



Some villagers crossing a flooded waterbody on a raft in Kurigram Sadar recently. Hundreds of people in the area are forced to cross the waterbody this way after floodwater washed away the bridge over it. PHOTO: STAR

Pubho Dal leader killed in 'shootout'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noidahalli

A union leader Jayitabhatta Jubo Dal was killed in "shootout" incident early yesterday, two days after he was picked up from his residence at Begumganj upazila in the district. Jubo Dal police killed him but not meant to decide on the fate of Adhaar card, but just on whether privacy of an individual was part of his inalienable fundamental rights. This means the five-judge SC bench will examine the validity of Adhaar card on the touchstone of privacy as a fundamental right. Attorney General KK Venugopal, who had argued that right to privacy can't be a fundamental right, welcomed the SC decision. Earlier, he had contended that "privacy, even if assumed to be a fundamental right, consists of a large number of sub-species... It will be constitutionally impossible to declare each and every instance of privacy a fundamental right. Privacy has varied connotations when examined from different aspects of liberties."

Privacy a fundamental

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larger bench on July 7. The five-judge constitution bench on July 18 decided to refer the matter to the nine-judge bench.

Yesterday's judgment was not meant to decide on the fate of Adhaar card, but just on whether privacy of an individual was part of his inalienable fundamental rights. This means the five-judge SC bench will examine the validity of Adhaar card on the touchstone of privacy as a fundamental right. Attorney General KK Venugopal, who had argued that right to privacy can't be a fundamental right, welcomed the SC decision. Earlier, he had contended that "privacy, even if assumed to be a fundamental right, consists of a large number of sub-species... It will be constitutionally impossible to declare each and every instance of privacy a fundamental right. Privacy has varied connotations when examined from different aspects of liberties."

On the other hand, the petitioners argued that the right to privacy was "inalienable" and "inherent" to the

most important fundamental right -- the right to liberty. Meanwhile, jurists and senior lawyers welcomed the SC verdict on right to privacy, terming it progressive. Senior advocate Soli Sorabjee said it showed the "good approach" of the SC which didn't hesitate to overrule its previous judgments.

The former attorney general said the judgment was very progressive and it protected people's fundamental rights. "Privacy is a basic right which is inherent in every individual."

"The unanimity of the bench in giving this decision shows a very good approach of the Supreme Court. Any judgment which broadens people's fundamental rights should be welcomed," he added.

Expressing optimism that the Indian citizens would now be protected from any kind of snooping, senior lawyer India Jaising said, "It is a day to celebrate."

"Privacy is fundamental. It certainly has an impact on day-to-day life. This verdict prevents any kind of snooping," he said.

Don't allow

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factories currently operating in the ECA.

Currently, the Bangladesh Environment Conservation (amendment) Act, 2010 prohibits permitting any factory within the area. The national environment committee meeting also decided to relax and change some rules and policies to allow the factories that could be potentially risky for the environment, said the petition.

The decision was meant to legalise about 150 factories set up in 63 unions of 11 upazilas of five districts around the Sundarbans.

The move came at a time when the Unesco recommended the government to do a Strategic Environment Assessment of the forest's southwest region.

The Unesco also recommended not to construct any large structure in the Sundarbans area until the SEA was complete.

The government agreed to do that in a meeting of World Heritage Committee held last month in Krakow, Poland.

The environment ministry stopped issuing environmental clearance certificates for factories in the ECA in 2015.

Since then, the ministry has a large number of clearance certificate applications piled up. There were 16 applications for new permits and 118 for permit renewals.

So the national environment committee came up with the decision to help the factories get legalised.

The writ was filed challenging that move of the government.

Seated at the HC, a judge issued a rule asking the respondents to explain in four weeks why the decision to approve 150 industries within the 10 kilometres of the Sundarbans Heritage area is contrary to the 1999 gazette notification.

It also asked why the respondents should not be directed to relocate the industrial units.

Secretaries to the ministries of foreign environment, industry and land and the DoE director general and eight other government officials were asked to comply with the directive.

