

Polls schedule in 1st half of December : EC Sanaullah

August 7, 2025

Online Desk : The schedule for the 13th parliamentary elections will be announced in the first half of December 2024, Election Commissioner Brigadier General (Retd) Abul Fazal Md Sanaullah has said. Speaking to reporters after the 9th Commission Meeting of the Election Commission, held under the chairmanship of the Chief Election Commissioner at the Election Commission Secretariat in Agargaon on Thursday evening, EC Sanaullah confirmed that preparations are on track. The meeting began at 11:00 am and lasted until 7:00 pm. “The election schedule will be announced in early December,” Sanaullah said. “Accordingly, plans are in place to complete the voting process before February.”

The Commission discussed several key issues related to the upcoming elections, including the code of conduct for political parties and candidates, proposed amendments to the Representation of the People Order (RPO), voting procedures for expatriate Bangladeshis, and the potential use of technology in election management. On the use of drones during election operations, Sanaullah stated clearly: “No one, including the media, will be permitted to operate drones during the elections. The Commission does not see a need for their use at this stage.”

Regarding CCTV surveillance, he noted: “No final decision has been taken yet, but the Commission is open to and interested in exploring its use to enhance transparency and security.” On overseas voting, the EC confirmed that postal ballots will be used to collect votes from expatriate Bangladeshis in the upcoming polls. “This time, expatriate voting will be conducted entirely through postal ballots,” he said. “Ballot papers will be sent to registered overseas voters at least three weeks before polling day. The Bangladesh Post Office will handle the distribution and collection, in close coordination with the Election Commission.”

However, he acknowledged that the postal voting system is costly. “It is estimated that Tk 6 to 7 crore will be required for every 1,00,000 expatriate voters. A formal budget proposal will be submitted to the government for approval.” Sanaullah also clarified that only those who are registered as voters by October 31, 2025 will be eligible to vote in the next parliamentary elections. He added that the draft electoral code of conduct for political parties and candidates has been finalised. “This code includes specific guidelines on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to prevent misinformation and ensure fair campaigning.” Voter education campaigns targeting the expatriate community will begin in September, he said, to raise awareness about the postal voting process. Meanwhile, the process of amending the Representation of the People Order is still underway and will be finalised in due course, the Election Commissioner added.