



A Nihang or a Sikh Warrior watch as police (not pictured) set up road blocks at Singhu border in New Delhi, India yesterday, as farmers continue to demonstrate against the central government's recent agricultural reforms. Officials said Delhi police detained 200 people in connection with the violence during the Republic Day tractor rally on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

UK vaccine site evacuated over suspect package

British police said yesterday they were called to an industrial estate, after a pharmaceutical company involved in coronavirus vaccine manufacturing received a suspicious package. "We are currently dealing with an ongoing incident on the Wrexham Industrial Estate," North Wales Police said in a statement. "The roads are currently closed and we would ask the public to avoid the area until further notice." Local media reported a bomb disposal unit had been sent to the scene, with images showing a robotic device being deployed by emergency responders. Global pharmaceutical and biotechnology company Wockhardt, which plays a role in Covid-19 vaccines production, said its site there had been "partially" evacuated following the discovery of a suspicious package. "Wockhardt UK in Wrexham this morning received a suspicious package," the company said in a statement, adding "all relevant authorities were immediately notified and engaged".

Blinken sworn in as Biden's secretary of state



Antony Blinken said it is the honor of his life to serve as the top US diplomat after being sworn in as the newest secretary of state Tuesday. Blinken, a longtime Biden associate, was approved by the Senate with a vote of 78-22 earlier in the day. "My career has come full circle," Blinken wrote in a tweet Tuesday. "I started at the @StateDept in 1993, and today, it's the honor of my life to lead the Department's women and men as the 71st Secretary of State." "I want to thank my colleagues for welcoming me home," he added. Blinken was sworn in at the State Department by Carol Perez, a career diplomat who is serving as acting under secretary for management. Photos from the event show him taking the oath of office on a copy of the US Constitution.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

Russia, US extend nuke arms pact

Says Kremlin as Biden signals tougher stance in first Putin call

AGENCIES

Russia and the United States have struck a deal to extend the New START nuclear arms control treaty, the Kremlin said on Tuesday, a move that preserves the last major pact of its kind between the world's two biggest nuclear powers. The White House did not immediately confirm the Kremlin's announcement but said President Joe Biden and Russian President Vladimir Putin had discussed the issue by telephone and agreed that their teams work urgently to complete the extension by February 5, when the treaty expires. Signed in 2010, the New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) is a cornerstone of global arms control.

It limits the number of strategic nuclear warheads deployed by the United States and Russia to 1,550 each as well as the number of land- and submarine-based missiles and bombers that deliver them. The Kremlin declared the breakthrough, which was widely anticipated, in a



statement announcing that Putin and Biden had spoken for the first time since Biden took office on January 20, reports Reuters.

Putin yesterday said the deal was a "step in the right direction" in reducing global tensions. Speaking at the Davos virtual summit, Putin hailed the deal but warned the global situation could still "develop unpredictably and uncontrollably if we sit on our hands."

The Russian parliament's lower house unanimously voted to ratify the agreement. A total of 399 lawmakers voted in favour of extending the agreement,

with no votes against or abstentions, reports AFP.

Moscow and Washington had failed to agree an extension under former US President Donald Trump, whose administration had wanted to attach conditions to a renewal that Moscow rejected.

The Kremlin said Putin and Biden "expressed satisfaction" that diplomatic notes between the two nations had been exchanged earlier on Tuesday confirming the pact would be extended and that procedures required for the pact to come into force before it expires would be completed in the coming days.

Biden, however, signalled a tougher US stance on Russia, raising concerns over human rights and "aggression" against Ukraine.

White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said Biden also raised a raft of worries about the Russian authorities' treatment of opposition members, including the "poisoning of Alexei Navalny."

Covid spread not seen in several studies of schools

AFP, Washington

Schools that practice social distancing, mask-wearing and other precautions have not seen rapid spread of coronavirus, but indoor sports activities should be avoided, researchers said Tuesday. The researchers from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reviewed studies of school settings in the United States and other countries.

"As many schools have reopened for in-person instruction in some parts of the US as well as internationally, school-related cases of COVID-19 have been reported, but there has been little evidence that schools have contributed meaningfully to increased community transmission," they wrote in the Journal of the American Medical Association on Tuesday.

