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STOCK MARKET
 DSE Index 765.89363 (-0.44%)
 Market capitalisation Tk 44.83 billion
 Turnover in volume 72911
 Turnover in value Tk 11.84 million

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Holiday Notice
 The offices of The Daily Star will remain closed today on the occasion of the May Day. There will, therefore, be no issue of the daily tomorrow.

NEWS BRIEFS
Medicine seized
 By Staff Correspondent
 Contraband medicines worth Taka 5,96,450 were seized from a Pakistani national at the Zia International Airport yesterday.

Farmer run over
 SIRAJGANJ, Apr 30: A farmer was run over by a truck and killed at Chandaikopa village in Raiganj thana this morning, police said. The deceased, identified as Rahim Box 51, of Raiganj, was hit by a Bagra-bound truck when he was crossing the Nagarbari-Bogra highway today. He died on the spot, reports UNB.

100 new launch ghats soon
 The government has initiated the process for setting up 100 launch ghats in the rural areas at a cost of Taka 36 crore. It was stated at a meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Shipping held at the Sangsad Bhavan yesterday. The meeting presided over by the Shipping Minister M K Anwar was also informed that the government had taken another programme project on priority for setting up 200 launch ghats at a cost of Taka 75 crore, reports BSS.

ODA to dry up in two to three years: Saifur

By Staff Correspondent
 Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday cautioned that external development assistance is going to dry up in the near future and the country would increasingly have to rely on domestic resources.

"We have to increase domestic resource mobilisation as within the next two to three years overseas development assistance (ODA) would stop coming," he told representatives of the private sector attending a pre-budget consultative meeting with officials of the National Board of Revenue (NBR).

The minister sought cooperation of the private sector in gearing up internal resource mobilisation while assuring them of government cooperation in creating an enabling business environment.

"You are taking a lot of risk and putting in lot of hard work. We want to help you, but at the same time the government also has to (function)," he said.

The donors are now telling the developing countries to rely on their internal resources, Rahman, who just returned from the Paris Aid Consortium meeting, said. "In such a situation, we have to fully rely on local resource."

He pointed out that the reduction of food aid has already put pressure on the exchequer on account of food imports this year, as one donor country alone reduced its food assistance by 2.1 lakh tons.

"We need huge funds for infrastructural development, but money from outside is a scarce commodity," the minister noted while pointing out that external funds may only come in the form of private investment provided a congenial political climate exists in the country.

Rahman acknowledged that to create a congenial business environment the government has to provide appropriate infrastructural support to the private sector while social cohesion and equilibrium is needed to improve the law and order situation. "Political consensus can resolve many of our problems," he added.

He appealed to the business community to take the economic reality of the country into account while seeking tax

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Diploma nurses brought out a procession in the city yesterday in support of their demands. — Star photo

6-point resolution BNP confce calls for dialogue to end impasse

The Dhaka divisional conference of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) that ended on Saturday night has adopted a six-point resolution, including call for ending the current political impasse through dialogue, reports UNB.

Briefing newsmen at the party's central office last night, Chairman of the conference preparatory committee and Food Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said the representatives' meet expressed support to the Prime Minister's offer for dialogue to resolve the crisis created by the Opposition.

Flanked by BNP's Dhaka division organising secretary Chowdhury Akmal Ibne Yusuf and Jubo DP President Mirza Abbas, MP, the Food Minister elaborated the proceedings of the Saturday's Hare Road meeting.

Bhuiyan, who is also the BNP Joint Secretary, said that the representatives had free and frank exchange of views and adopted the resolutions to strengthen the party and in-

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City's water demand rises by 1cr litre a day but supply static

The daily water requirement in last six months in the city has increased by one crore litre, raising the supply shortfall to 53 crore litre, which further aggravated the water crisis.

The daily water production and supply of WASA remained static at 76 crore litres against the demand of 129 crore litre. The actual delivery to the subscribers is much less due to a high rate of system loss, about 41 per cent in WASA's count.

The current crisis took a serious turn as hand-tubewells failed to pump out water at many places in the metropolis due to fall in ground water level in the midst of an unusual drought.

A WASA (Water and Sewerage Authority) source told UNB yesterday that in many residential areas water crisis became acute as a few 'influential' people, by using pumps, were sucking water from the main supply lines illegally.

According to WASA's estimate, in last six months, the city's population rose by two lakh, taking the total to 72 lakh.

