

Ministers, MPs cannot influence upazila parishad polls: CEC

May 7, 2024

Online Desk: Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal said on Tuesday said that ministers and member of parliament (MPs) cannot influence the upazila parishad elections.

Election Commission (EC) will monitor centrally whether they (minister, MPs) are trying to control the polls or not, the CEC said a press briefing held at Nirbachan Bhaban in the capital on the EC's preparation to hold the first phase of sixth upazila parishad election.

If their interference is detected by the EC, stern action will be taken immediately, he added.

When asked about the participation of the relatives of ministers, MPs in the polls, CEC Awal said, "The EC is not in trouble in this regard. Rather the political will is evident here."

The CEC said they have succeeded to prevent ministers, MPs from influencing the elections. "Few of them (ministers, MPs) are still staying in their constituencies. The EC asked them not to interfere in the elections."

Replying to a query over non-participation of political parties in the upazila parishad elections, Habibul Awal said, "This year's election is not being held with party symbol. The Election Commission does not see who belongs to which party, who is the candidate of which party. The Election Commission sees the candidates. It is not the responsibility of the Election Commission to see who came to the election and who did not."

On an average, four candidates are participating in each upazila in this election and so the election is being held in a competitive manner, he said.

When asked whether he sees any difference between January 7 election and tomorrow's upazila parishad election, CEC Awal said January 7 was parliament election and it is local body polls further adding that upazila parishad election is more competitive than parliamentary polls.

Elections will be held in 140 out of 495 upazilas in the first phase on Wednesday (May 8), with

Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) will be used in 22 upazilas.

Voting will start at 8am and continue till 4pm.

