

# 22 hurt as rival groups clash in Narsingdi

## 100 homes damaged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

At least 22 people were injured and more than 100 houses were ransacked as two rival groups clashed in a remote char in Mirzarchar area in Raipura upazila yesterday.

Lethal weapons were used and cocktails were exploded during the clash, witnesses said.

Zafar Chairman and his rival Faruq Miah have been fighting a legal battle against each other centring Union Parishad election.

Following this enmity, supporters of Zafar Chairman attacked Faruq Miah's house yesterday morning. Faruq's supporters also retaliated, resulting in a chase and counter chase.

Raipura police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control in the afternoon.

Injured Helal, Bachchu, Joynal, Kashem, Basir Uddin, Saleha Begum, Al-Amin, Joynal and Bazed Miah were admitted to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital. Others were admitted to different private clinics.

The two groups were trying to establish supremacy in the area for long, locals said.

# Tragic

FROM PAGE 16

studying the total number of wild elephants in Bangladesh, gave an official estimate of 268 elephants, all residing in south-eastern forest areas of the country.

This initiative also mapped out the routes elephants follow around the year and managed to mark 12 crucial small passages, known as elephant corridors, which they use to travel between forests.

The study has also pointed out 57 elephant crossing-points on the international borders with India and Myanmar.



The image on the left is of the actual 2nd edition of The Daily Star's Saturday issue and on the right the fake one. The real first edition is below.

# It's fake

FROM PAGE 1

"CJ exposes the Govt." and the subsequent second headline is also fake.

Similar fake pages of leading Bangla dailies -- Prothom Alo, Samakal and Ittefaq -- were also circulated on social media yesterday.

The fake news was uploaded from the Facebook pages named "Begum Khaleda Zia" and "ShomoyerShakkhi.com", and the Facebook and Twitter accounts of Wahiduzzaman, a suspended National University teacher.

The post was shared over 1,000 times from the "Begum Khaleda Zia" page and 40 times from the account of Wahiduzzaman, and five times from "ShomoyerShakkhi.com" page.

Soon after Wahiduzzaman, who introduces himself in his Facebook profile as climate change related secretary of the BNP, uploaded the doctored image around 3:00pm, the fake content drew surprise, criticism and sparked discussions.

In the discussions, Wahiduzzaman even went on to lie about the authenticity of the content by writing that the "screenshot" was of The Daily Star's second edition, which is not true.

The page, however, was taken down from the Facebook and Twitter accounts around 6:00pm yesterday.



"I saw the news on ShomoyerShakkhi.com and I shared it because I didn't think it could be fake. It looked so real. I thought it was genuine. But I am not the only person who shared it," Wahiduzzaman, who claims to be in Malaysia, told this correspondent over the phone.

"I took it down after I realised it was fake." The fake content was still on the pages of "Begum Khaleda Zia" and "ShomoyerShakkhi.com" as of 1:30am today.

It could not be known who run these pages. The Daily Star understands it has been done with the motive to malign the reputation of the newspaper and create confusion among people for the benefit of some vested quarters.

The newspaper requests its readers to be aware of the lies swirling around

the digital space and confront those by sharing the real news.

Last night, The Daily Star filed a general diary (GD) with Tejgaon Police Station over the issue.

Deputy Commissioner Alimuzzaman of Cyber Crime Unit of Dhaka Metropolitan Police said a group was spreading fake news using mastheads of some leading national dailies. "We are trying to trace the group and bring its members to book," he told The Daily Star.

Contacted, Pro-Vice Chancellor of National University Prof Mashiur Rahman said the university authorities suspended Wahiduzzaman as he had made "derogatory comments" about the prime minister and her family.

"A probe is going on in this regard. The university authorities will take action against him if he still is affiliated with the university and has done something like this."

On November 6, 2013, a Dhaka court had sent Wahiduzzaman, who was then a geography teacher of the university, to jail after rejecting his bail prayer in a case filed in connection with making derogatory remarks about Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her family members on Facebook.

# 11 'charges' against CJ

FROM PAGE 1

the allegations are resolved," said the statement, which was posted on the SC's official website.

The SC release, signed by its Registrar General Syed Aminul Islam, comes a day after Justice Sinha handed over a written statement to newsmen before leaving for Australia on Friday night.

