

Bangladesh tightens on-arrival visa issuance during election period

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Dhaka: The Ministry of Home Affairs in Bangladesh has directed authorities to tighten the issuance of on-arrival and other visas for foreign nationals during the 13th national election and referendum with a circular on January 12. The move is aimed at ensuring security.

The circular asked Bangladesh missions and embassies abroad to issue specific visas by strictly following the visa policy and later notifications, upon proper verification of documents.

Officials must thoroughly examine documents for on-arrival visa applicants, including the purpose of the visit, sponsoring organization or individual, hotel or accommodation details, and return ticket. In case of any irregularity, deviation, or suspicion, the visa must not be issued.

Foreign military and security personnel will require prior permission from the home ministry to enter Bangladesh.

For foreign observers and journalists coming to monitor the election and referendum, the circular said on-arrival visas would be issued with an “election observation” seal for the election period determined by the Election Commission, based on recommendations from the commission and, where applicable, the foreign ministry and the information ministry.

Additionally, the circular also directed agencies at international airports as well as land and sea ports to strengthen coordination among the Special Branch, intelligence agencies, and law enforcement during visa issuance and at the time of foreigners’ arrival and departure.

The Home Ministry instructed Bangladesh missions abroad, the Department of Immigration and Passports, the Special Branch, and authorities at international airports and land and sea ports to send detailed daily information on visas and foreigners’ movements.

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