

GDP GROWTH TO SLOW
 UN says Bangladesh will see the rate at around 6pc this fiscal year
 PAGE B1

UNBOUNDED INFLEXIBILITY
 Behaviour of our political leaders surprises, perhaps amuses, the fast-moving world
 PAGE 14

IMF CHIEF IN TROUBLE
 Christine Lagarde will be grilled for huge state payout to a tycoon
 PAGE 7



BANGLADESHIS AT GREECE FARM 32 shot as they asked for salary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 At least 32 Bangladeshi workers have been shot and injured on a strawberry farm in Greece after they demanded their arrears.
 Having survived without any payment for the last six months, some 150 Bangladeshi employees of the firm, Vagela Kos, went on a strike on Wednesday, BM Jamal Hossain, counsellor of the Bangladeshi embassy in Greece, told The Daily Star by phone.
 The farm owner, Nicolas Vagela Kos, threatened that he would not pay the arrears if the demonstrators did not go back to work. But the agitating Bangladeshis refused to do so until their arrears were paid, Jamal said.
 Then two staff of the farm opened fire on the workers, leaving 32 wounded, he added.
 On information, Greek police rushed to the spot and arrested the owner of the farm in Nea Manolada -- about 260km west of Athens and an area where thousands of



Bangladeshi worker Mohamed is helped by colleagues into a tent in the southwestern Greek town of Manolada yesterday, following the shooting incident on Wednesday evening that left dozens of Bangladeshis at a strawberry farm injured.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Change nat'l constitution, if need be

Hefajat asks govt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

The government must amend the constitution if any of the 13-point demands of Hefajat-e-Islam contradicted with the national charter, said leaders of the Islamist organisation yesterday.
 At a grand rally in the division, they also warned of waging a movement to oust the government, if it does not comply with the demands before their ultimatum expires.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

Correction

In our yesterday's report "Yunus given rare honour", it was inadvertently mentioned that Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad

SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

GRAMEEN BANK

Govt moves to pick 'educated' directors

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

The government plans to amend electoral rules of Grameen Bank to pick "competent and educated" directors for the lender, where members generally elect nine borrower-directors from among rural women.
 Analysts say the move goes against the spirit of the Nobel winning microlender, which supports the very poor people and is owned by the poor, rural women.
 The finance ministry on Tuesday formed a two-member committee to

draft the rules within a month.

The new development came days after Finance Minister AMA Muhith termed the electoral system of the lender undemocratic and unauthorised.
 At the bank, the nine women directors are elected for three years from among the borrowers, while the government nominates the rest three directors, including the chairman, to the 12-member board.
 Muhith said the government planed to amend election rules to phase out the current board, includ-

ing the nine women directors.

Last year, the government formed the Grameen Bank Commission to review the activities of the bank and 54 other organisations that bear the word "Grameen" in their names.
 The commission was asked to make recommendations on how to run the organisations.
 The commission in its interim report said the nine women directors of Grameen Bank were not "qualified and educated" enough to be on the board.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5

Watch abuse of mosque mikes

PM alerts all over Fatikchhari incident

BSS, UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon all to remain alert about the anti-liberation forces using mosques, madrasas and their students in destructive activities.
 Referring to the recent mayhem in Fatikchhari, she urged all including the ruling Awami League men to be alert to make sure that the anti-liberation forces cannot violate the sanctity of the holy places again.
 She was addressing a view exchange meeting with the grassroots leaders and workers of Patuakhali district unit Awami League at Gono Bhaban.
 Blasting the opposition BNP and

SEE PAGE 19 COL 2

Attack AL like in Fatikchhari

BNP-led alliance spurs activists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Top leaders of the BNP-led 18-party alliance yesterday asked its activists to carry out the "fiercest attacks" on anti-hartal leaders and activists of the ruling Awami League as in Fatikchhari of Chittagong.
 They made the call at a rally in front of the BNP's central office at the capital's Nayapaltan.
 The city unit of the alliance organised the rally protesting the government's "failure to find out Ilias Ali", and demanding restoration of the caretaker government system for holding general elections.
 M Ilias Ali, BNP organising secretary, disappeared in April last year.
 During hartal hours on April 11, Jamaat-e-Islami, a key component of the opposition alliance, and Hefajat-e-Islam, joined in by locals following announcements over loudspeakers, attacked an anti-hartal procession in Fatikchhari, leaving three AL men killed and scores injured.
 According to law enforcers, the attack was a planned one, as around

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

VICTIM OF NEGLECT



Tethered to the electricity pole, the body of Power Development Board employee Habibur hangs near Bakalia Fultala canal in Chittagong city yesterday. The wires were live and no safety gear is seen on him. Considering that some readers could feel traumatised, The Daily Star published the photo blurred with intent that the authorities concerned would make sure their employees have proper safety gear while doing hazardous jobs.

PHOTO: STAR

PADMA BRIDGE CORRUPTION

WB bans Lavalin for 10 years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Bank has banned from its project Canadian company SNC-Lavalin and over 100 of its partners for 10 years over the firm's misconduct in the Padma bridge project and another WB-funded project in Cambodia.
 "The debarment is part of a Negotiated Resolution Agreement between the World Bank and SNC-Lavalin Group following a

World Bank investigation into allegations of bribery schemes involving SNC-Lavalin Inc. and officials in Bangladesh," the WB said in a statement yesterday.
 The ban could be reduced to eight years if the company complies with all conditions of the agreement, it added.
 SNC-Lavalin accepted the punitive action and said in a statement that it would try to stick to business ethics in future.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

Container slips off freight train

One killed at slum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man was killed and 10 others were injured as a container of a Chittagong-bound freight train fell on a slum along the rail tracks in the capital's Banani area yesterday.
 The dead, Majibur Rahman, 35, a rickshaw-puller, was sleeping at his shanty at that time. His three-year-old son Zahidul Islam is among the injured.
 The identity of the other injured, including a woman and three more children, could not be known immediately.
 The accident occurred due to a sudden jerk near Sainik Club in Chairmanbari area of Banani around 12:30pm.
 Abdul Majid, officer-in-charge of Kamalapur Railway

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

Mahmudur taken to hospital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka Central Jail authorities sent Mahmudur Rahman, acting editor of Bangla daily Amar Desh, to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) as he became sick yesterday afternoon.
 Forman Ali, senior superintendent of Dhaka Central Jail, said Mahmudur was sent to BSMMU around 5:00pm as he fell ill due to

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1