Barister Sheikh Md Zakir Hossain appeared for the petitioner while Deputy Attorney General Motaher Hossain Sazu represented the government.

Blessings

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gum when ripe. We used the gum for making a whole bunch of things including envelopes and kites. The old trees that would bear these fruits had long been felled.

During my last trip here, I came across a young tree of that fruit which brought back all the memories. I saw bunches of ripened fruits at the back of our house. I touched the fruits and was rather delighted to notice their unique shapes.

Boula gota (*Cordia dichotoma*) is locally known as *bahal*, *bahari*, *bahula* or *lahoria*. They are deciduous trees of medium size and can grow up to 20 metres. They have a curved trunk, hanging branches and ash coloured barks. The leaves are straight and come in numerous sizes. The edges are wavy. The white flowers are fragrant and unisex. The oval shaped yellow fruits hang from the branches. The stones are also oval and are coated in a lucid sticky substance. The flowers bloom in February and the fruits ripen towards May-June. The trees provide timber, medicines and the material that can be used to make cloths.

The fruits are a favourite of the sarthal tribe. The gum is used for making fences, hunting traps and covering books. In places, the kernels of the fruits are also used as food. They are good for treating skin diseases. The barks produce 20 percent tannin. The bark juice is a useful tonic for treating indigestion, diarrhoea, fever and the ailments of the stomach. The timber can be used for making books, agricultural tools, and small furniture. The Lodha tribes of India use the barks for blisters.

These trees grow on their own in our forests. They grow in different parts of the country and can be found as far as Australia.

2 drug admin officials

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to appear before it yesterday for explaining the reason for his inaction.

Appearing before the HC bench of Justice Syed Muhammad Danish Husein and Justice Md Ataur Rahman Khan yesterday, Sirajul informed it, through an affidavit, about the suspension and the departmental proceedings.

The secretary offered an unconditional apology to the HC for not taking actions against the drug officials earlier. The court accepted his apology and exempted him from personal appearance over the matter.

The court has been asking for action against the two officials of the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA) since March last year, but no action was taken, the HC said on Wednesday while rebuking the health secretary.

Earlier, the Dhaka Drug Court acquitted all five accused in the case -- officials of Rid Pharma duo to negligence of the two officials in investigating the matter.

From June to August in 2009, at least 28 children across the country died of renal failure allegedly caused by Rid Pharma's paracetamol syrups and suspensions.

On July 22 the same year, the DGDA

sealed off Rid's factory in BSCIC Area of Brahmanbaria following wide media coverage of the children's death, and findings of Dhaka Shishu (Children) Hospital physician Dr Mohammad Hanif that Rid Pharma's Temset had toxic substance.

In August 2009, Shaiful Islam, then superintendent of drug administration, filed the case with the Dhaka Drug Court.

In its judgment on November 28 last year, the court acquitted all the five accused, saying that the prosecution failed to prove the charge against them.

Two officials of the drug administration involved in the case knowingly violated due procedure of law, and exhibited serious negligence, inefficiency and incompetence in dealing with the case, the verdict said.

Shaiful and Altaf were drug superintendents in 2009.

At the end of this year, following a petition moved by advocate Manzill Murshid on behalf of Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh, the HC ordered the health secretary to inform the court about the steps that have been taken against Shaiful and Altaf for their negligence.

HC orders

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constructed the ETP told the HC it was not operating the modules 24 hours a day as its workers would become ill if they overworked.

In its petition, Bela said the Chinese firm according to its contract with the BSCIC had agreed to set up and operate treatment operations through the central ETP, a common chorme recovery unit, a sewage treatment plant, and a chloride and solid waste management system in the area.

Apart from not running the ETP 24 hours, the firm has been dumping untreated effluent into the Dhaleswari.

The petitioner also said the Department of Environment in five reports prepared between December 2016 and April 2017 wrote that the Sagar BSCIC had been releasing an excessive amount of pollutants into the river. As a result, the river runs the risk of getting as much polluted as the Buriganga, he already said.

