



## WITH TODAY'S ISSUE



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## MUNICIPALITY ELECTIONS 2015



# Arrests upset BNP hopefuls

Party claims 500 of its prospective candidates detained this month

RASHIDUL HASAN

The BNP is worried about finding suitable candidates for the upcoming municipality polls as over 500 of its prospective contenders have been arrested this month, party insiders claimed.

Many BNP leaders are also in hiding to avoid arrest, they added.

Moreover, several grassroots BNP leaders said they fear their party's prospective candidates and their supporters might face the wrath of ruling Awami League men before, during, and after the polls.

"The local government elections would not change the government. Who will protect our men if the local Awami League men target our leaders for contesting the polls or our activists for working for our party candidates?" said Mahbub Hossain Piaru, president of Khulna's Sonadanga chapter of Jubo Dal, youth wing of the BNP.

"We are the ones who have to stay in our areas after the local body elections are over. Neither the police nor the BNP central leaders will come forward to protect us if the Awami League men take revenge centring on the elections," another BNP grassroots leader of Khulna said, wishing anonymity.

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## AL may face rebel trouble

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE and WASIM BIN HABIB

With the municipal polls about a month away, grassroots leaders of the ruling Awami League are posing as each other's rivals for mayoral posts at many municipalities.

Though such rivalry was commonplace in past elections too, the trouble over possible rebel candidates may only get bigger this time as the polls to 245 municipalities would be held in partisan manner, unlike in the past.

In many municipalities, multiple leaders announced that they would vie for the post of mayor in the polls, likely to be held in the last week of December.

Posters of many mayoral hopefuls have already been hung while the aspirants themselves have launched informal, door to door

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Sadia Islam Mou and her dance troupe entertained the crowd last night alongside local and international stars such as Momtaz Begum, Ayub Bacchu, Jacqueline Fernandez, KK and Hrithik Roshan during the Bangladesh Premier League's opening ceremony at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



## UNSC resolution planned to declare war on ISIS

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

World powers are poised to forge a single resolution at the United Nations Security Council to declare a common war against ISIS and "eradicate" jihadists in Iraq and Syria, The Independent understands.

The attacks in Paris as well as the downing of the Russian jet over the Sinai Peninsula have galvanised a hitherto divided Security Council. And a new reality exists: with its alleged execution this week of a Chinese national, Isis has now

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## 27 killed as gunmen siege Mali hotel

Security forces free 170 hostages after attack by Qaeda-linked Islamists

AGENCIES

At least 27 people were reported dead yesterday after Malian commandos stormed a hotel seized by Islamist gunmen to rescue 170 people, many of them foreigners, trapped in the building.

The jihadist group Al Mourabitoun, allied to al-Qaeda and based in the desert north of the former French colony, claimed responsibility for the attack. The former French colony has been battling Islamist rebels for years.

More than seven hours after the initial assault, a security source declared the drama over, along with the deaths of two militants.

"The attackers no longer have hostages," spokesman Amadou Sangho said.

France's defence minister said that notorious Algerian militant Mokhtar Belmokhtar was "likely behind" the attack but acknowledged it was not certain.

Jean-Yves Le Drian said several countries had long been searching for Belmokhtar, head of the jihadist group Al-Murabitoun, reported AFP.

Belmokhtar is blamed for a large-scale assault on an Algerian gas field in 2013 and a major figure in insurgencies across North Africa.

A UN official said UN peacekeepers searching the hotel had made a preliminary count of 27 bodies.

State television showed troops brandishing AK47s in the lobby of the Radisson Blu, one of the capital Bamako's smartest hotels and beloved of

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## Fresh attack on Bangladesh?

IS propaganda magazine warns

STAR REPORT

In the latest edition of its propaganda magazine, terror group Islamic State has claimed responsibility for the attacks on two foreigners in Bangladesh and warned that it is preparing for fresh attacks.

The new issue titled "Just Terror" of its English-language online magazine Dabiq, in its foreword, talks about the horrific attacks in France in which explosions and shooting at separate entertainment sites in Paris claimed 129 lives last Friday.

The militant group's strategic expansion to countries like Bangladesh is also talked about at length in the magazine and an

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## EXECUTION OF MOJAHEED, SQ CHY

# Waiting for mercy plea decisions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Condemned war criminals Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed and Salauddin Quader Chowdhury have yet to inform the authorities whether they would seek presidential clemency, sources in Dhaka Central Jail said yesterday.

