

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. 328-Law/2026.— In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (3) of section 63, read with section 20, of the Upazila Parishad Act, 1998 (Act No. 24 of 1998), the Election Commission hereby makes the following Rules, namely:—

1. Short title and commencement

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

2. Definitions

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

- (1) “Very important person” includes the Prime Minister, Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad, Chief Justice, Ministers, Chief Whip, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, State Ministers, Deputy Ministers, persons holding equivalent status, Members of Parliament, Mayors of City Corporations and other persons enjoying similar state privileges;
- (2) “Act” means the Upazila Parishad Act, 1998 (Act No. 24 of 1998);
- (3) “Upazila Parishad” constituted under the Act;
- (4) “Commission” means the Election Commission established under Article 118 of the Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh;
- (5) “Public relations” means communication, meeting or interaction by a candidate with voters of the electoral area concerned for the purpose of Upazila Parishad election;
- (6) “Wall” includes the outer and inner walls or fences and boundary walls or fences of any dwelling, office, court, educational institution, business centre, industrial establishment, shop or any other installation, whether pucca or kutchha, and also trees, electric poles, posts, road islands, road dividers, bridges, culverts, road surfaces and roofs of buildings;
- (7) “Election” means election or by-election to the office of Chairman, Vice-Chairman or female member of an Upazila;
- (8) “Electoral area” means the area determined for election of the Upazila concerned;
- (9) “Pre-election period” means the period from the date of announcement of the election schedule up to the date of publication of the election result in the official Gazette;
- (10) “Poster” means any campaign material printed on paper, cloth, rexine or environment-

Unofficial English Translation

friendly biodegradable material;

(11) “Contesting candidate” means a candidate who has been validly nominated for election as Chairman, Vice-Chairman or female member and who has not withdrawn candidature;

(12) “Candidate” means any person who has filed a nomination paper for election to the office of Chairman, Vice-Chairman or female member of any Upazila;

(13) “Festoon” means a festoon made of paper or cloth;

(14) “Banner” means campaign material prepared on paper or cloth, or displayed through electronic or digital media, for publicity or similar purposes;

(15) “Hanging of banner and festoon” means hanging or putting up any banner or festoon for publicity or similar purposes;

(16) “Voter slip” means a slip containing the voter’s name, photograph, ward name, serial number in the voter list and polling-centre information;

(17) “Mobile Financial Services (MFS) Transaction” means financial transactions conducted via bKash, Nagad, Upay, Rocket, or similar platforms;

(18) “Vehicle” means any vehicle plying on land, water or air, including motorised and non-motorised vehicles, passenger or goods vehicles, and mechanically powered vehicles;

(19) “Political party” means a Registered Political Party as defined in Article 2, clause (xix), of the Representation of the People Order, 1972 (P.O. No. 155 of 1972);

(20) “Statutory Government Authority” means a statutory government authority referred to in Article 152(1) of the Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.

3. Equal rights in election campaign

Subject to the Act and these Rules, contesting candidates and persons acting on their behalf shall have equal rights in election campaigning.

4. Prohibition on donations

No candidate, contesting candidate, political party, or any person, organisation or institution on their behalf shall, during the pre-election period, publicly or privately give, promise to give, announce or pledge any donation, grant or contribution to any institution situated in the electoral area concerned.

5. Campaign timing restriction

No election campaign of any kind shall be started before allotment of election symbols.

6. Election campaign through digital or social media

Subject to existing laws, the Upazila Parishad Election Rules, 2013, and these Rules, a candidate, election agent or any other person may conduct election campaigns through digital or social

media; provided that—

- (a) before starting such campaign, the candidate, election agent, other person or candidate-related social-media operator shall submit to the Returning Officer the name of the social-media platform, account ID, e-mail ID and other identifying information;
- (b) artificial intelligence (AI) shall not be used with dishonest intent in election-related matters including campaign activities;
- (c) no harmful content may be created or circulated, including rumour, false information, distortion of a person's face, or fabricated election-related information;
- (d) no hateful, personal or collective attack, or provocative language may be used targeting any group on the basis of caste, religion, community, colour, sex or gender;
- (e) no activity may be undertaken that misuses religious or ethnic sentiment for electoral gain;
- (f) no person may create, publish, circulate or share any false, misleading, defamatory, malicious, indecent, offensive or psychologically harmful content—whether by ordinary editing or by artificial intelligence—intended to mislead voters or damage the character or reputation of any candidate or person.

