

## US delegation

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to them the future programme the government is planning towards for the reconstruction of the country. **BANGABANDHU, JACKSON TALK UN RELIEF EFFORTS** Bangabandhu and Sir Robert Jackson, UN assistant secretary general, today confer on the further UN relief efforts in Bangladesh during next year. The current UN relief efforts which began sometime last year are likely to be terminated by next March when it was proposed the UNDP should take over. In view of the crop difficulties due to drought and reduced rainfall this season, the government urged the UN to extend the relief operation. The secretary general of the UN had in response to the Bangladesh request appealed to member countries to assist in extending the UN operations in Bangladesh. The appeal had indicated that Bangladesh would need about seven lakh tonnes of food grains during the next year. The final decision on the appeal is expected to be taken on November 30, 1972, when the General Assembly takes up the issue.

**BANGLADESH-INDIA JOINT RIVERS BODY STATUTE SIGNED** The statute of the Indo-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission is signed today in Dhaka. The commission will be constituted with a chairman and three members. The chairmanship of the commission will be held annually in turn by Bangladesh and India. The function of the commission will be to maintain liaison between the participating countries in order to ensure the effective joint efforts in maximising the benefits from common river systems and to formulate detailed proposals on advance flood warnings, flood forecasting and cyclone warning. **SOURCES:** November 25, 1972 issues of *Bangladesh Observer*, *Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq*.

## Unicef working

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held virtually by Unicef to discuss the transportation of vaccines.

The discussion brought together more than 350 logistics partners, including air freight operators, shipping lines and global logistics associations.

"As work continues to develop Covid-19 vaccines, Unicef is stepping up efforts with airlines, freight operators, shipping lines and other logistics associations to deliver life-saving vaccines as quickly and safely as possible," said Edeleva Kadilli, director of Unicef's supply division.

This invaluable collaboration will go a long way to ensure that enough transport capacity is in place for this historic and mammoth operation, she added.

"We need all hands on deck as we get ready to deliver Covid-19 vaccine doses, syringes and more personal protective equipment to protect front line workers around the globe. By protecting these workers, we are ultimately protecting millions of children who depend on their critical services," Kadilli said.

The procurement, delivery and distribution of novel coronavirus vaccines is anticipated to be the largest and fastest such operation ever undertaken.

The Unicef is leading efforts to procure and deliver vaccines from manufacturers that have agreements with the COVAX Facility.

## Oxford vaccine

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The virus has killed almost 1.4 million people worldwide since emerging in China late last year.

**'IMMEDIATE IMPACT'** The latest vaccine results are particularly important as the Oxford drug can be transported easily at normal refrigerator temperatures -- unlike some of the other candidates, which need extremely cold storage.

AstraZeneca chief executive Pascal Soriot said despite the vaccine's lower effectiveness compared with the other candidate drugs, it would still be highly effective and would have an "immediate impact".

The firm said it planned to develop up to three billion doses of the vaccine in 2021 if it passes the remaining regulatory hurdles.

Two other leading candidates -- one by Pfizer and German partner BioNTech and another by US firm Moderna -- reported 95 percent effectiveness in trials.

The European Union said it could approve vaccines for use by the end of the year, following a statement from US officials that a vaccination programme could be started as soon as next month.

"Our plan is to be able to ship vaccines to the immunization sites within 24 hours of approval," said Moncef Slaoui, head of the vaccine effort in the US, still the world's worst-hit nation with more than 12 million infections and 255,000 deaths.

The government's vaccine advisers will meet on December 10 to discuss approval.

Slaoui estimated that 20 million people across the US could be vaccinated in December, with 30 million per month after that.

But other experts stressed that Americans must continue to take precautions as many headed to airports to travel for this week's Thanksgiving holiday.



An excavator of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) knocks down an illegal structure built grabbing the Buriganga river in the capital's Shoari Ghat area. The BIWTA continued the drive for the second day yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Incentive not reality yet

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scrutiny," Dr Enamul Haque, joint secretary (budget-1 and 2) of the health ministry, told The Daily Star.

Mohammad Shahadat Hossain, additional secretary (financial management and audit unit) of the health ministry, said they have received a list from other sources and forwarded it to the DGHS for scrutiny.

"We have asked the DGHS to make a final list. As soon as we receive the list, we will forward it to the finance ministry to allocate funds as per the list."

DGHS officials said the reason behind the delay is ambiguity over the definition of "directly employed health workers", since there are many staffers working under Covid-19 control activities outside the dedicated hospitals.

Besides, all government healthcare staffers in other hospitals have been working despite risks during this Covid-19 situation, they said.

Dr Sheikh Mohammad Hasan Imam, director (administration) at DGHS, said, "After we asked for the definition, the ministry has directed us to prepare the list of health workers working in only the Covid-19 dedicated hospitals. It is not completed

yet and we are working on it."

Sources at the health ministry said many health staffers were assigned to the Covid-19 dedicated hospitals in deputation.

As a result, the hospital where they actually worked did not include the names of those working at Covid-19 hospitals in the list. At the same time, dedicated hospitals did not enlist their names since they work on government payroll at different hospitals, these sources said.

