

ATTACK ON HINDUS IN PABNA OVER FACEBOOK POST HC directs govt to compensate victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to compensate Hindu families in Pabna which had come under attack over a Facebook post that allegedly demeaned Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) in November last year.

The government was asked to compensate a total of 33 families within three weeks in Santhia upazila of the district.

Misceants vandalised 29 houses, 10 business establishments and seven temples at the Bonogram bazar in the upazila on November 2 last year on allegation that a Hindu boy from the locality maligned Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) on a Facebook page, according to a government probe report submitted to the HC last week.

The probe body has assessed that properties worth Tk 43.42 lakh were damaged.

The government will have to pay Tk 43.42 lakh as compensation following the HC order, Deputy Attorney General Bishwojit

Roy told The Daily Star yesterday.

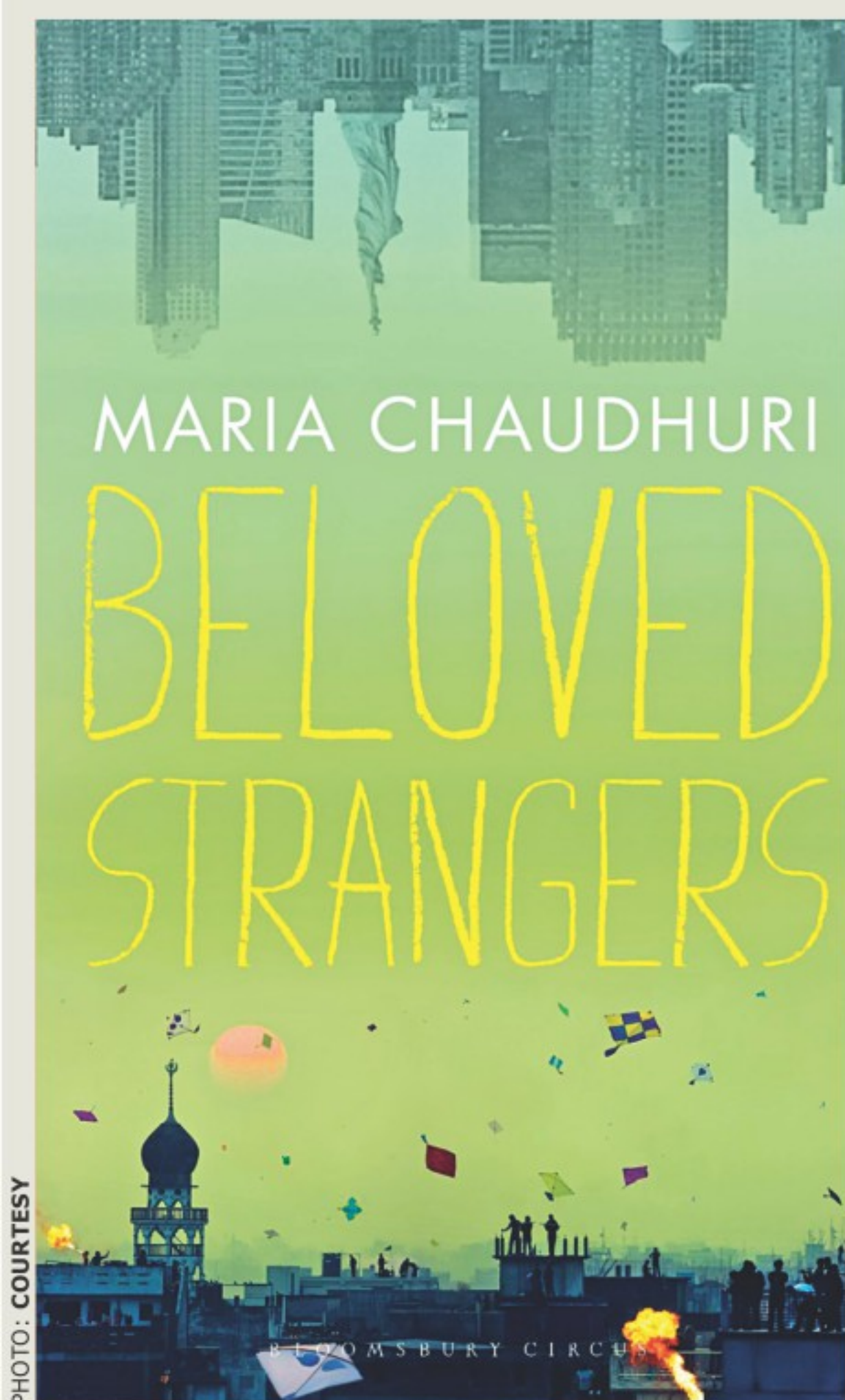
Hearing a suo moto rule, the HC bench of Justice Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque and Justice ABM Altaf Hossain also directed police to arrest those responsible for the attacks based on intelligence agency reports submitted to the HC.