The authority's negligence is clear in terms of both liquid and solid waste management. Although the Chinese firm was informed several times of the BSCIC's negligence, it neither paid any heed nor did it give any proposal for effective waste management, Bela said in the petition.

Since no punitive action has been taken against the firm for violation of the contract, the industrial area authority may meet the same fate as Hazaribagh in the capital, did, it added.

Stand beside flood victims

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Mentioning that natural disaster is a regular phenomenon in our country, Hasina said, "We'll have to move ahead bringing these natural disasters."

The PM said the current flood was caused by colossal damage to crops, while heavy rain was the main reason.

Hasina said her government always puts emphasis on facing natural disasters like flood, drought and tidal surge prudently alongside making it sure that there was no loss of life and much damage to the property.

The PM said her government was also very much alert and working relentlessly about the possible steps in the case of any disaster like flood and cyclone, and rebuild their damaged houses.

About the donations, she said those would help fulfill the demand of flood victims and rebuild their damaged houses.

She mentioned that the government was sending enough relief materials to the flood-hit areas. Various nongovernmental organisations were also working there, she added.

Extending her sincere thanks to the power and the internal resources divisions and other organisations for going beyond their duties to help and help fund, Hasina said the contributions from this fund were usually used for the welfare of the various section of people to meet their needs.

Those who donated to the Prime Minister's Relief and Welfare Fund, the Power Division and the organisations under it, the Internal Resources Division, the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, Shippers' Council of Bangladesh and Western Engineering (WEG) were thanked.

Earlier, the PM gave financial assistance to the families of a Rapid Action Battalion member, two police inspectors and two activists of Chhatra League who were killed when military forces were sent to clear the anti-military area of Atia Mahal in Shibbari area of Sylhet on March 25.

Hasina handed over cheques for financial assistance to RB official Lt

Col Abul Kalam Azad's mother Sayeeda Karim and wife Mouriya Sultana, police inspector Sunil Kumar and his wife Parveen Khatun and wife Parveen Akhtar, police inspector Abu Koyas's wife Saira Farhana Chowdhury, BCL activist Wahidul's mother Sultana Akhter and BCL activist Kamal's father Kamal Ahmed Kabal.

About the family members of the victims of Atia Mahal operation, the PM said she had no words to console those who lost their near and dear ones as their losses could not be replaced.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, PM's advisers HT Imam and Tarfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, State Minister for Power Nassir Hamid, IGP AKM Shahidul Hoque, National Board of Revenue Chairman Nojibur Rahman, Bar Director General Benazir Ahmed and Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Md. Mostafizur Mia, among others, were present on the occasion.

Don't missquote

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Mujiur Rahman.

Justice SK Sinha, who reviewed and delivered the final verdict in the case, said the prosecution's case and the investigation were riddled with faults. He would write "something" on the nation's saddest event in future, he said.

There were faults in the investigation of the killing case too, the judge just said added.

The chief justice urged the judge and lawyer communities to uphold the spirit of the judiciary. He said Ghosh's book would be helpful to young and aspirant lawyers.

Renowned jurist Dr Kamal Hossain at the ceremony said the country's judiciary has a glorious history and that an independent judiciary is a prerequisite for a sovereign and independent country.

Conspiracies had been hatched on a number of occasions to taint the judiciary and the country's constitution, he said, urging lawyers to be vigilant against the conspiracies and protecting the pride of the judiciary.

Supreme Court Bar Association President Zauinul Abedin said a vested quarry was trying to spread the venom of the book by attacking the constitution. SC verdict over the 16th amendment.

Lawyers Shanti Pada Ghosh, Subrata Chowdhury and Tobarak

Get more manpower

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Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), BFS and Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) jointly organised the conference.

Some 350 officials from government agencies, academia, researchers and representatives of packaged food companies and experts of international organisations participated in the event.

The conference took place at a time when concern on food safety among citizens is ubiquitous, thanks to numerous allegations of adulteration and unhygienic practices.

The conference suggested monitoring, upgrading domestic food testing laboratories as well as self-regulation by the processed food makers to ensure food safety and win consumer confidence.