The only source of WASA's water is underground reserve, which is being lifted by 189 deep tubewells everyday. Besides, there is quite a good number of deep tubewells installed privately, but that number is not known to WASA, although installing a deep tubewell requires permission from it.

All the multi-storied housing complexes in the city, Dhaka University, Engineering University, government houses and other multi-storied commercial buildings have their own deep tubewells.

A distance of 2,000 feet is required from one deep-tubewell to another, which is not being maintained, the source said. This fault is also contributing to the aggravation of the crisis and pushing down the ground water level.

Meanwhile, due to shortage of its vehicles, WASA has made an emergency arrangement with the Fire Brigade for emergency water supply to its subscribers.

To meet the increasing demand, it also went for interim arrangement to install 50 more deep tubewells in the city by June. Some 10 deep tubewells have already been installed and work for installing 40 others is underway, said the source. With the completion of installing 50 deep tubewells, 16 crore litre of water will be added to the present supply, the source maintained.

New deep tubewells under the interim project will be installed in the most crisis areas like Kalyanpur, Salimullah Road in Mohammadpur, Shahjahanpur and few other places.

WASA has also taken up Chandnighat Water Treatment Plant, the only surface water treatment plant.

Eid-ul-Azha on May 11

The holy Eid-ul-Azha, the second religious festival of the Muslim Ummah, will be celebrated in the country on May 11, reports UNB.

The National Moon Sighting Committee took the decision at a meeting at the Islamic Foundation office on the basis of information received from different district administrations and the foundation's offices that the moon, marking the beginning of the month of Zilhajj, was not sighted anywhere in the country yesterday.

Religious Affairs Minister Keramat Ali, who is also the President of the Committee, presided over the meeting.

The month of Zilhajj begins tomorrow as the Zilqad ends today.

Hasina dismisses PM's remarks

COX'S BAZAR, Apr 30: Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina today reiterated that the Prime Minister must resign 90 days ahead of the elections and handover power to a neutral caretaker government to conduct free and fair voting, reports UNB.

Addressing a public meeting at Pekua in Chokoria thana this afternoon, Hasina dismissed the Prime Minister's reported remarks about resignations 90 days before election being unconstitutional.

She said Parliament can be dissolved 90 days before election and the proposed caretaker government will be there for the interim period to conduct election and look after the rou-

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Biswas leaves for UK May 5

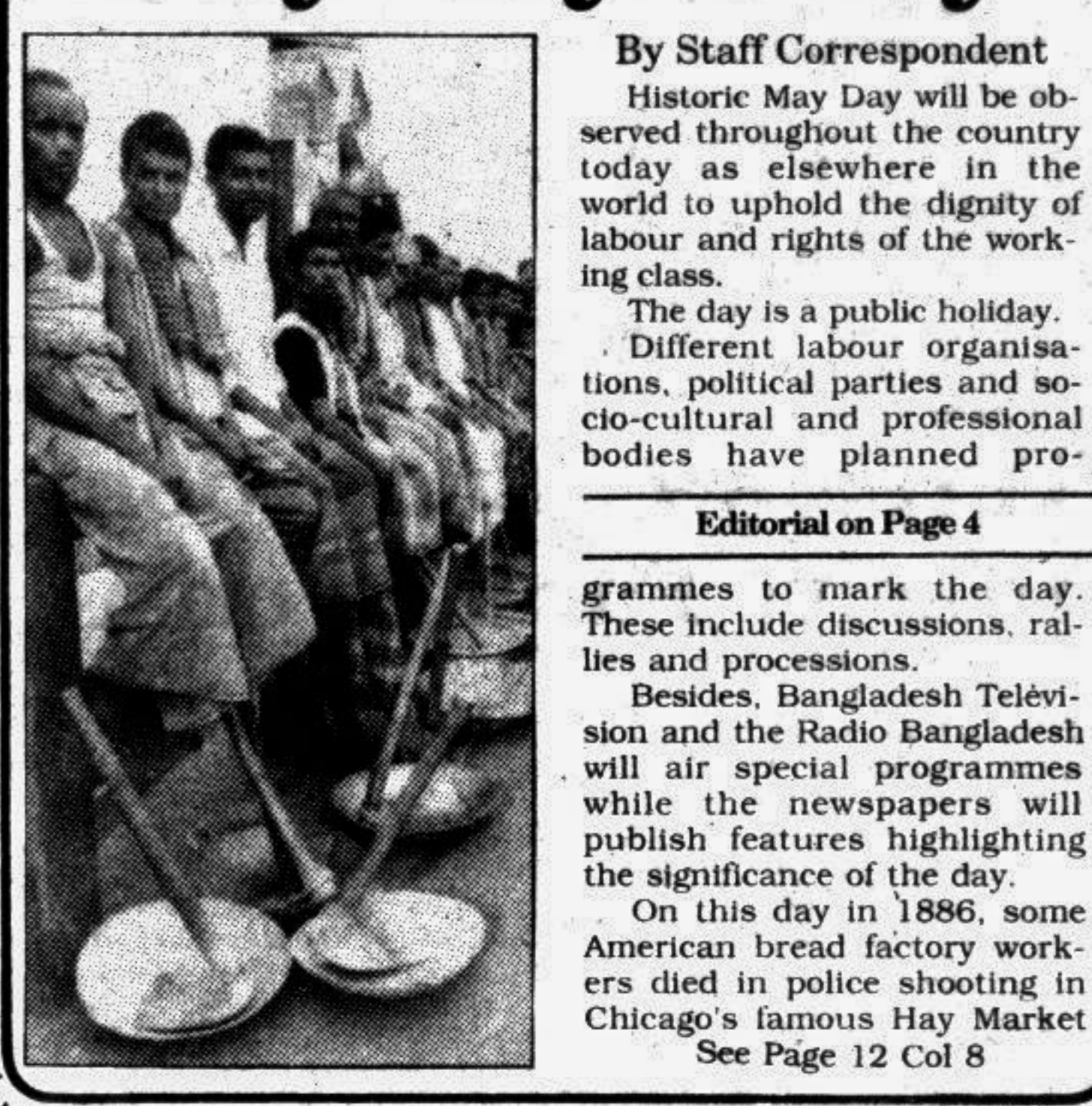
By Staff Correspondent
 President Abdur Rahman Biswas leaves Dhaka on May 5 on a 10-day official visit to Britain.