The top court issued the statement following a meeting of the apex court judges around 11:00am yesterday, according to a reliable source at the SC.

"The post of chief justice is an institution. For the sake of upholding the dignity of the post and the judiciary, the Supreme Court was yet to give any statement. But in the given context, the abovementioned statement has been issued," the statement concludes.

Meanwhile, Attorney General Mahbubey Alam yesterday said Justice Sinha's rejoining the office of chief justice after returning from abroad is "a far cry."

A deadlock would be created if other judges of the Appellate Division do not want to sit with the chief justice, he said during a press briefing at his office.

The country cannot be run in such a situation, he added.

"So, if you consider the situation, it seems to me that his reassuming the charge on return is a far cry," Mahbubey Alam said, adding that the SC release was very well-timed to dispel confusions created after the CJ's statement.

Before leaving the country on Friday night, Justice Sinha said he was not sick, contradicting the government claim that he went on leave on health grounds earlier this month.

He spoke to reporters briefly in

front of his Hare Road residence and handed them a signed statement, typed in Bangla, before heading to the airport.

In the statement, Justice Sinha said he was fully well, but embarrassed by the way he was criticised by a political quarter, lawyers, and especially the honourable prime minister and some ministers over a verdict.

He also said he was a "bit worried about the independence of the judiciary."

Justice Sinha has reached Australia, said an SC official yesterday, without giving details.

Meanwhile, Abdul Matin Khasru, former law minister and ruling Awami League's presidium member, yesterday said the allegations brought against Justice Sinha must be investigated.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said the CJ's statement has exposed the government's "real intention". Former law minister and senior BNP leader Moudud Ahmed alleged that the "government decision to send the CJ abroad" has completely tarnished the Supreme Court's image.

**SC STATEMENT**  
The Supreme Court yesterday said it was issuing the release as Justice Sinha's statement is "misleading" and has drawn the court's attention.

On September 30, the president invited five judges of the Appellate Division, other than Justice Sinha, to the Bangabhaban. Justice Muhammad Imman Ali could not be there as he was abroad at the time.

Four other judges -- Justice Md Abdul Wahhab Miah, Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain, Justice Hasan Foez Siddique and Justice Mirza Hussain Haider -- met the president.

At one stage of a long discussion, the president handed over documentary evidence over 11 specific allegations against the chief justice.

The allegations include "money laundering, financial irregularities, corruption, moral turpitude and some other specific serious allegations".

After Justice Imman Ali returned home, the five judges held a meeting on October 1 to discuss the 11 allegations and decided to notify Justice Sinha about those.

"If he fails to give satisfactory reply to the allegations, it would not be possible to conduct trial proceedings alongside him," reads the statement.

The five judges, taking permission from Justice Sinha, met him at his residence at 11:30am the same day and discussed the allegations.

But the five judges did not get a satisfactory answer from the CJ, according to the SC statement. They told him that it would not be possible for them to hold trials sitting in the same bench with him unless the allegations are resolved.

At this, Justice Sinha categorically said that he would resign. However, he would come up with his final decision the following day.

On October 2, without informing the judges, Justice Sinha submitted his application to the president for one month's leave. The president approved it, reads the release.

Following this, president, as per article 97 of the constitution, appointed Justice Md Abdul Wahhab Miah, the senior most judge of the Appellate Division, to discharge the duties of the chief justice in the absence of Sinha.

**AG BRIEFING**  
Replying to a query, the attorney gen-

eral said Justice Wahhab will discharge all types of duties of the CJ. It is not logical that an acting chief justice, when the chief justice stays abroad for a month or 15 days, will not be able to make policy decisions.

In his written statement on Friday night, Justice Sinha said there is no precedence of interference in the administration of the chief justice by the government or the judge acting as the chief justice. He (the judge discharging duties of the CJ) will only perform routine job. "It has always been like this."

Asked about details of the 11 allegations against Justice Sinha, the AG said, "The allegations are at the hands of law enforcement agencies, not mentioned in the statement [issued by the SC]. The president is well aware of it."

Asked whether Justice Sinha broke his oath, the country's top law officer said oath is violated when an allegation is proved.

Asked whether the allegations are proved, he posed a counter question: "Is it possible to say all this against the country's chief justice if the allegations, prima facie, have no substance?"

The SC statement has proved that the government has no role regarding the chief justice's leave as alleged by a political party, he said.

