

REGISTRATION, CORRECTION

EC introduces online service for voters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission yesterday introduced an online application system for registration of new voters, correction of existing electoral roll and switch between polling areas.

"We have introduced the new system today [Wednesday] aiming at making registration, correction and change of polling areas easier and smoother," said Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad at a press briefing at the EC's conference centre.

The application forms will be available at EC's website www.ec.org.bd.

The online system would ensure that the existing voters can correct their information, if need be, before the EC prepares the smart NID (national identity) cards, EC officials told The Daily Star.

Currently, there are around 9.61 crore voters in Bangladesh. The EC has recently taken an initiative to provide smart NID cards to around 9 crore voters by 2016. The rest of the voters will get their cards later.

Addressing yesterday's press briefing, the CEC said citizens upon reach-

ing 18 years could apply for registration at home. The existing voters can check their information of NID cards and apply for correction, if needed, online.

Besides, the voters would also be able to learn about their polling station online and apply for fresh NID cards in case of loss and damage.

After filing an application, prospective voters will get an appointment with officials concerned online to complete the task.

"We have introduced the new system after checking and rechecking different technical issues so that our national database of voters does not get jeopardised," the CEC observed.

NID wing Director General Brig Gen Sultanuzzaman Md Saleh Uddin said the new system would minimise the possibility of inserting wrong information during registration as the voters would put their information themselves.

The previous manual system would also continue besides the online one, he added.

Top officials of EC and NID wing were present at the press briefing.



Nagorik Oikya convener Mahmudur Rahman Manna being taken to a Dhaka court yesterday in connection with a case filed for his alleged attempt to instigate a revolt in the armed forces.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Studies go on but in fear

FROM PAGE 1

said schools have been kept open in the city and rural areas. But student attendance in the city is very low. "It appears parents are unwilling to send their children to schools on security grounds," he said.

"But there is no such problem in the suburbs and rural areas," he said.

Bangladesh has more than 1.0 lakh primary educational institutes with 1.95 crore students, according to Bangladesh Economic Review 2014, a government publication.

Sabera said attendance at her school was unaffected despite the ongoing political turmoil.

A trip inside rural areas of Bagerhat and Khulna also made it clear; the

schools had children either in classrooms or playing on the playground during breaks. There was no sign of anxiety among them.

While the children get to schools in rural areas without trouble, it is the teachers who are risking their lives.

Early this month, a truck came under arson attack on Khulna-Mongla highway, which Sabera and Manna take. The incident has made them more nervous.

Teacher Jahanara Khatun, who has to travel 21km from Jessore to get to her school, said, "During the initial days of the blockade, every moment on the highway was scary. I felt that it [a petrol bomb] would come any time."

For nearly 40 days, she has gone to school in motorised three-wheelers, and not on the usual bus. The change in mode of transport costs her Tk 120 a day, which was just Tk 50 on the bus.

Teachers do not get paid much and the extra costs put additional pressure on her family.

"None is free from fear of attacks. But we have to be courageous. Rural areas have so far been immune to the turmoil. So if we do not go, children will stop coming to school," said Jahanara.

Facing the same dilemma, Tapu Rani Roy, a 33-year-old college teacher, has to travel nearly 25km to Digraj near Mongla port from her home in a

village of Bagerhat.

She is out the door by 7:00am and in college by 9:00am. "The roads are quiet early in the morning which makes me even more nervous," said Tapu while returning home from work one afternoon.

After their work is done for the day in the late afternoon, Sabera and Manna has to take the bus home where their kids wait for them. But the two have to wait inside the bus until all seats are taken.

"There is no alternative transport here on this highway. So, we have no choice but to ride the bus. Appeals to get a move on since the sun is setting make no difference to bus staff," said frustrated Sabera.

Manna facing

FROM PAGE 1

Amid controversies over the leaked phone calls, Manna had gone to his niece's house on Monday night.

The group of five to six men who picked him up identified themselves as detectives. They also told Manna's niece that they would take him to the DB headquarters on Minto Road, family sources said.

But on Tuesday morning top DB officials denied that they arrested him.

Officials later said the Rab arrested Manna from Dhanmondi on Tuesday night, a claim Manna rejected while talking to his family members in the court yesterday.

Police said the elite force handed Manna over to the detectives after Tuesday midnight.

According to family members, Manna could not recognise those who detained him or the place they took him to, as he was blindfolded.

Nilom Manna, his daughter, told The Daily Star, "Baba [father] told us

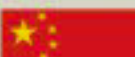









that they [those who detained him] behaved well with him."

Arguing against the remand petition, Manna told the court, "Everything I said during my two conversations is already public. What additional information will you [police] collect from me when I have nothing new to say about this? There is no need of taking me on remand."

On the allegation of instigating the armed forces to revolt, Manna told the court he never said anything like that in the conversations.

The former vice-president of Dhaka University Central Students Union also protested that during the conversations he talked about the need of dead bodies to intensify the anti-government movement.

But prosecutors said they needed to quiz Manna to know the names and addresses of those, including a Bangladeshi living in Australia, "involved in a conspiracy" against the government.

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| <div><div>OIL DEAL</div><div>APPROVED</div></div> | | SUPPLIER | |  UNIPCC, CHINA |  PETRO CHINA, SINGAPORE |  PETOLIMEX, VIETNAM |  PETCO TRADING, MALAYSIA | | | | |
| | | QUANTITY | | Gas oil 447600 barrel | Furnace oil 40000 MT | Gas Oil 671400 barrel | Furnace Oil 40000 MT | Gas oil 223800 barrel | Furnace Oil 60,000 MT | Gas Oil 1902300 barrel | Furnace Oil 80,000 MT |
| | | PRICE PER BARREL/MT | | \$71.32 | \$ 375.63 | \$71.32 | \$ 375.63 | \$71.32 | \$ 375.63 | \$71.32 | \$ 375.63 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SUPPLIER |  PB TRADING, BRUNEI |  KUWAIT PETROLEUM |  EMIRATES NATIONAL OIL |  PNOC EXPLORATION, PHILIPPINES |  BUMI SIAK PUSAKO, INDONESIA |  TURKISH PETROLEUM CO. | | | | | |
| QUANTITY | Gas oil 447600 barrel | Furnace oil 20,000 MT | Gas Oil 4252200 barrel | Jet A-1 720000 barrel | Gas oil 671400 barrel | Furnace Oil 80,000 MT | Gas Oil 783300 barrel | Furnace Oil 80,000 MT | Gas oil 223800 barrel | Furnace Oil 80,000 MT | Gas oil 223800 barrel |
| PRICE PER BARREL/MT | \$71.32 | \$ 375.63 | \$70.87 | \$ 75.68 | \$71.32 | \$ 375.63 | \$71.32 | \$ 375.63 | \$71.32 | \$ 375.63 | \$71.32 |