

‘VACCINE DIPLOMACY’ AND ‘VACCINE NATIONALISM’ IN THE POSTCOVID-19 ERA: AN APPRAISAL FROM THE BANGLADESHI PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

The impact of global political actors on vaccine diplomacy and vaccine nationalism will be discussed in depth in this research study. First, vaccine pulls in developed countries long before vaccines were discovered and manufactured. Second, vaccine diplomacy and nationalism have emerged as a new tool for safeguarding inter-state relations; it is a weapon for extending imperialism in contemporary international politics. As a result, many governments have competed to announce vaccine gifts or advance supplies to other countries to sway public opinion while failing to meet their needs. For example, the Serum Institute of India failed to produce the promised vaccine due to the severe corona infection and complete failure of the death-oxygen-health system in India. As a result, 1.3 million people out of 3.5 million who received the first dose could receive the second dose. Bangladesh's government has stepped up diplomatic efforts outside India to gather and manufacture vaccines with Russia and China. Furthermore, Bangladesh's government is stepping up diplomatic attempts to obtain vaccines from the USA, Japan, and the UK. Finally, this study will examine how vaccine diplomacy and vaccine nationalism work in Bangladesh regarding vaccine collection.

Keywords: *Diplomacy, Nationalism, Negotiation, Globalization, Pandemic, Covid-19*

Abstrak

Artikel ini membahas tentang Dampak aktor politik global terhadap diplomasi vaksin dan nasionalisme vaksin. Pertama, penarikan vaksin di negara maju jauh sebelum vaksin ditemukan dan diproduksi. Kedua, diplomasi vaksin dan nasionalisme telah muncul sebagai alat baru untuk menjaga hubungan antar negara; itu adalah senjata untuk memperluas imperialisme dalam politik internasional kontemporer. Akibatnya, banyak pemerintah bersaing untuk mengumumkan hadiah vaksin atau memajukan pasokan ke negara lain untuk mempengaruhi opini publik sementara gagal memenuhi kebutuhan mereka. Misalnya, Institut Serum India gagal memproduksi vaksin yang dijanjikan karena infeksi korona yang parah dan kegagalan total sistem kesehatan oksigen kematian di India. Akibatnya, 1,3 juta orang dari 3,5 juta yang menerima dosis pertama dapat menerima dosis kedua. Pemerintah Bangladesh telah meningkatkan upaya diplomatik di luar India untuk mengumpulkan dan memproduksi vaksin dengan Rusia dan China. Selain itu, pemerintah Bangladesh meningkatkan upaya diplomatik untuk mendapatkan vaksin dari Amerika Serikat, Jepang, dan Inggris. Terakhir, penelitian ini akan mengkaji bagaimana diplomasi vaksin dan nasionalisme vaksin bekerja di Bangladesh terkait pengumpulan vaksin.

Kata kunci: *Diplomasi, Nasionalisme, Negosiasi, Globalisasi, Pandemi, Covid-19*

INTRODUCTION

Vaccine diplomacy is a subset of global health diplomacy that involves the use or supply of vaccines, whereas vaccine science diplomacy is a hybrid of global health and science diplomacy (Hotez, P. J. 2014). Both present new opportunities for the United States to improve its foreign policy and diplomatic relations with antagonistic nations. Scientific diplomacy around vaccines could pave the path for developing and testing some cutting-edge vaccines for neglected illnesses. People were not humbled even after Corona's terrible stop. No one from the individual to the government has been seen to be corrected. Corona itself is becoming the most prominent element of international politics on this site. Rich countries have ensured a few times more corona vaccination for themselves. They did not think about what would happen to the poor people of Africa, Latin America, and Asia. The World Health Organization has pleaded with rich countries to collect vaccines for the poor (LaDou, J. 2020). Who listens to whom? In the end, the G7, an organization in rich countries, inspired the poor to ensure vaccination as a component of politics. The World Health Organization has not been able to go to the door with a begging bag before. Some other plans that have been taken by rich countries that could have been taken liberally earlier include the opening of a license to produce a corona vaccine. From the beginning, vaccines for companies like Pfizer, Moderna, and AstraZeneca would have been available to everyone by now (Forni, G., & Mantovani, A. 2021). They also plan to strengthen and restructure the WHO to find out the disease detection and treatment methods. However, at the beginning of the Corona outbreak, the United

