



His name is Rubel and the road he is crossing, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, is his source of survival. Be it traffic congestion or a gathering of people in front of restaurants beside the entire stretch of the avenue, he moves along the busy thoroughfare back and forth to seek alms from them. Every day Rubel's journey begins at the crack of dawn and continues till his hands can support. He said he lost his legs at an early age due to an illness and life has been an endless stream of hardships ever since. The resident of Karwan Bazar railway slum is one of the countless physically-challenged persons who are struggling to get by in the capital for lack of proper rehabilitation, training, assistance and development programmes. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

# Luck runs out for 'Tarot Baba'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

He used to conduct magic shows on social media platforms and YouTube, claiming that he could catch a jinn (a supernatural spirit) with his bare hands.

Also, by showing various magic and "supernatural" tricks, he claimed that he could solve personal, familial and social problems.

For this, he used to appear on Facebook live saying that he could tell someone's fortune by reading "tarot cards".

Meet the "Tarot Baba", a former host of ABC Radio 89.2 FM, MM Jahangir Reza alias Radbi Reza.

He was arrested by a team of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of Police in the capital's Farmgate area on charge of "digital fraudulence" on Thursday.

"Radbi used to claim that he has spiritual power and could predict the results of a game in advance and help people win lotteries," Molla Nazrul Islam, special superintendent of CID, told reporters at a press briefing at its headquarters in the capital.



Radbi Reza

"He also duped people and robbed them of their money in the name healing cancer and paralysis," he added.

Radbi, who hailed from Sunamganj, studied in the UK, according to his Facebook account.

The police official said Radbi joined the radio station in October 2016 as a "paranormal researcher". After his joining, the "Tarot Cards" segment was introduced in the programme named, "Daar" [fear].

In the particular segment, a listener had to give his or her name and cell phone number to participate. Later, Radbi used to retrieve the detailed information of the listener by searching their Facebook profiles.

In addition, upon meeting the listeners, Radbi used to astonish them by revealing information about themselves, which he gathered from their profiles.

As the programme became popular, his fan following also increased. His admirers used to consider him a person who has supernatural powers, Molla Nazrul said.

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# Scent of a book still matters

UNB, Dhaka

Reading is a habit that stays with someone for life. It is a lifelong source of delight and an affordable pastime for anyone who wants to take up the journey.

The way books are published and distributed has gone through many changes -- from books written and copied by hand to Gutenberg's invention of the printing press.

Booklovers' reading habits have also been affected through the innovations. And, in this era of connectivity, digital technology has a deep impact on book publishing and the way people read.

This digital revolution has also introduced a new trepidation that the traditional way of reading will come to an end as many of the readers have been switching to reading on the internet, tablet computers and e-books.

But there's hope too. This year's Amar Ekushey Granthamela remains a glaring example that paper books still dominate the readers' choice.

At the just finished month-long book fair, the publication of books has nearly doubled and

sales have increased by almost seven times compared to five years ago, according to Bangla Academy.

A total of 4,591 books came out during the fair and the total sale was around Tk 70.50 crore. In 2013, the number of new books was 2,963 and

YEAR	NEW BOOKS	TOTAL SALE (APPRX)
2013	2,963	Tk 10.14cr
2014	2,959	Tk 16.50cr
2015	3,700	Tk 21.95cr
2016	3,444	Tk 40.50cr
2017	3,646	Tk 65.40cr
2018	4,591	Tk 70.50cr

SOURCE: BANGLA ACADEMY

the sale around Tk 10.14 crore.

The Ekushey book fair witnessed a huge presence of readers. While talking with many of the booklovers throughout the month, it was seen that the youth were more inclined to reading books online or using e-book services.

But most of the visitors said they still prefer the old fashioned way of reading and enjoy the touch and smell of a physical book.

"Paper books have a lively feeling... It's like living in the moment. Digital books cannot offer the same sensation," said Meer Raihan Masud, a journalist.

Munira Dilshad Ela spends most of her leisure time at the public library. The Dhaka University student said, "I feel comfortable holding a book... It's a unique pleasure. It's not the same with a PDF-version or e-books."

The design of a book, the way it smells and the quality of the paper, all of these can heighten a reader's sensory details, said the avid reader. "You can't have that experience while reading a digital book."

Freelance writer Sadman Sakib said, "A digital device is used for multipurpose, which can hamper attentive reading. Also, digital version of all standard books is not available. At times, reading it not comfortable due to the resolution or quality..."

Young poet Aleem Haider Dhrubo echoed

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