



With high hopes, 13th parliament goes into session

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The 13th parliament begins its journey today amid hopes that the new House will emerge as the living centre of democratic practice, alive with constructive debate, meaningful decision-making, and a strong role in holding the government accountable.

The Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban will come to life at 11:00am when newly elected lawmakers gather for the first sitting.

They were elected in the February 12 general election, the country's first

and deputy speaker on the first day. The new parliament features a two-thirds majority for the treasury bench.

However, uncertainty remains over the formation of the Constitution Reform Council, proposed under the July National Charter (Constitution Reform) Implementation Order, 2025.

Chief Whip of the 13th parliament Nurul Islam Moni told reporters at a press conference yesterday, "The parliamentary session that begins tomorrow will be the people's parliament, the highest



This handout photo, taken yesterday and released by the Royal Thai Navy, shows smoke rising from the Thai bulk carrier Mayuree Naree near the Strait of Hormuz after an attack. PHOTO: AFP

Migrants' woes mount in war-hit Lebanon

Many Bangladeshis without work, pay

PORIMOL PALMA

When Ripon Bepari sent his entire salary -- about \$200 -- home in early February, he had no idea that the next month would be any different.

However, the latest Israeli offensive on Lebanon has caught the construction worker off guard and put his somewhat stable life into disarray. Ripon has not received his March salary and is unsure whether he still has the job that supports him and his elderly parents in Faridpur.

"Since the war broke out, construction work has

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



PM to nominate an MP to preside until Speaker elected

President to address session

Condolence motions to honour Khaleda Zia, July uprising victims

credible polls in more than 15 years.

Since 1991, Bangladesh's parliaments have often been marred by boycotts, hollow debates, and the perception of serving as little more than rubber stamps for ruling parties.

Expectations are therefore high that the new House will break from that pattern.

From the outset, the parliament faces several crucial tasks. Among the most immediate is deciding the fate of 133 ordinances promulgated by the interim government. Under the constitution, parliament must approve or reject them within 30 days.

Lawmakers will also elect a Speaker

democratic institution representing the rights, hopes, and dreams of the people.

"Our goal is to run an effective, vibrant, and responsible parliament," he said.

"We want an environment for constructive discussion, rational arguments, and healthy debate on issues of national importance. The beauty of democracy is finding solutions to national problems through discussion and despite differences of opinion."

He also expressed hope that opposition parties would play a constructive role so the nation can move towards a stronger and more self-reliant future.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Dhaka seeks US waiver to buy Russian oil

Requests Delhi for more fuel

ASIFUR RAHMAN

The government has formally requested the US to allow Bangladesh to purchase Russian oil, similar to the arrangement provided to India, to address potential supply shortages and reduce the economic impact of the surge in crude oil prices amid the US-Israel war on Iran.

The US sanctioned Russian oil following Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. In the wake of the Middle East war, the US last week issued a 30-day waiver to allow Indian refiners to purchase Russian oil.

"India has already been given a temporary waiver to

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

'Get ready for \$200 a barrel'

Iran tells world as IEA nations agree record release of oil reserves; 3 ships hit in Strait of Hormuz

AGENCIES

Iran yesterday said the world should prepare for oil to hit \$200 a barrel, as three more ships came under attack in the blockaded Gulf, forcing governments to tap their strategic oil reserves.

As the conflict entered its 12th day, Iran vowed to target "economic centres and banks" it deems linked to US and Israeli interests, while all eyes were on the Strait of Hormuz, the vital sea lane connecting Gulf oil and gas export terminals to the

global economy.

Meanwhile, Iran fired at Israel and targets across the Middle East yesterday, demonstrating its capacity to launch critical attacks and disrupt energy supplies while withstanding the "most intense" US-Israeli strikes.

Oil prices, which surged earlier this week, have since eased, and stock markets rebounded, with investors betting that US President Donald Trump will find a quick way to end the war he

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



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