

DABLU MURDER
RCC councillor
candidate held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion has arrested a councillor candidate of the upcoming Rajshahi City Corporation election and 5 others in Dhaka and Gazipur in connection with Dablu murder in Rajshahi.

They are Mahfuzur Rahman, the candidate of ward no. 7; Asad Ali, Rimon Hosen, Mohd Sony, Mohd Rajib, and Amir Sohel Chandra.

On information from Rab-5, the prime accused Mahfuz, Asad and Rimon were arrested by Rab-1 at Cantonment Rail Station, Dhaka on Friday afternoon.

Later, the law enforcers arrested Sony, Rajib and Sohel in Gazipur early yesterday.

Our staff correspondent from Rajshahi said Mahfuzur, a Jubo League activist, led a local gang, "Maya group".

On May 22, the group gunned down Dablu, acting Jubo League president of the ward, in a factional clash in the city. Rab-1 said Mahfuz admitted the killing.

Ex-army officer
'commits suicide'
in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A retired army officer allegedly committed suicide in his residence at Paikpara in the capital yesterday.

His body was found hanging from the ceiling.

The officer, identified as Maj Nazmul Hasan Sarkar, 50, had used a nylon rope to commit suicide, claimed Mirpur police Sub-inspector Towhidul Arefin.

Police made the discovery around 4:00pm, when neighbours reported an odour wafting from his one-roomed tin-shed house.

Nazmul was separated from his wife and he had no children, added Towhidul.

Neighbours reported to police that he was estranged from his other family members and relatives as well.

The police suspected that Nazmul had been suffering from depression.

The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy.

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দক্ষিণ মখী ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়

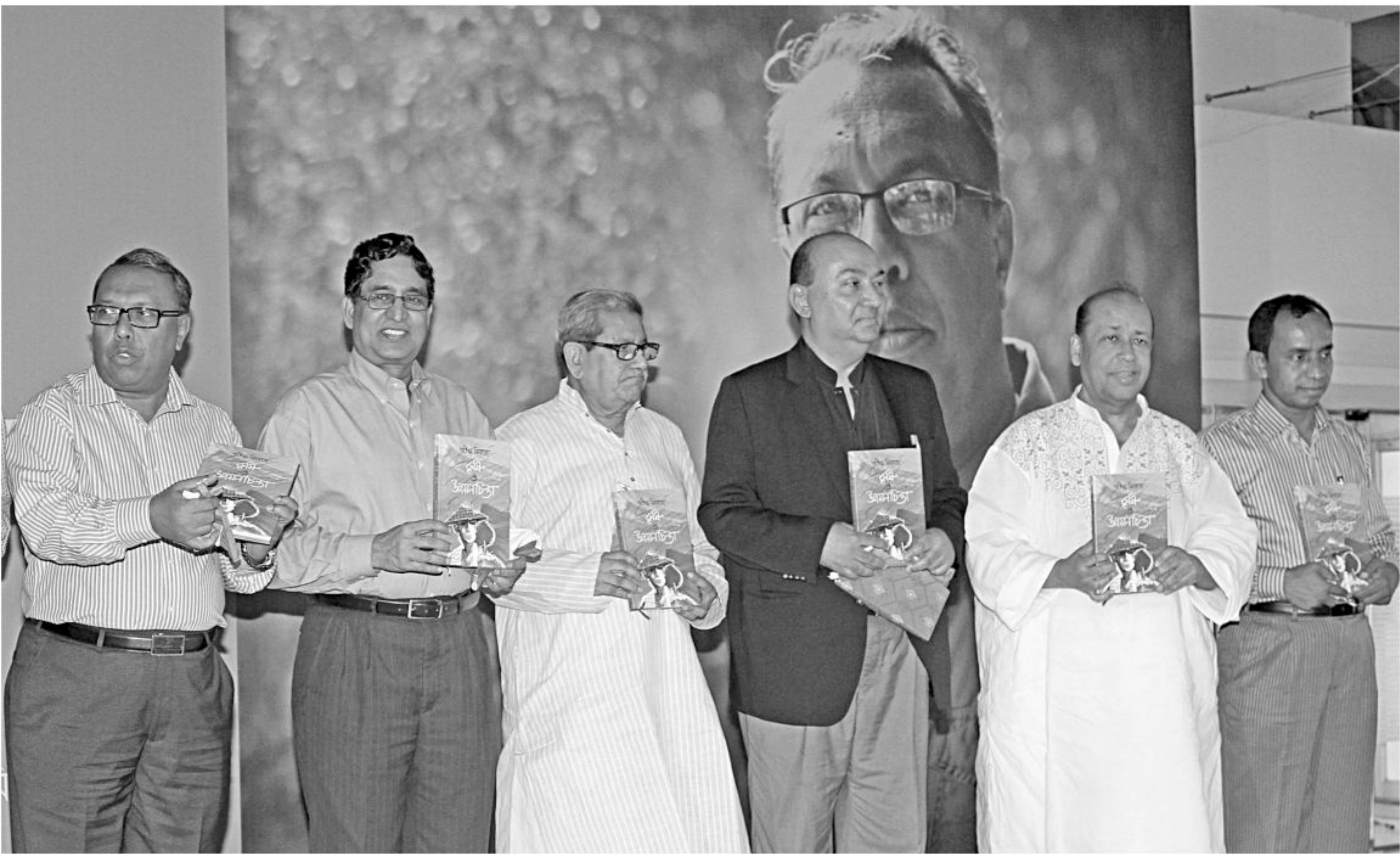
পুরাতন ঢাকা স্বামীবাগে মেইন রোড সংলগ্ন দক্ষিণমখী ও আধুনিক সকল সুবিধাসহ ১১০০, ১৩৯৮, ১৪৪০, ১৫৪০ এবং ১৬৫২ বর্গফুটের লাক্সারী ফ্ল্যাট কিস্তিতে বিক্রয়। যোগাযোগ- ০১৯১২৭৬৬৫৩০, ০১৯১২০৩৭০০৮