States has severely slammed the organization. It accused it of being 'tolerant of China,' and the US stopped funding to WHO. The rest of the G7 countries did not stand by the World Organization at that time (Akhtaruzzaman, M., Boubaker, S., & Sensoy, A. 2021). However, under the leadership of new US President Biden, the country has returned to the World Health Organization. When China was infected with Corona in early 2020, the United States has strongly criticized China under Trump's rule. On this occasion, they have used all kinds of weapons to put the country under pressure. The Trump administration did not fear that Corona could spread to its own country in the form of an epidemic. Therefore, he did not take precautionary measures to take political advantage. Their speech seemed that Corona was just a curse for China (Gostin, L. O., Friedman, E. A., & Wetter, S. 2021).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

During the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union in 1956, U.S. virus expert Albert Sabin and Soviet virus expert Mikhail Chumakov conducted polio-vaccine tests on Soviet Union schoolchildren. In continuation, in the late 1960s, U.S. virus expert DA Henderson succeeded in using the results of Soviet research to use the smallpox vaccine. Sabean and Chumakov do not have a day now (Swanson, W. 2012). The world is now multidimensional, and relationships among the states are more complicated. Countries are in many ways connected to global politics and the economy. COVAX, the vaccine's global initiative, continues to maintain the basic principle of cooperation in the field of coronavirus vaccine diplomacy, which is

COVID-19 Vaccinations Global Access (COVAX) is a global program led by Gavi (Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization), CEPI (Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations), and the World Health Organization to ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines. Along with this, vaccination nationalism is also going on for Vaccine diplomacy (Eccleston-Turner, M. A. R. K., & Upton, H. 2021). While China and Russia were making this effort with their invented vaccines, the U.S. Influenced World Health Organization (WHO) did not give final approval to use their vaccines. However, in the second year of corona infection, the WHO recently allowed Sinopharm and Sinovac vaccines in China (Mallapaty, S. 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic has been the highest in the United States, with no other country close to them suffering. India, a country of 130 million people next to them. If Corona spreads to Bangladesh on the same scale, this number could have been much higher due to the weakness of management in tackling underdeveloped treatment and Corona. A year and a half later, it was found that 14,000 people had lost their lives in Corona in Bangladesh. The thing is, Corona has hit China as 'cursed' in its country. As of July 14, 2021, 92,147 people have been affected by Corona in China. A total of 4,636 people died at the same time. Corona has killed 132 times more people in the United States than in China. The victim is 373 times more affected (WHO. 2021). Chinese management was initially despised, hated as the origin of the epidemic. Nevertheless, in just a few months, they have been able to cope with the

epidemic. If a country has to be credited for handling Corona best, the country's name is China. So far, 187 million people around the world are suffering from Corona. 40.5 million people have lost their lives (WHO. 2021).

Bangladesh and India have a unique relationship with corona vaccination. There are also indications of China being stopped. After India was allowed to produce AstraZeneca vaccines, there was a noticeable change in the activities of the Modi government. They took up a significant duty of distributing vaccines around the world from a second-hand position. He kept on promising to supply vaccines to the country. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi introduced a new term called 'Vaccine Alliance' to the neighbor states. Indian campaigners called it 'Vaccine Diplomacy.' Under this, Indian brands of AstraZeneca have been sent to different countries. As the 'neighbor first,' the gift of the vaccine fell (Vaidyanathan, G. 2020). Bangladesh has received vaccines from India in three rounds as a gift. The main thing is that one-fourth of the people in this country need about 90 million doses to be vaccinated. That is why it is more important to get a commercial immunization than to receive a gift. When India was enthusiastically gifting such vaccines, it did not feel any need to take care of the situation in its country. Indian intellectuals calculated how influential India was becoming against China in international politics by providing vaccines in different countries. The Modi government is delighted with the high campaign. He is very busy with the politics of voting within the country. From top leader Modi to BJP leaders, only one statement - we have defeated Corona. Modi

and Amit Shah have left everything and pressed West Bengal to seem the only important task in the world: the BJP's victory in the Assembly elections in West Bengal. In the meantime, news started pouring in about the unlimited expansion of Corona. Adding a new dimension to this is the 'Indian Variant.' India has an average of 400,000 victims a day and a record of 4,000 deaths a day before Narendra Modi regains consciousness. We mentioned that Bangladesh is also in great danger due to India's mindless behavior (Singh, V. B. 2021).

