

## National High School Programming Contest

# NHSPC 2026

## Contestant Handbook

*Regional Round, 16 May 2026*

*Read this once before contest day. Use the checklist on the morning of the contest.*

*Issued by the Central Coordination Panel*  
Department of Computer Science and Engineering  
**Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST)**

## Contents

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Contents.....	2
1. About NHSPC 2026.....	3
2. Eligibility and Categories.....	3
3. Contest Format.....	4
4. The Mock Contest.....	4
6. How Your Result is Calculated.....	6
7. What to Bring on Contest Day.....	7
8. What is Prohibited.....	8
9. The Codebook.....	9
10. Inside the Contest Room.....	10
11. Breaks and Snacks.....	11
12. Clarifications.....	11
13. Grounds for Disqualification.....	12
14. After the Contest.....	13
Appendix A, Day-of-Contest Timeline.....	14
Appendix B, Pre-Contest Checklist.....	15

## 1. About NHSPC 2026

The National High School Programming Contest (NHSPC) 2026 is the largest competitive programming event in Bangladesh for secondary and higher-secondary students. The Regional Round will be held simultaneously across 24 venues nationwide on Saturday, 16 May 2026.

NHSPC 2026 is organized centrally by the Central Coordination Panel of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST). The same problem set is used at every venue across the country. Decisions of the Central Coordination Panel are final.

### How to use this handbook

Read Sections 1 to 6 to understand what the contest is and how it works.

Read Sections 7 to 13 carefully; they tell you what to bring, what not to bring, and how to behave at the venue.

Use Appendix A as your checklist on the morning of the contest.

Keep this handbook with you until contest day.

## 2. Eligibility and Categories

NHSPC 2026 is an individual contest. You compete on your own, against everyone in the country who is also taking part. You will be placed in one of three categories based on your current level of study during the 2026 academic year:

<b>Junior</b>	Class VI to Class VIII (general board) or equivalent.
<b>Secondary</b>	Class IX to Class X (general board) or equivalent.
<b>Higher Secondary</b>	Class XI to Class XII (general board) or equivalent.

### 2.1 Eligibility

- General board: Class VI up to and including HSC 2026 examinees.
- Madrasah board: Dakhil up to and including Alim 2026 examinees.
- Technical/vocational: up to the 4th semester of polytechnic level.
- English medium: up to and including O-Level / A-Level 2026 examinees.

### 2.2 One problem set for everyone

All three categories receive the same problem set, same problems, same time limits, and same scoring. Categories differ only in how the final results are filtered after the contest. So when you sit in the room, you and a Higher Secondary contestant in another district are competing on identical problems.

### 3. Contest Format

<b>Duration</b>	3 hours (180 minutes)
<b>Number of problems</b>	6 to 10 problems
<b>Problem ordering</b>	Not necessarily sorted by difficulty, read all of them
<b>Problem set</b>	Single set used for all venues and all categories
<b>Problem Statement Language</b>	English, Bangla
<b>Languages permitted</b>	C, C++, and Python only, single source file per submission
<b>I/O</b>	Standard input and standard output, unless a problem states otherwise
<b>Platform</b>	Toph online judge, accessed only from the venue network

Problems may be divided into subtasks, each carrying a portion of the problem's full score. Some problems may include time and memory limits beyond the global default; these are stated in the problem itself.

Every problem will contain: problem name, description, input format, output format, constraints, sample input(s), sample output(s), and, where helpful, an explanation.

### 4. The Mock Contest

Before the main contest day, an online mock contest will be held so you can practice with the Toph platform from home. The mock is open to every registered contestant.

<b>Mode</b>	Online from home, or any device with Internet access. No venue attendance required.
<b>Time &amp; Date</b>	15 May 2026, 10 AM to 10 PM.
<b>Purpose</b>	Get familiar with the Toph platform, the login flow, the submission interface and verdict display. The mock does not affect the main leaderboard or selection.
<b>Credentials</b>	The mock contest link, username and password will be sent to your registered e-mail address.
<b>Participation</b>	Strongly recommended. If you have never used Toph before, attempt the mock so that contest day is not your first encounter with the platform.

**Mock credentials are not main-contest credentials**

The username and password sent for the mock contest are valid for the mock only. They will NOT work on contest day.

On contest day (16 May 2026), you will receive a separate, fresh credential token from your Room Volunteer at the venue.

