

Bangladesh Election Commission
Election Commission Secretariat
Nirbachan Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka

GAZETTE NOTIFICATION

Date: 19 Bhadra 1433 Bangabda / 3 September 2026 AD

S.R.O. No. 329-Law/2026.— In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (2) of section 20 of the Zila Parishad Act, 2000 (Act No. 19 of 2000), the Election Commission hereby makes the following Rules, namely:—

1. Title and Commencement.—

- (1) These Rules shall be called the Zila Parishad (Election Conduct) Rules, 2026.
- (2) They shall come into force at once.

2. Definitions.—

Unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context, in these Rules—

- (1) "Very important person" means the Prime Minister, the Speaker of the National Parliament, the Deputy Speaker, Ministers of the Government, Chief Whips and Whips of political parties, the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Members of Parliament, elected representatives holding the status of Member of Parliament, and Mayors, or the persons discharging the duties of Mayor, of City Corporations;
- (2) "Act" means the Zila Parishad Act, 2000 (Act No. 19 of 2000);
- (3) "Commission" means the Election Commission established under Article 118 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh;
- (4) "Public relation" means establishing contact with, meeting, or making oneself known to, the voters of the relevant constituency by a candidate, for the purpose of a Zila Parishad election;
- (5) "Zila Parishad" means a Zila Parishad constituted under the Act;
- (6) "Wall" means any wall or fence demarcating the boundary of a dwelling, office, court, educational institution, business centre, industrial factory, shop, or any other establishment, whether kutcha or pucca, and, for this purpose, includes electric line and post pillars, food [grain storage], road dividers, road islands, bridges, culverts, metro-rail pillars, and flyover pillars, as well as the canopies of roads and the rooftops of buildings;
- (7) "Election" means an election or by-election of a Chairman or Member of a Zila Parishad;
- (8) "Election area" means the area of the relevant district fixed for a Zila Parishad election;
- (9) "Pre-election period" means the period from the date of announcement of the election schedule until the date of publication of the election result in the official Gazette;
- (10) "Poster" means any propaganda material prepared using paper, cloth, canvas, or other perishable/decomposable materials harmful to the environment;
- (11) "Contesting candidate" means a candidate who has been lawfully nominated for election as Chairman or Member and who has not withdrawn his/her candidacy;

- (12) "Candidate" means any person who has submitted a nomination paper for election to the office of Chairman or Member;
- (13) "Festoon" means a decorative item made of cloth or canvas;
- (14) "Banner" means any material used for propaganda of this kind, made of cloth or canvas, or produced by electronic or digital means;
- (15) "Displaying a banner or festoon" means putting up or hanging a banner or festoon anywhere for such propaganda purposes;
- (16) "Voter slip" means a document that, purposefully, contains a voter's name, photograph, symbol name, and serial number according to the voter list, along with voting-centre related information;
- (17) "Mobile Financial Services (MFS) transaction" means financial transactions carried out through bKash, Nagad, Upay, Rocket, or similar platforms
- (18) "Vehicle" means any mechanical or non-mechanical means of conveyance plying on water, land, or air, whether or not carrying passengers or goods;
- (19) "Political party" means a Registered Political Party as defined in clause (xxa) of Article 2 of the Representation of the People Order, 1972;
- (20) "Member" means, and includes, the Chairman and the male and female Members of a Zila Parishad;
- (21) "Statutory government authority" means a statutory government authority as defined in Article 152(1) of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

3. Equal rights in election campaigning.—

Subject to the Act and the provisions of these Rules, all contesting candidates for an election shall have equal rights and opportunities in respect of election campaigning.

4. Prohibition on donations, grants, etc. from any establishment.—

No candidate or contesting candidate, nor any political party, other person, organisation, or institution on his/her behalf, shall, during the pre-election period, promise to provide, openly or covertly, any donation or grant from any establishment situated within the relevant election area.

5. Time of campaigning.—

No candidate shall commence any election campaign prior to the allotment of the election symbol.

6. Election campaigning through digital or social media.—

In compliance with the applicable law, the Zila Parishad Election Rules, 2016, and these Rules, a candidate, his/her election agent, or any other person may conduct election campaigning using digital or social media; provided that, in doing so—

- (a) no campaigning shall be conducted using the name, account ID, email ID, or other identifying information connected to social media of a candidate, his/her election agent, or

any other person, without first submitting the same to the Returning Officer prior to the commencement of such campaigning;

(b) no candidate shall use artificial intelligence (AI) for any dishonest purpose in connection with an election;

(c) no one shall create or circulate, in relation to an election, defamatory speech, false information, distorted images of any person's face, or any mischievous content;

(d) no one shall use language that creates division on the basis of caste, religion, sex, colour, or community targeting any particular community, nor engage in defamatory speech, personal or communal attack, or provocative statements;

(e) no activity shall be carried out that amounts to misuse of religious sentiment or communal feeling for the purpose of gaining electoral advantage;

(f) no candidate, or person on his/her behalf, shall, with intent to defame or destroy the character or reputation of any candidate before the voters, create, publish, distribute, or share, whether generally or through the use of artificial intelligence (AI), on social media or through any other means, any false, mischievous, malicious, out-of-context, obscene, or inhumane content.