Bangladesh falls into the grip of Indian' vaccine diplomacy'. They gave us a few rounds of gifts, but they could not give the vaccine for which the money was paid. The same has happened to many friendly countries. From the vaccinator to the country, it became a vaccination country (Pattanaik, S. S. 2021). In Bangladesh, India's weakness was once realized when there was nothing else to do. As we have seen, the Chinese have traveled to our country for the vaccine trial. They even gave dharna for a few months. However, there was a campaign that the Chinese company was asking for money. In the end, they could not conduct a vaccine trial in our country. If we could run that trial, we would have received a corona vaccine initially as a gift and produced them jointly. On a commercial basis, Bangladesh could have made a deal with them as a priority. Instead, even after paying the advance money, we are forced to return to China when we are not getting vaccination from India. It is also learned that there is no option left for Bangladesh except to buy vaccines from India. There were various hurdles in collecting vaccines from China (Oxford Analytica. 2021). That is why the Chinese ambassador said it would have to be late if

the decision was delayed. There are 'obstacles' when it comes to taking up any project in China. China's interest in Bangladesh is evident. India messed up our vaccine management and fell into a state of disinterest. China, on the other hand, vaccinated us at a lower price. They sold the same vaccine for more than that in Sri Lanka and Indonesia and other countries. Bangladesh, therefore, pledged to keep it a secret as per the terms of the agreement. The bureaucrats of Bangladesh have broken the pots in the hut. Bangladesh needs to review the crisis time incident with vaccines. Bangladesh did not treat the Chinese company properly; initially, the Chinese have returned from this country because of our enmity.

On the other hand, when we are not getting a chance to get vaccination sense, China provides us with vaccines quickly. Instead of taking advantage of the crisis, they do so at a lower price than the international market. Besides, Bangladesh broke the promise with them again and leaked the secrecy. This kind of attitude raised fears of deteriorating China's relations with many countries. That is why their business was also affected. In this situation, Bangladesh has to build a balanced relationship with these two big countries and not fall in one direction for its own sake.

VACCINE DIPLOMACY AND VACCINE NATIONALISM

Research on making this vaccine is mainly going on in rich countries. There is no doubt that these countries will provide the vaccine to their citizens on priority after the corona creates effective vaccines. As a result, developing countries like

Bangladesh in Asia will face these rich countries. Furthermore, this crisis has opened the door to vaccine diplomacy. Unfortunately, some countries involved in the research and production of COVID-19 are using the vaccine for their influence and selfishness. If the vaccine is not available, scientists at The Rand, a European research center, believe that the COVID-19 will influence global GDP in the coming year. Furthermore, if the vaccine is made available, the total cost will be 1.2 trillion dollars. On the one hand, the new type of COVID-19 will be available by the end of the year (Miles, D. K., Heald, A. H., et al., 2021). Furthermore, on the other hand, vaccine diplomacy is going on worldwide to guarantee the receipt of vaccines for all people. Vaccine diplomacy has been thwarted numerous times by vaccine nationalism, even though it has a long history of success. As a result, there has been an increase in unbelief in the north-south divide.

Two phrases have grown quite common in the COVID-19 pandemic over the last year. Vaccine diplomacy and vaccine nationalism are two examples. Vaccine diplomacy has a long and illustrious history. In the dictionary definition, Vaccine diplomacy refers to the use of vaccines to strengthen diplomatic connections between countries. It may, for example, highlight China and India's new interest in the COVID vaccination in Bangladesh. Vaccine diplomacy, on the other hand, focuses primarily on money. Instead, modern diplomacy comprises exchanging knowledge and skills in vaccine creation, acquisition, and supply to ensure strategic communication. Vaccine diplomacy is thus one element of international health diplomacy, which is why the Russian-United States was formed on a forum to assure strategic communication for

vaccine discovery, procurement, and supply. Vaccine diplomacy was initially successfully employed in developing smallpox vaccines between Russia, Turkey, Spain, Mexico, Kannada, and the United States between 1800 and 1805. British doctor Edward Jenner's polio vaccine development in the early 18th century temporarily halted the round of war between Britain and France (Hotez, P. J. 2021). "Science is never for war," Edward wrote to the National Institute of The Arch Enemy country. The last time the US and Iran signed a joint statement to research vaccinations for certain diseases was in 2013. Furthermore, vaccine diplomacy has become increasingly common due to the current race to develop the COVID vaccine. "Vaccines are a significant and effective tool of foreign policy," says Hotez. Vaccine diplomacy, for example, is a term used to describe China's recent health Silk Road program. Experts believe China is utilizing the COVID vaccination as part of a campaign to improve its image on the one hand while also expanding its sphere of influence on the other. On the other hand, many countries are now looking to China as a wealthy man's dream. (Shampratikdeshkal. 2021).

