

opportunity to cross-examine them. Moreover, as per the observations made by the Appellate Division the accused petitioner has also the opportunity to rely on the evidence of said two accused adduced by them earlier for his defence.

25. The impugned order is well reasoned and we find no illegality and infirmity with the same.

26. Accordingly, the application is rejected summarily.

Communicate a copy of this order to the Court concerned at once.

Ed.

**High Court Division
(Special Original Jurisdiction)**

Naima Haider J | TM Textiles and Garments Ltd.....Petitioner
ATM Saifur Rahman J |

vs

Bangladesh, represented by the Secretary Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources, Bangladesh Dhaka and others.....
.....Respondents*

Judgment

October 31st, 2017

**Constitution of Bangladesh, 1972
Article 102(2)**

Arbitration claim—The dispute is not a “contractual dispute”; the dispute, it seems, relates to the propriety of the decision to provide gas connection to others through the petitioner’s dedicated line. That being the position, this Division can interfere and there is no need for the petitioner to refer this matter to arbitration.

We feel that justice would be best served if the Rule is disposed of with the direction upon all concerned to

*Writ Petition No. 8753 of 2015.

ensure that the petitioner is ensured the “approved gas supply and approved pressure” at all material times. No gas connection is to be provided to the other nine factories unless the “approved gas supply and the approved gas pressure” is ensured. The respondents are further directed to ensure strict compliance with the conditions set out in the aforesaid paragraph in connection with providing gas connection to the nine factories.(10 & 15)

Nuruddin vs Titas Gas, 3 BLC (AD) 231 ref.

Ajmalul Hossain QC, Senior Advocate with Md Saifullah Mamun and Forrukh Rahman, Advocates—For the Petitioner.

Probir Neogi, Senior Advocate with AM Amin Uddin, with Munshi Muniruzzaman, with Suvra Chakraborty, with Yousuf Khan Rajib, with Shakib Rejwan Kabir, with Anita Ghazi Rahman, with Manzur Al-Matin, with Taposh Bandhu Das, and Sumon Ali, Advocates—For the Respondent No. 6-14.

Dr Md Bashir Ullah, Advocate—For the Respondent No. 2.

Judgment

Naima Haider J : In this application under Article 102 of the Constitution, Rule was issued calling upon the respondent to show cause as to why the impugned Letter No. 1 bearing Reference No. জোবিঅ/ডালুকা/৭৫৭.৬/৮৯৯ dated 30-3-2015 (Annexure-‘K’ to the Writ Petition) and the impugned Letter No. 2 bearing Reference No. জোবিঅ/ডালুকা/৭৫৭.৬/১০২৫ dated 1-7-2015 (Annexure-‘O’ to the Writ Petition) should not be declared to be without lawful authority and are of no legal effect and/or such other or further order or orders passed as to this Court may seem fit and proper.

2. The relevant facts, in brief, are as follows: The petitioner is engaged in the business of manufacturing and exporting knit products. The petitioner uses gas as a raw material in the manufacturing process. The petitioner applied for

gas connection for both Captive Power and Industrial Project. The petitioner's requirement, amongst others, was pressure of 50 PSIG. Although the respondents provided the said gas connection, the respondents could not consistently provide the approved quantity of gas. The respondents could also not ensure continuous gas pressure of 50PSIG. Thereafter, the petitioner, by its letter dated 19-6-2012 applied for dedicated 150 psi 12-inch gas line connection from the respondent No. 2's "Dhanua Town Bordering Station" to the petitioner's factory. The dedicated line was to ensure that approved gas supply and the approved pressure are maintained. The petitioner undertook to pay the cost of such dedicated line. The respondent No. 2 by its letter dated 4-7-2012 approved the increased load and also approved the construction of the dedicated pipeline. The petitioner thereafter requested for confirmation and assurance from the respondent No. 2 regarding, among others, of undisturbed gas connection. The petitioner also requested the respondents not to provide any gas connection to anyone from the said dedicated gas line. The respondent No. 2 by its letter dated 25-10-2012 provided such assurance by stating "আপনার ধনুয়া টিবিএস এ নির্মিতব্য আরএমএস হইতে ভালুকাস্থ মেসার্স টিএম টেক্সটাইল এন্ড গার্মেন্টস লিমিটেড এর আঙ্গিনা পর্যন্ত ১২" x ১৪০ পিএসআইজি গ্যাস বিতরণ লাইন হইতে অন্য কোন গ্রাহককে গ্যাস সংযোগ না প্রদানের অনুরোধ করিয়াছেন। এই বিষয়ে আপনাদের জানানো যাইতেছে যে, আপনাদের বর্তমান ও ভবিষ্যৎ চাহিদা বিবেচনায় আনুমানিক ৮ এমএমসিএফডি গ্যাস সরবরাহ নিশ্চিত না করিয়া উক্ত গ্যাস বিতরণ লাইন হইতে অন্য গ্রাহককে গ্যাস সরবরাহ করা হইবে না।

