

The Queen's Baton Relay arrives in Bangladesh

The 16th official Queen's Baton Relay arrived in Dhaka on Thursday 6 January as it continues its global journey around the 72 Commonwealth nations and territories before concluding at the opening ceremony of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games on 28 July.

The Baton was carried to the High Commission by celebrated Bangladeshi sport shooters Abdullah Hel Baki and Shakil Ahmed, where they were welcomed by the British High Commissioner Robert Chatterton Dickson, alongside the President of the Bangladesh Olympic Association General S M Shafiuddin Ahmed, SBP, OSP, ndu, psc, PhD. The reception was attended by several renowned sports persons in Bangladesh, representatives of Bangladesh government, different civil society organisations, youth groups, British businesses, and heads of missions of the Commonwealth countries in Bangladesh.

British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Robert Chatterton Dickson said

“With the 50th anniversary of UK-Bangladesh relations and our ties through the Commonwealth, the arrival of the Queen's Baton Relay in Bangladesh is another important milestone of Brit Bangla Bondhon.

“The Baton Relay has been an essential part of the Commonwealth Games for over 60 years and celebrates communities from across the Commonwealth during the run up to the Games. It ignites hope, solidarity, and collaboration as it connects communities embracing unique cultures and inspires the next generation of sporting heroes.”

The arrival of the Queen's Baton Relay will amplify moments of celebration in Bangladesh with its golden jubilee of independence, and offer opportunities for reflection and connection, galvanizing the future potential of the Commonwealth.

The Baton will visit the National Martyrs' Monument, the Bangladesh Army Stadium and Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protishtan (BKSP), the national sports institute of the country. The Baton will also visit the Bangladesh Olympic Association and Shaheed Bir Uttam Lt. Anwar Girls' School and College. Throughout, Baton bearers, athletes and others will share stories of striving for change in their communities.

After Bangladesh, the Baton Relay will travel to India on 10 January.

- The Queen's Baton Relay is the traditional curtain raiser for the Commonwealth Games. It began when the Baton, containing a message from The Queen, departed from Buckingham Palace on 7 October 2021. The 16th official Queen's Baton Relay is an epic journey covering the entirety of the Commonwealth as it will travel to all 72 nations and territories, covering a distance of 140,000 kilometres. For 269 days, the Baton will

travel to Europe, Africa, Asia, Oceania, the Caribbean and the Americas, before it embarks on the final stretch of its journey across England for 25 days. The global journey will conclude at the Birmingham 2022 Opening Ceremony.

- The Commonwealth Games bring nations together in a colourful celebration of sport and human performance. But the Games have evolved dramatically since its beginnings in 1930. Held every four years, with a hiatus during World War II, the Games have grown from featuring 11 countries and 400 athletes, to a global spectacle of 6,600 sports men and women from across 72 nations and territories.
- The UK is hosting Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. Birmingham 2022 will bring together 6,500 athletes and team officials from the Commonwealth countries in a spirit of friendly competition and a celebration of the Commonwealth family's rich diversity and shared goals of democracy, development and peace.
- Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games is one of three major events the UK is hosting in 2022 alongside Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee and Festival UK 2022.

Further information

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[Ministerial Appointment: 7 January 2022](#)

Press release

The Queen has been pleased to approve the re-appointment of Baroness Penn as a Baroness in Waiting.



The Queen has been pleased to approve the re-appointment of Baroness Penn as a Baroness in Waiting (Government Whip) following the end of her maternity leave, and the consequent departure from Government of Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen.

These will take effect on 26 January and 4 February respectively.

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[Boosters continue to provide high levels of protection against severe disease from Omicron in older adults](#)

Press release

Latest data from UKHSA shows booster doses are continuing to provide high levels of protection against severe disease from the Omicron variant among older adults.



[Figures show](#) that around 3 months after they received the third jab, protection against hospitalisation among those aged 65 and over remains at

about 90%.

With just 2 vaccine doses, protection against severe disease drops to around 70% after 3 months and to 50% after 6 months.

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has taken this latest evidence into account in their ongoing review of the booster programme.

