

## CCC MAYORAL ASPIRANTS

## Nasir earns more than Manjur

PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY, City

Awami League-backed mayoral aspirant AJM Nasir Uddin has an annual income of over Tk 3.60 crore while his rival BNP-backed mayoral candidate M Manjur Alam Manju's annual income stands at Tk 1.92 crore that includes his yearly salary of Tk 8.49 lakh for his mayoral job.

The information was found in their respective affidavits submitted to the Election Commission office in Chittagong on March 29. The Daily Star has collected copies of both the affidavits.

According to Nasir's affidavit, he is involved in six types of business: berth operator, sweater factory, developer, fishing business, ghat lease and oil transportation.

Of his total annual income, Nasir earns Tk 3.20 crore from his businesses and Tk 42 lakh in allowance as director from a company's share, savings certificate and bank deposits. Besides, he earns Tk 3,000 honourium as Waqf beneficiary, Tk 4,744 from bank interest and Tk 25,000 from other sources.

The value of moveable property -- including cash, bank deposit, proprietorship capital, stock exchange share, company share, life insurance, installment of DPS, electronics, FDR -- owned by Nasir and his wife stands at Tk 11.99 crore, of which Nasir alone owns property of Tk 11.50 crore.

Nasir, who has a plot of 10 katha in the capital, is also owner of one sixth of his paternal residential and commer-

cial building.

On the other hand, former CCC Mayor Manju owns 12 industries and business firms.

Despite Manju's involvement in more businesses than Nasir's, the former showed his annual income as less than his rival's.

In his affidavit, Manju has showed himself as Managing Director, Chairman and Director of twelve business organisations including Golden Iron Wax Ltd, Mostafa Hakim Housing and Real Estate Ltd, Alhaz Mostafa Hakim Cement Industries Ltd, Golden Oxygen Ltd, Eagle Star Textile Mills Ltd, Mutual Jute Spinners Ltd, Mostafa Hakim Bricks Ltd, Golden Bricks Works Ltd, Taher and Company Ltd, Golden Steel Works Ltd, HM Steel and Industries Ltd and Standard Bank Ltd.

The total value of his moveable and immovable property is over Tk 36.01 crore. His wife's moveable and immovable property are worth Tk 3.9 crore.

The sectors of his income have been shown as agriculture, business, share, bank deposit, lease rent, and rent from house, apartment and shops and other establishments.

Nasir has taken a loan of Tk 8.43 crore from Agrani Bank Laldeghi branch while Manju's individual bank loan stands at Tk 5.92 crore from two banks.

As Chairman, Director and MD of different business organisations, Manju owes Tk 359.29 crore in debt.

## Salim claimed his resignation not accepted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Independent lawmaker Haji Mohammad Salim yesterday jokingly blamed Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury for his failure to take part in the Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) elections slated for April 28.

Before asking a supplementary question in parliament, Salim laughingly sang two lines of a song -- *Haire Kopal Mondo, Chokh Thakite Ondho (Oh, what an irony! We have eyes but cannot see)* and said, "Honourable Speaker, had you accepted my resignation, I would not have been here [in parliament]. I would have been in the south [DSCC to contest mayoral polls]."

In response, the Speaker asked, "Honourable parliament member, where is your resignation letter?"

"It was given to you," Salim replied. "Where is your resignation letter?" the Speaker asked him.

Salim said he submitted the resignation letter to her but it was torn.

Resignation as lawmaker is mandatory to take part in mayoral elections, according to the electoral laws.

Earlier on his Facebook page, Salim wrote that he submitted his resignation letter to the parliament but the Speaker did not accept the letter.

The Speaker earlier told The Daily Star that Salim met her several times and discussed about his resignation but did not make any final decision to this end. He also did not submit any resignation letter, she added.

Salim was reportedly advised by the ruling Awami League high command to refrain from running in the upcoming mayoral race for the DSCC.



Two suspects, caught by people allegedly after the hacking of online activist Oyasiqur Rahman, are paraded before the media at Shilpanchal Police Station yesterday.

## Blogger killed in city again

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Some, however, seemed trying to justify the brutal act by labelling him as "anti-Islam".

Oyasiqur, son of Tipu Sultan of Ramganj in Laxmipur, worked at a travel agency in Motijheel.

Yesterday morning, as he was going to office, the three youths, who had been lying in wait, attacked him in an alley near Dipikar Mor in Begunbari, some 30 yards from his house, police said.

With two gashes in the throat and four in the face, he was brought dead at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, hospital sources said.

People, including some hermaphrodites, chased the three for about a kilometre and caught Zikrullah, a student of Hathazari madrasa in Chittagong, and Ariful Islam of Darul Uloom madrasa in the capital's Mirpur.

"I was taking breakfast at a restaurant. Suddenly a woman shouted out, 'Robbers are killing a man! Save him!'" a local told this correspondent. He rushed out of the restaurant and saw people in pursuit.

Police are now looking for the third attacker, identified as Taher by the two detainees.

Law enforcers recovered a meat cleaver from Ariful's haversack and two more from the spot, said DC Biplab.

