

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. 327-Law/2026.—In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (b) of sub-section (1) of section 120, read with section 21, of the Local Government (Pourashava) Act, 2009 (Act No. 58 of 2009), the Election Commission hereby makes the following rules, namely:—

1. Short Title and Commencement.—

(1) These rules may be called the **Pourashava (Election Conduct) Rules, 2026**.

(2) It shall come into force immediately.

2. Definitions.—Unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context, in these rules,—

(1) **"Very Important Person" (VIP)** means the Prime Minister, Speaker of the National Parliament, Deputy Speaker, Minister of the Government, Chief Whip, Leader of the Opposition, Deputy Leader of Parliament, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Minister of State, Whip, Deputy Minister, or any person holding equivalent status, Member of Parliament, Mayor of a City Corporation, or person/Administrator in charge of a Mayor;

(2) **"Act"** means the Local Government (Pourashava) Act, 2009 (Act No. 58 of 2009);

(3) **"Commission"** means the Election Commission established under Article 118 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh;

(4) **"Public Relations"** means contacting, meeting, or introducing oneself to the voters of the relevant electoral area by a candidate for the purpose of the Pourashava election;

(5) **"Wall"** means the outer and inner walls or fences of residences, offices, courts, educational institutions, business centers, industrial factories, shops, or any other structures, whether temporary (kacha) or permanent (pukka), or their boundary walls/fences, and shall also include trees, electricity and telephone poles, traffic islands, road dividers, bridges, culverts, road surfaces, and house roofs;

(6) **"Election"** means an election or by-election to the post of Mayor or Councillor of any Pourashava;

(7) **"Electoral Area"** means the area designated for the election of a Pourashava;

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(8) **"Pre-election Period"** means the period from the date of the announcement of the election schedule to the date of publication of the election results in the official Gazette;

(9) **"Poster"** means any publicity material prepared using paper, cloth, jute, rexine, or non-biodegradable substances harmful to the environment;

(10) **"Pourashava"** means any Pourashava constituted under the Act;

(11) **"Contesting Candidate"** means a candidate validly nominated for election as Mayor, General Ward Councillor, or Reserved Ward Councillor, and who has not withdrawn their candidature;

(12) **"Candidate"** means any person who has submitted a nomination paper for election to the post of Mayor, General Ward Councillor, or Reserved Ward Councillor;

(13) **"Festoon"** means a festoon made of cloth or jute;

(14) **"Banner"** means publicity materials prepared with cloth, jute, or through electronic or digital media for publicity or similar purposes;

(15) **"Affixing Banner and Festoon"** means hanging or suspending any banner or festoon for publicity or similar purposes;

(16) **"Voter Slip"** means an information sheet mentioning the candidate's name, photo, post name, and symbol, which contains the serial number of the voter according to the voters' list and information regarding the polling station;

(17) **"Mobile Financial Services (MFS) Transaction"** means financial transactions through bKash, Nagad, Upay, Rocket, etc.;

(18) **"Vehicle"** means any motorized or non-motorized vehicle carrying passengers or goods by water, land, or air, with or without wheels;

(19) **"Political Party"** means a Registered Political Party as defined in Clause (xix) of Article 2 of the Representation of the People Order, 1972 (P.O. No. 155 of 1972); and

(20) **"Statutory Public Authority"** means a statutory public 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 provisions of the Act and these rules, any candidate or contesting candidate, or any other person on their behalf, shall have equal rights in election campaigning.

4. Prohibition of Subscriptions, Donations, etc., to Institutions.—No candidate or contesting candidate, or any political party, person, organization, or institution on their

behalf, shall publicly or privately pay or promise to pay any subscription or donation to any institution located in the relevant Pourashava area during the pre-election period.

5. Campaign Period.—No candidate, nor any party, person, organization, or institution on their behalf, shall begin any election campaign prior to the allocation of symbols.