"The preponderance of available evidence from the fall school semester has been reassuring insofar as the type of rapid spread that was frequently observed in congregate living facilities or high-density workplaces has not been reported in education settings in schools," they said.

They said the data suggests a path forward to "maintain or return primarily or fully to in-person" instruction.



In this file photo taken yesterday, Holocaust survivors walk below the gate with its inscription "Work sets you free" after a wreath laying at the death wall at the memorial site of the former German Nazi death camp Auschwitz during ceremonies to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the camp's liberation in Oswiecim, Poland.

PHOTO: AFP

53 killed in Cameroon bus blaze

AFP, Yaounde

Fifty-three people died yesterday when a bus collided with a fuel-laden van in Cameroon, causing a blaze that engulfed both vehicles, the local governor said.

"The dead have all been burned beyond identification," Awa Fonka Augustine, the governor of West Region, said.

Twenty-nine people suffered severe burns.

The 70-seat bus collided head-on with the van at around 3.30am at a location called the Cliff of Dschang, in central-western Cameroon, he said. The stretch of road is notorious for accidents, with hairpin bends and ravines.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
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**Invitation for Re-e-Tender**

Memo No-44.01.0000.057.11.045.20/624/Betar

For the financial year 2020-2021. Re-e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following items.

SL	Description	Re-e-Tender ID	Procurement Method	Online Tender Publication Date & Time	Online Tender Closing Date & Time
1.	Purchase of Pack Battery for Hytera DMR PD-688 W/T	538775	OTM	28 Jan 2021 11:00	15 Feb 2021 12:00
2.	Purchase of Pack Battery for Vertex UHF NC (VX417)W/T	538776	OTM	28 Jan 2021 11:00	15 Feb 2021 12:10
3.	Purchase of Pack Battery for Kirisun UHF NC PT7200W/T	538777	OTM	28 Jan 2021 11:00	15 Feb 2021 12:20
4.	Purchase of Single & Multi charger for Motorola XIR P8600 6620i Vertex EVX 539 W/T.	538778	OTM	28 Jan 2021 11:00	15 Feb 2021 12:30
5.	Purchase of Microphone for Motorola M-6660, Hytera MD-788 & Kirisun.	538779	OTM	28 Jan 2021 11:00	15 Feb 2021 12:40
6.	Purchase of RG-8/213 Feeder Cable 150 & 200 Feet.	538780	OTM	28 Jan 2021 11:00	15 Feb 2021 12:50

This is an online Tender, Where only e-Tender 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 Systems Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-tender documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (<http://www.helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd>).

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Memo No. 57.03.2692.300.07.003.21-61

Dated: 26-01-2021

**e-Tender Notice**

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

Sl No.	Tender ID	Number & name of package	Tender publication date & time	Last date & time for tender security submission	Closing date & time
1.	530372	BIGC/2020-21/G-1 Supply of Computer Contents Office Equipment and Education and teaching materials.	28 Jan-2021 Time 09:00	16 Feb-2021 Time 14:00	16 Feb-2021 Time 17:00
2.	530378	BIGC/2020-21/G-2 Supply of cleaning materials other Stationary Chemicals Raw materials & spare parts Uniform Sports goods and Books & Journals.	28 Jan-2021 Time 09:00	14 Feb-2021 Time 13:00	14 Feb-2021 Time 15:00
3.	541298	BIGC/2020-21/G-3 Supply of Installation with commissioning of equipments for competency based training lab laboratory of BIGC.	28 Jan-2021 Time 09:00	15 Feb-2021 Time 15:00	15 Feb-2021 Time 17:00
4.	530382	BIGC/2020-21/G-4 Supply of Furniture.	28 Jan-2021 Time 09:00	14 Feb-2021 Time 14:00	14 Feb-2021 Time 17:00
5.	541321	BIGC/2020-21/G-5 Supply of Installation with Commissioning of Equipments for Workshop of BIGC.	28 Jan-2021 Time 09:00	15 Feb-2021 Time 13:00	15 Feb-2021 Time 15:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender 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. Interested persons can communicate with the undersigned during office hours.

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