

Quotes of the day



SAUDI ARABIA'S KING SALMAN

We hope (Iran) changes its policy and negative behaviour in the region, and it heads towards dialogue and cooperation. We are following with great concern the Iranian regime's destabilising policy to security and safety in the region.



US SECRETARY OF STATE ANTONY BLINKEN

Journalism is not sedition. We call on PRC (China) and Hong Kong authorities to cease targeting Hong Kong's free and independent media and to immediately release those journalists and media executives who have been unjustly detained and charged.

'Effective dialogue' possible

Says Putin ahead of phone call with Biden

AGENCIES

Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday told US counterpart Joe Biden he is "convinced" that "effective dialogue" between Moscow and Washington is possible, hours ahead of telephone talks as tensions rise over Ukraine.

Putin and Biden will hold their second telephone call in less than a month at 2030 GMT in the latest effort to defuse tensions surrounding Moscow's military build-up on the border with Ukraine.

"I am convinced that... we can move forward and establish an effective Russian-American dialogue based on mutual respect and consideration of each other's national interests," Putin said, according to a Kremlin statement carrying his holiday messages to world leaders.

A senior US administration official told reporters that Biden will say "we are prepared for diplomacy and for a diplomatic path forward."

"But we are also prepared to respond if Russia advances with a further invasion of Ukraine," Biden will tell Putin, the official said, adding that "we continue to be gravely concerned" by Russian forces near the Ukrainian border.

The phone call comes ahead of talks between Russia and the United States in Geneva on January 10. Washington has led the charge in raising the alarm over Russian troop movements near ex-Soviet Ukraine and accusing Moscow of plotting a



winter invasion of its neighbour.

Moscow has denied the charge and said it expects the West to agree to sweeping security demands it presented earlier this month. They said Nato must not admit new members and the United States cannot establish new military bases in former Soviet republics.

The talks in Geneva on Jan. 10 will be attended by Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov and US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman, the Russian Foreign Ministry said yesterday.

Russia is then set to hold talks with Nato in Brussels on Jan 12, before a broader meeting including Russia, the United States and other European countries on Jan 13, which Russia's foreign ministry said would take place in Vienna.

CRACKDOWN ON MEDIA IN HONG KONG

Stand News editors charged with sedition

AFP, Hong Kong

Two senior editors of Hong Kong media outlet Stand News were yesterday charged with "conspiracy to publish seditious" material, authorities said, following a raid that drew international condemnation over China's crackdown on press freedom in the city.

China has tightened its control of Hong Kong since massive and sometimes violent pro-democracy protests engulfed the financial hub in 2019, using a sweeping national security law to clamp down on dissent.

Police stormed into the Stand News office in the latest crackdown on Wednesday, seizing phones, computers, documents and thousands of dollars. Its acting editor-in-chief Patrick Lam was brought handcuffed to the headquarters during the search.

Lam and former editor-in-chief Chung Pui-kuen were charged along with Stand News' parent company for conspiring "together and with other persons, to publish and/or reproduce seditious publications," according to court documents. Chung and Lam were arrested on Wednesday with five others.

Among the violations listed on the charge sheet were the promotion of "hatred or contempt or to excite disaffection" against the government and the incitement of "persons to violence".

The Chinese government's liaison office in Hong Kong termed the arrests an "act of justice" and accused Stand News of inciting secession.

MORE NEWS

India saw record 126 tiger deaths in 2021

India's tiger conservation body said 126 of the endangered big cats died in 2021, the highest toll since it began compiling data a decade ago. The previous highest number of deaths per year before the authority began compiling data in 2012 was in 2016, when 121 perished. India is home to around 75 percent of the world's tigers. Over the past decade the biggest cause of death was recorded by the NTCA as being "natural causes", but many also fell victim to poachers and "human-animal conflict". Nearly 225 people were killed in tiger attacks between 2014 and 2019, according to government figures.

Saudi boosts pandemic curbs at Makkah's Grand Mosque

Saudi Arabia yesterday reimposed social distancing measures at the Grand Mosque in the Muslim holy city of Makkah, after recording the highest number of infections in months. Workers have returned floor markings removed on October 17 to guide people to social distance in and around the Grand Mosque -- which is built around the Kaaba, the black cubic structure towards which Muslims around the world pray. Saudi authorities said they will reimpose "social distancing requirements between worshippers and pilgrims" at the Grand Mosque, without specifying whether a capacity has been set.

Socialite Ghislaine Maxwell convicted of sex trafficking

British socialite Ghislaine Maxwell was found guilty in New York on Wednesday of recruiting and grooming young girls to be sexually abused by the late American financier Jeffrey Epstein. Maxwell faces spending the rest of her life behind bars after the 12-person jury convicted her on five of the six counts she was facing, including the most serious charge of sex trafficking a minor. The conviction, just days after she turned 60 on Christmas, caps a remarkable fall from grace for the Oxford-educated daughter of the late British press baron Robert Maxwell, who grew up in wealth and privilege as a friend to royalty. Sex trafficking of minors carries a maximum 40-year sentence. The lesser charges have terms of five or 10 years. Epstein, 66, killed himself in jail in 2019 while awaiting his own sex crimes trial. Maxwell, his lover-turned-close friend, was arrested the following year.