The President will pay the visit at the invitation of the British government to attend the official programmes in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Victory in World War II.

This is the first official trip of the President outside the country since taking office in

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May Day today



By Staff Correspondent
 Historic May Day will be observed throughout the country today as elsewhere in the world to uphold the dignity of labour and rights of the working class.

The day is a public holiday. Different labour organisations, political parties and socio-cultural and professional bodies have planned programmes to mark the day. These include discussions, rallies and processions.

Besides, Bangladesh Television and the Radio Bangladesh will air special programmes while the newspapers will publish features highlighting the significance of the day.

On this day in 1886, some American bread factory workers died in police shooting in Chicago's famous Hay Market

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Delhi summit begins tomorrow 'SAARC states must beat protectionism'

NEW DELHI, Apr 30: India said today that a South Asian summit meeting this week should boost regional cooperation to beat growing protectionism against developing countries despite a new global trade regime, reports Reuter.

Indian External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee asked the foreign ministers of the seven-member South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to resist moves by the rich nations to raise 'non-trade issues' against the developing countries.

"As you are aware, regional cooperation is increasingly becoming a dynamic instrument of promoting economic growth and development," Mukherjee said, ahead of a May 2-4 SAARC Summit in New Delhi.

"The international trading system has brought about new challenges in the wake of the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations and the establishment of the World Trade Organisation," Mukherjee said.

But, he added: "Despite opportunities, barriers of protectionism against exports of developing countries persist, and, in fact, (we) face the threat of new barriers in the name of non-trade issues."

"Optimising regional potential has become a central strategy in many regions of the world," he said. "We should not be left behind in the dynamic transformation taking place in

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New CJ takes oath today

By Staff Correspondent
 Justice A T M Afzal will take oath today as the 8th Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas will administer the oath at Bangabhaban this morning.

Justice Afzal succeeds Justice Mohammad Habibur Rahman, who retired yesterday after serving as chief justice since February 1 last.

Newly-appointed Chief Justice Abu Taher Md Afzal (A T M Afzal) is scheduled to continue in the position until May 31, 1999 when he should retire on reaching the age of 65.

Born on June 1, 1934, A T M Afzal passed the matriculation examination from the

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CEC seeks cooperation

By Staff Correspondent
 Newly-appointed Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Justice A K M Sadeque has sought cooperation of the political parties in the Election Commission's on-going task of voters' registration and preparing for future elections.