The politics of vaccine diplomacy is going on in the contemporary international political arena. As a result, the term "vaccine nationalism" was coined as a derogatory term. World health is seen as a business by nationalism (Kavanagh, M. M., Singh, R., & Pillinger, M. 2021). An outbreak occurs when a country's leadership guarantees immunizations for its citizens while denying other nations the same opportunity. Worst of all, the world's wealthy nations are solely concerned with their own citizens'

well-being; they have little interest in assisting other nations or combating the disease together. As a result, new types of discrimination between affluent and developing countries have emerged around the world. Rich countries have already pre-ordered millions of vaccine doses before it is released, inspired by outgoing US President Donald Trump's vision of 'My Nations First' (Brown, J. R. 2017). Although only 14 percent of the world's population lives in these countries, the United States, the United Kingdom, some European Union countries, Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Macau, Japan, and Switzerland have reached an advance agreement to purchase more than half of the corona vaccine dose, according to Oxfam (Oxfam International. 2021). The Oxford vaccine will be purchased in 30 million doses by the United Kingdom alone. Four more European countries will purchase a total of 400 million doses. The United States, on the other hand, has agreed to buy 300 million Oxford and 100 million Pfizer dosages. According to the People's Vaccine Alliance, developed countries have acquired 53% of their total vaccine requirement. According to Oxfam, by 2021, wealthier countries' actions will prohibit at least 90% of 67 low-income countries from receiving vaccines. Oxfam International (Oxfam International, 2021).

On the other hand, Vaccine nationalism is not a recent phenomenon; it has a long history. Despite being one of the worst-affected countries, Indonesia could not obtain the H5N1 influenza vaccination in 2007, as the vaccine was only available to the wealthy through advance contracts. In 2009, wealthy countries purchased nearly all h1n1 influenza (swan flu) vaccination shots. (Katz, I. T., Weintraub, R., Bekker, L.

G., & Brandt, A. M. 2021). The COVAX, the global vaccine facility, is spreading some hope against this authoritarianism of rich countries. Under this, 2 billion doses of vaccines will be provided by 2021. Ninety-two countries will get free of cost, of which Bangladesh is one. The European Union has already announced 870 million Euros to the COVAX by announcing pluralism to counter vaccine nationalism (European Commission. 2021). The WHO's warning that the rise of vaccine nationalism will endanger many people's lives in low and middle-income countries is, unfortunately, going to be true. Many countries will also have to wait for months to get access to a limited amount of vaccines. Even the wealthiest countries in the world are not getting the promised vaccine even after paying the price in advance. The situation that no one thought of was going to happen in Europe now. The war of words started with vaccination and could also trigger a trade war. The impact of this on diplomacy is not at all pleasant. The vaccination competition has raised fears of bitterness in diplomatic relations between the European Union (EU) and the UK. The COVID-19 crisis has been sparked by the declaration of the inability of vaccine manufacturing companies to fully fulfill their commitments even with advance money as per the agreement. However, companies must follow transparency in exports, and nowhere can be sent above the required levels. One hundred twenty countries have been exempted from the control measures, including European neighbors, UK and Turkey, and 92 low and middle-income countries on the COVAX list.

Being under the COVAX, Bangladesh may seem to be in a comfortable position to get the vaccine. Nevertheless, as global politics with vaccines thickens, the risk of countries like Bangladesh getting a very tolerant vaccine is diminishing. Initially, Bangladesh adopted the policy of 'opening doors for all' in vaccine diplomacy. As China was allowed to conduct the third phase of trials, its opposition tied up with India's Serum Institute. The Serum Institute will supply 30 million doses of vaccines to Bangladesh within six months. In the face of vaccine nationalism, a deal with just one institution or state cannot bring intelligent results. It can allow the country to seek diplomatic advantage. Then Bangladesh has to burn a lot of wood and straw to import vaccines. Due to diplomatic failures in the past, the north-south gap and the distrust between the two have increased many times. So, Bangladesh has to strengthen vaccine diplomacy. Efforts to contact all possible sources and collect vaccines must continue. As well as the distribution management of vaccines, Let us not forget. It is also essential to think about cold chain structure and vaccine development in particular. Ensuring transparency of information on the overall issue will not create confusion, controversy, and doubt in the public mind.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