6. Election Campaigning via Digital or Social Media.—Subject to compliance with existing laws, the Local Government (Pourashava) Election Rules, 2010, and these rules, a candidate, their election agent, or any other person may conduct election campaigns using digital or social media, provided that:

(a) No candidate, election agent, or other person shall campaign without submitting the relevant social media platform name, account ID, email ID, and other identifying information to the Returning Officer prior to commencing campaign activities;

(b) Artificial Intelligence (AI) shall not be used for malicious/dishonest purposes regarding campaign or election-related matters;

(c) Harmful content, including hate speech, misinformation, distorted faces, or fabricated election information, shall not be created or circulated;

(d) Hate speech, personal or group attacks, or provocative language targeting any community based on race, religion, caste, ethnicity, or gender shall not be used;

(e) No activity exploiting religious or ethnic sentiments to gain electoral advantages shall be performed; and

(f) No candidate or person on their behalf shall create, publish, promote, or share false, misleading, biased, malicious, obscene, vulgar, or defamatory content (generally, edited, or AI-generated) on social media or other platforms to mislead voters, character-assassinate, or damage the reputation of any candidate or person.

7. Restrictions on Using Circuit Houses, Dak Bungalows, State Media, etc.—

(1) During the pre-election period, no contesting candidate shall:

(a) Stay at a government Circuit House, Dak Bungalow, or Rest House;

(b) Use any government Circuit House, Dak Bungalow, Rest House, government office, or office of a statutory public authority as a campaign site for or against anyone; and

(c) Use state-owned broadcasting media, such as Bangladesh Television, Bangladesh Betar, etc., for campaign activities for or against any candidate.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in any other rules or policies, officials involved in election management shall get priority in using government Dak Bungalows, Rest Houses, and Circuit Houses.

8. Restrictions on Meetings and Gatherings.—

(1) No candidate, political party, person, organization, or institution on their behalf shall:

(a) Hold any public rally or procession other than public relations, street rallies (pathasabha), and indoor meetings;

(b) Disrupt, obstruct, or intimidate an opponent's street rally, indoor meeting, or other campaign activities;

(c) Conduct campaign work without written permission; permission for the date, time, and venue of street rallies/indoor meetings shall be granted based on the chronological order of application submission to the proper authority;

(d) Conduct a street rally or indoor meeting without informing the local police authority about the venue and time at least 24 (twenty-four) hours prior to the proposed meeting so necessary police arrangements can be made to maintain law and order; and

(e) Hold street rallies in a manner that obstructs public movement, nor shall any person on their behalf hold such public rallies, street meetings, etc.

(2) Organizers shall seek police assistance to act against persons obstructing or causing disruptions at street rallies and shall not take action themselves.

9. Restrictions on Posters, Leaflets, Handbills, Festoons, and Banners.—No candidate or person on their behalf shall, in the relevant electoral area:

(a) Use any type of poster;

(b) Use non-biodegradable materials (such as rexine, polythene, plastic, or any environmentally harmful components) to make campaign leaflets, handbills, festoons, banners, or symbols;

(c) Paste or affix with adhesive any leaflets, handbills, or festoons on buildings, walls, trees, fences, power and telephone poles, structures of government/local authorities, or vehicles (buses, trucks, trains, steamers, launches, rickshaws, auto-rickshaws, legunas, taxis, baby taxis, etc.);

(d) Hang their festoons, banners, symbols, or billboards over those of another contesting candidate, nor cause damage, distortion, or destruction to them;

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(e) Except for electronic and digital media, banners, leaflets, handbills, and festoons used in campaign activities must be in black-and-white. Banners (vertical or horizontal) shall not exceed 10 ft × 4 ft, leaflets/handbills shall not exceed A4 size (8.27 in × 11.69 in), and festoons shall not exceed 18 in × 24 in. No photo or symbol other than the candidate's photo and symbol shall be printed on them;

(f) Have an election symbol whose length, width, or height exceeds 6 (six) feet;

(g) Use any banner, leaflet, handbill, or festoon without the printer's name, address, and date of printing; and

(h) Use polythene covers or plastic (PVC) banners on banners, leaflets, handbills, and festoons.

10. Restrictions on Voter Slips.—No contesting candidate or person/organization on their behalf shall:

(a) Distribute voter slips within 400 (four hundred) yards of any polling station;

(b) Issue voter slips larger than 5 (five) inches × 3 (three) inches; and

(c) Print voter slips without specifying the printing press's name, address, quantity, and printing date.

11. Restriction on Live Animals as Symbols.—Live animals cannot be used as symbols in election campaigns.

12. Restriction on Processions or Showdowns.—

(1) No procession or showdown shall be held while collecting and submitting nomination papers; a candidate may not be accompanied by more than 5 (five) supporters during collection and submission.