The authorities asked Mojaheed and Salauddin around noon whether the two would seek the mercy, the last option for them to avoid gallows.

Both of them said they would inform the prison officials about their decision later, according to the sources.

On Thursday, the Supreme Court released its full verdicts that dismissed the petitions of Jamaat leader Mojaheed and BNP leader Salauddin to review their death sentences originally handed down by two war crimes tribunals in 2013.

Later in the day around 10:00pm, jail officials read out the SC verdicts to the war crimes convicts.

Around 7:30pm yesterday, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal told this newspaper that he was not informed whether the two would seek presidential mercy.

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## BNP seeks security for Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday demanded that the government beef up security for Khaleda Zia upon her arrival in Bangladesh in view of what it said "deterioration" in law and order.

In a statement, BNP spokesperson Asaduzzaman Ripon said, "Khaleda Zia is returning from London in an Emirates flight at 5:00pm Saturday. We're worried about her security due to a slide in the country's law and order."

"We urge the government to take steps to intensify the former prime minister's security as her security is inadequate."

On September 16,

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## IS threatens attack on White House

REUTERS, Washington

Islamic State militants released a video on Thursday threatening the White House with suicide bombings and car blasts and vowing to conduct more attacks on France.

The six-minute video released by Islamic State fighters in Iraq applauds last week's Paris attacks, according to a translation of the Arabic provided by the Maryland-based SITE Intelligence Group.

The latest threat comes one day after the militant group put out a video showing scenes of New York City, which suggested it was also a target.

Islamic State, which controls a large territory in Syria and Iraq, has claimed responsibility for last Friday's attacks in Paris in which 129 people were killed.

FBI Director James Comey said on Thursday he was not aware of any credible threat of a "Paris-type attack" in the United States.

State Department spokesman John Kirby told CNN that Thursday's video

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A shoal of fish at a fish enclosure created on a wetland in Jhalakathi Sadar upazila. Some 30 people have taken up a pisciculture project using waterlogged non-agricultural land. Left, Kajol Rani, one of those participating in the fish farming.

PHOTO: JAHIRUL ISLAM JEWEL

## Turning a swamp into fish farm

JAHIRUL ISLAM JEWEL with ANDREW EAGLE

"It's a great pleasure to feed the fish each day," says an enthusiastic Kajol Rani Howlader of Choupala Bazar in Jhalakathi sadar upazila, standing beside an unlikely fish enclosure built on swampy, disused land. "We have thousands of fish and after throwing feed, there are so many that anybody can touch them," she says.

Kajol Rani is participating in a new style of pisciculture and vegetable growing project that aims to utilise waterlogged non-agricultural land to improve people's lives.

To ask the ten women in the group of thirty locals involved in the project, is to hear how their husbands used to pass days in idle gossip in tea-shops while wives were busy with household chores. It all changed last July, thanks to the BRAC-organised project, championed in particular by the women.

"We have the chance to earn some money," says a thrilled Kajol Rani.

Md Shahalam Mia, the team's group leader, says, "At first we managed fifteen acres. It was covered in weeds and water hyacinth. We made the enclosure there, in preparation for fish production."

The weeds and hyacinth were meanwhile used in creating floating beds for simultaneous vegetable farming.

"Our project cost was about four lakh takas, including the purchase of fish fry," Mia explains. BRAC helped with finance but each group member has invested 5,000 taka.

The aim is for each family to achieve up to

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## Armed Forces Day today

BSS, Dhaka

The country is set to celebrate Armed Forces Day today to mark the founding of army, navy and air force during the Liberation War.

"On this day during the great war of Liberation in 1971, the Bangladesh Armed Forces comprising army, navy and air force came into being and launched an all-out attack on the Pakistani occupation forces," said an ISPR statement yesterday.

The day's programme will begin with the offering of special prayers after Fazr prayers in all mosques in the cantonments, naval and air force bases across the country, seeking divine blessings for the well-being and prosperity of the nation and progress of the armed forces.

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday issued messages greeting members of the armed forces on the occasion.

"[On this occasion] I am recalling the memory of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who declared the independence of the country on March

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