

EC to begin political dialogues this week

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Online Desk : Moving into the election mode, the Election Commission will start a series of dialogues with registered political parties this week to lay the groundwork for the upcoming national election scheduled for February, reports UNB. But the political parties would be invited in groups to join the discussions due to time constraints before the election schedule to be announced in early December, according to EC officials. They said the dialogues, considered the Commission's last major task before the election schedule, will take around two weeks to complete ahead of the 13th parliamentary election.

"The dialogues with political parties will begin next week. It will have to invite them in groups due to time constraints (before the announcement of election schedule)," said EC Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed on Thursday (6th November 2025). Replying to a question, he told UNB that it will not be possible to complete the dialogues within a week rather it would take two weeks. As part of preparations for the dialogues with political parties, the Commission has already made changes to the electoral code of conduct in line with an ordinance promulgated on November 3, bringing further amendment to the Representation of the People Order, 1972.

The Code of Conduct for Political Parties and Candidates in Parliamentary Elections Rules 2025 will soon be published in the official gazette, with the code expected to be one of the key discussion issues during the dialogues. "We have sent the code of conduct (to publish it in the official gazette). So, the dialogue will be opened next week," said the EC Secretary. The Election Commission traditionally holds talks with registered political parties before each national election. Each party was usually invited to join the dialogue separately.

However, this time it is still uncertain whether the Jatiya Party and some other registered parties, known as the allies of Sheikh Hasina's regime toppled through the 2014 mass uprising, will be invited to the talks. Currently, there are 53 registered political parties, excluding the Awami League, whose registration remains suspended. Besides, the EC on Tuesday last published notifications seeking objections, if any, against the registration to three new political parties –National Citizen Party (NCP), Bangladesh Aam Janagan Party and Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (Marxist). The Commission will finally recognise them as the registered parties after November 12.

In late September 2025, the Commission opened a series of electoral dialogues with different stakeholders amid talks with civil society representatives on September 28. Then the EC sat in another discussion with the representatives of teachers on the same day. On October 06, the Commission held two separate dialogues with senior journalists from different media outlets. Besides, the EC held dialogues with election experts and election observers in October last. In a bid to conduct the next election in free, participatory and fair manners, the EC sat in a views-exchange with different law enforcement agencies and intelligences on October 20 and with top government officials, including secretaries of key ministries, directors general of important agencies on October 30 last.

According to the electoral roadmap unveiled in August 2025, dialogues with stakeholders, including political parties, civil society members, journalists, observers, and election experts, were scheduled to begin in late September and conclude within about one and a half months. The Commission either completed or almost finished all important tasks, including amendment to the electoral laws, delimitation of constituencies, updating the voter lists, finalisation of polling stations, registration of new political parties and registration of election observers.

The EC has already amended different electoral laws including RPO; as well as revised the three separate guidelines for journalists, observers and installation of polling stations: The Commission on September 04 last finalised the delimitation of 300 constituencies, redrawing the boundaries of 46 parliamentary seats in 16

different districts across the country ahead of the 2026 February election. The EC on October 27 released the final list of 42,761 polling stations throughout the country for the upcoming national election, raising the number by around 611 from what was in the 2024 national election.

The Commission on November 02 released the draft updated electoral rolls with more than 12.76 core voters in the country, which would be the final voter lists for the 2026 February election. The electoral rolls would be finalised on November 18. The Commission on Thursday last registered 66 organisations as local election observers as well as identified 16 more firms as eligible for registration as local election observers. The final decision over the 16 organisations will be taken following settlement of objections if any to be received by November 27 next.

The EC will launch a mobile app for the expatriates and others to register first to vote through the postal ballot during the 2026 election. So, the upcoming dialogues with political parties will mark the Commission's final major engagement before announcing the election schedule next month.