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From left, Media personality Shykh Seraj, Food Minister Dr Abdur Razzak, Professor Emeritus Anisuzzaman, Asian Development Bank official Parvez Imdad, Channel i Managing Director Faridur Reza Sagar, and Chandrabati Academy Executive Director Kamruzzaman Kajal with copies of the new book "Krishi o Unnyanchinta", authored by Seraj and published by Chandrabati Academy, at the Channel i office in the capital yesterday.

Social accountability of
govt can help fight graft

International conference told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Social accountability of the government can help people combat corruption in public offices, speakers said at an international conference in the capital yesterday.

Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) organised the two-day conference on "Social Accountability in Practice: Lessons, Challenges and Way Forward" at Brac Centre Inn.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of MJF, said social accountability is a powerful tool for combating corruption in the state mechanism and establishing people's rights in the government's delivery system, particularly in health and education sectors, that are often plagued with corruption and nepotism.

"Lack of power to have a say in decision making affects people's life and empowerment," said Richard Butterworth, head of governance at British aid agency DFID Bangladesh.

Right to information is a powerful tool to ensure social accountability of the governance system, said Dr Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh.

Dr Atiur Rahman, governor of Bangladesh Bank, also spoke, among others, at the conference attended by NGO representatives from home and abroad including from India, Pakistan, Philippines, Cambodia and the US.



From left, TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman, Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr Atiur Rahman, Manusher Jonno Foundation's (MJF) Governing Board Member Barrister Manzoor Hasan, Head of Governance of DFID Bangladesh Richard Butterworth, and Executive Director of MJF Shaheen Anam at a conference styled "Social Accountability in Practice: Lessons, Challenges and Way Forward" organised by MJF at Brac Centre Inn in the capital yesterday.

SHAMIM SARKAR'S DEATH IN 'POLICE TORTURE'

Family demands capital
punishment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Family members of Shamim Sarkar, allegedly tortured to death in police custody in Savar on Thursday, demanded capital punishment for those involved.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Shamim's brother Amin Sarker said, "It should be ensured that the accused do not get out through legal loopholes."

A Dhaka court yesterday granted a five-day remand for the prime accused, Akidul Islam, assistant sub-inspector of Savar Police Station, who was arrested from the capital's Gabtoli on Friday night.

"Akidul was absconding since the incident," said Savar Police Station Officer-in-Charge Mostafa Kamal.

Police also formed two three-member committees to investigate the incident, informed Dhaka Superintendent of Police Habibur Rahman yesterday.

Five policemen were accused in a murder case filed by Amin with Savar Police Station.

The remaining four -- Ashulia Police Station sub-inspector Emdadul Islam and Savar police constables Ramjan, Mofazzal and Yousuf -- surrendered on Thursday and were taken on a five-day remand.

The five and another Savar sub-inspector, Sajjad Hossain, were suspended in this connection.

Shamim, a 30-year-old land broker, was tortured after plainclothes police picked him and his nephew Sohel, 28, up from Hemayetpur on Wednesday around 10:30pm, said Shamim's family.

Hours later, Shamim's body was found in Old Dhaka's Mitford Hospital and a magistrate's inquest report found injury marks on different body parts.

Amin requested the recovery of three mobiles phone and Tk 20,000 taken from Shamim and Sohel by the five.

