



“There are no partners in Palestine for Trump. There are no Arab partners for Trump and there are no European partners for Trump.”
PALESTINIAN PM MOHAMMAD SHTAYYEH

“We’ve failed to give you a beautiful Bangladesh and ensure your security.”
BNP LEADER MIRZA FAKHRUL AT THE AWARD-GIVING CEREMONY OF A CHILDREN’S ART COMPETITION

“Those who don’t believe in democracy want to make elections controversial.”
ELECTION COMMISSIONER MAHBUB TALUKDAR DURING A TRAINING PROGRAMME AT THE ELECTORAL TRAINING INSTITUTE

Plagued by corruption

ACC identifies 22 sources of graft in Titas, including illegal connections, meter tampering

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has identified 22 sources of corruption plaguing the state-run Titas Gas for years.

Illegal connections, re-connection of illegal lines, meter tampering and bribery in providing legal connections are major sources of corruption there.

Showing artificial system loss, giving illegal connections to boilers and generators and changing category of customers are also among the 22 possible sources of graft in Titas Gas Transmission & Distribution Company Limited, the ACC has found.

The corruption watchdog gave 12 recommendations, including introducing pre-paid meter, conducting surprise drives and imposing higher fines on illegal connection-holders, as well as taking action against corrupt officials.

ACC Commissioner Mozammel Haque Khan yesterday submitted a report on the corruption and irregularities in Titas to Nasrul Hamid, state minister for power, energy and mineral resources.

In 2017, the ACC formed 25 teams to investigate graft in 25 public organisations, including Titas, which are perceived to have corrupt practices, Mozammel said.

Led by a deputy director, the team investigating Titas talked with former and current Titas employees and people who have knowledge of how the company operates.

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A pedestrian walks by a large hole on the footpath on the capital's major thoroughfare Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue yesterday afternoon. A momentary lapse and a fall into the drain might completely ruin one's day or cause life-threatening injuries.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

EC to ensure Rohingyas not on voter roll

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The Election Commission will take special measures to prevent Rohingyas from registering as Bangladeshi voters.

Talking to The Daily Star, EC officials yesterday said they would form special committees in 32 upazilas of Bandarban, Cox's Bazar, Khagrachhari and Rangamati districts to implement their plan.

Brig Gen Mohammad Sidul Islam, director general at the EC's National Identity Card Wing, said, "No Rohingya will be listed as Bangladeshi voter. We will set up committees to prevent such incidents."

Bangladesh already has a list of Rohingyas as they were previously brought under biometric registration. The EC would cross-check the list with our updated voter list to identify Rohingyas in the next voter list.

Previously, allegations were found that Rohingyas managed to get national ID cards of Bangladesh

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NUSRAT KILLING

One student confesses direct links

STAR REPORT

An Alim examinee of Sonagazi Islamia Senior Fazil Madrasa yesterday confessed to playing a direct role in the killing of his fellow student Nusrat Jahan Rafi.

Abdur Rahim alias Sharif in his confessional statement said he and 11 others had earlier planned to kill Nusrat and decided who would do what to execute the plan, said sources close to the investigation.

Senior Judicial Magistrate Shoraf Uddin Ahmed recorded the statement of the suspect who was arrested on Tuesday night in the capital's Kamrangirchar.

Also yesterday, the same court placed another suspect Kamrun Nahar Moni on a five-day remand, hours after she was arrested in Mohalpa area of Feni.

Twelve suspects, including Rahim and two key accused Nuruddin and Shahadat Hosen Shamim, held a meeting at the

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TIB SURVEY ON DHAKA WASA

Rampant graft, poor service

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nearly 45 percent service seekers in the capital don't get the desired amount of water from Dhaka Wasa, Transparency International Bangladesh said yesterday citing its survey.

In slum areas, the shortfall against the demand is 72 percent while it is 45.8 percent in residential areas, 35 percent in commercial areas and 19 percent in industrial areas, TIB said.

Besides, about 35 percent service seekers complain of poor-quality water throughout the year.

Because of this, 91 percent clients of the Water Supply and Sewerage Authority have to boil water before drinking, although it was already supposed to be safe for drinking, the study said.

On an average, this second layer of purification at the individual level costs natural gas worth Tk 332 crore every month, TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said, while presenting the findings at a press conference at his office in the capital.

Sixty-two percent of those seeking water and sewer connections from Wasa become victims of corruption, harassment and irregularities, according to the study.

Corruption takes place at "mutual connivance". As a result, it's difficult to identify the corrupt person, Iftekharuzzaman said, adding, "But, it's still possible for the Anti-Corruption Commission [ACC] to unearth these rampant grafts."

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» Gas worth Tk 332 crore burnt a month for boiling Wasa water to make it drinkable

» 45pc service seekers do not get water as per their need

» 62pc people fall victim of graft relating to water, sewerage connections

» 35pc service seekers complain of poor quality water all year round

INDIAN ELECTION PHASE-2

EC keeps eye on vote buying

Voters in 96 constituencies will exercise their rights today

AGENCIES

India is all set for the second round of elections today as election authorities cracked down on 'vote buying' to deter unwanted influence in the ongoing polls.

The authorities have cancelled voting in a southern region of the country after seizing more than 110 million rupees (\$1.5 million) they believe was meant to influence the outcome, officials said yesterday.

It is the first time a ballot has been cancelled in a national election over attempted vote-buying, they said.

Voters in the Vellore constituency in coastal Tamil Nadu state will not be going to the polls as scheduled after the Election Commission of India ruled there were fears of a "systematic design to influence voters".

The commission said late Tuesday that the environment in Vellore was no longer conducive to "free and ethical" elections.

"Special measures are being taken by the election commission to check money power in the poll bound areas," an election commission official said, adding that "we have divided areas and extra measures are being taken

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CAMPAIGN CONTROVERSY

First Ferdous, now Noor

Right after renowned Bangladeshi actor Ferdous Ahmed was caught in the TMC (Trinamool Congress) campaign controversy, another Bangladeshi actor Gazi Abdun Noor was also allegedly spotted electioneering for the party.

Gazi, known for the role of Raja Rajchandra in the hit Channel Zee5 serial "Rani Rashmoni", popular in both India and Bangladesh, was seen waving to onlookers from a vehicle as part of a campaign road show by MP Saugata Roy.

The incident came to light after the BJP submitted a video of it to the Election Commission. The Indian government has reportedly revoked Ferdous's visa and ordered him to leave the country. Turn to page 9 for full story.

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