POST-BREXIT TRADE PACT

WHAT WE KNOW

The European Union and Britain on Thursday agreed a post-Brexit trade deal after almost ten months of tortuous negotiations to govern ties when the UK exits the single market. Here is what we know so far about the 2,000-page accord -- still yet to be published -- that covers areas from fishing to future competition after December 31.

TARIFFS: The deal means there will be no tariffs or quotas on goods produced in the UK and EU moving between the two sides. London has hailed the lack of tariffs as a major positive of the deal -- but it simply helps maintain part of the benefits Britain already enjoyed as a member of the bloc.

FISHING: The two sides reached a hard fought compromise that will see EU boats gradually relinquish 25 percent of their current quotas during a five-and-a-half year transition period. After that there will be annual negotiations on the amount of fish EU vessels can take from British waters -- and if Brussels isn't happy it can impose economic measures against the UK.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD: The UK had fought hard to avoid having a system put in place that could see Brussels able to force it to follow its rules on such issues as environmental or labour regulations and state aid. But the UK government admitted the deal allowed for either side to impose "countermeasures if they believe they are being damaged" subject to arbitration.

CUSTOMS: Britain will leave the EU's customs union along with the single market at the end of the year, meaning that businesses face new red tape for imports and exports across the Channel.

SECURITY: London said the deal will see the two continue to share DNA, fingerprint and passenger details and see them cooperate through the EU's Europol. Brussels says "security cooperation can be suspended in case of violations by the UK of its commitment for continued adherence to the European Convention of Human Rights".

'BIG CHANGES': Citizens of the UK and EU will no longer enjoy free movement to live and work between the two. "The free movement of persons, goods, services and capital between the UK and the EU will end," Brussels said.

A child plays with a lit sparkler whilst celebrating Christmas Eve at an improvised shelter, set up under an overpass by people who lost their homes due to the floods caused by Hurricanes Eta and Iota, in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Global Christmas celebrations took place yesterday amid the coronavirus pandemic, with millions of people limiting festivities in a bid to spread further contagion. Many are spending their Christmas grieving, after the health crisis claimed the lives of 1.7 million people so far this year.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Turkey says China's Sinovac Covid vaccine 91pc effective

AFP, *Istanbul*

Turkey will receive its first shipment of China's Sinovac coronavirus vaccine within days as preliminary domestic tests showed it was 91% effective, Health Minister Fahrettin Koca said.

Ankara in the next few days will also sign a deal with Pfizer/BioNTech for 4.5 million doses, with the option to buy 30 million more from the US pharmaceutical giant and its German partner, Koca said

Turkey will initially receive three million doses of Sinovac and have the option for 50 million more as it begins inoculations next month, starting with healthcare workers and the most vulnerable.

The preliminary tests on 7,371 volunteers in Turkey showed that the Chinese vaccine was 91.25 per cent effective, although phase three tests were still not complete.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Trump admin pushing $500m arms sale to Riyadh: report

Donald Trump's administration plans to authorise the sale of nearly $500m in weapons to Saudi Arabia before the United States president leaves the White House, US media outlets have reported, a move that one expert slammed as "a moral outrage". Citing two unnamed sources familiar with the issue, Bloomberg reported that the State Department notified Congress on Tuesday that it was moving ahead to issue a licence for the sale of precision-guided, air-to-ground munitions to Riyadh, estimated to be worth $478m. US weapons manufacturer Raytheon Technologies Corp will be able to sell the weapons directly to the Saudis when it receives the licence, Bloomberg said. The agreement also includes a $97m internal security communications system, the newspaper said.

Police killing of unarmed Black man ignites fresh US outrage

The fatal shooting of an unarmed Black man by police in Columbus, Ohio -- the US city's second such killing this month -- sparked a fresh wave of protests on Thursday against racial injustice and police brutality in the country. Andre Maurice Hill, 47, was in the garage of a house on Monday night when he was shot several times by a police officer who had been called to the scene for a minor incident. Seconds before the gunfire, bodycam footage shows Hill walking towards the policeman holding a cell phone in his left hand, while his other hand cannot be seen. Columbus police chief Thomas Quinlan announced Thursday that he was moving to fire the officer, Adam Coy, on allegations of "critical misconduct".

Michael Jackson's Neverland Ranch sold for $22 million

Michael Jackson's famed Neverland Ranch in California has finally sold, more than 10 years after the death of the pop star who abandoned the property following his trial on charges of molesting a young boy there. Billionaire investor Ron Burkle, a former family friend of Jackson, recently bought the sprawling 2,700 acre estate, his spokesman said on Thursday. The Wall Street Journal said the estate, which was renamed Sycamore Valley Ranch several years ago, sold for $22 million according to public records. In 2015, the asking price was $100 million and in 2017 it was re-listed for $67 million. Jackson bought the property in Los Olivos, about 193 km north of Los Angeles, in 1988 for $19.5 million. After financial troubles, in 2008 he handed over the title to Colony Capital LLC, which held a loan on the property.

SOURCE: **AFP, REUTERS**

Mass vaccination starts in Latin America

US imposes travel curbs on UK over new Covid-19 variant

AFP, *Montevideo*

Three Latin American countries launched mass immunization programs on Thursday as fears grew in Europe over a variant coronavirus strain that is believed to be far more contagious than the original version.

Frontline medical staff in Mexico and Chile were among the first to receive their vaccines while Costa Rica began its own immunization program, with President Carlos Alvarado hailing what "may be the beginning of the end of this pandemic."

Mexico televised the start of its mass immunization program after it received its first 3,000 doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine from Belgium. Mexico has registered more than 120,000 Covid-19 deaths -- the world's fourth highest toll after the United States, Brazil and India.

