

RUCSU ELECTIONS: 2,000 cops to be deployed on polling day

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At least 2,000 police personnel would be deployed on the Rajshahi University campus on September 25 during the long-awaited student union elections, said the police.

Rajshahi Metropolitan Police commissioner Mohammad Abu Sufian said on Tuesday that the force would give security to the elections of the Rajshahi University Central Students' Union, hall unions, and senate student representative.

Speaking to journalists after visiting the campus in the afternoon, he said that additional reserve forces would also be kept ready.

‘There will be three to five-tier security on election day. Each polling centre will have both inner and outer cordons, supported by several mobile teams patrolling the campus,’ Abu Sufian said.

He later sat with the university authorities to review security preparations.

The polls, to be held after a 33-year hiatus, will see 247 candidates vying for 23 RUCSU posts, including 18 for vice-president, 13 for general secretary, and 16 for assistant general secretary.

Another 597 candidates are contesting in the elections of 17 residential hall unions, each having 15 posts, while 58 candidates are in the race for five senate representative posts.

Meanwhile, Sarbajanin Shikharthi Sangsad panel on Tuesday unveiled its 12-point manifesto.

The panel’s vice-president candidate Tasin Khan, the first woman to contest the post in RUCSU’s history, read out the pledges at a press conference in front of Ismail Hossain Siraji Bhaban.

Their commitments include a mandatory 10-year academic master plan, creation of a high-capacity research and impact department with annual transparency reports, introduction of a one-tap payment system, an alumni network to support students, incorporation of RUCSU elections into the academic calendar, and creating pressure on authorities for timely vice-chancellor appointments.

Other pledges involve ensuring inclusion of engineering students in the Institute of Engineers Bangladesh, formation of a food and public health monitoring group led by students, institutional email access for all, a politically neutral and education-friendly campus with freedom of expression, establishment of an international student community forum, a student-focused transport system, and full implementation of the proposed TSCC Complex.

'We want to address the university's problems from the root. Whatever authority the constitution grants us, we will fully utilise it,' Tasin said.

She also accused rival panels of violating electoral code of conduct.

'Campaigning during class hours is prohibited, yet many are doing so with feasts, gifts and large campaign teams. As independents, we have only 19–20 members. This creates clear inequality,' she alleged.