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

13. Restrictions on Election Camps or Offices.—

(1) A Mayor candidate may establish no more than 1 election camp/office per 20,000 voters, up to a maximum limit of 5 (five) camps/offices.

(2) A candidate for Reserved Ward Councillor may establish no more than 1 (one) election camp/office in each general ward.

(3) A candidate for General Ward Councillor may establish no more than 1 (one) election camp/office.

(4) No television, VCR, VCD, DVD, LED display, projector, etc., may be used in camps or offices.

14. Restrictions on Vehicles.—No candidate, political party, person, organization, or institution on their behalf shall:

(a) Take out processions or torchlight processions, or conduct showdowns using trucks, buses, motorcycles, watercraft, trains, or other motorized vehicles;

(b) Use helicopters or other aircraft for election campaigning;

(c) Use motorcycles or other vehicles within the designated premises of a polling station; and

(d) In an effort to make the election festive, conduct campaigns using a caravan or mobile vehicle decorated with digital technology or general perishable materials from 12:00 PM (noon) until sunset, provided that such campaigning does not obstruct traffic or cause public suffering.

15. Restrictions on Vehicles on Election Day.—On behalf of a contesting candidate:

(a) No vehicle of any kind may be hired or used to transport voters to or from any polling station;

(b) No unauthorized person, except those permitted by the Commission to maintain law and order, shall drive any vehicle within the designated premises of a polling station; and

(c) Persons with disabilities or physical infirmities may use a vehicle subject to prior permission from the Commission or Returning Officer.

16. Restrictions on Wall Writings.—No candidate, political party, person, or organization on their behalf shall conduct campaign writing, printing, stenciling, or drawing on walls or vehicles using ink, lime, or chemicals of any color.

17. Restrictions on Gates, Arches, Enclosures, Pandals, Camps, and Illumination.—No candidate, political party, person, or organization on their behalf shall:

(a) Construct gates, arches, or enclosures for campaigning, or create blockades on public thoroughfares;

(b) Construct any pandal or camp covering an area exceeding 350 (three hundred fifty) square feet for election campaigning;

(c) Use electrical illumination as part of election campaigning; and

(d) Set up election camps or offices on roads or public spaces designated for general movement/use.

18. Restrictions on Promotional Wear, Food Service, and Gifts.—No candidate, political party, person, organization, or institution on their behalf shall:

(a) Wear shirts, jackets, vests (fotua), etc., containing the picture/promotional statements of a contesting candidate or symbols/pictures of anyone else for campaigning;

(b) Serve any food or beverage to voters at election camps; and

(c) Provide any gifts, tips, or gratuities to voters.

19. Provocative Statements, Unruly Conduct, and Campaigning at Religious Places.—No candidate, person, organization, or institution on their behalf shall:

(a) Make personal slander, obscene, offensive, character-assassinating, bitter, provocative, defamatory, or religiously/community/gender-sensitive offensive statements during campaigns;

(b) Conduct election campaigns inside mosques, temples, pagodas, churches, religious places, government offices, or educational institutions; provided that educational institution grounds may be used with authority approval without disrupting academic activities;

(c) Damage real/personal property of any citizen or breach peace through unwanted chaos/unruly behavior;

(d) Use force or money to influence voters for or against any candidate; and

(e) Collect national ID (NID) numbers or mobile numbers for Mobile Financial Services (MFS) transactions from voters or family members to influence them for or against a candidate.

20. Restrictions on Carrying Explosives.—No person, except those authorized by the Commission, shall carry explosives defined in section 4(1) of the Explosives Act, 1884, section 2 of the Explosives Substances Act, 1908, or arms and ammunition defined in section 4 of the Arms Act, 1878, within the boundaries of a polling station.

21. Restrictions on Sound Amplifiers/Microphones.—

(1) No candidate, person, or organization shall use more than 1 (one) microphone/sound amplifier simultaneously in a ward for street rallies or campaigns.

(2) Microphones/sound amplifiers shall not be used before 12:00 PM (noon) or after sunset.

(3) Sound levels from campaign microphones/amplifiers shall not exceed 60 (sixty) decibels.