Healthcare professionals' representatives, meanwhile, said such a delay was "unacceptable" and it "demoralised" the healthcare professionals fighting on the frontline.

"We are hopeless. Many employees of different government departments, such as those working in the administration cadre, have received the money. But ours remains a far cry," said Ehteshamul Haque Chowdhury Dulal, secretary general of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA).

"We think this has been delayed because of bureaucratic tangles," he told The Daily Star.

Despite the prime minister directing the authorities concerned in April on the incentives, there seemed to

be sluggishness on the part of the administration, Ehteshamul said.

## SLOW PROGRESS ALSO IN INSURANCE COVERAGE LIST

Since the first three cases were reported on March 8, a total of 42 healthcare staffers have died of Covid-19 and 10,888 others have been infected across the country, according to the DGHS as of November 15.

According to the data, among the deceased healthcare workers are 10 doctors, five nurses, nine field staff, three medical technologists, two support staff, and 13 other staffers.

Among the infected health staffers were 2,302 doctors, 2,726 nurses, 887 field staff, 702 medical technologists, 1,376 support staff, and 1,895 other staffers.

In July, the government also announced that health professionals, other government officials, and law enforcers who are putting their lives at risk to fight Covid-19 will each get insurance coverage of up to Tk 10 lakh.

Finance ministry officials at that time said if any healthcare professional caught the infection, there would be health insurance coverage of Tk 5 lakh, Tk 7 lakh, or Tk 10 lakh, depending on rank, position, and grade. If anyone

## Biden to name Blinken

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Biden aide known for his mastery of policy detail and lack of personal drama.

Ron Klain, the incoming White House chief of staff, told ABC News that Biden would make his first cabinet announcements today.

Blinken, who would need Senate confirmation, could help reassure the United States' allies that have been shunned and at times insulted by Trump.

A committed Europhile, the New York-born Blinken went to high school in Paris -- where his stepfather, a Holocaust survivor, practiced law -- and later worked himself as an attorney in France.

Polished and courteous, he could hardly be more different in personality than the hard-charging outgoing secretary of state, Mike Pompeo.

But one common trait would be their close alliances with their bosses, with Blinken advising Biden since the president-elect's time as a senator.

Richard Haass, president of the Council on Foreign Relations, wrote on Twitter that Blinken would be a strong secretary of state.

Besides thorough knowledge of foreign policy, Blinken has "a relationship with his boss that allows him to speak truth to power and the

authority to speak for his boss," Haass wrote.

Pompeo, a steadfast loyalist of Trump even as the president refuses to concede defeat, has put a priority on a more confrontational approach to China and containing Iran.

In remarks during the campaign, Blinken said he also saw China as a competitor but was willing to find areas on which to work with Beijing, including in fighting climate change and global pandemics such as Covid-19.

He faulted Trump's approach, saying that the president needlessly alienated US allies and had reduced American credibility by challenging democratic norms at home.

"We need to be standing up for our values and put them back at the center of our foreign policy, not walk away from them," Blinken told the Hudson Institute.

Blinken was closely involved in the Obama administration's sealing of a landmark 2015 nuclear accord with Iran that Trump exited.

Blinken has strongly criticized Trump's withdrawal, noting that Iran has since boosted its nuclear program and stepped up its support for regional proxies, even as its economy takes a hit from US sanctions.

## ACC seeks

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intelligence agencies to take appropriate steps to stop the laundering of money.

Prashanta Kumar Halder alias PK Halder, who along with others misappropriated at least Tk 10,200 crore from four non-banking financial institutions, bought properties and launched a business in Canada, ACC sources said.

Like him, many Bangladeshis have bought luxurious homes in "Begum Para", spending millions laundered out of Bangladesh. Mainly, the wives and children of Bangladeshi millionaires live in these homes in an area in Toronto, hence the name Begum Para.

According to a report published in this newspaper on November 20, the "Begum Para" has come up in numerous political discussions in Bangladesh.

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen recently raised eyebrows saying that government officials are forging ahead of politicians in the race to purchase luxurious homes in Begum Para. The minister spoke to The Daily Star on this issue over the phone on November 19.

## Guatemalans protest for second day to demand president resign

AFP, Guatemala City

Hundreds of Guatemalans took to the streets for a second day Sunday to demand the resignation of President Alejandro Giammattei, following the passage of a budget that has sparked outrage in the impoverished Central American nation.

Masked protesters filled the central square in front of the old government palace in the historic center of the capital. They carried signs with slogans including "I would rather die as a rebel than live as a slave" and "Giammattei out."

Sunday's peaceful protests came the day after demonstrators partially burned down the Congress building.

Giammattei issued a statement Sunday afternoon reproaching Saturday's violent demonstrations, saying he considered the protesters to be "minority groups that seek to force a true coup d'etat."

## All above 10yrs to get smart NID cards

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"This project is part of our target to hand identity cards to all citizens by 2030," he said.

IDEA Project Director Brig Gen Mohammed Saidul Islam said they were planning modernisation of the NID server and data centre, aiming to have a secure, accurate and reliable national identification system in the country, which is critical for fighting corruption and providing more efficient services to the people.