So far, 31 people have been arrested in this connection.

Following an HC rule issued on November 3 last year, the government formed the probe body to assess the damage caused by the attacks.

The HC passed the order yesterday after examining the report.

Based on a report published on The Daily Star under the headline "Hindus attacked in Pabna" on November 3 last year, the same HC bench issued the suo moto rule upon the government to explain why it should not be directed to take appropriate legal actions against the people responsible for attacks on the minority community.



Beloved Strangers, a book by Bangladeshi writer Maria Chaudhuri, right, chronicling her experiences of growing up in Dhaka and returning to live here again many years later after finishing her education in the US, has recently been released by Bloomsbury Circus in India. It is being distributed in Bangladesh by Bengal Lights Books, and can be found in Dhaka bookstores including The Bookworm, Omni Books, and Boi Bichitra, as well as other outlets including Meena Bazar, Jatra, Aranya, and Red Shift Coffee Lounge.

ICT-1 to get new chairman within next week

Says law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said the government will appoint a chairman for the International Crimes Tribunal-1 within the next week, so that it [the tribunal] can resume trial proceedings of cases.

The minister was talking to reporters in his Bangladesh Secretariat office yesterday afternoon.

The post of ICT-1 chairman fell vacant after its former chairman Justice ATM Fazle Kabir retired on December 31 last year.

Anisul Huq yesterday said the post for the ICT chairman will be filled within a day or two after he returns from London on February 16.

The law minister left for the United Kingdom last night for a meeting on prevention of money laundering across the world.

The tribunal-1 headed

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Saarc ministers' meet Feb 17-20 in Maldives

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Nepal is expected to propose a date for the next Saarc summit during the Saarc council of ministers meeting scheduled to be held in the Maldives on February 17-20.

Official sources said though Nepal may not announce the exact date for the 18th summit but it is expected that it will suggest a tentative date between November and December 2014.

The meeting of the Saarc council of ministers will comprise foreign ministers of all the member countries - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and

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ATTACK ON RU STUDENTS BCL leader on 10-day remand

Evening master's programmes still running

RU CORRESPONDENT

A Rajshahi court yesterday allowed police to take a Rajshahi University (RU) unit Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leader on a 10-day remand in four of the six cases filed over the February 2 police-backed attack by armed BCL activists on RU students.

Meanwhile, although the RU authorities closed the university for an indefinite period following the attack, evening master's programmes were still running.

The students came under attack while protesting the move to introduce evening master's programmes in seven social science faculty departments, the programmes running in the law and business faculties for the last couple of years and hike in some fees.

RU unit BCL Vice-President Delower Hossain, a master's student, was arrested at Rajshahi city's Veripara intersection on Wednesday. Several TV footages showed Delower throwing stones at the agitating students.

However, none of six BCL leaders seen brandishing firearms during the attack have been arrested yet.

The social science faculty Dean Prof Ansar Uddin said the programmes' admission activities were ongoing while the RU administration sources informed that the programmes' classes and exams were being held at the law and business faculties.

The events came to light when several of the agitating

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Education in mother tongue eludes Dalits

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although the education policy of the country professes to develop languages and cultures of indigenous communities and small ethnic groups, the need for teaching Dalit children their mother tongue is not even discussed in government circles, said speakers at a seminar yesterday.

Teaching Dalit children in their own languages would pave the way for implementing universal primary education, they added.

Bangladesh Dalit and Excluded Rights Movement (BDERM) and Nagorik Uddyog organised the seminar "Dalit Jonogoshthir Shikkha Odhikar" at an auditorium of Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management in the capital.

In the keynote presentation, Abul Bashar, project convener of Nagorik Uddyog, painted a grave picture of the poverty and exclusion faced by the Dalit community.

"School authorities' reluctance to enrol Dalit children

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