

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(SPECIAL ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)

WRIT PETITION NO. OF 2016.

IN THE MATTER OF:

An application under Article 102 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

AND

IN THE MATTER OF:

Public Interest Litigation (PIL).

AND

IN THE MATTER OF:

1. Human Rights and peach for Bangladesh (HRPB), represented by its Secretary, Advocate Asaduzzaman Siddique, Hall No.2 Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

.....Petitioner.

-V E R S U S-

1. Bangladesh represented by the Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forrest, Bangladesh Secretariat, P.S -, Shahbag, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

2. The Secretary, Ministry of LGRD, Bangladesh Secretariat, P.S:- Shahbag, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

3. The Director General, Department of Environment, Paribesh Bhaban, E-16, Sher-E Bangla Nagar, Agargaon, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

4. Mayor, Belkuchi Municipal Corporation District- Sirajganj, Bangladesh.

5. The Deputy Commissioner (D.C), Sirajganj, Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Sirajganj, Bangladesh.
6. The Superintendent of Police (S.P), Sirajganj, Post and District- Sirajganj, Bangladesh.
7. The Director (Enforcement), Department of Environment, Paribesh Bhaban, E- 16, Sher-E-Bangla NAgar, Agargaon, Dhaka.
8. Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), Upazila: Belkuchi, District- Sirajganj, Bangladesh.
9. Assistant Commissioner (Land), Upazila: Belkuchi, District-- Sirajganj.
10. The officer in Charge (O.C), Police Station, P.S Belkuchi, District- Sirajganj, Bangladesh

.....Respondents.

AND

IN THE MATTER OF:

The Bangladesh Environment Conservation Act 1995 (amended in 2000 and 2002), and মহানগরী, বিভাগীয় শহর ও জেলা শহরের পৌর এলাকাসহ দেশের সকল পৌর এলাকার খেলার মাঠ উন্মুক্ত স্থান, উদ্যান এবং প্রাকৃতিক জলাধার সংরক্ষন আইন, ২০০০.

AND

IN THE MATTER OF:

Inactions/failure of the respondents to take necessary steps to stop encroachment within wapda khal at Belkuchi Municipal Corporation, District- Sirajgonj and to remove all the illegal permanent structures/ market/ house as build up within the territory of the Wapda khal at Belkuchi Municipal Corporation, District- Sirajgonj violating the provisions of law.

AND
IN THE MATTER OF:

For a direction upon the respondents to remove all the illegal permanent structures as built within the territory of the wapda khal at Belkuchi Municipal Corporation, District- Sirajgonj.

To,
Mr. Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha, The Hon'ble Chief Justice Bangladesh and his companion judges of the said Hon'ble Court.

The humble Petition of the Petitioner above named most respectfully;-

S H E W E T H:

1. That the organization Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) is a non profitable registered organization and the objects of the organization is to uphold the human rights of the citizen and to work for the poor people, to give legal support to the helpless people, and to build up awareness amongst the people about their rights etc. That the organization is engaged in promoting and defending human rights supporting the victims of their human rights violations. It also works to protect environment and to protect health of the citizen and to establish rule of law.

G R O U N D S -

i. For that the duty and responsibility vested upon the respondents to serve the people and initiate lawful steps and they are also duty bound to obey the provisions of law. But the respondents have failed to perform the duties and responsibility as vested upon them against any violation of the provisions of law by way of earth filling, building permanent structures in the bed of the khal and illegal encroachment of bed and territory of the said khal and ponds, which is illegal. Hence direction may be given upon the respondents to stop earth filling, illegal encroachment and making building structures in the territory of the said khal at Belkuchi Municipal Corporation, District- Sirajgonj.

ii. For that disregard to laws and legal provisions and failure to ensure proper implementation of laws, the respondents have caused damage to the environment, to the khal. Under these circumstances the respondents are legally bound to protect the khal accordance with law at one hand and to remove the buildings and market as built within the khal.

iii. For that under Section 5 of the মহানগরী, বিভাগীয় শহর ও জেলা শহরের পৌর এলাকাসহ দেশের সকল পৌর এলাকার খেলার মাঠ উন্মুক্ত স্থান, উদ্যান এবং প্রাকৃতিক জলাধার

সংরক্ষন আইন, ২০০০, also prohibits change of the nature of any land that has been earmarked as a natural reservoir. As per section 8 of the Act 2000 any person who acts in contravention of the Act is liable to imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or a fine not exceeding Taka 50,000 or both. Hence, a direction may be given to remove the said building and market by encroachment of the territory of khals and ponds to remove the structures from the territory of the khals and ponds.

iv. For that encroachment, earth filling and making permanent structures within the territory of the said khal is contrary to all applicable laws of the country. That the encroachment within the khal making permanent structures in the territory of khal has created obstruction to the normal movement of the said khal, which is not only illegal but also without lawful authority.

v. For that the environment is being continuously endangered and threatened by various illegal activities such as encroachment, earth filling and making illegal structures in the territory of the said khal. The unauthorized activities are the main causes for environmental degradation. Taking advantage of the silence of the concern authority, the illegal activities is being continued and as a result the environment is being destroyed.

vi. For that the non-implementation of the laws by the respondents undermine rule of law and jeopardize people's fundamental right as guaranteed under Article 32 of the Constitution of Bangladesh.

Wherefore, it is most humbly prayed that your Lordships would graciously be pleased to:-

a) Issue a Rule Nisi calling upon the Respondents to show cause as to why failure/inaction of the respondents to stop encroachment/earth filling within the Wapda khal at Belkuchi Municipal Corporation, District- Sirajgonj from the land grabbers, should not be declared illegal and without lawful authority.

AND

Why a direction should not be given upon the respondents to demolish/evict all illegal structures/constructions/ /house built within

the territory of wapda khal at Belkuchi Municipal Corporation, District- Sirajgonj.

AND

Why a direction should not be given upon the respondents to bring the said khal to its previous condition as per record.

b) Pending hearing of the rule direct the respondent No. 5, 8 and 9 and to survey the area of wapad kahl at Belkuchi Municipal Corporation, District- Sirajgonj as per record and find out the real encroachment/earth filing of the said said khal and submit a report within 30 days through affidavit before this court.

c) Direct the office to serve notices upon the respondents at the cost of office.

d) Upon hearing the parties and the cause if any shown makes the rule absolute.

e) Pass such other or further order or orders as your Lordships may deem fit and proper.

Present Status

The case was filled and moved by Advocate Manzill Murshid, President, HRPB. After hearing the parties the Hon'ble Court issued Rule Nisi upon the respondents and granted ad-interim order. The matter is pending before the Hon'ble High Court Division.