"Rather, after being informed by the president about the allegations against the chief justice, the other judges declined to sit with him [Justice Sinha]. So he was forced to take the leave."

Replying to a question whether there is a necessity to form the Supreme Judicial Council now, the AG said, "We are yet to accept the concept of Supreme Judicial Council."

"We are taking preparation for filing a petition seeking a review [of the

sixteenth amendment verdict]."

The provision of SJC has been reinstated following the cancellation of 16th constitutional amendment through the verdict.

Justice Sinha was appointed the 21st chief justice in January 2015. He is scheduled to retire on January 31 next year, said SC sources.

He came under fire ever since the SC on August 1 released the full text of the verdict scrapping the 16th amendment that had empowered parliament to remove SC judges for misconduct or incapacity.

Following the verdict, the prime minister and senior ministers came down heavily on the CJ, with many of them calling for his resignation.

The Jatiya Sangsad on September 13 passed a resolution calling for legal steps to nullify the SC verdict. The law minister on several occasions said the government would seek review of the judgment.

In its full verdict, the top court made some observations, which were critical of the country's present political culture.

On October 2, the SC authorities in a letter informed the president about Justice Sinha's leave, according to Law Minister Anisul Huq.

The following day, the minister told the media that the CJ was going on a month's leave as he was suffering from cancer. A few days later, he also showed what he claimed was a copy of the CJ's letter informing the president about his leave.

The BNP and the Supreme Court Bar Association, which is dominated by pro-BNP lawyers, however, have been alleging the government forced the CJ to go on leave, but the law minister and the attorney general dismissed it.

# 25 injured

FROM PAGE 16

with Zia Orphanage Trust corruption and undermining the country's map and the national flag.

At least 15 activists of Narayanganj district Jubo Dal, including its president, were injured when police charged truncheons on their procession in Narayanganj yesterday.

BNP leaders and activists said they brought out the procession around 4:00pm from Dewwog area but police stopped them and tried to take away their banner when they reached the DTI commercial area.

Police started charging truncheons on them when they tried to continue with their procession breaking through the police barricade, they said.

Inspector Abdur Razzak of Narayanganj Model Police Station said Police permitted them to stage a peaceful procession but their procession was obstructing public movement.

Police dispersed them as they were making provocative speeches from the procession.

Meanwhile, at least 10 BNP leaders and activists were injured in Barisal after police charged truncheons on their procession on Sadar Road of the city, reports our Barisal correspondent.

Police detained seven BNP activists from the spot while they were allegedly vandalising an auto-rickshaw.

Awlad Hossain, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station, said, "We foiled their attempt as they brought out a procession blocking the Sadar Road."

In Rajshahi, police twice foiled attempts of Rajshahi City Unit BNP to bring out another procession.

However, some Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal men brought out a procession at the Loknath School intersection but it was intercepted by police at Malopara.

Police also obstructed processions brought out by some leaders and activists of BNP, Chhatra Dal and other units at Malopara intersection.

Later, BNP leaders held a brief rally on the road, protesting the police action.

Aman Ullah, office-in-charge of Boalia Police Station, claimed that they had prevented the procession as there was intelligence information of subversive activities.

# Trump

FROM PAGE 16

The United States emerged as the indispensable superpower in the wake of World War II in part through its leadership in a global rules-based system of treaties and alliances.

But, as Trump made clear last month in a speech to the UN General Assembly, his vision is of a world where America is just the most powerful in a network of sovereign nations.

"Trump foreign policy has found its theme: 'The Withdrawal Doctrine,'" quipped Richard Haass, influential president of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Trump has not yet withdrawn from the Iran deal, although he made it clear that he is ready to do so if Congress and skeptical US allies do not agree to new sanctions.

He did quit the UN cultural organization, this week. He has collapsed the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal and appears to be poised to destroy the bigger Nafta treaty.

Time and again his bluster has put in question America's commitment to its Nato allies, and time and again he has ordered reviews into the utility of remaining in UN agencies.

He has even declared that America will drop out of the biggest -- and arguably most important -- accord in world history, the 196-member Paris climate deal.

As might be expected, former members of president Barack Obama's administration are furious and bewildered at what they see as an abdication of US leadership.

