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CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS

Jamaat, NCP set to skip special JS committee

Opposition parties to go for protests to press for reform council

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jamaat-e-Islami is set to reject the government's proposal to join a special parliamentary committee on amending the constitution in line with the July charter.

The National Citizen Party (NCP), a component of the Jamaat-led 11-party opposition alliance, has also opposed joining the committee.

Constitutional reform remains one of the flashpoints between the ruling BNP and the opposition, and the moves have made the fragile reform process further uncertain.

Since the 13th parliament sat, parties including Jamaat have been demanding sweeping changes through a Constitution Reform Council as outlined in the July Charter Implementation Order. They have staged protest programmes and plan more.

The BNP government, however, argues the constitution contains no provision for such a council.

On April 29, it instead proposed forming a special parliamentary committee and sought names from opposition parties.

Shafiqur Rahman, the ameer of Jamaat and leader of the opposition, had initially said the party needed more time for internal discussions.

But yesterday, Jamaat Assistant Secretary General Ahsanul Mahboob Zubair told The Daily Star that the party would not submit any names.

It would formally convey its decision not to join the committee before the next parliamentary session begins on June 7, he said.

"We don't see any effectiveness of the special parliamentary committee," he said, noting that the BNP-led coalition would dominate the 17-member body with 12 seats, leaving only five for the opposition.

"In reality, through this committee, the BNP will impose what it wants," he added.

Zubair argued the committee would not reflect the referendum mandate, where 70 percent voted for reforms based on the July charter.

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Ahsanul Mahboob Zubair,
Jamaat assistant secretary general



DEVASTATED DHALESHWARI

Household and industrial waste dumped along the banks of the Dhaleshwari river in Savar's Hemayetpur has turned a long stretch of the riverbank into a sprawling landfill, severely polluting the water and threatening the river's biodiversity and the surrounding ecosystem. The photo was taken from the Hemayetpur end of the Language Martyr Rafiq Bridge recently.

PHOTO:
PALASH KHAN

Trump lands in China for summit with Xi

Trade, Iran war set to dominate high-stakes talks as Beijing warns Washington over 'four red lines'

AGENCIES

US President Donald Trump landed in Beijing yesterday for a high-stakes summit with Chinese leader Xi Jinping aimed at easing deep tensions between the rival superpowers.

Giving a fist pump, Trump descended the steps of Air Force One after touching down at Beijing Capital International Airport, kicking off the first visit to China by a US president in nearly a decade.

Right behind him were Tesla boss Elon Musk and Nvidia chief Jensen Huang -- potent symbols of the business deals that Trump hopes to sign between the world's biggest economies.

Trump was greeted with a bunch of flowers and then walked along the red carpet, which was lined with 300 Chinese youth in white uniforms chanting "welcome" and waving small Chinese and US flags in unison.

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Ecneec okays Padma barrage mega project