At a session on food safety, FICCI official Shadab Ahmed Khan said self-regulation within the food industry would help develop the market and increase confidence of regulators and consumers.

Asif Iqbal, executive director (marketing) of Meghna Group of Industries, said Good Agriculture

Practice (GAP) and Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) have to be self-imposed in each factory.

"We need strong intervention to protect consumer rights and we need self-regulation," said Murshid, director general of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS).

Some 25 lakh people are engaged in the food business and of them 15 lakh are directly linked with the food trade.

BFS said it had taken up an initiative to get 25 lakh food businesses registered. This would allow them to be properly monitored and supervised.

BFS aims to make processed food producers comply with standards so that safe food can be ensured by 2021.

At the closing session, Food Minister Qamrul Islam said the government wants to ensure constitutional right of every citizen to safe food.

Commerce Minister Tofiqul Ahmed said Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection (DNCRP) has taken steps to protect rights of consumers. The office under the Commerce ministry received 6,060 allegations and resolved 5662 of them, he said. It fined violators of consumer rights Tk 6.14 crore, he said.

Former agent

@realDonaldTrump / His former presidential account @realDonaldTrump.

He has sometimes removed tweets from his own account, usually because they contain typos. Exasperated critics note that under US law all the president's public utterances must be preserved.

The White House account also has blocked certain Twitter users. Several have tried to file suit against Trump, accusing him of restricting their freedom of expression by denying them access to his account.

Plame's career as an undercover CIA officer was upended in 2003 after her husband, diplomat Joe Wilson, accused the administration of George W Bush of lying about the threat posed by Iraq.

Administration officials retaliated by leaking Plame's secret work for the CIA, in violation of laws that make it a crime to release classified information to the press.

A White House aide was convicted of perjury and obstruction of justice in the case, but Bush later commuted his prison sentence.

25km tailback

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Another driver, Kasem Ali of Ekusay Paribahan, said he had been stuck near the Daudkandi junction for three hours on his way to Dhaka from Comilla.

The movement of vehicles slowed down when entering the two-lane bridges from the four-lane highway and it is one of the major reasons for the long tailback, he observed.

Police were trying to ease the congestion, he added. Several bus drivers said the increasing number of goods carrying vehicles on the highway ahead of Eid-ul-Azha and the long time taken for toll collection on the Daudkandi and Meghna Bridge are other reasons for the tailback.

"It takes 20 to 25 minutes for a goods carrying truck or lorry to complete the formality of giving the toll on the two bridges which creates a tailback. It takes more time when the toll authority and driver lock horns over charging fines related to overloading," a driver of Hanif Paribahan said.

Several other drivers also blamed the slow pace of toll collection and the two bridges and the Eid rush for the overloaded highways.

While visiting the areas, it was seen that hundreds of vehicles remained stuck on the highway, causing immense sufferings to passengers.

"I had to walk six kilometres from Amirabad to Shahidnagar," said Mr Meing, a Chinese national with business interests in Comilla.

Former agent

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damage the country and put people in harm's way. But threatening atomic nuclear war with North Korea takes it to a dangerous new level."

Plame's plan is simple, if unlikely to succeed: raise a billion dollars to buy a controlling interest in Twitter, and use that to pressure the social network to ban Trump.

"That's a small price to pay to take away Trump's most powerful megaphone and prevent a horrific nuclear war," she wrote.

Launched last week, Plame's campaign had raised \$6,000 as of Wednesday, with individual donations of up to \$100.

Trump's use of Twitter has been a near daily source of controversy. His intemperate tweets have threatened war, scalded allies and opponents alike, and at times abruptly changed the course of US policy, like one last month proclaiming a ban on transgender people serving in the US military.

The billionaire prefers to express himself on his personal account, @realDonaldTrump.

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US to strengthen Ukraine army

Russia sanctions to stay

APR. 15

US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis yesterday said that the United States was committed to helping Ukraine's security, but the capacity of your armed forces," Mattis said after meeting with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko.

"Mr President, we continue to support Ukraine and remain committed to helping the capacity of your armed forces," Mattis said after meeting with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko.