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All above 10yrs to get smart NID cards by 2025

EC proposes phase-II of the project although phase-1 missed 4 deadlines

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON and MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The Election Commission has prepared a proposal for the second phase of a project to distribute smart NID cards among all citizens aged above 10.

The commission makes the move despite having missed four deadlines for the first phase of the project, causing its cost to go up.

Under the second phase of the Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) project, the EC is now planning to distribute smart NID cards among over 17.73 crores citizens, who would be above 10 by 2025.

During the first phase, the commission is supposed to personalise and supply NID cards to about 9 crore voters up to upazila level. However, it has personalised and supplied 6.5 crore cards till date, said EC officials.

After missing four deadlines, the first phase of the project is now set to be completed next month. Its cost has risen to Tk 1,696 crore, up from the primary budget of Tk 1,379 crore.

Against such a backdrop, the EC is going to place its proposal on the Tk 1,805 crore second phase project before the Ecnc soon.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, EC Senior Secretary Md Alamgir said the proposal is likely to be placed before the meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecnc) today. He expressed hope that the committee would give the go-ahead to the proposal.

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Firefighters and locals rummage through charred remains after a fire ravaged part of Sat Tola slum in Mohakhali last night. More than 100 shanties and slum shops were burnt in the fire that broke out around 11:45pm. Twelve fire engines brought the flames under control around an hour later. No casualties were reported immediately. The photo was taken around 1:30am today.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Biden to name Blinken as top US diplomat

AFP, Washington

President-elect Joe Biden plans to nominate seasoned diplomat Antony



Blinken as his secretary of state, a decision likely to signal a return to multilateralism after Donald Trump's shunning of traditional allies, US media reported Sunday.

A mild-mannered policy wonk who is fluent in French and plays guitar on the side, the 58-year-old Blinken is a longtime aide to Biden who served as deputy secretary of state during Barack Obama's presidency.

Bloomberg, The New York Times and several other news organizations reported on the plan to nominate Blinken, quoting anonymous sources close to the president-elect.

The Washington Post and other news outlets said that the national security advisor job would go to Jake Sullivan, another veteran

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NBR wants info about all bank accounts of Monir, family

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON

The National Board of Revenue yesterday asked banks and financial institutions to provide detailed information on all types of accounts and transactions of Md Monir Hossain, also known as Golden Monir, his family members and their five firms.

The NBR's initiative came two days after Rab arrested Monir on charges of possessing illegal firearms and drugs in the capital's Merul Badda.

The crime busters recovered gold ornaments weighing 8kg, Tk 1.09 crore in cash, Tk 9 lakh in currencies of 10 countries, a pistol, four bullets and four litres of foreign liquor from his house and five SUVs

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Primary School Students Promote them without final exams this year

DPE gives directive to headmasters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Primary school students will get promoted to the next classes without having to sit for final examinations while the teachers will evaluate students based on classes taken before the pandemic.

The Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) yesterday issued letters to head teachers of all primary schools to take necessary steps for teachers to evaluate their students.

The letter, signed by DPE Director General Alamgir Muhammad Mansurul Alam, said the government has arranged education through television and radio, while teachers have also conducted virtual lessons.

Education officials were also involved in the process during the pandemic.

"Against this backdrop, the teachers are requested to take steps to evaluate their students," the letter said.

DPE Director of Policy and Operations Khalid Ahmed told The Daily Star that all primary students

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COVID VACCINES Unicef working on delivery of 2b doses to 92 countries

UNB, Dhaka

The Unicef is working with major global airlines and freight providers to step up efforts to deliver about 2 billion doses of Covid-19 vaccines next year to over 92 countries as soon as those become available.

To kick-start preparations, Unicef together with the Pan American Health Organisation and the International Air Transport Association, briefed major global airlines last week on the expected capacity requirements and discussed ways to transport the vaccines, Unicef said yesterday.

This is in addition to the 1 billion syringes that need to be transported by sea-freight.

This virtual meeting comes close on the heels of the first-ever logistics event

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

US delegation calls on Bangabandhu



A US congressional delegation calls on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Gono Bhaban on November 24, 1972.

November 24, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

US CONGRESSIONAL TEAM HOLD TALKS WITH BANGABANDHU

The 11-member congressional delegation from the Agriculture Committee of the United States House of Representatives holds talks for about 40 minutes with Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Gono Bhaban today. Led by Chairman of the Committee William Robert Poage of Texas, the delegation arrives today on a 24-hour visit to Bangladesh to review US food aid to Bangladesh and the food grain situation in general. Bangabandhu gives them a picture of the needs of the country. He also explains

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'BEGUM PARA' IN CANADA ACC seeks a list of people who bought homes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission asked the government to provide a list of its officials who own homes in "Begum Para" of Toronto, Canada.

"We're looking into the matter and sought a list from the government," ACC Secretary Dilwar Bakht told reporters yesterday at his office in the capital's Segunbagicha.

The ACC commissioner has already talked about the matter, he said.

"Once we get [the list], we'll start working."

On Sunday, the High Court asked the ACC chairman, secretaries concerned of the ministries of home and foreign affairs, governor of Bangladesh Bank and its financial intelligence unit, chairman of Board of Revenue, and the deputy commissioner of Dhaka to submit the details, including names and addresses, of the people who launder money abroad, to the court by December 17.

Issuing an injunction to restrain people from laundering money abroad, the HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Ahmed Sohail directed

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The land was taken on false promise

Allege Mro people

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Kwe Shwe Hla, chairman of Bandarban Hill District Council, has allegedly tricked around 20 Mro families into giving their jhum land in Lama upazila's Dola Para for tourism.

Though he promised to build a garden where the Mro people would work, the 20-acre land was handed to an organisation for tourism, leaving the community irked.

"The chairman even appointed me as a caretaker to the garden. We

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PRAYER TIMING NOVEMBER 24

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5-05 12-45 3-45 5-21 7-00
JAMAT 5-40 1-15 4-00 5-24 7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Showing blatant disregard for their own safety, two electricians work on top of a utility pole without wearing any safety gear in the capital's Basabo area. Such dangerous acts go on unabated mainly due to weak enforcement of labour laws in the country. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Oxford vaccine highly effective

Results show as US plans mass vaccine rollout in December

AGENCIES

The developers of a coronavirus vaccine in Britain yesterday claimed success after mass testing, as the United States announced plans to give jabs to 20 million people before the end of the year to combat surging infections.

Interim data suggests 70% protection, but the researchers said the figure may be as high as 90% by tweaking the dose, according to AstraZeneca and Oxford University.

The results will be seen as a triumph, but come after Pfizer and Moderna vaccines showed 95% protection.

The bright news on vaccines comes as Europe and the Americas battle rising caseloads that are pushing health systems to the brink, forcing governments to issue stay at home orders and close businesses even as the crucial Christmas period approaches.

Canada's biggest city Toronto will become the latest area to shut down later yesterday, as officials ban private indoor gatherings and limit the size of weddings and funerals -- similar to measures already in place in France and other European countries.

"We can't risk overwhelming our hospitals," said Doug Ford, premier of Ontario province, earlier this week.

At the other end of the confinement cycle, Australia's second-largest city Melbourne continued to emerge from a gruelling four-month lockdown with authorities lifting a ban on travel across state borders.

"When I went across the border I beeped the horn, 'Yahoo!'," said Melbourne resident Margaret Forster after being allowed to drive from Victoria into New South Wales for the first time since June.

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