



Seminar on OCV Setting the Scene



29 Apr '25; BEC

OCV : Setting the Scene

- Objective
- Context
- Activities
- OCV around the world
- Dispensation of BD Diaspora
- Existing provision and status of OCV for BD
- Options and major findings

Objective

Obtain input from 'stakeholders' to finetune practicable methods towards implementing OCV for Diaspora Bangladeshis

3

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Setting the Scene --Context--



Hon'ble CA's address to the Nation : 16 Dec '24



- Materialising the voting right for the diaspora
- Implementation; not mere assurance
- Reliable method/arrangement

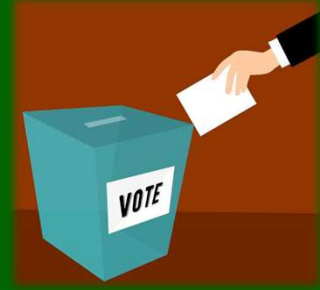
OCV : Context...

- **National commitment and obligation**
- **EC's Decision**
 - 'Devise sustainable method(s) for OCV with the objective of materialising diaspora voting in the 13th National Parliamentary Election'*
- **Study:**
 - Existing provision
 - Proposals by the 'Electoral Reform Commission'
 - Good practices, and, methods followed by countries
 - Input from BD Missions abroad
 - Feedback from and presentations by the experts
 - Deliberations

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--Activities--

Activities• **Step 1 : Sub-committee studies**▪ **Desired Attributes for Recommended Method(s):**

- Confirmed identity (of the voter)
- Confidentiality
- Security and integrity of the vote
- Security and redundancy of the system
- Evidentiality (Audit trail and/or presentable evidence)
- Practicality (Time, logistics)
- Cost-effectiveness
- Legal consistency
- Universality (easy for voters with varying level of awareness and acumen)
- Global Precedence

Activities

- **Step 1 : Sub-committee studies**
- **Step 2 : Deliberations at the committee level; shortlisting options:**
 - Practicable postal ballot
 - Online voting
 - Proxy Voting
- **Step 3 : Endorsement of the findings by the Commission**
- **Step 4 : Workshop**
- **Step 5 : Formation of an 'Advisory Team' for critical examination of options and devising architecture against proposed options**

9

Advisory Team

- | | | |
|---|---|--------|
| 1. Dr. Md. Monirul Islam, Prof, Dept of CSE, BUET | - | Leader |
| 2. Maj Gen Wahid-Uz-Zaman (Retd), Former Commandant, MIST | - | Member |
| 3. Dr Md Abdul Alim, Election Expert & Member ERC | - | Member |
| 4. Brig Gen Saleem Ahmed Khan (Retd), Former DG, NID, ECS | - | Member |
| 5. Dr Mohammed Zakaria, Former Acting Secretary, ECS | - | Member |
| 6. Faruque Ahmed, JS, Law Wing, ECS | - | Member |
| 7. Dr Md Mustafizur Rahman, Prof, Dept of CSE, DU | - | Member |
| 8. DG, Directorate of Posts | - | Member |
| 9. Administrator, BASIS | - | Member |
| 10. DG Consular and Welfare, MOFA | - | Member |
| 11. Lt Col Muhammad Nazrul Islam, PhD, Associate Prof, CSE, MIST | - | Member |
| 12. Senior System Analyst (Digital Governance & Implementation Br)- | - | Member |
| 13. Md Rafiqul Hoque, System Manager, ICT Wing, ECS | - | Coord |

10

Activities

- Step 1 : Sub-committee studies
- Step 2 : Deliberations at the committee level; recommended options:
 - Practicable postal ballot
 - Online voting
 - Proxy Voting
- Step 3 : Endorsement of the findings by the commission
- Step 4 : Workshop
- Step 5 : Formation of an 'Advisory Committee' for critical examination of options and devising architecture against proposed options
- Step 6 : Obtaining opinion of the stakeholders (Two weeks starting today)
- Step 7 : Fully develop the options
- Step 8 : Trial, piloting, and, subsequent implementation (as required)

11

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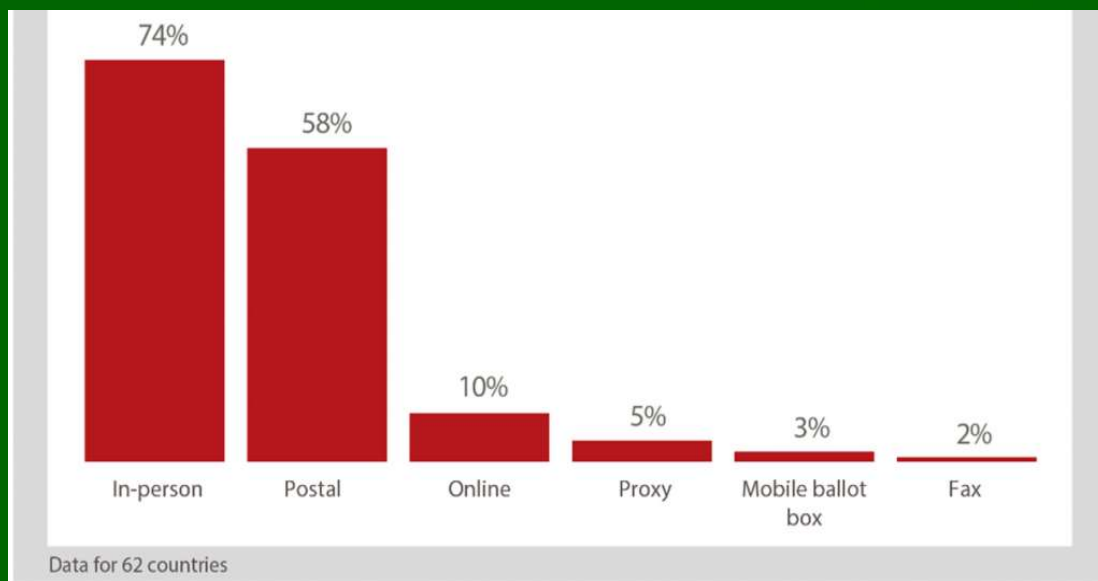
--OCV Around the World--



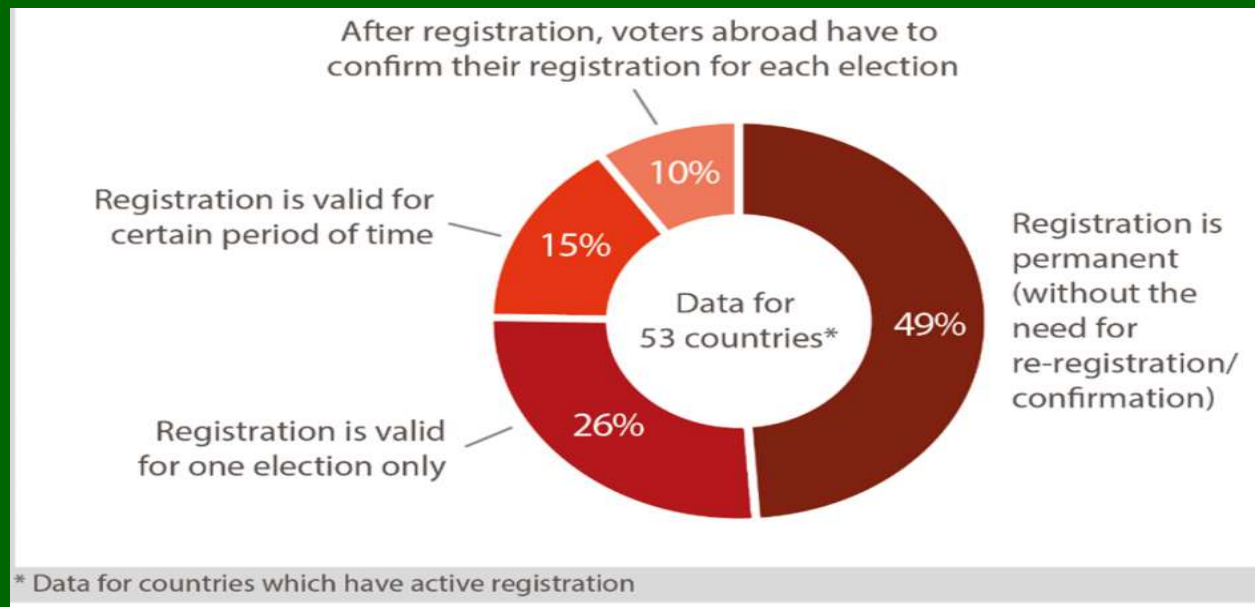
OCV Around the World : Prevalence, Turnout, Practices

- Around 115/178 countries and territories had the provision (as of early 2023)
- 20% countries experience higher OCV turnout compared to in-country turnout
- Multiple OCV methods in one country is quite common
- OCV option applies mostly for national elections
- Most countries require their diaspora/absentee voters to register for OCV
- Some countries make OCV obligatory