7. Restrictions on government rest houses

During the pre-election period, no contesting candidate shall—

- (a) stay in 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 venue, directly or indirectly;
- (c) claim any special privilege over government dak bungalows, rest houses or circuit houses for election purposes, except as permitted by relevant rules or policy and subject to the needs of election officials.

8. Meetings and rallies restrictions

(1) No candidate or any political party, person, organisation or institution on behalf of a candidate shall—

- (a) hold meetings in mosques, temples, churches or other places of worship;
- (b) obstruct another candidate's meeting or campaign by procession, counter-meeting, campaign van, slogan, or similar activity;
- (c) conduct campaign work at a meeting without necessary permission of the competent authority regarding the date, time and place;
- (d) inform local police at least 24 hours before the proposed meeting so that order and security arrangements may be made;
- (e) obstruct public movement or inconvenience the public through meetings;
- (f) fail to seek police assistance where organisers apprehend disorder or threat to a meeting.

(2) Organisers shall comply with lawful directions of the police or competent authority relating to order, security and public movement.

9. Restrictions on posters and banners

No candidate or person on behalf of a candidate shall, in election campaign in the electoral area concerned—

- (a) use any kind of poster;
- (b) use non-degradable or environmentally harmful material, including rexine, polythene, plastic, plastic-coated material, laminated material, or similar material, for leaflets, handbills, festoons or banners;
- (c) paste, hang or affix any leaflet, handbill, festoon or banner on any building, wall, tree, fence, electric or telephone pole, government or local-authority installation, or on buses, trucks, trains, steamers, launches, rickshaws, auto-rickshaws, legunas, taxis, baby-taxis or any other vehicle;
- (d) hang any candidate's festoon, banner or billboard over another contesting candidate's festoon, banner or billboard, or damage, deface or distort those materials;
- (e) Except for electronic and digital media, campaign banners, leaflets, handbills, and festoons must be black-and-white. Banners shall not exceed 10 ft × 4 ft (Vertical/Horizontal); Leaflets or handbills shall not exceed A4 size (8.27 in × 11.69 in); Festoons shall not exceed 18 in × 24 in. No photographs or symbols other than the candidate's own photograph and allotted symbol may be printed;
- (f) display any photograph or symbol other than the candidate's own photograph and election symbol on banners, leaflets, handbills or festoons;
- (g) use an election symbol with length, width or height exceeding 6 feet;
- (h) use any banner, leaflet, handbill or festoon without the name, address and printing date of the printing establishment;
- (i) use polythene covering or plastic/PVC banners for banners, leaflets, handbills or festoons.

10. Restriction on use of voter slips

No contesting candidate, or any person, organisation or institution on behalf of a candidate, shall—

- (a) distribute voter slips within 400 yards of any polling centre;
- (b) use voter slips larger than 5 inches × 3 inches;
- (c) print voter slips without the name, address, number and date of the printing establishment.

11. Prohibition on use of live animals as symbols

Live animals shall not be used as election symbols in election campaigns.

12. Prohibition on processions and showdowns

- (1) At the time of collection and submission of nomination papers, no procession or showdown shall be made and a candidate shall not be accompanied by more than five supporters.
- (2) No procession or showdown of any kind shall be made during the pre-election period.

13. Prohibition on establishing election camps or offices in excess

- (1) In an election, a contesting candidate shall not set up more than one election camp or office in each union, not more than one in each ward of a municipality area, and not more than one central camp or office in an Upazila.
- (2) Each election camp or office at union or municipal ward level shall not exceed 6 hundred square feet, and the central election camp or office shall not exceed 12 hundred square feet.
- (3) No election camp or office may be set up on any road or in any place designated for public movement or common use.
- (4) No television, VCR/VCD/DVD or similar device may be used in an election camp or office.

14. Prohibition on use of vehicles

No candidate, political party, person, organisation or institution on behalf of a candidate shall—

- (a) hold processions or showdowns using trucks, buses, motorcycles, boats, trains or other mechanised vehicles or aircraft, and shall not conduct motorcycle processions;
 - (b) use helicopters or other air transport for election campaign;
 - (c) use motorcycles or other vehicles within the premises of polling centres except as permitted by competent authority;
 - (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
- Provided that during such campaigning, no traffic obstruction or public harassment shall be caused.