The Committee advises that at this present time:

- there is no immediate need to introduce a second booster dose, or fourth jab, to the most vulnerable (care home residents and those aged over 80) – the timing and need for further booster doses will continue to be reviewed as the data evolves
- priority should continue to be given to rolling out first booster doses to all age groups
- unvaccinated individuals should come forward for their first 2 doses as soon as possible

Professor Wei Shen Lim, the JCVI's chair of COVID-19 immunisation, said:

The current data shows the booster dose is continuing to provide high levels of protection against severe disease, even for the most vulnerable older age groups. For this reason, the committee has concluded there is no immediate need to introduce a second booster dose, though this will continue to be reviewed.

The data is highly encouraging and emphasises the value of a booster jab. With Omicron continuing to spread widely, I encourage everyone to come forward for their booster dose, or if unvaccinated, for their first 2 doses, to increase their protection against serious illness.

The latest study looked at booster doses in those aged over 65, who were among the first to be eligible when the booster rollout began in mid-September.

Whilst with a booster dose, the duration of protection against severe disease remains high, protection against mild symptomatic infection is more short-lived and drops to around 30% by about 3 months.

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The Environment Agency successfully prosecute director of Skip Company for handling waste illegally

- Mr Connell, director of CK Waste limited, failed to operate within their permit and managed waste without a set of procedures that identified and minimised risk of pollution.
- Mr Connell appeared at court on Friday 7th January 2022 where he was sentenced to 22 weeks, imprisonment suspended for 12 months, ordered to pay costs of £8,132.45 and a victim surcharge of £115. Mr Connell was also disqualified from being a director of a company for 3 years

The Environment Agency has successfully prosecuted Mr Connell an Oldham based man, for the illegal storage and treatment of approximately 6,000 cubic metres of waste, equivalent of roughly 12,000 standard 6x4 trailers, on an industrial estate on the outskirts of Manchester.

The case was brought against Mr Connell, director of CK Waste Limited, when he allowed an environmental offence to occur. The site failed to operate within their permit and managed waste without a set of procedures that identified and minimised risk of pollution and was therefore handling waste illegally.

Mr Connell was also issued with an enforcement notice as excessive piled waste posed a serious fire risk after being stored for too long. Following the issue of the enforcement notice, Mr Connell failed to take steps to reduce the piled waste on site and failed to provide a fire prevention plan.

Mr Connell was sentenced to 22 weeks, imprisonment suspended for 12 months, ordered to pay costs of £8,132.45 and a victim surcharge of £115. Mr Connell was also disqualified from being a director of a company for 3 years

An Environment Agency spokesperson said:

“The Environment Agency welcome the result of this prosecution for the offences committed by Mr Connell, director of CK Waste Limited. Mr Connell was offered extensive advice and guidance from Environment Agency officers but despite this, failed to take steps to reduce piled waste at the site in Dukinfield, Manchester.

“We all create waste, and we all have a responsibility to ensure our waste is handled correctly. This prosecution sends out a strong signal to others that we will continue to fight tirelessly to combat illegal waste crime and bring those responsible to justice. Businesses and householders also need to do everything possible to ensure that waste doesn't end up in the hands of operators who break the law by checking the online register [Waste carriers, brokers and dealers \(data.gov.uk\)](https://www.data.gov.uk)”

Environmental incidents can be reported to the Environment Agency 24/7 on 0800 807060, waste crime can also be reported anonymously via Crimestoppers online or on 0800 555111.

[UK Foreign Secretary calls out unacceptable Russian behaviour at NATO talks](#)

Press release

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss today (Friday 07 January) made clear the UK's support for Ukraine and stressed NATO's important defensive role as she attended a virtual NATO Foreign Ministers' meeting.



Following the meeting, Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

Russia's military build-up on the border of Ukraine and in illegally-annexed Crimea is unacceptable. There is no justification for its aggressive and unprovoked stance towards Ukraine. We stand with our NATO allies in urging Russia to end its malign activity and adhere to international agreements it freely signed up to.

We will defend democracy in eastern Europe and around the world. Our support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity is unwavering. We are clear that any Russian incursion would be a massive strategic mistake, for which there would be a severe cost.

The Russian Government needs to de-escalate, pursue diplomatic channels and abide by its commitments on the transparency of military activities. We will be discussing this at the NATO-Russia Council next week.

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