7. Restriction on use of circuit houses, dak bungalows, etc.—

1. No contesting candidate shall, during the pre-election period—

(a) reside in a government circuit house, dak bungalow, or rest house; and

(b) use, as a place for campaigning or otherwise, any government circuit house, dak bungalow, rest house, or the office of any statutory public authority; and

(c) State media such as Bangladesh Television, Bangladesh Betar, etc., shall not be used for campaigning for or against any candidate.

2. notwithstanding anything in any other rules or policy, officials engaged in conducting the election shall face no restriction in using government dak bungalows or rest houses for election-management purposes.

8. Restriction on organising social gatherings.—

(1) No candidate, or political party, or any other person, organization, or institution on their behalf—

(a) Shall hold any public rally or procession other than public relations, street corner meetings, and indoor meetings;

(b) Shall disrupt, obstruct, or cause fear in the street corner meetings, indoor meetings, and other campaign activities of opponents;

(c) Shall conduct street corner meetings/indoor meetings without written permission, which shall be granted in order of receipt of applications submitted to the appropriate authority regarding the date, time, and venue;

(d) If intending to hold a street corner meeting/indoor meeting, shall inform the local police authority about its venue and time at least 24 (twenty-four) hours prior to the proposed meeting, so that the police can take necessary measures to maintain law and order at the site; and

(e) Shall hold street corner meetings on any road that may obstruct public movement, nor shall any other person on their behalf hold public rallies, street corner meetings, etc., in a similar manner.

(2) Organizers of a street rally shall seek police assistance to take action against disruptors or anyone creating disturbances at the meeting and shall not take action against such persons themselves.

9. Restrictions on the use of posters, leaflets, and handbills.—

No candidate, or any person on his/her behalf, shall, in connection with election campaigning within the relevant election area—

- (a) use any poster of any kind;
- (b) use, for leaflets, handbills, festoons, or banners, resin, polythene, plastic, or other non-biodegradable materials harmful to the environment;
- (c) affix any leaflet or handbill on any structure, wall, tree, fence, electric or telephone pole, or installation of the government or a local authority, or on any bus, truck, train, steamer, launch, rickshaw, auto-rickshaw, leguna, taxi, baby-taxi, or other vehicle;
- (d) tear down, deface, or destroy the festoon, banner, or billboard of any contesting candidate;
- (e) other than a banner, leaflet, or handbill in black and white for electronic media, use a banner exceeding 10 (ten) feet by 4 (four) feet mounted vertically/lengthwise, a leaflet or handbill exceeding A4 size (8.27 inches × 11.69 inches), or a festoon exceeding 18 inches × 24 inches, or print thereon any photograph or symbol other than that of the candidate himself/herself;
- (f) The length, width, or height of a candidate's election symbol shall not exceed 6 feet
- (g) use any banner, leaflet, or handbill that does not bear the printer's name, address, and press identity; and
- (h) use any banner, leaflet, or handbill made of polythene and PVC material

10. Restrictions on the use of voter slips.—

No contesting candidate, or any person, organisation, or institution on his/her behalf, shall—

- (a) distribute voter slips within 400 (four hundred) yards of any polling station;
- (b) use a voter slip exceeding 5 (five) inches × 3 (three) inches in size;
- (c) print any voter slip that does not bear the printer's name, address, and identity.

11. Restriction on use of a living creature as a symbol.—

No living creature or animal shall be used as a symbol for election campaigning.

12. Restriction on processions or showdowns.—

- (1) No procession or showdown of any kind shall be permitted at the time of, and while, submitting a nomination paper, and no candidate shall bring more than 5 (five) supporters while submitting a nomination paper.

(2) No procession or similar showdown of any kind shall be permitted during the pre-election period.

13. Restrictions on establishing election camps or offices, etc.—

(1) No contesting candidate for the office of Chairman shall establish more than one election camp per thana/upazila within his/her constituency;

(2) No candidate for the office of Member, including for a reserved seat for women, shall establish more than 1 (one) camp or office in the relevant election area;

(3) No television, VCR, DVD, or similar device shall be used in an election camp or office.