Myanmar court jails Suu Kyi aides for sedition

A Myanmar junta court yesterday sentenced two close aides of ousted civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi to two years in jail for sedition, a legal source told AFP. Two members of the NLD's central committee -- economic advisor Han Thar Myint and Thein Oo -- were sentenced to two years' imprisonment on Thursday, a legal source close to the case said. Earlier this month Suu Kyi was jailed for four years for incitement against the military and breaching Covid restrictions. Junta chief Min Aung Hlaing later reduced the term to two years and said she would serve her sentence under house arrest in the capital Naypyidaw.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

Don't 'punish' ex-employees

Taliban chief orders fighters amid reports of abuses

AFP, Kabul

The Taliban's supreme leader has ordered fighters not to punish members of Afghanistan's former regime for past "crimes", days after a video of an army commander being beaten went viral on social media.

The order, tweeted yesterday by group spokesman Mohammad Naem, also urged Taliban authorities to discourage Afghans from leaving the country as they would not be respected abroad.

"Don't punish employees of the previous regime for their past crimes," Mullah Hibatullah Akhundzada was quoted as telling followers in Kandahar, the birthplace of the hardline Islamist movement.

The Taliban chief said a general amnesty announced after the Islamists took power

in August should be honoured.

The Taliban are accused by the United Nations, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch of dozens of extrajudicial killings of members of the former security forces and administration.

The exodus has been exacerbated by a collapsed economy and a humanitarian crisis that the UN warns has caused "an avalanche of hunger".

On Wednesday, The US appointed an envoy to defend the rights of Afghan women, stepping up efforts on a key priority as the Taliban ratchet up restrictions. Rina Amiri, an Afghan-born US mediation expert who served at the State Department under former president Barack Obama, will take the role of special envoy for Afghan women, girls and human rights.

India extends draconian security law in Nagaland

Six militants, soldier killed in Kashmir

AGENCIES

The Indian government yesterday extended a special law giving armed forces sweeping powers in the north-eastern state of Nagaland, days after a botched army ambush killed 14 people.

The killings triggered protests against the law which gives the armed forces sweeping powers to conduct raids, warrantless searches and open fire, with broad protection from prosecution.

But the six-month extension issued by India's ministry of home affairs said the government believed the state was "in a disturbed and dangerous condition."

"The use of armed forces in aid of the civil power is necessary," the government said, justifying the extension of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA).

Earlier this month, the Indian army shot dead six miners returning to their homes in the state's Mon district, near the Myanmar border, believing them to be insurgents. Another eight people were killed by the troops when they were confronted by an angry crowd. A soldier was killed and a military vehicle was set alight.

The Indian army said in a statement Wednesday that a court of inquiry set up to probe the incident was "proceeding expeditiously."

Meanwhile, Indian security forces shot dead six militants and lost one soldier in a series of operations in disputed Kashmir yesterday, as a crackdown against insurgent groups continues after a spate of civilian killings this year, an official said.

"Six militants, including two Pakistan nationals, have been killed in two separate encounters with the security forces in Anantnag and Kulgam districts of Kashmir," the Kashmir valley's police chief Vijay Kumar said.

An Indian army soldier was also killed in the back-to-back gun battles that took place in southern Kashmir, Kumar said.



Young women pose for pictures after getting their hands and face painted ahead of New Year's Eve celebrations in Amritsar, India, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
Patuakhali
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.7800.000.14.003.21-4061

e-Tender Notice-31/2021-2022

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

SL. No.	Package No.	Tender ID	Name of scheme	Document last selling date and time	Security submission last date and time
01	SupRB/Patua/Maint/21-22/W-165	621226	1) Minor Maintenance of 126.0m Long RCC Girder Bridge on Boga RHD- Baharchar at Chainage: 13250m [578382002]	17-01-2022 16:00	18-01-2022 11:00
02	SupRB/Patua/Maint/21-22/W-193	624851	1) Minor Maintenance of 12.0m long RCC Girder Bridge on Mominpur GC-Kalaiya GC Road at Chainage: 1480m [578382003] under Bauphal Upazila, District: Patuakhali. 2) Minor Maintenance of 12.0m long RCC Girder Bridge on Mominpur GC-Kalaiya GC Road at Chainage: 6700m [578382003] under Bauphal Upazila, District: Patuakhali. 3) Minor Maintenance of 15.0m long RCC Girder Bridge on Mominpur GC-Kalaiya GC Road at Chainage: 8680m [578382003] under Bauphal Upazila, District: Patuakhali. 4) Minor Maintenance of 120.0m long RCC Girder Bridge on Mominpur GC-Baharchar GC via Kalisuri GC Road at Chainage: 8150m [578382005] under Bauphal Upazila, District: Patuakhali.	17-01-2022 16:00	18-01-2022 11:00
03	SupRB/Patua/Replac/21-22/W-74	633350	Construction of 24.06m long RCC Slab+ Girder Bridge on Pangashia UPC (Iron Bridge)-Sreerampur Bazar via Moukaran GPS & H/S Road at Ch. 5465m under Replacement Category [578953057]	24-01-2022 16:00	25-01-2022 11:00
04	SupRB/Patua/Replac/21-22/W-86	633352	Construction of 20.00m Long RCC Girder Bridge on Boga RHD-Baharchar GC Road at Ch. 6650m Under Replacement Category [578382002]	24-01-2022 16:00	25-01-2022 11:00
05	SupRB/Patua/Replac/21-22/W-96	633353	Construction of 15.00m Long RCC Girder Bridge on Boga RHD-Baharchar GC Road at Ch. 10490m Under Replacement Category [578382002]	24-01-2022 16:00	25-01-2022 11:00