India, the United States, China, Russia, all four vaccine-producing countries have joined the influence politics. There is much polarization going on in the fold of vaccine diplomacy. There are global initiatives like COVAX. When the US-India force could not provide vaccines to Bangladesh smoothly, China seized the

opportunity. China has sold vaccines to Bangladesh at a lower price than Sri Lanka to take advantage of India's failure to supply vaccines to Bangladesh. China has sent 1.1 million vaccines to Bangladesh as a gift in two rounds soon after Bangladesh was hit by vaccination. Until then, they were reasonably quiet. In addition, China and Russia have come together to bargain for their invented vaccine marketing. That has also made the situation a little fragile. In this situation, the government of Bangladesh has announced to collect 100 million vaccines by the first quarter of next year, including supplies of India's Serum, China's Sino pharm, Russia's Sputnik, and COVAX. Nevertheless, 80 percent of the people in the country need 260 million vaccines to be vaccinated in two doses. So, matching the rest of the vaccine account is also a big challenge.

Bangladesh started the process of buying the corona vaccine a little earlier than many countries in the world. Last February, Bangladesh started the vaccination program with the oxford AstraZeneca vaccine invented in the U.K. and produced at the Serum Institute in India. However, after the raw material crisis and the continuous deterioration of the corona situation in India, Serum stopped supplying vaccines to Bangladesh (Deutsche Welle. 2021). Even though the vaccine for gifts was purchased from Serum, it becomes uncertain for 1.3 million people to get the second dose of the vaccine. Bangladesh started contacting China and Russia last March as the supply of vaccines from Serum was stopped. Talks with the two countries started in the nearest, but the vaccination slots have started by agreeing with China's Sino pharm.

Dependence on a single source at the root of the crisis in Bangladesh

The Serum vaccine that Bangladesh has organized with the mass vaccination program was somehow visible. According to many diplomats and public health experts, Bangladesh is in crisis due to single dependence, despite the assurance that vaccines that have not been granted WHO permission should not be taken. Because Russia and China contacted Bangladesh late last year with their vaccines, but the government was not enthusiastic about it. China, in particular, rejected the third phase test proposal in Bangladesh at the very last minute. China can provide the amount of vaccine required for Bangladesh without Serum. Experts feel that Bangladesh could have been comfortable in vaccines if China had been substituted from the beginning. Talking to diplomats from China and The United States, it is learned that while Bangladesh is in crisis over Serum's vaccine, China can help with millions of vaccines on demand at the moment.

According to the Bangladesh Mission in Geneva, COVAX, a global initiative to collect corona vaccines led by the World Health Organization, has allocated 10 million vaccines for Bangladesh (Wouters, O. J., Shadlen, K. C., et. al. 2021). Of these, 1 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine sit in August. The Serum Institute of India was supposed to provide 60% of the total vaccines of COVAX. However, due to the severe deterioration of the corona situation in India and the shortage of raw material, Serum has failed to produce vaccines on demand. So even COVAX is not able to vaccinate different countries as planned. The remaining 90 lakh vaccines under COVAX are unlikely to be received in three months in the overall situation.

Bangladesh had also requested the U.S. to meet a shortage of AstraZeneca vaccine. However, the United States could not vaccinate Bangladesh with stored AstraZeneca due to a lack of permission from its FDA (Food and Drug Administration). However, the country has gifted 2.5 million Moderna vaccines to Bangladesh under the COVAX from its stored vaccines.

Priority over Public Health in Geopolitics

A responsible government official said in the first light that it is needless to say that vaccines have become a soft weapon in an epidemic like the Corona (Gong, W., & Wu, X. 2021). The whole world was dependent on the Serum Institute of India in the field of vaccine production. China has addressed the crisis by providing vaccines in different parts of the world, including South Asia, as it lags in production and focuses on increasing its influence. Several senior diplomats, who declined to be named, said the competition between the United States and China was visible for vaccination and various assistance during corona infection (Bahi, R. 2021). The United States sent Corona combat materials for Bangladesh by air force aircraft on June 4 and 8, 2021. Soon after, it was found that the Communist Party of China had sent medical supplies to the Bangladesh Awami League, the ruling party, in a Bangladesh Air Force plane that had gone to Beijing to get Chinese gift vaccines.