15. Restriction on use of vehicles on election day

- (1) No vehicle may be hired or used on behalf of any contesting candidate to bring voters to or take voters from polling centres.
- (2) Except for persons authorised by the Commission for maintaining peace and order, no unauthorised person may use any vehicle within the restricted area around polling centres.
- (3) Persons with disabilities or infirmities may use vehicles subject to prior permission from the Commission or Returning Officer.

16. Prohibition on wall writing

No candidate, political party, person, organisation or institution may conduct election campaign by writing, painting, engraving, printing, affixing or otherwise displaying any writing, symbol, mark or picture on any wall, vehicle or other surface.

17. Prohibition on gates/arches/fences, camp installation, and illumination

No candidate or any political party, person, organisation or institution on behalf of a candidate shall—

- (a) construct any gate, arch or enclosure for election campaign or create any obstruction on roads or movement routes;
- (b) construct any pandal or camp occupying more than 350 square feet for campaign purposes;
- (c) make any illumination or lighting arrangement with electricity as part of election campaign;
- (d) establish an election camp or office on any road or any place reserved for public movement and common use.

18. Prohibition on speeches, food distribution, and gift

No candidate or any political party, person, organisation or institution on behalf of a candidate shall—

- (a) use the photograph of any rival candidate, or any image, portrait, chart, jacket, badge or similar promotional item identifying rival candidates for campaign purposes;
- (b) distribute food or drink to voters at any election camp;
- (c) provide entertainment, gifts or similar inducements to voters.

19. Provocative or offensive statements, religious incitement and misuse of religion

No candidate, or person, organization, or institution on their behalf—

- (a) Shall make statements defaming personal character, indecent or offensive speeches, or any bitter, provocative, defamatory, gender-insensitive speeches, or speeches hurting communal or religious sentiments during campaigning;
- (b) Shall conduct any election campaigning in mosques, temples, pagodas, churches, or any other religious places of worship, or in government offices or educational institutions:
Provided that school grounds may be used with permission from authorities without disrupting academic activities;
- (c) Shall damage land, buildings, or any movable or immovable property of any citizen, or disturb public peace through unwanted chaos or disorderly conduct on account of the election;
- (d) Shall use force or spend money to influence voters for or against any contesting candidate; and

(e) Shall collect personal National ID (NID) numbers of voters or their family members, or mobile numbers for Mobile Financial Services (MFS) transactions with the intent of influencing voters for or against any candidate.

20. Prohibition on use of microphones

Except for persons authorised by the Commission, no person shall carry, within the prescribed polling-centre area, any explosive as defined in the Explosives Act, 1884, any explosive substance as defined in the Explosive Substances Act, 1908, or any arms or ammunition as defined in the Arms Act, 1878.

21. Prohibition on use of Microphones and sound-amplifying devices

(1) No candidate or any political party, person, organisation or institution on behalf of a candidate may use more than one microphone or sound-amplifying device in any union or municipality for meetings or election campaign.

(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. Very important persons, public officials and government facilities

(a) Very Important Persons (VIPs) and officers/employees of government/statutory institutions shall not participate in election campaigning or election activities in the electoral area during the pre-election period;

(b) They shall not combine any election program or activity with their official government programs;

(c) VIPs shall not directly or indirectly campaign for or against any candidate and shall not stay in locations or at times that, in the opinion of the Commission, may influence the election;

(d) They shall not use government vehicles, state publicity equipment, or enjoy other government facilities for campaigning on behalf of themselves or others, nor utilize officers/employees of government, semi-government, or autonomous bodies for this purpose;

(e) No candidate or person on their behalf shall use government publicity machinery, government employees, or enjoy government facilities for election work in the electoral area, district, or any other place;

(f) No candidate or person on their behalf shall utilize government officials/employees or persons associated with organizing the election in any activity; and

(g) Except for a candidate, no Chairman, Mayor, Administrator, or Person-in- Charge of any local government council shall participate in election campaigning.

23. Government development activities during pre-election period

No contesting candidate shall direct, preside over, inaugurate, lay foundations for, announce or participate in any government development programme in the electoral area during the pre-election period.

