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Low flow at Farakka, says Indian team

By Staff Correspondent
 The Indian side at the official level meeting here yesterday told Bangladesh that sufficient water could not be released due to lack of adequate flow of water at Farakka point, according to Water Ministry sources.
 The meeting between a two-member Indian delegation and senior officials from Bangladesh side began at the Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) office. The meeting is due to continue today.
 The Indian officials said that due to slow melting of ice in the Himalayas, withdrawal of water at the upper reaches and less rainfall, water could not be released as per the Ganges water accord, the sources said.
 The Bangladesh side at the meeting informed that the figures so far available from the four monitoring sites — Farakka point, the feeder canal, the navigation lock and those collected from Hardinge Bridge point on several days during each of the 10-day cycles showed a significant drop in the availability of water on the Bangladesh side.
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Main pump of GK Project closed

The main pump of the GK Project was closed yesterday since there is no demand for water at present to raise seedlings, a press release of the Water Development Board (WDB) said in Dhaka, reports BSS.
 The main pump of the project was opened by Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak on March 9 with the beginning of the Kharif season.
 The pump remained operative and supplied water to the farmers for raising seedlings of the crops, the press release said. The pump was closed at 5 pm yesterday since there is no demand for water at present to raise seedlings.
 The press release said if necessary the pump will start functioning again from April 8 on the basis of demand for water from the Farmers' Samity at field level.
 It said the water level of the Padma is adequate for the operation of the pump. There is no problem to keep the pump operational during the current Kharif season, it said.

PM's directives to solve city's waterlogging, ease traffic jam

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed the authorities concerned to solve the city's waterlogging problem and take all possible steps to ease traffic congestion, reports UNB.
 Giving directives at an emergency meeting at her office, the Prime Minister said that waterlogging and traffic jam were causing great difficulty to the city dwellers, particularly in the rainy season.
 Reviewing the progress of ongoing steps in this regard, the Prime Minister emphasised the

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Bangabandhu murder case

3 specific charges against 20

By Staff Correspondent
 Hearing on framing of charges in the Bangabandhu murder case which began yesterday at the court of District and Sessions Judge Dhaka, was adjourned till 10:30 am today.
 During yesterday's proceedings, the judge, Kazi Golam Rasul, also ordered for joint briefing for the media by both the defence and prosecution counsels to avoid distortion of news.
 The charge-framing was earlier deferred twice by the court.
 Special Public Prosecutor Serajul Huq read out the charges brought against the 20 accused in the case. The proceedings began at 11:20 am and continued for about two hours.
 Defence counsels of two of the accused Zobaidda Rashid and Wahab Joarder, pleaded innocence of their clients before the court.
 After hearing the submissions of the lawyers of Zobaidda Rashid and Wahab Joarder, the judge adjourned the day's proceedings till 10:30 am today. The prosecution side wanted continuation of the day's proceedings while the defence side pleaded for adjournment.
 During yesterday's proceedings, five of the accused were produced in the court at around 11:15 am. Begum Zobaidda Rashid, another accused who was released on bail on April 4 last, was not present due to illness, her lawyer Mahbubur Rahman claimed. Fourteen others accused in the case are absconding.
 Mahbubur Rahman was allowed by the court to represent her till further order.
 Charges brought against the 20 accused include conspiracy (under Section 120 B of the Penal Code), murder (under Section 302 of the Penal Code) and destruction of evidence after the murder (under Section 201 of Penal Code).
 During his submission, Serajul Huq also read out the relevant portion of the FIR of the case lodged with the Dhanmondi Police Station, by Mahitul Islam, the then resident PS of President, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
 UNB adds: Reading out the charges, Serajul Huq said the 20 accused should be tried as they committed crime under Section 302 of CrPc by killing Bangabandhu, his 10 family members and few others, including Col Jamil, on August 15 in 1975, in connivance with late Khondker Mostaque Ahmed, Mahbubul Alam Chashi, Risaldar Syed Sarwar Hossain and Capt Mostafa to aggrandise personal and joint interest and ambition.
 The prosecution also proposed charges against the 20 of hatching conspiracy to kill
 See Page 12 Col 3