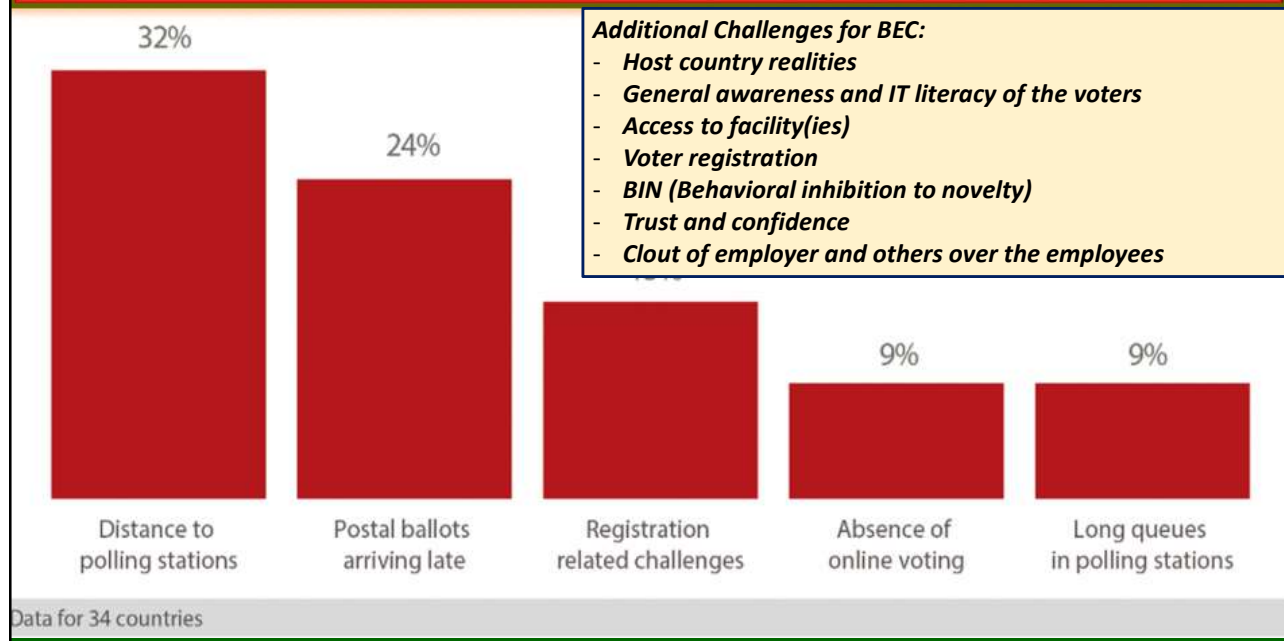
OCV Around the World : Methods



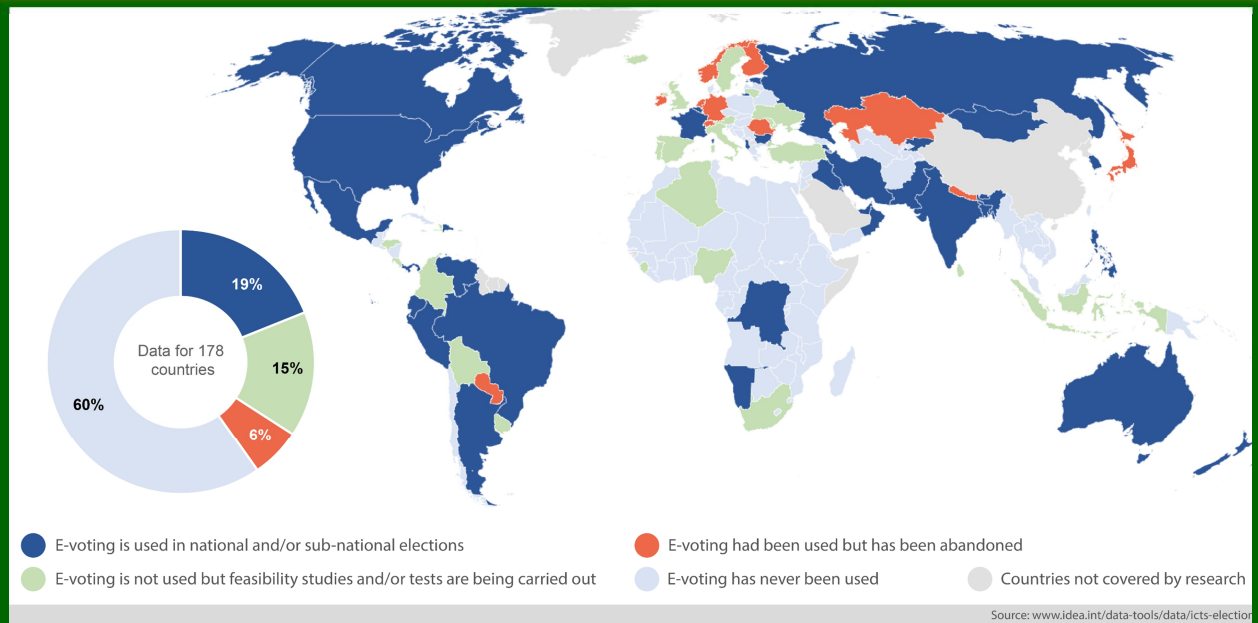
OCV Around the World : Frequency of Registration



OCV Around the World : Challenges



E Voting Around the World (Online and EVM)



