



WITH TODAY'S ISSUE
STAR WEEKEND

SONGS OF SOUL
 Ferdousi Rahman writes on the link between folk songs and Bangalee psyche
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'A BRUTAL DICTATOR'
 Assad has no legitimacy to lead Syria, says John Kerry
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CITY CORPORATION ELECTIONS 2015

Cornered BNP vs upbeat AL

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With polls to three city corporations only a month away, archrivals Awami League and BNP are in contrasting moods. While the ruling AL is preparing to launch its campaign on full throttle, opposition BNP finds itself in a difficult situation.

The BNP camp is in a dilemma about its campaign plan, as many of its men are on the run to avoid arrest. Its leaders from top to bottom face numerous cases filed against them over the last four-five years. Many BNP leaders, including its acting secretary general, are behind bars.

Mayoral aspirants in the capital Abdul Awal Mintoo, an adviser to BNP chief Khaleda Zia, and Abdus Salam, treasure of

the party, themselves stand accused in several cases over street violence.

Moreover, the party's central office at Nayapaltan has remained locked since January 5.

Some senior BNP leaders fear that the prevailing situation will appear as a big challenge for them to campaign for their mayoral hopefuls in the elections to the three city corporations -- two in Dhaka and one in Chittagong.

'WE'RE IN TROUBLE'

To seek relief, the BNP on Wednesday sent a delegation to the Election Commission, insiders said.

The delegation of pro-BNP professionals at a meeting with the chief election

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Australia players celebrate the fall of India's Ravindra Jadeja's (not in picture) wicket during the second semifinal of the ICC World Cup at the Sydney Cricket Ground yesterday.

Homage to martyrs
Independence Day celebrated



STAR REPORT

The nation yesterday celebrated the 45th Independence Day, paying rich tributes to three million martyrs who made the supreme sacrifice to free the country from Pakistani rule through a bloody war in 1971.

On March 26, Bangalees launched the Liberation War against the Pakistani junta that denied Awami League its legitimate right to form government, although it won absolute majority in parliament in the 1970 general elections.

PHOTOS ON PAGE 5, 11

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Cup to go down under

Australia thrash India; meet co-host New Zealand in Sunday's final

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AFP, Sydney

Australia put themselves in line for a fifth World Cup title with an emphatic 95-run semi-final victory over defending champions India in Sydney on Thursday.

Steve Smith hammered 105 off 93 balls and Aaron Finch returned to form with 81 as the hosts piled up 328 for seven after electing to bat on a good pitch at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

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CRASH IN FRENCH ALPS
Co-pilot 'willfully' crashed the plane

REUTERS, Paris/Seyne-les-Alpes

A young German co-pilot locked himself alone in the cockpit of Germanwings flight 9525 and set it on course to crash into an Alpine mountain, killing all 150 people on board including himself, prosecutors said yesterday.

French prosecutors offered no motive for why 28-year-old Andreas Lubitz apparently took the controls of the Airbus A320, locked the captain out of the cockpit and deliberately set it veering down from cruising altitude at 3,000 feet per minute.

MORE ON PAGE 14 SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Teenage boy killed in blast

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

An 18-year-old boy was killed as a crude bomb abandoned in a shopping bag went off at Daudpur village under Nawabganj upazila yesterday afternoon.

The dead, Md Monirul Islam, was from Akhira village in the upazila. He ran a small grocery shop on Daudpur-Bhaduria road, some 80 kilometres away

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TOP QUOTE

"I still don't think we played the perfect game yet. We have improved every game and now we are excited to be in

AUSTRALIAN CAPTAIN
MICHAEL CLARKE
 AFTER HIS TEAM THRASHED INDIA IN THE WORLD CUP SEMI-FINAL

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Congrats to Australia on reaching the Final

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