If you do not receive the mock contest e-mail by the announced date, check your spam folder. If you don't get a mock credential by 15th May 10 AM, contact this number: +8801873919423

**5.1 Verdicts**

Every submission you make receives one of the following verdicts:

<b>Accepted</b>	Your solution is correct on all test cases of the problem (or relevant subtask), within the time and memory limits.
<b>Wrong Answer</b>	Your output differs from the expected output on at least one test case.
<b>CPU limit exceeded</b>	Your solution did not finish within the allowed time.
<b>Memory Limit Exceeded</b>	Your solution exceeded the memory limit.
<b>Output limit exceeded</b>	Your program tried to print way too much data, more than what is necessary to solve this problem.
<b>Runtime Error</b>	Your program crashed during execution (segfault, division by zero, etc.).
<b>Compilation Error</b>	Your source could not be compiled.
<b>Internal error</b>	There is an issue with the programming problem's tests or in the evaluation process. Contact the volunteer to report to the venue judge.

There'll be no penalty for rejected submissions. Even if your solution is **not Accepted**, you can get a partial score. The following section provides the details about partial scoring.

## 5.2 Partial scoring

NHSPC 2026 uses partial scoring. Where a problem is divided into subtasks, you earn the sum of the scores of the subtasks you pass.

1. Your score on a problem is the maximum you have achieved on that problem across all your submissions.
2. Your total score is the sum of your best scores across all problems.
3. Where a problem is not divided into subtasks, you either get full credit (AC) or zero.

## 5.3 System Specification

Software baseline included in the system:

- Ubuntu 22.04 LTS.
- GCC and G++ 11.4 or later.
- Python 3.10 or later.
- VS Code, Code::Blocks, Geany, Vim and Sublime Text.
- Mozilla Firefox, with the contest platform login page set as the home page.

This OS will also be equipped with:

- Firewall protected to a site rather than the contest platform
- USB mount disabled

## 6. How Your Result is Calculated

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### 6.1 A single common leaderboard

Because the problem set is identical for everyone, there is one common nationwide leaderboard. Every contestant from every venue and every category appears on this leaderboard. But on the toph platform, you'll also be able to select your venue and category to see specific venue results.

### 6.2 Ranking

Your rank on the common leaderboard is decided by:

1. Higher total score ranks above lower total score.
2. On equal score, lower total time penalty ranks higher. Time penalty is the sum of the times of your first scoring submission for each problem on which you earned non-zero credit.
3. On equal score and equal time penalty, the contestant whose last scoring submission came earlier ranks higher.

So submitting a partial solution early is better than submitting the same partial solution late, even though both earn the same score.

### 6.3 Scoreboard freeze

The public scoreboard may be frozen during the final 30 minutes. During the freeze, no rank changes are shown publicly, but you will still receive verdicts on your own submissions in real time. Keep submitting.

#### **The contest's end standing is not the final standing**

The final standing after the contest is not the actual standing. It is the frozen standing of 30 minutes before the contest's end. The final result will be announced at the closing ceremony and afterwards you can see the unfrozen result in the contest platform.

### 6.4 Per-venue results

After the contest ends, the Central Coordination Panel filters the common leaderboard by venue and category, and announces the per-venue results in each of the three categories: Junior, Secondary and Higher Secondary.

## 7. What to Bring on Contest Day

- The printed Admit Card (downloaded from the registration portal or received by e-mail).
- A valid student identification card from your school or institution.
- Your own pen or pencil and rough paper for note-taking and rough work.
- Optionally, one personal printed codebook prepared according to Section 9.

**No pen, paper or notepad will be provided by the venue. You are solely responsible for your own writing materials.**

### 7.1 Identity verification at the gate

Volunteers will verify your Admit Card and student ID at the venue gate. A contestant who cannot produce the Admit Card will not be admitted under any circumstances.

### 7.2 When to arrive

The contest begins at 9:30 AM sharp. Reach the venue at least 60 minutes before the contest starts, i.e., by 8:30 AM. Entry closes 30 minutes before contest start (9:00 AM). Late arrival means no entry.

## 8. What is Prohibited

The items in the right-hand column below are strictly prohibited inside the contest room. Any prohibited item must be surrendered at the device-deposit point before you enter the room.

DO, Permitted inside the room	DO NOT, Strictly prohibited
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Printed Admit Card</li> <li>✓ Student ID card</li> <li>✓ Pen/pencil for personal use</li> <li>✓ Plain rough paper or unmarked notebook</li> <li>✓ One personal codebook conforming to Section 9</li> <li>✓ Transparent, label-free water bottle</li> <li>✓ Analogue, non-smart wristwatch</li> <li>✓ Personal medication, if medically required (declared at the gate)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Mobile phones, smartphones of any kind</li> <li>✗ Smartwatches, smart bands, fitness trackers, smart rings</li> <li>✗ Laptops, tablets, e-readers, palmtops</li> <li>✗ Calculators of any kind</li> <li>✗ Headphones, earphones, earbuds, Bluetooth devices</li> <li>✗ Cameras, voice recorders</li> <li>✗ USB drives, pen drives, external hard disks, SD cards</li> <li>✗ Pre-printed reference material other than your conforming codebook</li> <li>✗ Standalone formula sheets, mathematical tables, syllabus printouts</li> <li>✗ Bags, backpacks (deposit them outside the room)</li> </ul>

### 8.1 Deposit procedure

1. Hand over all prohibited items to your Room Volunteer at 9:00 AM (i.e., 30 minutes before the contest begins).
2. Items are placed in a numbered cloth bag or envelope. The number is recorded against your entry in the device register, which you sign.
3. Items are returned to you only after the contest has officially ended, against your signature in the same register.

