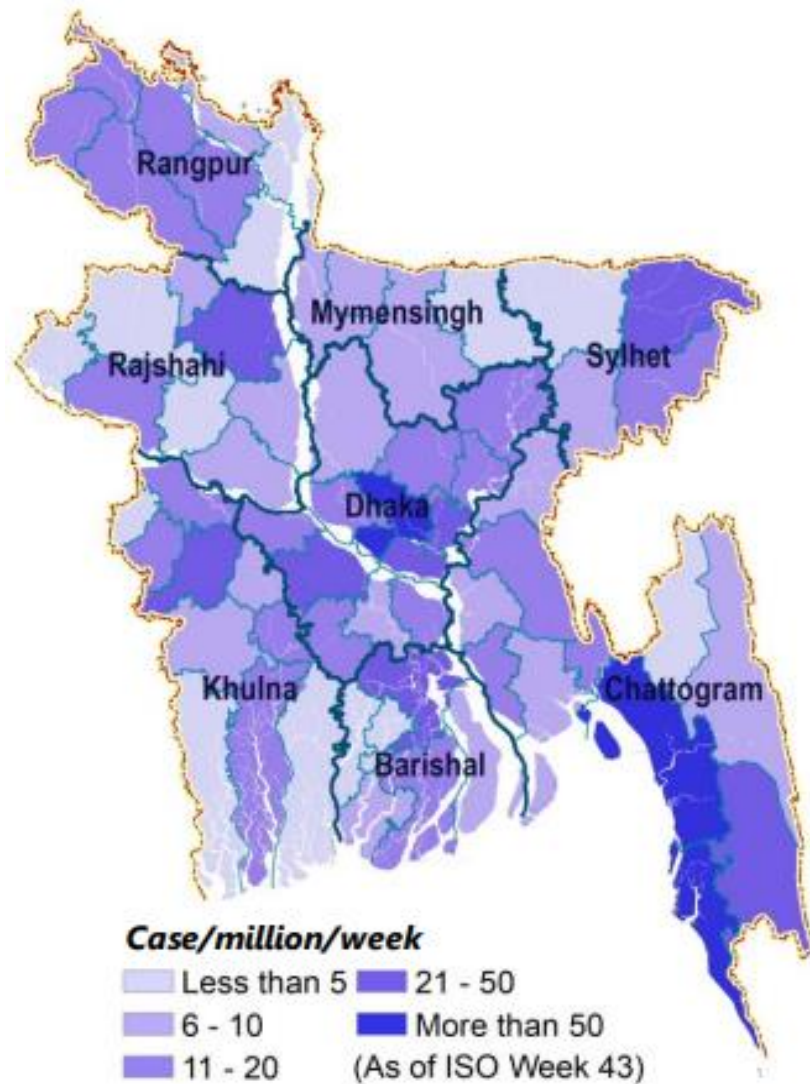
## Daily reported confirmed Covid-19 cases and deaths, 8 March – 23 November 2020, Bangladesh



# Age-Sex distribution of Covid-19 cases and deaths, 8 March – 26 October 2020, Bangladesh



# Geographical distribution of Covid-19 cases and deaths



Source: WHO

# Triumph of science: The vaccine is here but..

- **“The timetable for a coronavirus vaccine is 18 months. Experts say that's risky”**

"When Dr. Fauci said 12 to 18 months, I thought that was ridiculously optimistic" - [Dr. Paul Offit](#), the co-inventor of the successful rotavirus vaccine

- “the vaccines against Covid-19 are being written instead as a victory for pharmaceutical companies”, not scientists
  - the Pfizer vaccine
  - the Moderna vaccine
  - the AstraZeneca vaccine (fortunately also branded as “the Oxford vaccine”)

# Pricing: sky-rocketing profit?

- US gov't buys the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines for \$15.25 to \$19.50 per dose
- \$25 to \$37 for the rest of the world (Moderna)
- Even \$19.50 could yield Pfizer a 60-80% profit margin