22. Restrictions on VIPs, Government Officials, and Government Facilities.—

(a) VIPs and officials/employees of government/statutory bodies shall not participate in election campaigns or election activities in electoral areas during the pre-election period;

(b) VIPs shall not campaign directly or indirectly for or against any candidate, nor stay in places/times deemed by the Commission as capable of influencing elections;

(c) VIPs/officials shall not use government vehicles, official machinery, or government facilities for campaigning for themselves or others, nor employ public/autonomous body staff for this purpose;

(d) No candidate or person shall use government machinery, government employees, or government facilities in the electoral area, district, or elsewhere for election work;

(e) No candidate or person shall engage persons involved in conducting elections (including public officials) in any campaign activities; and

(f) No local government Chairpersons, Mayors, Administrators, or persons in charge of local government councils (except if they are candidates themselves) shall participate in campaign activities.

23. Restrictions on Controlling Government Development Programs during Pre-election Period.—No contesting candidate shall exercise control over or attend meetings related to government development projects in their electoral area during the pre-election period.

24. Restrictions on Governing Bodies of Educational Institutions.—If a contesting candidate was previously elected or nominated as President or Member of an educational institution's governing body, they shall not preside over, attend meetings of, or involve themselves with the affairs of that institution during the pre-election period.

25. Restrictions on Project Approvals, Unveiling Plaques, etc.—

(1) No project under revenue or development funds in government, semi-government, or autonomous institutions shall be approved, announced, laid foundation for, or unveiled during the pre-election period.

(2) No government-benefited VIP shall announce, allocate, or release grants/funds to any individual, group, or institution from government, semi-government, or autonomous funds during the pre-election period.

(3) No Pourashava Mayor, Councillor, or office bearer shall approve new development projects or release/disburse funds for previously approved projects in the Pourashava area during the pre-election period.

26. Conditions for Using Billboards.—For election campaigning:

(a) The advertisement portion of a billboard shall not exceed 16 ft × 9 ft;

(b) A candidate shall not use more than 1 (one) billboard per ward; and

(c) Billboards shall not be installed in a manner that obstructs public/vehicular movement, damages the environment, or compromises public safety.

27. Election Expenditure Limits.—

(1) No contesting candidate shall exceed the prescribed limit for election expenditure.

(2) Expenses incurred for election campaigns on social media shall be included in the candidate's total election expenditure limit.

28. Prohibition of Obstruction during Nomination Submission and Withdrawal.—

(1) No person, organization, or political party shall obstruct a candidate or someone on their behalf from submitting nomination papers to the Returning Officer or Assistant Returning Officer.

(2) No person, organization, or political party shall obstruct a candidate from withdrawing their candidacy before the Returning Officer or Assistant Returning Officer.

29. Access to Polling Stations.—

(1) Only election officials/staff, contesting candidates, election agents, polling agents, election observers, Commission-authorized individuals, and voters shall have access to polling stations.

(2) Workers of contesting candidates shall not enter or loiter inside polling stations except for the purpose of casting their vote.

(3) Polling agents shall perform assigned duties seated in designated areas.

(4) Polling agents or voters shall not enter polling stations wearing shirts, jackets, vests, caps, badges, or items containing campaign statements or candidate symbols.

30. Keeping Elections Free from Influence.—No contesting candidate or person on their behalf shall influence the election using money, weapons, muscle power, or local clout.

31. Penalties for Violation.—Violation of any provision of these rules during the pre-election period by any candidate or person on their behalf shall be punishable by imprisonment for up to 6 (six) months, a fine of up to BDT 50,000 (fifty thousand Taka), or both.

32. Cancellation of Candidature by the Commission.—

(1) Notwithstanding anything contained in other provisions, if it appears to the Commission from records or written reports that a candidate or their election agent has violated or attempted to violate these rules, rendering them ineligible, the Commission may order an immediate investigation.

(2) Upon receiving the investigation report, if the Commission is satisfied that the candidate, election agent, or another person/organization with their direct/indirect consent violated or attempted to violate these rules, the Commission may, by written order, immediately cancel the candidature of said contesting candidate.

(3) The Commission shall inform the candidate, their election agent, and the Returning Officer of any order under sub-rule (2) as soon as possible.

(4) Orders under sub-rule (2) shall be published by the Commission in the official Gazette.

33. Repeal and Savings.—

(1) The Pourashava (Election Conduct) Rules, 2015, are hereby repealed.

(2) Notwithstanding such repeal:

(a) Any action taken or measure adopted under the repealed rules shall be deemed to have been taken or adopted under these rules; and

(b) Any pending lawsuits or legal proceedings shall be disposed of as if the previous rules had not been repealed.