#### Undeclared devices = immediate disqualification

If you fail to declare and surrender any electronic device, and such a device is later found on you inside the room, you will be disqualified immediately and escorted out of the venue.

## 8.2 No printing, no sharing

There is no printing facility at any venue. You cannot request printouts of code, problem statements or scoreboards. The complete problem set is on-screen.

Sharing of pen, paper, codebook, water bottle or any other item with another contestant during the contest is not permitted. If you need additional rough paper, ask the Room Volunteer.

## 9. The Codebook

You may bring one (1) personal printed reference book, commonly called a codebook, into the contest room. The codebook is for your personal reference and must conform strictly to the specifications below. The format follows the standard codebook rule used in IUPC-style contests in Bangladesh.

<b>Quantity</b>	Exactly one (1) codebook. Multiple booklets, separate stapled bundles, or a codebook with detachable inserts are not permitted.
<b>Length</b>	At most 25 pages.
<b>Paper size</b>	A4 only.
<b>Printing</b>	Printed on one side only. A 25-page double-sided booklet counts as 50 pages and is not allowed.
<b>Header on every page</b>	Your full name and the page number must appear at the top of every page.
<b>Readability</b>	Text must be readable from 0.5 metres without magnification. Microprinting is prohibited.
<b>Binding</b>	Stapled, spiral-bound, or perfect-bound at one corner/edge. Pages must not be detachable in a way that allows sharing.
<b>Annotation</b>	Pre-printed annotations and highlighting are fine. Adding handwritten notes during the contest is not permitted.

Volunteers will inspect your codebook at the entry desk. A non-conforming codebook will be confiscated; you may still participate without it.

**What the codebook is, and what it is not**

The codebook is your own prepared reference. It is not a textbook, not a printout of an online resource, and not a shared resource between contestants.

Bringing a printed book, magazine, photocopied chapter, or any pre-published material is treated as a prohibited item, not a codebook, and will be confiscated.

Sharing your codebook with another contestant during the contest will result in the disqualification of everyone involved.

## 10. Inside the Contest Room

### 10.1 Allocation and seating

At the entry desk, you will be told your room number. Inside the room, your Room Volunteer will guide you to your allocated PC. Sit at the PC assigned to you. Do not, under any circumstances, change seats.

### 10.2 Credential tokens

At 9:10 AM (20 minutes before the contest starts), your Room Volunteer will hand you a small printed slip, your credential token. This slip contains the username and password you will use to log in to the Toph platform for the contest.

Try to log in immediately. If your login does not work:

- If the platform login page does not load → tell the volunteer. This is a hardware issue. You will be moved to a spare PC.
- If the login page loads but your password is rejected → tell the volunteer. This is a credential issue. A replacement credential will be issued by the Central Panel.

By 9:15 AM, every contestant in the room must be successfully logged in.

### 10.3 Conduct during the contest

- If you need help from a volunteer, raise your hand and wait silently.
- Your rough paper stays with you on the desk. Do not take any official material out of the room.
- Do not look at another contestant's screen. Do not allow another contestant to look at yours.
- Do not attempt to access another contestant's workstation, files, or login session.
- Do not attempt to access any website outside the contest platform; this is logged and may result in disqualification.
- Any kind of technical issue, including network issues, screen or power failure of the PC, or a contest platform issue, immediately inform the room volunteer.

**Save your code immediately after any modification**

In case of workstation failure, power outage, or unexpected restart, only saved code can be recovered. Use **Ctrl+S** after every meaningful change, no matter how small.

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## 11. Breaks and Snacks

### 11.1 Bathroom break

1. Raise your hand and wait for a volunteer.
2. Only one contestant is on a bathroom break at a time. If another contestant is already on a break, your request is queued.
3. A volunteer will escort you. You may not carry any paper, pen, or device with you; leave them on your workstation.
4. The contest clock does not pause for you. Plan accordingly.

### 11.2 Prayer break

On request, a short prayer break is allowed, under the same rules as a bathroom break, one at a time, volunteer escort, no carrying of any material.

### 11.3 Medical break

If you feel unwell at any point, inform your Room Volunteer immediately. The Venue Judge will assess the situation and arrange medical help if needed.

### 11.4 Snacks

During the contest, your Room Volunteer may place a snack at your workstation. They will approach silently from the side and place it quietly on a free corner of your desk, without speaking to you and without seeking your attention. You are not required to acknowledge them or to stop your work.