In Chile, 46-year-old nursing assistant Zulema Riquelme was the first person shown receiving the jab in the presence of President Sebastian Pinera.

"I'm very excited and nervous," she said, hours after the first 10,000 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine arrived by plane.

Argentina, meanwhile, received the first 300,000 doses of Russia's controversial Sputnik V vaccine on Thursday on a special flight from Moscow. The country is the first in Latin America to approve the Russian vaccine.

The new strain of the virus that surfaced in Britain and has been detected in small numbers elsewhere, appeared for the first time in Germany after a woman flew in from London.

Although it appears to spread more easily, experts say there is no evidence it is more lethal or resistant to vaccines.

US authorities on Thursday announced that passengers arriving on flights from the United Kingdom will need to test negative for coronavirus before departure, the latest restriction imposed due to a new Covid-19 variant. The new rule takes effect Monday and requires a negative test within 72 hours of departure.

Meanwhile, another new variant of the new coronavirus seems to have emerged in Nigeria, the head of Africa's disease control body has said, cautioning more investigation was needed.

Singapore on Thursday also confirmed its first case of the new coronavirus variant. The case is linked to a passenger who travelled from UK.

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Iran warns Trump against 'adventurism'

AFP, *Tehran*

Iran has warned the US president against any "adventurism" before leaving the White House, after Donald Trump said he would hold "Iran responsible" for any fatal attack on Americans in Iraq.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif's comments came after Trump accused Iran of being behind a rocket attack Sunday on the US embassy in the Iraqi capital, that caused material damage but no deaths.

The exchange also comes as tensions mount ahead of the first anniversary of the killing of top Iranian general Qasem Soleimani in a US drone strike in Baghdad.

Trump "uses a worthless photo to recklessly accuse Iran", Zarif said on Twitter, referring to an image Trump had posted after the embassy attack of three rockets he said had come from Iran.

"Trump will bear full responsibility for any adventurism on his way out," Zarif added.

Trump ordered a drone strike on January 3 this year to kill powerful Iranian general Soleimani while he was in Baghdad. Days later, Iran launched a volley of missiles at Iraqi bases housing US and other coalition troops. Trump refrained from any further military response.

But the US leader, now in his final weeks in office, is sticking to his "maximum pressure" approach toward the Iranian regime.

"Now we hear chatter of additional attacks against Americans in Iraq," Trump tweeted Wednesday, before warning, "if one American is killed, I will hold Iran responsible. Think it over".

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Department of Archaeology
Office of the Regional Director
Chattogram & Sylhet Division, Kotbari, Cumilla-3503
www.archaeology.comilla.gov.bd

Memo No. 43.23.1900.136.17.002.21/718 Date: 24-12-2020

Invitation for Tender

1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Cultural Affairs.
2.	Agency	Department of Archaeology.
3.	Procuring entity	Regional Director, Department of Archaeology, Cumilla University Road, Koatbari, Cumilla-3503.
4.	Procuring entity code	134.
5.	Procuring entity district	Cumilla.
6.	Invitation for	Procurement of Works & Supply of Goods.
7.	Invitation Ref. No.	43.23.1900.136.17.002.21/
8.	Date	24-12-2020
9.	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (OTM).
10.	Budget and source of funds	GOB.
11.	Project program code (applicable)	3258108
12	Project program name (applicable)	Boundary wall construction work of Dalal Bazar Laxminarayan Zamindar House under Sadar upazila of Laxmipur district 2020-21.
13.	Tender package No.	01/2020-2021
14.	Tender package date	24-12-2020
15.	Tender publication date	26-12-2020
16.	Tender last selling date	10-01-2021 up to office hours.
17.	Tender submission date and time	11-01-2021 at 12.30pm (Tender will be received directly (in hand) or by post or by courier in any working day before the stated time).
18.	Tender opening date and time	11-01-2021 at 2.30pm.
19.	Name & address of the offices	Regional Director, Department of Archaeology, Cumilla University Road, Koatbari, Cumilla-3503.
a)	Selling & receiving tender document	(a) Office of the Regional Director, Department of Archaeology, Cumilla University Road, Shalban Bihar, Koatbari, Cumilla-3503. (b) Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Cumilla.
b)	Opening tender document (principal)	(a) Office of the Regional Director, Department of Archaeology, Cumilla University Road, Shalban Bihar, Koatbari, Cumilla-3503.
20.	Eligibility of tenderer	Experience in Construction Works in a single contract as per TDS.

21.	Lot No.	Identification of supply of goods & works	Location	Price of tender document in (Tk)	Tender security amount in (Tk)	Completion time in days
	1.	লক্ষীপুর জেলার সদর উপজেলাধীন দালাল বাজার লক্ষী-নারায়ণ জমিদারবাড়ির সীমানা প্রাচীর নির্মাণ কাজ ২০২০-২০২১খ্রিঃ।	Regional Director, Department of Archaeology, Cumilla University Road, Koatbari, Cumilla-3503.	1500/-	1,30,000/-	90 days

22. Name and designation of official invitation tender: Dr. Md. Ataur Rahman, Regional Director.
23. Address of official inviting tender: Regional Director, Department of Archaeology, Cumilla University Road, Koatbari, Cumilla-3503.
24. **Special instructions:**
1. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders.
2. At the time of purchase of tender the tenderers must show all the original relevant documents including papers in support of eligibility.
3. All procurement activities must be maintained by The Public Procurement Regulations-2008.
4. In under any unavoidable circumstances tender document selling, receiving and opening are disturbed, the next working day will be applicable for the same respectively.

Regional Director
Phone No. 081-76211

GD-2069

Protesters get detained in front of the supreme court as they take part in a protest after the parliament was dissolved and general elections were announced to be held in April and May, more than a year ahead of schedule, in Kathmandu, Nepal, yesterday.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**