"The phones and the money could not be recovered yet," said Inspector Aminur Rahman, the case's investigation officer.

Shykh Seraj making
agriculture popular

Speakers tell launch of his new book

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Media personality Shykh Seraj has been popularising agriculture among people through his television programmes while spreading knowledge about the latest agricultural innovations, speakers said at a book launch yesterday.

His programmes have also raised the issue of crop insurance and had an impact at the policy level to increase agriculture budget, they told the unveiling ceremony of Seraj's book "Krishi o Unnyanchinta" [Agriculture and Ideas of Development], published by Chandrabati Academy, at the Channel i office in the capital.

"In the book, I depicted the scenarios of villages which have fascinated me in the last two years. I portrayed the sorrows and happiness of the farmers' lives and anomalies in receiving their rights from the state," Seraj said, adding he tried to narrate the farmers' contributions to the economy.

Food Minister Dr Abdur Razzak said agriculture was a very risky sector because of its high dependence on nature. A flash flood can wash away crops, and the prices of agriculture produces at times drop so much that they do not even cover the labour cost, he added.

The minister noted that although the government gave agriculture the highest priority in the budget, it did not prioritise fishery and animal husbandry.

Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, said Seraj had proved that it was possible to make journalism attractive by reporting on agriculture and the struggles of farmers' lives.

With Professor Emeritus Anisuzzaman in the chair, the programme was also addressed by Channel i Managing Director Faridur Reza Sagar, painter Qayum Chowdhury and Asian Development Bank official Parvez Imdad.

Govt urged to release
fund for public health

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The public healthcare services will suffer as allocation for the sector has decreased in the proposed budget, said speakers at a views-exchange meeting yesterday.

The speakers also urged the authorities concerned to ensure that the allocated funds are released from the ministry without delay and monitor whether the funds are properly utilised.

Due to delays in releasing the funds from the health ministry, only 24 percent of the allocated fund was spent during the last fiscal year, they stated.

The meeting was organised by Shastho Andolon at Dhaka Reporters' Unity yesterday.

"Declining government expenditure in the health sector means that people will have to spend the money from their pocket. Declining public health services will also force more people to go to private facilities that are beyond the means of a majority of the people of the country," said Prof Rashid-E-Mahbub, former president of Bangladesh Medical Association.

Stating that there was no specific plan in the proposed budget to reduce health risks of garment workers, he urged the government to take responsibility of the workers who are suffering from major injuries in recent industrial disasters.

JS body calls for 'child budget'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fifteen members of the parliamentary caucus on child rights yesterday urged the government to incorporate a "Child Budget" focusing on the welfare of children.

The National Child Policy 2011 and the draft Child Act 2013, being reviewed in parliament, cannot be effectively implemented without a specific budget for children, they told a press briefing at Jatiya Sangsad Bhavan.

The recommendation came after finance minister's budget speech brought attention to ensuring education for the underprivileged children, setting up a child helpline, and making a list of the ultra-poor for their inclusion in the social safety net programmes.

The budget will provide the framework for the implementation of resources for these projects, they said.

They said since one-third of the population now lived in urban areas, the child budget should ensure safe water, sanitation and education for children of the urban poor.

"Slum children with birth registration could be provided with identity cards for accessing government healthcare services," suggested Kazi Maruful Islam, an associate professor at Dhaka University, and consultant to the parliamentary body.

"However, it is to be acknowledged that such ventures may be limited to established slums only," said Chowdhury Mohammad Tayub Tajammul, an official at Save the Children.

"The welfare of children with physical and mental disabilities must also be taken care of. The child budget could be used to give higher wages to the teachers of handicapped children," said the caucus chairperson, Asma Zarin Jumu.

বাণিজ্যিক ভবন ভাড়া হবে

পরীবাগস্থ হোটেল রূপসী বাংলার বিপরীতে অতি মনোরম সিসিটিভি ক্যামেরার আওতায়া নিরাপত্তাপূর্ণ ভিআইপি এরিয়াতে টিএমএসএস ট্রেনিং কমপ্লেক্স, চারতলা ভবনে সর্বমোট ১১,৫০০ বর্গফুট স্পেস প্রাইভেট ইউনিভার্সিটি, ব্যাংক, ইন্টারনেট কোম্পানী, বিদেশী এনজিও, কর্পোরেট অফিস ইত্যাদির জন্য ভাড়া দেয়া হবে।
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On this day eleven years ago, Late Mr. Mahabub Uddin Molla departed from this world. For those who knew him, please pray for his soul's eternal salvation. We all miss him dearly.
- Barrister Moshfque M. Rizvi, on behalf of the Family.

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General Manager ICT Division