Asked about vaccine diplomacy, Foreign Secretary Masood bin Momen said in the first light that no competition on life-saving drugs like vaccines is desirable at once (Chatham House. 2021). Vaccination should be open to all people in the world. Rich

countries have stored vaccines several times as much as they need. However, many countries, including Bangladesh, are in crisis. Big countries will show responsibility by vaccinating other countries—that is the expectation of this time. Their state control plays a significant role in China's lead in vaccination in different countries. China's vaccine is being produced at Sino pharm, a state-owned company. With this, the United States has to compete with Pfizer and AstraZeneca. The United States could not distribute cheap Sino pharm vaccines as planned by China. Competing with China, U.S. President Joe Biden announced the vaccination of COVAX and his stock to various countries. Under the plan, the United States will gift 500 million Pfizer vaccines to various countries by June 2022. Out of this, 20 crore vaccines will be given by December this year. Japan, another U.S. ally, is also not lagging in competing with China. Japan last month announced to give 13 million AstraZeneca vaccines to various countries.

India's Smart Vaccine Diplomacy

As countries cry for the COVID-19 vaccine, the world vocabulary hears ugly words like 'Vaccine Diplomacy' and 'Vaccine Nationalism.' India follows a different path, and they have sent as many as 60 countries by creating vaccines under the 'Vaccine Alliance' campaign. India is a superpower in making medicines and producing 20 percent of the types of medicines in the world, including 62 percent of the total number of the vaccine. Before discovering the COVID-19 vaccine, India supplied Hydroxychloroquine and Paracetamol to 100 countries, sent medicines, test kits, and other equipment to as many as 90 countries (Shashi Tharoor 2021). Even before it

was approved, Adar Punawala, head of the privately-owned Serum Institute of India (SII), dared to make oxford-AstraZeneca vaccines. Then, after receiving the approval, they made millions of doses for use at home and outside and gave it to the government.

Most of India's neighboring countries have received Indian vaccines, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sicily, Cambodia, Mongolia, Pacific Islands, Caribbean, and African countries. Vaccine has aided in the healing of tense ties with Bangladesh while also strengthening amicable ties with the Maldives. China and Russia are pushing their vaccines, and Western pharmaceutical corporations have launched public awareness campaigns. However, while making vaccines for their use, the developed world has ignored the inability of relatively developing countries to buy vaccines. On the other hand, Indian-made vaccinations are safe, cost-tolerant, and, unlike others, do not require lower temperatures for storage and shipment. India is promoting this capability as a counterweight to China's economic and geopolitical hegemony. Furthermore, because China conceals the information's disclosure, its effectiveness is questioned. India also hosted a tour with foreign ambassadors to show them the pharmaceutical factories in Pune and Hyderabad. India's goal to be acknowledged as a global power has benefited from vaccination diplomacy. It is still unclear if exporting healthcare can considerably boost a country's global standing. Nonetheless, if permanent seats in the Security Council are ever moved, appreciative states will recognize who has done the most to protect the globe from chronic infections.

Vaccine Diplomacy and Bangladesh

When COVID-19 began to spread around the world in late 2019 and early 2020, health experts realized the speed and nature of the disease and concluded that mass vaccination was the only way to achieve 'hard immunity' against the disease. It was then that the vaccine was explored, and several vaccines were invented in a short time. As a result, vaccination is now going on all over the world. Nevertheless, developing countries have not been very successful in vaccinating. The Serum Institute in India is producing and marketing the vaccine invented by Oxford-AstraZeneca. In November last year, Beximco Pharma in Bangladesh signed an agreement to buy 30 million vaccines from the Serum Institute to provide them to our health department. Out of this, 1.5 crore doses have been paid by the Bangladesh government. The Serum Institute is supposed to give this vaccine to Beximco in 6 months at the rate of 50 lakh doses per month. The first shipment of 50 lakh doses reached Bangladesh on January 25, 2021. The second shipment of 2 million doses came in the last week of February. The rest of the second shipment was scheduled to arrive in the first week of March. At the same time, some more vaccines are supposed to be received as grants from COVAX.