"Once again, Trump is throwing into question the ability of the US to keep its commitment to international agreements," former top aide Ben Rhodes said.

"Other nations will not want to enter into agreements with the United States," he warned.

Former secretary of state John Kerry, who negotiated the Iran deal, called Trump's decision a "reckless abandonment of facts in favor of ego and ideology."

Trump, he said, "weakens our hand, alienates us from our allies, empowers Iranian hardliners, makes it harder to resolve North Korea and risks moving us closer to military conflict."

But Democrats are not the only ones criticizing the Republican billionaire's stance. Nicholas Burns a professor at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and, like Haass, a veteran of George W Bush's administration is scathing.

"We're withdrawing as global leader under Trump," he said, dubbing the decision to dump the TPP and Paris and undermine the Iran deal "historic mistakes."

Washington's traditional allies in Europe were at first cautious in their approach to Trump, hoping he would mellow as he grew into the Oval Office role.

# Comes wonder wheat

FROM PAGE 1

With a high yield potential (4.6 tonnes per hectare), Bari Gom-33 is also the most promising and productive wheat variety Bangladesh has ever bred. It has got bold grain with a white amber colour, high zinc content and blast resistance. It is heat tolerant as well, meaning farmers will be able to sow and reap Bari Gom-33 late into the season.

Being a net wheat importing country, it's important for Bangladesh to have better breeds so that farmers can try augmenting domestic production. As against nearly six million tonnes of yearly wheat requirements, Bangladesh can produce just little over a million. Its per hectare wheat productivity is now hovering a little over three tonnes.

Scientists at WRC said it was crucial for them to breed a variety that would withstand blast given the fact that wheat

blast's emergence in Bangladesh last year was the first case of such attack anywhere in Asia.

Caused by a fungus, Magnaporthe oryzae, wheat blast is one of the most fearsome and intractable wheat diseases. It was first discovered in Brazil in 1985.

The first ever wheat blast attack in Bangladesh cost the country a financial loss of at least Tk 1,800 crore in terms of lost yield last year. It affected 1,08,715 hectares of wheat fields in Jessore, Kushtia, Chuadanga, Meherpur, Jhenidah, Magura, Barisal and Bhola, damaging up to 40 percent crop.

Mexico-based International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT) raised an alarm when blast started attacking Bangladesh's wheat fields as millions of farmers in South Asia depend on wheat farming for a living.

Parliament has recently passed a bill

to upgrade WRC, currently a centre under Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI), to an independent institute.

BNP Director General Abul Kalam Azad told The Daily Star, "It's a great achievement for us and we have taken initiatives for quick seed multiplication and rapid dissemination of this variety to the farmers' field to combat the threat of wheat blast in Bangladesh. This year we will provide 20kg seed to the BADC [Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation] and also limited number of demonstration through the DAE [Department of Agricultural Extension]".

Talking to this correspondent yesterday, WRC Director Naresh Chandra Deb Barma said, "Development of a variety is a continuous process and top research priority has been given to develop a high yielding blast resistant variety in collaboration with national and international

partners like CIMMYT."

He said the wheat line that has been officially released as Bari Gom-33 on Wednesday was developed through hybridization between two wheat varieties at CIMMYT, Mexico and then HarvestPlus provided materials helping out enhancing its zinc uptake capacity from the soil.

Following evaluation and selection in different generation, Naresh explained, the field performance of the line was studied for four years across different growing environments of Bangladesh and finally a line called BAW 1260 was found to be the most promising.

The variety has been tested in the United States at a lab run by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) under artificially inoculated conditions in 2016 and 2017 and the variety consistently showed good level of resistance to wheat blast in two independ-

ent greenhouse evaluations.

The variety also didn't show any sign of blast infection when field tested in Jessore in 2016 and 2017.

Khairul Bashar, HarvestPlus country manager in Bangladesh, said higher zinc content in wheat and rice varieties would help redress micronutrient deficiencies in a large number of people and eradicate stunting and malnutrition.

Back in 2013, Bangladeshi scientists developed the world's first zinc-rich rice with HarvestPlus as partner. HarvestPlus founder Howarth Bouis was accorded World Food Prize last year for his contribution in spreading the biofortification movement across countries in Asia and Africa.

Biofortification is the process by which the nutritional quality of food crops is improved through agronomic practices, conventional plant breeding, or modern biotechnology.