



TOXIC SYRUP

# 6 jailed for 20 years

Verdict in two cases delivered 23 years after the death of at least 76 children

EMRAN HOSSAIN and CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER

The Dhaka Drug Court yesterday handed down three directors and three employees of a now-defunct pharmaceutical company 20 years of imprisonment and fined Tk 4 lakh each in two cases for producing and marketing toxic paracetamol syrup.

The cases were filed by the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA) in 1992 against BCI (Bangladesh) Ltd for using cheap, poisonous Di-Ethylene Glycol in two batches of its paracetamol syrup called Paracem that killed at least 76 children.

An HC order, however, stayed proceedings of the cases in 1994, which resumed in 2011.

"The prosecution has proved the charges against the accused," Drug Court Judge M Ataur Rahman said, reading out the verdict.

They are sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment and fined Tk 2 lakh each in a case, said the judge.

The court's Public Prosecutor Shaheen Ahmed Khan said convictions in

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PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

BCI Director Shahjahan Sarker is being taken to prison after a Dhaka Drug Court sentenced him to 20 years' imprisonment in two cases for producing and marketing adulterated paracetamol syrup that killed 76 children in

## She served only 53 days

EMRAN HOSSAIN and ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The woman physician, convicted of poisoning children's paracetamol, served only 53 days of her sentence after a drug court on July 22 last year jailed her for 10 years.

Owner of now defunct Adflame

Pharmaceuticals, Helena Pasha challenged the lower court's verdict in the High Court and secured bail from it on September 11 on health grounds. She then claimed to be 78 years old.

Her trial in the Adflame case opened in

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Helena Pasha

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## CASE UNDER ICT ACT Journo Probir sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Faridpur court yesterday sent journalist Probir Sikdar to jail in a case under Information and Communication Technology Act, for "tarnishing the image" of LGRD Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain.

Local Awami League leader Swapan Kumar Paul filed the case on Sunday after Probir in a Facebook post said his life was under threat and that the minister, businessman Moosa bin Shamsen and condemned fugitive war criminal Abul Kalam Azad would be responsible if he were killed, police said.

Police produced the journalist before the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court in Faridpur, seeking a 10-day remand. But the court sent Probir, 55, to prison and may hear the remand petition today, court sources said.

During yesterday's proceedings, however, no lawyer stood for Probir in the court. His son Suprio Sikdar said they requested a number of lawyers to represent his father but no one dared do so, fearing reprisal from "influential people".

"I have enough reasons to be apprehensive given the way police picked up my father. Besides, despite relentless efforts I could not get a lawyer to defend my father in the court," he told The Daily Star.

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## Deadly Bangkok blast kills 19

Thai minister says perpetrators intended to destroy economy, tourism

BBC ONLINE

A bomb exploded close to a shrine in the centre of Thailand's capital, Bangkok, yesterday killing at least 19 people and injuring more than 120.

The Erawan Shrine, which was crowded at the time, is a major tourist attraction and foreigners, including Chinese, are among the casualties.

No one claimed responsibility for the attack.

Defence Minister Prawit Wongswan said the bombers had "targeted foreigners... to damage tourism and the economy".

"We will hunt them down," he said.

The Nation TV channel quoted Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha as saying the government would set up a "war room" to co-ordinate its response.

National police chief Somyot Poompuang said that 10 Thais had been confirmed dead, along with one Chinese and one Filipino.

He said: "Whoever planted this bomb is cruel and aimed to kill. Planting a bomb there means they want to see a lot of people dead."

Thai police said 123 people had been injured. The government in Hong Kong said three of its residents were among those wounded.

The explosion occurred at about 19:00 local time (12:00 GMT).

The Bangkok Post quoted police as saying that 3kg of TNT had been stuffed in a pipe inside the shrine and that an electronic circuit suspected to have been used in the attack was found 30 metres from the scene.

BBC's Jonathan Head, who was one of the first journalists at the scene, said there was a huge amount of chaos, with body parts scattered everywhere.

This is a very well-known shrine, next to a five-star hotel, and that people around it were hit by the full force of the blast, he said.

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ইসলামী ব্যাংক  
শিক্ষাবৃত্তি ২০১৫

কল্যাণশূন্য ব্যাংকিং ধারার প্রত্যক্ষ ইসলামী ব্যাংক বাংলাদেশ লিমিটেড প্রতিষ্ঠাকাল থেকেই সামাজিক দায়বদ্ধতার আওতায় শিক্ষাবৃত্তি বিভিন্ন ক্ষেত্রে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ অবদান রেখে আসছে। এই ধারাবাহিকতায় ২০১৫ সালে এসএসডি/সমমানের পরীক্ষায় জিপিএ-৫ প্রাপ্ত উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক/সমমানের শ্রেণিতে অধ্যয়নরত অতি দরিদ্র পরিবারের ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদের নিকট হতে ৩০ আগস্ট, ২০১৫ তারিখের মধ্যে বৃত্তির দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

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