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## 12. Clarifications

If a problem statement seems ambiguous, you can ask for clarification through the contest platform. All clarifications are answered by the Central Coordination Panel directly through the platform. Venue volunteers do not answer clarifications.

### 12.1 What will be answered

- Genuine ambiguities in the statement, input format, output format, or constraints.
- Suspected typographical errors in the statement or sample cases.
- Issues with the platform or judge environment.

### 12.2 What will not be answered

- Requests for hints or partial solutions.
- Requests to confirm an algorithmic approach ("is dynamic programming the right idea here?").
- Duplicate requests, check earlier broadcast clarifications before posting.
- Disrespectful or derogatory messages, these will be flagged for disciplinary action.

### 12.3 Broadcasts

If a clarification has general value, the response will be broadcast to all contestants. Otherwise, the answer is sent only to you.

## 13. Grounds for Disqualification

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The list below is illustrative, not exhaustive. The Central Panel reserves the right to disqualify a contestant for any conduct that, in its judgment, brings the contest into disrepute.

1. Possession of any prohibited electronic device inside the room after the contest begins.
2. Possession of any pre-printed reference material other than your conforming codebook.
3. Sharing code, the codebook, paper or any other material with another contestant; receiving the same from another contestant or any external source.
4. Communication with any external person, including during bathroom or prayer breaks.
5. Attempting to access another contestant's workstation, files, login session or screen.
6. Attempting to bypass the venue firewall or accessing any website outside the contest platform.
7. Tampering with the workstation hardware, the operating system, the network configuration or the platform.
8. Plagiarism detected after the contest. If two or more submissions are substantially similar beyond what could be expected from independent work, all involved contestants are disqualified.
9. Code obfuscation intended to defeat plagiarism detection.
10. Submitting code containing harmful, malicious, abusive or insulting content.
11. Disrespectful behaviour toward volunteers, judges, fellow contestants or venue staff.

12. Refusal to follow the lawful instructions of a Room Volunteer or the Venue Judge.

**A disqualified contestant is removed from the official ranking and is not eligible for selection to the National Final Round.**

## 14. After the Contest

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### 14.1 At contest end

When the contest ends, the platform automatically locks submissions; you cannot submit anything after the timer hits zero, no matter what you have on screen. Step away from your workstation when the volunteer asks. Leave the room in an orderly manner. Collect your surrendered devices from the device-return desk against your signature in the register.

### 14.2 Provisional results

Provisional standings will be released by the Central Coordination Panel through the contest platform shortly after the contest concludes. These standings are subject to review for plagiarism and rule violations, and are not yet final. The result will be announced by the venue judge at the closing ceremony of the program.

## Appendix A, Day-of-Contest Timeline

The contest begins at 9:30 AM sharp. Reach the venue at least 60 minutes before, i.e., by 8:30 AM. The table below shows both the clock time.

Clock time	Activity
<b>8:30 AM</b>	Reach the venue. Entry desk confirms your attendance and tells you your room number.
<b>9:00 AM</b>	You must be inside your room. Surrender all prohibited devices to the Room Volunteer. The volunteer briefly re-explains the rules.
<b>9:10 AM</b>	Room Volunteer hands you your credential token. Log in to the contest platform.
<b>9:15 AM</b>	If login fails, hardware issue → spare PC; credential issue → escalated to the Central Panel.
<b>9:25 AM</b>	Final pre-contest announcement. Stay silent and ready.
<b>9:30 AM</b>	Contest begins simultaneously across all 24 venues. No late entry.
<b>9:30 AM – 12:30 PM</b>	Contest in progress.
<b>12:30 PM</b>	Contest ends. Submissions auto-locked. Devices returned against signature.

### **Strict 9:30 AM start, no late admission**

The contest begins at exactly 9:30 AM across all 24 venues. There is no margin for delay. Plan your travel so you reach the venue with time to spare, aim for 8:30 AM at the latest.

## Appendix B, Pre-Contest Checklist

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Tick each item before leaving home on contest day.

### Documents and identity

- Printed Admit Card carried.
- Valid student ID card carried.

### Writing materials

- At least two pens or pencils.
- Sufficient blank rough paper, or an unmarked notebook.

### Optional items

- Codebook prepared per Section 9 (optional, but if you bring it, it must conform).

### Devices

- Mobile phone, smartwatch, smart band, headphones, left at home, OR ready to hand over at the venue device-deposit point.
- Calculator, USB drives, camera, voice recorder, e-reader, tablet, not brought at all.

### Preparation

- Familiar with C, C++ or Python, language of choice decided.
- Familiar with reading from stdin and writing to stdout.
- Attempted the mock contest.
- Read Sections 7 to 13 of this handbook.
- Reporting time and venue address re-verified from the Admit Card.

***Best of luck.***