Squadron Leader Kazi Asikuzzaman, IDEA project officer in charge of operation, planning and communication, said they would give smart NID cards to all citizens aged over 10 as part of the project.

Till now, the EC has given smart NID cards to citizens aged 18 and above.

Asikuzzaman said there are lists of 10.98 crore voters in the server. According to an estimate, another 3.93 crore will be eligible for enrolment as voters and about 2.84 crore will be

aged between 10 to 17 by 2025.

The commission will need to procure another 10 crore NID smart cards till 2025 to achieve its target.

According to the EC proposal, the second phase of the IDEA project will be implemented between July 2020 and June 2025. Other targets of the project include expansion of NID database and updating it to make the existing server more efficient and help the EC have a flawless voter list.

"We will need to modernise and enhance the database and server as the number of people and voters are increasing every day. Although the target was set at distribution of nine crore smart NID cards, we now have 10.98 crore voters," said Saidul.

**WHY THE DELAY?** Five-year-long first phase of the IDEA project was launched in 2011, aiming at establishing a secure, accurate and reliable national identification system in Bangladesh. It targeted at providing smart NID cards to about 9 crore adult

people who are registered in the voter list.

Alamgir said they started preparing a new project in 2017 which was delayed for different reasons and it eventually caused the delay in the implementation of the first phase of the project.

Giving reasons for the delay, Saidul said they had to scrap a deal with French firm Oberthur Technologies (OT) due to its failure to complete the production and supply of all smart NID cards on time.

Within the June 2017 deadline, the company could produce 7.73 crore blank cards and only 12.41 million of those were personalised. It supplied 10.98 million cards to upazila election offices within that period.

The EC itself is now personalising blank NID cards.

Saidul said once the second phase of project is implemented, Bangladesh will be capable of producing smart NID cards with necessary security features.

## NBR wants

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-- two from his residence and three from his car showroom.

In a letter yesterday, the Central Intelligence Cell (CIC) of the NBR asked banks and financial institutions to send all sorts of information of deposit accounts, lockers or vaults, savings instruments, credit cards, investment scheme, beneficiary owners or stock market-related accounts, and all types of loans within seven days.

The NBR wanted banks to provide information of the persons and firms from July 2013 till date. It suggested banks provide information of closed accounts also, according to the letter.

As per the CIC's instruction, banks will have to provide statements of accounts of Monir's mother, spouse and son apart from five companies.

The firms are Auto Car Selection Ltd, Gulf Auto Cars Ltd, Monir Builders, Golden Gear and Monir Trading/Trade International, said the letter.

The CIC warned banks of fine and legal action for failure to comply with the directive.

## Promote them without

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will be promoted to higher classes without exams.

The government has extended the closure of all educational institutions until December 19 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The government closed all schools on March 17. Academic activities of around four crore students are being affected due to the pandemic.

The long closure has led to cancellation of exams and left academic calendars in disarray.

This year's Higher Secondary Certificate and equivalent exams, Primary Education Completion and its equivalent exams, and Junior School

Certificate and equivalent exams got cancelled.

In place of HSC exams, candidates will be evaluated based on their results in JSC and SSC tests.

More than one crore students of classes 6 to 9 will be promoted to the next classes this year without any annual examinations, the government announced. Instead, school authorities will give assignments to students.

The government launched educational programmes on Sangsad TV for primary students on April 7, and for technical and madrasa students on April 19 to help them make up for the losses due to the closure of educational institutions.

## The land was taken on false promise

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following discussion with the Mro community. In 2016, the land was leased out to an organisation for 40 years, he added.

"As no one lived in the area, no Mro people will be affected for this," said the chairman, reading out a reading statement.

He, however, admitted that when the district council applied to the Ministry of Chattogram Hill Tracts Affairs, seeking ownership of the land, their application was rejected for failing to meet "required conditions."

This correspondent repeatedly tried to talk to the chairman over phone for comments on the allegation against him, but he did not pick up the calls.

Singpas Mro, headman of Lulaing mouza under which Dola Para falls, said, "The chairman has betrayed us. Initially, he planted some fruit trees. But it was nothing but an eyewash. He later handed the land to an organisation for tourism purposes."

Some 20 Mro families was using this land, in the Naitong hilly area, for jhum cultivation. After losing this land, they moved to nearby areas, said Singpas. "We want our land back," he said.

Meanwhile, the chairman yesterday addressed a press conference where he claimed that the land was taken

for gardening.

## Government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer, DPHE Noakhali Division, Noakhali.



Memo No : 46.03.7500.061.19.01-20/2425

Date: 23/11/2020

### e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of

Sl No	Tender ID	Name of Work	Closing Date & Time
	514961, 516209 516210	Construction of 2 storied RCC WASH Block for MT & boys and FT & girls including all associated construction sanitary plumbing & electrical works Under Need Based Infrastructure Development of Newly Nationalized Government Primary Schools Project at Different Upazilla in Noakhali FY 2020-2021.	As Per Tender ID

This is online Tender where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/ hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information & guideline are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd))

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