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**GREEN FACTORY AWARD 2025**



BANGLADESH'S  
**NO. 1 CEMENT BRAND**

## Dhaka resumes visa services in India

PORIMOL PALMA

All Bangladesh missions in India resumed visa services on Friday, signalling a step towards normalising relations between the two countries.

"We have resumed issuing visas of all categories on a limited scale since Friday and will expand the service from the coming week," a diplomatic source in New Delhi told The Daily Star last night.

The move comes three days after the BNP-led government took oath on February 17 following a landslide victory in the February 12 polls.

The India-Bangladesh relations have been strained since the ouster of the Awami League government through a mass uprising on August 5, 2024, when the former prime minister Sheikh Hasina fled and took shelter in New Delhi.

India restricted travel visas for Bangladeshis while limiting other

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Workers put the finishing touches on stalls at Bangla Academy yesterday ahead of the Amar Ekushey book fair, set to run from February 25 to March 15. Despite objections from several notable publishing houses, this year's fair is being held during Ramadan.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

## NCP mulls ties with Jamaat beyond polls

Party insiders cite reform agenda

SHAMIMA RITA

The youth-led National Citizen Party is considering transforming its electoral alliance with Jamaat-e-Islami into a political one.

Though top party leaders have remained silent on the issue, insiders say they will move ahead with Jamaat both inside and outside parliament to ensure the implementation of the reform initiatives taken by the interim government.

Some NCP leaders expressed hope that the move would help them build a strong opposition to the BNP government and push for constitutional reforms in line with the July charter.

The NCP, formed by the frontline July protesters, which contested the February 12 national election with the Jamaat-led 11-party alliance, is likely to take part in the upcoming local government polls

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## GUNMEN FACILITIES

### Home ministry, police differ on withdrawal

TOUSIF KAUUM and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Uncertainty has arisen over the withdrawal of security support — including the deployment of gunmen, and in some cases, house guards — provided to at least 70 politicians and politically important individuals ahead of the 13th parliamentary election.

The facilities were approved for a limited period and were supposed to remain in

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## US evacuates troops from ME bases

Another aircraft carrier arrives in Mediterranean as military planning on Iran reaches 'advanced stage'

AGENCIES

Hundreds of US troops have been pulled out of the Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar, The New York Times reported Friday, as US President Donald Trump said he was considering limited military strikes on Iran.

Two US officials told Reuters that US military planning on Iran had reached an advanced stage, with options including targeting individuals as part of an attack and even pursuing leadership change in Tehran, if ordered by Trump.

Trump on Thursday gave Tehran a deadline of 10 to 15 days to make a deal to resolve their longstanding nuclear dispute or face "really bad things" amid a US military buildup in the Middle East that has fueled fears of a wider war.

Amid the tensions, the USS Gerald R Ford aircraft carrier, the world's biggest, was seen entering the Mediterranean Sea on Friday. The carrier was seen transiting the Strait of Gibraltar — which links the Atlantic Ocean to the Mediterranean — in a photo taken from the Gibraltar side of the strait. It will

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- US evacuates hundreds of troops from Qatar, Bahrain
- Trump considering limited military strikes
- Serbia, Sweden urge citizens to leave Iran
- Iran eyes draft counterproposal as talks continue

## JS to convene on March 12 or earlier

Says home minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first session of Bangladesh's newly elected 13th Parliament will take place on March 12, or possibly a day or two earlier, said Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed last night.

The home minister shared the information through a post on his verified Facebook page.

According to the post, the election for the Speaker and deputy Speaker of the House will be held during the inaugural session.

In addition, ordinances passed during the tenure of the interim government will be tabled, and a condolence motion will also be moved during the session, he added.



A physically challenged person with crutches jumps over the divider to manoeuvre past moving traffic on the road outside the National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation. Dhaka still lacks adequate accessible options for people with disabilities to get across the city streets. The photo was taken yesterday in the capital's Agargaon.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## LDC GRADUATION

### UN panel set to evaluate Dhaka's deferment plea

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

The Enhanced Monitoring Mechanism (EMM), a body of the UN Committee for Development Policy (UN CDP), will begin an evaluation process following Bangladesh's request to defer its graduation from the group of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to developing nation status.

The EMM will assess Bangladesh's request in light of recent socio-economic data, cross-country experience, and progress in implementing the Smooth Transition Strategy, EMM Chief Debapriya Bhattacharya said yesterday.

Debapriya, also a distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, left Bangladesh yesterday to attend a UN CDP meeting in New York, USA, from Monday to assess the situation of both graduating and recently graduated countries.

Relations Department Secretary Md Shahriar Quader Siddiqui to UN CDP Chairperson José Antonio Ocampo on Wednesday.

He added that the EMM will also discuss the cases of two other nations, Nepal and Lao PDR, which are also



scheduled to graduate from the LDC group to developing nation status on November 24 this year.

However, neither Nepal nor Lao PDR applied for deferment, Debapriya said, adding that the UN CDP will also assess the country statements on the economic situation submitted by all three countries to the UN in November last year.

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Brazil, India ink critical minerals deal as leaders meet

P5

**HASANAH ISLAMIC BANKING**  
البنكية الاسلامي  
Prime Bank

**PRAYER TIMING**  
FEBRUARY 22

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:13	12:45	4:30	5:59	7:30
JAMAAT 5:23	1:15	4:45	6:09	8:00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

**SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING**

RAMADAN	FEB	SEHRI	IFTAR
4	22		5:59
5	23	5:09	6:00
6	24	5:08	6:00

ত্রয়োদশ জাতীয় সংসদ নির্বাচনে  
বাংলাদেশ জাতীয়তাবাদী দল (বিএনপি) নিরঙ্কুশ  
সংখ্যাগরিষ্ঠতা অর্জনের মাধ্যমে সরকার গঠন করায়  
নর্থ সাউথ ইউনিভার্সিটির পক্ষ থেকে

আন্তরিক শুভেচ্ছা  
ও অভিনন্দন

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