14. Restriction on the use of vehicles.—

No candidate, nor any political party, other person, organisation, or institution on his/her behalf, shall—

(a) take out a procession, or hold a showdown, using trucks, buses, motorcycles, launches, trains, or any other mechanical vehicle, in the form of a motorcade or torch procession, or any procession of any kind;

(b) use a helicopter or any other airborne vehicle for election campaign work;

(c) use any vehicle chartered or otherwise designated for voters, in order to transport them;

(d) To make the election festive, campaigning using a single caravan or mobile vehicle decorated with digital technology or general biodegradable materials around the vehicle shall be allowed from 12:00 PM (noon) until before sunset:

Provided that during such campaigning, no traffic obstruction or public harassment shall be caused.

15. Restriction on the use of vehicles on election day.—

(1) No vehicle shall be hired for, or used in, bringing voters to or from any voting centre by or on behalf of a contesting candidate.

(2) Save for persons approved by the Commission for the purpose of maintaining peace and order in the election, no other person shall use any vehicle on the roads designated as approaches to voting centres.

16. Restriction on writing on walls.—

No candidate, nor any political party, other person, organisation, or institution on his/her behalf, shall carry out election campaigning by writing, painting, printing, or drawing any picture, using paint, lime, or chemicals, on any wall or vehicle.

17. Restriction on constructing gates, arches, or fences, and installing panels or camps, and illumination.—

No candidate, nor any political party, other person, organisation, or institution on his/her behalf, shall—

(a) construct any gate, arch, or fence at a place of election campaigning, or create any obstruction on a route of passage;

- (b) set up any panel or camp occupying an area exceeding 350 (three hundred fifty) square feet for election campaigning;
- (c) use electric illumination as part of election campaigning; and
- (d) establish an election camp or office on any road, or at any place designated for general movement or public use.

18. Restriction on propaganda-related speeches, provision of food, and giving of gifts.—

No candidate, nor any political party, other person, organisation, or institution on his/her behalf, shall—

- (a) use any picture or symbol-bearing shirt, jacket, cap, or scarf of a contesting candidate in a propaganda speech or otherwise;
- (b) serve voters any drink or food at an election camp; and
- (c) give voters any allurement, bribe, or gift of any kind.

19. Provocative speech or statement, boisterous conduct, and campaigning in Places of Worship —

No candidate, nor any political party, other person, organisation, or institution on his/her behalf, shall—

- (a) during election campaigning, make any speech that involves personal abuse, indecent or aggressive attack on personal character, or a defamatory statement that touches on communal or religious sentiment;
- (b) conduct any election campaigning inside a mosque, temple, church, pagoda, or other place of religious worship, or inside any government office or educational institution;
Provided that grounds of educational institutions may be used with permission from the authority without disrupting academic activities.
- (c) cause damage to any citizen's land, building, or other movable or immovable property, or engage in any undesirable action or boisterous conduct with intent to penalise anyone, on grounds connected with the election;
- (d) spend money or exert force with intent to influence voters, for or against any contesting candidate.
- (e) No candidate or representative shall collect personal NID numbers of voters or their family members, or mobile numbers for MFS transactions, to influence voters.

20. Restriction on carrying explosive materials.—

Save for a person approved by the Commission, no other person shall carry, at or near a voting centre designated by the Commission, any explosive as defined in section 4 of the Explosives Act, 1884 (Act No. IV of 1884), any explosive substance as defined in clause (1) of section 2 of the Explosive Substances Act, 1908 (Act No. VI of 1908), or any arms or ammunition as defined in section 4 of the Arms Act, 1878 (Act No. XI of 1878).

21. Restriction relating to the use of microphones.—

(1) No contesting candidate or person, organization, or institution on their behalf shall use more than 1 (one) microphone or sound amplifier in a single ward for street meetings or campaign activities.

(2) Microphones or sound-amplifying devices shall not be used for campaigning before 12:00 PM (noon) and after sunset in any electoral area.

(3) The sound level of microphones or amplifiers used in campaigning shall not exceed 60 (sixty) decibels.

22. Restrictions relating to election campaigning by, and use of government facilities by, very important persons and government officials and employees.—

(a) Very important persons and officials and employees of the government and of statutory bodies shall not participate in any election-related activity during the pre-election period, and shall not remain present at any time or place where, in the opinion of the Commission, it might have an influence on the election;

(b) they shall not, for themselves or on behalf of others, avail of any government vehicle, government propaganda equipment, or unauthorised government facility for election campaigning, nor shall they, for such purpose, make use of any officer or employee of the government, semi-government, or an autonomous body;

(c) no candidate, or any other person on his/her behalf, shall use any government publicity equipment, or any government officer or employee, or avail any such government facility, at the election area, the relevant district, or any other place, for election purposes;

(d) no candidate, or any other person on his/her behalf, shall use, for any such purpose, any person connected with government officers or employees in the organisation of the election; and

(e) no Chairman, Mayor, Administrator, or officer-in-charge of any local government body, other than [the concerned] candidate, shall take part in election campaigning.