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/17/opinion/covid-vaccine-big-pharma.html?action=click&module=Opinion&pgtype=Homepage>

Dec. 17, 2020

# Vaccine nationalism?

- “Rich countries with 14% of the world’s population have bought more than half of all the most promising vaccines”
- “Nine out of 10 people living in 67 poor countries will miss out on the vaccine in 2021: rich countries have “hoarded enough doses to vaccinate their entire populations nearly 3 times over.”
- Canada has reportedly bought enough doses to immunize its citizens five times over.
- Vaccine nationalism is also one facet of the widening economic inequalities between the developing and the developed world.
- “vaccine nationalism may deprive citizens of low-income countries of COVID-19 vaccines for many months to come” – Prof Kunal Sen (WIDER)



# Vaccines – a global common good

## Proposed principles for declaring COVID-19 Vaccine a Global Common Good

- Vaccines approved by regulatory authorities to be treated as essential generic medicines.
- Patents to be placed in the public domain against cost-based compensation for laboratories.
- The production and distribution of vaccines to be accessible to all countries, without priority nor exclusivity, and thus regarded as a global common good.
- Allocation rules and pricing policies to be transparent, under the watch and reporting of an arbitrator whose decisions are final.

Source: M. Yunus et al, *The Lancet* (DOI:[https://doi.org/10.1016/S2666-7568\(20\)30003-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2666-7568(20)30003-9))

# New vaccines: The unknowns

- Length of protection
- Good for all ages, gender and races?
- Acceptable to the skeptics?
- Good for new strains (as being reported for UK)?
- Thwart vaccine nationalism? Ensure equity? Human rights?
- Ensure finance?

# Bangladesh roll out

- Vaccine Plan chalked out
- 80% popln to be covered eventually
- Initially BD (hopes) to receive
  - 68 million doses from Covax facility
  - 30 million doses from Serum India and Beximco
  - To cover 50 million population
- Local Covid Coordination Committees to select vaccine receivers

## বাংলাদেশে কোভিড-১৯ টিকা বিতরণ পরিকল্পনা

ধাপ	পর্যায়	শতাংশে জনসংখ্যা	যতজন টিকা পাবেন
প্রথম	১ (এ)	৩%	৫১,৮৪,২৮২
প্রথম	১ (বি)	৭%	১,২০,৯৬,৬৫৭
দ্বিতীয়	২	১১-২০%	১,৭২,৮০,৯৩৮
তৃতীয়	৩	২১-৪০%	৩,৪৫,৬১,৮৭৭
চতুর্থ	৪	৪১-৮০%	৬,৯১,২৩,৭৫৪
মোট			১৩,৮২,৪৭,৫০৮



সূত্রঃ ডা. মো. মারুফুর রহমান (স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর), প্রথম আলো, ১৯ ডিসেম্বর, ২০২০

# COVID-19 VACCINATION PLAN PHASE 1

8



People aged 60  
and above  
**1.2 CRORE**



Private sector  
health workers  
**7 LAKH**



Govt sector  
health workers  
**4.5 LAKH**



Bangladesh Army  
frontliners  
**3 LAKH**



POLICE  
**5.5 LAKH**



Freedom fighters  
**2.10 LAKH**



Health management  
and support workers  
**1.5 LAKH**



Public  
representatives  
**70,000**



Journalists  
**50,000**



Civil surgeons, DCs  
and ministry officials  
**5,000**

# The Bangladesh Plan: Unanswered questions

- Plan too optimistic? Jan 15 roll-out?
- Over-dependence on yet-to-be-approved Oxford vaccine may pose a threat to start vaccination as planned (Pfizer, Moderna have cold chain limitations). Chinese and Russian vaccines in consideration ?
- Preservation of vaccines: (cold-chain) logistics good enough? Storage?
- EPI experiences may not be enough: This is entirely new popln groups
- Listing the early candidates—risk of leaving out the too old and marginalized
- Need for preparing the popln – where's the community in the Plan?

**In the face uncertainties: PUSH MASK USE!**