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. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Executive Engineer
LGED, Patuakhali
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GD-2420

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Capacity Enhancement of NEC-ECNEC & Coordination Wing by Introducing Digital Database & Archive System
Planning Division
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar
Building # 01, Room # 32, Dhaka-1207
Phone: 9180746

Request for Expression of Interest (EOI)

Project Director of Capacity Enhancement of NEC-ECNEC & Coordination Wing by Introducing Digital Database & Archive System Project of the Planning Division is inviting application from reputed organizations to arrange study tour/training in abroad. The details of the Project, Job Title, Qualification and other requirements are mentioned below:

Sl.	Item	Description
1.	Ministry/Division	Planning Division.
2.	Agency	Planning Division.
3.	Name of the procuring entity	Project Director.
4.	Procuring entity code	Not applicable.
5.	Procuring entity district	Dhaka.
6.	Expression of Interest for Selection of	Selection of Training Management Firm for Organising Overseas Training/Study Tour programs.
7.	EOI Ref No.	20.00.0000.411.14.003.17-78
8.	Date of advertisement	31.12.2021
9.	Procurement method	OCBS.
10.	Project code	2240025
11.	Project name	Capacity Enhancement of NEC-ECNEC & Coordination Wing by Introducing Digital Database & Archive System Project.
12.	EOI closing date and time	16.01.2022 at 3.30pm.
13.	Brief description of the assignment for different position: Foreign Study Tour/Training Programme: The Training Management Firm will be responsible for management of overseas study tours of officers (different levels) of the Planning Division and relevant sector of Planning Commission in Four batches (6-5 persons each). Two batches in European Countries (Italy/Greece/UK/Germany/France/Austria/Hungary etc. and Two batches in Canada/USA/Mexico/Latin American countries). Study tours/Training in abroad should be arranged through reputed training organizations/Universities, preferably through training institution responsible for training of the Government officers of the destination country. The study tour will include (a) classroom discussion by eminent faculties, university teachers and senior government officials on the theme/topics to be finalized by the project authority (b) visit to relevant government offices for having experience and open discussion (c) other related activities in home and the visiting country. Area of Training: Advanced Project Management /Advanced Planning Tools.	
14.	Experience resources and other delivery capacity required: a. Minimum 05 (five) years of experience in organizing overseas training/study tour under GoB. b. Evidence of organizing foreign training/study-tour programs [Photocopies of at least 05 (five) relevant contracts signed during the last 04 (four) years must be submitted as evidence]. c. Overseas training partnership/Regional/Global networking with other International and Regional training Organizations/Institutions. The intending firms must show written evidences of partnership in the form of agreement/MOU or any other form of mutual collaboration signed with the organizations engaged in training of civil/public officials. d. Evidence of permanent office, registration and training/study tour management team in Bangladesh. e. Evidence of ISO 9001-2015 certification. f. Evidence showing ability of pre-financing foreign training/study tour programs and receive payment after program completion. g. Bank statement showing recent transaction/liquid asset of minimum BDT 2 (two) crore h. Evidence of competency and capability i.e. Brochures, Description of Similar Experiences, VAT Registration Documents, Income tax Certificate, Financial Solvency Certificate, Audit Reports must be submitted.	
15.	Other information: 1. Consultants will be selected in accordance with Public Procurement Act 2006 and Public Procurement Regulation 2008 of GOB. 2. Interested firms are required to submit their expression of interest in prescribe form to be obtained from the CPTU Website. 3. Applicants should provide attested copies of documents in support of their qualification and experience with EOI. 4. EOI shall be submitted in sealed envelope and be clearly marked the proposal.	
16.	Name designation and address of officials inviting Expression of Interest: Md. Younus Mian, Project Director, Capacity Enhancement of NEC-ECNEC & Coordination Wing by Introducing Digital Database & Archive System Project, Room No. 32, Building No. 02, Ministry of Planning, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207, Contact No. 9180746	

The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs.

Signed/-
29-12-2021
Tahmina Taslim
Deputy Chief Planning Division &
Deputy Project Director
Capacity Enhancement of NEC-ECNEC & Coordination Wing by Introducing Digital Database & Archive System Project

GD-2422