According to his friends, Oyasiqur was known to Bangladesh-born US citizen Avijit Roy, a writer and blogger hacked to death on February 26 on Dhaka University campus. Avijit's wife Bonya too was

severely injured in the attack.

Protesting Avijit's murder, Oyasiqur updated his Facebook profile and cover photo using texts -- "#amAvijit" and "WordsCannotBeKilled".

His Facebook posts often triggered backlash for his freethinking and stance against religious bigotry, said his fellow online activists.

However, the two detained youths, aged about 19, said they took part in the killing without even knowing Oyasiqur or reading any of his write-ups. They just acted as per instruction of a person called Masum, who recently graduated from a madrasa.

Talking to The Daily Star at Shilpanchal Police Station after the arrest, the duo said Masum took them to the Hatirjheel area on Sunday afternoon, showed Oyasiqur's house and briefed them about "the mission".

"Masum showed us some writings and a photograph of the person. He asked us to come to Dakkhin Begunbari at 9:00am when the man comes out of his house for office," said Zikrullah.

"Accordingly, we carried out the attack with cleavers."

DC Biplab Sarkar, who interrogated the two, said Masum might not be the real name. "However, we are trying to trace him and his other accomplices."

He added, "The attack is similar to that on bloggers Avijit Roy and Rajib Haider. Similar types of weapons were used in the attacks."

The official suspected the group or persons behind Oyasiqur's murder

might have links to those involved in earlier attacks.

He said the attackers and the mastermind communicated using symbolic messages online. "They now work in small groups and one group is not known to others."

In a similar fashion, blogger Ahmed Rajib Haider was hacked in February 2013 and outspoken writer Prof Humayun Azad in February of 2004.

Scan the QR code to see the video of reactions to the killing



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Last night, Oyasiqur's brother-in-law filed a murder case with Shilpanchal Police Station, naming four -- Zikrullah, Ariful, Taher and Masum.

## CONDEMNATION

European Union Ambassador to Bangladesh Pierre Mayaudon has condemned the killing, reports UNB.

Over a month after the killing of Avijit, this vile aggression again calls for the EU to reiterate its strong attach-

ment to freedom of expression, which constitutes an essential element of a democratic society, he said.

In a message, the envoy expressed his condolences to the victim's family.

Dr Anisuzzaman and Sultana Kamal said the assailants have got the courage to go wild since there have been no firm and inclusive steps after the killing of Avijit.

In a joint statement issued on behalf of "Bangladesh Rukhe Darao", they said if the government does not take tough measures, the exercise of freethinking might be vanished from the country.

Also condemning the killing, Prof Syed Manzoorul Islam said, "The government is not very proactive. They are being reactive most of the times."

Rights body Ain o Salish Kendra in a press release demanded a fair probe to find out who were behind the killing and the purposes behind it.

In a statement, Amnesty International said the horrifying murder must be a "wake up call" to the authorities on the need to create a safe environment for journalists and activists to express their views.

"How many more bloggers will have to be attacked before action is taken?" asked Abbas Faiz, Bangladesh Researcher at Amnesty International.

In the evening, a torch procession was brought out in Shabagh area, mostly participated by youths and online activists and members of political student organisations.

## Probe finds no police negligence

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swooped on them.

"I believe the perception is that police are friends of people. Let alone acting as friends, police watched as Avijit writhed in pain and Bonya kept screaming for help after militants attacked the couple," said Ajay.

He demanded a reinvestigation into the matter with a team, comprising former judges and civil society representatives.

Avijit was hacked to death and his wife Rafida Ahmed Bonya was critically injured near TSC on DU campus around 8:45pm on February 26.

Ajay also demanded immediate resignation of Inspector General of Police (IGP) AKM Shahidul Hoque

for failing to identify his son's killers.

"He (IGP) neither has the ability to combat militancy, nor he has the efficiency to find out the killers," Ajay told the Daily Star.

On Sunday, Ajay met the IGP at the latter's office and submitted a letter of complaint regarding inefficiency of police in maintaining law and order.

The IGP did not answer the calls made over his cell phone last night.

On March 16, Law Commission Chairman Justice ABM Khairul Haque said the IGP should have resigned immediately after the murder of Avijit.

A militant group called Ansar Bangla 7 claimed responsibility for the murder of Avijit whom it identified as

an "atheist".

Earlier in February 2013, Ahmed Rajib Haider, a progressive blogger, was hacked to death in the capital's Mirpur. Police, however, are yet to arrest Redwanul Azad Rana, the prime suspect of the murder.

Mystery centring the murders of Rajshahi University teacher AKM Shafiu Islam and anchor of an Islamic programme on Channel i Sheikh Nurul Islam Faruqi could not be solved yet.

"It proves how organised they are," said Ajay.

"They keep showing their ability to kill anyone anywhere they want. Perhaps they are highly trained and being financed by the global terrorist syndicate."

## Seven to die

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Of the convicts, Sohel and Sarwar are behind bars, while the rest including Shahdat are on the run.