24. Participation in management of educational institutions

If a contesting candidate has earlier been elected or nominated as president or member of the managing committee/governing body of any educational institution, the candidate shall not preside over, participate in, or be involved in any meeting or work of that institution during the pre-election period.

25. Grants, approvals and foundation laying during pre-election period

(1) During the pre-election period, no government, semi-government or autonomous institution shall approve, announce, declare, lay foundations for, or inaugurate any project, grant or development allocation involving state or development funds in the electoral area concerned.

(2) No very important person shall, through any government, semi-government or autonomous institution, announce or provide any grant, promise, allocation or financial assistance to any person, group or institution during the pre-election period.

(3) During the pre-election period, the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, female member or any office-holder of an Upazila Parishad shall not allocate, distribute, release or provide any money from Upazila Parishad funds or from any approved or proposed development project in a manner that may influence the election.

26. Restrictions applicable to certain sitting office-holders

Notwithstanding anything contained in rule 22, if any person is holding the office of Upazila Parishad Chairman, Vice-Chairman or female member and becomes a candidate for any of those offices, then from the date of submission of nomination paper until the date of polling—

(a) the candidate shall not use the office or vehicle of the Upazila Parishad in election campaign or election activities;

(b) the candidate shall not participate in any programme or ceremony of the Upazila Parishad, any Union Parishad or Municipality under the Upazila; and

(c) the candidate shall not participate in any programme of any educational institution, government, semi-government, autonomous organisation, body or NGO situated in the Upazila concerned.

27. Conditions for use of billboards

For election publicity—

- (a) the publicity area of a billboard shall not exceed 16 feet × 9 feet;
- (b) not more than one billboard may be used per union or per ward of a municipality area; in the whole electoral area not more than 20 billboards may be used;
- (c) billboards shall not be installed in a manner that creates obstruction to roads, vehicles or pedestrians, or causes environmental harm or danger.

28. Election expenditure

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

29. Obstruction in collection and submission of nomination papers

- (1) No candidate or person shall create obstruction to another candidate or person in collecting nomination papers from, or submitting nomination papers to, the Returning Officer or Assistant Returning Officer.
- (2) No obstruction shall be created at the time of withdrawal of candidature.

30. Right of entry to polling centres

- (1) Voters, election officials and employees, contesting candidates, election agents, polling agents, election observers, persons authorised by the Commission and only persons entitled to vote shall have the right to enter polling centres.
- (2) No supporter of any contesting candidate may enter or loiter within the polling centre except voters who enter to cast votes.
- (3) Polling agents shall remain seated at the designated places and perform their assigned duties.
- (4) Polling agents or voters shall not enter the polling centre wearing clothing, cap, badge, scarf, bag or any item bearing campaign statements, candidate names, election symbols or similar markings.

31. Maintaining election environment

A contesting candidate or any person on behalf of a candidate shall not influence the election process through money, arms, muscle power or local influence.

32. Penalty for violation of Rules

Any candidate or individual violating these rules during the pre-election period shall be punishable by imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 (six) months, or a fine not exceeding BDT 50,000 (Fifty Thousand Taka), or both.

33. Powers of the Commission

- (1) If the Commission is satisfied, on the basis of a record, written report or other evidence, that a contesting candidate or the candidate's election agent has violated or attempted to violate any provision of these Rules, and that cancellation of candidature is necessary to prevent corruption or misconduct, the Commission may issue a show-cause notice to the candidate.
- (2) After considering the reply, if the Commission is satisfied that the candidate, election agent, or any person acting on behalf of the candidate has violated or attempted to violate these Rules, the Commission may, by written order, cancel the candidature of the contesting candidate.
- (3) Any order passed under sub-rule (2) shall be promptly communicated to the concerned contesting candidate, election agent and Returning Officer.
- (4) The Commission shall arrange publication of such order in the official Gazette.

34. Repeal and savings

- (1) The Upazila Parishad (Election Conduct) Rules, 2016 are hereby repealed.
- (2) Notwithstanding such repeal, anything done or any action taken under the repealed Rules shall be deemed to have been done or taken under the corresponding provisions of these Rules.
- (3) Any case or proceeding pending under the repealed Rules shall continue as if those Rules had not been repealed.