S Asian Growth Quadrangle

7-point objective announced

The emerging four-nation growth quadrangle has set its 7-point objective and principle to govern the economic cooperation among its member states, reports UNB.
 According to an official announcement made in Dhaka yesterday, the objectives of the subregional grouping were finalised at the April 2 Kathmandu meeting of foreign secretaries of four South Asian countries — Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Bhutan.
 The growth quadrangle in the offing aims at creating an enabling environment for rapid economic development through identification and implementation of specific projects of cooperation in the core economic sectors.
 The sectors are multi-modal transportation and communication, energy, trade and investment facilitation and promotion, tourism optimal and sustainable utilisation of natural resource endowments.
 These projects will serve as "building blocks" for subregional cooperation which will accelerate regional cooperation. These should be supportive of and complementary to national plans of the countries in the growth quadrangle.
 The projects should realise tangible benefits to the people in the subregion in the form of
 See Page 12 Col 7

BNP warns of massive street protests after Eid

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday demanded of the government to release the party leaders and workers immediately, and said otherwise it will be forced to announce massive street protests after Eid-ul-Azha, reports UNB.
 "Release all our leaders and workers forthwith and withdraw all false cases. None will be able to protect you (government) if we start moving against you," he said addressing a big rally in front of the party central office in the city.
 The BNP organised the rally as part of its countrywide demonstration demanding the release of BNP leaders and also withdrawal of "false" cases against the party activists.
 Bhuiyan accused the ruling



BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan addressing a rally in front of the party central office in the city yesterday as part of its countrywide demonstration programme. — Star photo

AL rally at Manik Mia Avenue today

By Staff Correspondent
 Prime Minister and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to address a public meeting organised by the party in the city today.
 Ruling party sources indicated that Sheikh Hasina is expected to focus on some national issues in her speech at the meeting this afternoon.
 Planning for a big gathering today, the AL relocated the meeting venue from Panthapath to Manik Mia Avenue. Senior party leaders including a number of cabinet members are also expected to address the party public meeting.
 The meeting is aimed at reg-
 See Page 12 Col 6

Verdict today on detention of 4 BNP leaders

The High Court yesterday concluded hearing of the habeas corpus cases of four BNP leaders detained under Special Powers Act, reports UNB.
 The judgement is expected today.
 A division bench of the High Court, comprising Justice Mohammad Mozammel Huq and Hasan Amin, heard the four habeas corpus matters.
 Bilkis Akhter, wife of Dr Khondker Mosharraf Hossain, Nilufar Mannan, wife of Abdul Mannan, Afroza Abbas, wife of Mirza Abbas, and Jhorna Roy, wife of Goyeswar Chandra Roy, filed the petitions challenging detention of their husbands un-
 See Page 12 Col 3

21 more get ad-interim bail

Share market scandal

By Staff Correspondent
 The High Court yesterday granted ad-interim bail to twenty-one of the thirty-two persons accused in the share market scam case.
 Twenty of them were granted bail until today, pending hearing of their bail petitions, and another for two months.
 Those who surrendered before the court and obtained the ad-interim bail included Intiyaz Hossain, Chairman of Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), Ms Runa Alam of SES Company Ltd and Aziz Mohammed Bhai of Olympic Industries.
 Prof Mahbub Ahmed, a faculty member of the Dhaka University and director of Securities Consultants Ltd, obtained ad-interim bail for two months, upon a prayer moved by his counsel Barrister Rokanuddin Mahmud to permit him to perform Hajj. A Division Bench comprising Justice Mahmudul Amin Chowdhury and Justice Shah Abu Naveem Mominur Rahman granted bail to Prof Mahbub Ahmed.
 Others obtained bail for a day when their petitions were moved at the far end of the court hour.
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DSE Chairman Intiyaz Hossain (L) and Aziz Mohammed Bhai of Olympic Industries (R), both accused in share market scam cases, coming out of the High Court after they were granted ad-interim bail yesterday. — Star photo

Biman seeks Saudi permission to ferry 1200 more Hajj pilgrims

Biman Bangladesh Airlines is making all-out efforts to carry 1200 more non-ballottee Hajj pilgrims to Jeddah by operating four more flights, reports BSS.
 Biman authorities have already approached the Saudi authorities in Jeddah for obtaining permission for these extra flights and pursuing the matter.
 After receiving permission, Biman will operate four extra flights by adjusting its normal flight schedule, sources said.
 Biman has already ferried 9000 ballottee Hajj pilgrims and completed preparations to carry 7500 non-ballottees.
 Biman has also arranged three extra flights for 822 more non-ballottees after 2000 non-ballottee pilgrims demanded to
 See Page 12 Col 3