OCV Around the World : Provision for Proxy Voting

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. Algeria | 10. Gabon | 19. Niger |
| 2. Antigua and Barbados | 11. Ghana | 20. Poland |
| 3. Belgium | 12. Guinea | 21. Rep of Congo |
| 4. Belize | 13. Guyana | 22. Surinam |
| 5. Benin | 14. India | 23. Sweden |
| 6. Burundi | 15. Mali | 24. Switzerland |
| 7. Chad | 16. Mauritius | 25. Togo |
| 8. China | 17. Monaco | 26. UK |
| 9. France | 18. Netherlands | |

Sources:

1. *International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA)*
2. www.gov.uk/apply-proxy-vote

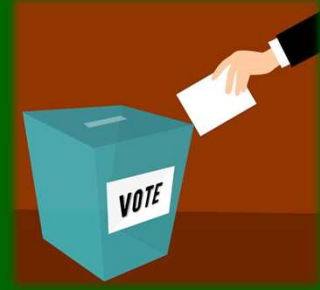
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--Dispensations of the BD Diaspora--**OCV : Dispensations of BD Diaspora**

Region	BD Diaspora (Approx)	Remarks
ME	7,900,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data from major destinations • Varying form of governance in host countries • Widely dispersed • Assumptions : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Majority adult ✓ Majority male ✓ Majority 1st generation • Include registered and unregistered 'voters' • Registration facility in 9 countries; and expanding
South Asia	100,000	
SE Asia	1,700,000	
East Asia	78,000	
Europe	1,800,000	
Oceania	130,000	
North America	1,382,000	
South America	2,500	
Africa	300,000	
Total	13,392,500	

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--Existing Provision and State of OCV--



Existing Provision and State of OCV

Bases:

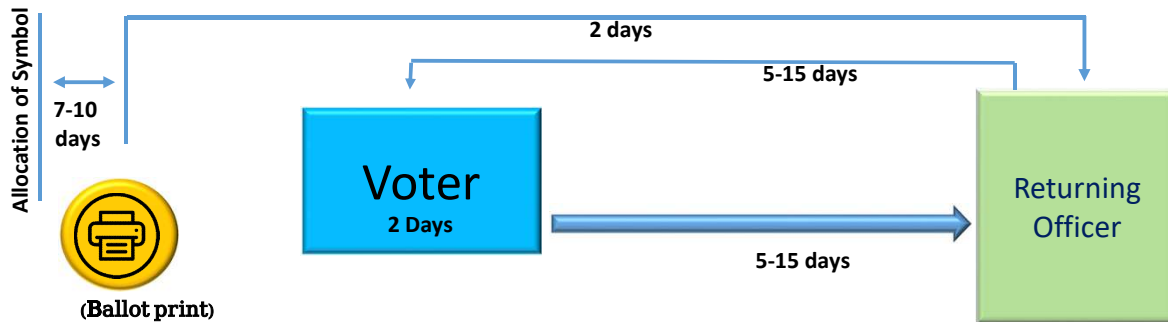
- ❖ Representation of the People Order 1972: Article 27
- ❖ Voters' List Act-2009

Provisions :

- ❖ In-person voting
- ❖ Postal Ballot

Note: Any change will require amendment to the law

Existing Provision and State of OCV : Postal Ballot



Notes:

1. Require 20 to 35 days or more
2. Usual time available after printing of ballot : 10-12 days
3. In the last election, no postal ballot was cast from overseas
4. No record of postal ballot in any of the past elections

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--Findings So Far--



Common Findings

- Options have to take into account the diaspora dispensation
- Will possibly need combination of methods
- Irrespective of the method(s), will require registration for OCV

25

Findings for Option 1 : 'Online Voting'

- Not popularized worldwide
- Some countries are into trials for years
- Some countries have retracted at some stage
- Some have implemented (Mexico and Estonia)
- Influence of externalities over BD diaspora voters can't be fathomed
- Quite possibly, will need fairly long trial
- Can't be implemented in full in the 13th National Election; might be able to reach piloting/selective implementation

26

Findings on Option 2 : 'IT Supported Postal Ballot'

- **Implementable – if time can be shortened**
- **Possible means to shorten time:**
 - Printing the ballot paper at the destination country
 - Counting the vote at the mission/designated office/facility
 - Using alternative means for delivery of the mail (UPS, DHL, Delivery Services, etc)
- **Will require some trial, and, possibly piloting**
- **Influence of externalities remain a concern**

27

Findings on Option 3 : 'Proxy Voting'

- **Implementable**
- **Perpetual debate about reflection of 'voter will' and 'anonymity'**
- **Best option in terms of:**
 - Real-time voting
 - Large scale implementation
 - Logistics
 - Expenses
 - IT intervention (very limited; registration only)
 - Assured voting

28



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Thank you

Remittance



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