23. Restriction on carrying out government development programmes during the pre-election period.—

No contesting candidate shall, during the pre-election period, discharge the function of carrying out a government development programme within his/her constituency, or attend any meeting held to that effect.

24. Restriction on involvement in the management of educational institutions during the pre-election period.—

If any contesting candidate previously held the office of President or Member of the managing committee of an educational institution, he/she shall not, during the pre-election period, take part in the meetings of the managing committee of the said institution, nor become involved in any work of that educational institution.

25. Restrictions relating to project approval, unveiling of plaques, etc. for the relevant election area during the pre-election period.—

(1) During the pre-election period, the Chairman or Administrator of a Zila Parishad shall not, in the concerned electoral area-

- (a) Announce the approval of any project, lay a foundation stone, or unveil a plaque;
- (b) Announce or allocate any grant, or release funds from the Zila Parishad's funds in favor of any individual, group, or institution; and
- (c) Approve any development project or release or disburse funds for any previously approved project.

26. Conditions on the use of billboards.—

In respect of election campaigning—

- (a) the area of a billboard shall not exceed 16 (sixteen) feet × 9 (nine) feet;
- (b) no contesting candidate shall install more than one billboard per thana/upazila;
- (c) no billboard shall be installed in a manner that creates a risk of obstruction to pedestrian or vehicular movement, or that damages or defaces the environment.

27. Election expenditure limit.—

- (1) No contesting candidate shall exceed the prescribed expenditure limit.
- (2) Expenditure incurred on campaigning through social media shall also be included within the candidate's election expenditure limit.

28. Prohibition on obstruction at the time of submission of nomination paper and withdrawal of candidacy.—

- (1) No candidate, nor any political party, other person, organisation, or institution on his/her behalf, shall create any obstruction while the candidate submits his/her nomination paper to the Returning Officer or an Assistant Returning Officer.
- (2) No candidate, nor any political party, other person, organisation, or institution on his/her behalf, shall create any obstruction while the candidate withdraws his/her candidacy before the Returning Officer or an Assistant Returning Officer.

29. Right of access to a voting centre.—

- (1) The officials and staff of the voting centre, contesting candidates, polling agents, election observers, persons approved by the Commission, and voters only, shall have the right of access to a voting centre.
- (2) No election agent of any contesting candidate shall enter or loiter within the premises of a voting centre.
- (3) A polling agent shall remain present at the place designated for him/her and perform his/her assigned duty.
- (4) No polling agent or voter shall enter a voting centre wearing any shirt, jacket, cap, scarf, or bag bearing a propaganda-related picture, symbol, or badge.

30. Maintaining an atmosphere conducive to the election.—

No contesting candidate, or any person on his/her behalf, shall influence the election by means of money, arms, muscle power, or local influence.

31. Punishment for contravention of the provisions of these Rules.—

Any candidate, or any other person on his/her behalf, who contravenes any provision of these Rules during the pre-election period, shall be liable to punishment with imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 (six) months, or with fine not exceeding Taka 50 (fifty) thousand, or with both.

32. Cancellation of candidacy by the Commission.—

(1) Notwithstanding anything contained elsewhere in these Rules, if, from any record or written report received from any source, it is proved to the satisfaction of the Commission that a candidate for the office of Chairman or Member, or his/her election agent, has contravened, or attempted to contravene, any provision of these Rules, and that such contravention or attempted contravention would render him/her disqualified for election, the Commission may, in that regard, direct an immediate inquiry.

(2) If, upon the report of the inquiry conducted under sub-rule (1), the Commission is satisfied that any contesting candidate, or his/her election agent, or any person, organisation, or institution acting directly or indirectly on his/her instructions or on his/her behalf, has contravened, or attempted to contravene, any provision of these Rules, and that such contravention or attempted contravention would render the said contesting candidate disqualified for election, then the Commission may, by written order, cancel forthwith the candidacy of the said contesting candidate.

(3) Any order made under sub-rule (2) shall be duly notified by the Commission to the contesting candidate concerned or his/her election agent, and to the Returning Officer concerned.

(4) Arrangements for publication in the official Gazette of an order made under sub-rule (2) shall be made by the Commission.

33. Repeal—

The Zila Parishad (Election Conduct) Rules, 2016 are hereby repealed.

(2) Notwithstanding the repeal under sub-rule (1)—

(a) any action taken or measure adopted under the said Rules shall be deemed to have been taken or adopted under these Rules; and

(b) if any case or proceeding is pending, it shall be disposed of as if the said Rules had not been repealed.