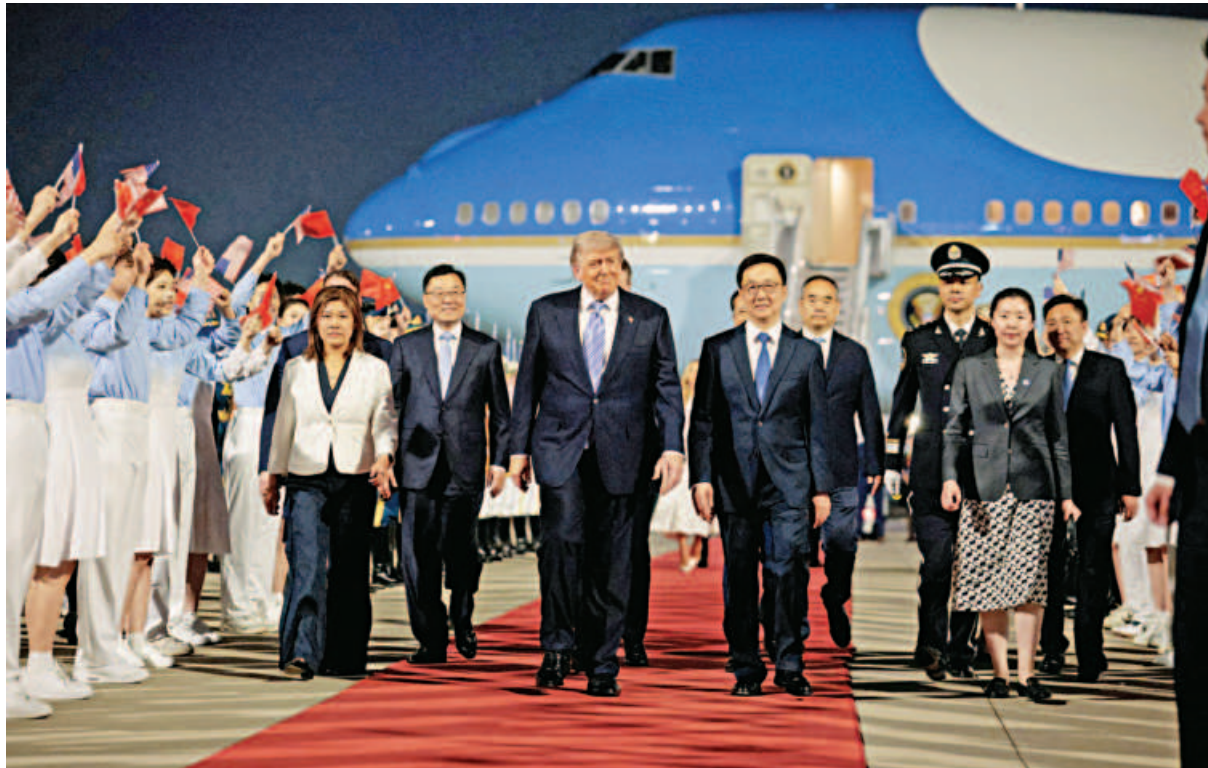
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has approved the first phase of the Padma barrage project at Tk 34,497 crore with the aim of reviving five major river systems, reducing seawater intrusion and storing 2,900 million cubic metres of water in the Padma river.

Under the project, a 2.1km barrage and related infrastructure would be constructed at Pangsha in Rajbari at the estimated cost of Tk 18,602 crore, around 56 percent of the total project cost. A hydropower plant

RELATED STORY ON PAGE 12

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US President Donald Trump is escorted by Chinese Vice President Han Zheng upon his arrival at Beijing Capital Airport yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

'I just want to know where my husband is'

Wife of missing man alleges Coast Guard took him away; the force denies allegation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

A man from Mongla upazila in Bagerhat has remained missing for over a month, his family alleged yesterday.



Miraj Sheikh

Miraj Sheikh, 30, of Joymoni village, was picked up by a team of Coast Guard on the night of April 10, said his wife Mukta Khanom.

Coast Guard officials, however, denied the allegation.

Mukta filed a general diary with the Mongla Police Station on April 23. The family also held a press conference at Mongla Press Club on May 8, demanding to know Miraj's whereabouts.

Police last night said they were investigating the complaint.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, Mukta said, "Around 7:00pm that

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Measles cases cross 60,000; death toll 432

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The number of confirmed and suspected measles cases crossed 60,000 as the country recorded 1,615 suspected and confirmed cases in 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday.

During the period, eight more suspected and confirmed measles deaths were recorded, taking the total number of confirmed and suspected deaths to 432, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Meanwhile, DGHS said it had reached 100 percent of the targeted children in the vaccination campaign and hoped the number of

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The DGHS recorded 1,489 suspected cases in the last 24 hours, taking the total suspected deaths to 53,056. On the other hand, it recorded 126 confirmed cases during this time, taking the total confirmed deaths to 7,150.

With the new figures, total confirmed and suspected measles

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