Judge ABM Nizamul Haque of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-4 of Dhaka pronounced the verdict in presence of Sohel and Sarwar at a packed courtroom.

The punishment of the fugitives will be effective from the day of their arrest or surrender and the convicts with death can file an appeal with the High Court within 30 days from the day of receiving the certified copy of judgement.

Eight extortionists gunned down Monu in Mirpur-12 in the capital around 3:45pm after a programme organised on the occasion of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's death anniversary as he had refused to pay Tk 1 crore in toll.

Monu's elder brother Akbar Ali filed a murder case with Mirpur police against Shahdat, Mintur and four to five unknown assailants.

## BNP to make it

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behind bars or on the run," senior advocate Khandker Mahub Hossain told The Daily Star yesterday.

If the government is sincere about creating a congenial atmosphere for the elections, it won't oppose the bail prayers, added Mahub, also an adviser to BNP chief Khaleda Zia.

The returning officers will start scrutinising the nomination papers on April 1. The Dhaka north, south and Chittagong city corporations will go to polls on April 28.

BNP leaders fear the returning officers might reject the nominations of party favourites citing various reasons, including the pending cases against them.

Alongside over 60 cases, Mirza Abbas has been facing an arrest warrant in a corruption case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission.

A Dhaka court on February 24 had declared him a fugitive and issued the arrest warrant as he was absent in the court that day.

The electoral law disqualifies a fugitive from contesting the city polls.

A senior BNP lawyer said, "His [Abbas] case is very critical. The only option for him now is to surrender before the court and seek bail. Even if he is not granted bail, he would then not be considered a fugitive. This would allow him to contest the election."

Police are scheduled to submit a report to the Metropolitan Sessions Judge Court of Dhaka on April 28 on the status of the arrest warrant.

Under such a situation, the BNP will wait for a few more days to announce its stance on the city polls.

"We will announce our stance on the city corporation elections after April 2," said Lt Gen (retd) Mahabur Rahman.

If the BNP-blessed candidates cannot contest the mayoral polls, the party would have no other option but to focus on the street agitation, mentioned Mahub, a member of BNP national standing committee.

However, the situation in

Chittagong is not so complicated for the party. The local BNP-led alliance has backed M Manjur Alam for mayor of CCC and started working for him.

## PRESS STATEMENT

The BNP-led alliance yesterday in a statement said people hope that the Election Commission and the government will take up proper initiatives to hold the city elections in a free, fair and neutral manner.

The 20-party combined alleged that the EC has been "favouring" the ruling Awami League-backed candidates in the elections.

"Tough speeches" of ministers, ruling party lawmakers and high officials of the law enforcement agencies on the election process are making the polls environment more "biased and panicky," said the release signed by BNP Joint Secretary General Barkat Ullah Bulu.

"The Awami League-backed aspirants are conducting electioneering in a very aggressive manner violating the electoral code of conduct, while the candidates supported by the opposition parties are not getting minimum scope to this end."

PROFESSIONALS MEET KHALEDA  
BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia is observing whether the government and the EC are working on creating a congenial atmosphere for the Dhaka and Chittagong city corporation polls, said Ruhul Amin Gazi, acting convener of Bangladesh Sammilito Peshajibi Parishad.

He was speaking to newsmen after a meeting with Khaleda at her Gulshan office last night.

"The BNP is yet to decide on extending support to the candidates. Khaleda Zia discussed nominations of party favourites with all. After securitisation of the nominations [by the Election Commission] on April 2, the party will finalise its favourites," he added.

The nine-member delegation of the pro-BNP platform met Khaleda at 7:40pm. Shawkat Mahmud, an adviser to the BNP chief, was present, among others.

## Ministers rally

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campaign for party-backed aspirants.

Qamrul, joint general secretary of city AL, said they held a party meeting and discussed the city polls. "It is definitely not a violation of the electoral code of conduct."

AL Joint General Secretary Mahbulul Alam Hanif said the meeting focused on the polls in Dhaka South City Corporation.

When told that the code of conduct prohibits ministers from participating in electoral activities, Hanif said he joined the meeting late and didn't see any minister there.

Qamrul said the meeting was attended by, among others, Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed, Health Minister Mohammad Nasim, Prime Minister's Political Adviser HT Imam, Disaster Management Minister Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya and PM's Special Assistant Abdus Sobhan Golap, who enjoys the status of a secretary.

MA Aziz, acting president of city AL, and Sayeed Khokon, AL-backed mayoral candidate in Dhaka South, were also present.

Qamrul said they discussed the party's plan and strategies to clinch victory for the party-backed mayoral candidate.

Sources said the AL leaders also talked on the issue of picking a single candidate in each ward in the two Dhaka city corporations. The party would finalise the names of aspirants by April 9, the last date for withdrawing candidature.

City AL leaders Maya and Qamrul gave assurance that they would work for Khokon.

Earlier, both of them were against lending party support to Khokon, and were in favour of backing independent lawmaker Haji Mohammad Salim in the city polls, added the sources.

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