

GDP GROWTH TO FALL

Statistics Bureau and BB say the rate will be 6-6.2pc this fiscal year

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BATMAN IS BACK

The Snyder-Capullo team tops the graphic books bestsellers list

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BASSEM YOUSSEF'S ELBERNAMEG

A Cairo court rejects a petition to ban the popular comedy show

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SIX VIOLENCE CASES

Bail denied

Court sends Fakhrul, 7 others to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eight senior BNP leaders, including Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, Moudud Ahmed and Mirza Abbas, were sent to jail yesterday in connection with "torching vehicles, assaulting police and preventing them from discharging their duties" during opposition agitations.

The leaders appeared before Dhaka courts and sought bails in the seven cases filed by police against them with police stations in the capital on December 9, 2012, and March 2 and 6, 2013.

The courts rejected the bail petitions and ordered them to be sent to jail, drawing sharp a reaction from BNP-led 18-party opposition alliance, which almost instantly declared a two-day hartal from tomorrow morning on top of Hefajat-e Islam's hartal today.

Outraged, opposition activists brought out procession and in cases resorted violence at many places in the country.

As many as 148 BNP leaders, including Opposition

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Hefajat breaks BNP's heart

Angry at soft programme, main opposition decides not to support its hartal today

SHAKHAWAT LITON and RASHIDUL HASAN

Just a day's hartal called by the Hefajat-e Islam appears to have upset the BNP, which wanted tougher action from the Islamist group to make April a turning point in the opposition alliance's oust-govt movement.

The main opposition party had expected that Hefajat men from their Motijheel rally on Saturday would announce agitation programmes such as non-stop shut-downs or sit-ins for several days.

It also decided to support Hefajat actions and supplement those by enforcing more hartals and blockades.

The BNP had relied upon stalwarts of some Islamist parties that are its alliance partners to convince the Hefajat top leadership to go for tougher programmes.

The Islamist leaders, who also hold posts in Hefajat,

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HARTAL

Today, tomorrow, day after

5 of 10 April days set to end in whimper; 10 vehicles torched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country lurches into yet another spell of hartals this morning amid fears of violence and a further blow to the economy, education and life of people.

Hefajat-e Islam on Saturday called a dawn-to-dusk hartal for today while the BNP-Jamaat-led 18-party opposition yesterday declared a 36-hour countrywide hartal from tomorrow.

Minutes after the announcement of the

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A bus set ablaze at the capital's Kakrail yesterday afternoon, on the eve of the daylong hartal of Hefajat-e Islam. The BNP-led 18-party alliance has also called a 36-hour hartal starting tomorrow.

Outraged

Over 30 organisations react angrily at assault of female journo; Hefajat says sorry but 'its activists' rough up 3 lensmen in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women's rights activists, citizens' groups and journalists yesterday strongly condemned the assault on ETV journalist Nadia Sharmin by Hefajat-e Islam supporters.

Expressing grave concern over the regressive and anti-women stances of the radical Islamist group, they said Hefajat's demands undermine women's rights and the group seems bent on pushing the women back to an era of darkness.

The Qawmi madrasa-based Islamist organisation, however, denies its involvement in the assault.

Addressing a press conference yesterday, its leaders claimed government supporters had infiltrated into the rally venue and staged the attack.

When journalists provided proof of Hefajat men's involvement, the Islamist leaders expressed regret over the incident.

Besides Nadia, three other journalists were attacked while covering Hefajat's programme in the capital on Saturday.

Meanwhile in Chittagong, three photojournalists were assaulted by pro-hartal pickets at Kazir Dewri yesterday.

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13 demands for real disaster

React jurists, rights activists at Hefajat's conditions

WASIM BIN HABIB

Women's empowerment will not only be severely hindered but Bangladesh will also go backward if the demands of Hefajat-e-Islam are met, observed jurists and women's rights activists yesterday.

The Hefajat demands also go against the country's constitution, which was formulated through upholding the spirit of the Liberation War, they said, urging political leaders to stop appeasing such reactionary groups.

Dr Kamal Hossain, chief of the constitution drafting committee set up in early 1972, said the constitution, which was formulated on the basis of national unity and the spirit of the Liberation War, still exists in the country and whatever needs to be considered has to be

made in line with the ethos of the constitution.

"Anyone may demand anything, but we have to consider the context of the formulation of the constitution. We have to take a strong stance on the fundamental aspects of the constitution and preserve them," said the eminent jurist.

Noted jurist Dr Shahdeen Malik said the 13 demands were clearly a recipe for turning the country backward.

"There will be an end to Bangladesh as we know it today if these demands are met," he said, adding that religious organisations and political parties all seem to be coming out, probably out of a lack of understanding of social forces and social dynamics, to

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IN MEMORY OF
HUMAYUN ZAHIR
Founder, Chairman, Ananta Group
On His 20th Death Anniversary

On this day 20 years ago, you did not pass away
Immortal is what you simply became
A beacon of goodness and an epitome of fame

In the few years you stayed on this earth,
Your accomplishments in enterprise and social areas, had no dearth
So many lives you changed and saved, Power and glamour you never craved
Sinister threats you had braved, of some who were corrupt and depraved

Your good deeds are like trees that have grown
Your forbearers carry forward the fruits of the seeds you have sown
You look down with pride seeing that the path they have taken
is what you have shown
And with you are angels and you are never alone

May your name and what you have created remain
Surviving the withering hands of time
And may your legacy grow forever more
Making your memory sublime.

--- On behalf of all the staff and workers of the
ANANTA GROUP

Country's first human death from bird flu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 23-month-old boy from Choddogram in Comilla has died from bird flu virus.

This is the first death from the deadly flu in the country, said Mahmudur Rahman, director of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) in Dhaka.

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Beaten up, tendons of legs cut off

Shibir-BNP rogues ensure death of Jubo League man

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A local Jubo League leader was killed as Jamaat-Shibir and BNP activists beat him up and severed tendons of his legs at Kalai upazila in Joypurhat district yesterday morning.

The dead, Towhidul Islam Sabuj, 30, son of

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