The CEC made the request when two delegations of the Left Democratic Front, an alliance of eight left-leaning political parties, and the Bangladesh Peoples Party met him to submit separately their memoranda, each containing a 25-point proposal.

The memoranda suggested

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Hartals losing support, survey says

By Staff Correspondent
 A sample survey yesterday revealed that hartals had a negative impact on urban people whose dislike of such tactics to press demands was on the rise.

A survey of 100 servicemen, students, businessmen, professionals and labourers of Dhaka said 81 per cent of the respondents spoke against hartals agreeing that these had adverse impacts on their lives.

Yet, they said, limited and peaceful use of the hartal could be an effective political weapon in realising rightful demands, the survey said.

Conducted by a group of students of the International Relations Department of Dhaka University, the survey was aimed at weighing people's perception about hartals and what they thought were good alternatives.

Representing diverse economic and social backgrounds,

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Vote BNP to safeguard democracy: Khaleda

MIRPUR (Kushtia), Apr 30: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today urged the people to renew their mandate in favour of her party for safeguarding independence and democracy and maintaining the current trend of development, reports UNB.

It has been proved that continuity of democracy can change the lot of common man and ensure development of the country, she said addressing a mammoth public meeting at the Thana Parishad ground here and urged the people to give right decision in the coming polls.

She said the opposition parties resorted to destructive activities because they did not want development of the country, and urged the people to withdraw their support from those who believe in destruction and arson.

The Prime Minister said her government had succeeded in placing the country to a dignified position in the

See Page 12 Col 8

Trade & Investment Promotion wing at Foreign Ministry

The government has set up a new wing at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to promote trade and investment, a spokesman of the Ministry said yesterday, reports BSS.

The Trade and Investment Promotion (TIP) wing of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would act as facilitator to promote trade and investment, the spokesman said.

The functions of the new wing, he said, would include coordination with the Bangladesh missions abroad.

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Killing of pro-BNP activists: 6 held

From Our Correspondent
 NARAYANGANJ, Apr 30: Six persons were arrested in connection with yesterday's killing of two pro-BNP political activists at Pagla under Fatullah thana.

Humayun Kabir and Abu Siddiq Bhuijo were shot dead during clashes between supporters of the BNP and the Awami League.

Police failed to give political identity of those arrested. They are: Monir, 22, Abdul

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Hartal observed in Narsingdi

NARSINGDI, Apr 30: A dawn-to-dusk hartal, called by a ruling party MP to protest the killing of his son, was observed peacefully in the town today, reports UNB.

Masud, 24, son of Shamsuddin Ahmed MP from Narsingdi-1, was gunned down on Saturday as a sequel to the feud between the supporters of two BNP MPs in the town.

An all-party protest rally was also held at the Narsingdi bus stand this afternoon.

Speaking at the rally, Shamsuddin Ahmed MP was bitterly critical of police for not taking any action when his son Masud was killed by the miscreants in their presence.

He demanded immediate arrest of the killers and warned of serious repercussions if the miscreants were spared by anybody.



A young girl yawns as she watches the parade yesterday marking the 20th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War alongside Vietnamese war veterans. — AFP/UNB photo

Public awareness needed to control malaria

By Staff Correspondent
 Malaria cannot be eradicated totally, but it can be controlled through proper treatment at proper time, the Director General (DG) of Health said yesterday.

"We have enough medicine and treatment. What is needed now is creation of awareness among the people about the disease," said the DG, Prof A K Shamsuddin Siddiqy, at a press conference.

Expressing concern over reports of increasing number of malaria cases, he said the authorities were prepared to tackle the situation.

Bangladesh is once again facing an increase in the number of people suffering from malaria particularly in the forested and hilly border areas.

"We cannot eliminate malaria completely with all our might as there is chance of in-

See Page 12 Col 3

3 Janata Bank officials get 10 years' RI

Three Janata Bank officials have been sentenced to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment each for misappropriating bank money amounting to Tk 1.80,000, reports UNB.

Divisional Special Judge M Ansuruddin Sikder on Saturday also fined them to pay Tk 50,000 each, in default to suffer another two years' RI.

The convicts are senior cashier Alamgir Gazi, 36, officer Karimul Haque, 50, and officer Rabiul Hossain, 50 — all of the Janata Bank, Postogola Branch.

According to the prosecution case, accused Alamgir, in collusion with his co-accused, opened an account with the said branch in the name of a fake person and misappropriated Tk 1,80,000 by creating false documents and showing false entry.