Nevertheless, none of the promised vaccines have arrived. Bangladesh has received over 10 million vaccines, including 3.2 million doses of gifts from India. As of April 25, 58.18 lakh people have taken their first dose. The second dose of the vaccine started on April 8, and 2327,000 people have been given so far. While the first dose is

required to give the second dose to the rest, there are only 2.1 million doses. At the same time, Corona expanded unprecedentedly in India, and at the same time, the Serum Institute failed to reach its expected production target for various reasons. As a result, the Government of India stopped exporting vaccines to tackle the crisis. This decision has become a nightmare for Bangladesh. The first dose of vaccination has been stopped since yesterday. Nevertheless, the second dose of 13-14 lakh people is uncertain. What can be done through diplomatic means is a request, Bangladesh has done it. India is said to have reported their inability in the initial response. Therefore, efforts should be made at the diplomatic level to give at least the remaining 8 million doses of the vaccine for which Bangladesh paid. Moreover, by May 15, at least 2 million doses should be supplied before we run out of stock so that all those who have taken the first dose can get the second dose.

Bangladesh has also joined the vaccination diplomacy outside India. Russia and China have been contacted for the vaccine. Bangladesh has also agreed to join China's proposed platform to stock vaccines with other South Asian countries other than India. Efforts are also being made to get some vaccines urgently from the COVAX. Bangladesh may take another step in the diplomatic field. During his recent visit to Bangladesh, John Keri said that after vaccination reached a stage in the United States, the United States would give additional vaccinations to other countries, including Bangladesh. The White House has expressed concern over the COVID-19 crisis in India and expressed its willingness to help India in this regard. The United States Chamber of Commerce has called for sending AstraZeneca vaccine stake in

U.S. collections to India, Brazil, and other affected ('hard hits). Is it the right time to take the initiative so that Bangladesh can get a share of it? Usually, the intellect increases when the thief escapes. What lessons can we learn from the crisis we are in? The first education was foolish to rely on a single source for such a comprehensive program. India has blocked vaccine shipments due to a breach of trust that is unexpected and unacceptable in a friendly country. However, India has taken this step in the wake of a deep crisis in their home country, and in crisis, people often behave like selfish people.

1. Even if India had given 30 million vaccines per schedule, this number was inadequate for mass vaccination to achieve herd immunity. So, the search for alternative sources for the required vaccine was essential from the beginning. Initiatives with China and Russia could also have been taken at least two months ago.
2. After three or two months, when India's infection is under control and Serum's capacity increases, they will try to sell vaccines on their own in Bangladesh, and we will also buy if the price is affordable. However, half the vaccine has to be kept for the second dose and given the first dose when supplied. The supply cannot be put back into crisis depending on the aerial assurance that the supply will be fine.
3. Finally, Bangladesh had a long-time ability to make vaccines. Later, when technology improved, our vaccine production program was stopped on the advice of the World Health Organization without adopting and applying new

technologies. It is time to adopt the latest technology and go back to vaccine production. The slightest movement with Russia needs to be followed up seriously. Bangladesh could become one of the most vaccinated countries in the coming days. Not only for ourselves but also for the global market. The need for a vaccine will continue for a long time, perhaps forever.

CONCLUSION

In Bangladesh, the second wave of COVID-19 has increased deaths. The infection has spread like wildfire in India next to home, which is an omen for us. Our health minister has finally made an important point. He said we could have a situation like India here if we did not learn from the past. Be careful not to do so. Closing the border with India for two weeks is the right decision. It can also be increased if necessary. In addition, health awareness and compliance with regulations have to be achieved to avoid major disasters. The cooperation of the United States and the former Soviet Union on the polio vaccine six decades ago to combat the pandemic energized the world. The two hostile countries proved that political enmity could not be a thorn in the way of cooperation in dealing with deadly diseases. Therefore, the long history of vaccination diplomacy teaches that cooperation is essential to fight against viruses. The establishment of COVAX is a policy reflection of such coordinated action. If the welfare of humanity is the fundamental goal, scientists who found the corona vaccine should make the vaccine-making formula public so that any country can produce vaccines customized to its needs. Nonetheless, vaccines must be

collected from a specific manufacturer in a specific country. Is this a case of humanitarianism or corporate fraud?

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