Water retention point at Kalyanpur planned

The government is planning to acquire 356 acres of land around the Kalyanpur Pump Station in the city to make a water retention point vital for the eco-system, Dhaka WASA sources said.
 The Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD) Ministry has recently okayed a Tk 185 crore project in this regard and the matter is now awaiting ECNEC approval, sources concerned said.
 The move comes at a time when most of the city's low-lying areas and open spaces are disappearing fast due to rapid urbanisation. The WASA sources pointed out that such a retention point was vital for the city which desperately needs a ground water recharge point.
 Originally, the Kalyanpur Pump Station was built on the concept that it would pump out the water from the retention point around it, from inside the embankment, said a senior WASA official requesting anonymity.
 Despite WASA warnings against land filling and buying or selling of land last year, a large part of the land selected for the retention point in the area was occupied by several real estate companies and individuals. "We will have to acquire the land for the sake of the city and the future generations," said the official. He, however, admitted that it would be a "difficult acquisition process."
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LGC finalises report Four-tier local govt system likely

By Staff Correspondent
 Chairman of the Local Government Commission (LGC) Rahmat Ali, MP, yesterday assured that the Commission, in its report, would recommend a four-tier local government system, to build up democratic institutions across the country.
 The LGC chairman, however, refused to disclose the salient features of the 'almost finalised' report which, he said, would be submitted first to the Prime Minister.
 Rahmat Ali was speaking on the subject at a roundtable conference organised jointly by the Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) and Study and Research Group of the Manabik Shahajya Sangstha in the city. Participants at the roundtable suggested various measures for a strong local government. The strong and powerful local bodies are a prerequisite for any kind of sustainable development and democratisation of the society, they said.
 Presided over by the Vice Chairperson of the FEMA, Abul Ahsan, the roundtable was attended by participants from different professions including legislators, teachers and researchers.
 Without disclosing anything specific, the LGC chairman said that while preparing the outline of the future local government system the committee had specifically addressed the issues like component, functions
 See Page 12 Col 4

N'ganj fire: CID to probe case against jute co MD, directors

From Our Correspondent
 NARAYANGANJ, Apr 6: CID will conduct the investigation into the case lodged against the Managing Director and four directors of the Popular Jute Exchange by the OC of Narayanganj thana, sources concerned said.
 A CID team visited the jute godowns today which were gutted in a fire last week and collected different samples as evidence.
 It was alleged in the case that the fire was started, destroying state properties, in order to make a profit illegally through false insurance claims.
 Promotion of 64 deputy secys recommended
 By Staff Correspondent
 The Superior Selection Board (SSB) has recommended for promotion of 64 out of 120 deputy secretaries in the administrative cadre to the rank of joint secretary, according to sources concerned.
 Chaired by Cabinet Secretary Ataul Huq, the SSB meeting on Saturday also recommended for promotion of five joint secretaries to the rank of additional secretary.
 There will be a few more meetings of the SSB to finalise the promotions, the sources said.
 Earlier last month, 24 deputy secretaries were recommended for promotion.
 The SSB meeting was also attended by Establishment Secretary, Finance Secretary, Law Secretary and Comptroller of Accounts and the Auditor General.
 See Page 12 Col 2

New S Asian grouping only to serve Indian purpose

The planned South Asian Growth Quadrangle will facilitate Indian economic aggression, geographical hegemony and military designs, threatening the sovereignty of Bangladesh.
 This was observed at a seminar on 'Regional Cooperation, National Sovereignty and Security' at the Engineers Institution in the city yesterday, reports UNB.
 Foreign secretaries of Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Bhutan in a meeting in Kathmandu on Wednesday decided to

Seminar in city told

of a three-day Conference on National Solidarity organised by a forum of intellectuals.
 BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia inaugurated the conference on Saturday.
 Focusing on geo-physical scenario of the eastern Himalayan region, Prof Emajuddin said, "India desperately needs 60-mile-long Chumbak valley and 18-mile-long Siliguri corridor for its military strategy."
 He warned that India with the world's fourth largest army and sixth largest air force would use Bangladesh as its hinterland taking the advantage of the regional cooperation in case of an extensive war.
 Emajuddin also sounded the possibility of advancing Indian troops through Bangladesh territory to quench insurgency in

the 'Seven Sisters'.
 Prof Muhammad Abdur Rob of the Geography and Environment Department of DU blamed New Delhi for conspiring to implement 'Indian doctrine' aiming at establishing its supremacy over entire South Asia by floating a fresh regional cooperation at their dictates.
 In a paper on 'Sub-Regional Grouping: Security and Sovereign Existence of Bangladesh,' Dr Rob observed that India wants to become the only guiding force in the region.
 Opposing the planned Asian