3. The petitioner started the construction work of the dedicated pipe line from "Dhanua Town Bordering Station" to the petitioner's factory. M/s ARKO Engineering Limited was appointed for the said purpose for approximately Taka 20,43,44,289. When the construction work was completed, the respondent authority conducted successful examination of the said pipe line. Thereafter, gas was supplied to the

petitioner's factory through the dedicated line. However, in contradiction with the previous assurances, the respondent authority requested the petitioner to sign two Gas Sale Agreements. The said agreements were signed on the standard template and there was no room for negotiation. The petitioner came to know that the respondent-authority is planning to give gas connection to nine (9) other industries through the petitioner's dedicated line given that their location was closer to the dedicated line. The petitioner requested the respondents at several times, not to provide such gas connections. The respondents paid no heed thereto. The respondents, to the contrary approved the gas connections of the said factories from the dedicated line of the petitioner. Experts from Hong Kong concluded that the gas pressure would be very low if gas supply is given through the dedicated line. Despite this, the respondents proceeded with providing gas connections to other factories through the dedicated line.

4. Finding no other alternative efficacious remedy, the petitioner has moved this Court and obtained the instant Rule Nisi.

5. The respondent Nos. 2 and 6-14 enter appearance by filing Affidavit-in-Opposition. The respondents points out that the petitioner would not be affected as a result of the new gas connections through the dedicated line. The respondents have tried to illustrate this through mathematical statistics. The respondents also contend that since the pressure of the present gas flow is 120 PSIG which is less than the approved pressure, it would make no difference if gas is supplied to the others.

6. Mr Ajmalul Hossain QC, Senior Advocate for the petitioner at the outset submits that the dispute in question is not a dispute that should be referred to arbitration and hence the writ petition is maintainable. He further submits that the position taken by the petitioner is not controverted. The only issue for determination is

whether the respondents are at liberty to permit others to use the dedicated line of the petitioner when such use may affect the gas supply and gas pressure to the petitioner's factory.

7. Mr Probir Neogi, Senior Advocate, with Mr AM Amin Uddin, Senior Advocate appearing on behalf of the respondent Nos. 6-14 points out that the pipeline in question has a capacity of 15,70,000 CFT/Hr, whereas, the approved load of the petitioner is 1,43,470 CFT/Hr, i.e. a fraction of the total load. Hence, there is a surplus capacity of 14,26,530 CFT/Hr in the said pipeline. 90.86% of the capacity of the pipeline remains to be utilized. Even if the approved load of the petitioner is increased to 3,33,334 CFT/Hr, which is enough to meet the future demands of the petitioner, there will still be a surplus supply of 12,36,666 Cft/Hr. The total demand of the nine industries for which connections were approved stands at 11,07,741 CFT/Hr. Therefore, even after giving connection to the nine factories, there would be surplus capacity. As a result, the petitioner would not be prejudiced and the petitioner's fundamental rights would not be infringed. Mr Neogi's submission was adopted by the learned Counsels appearing for the other respondents.

8. Dr. Md Bashir Ullah, the learned Advocate appearing on behalf of the respondent No. 2 submits that there are certain factual aspects involved in the writ petition and therefore, it should be addressed by the Energy Regulatory Commission of Bangladesh. Dr. Bashir Ullah further submits that the petitioner entered into contractual arrangement and therefore, disputes should be resolved by the arbitrators in light of the arbitration clause in the agreements. On these counts, the learned Advocate submits that the Rule should be discharged and placed reliance upon the decision of our Hon'ble Appellate Division in the case of *Nuruddin vs Titas Gas*, reported in 3 BLC (AD) 231.

9. We have considered the submissions of

the learned Counsels appearing for the petitioner and the respondents. We have also perused the writ petition, the Affidavit in Opposition and the documents annexed thereto.

10. In our view, dispute which compelled the petitioner to move this Division is, in strict sense, not a dispute that should be resolved by arbitration, as suggested by Dr. Md Bashir Ullah. The dispute is not a "contractual dispute"; the dispute, it seems, relates to the propriety of the decision to provide gas connection to others through the petitioner's dedicated line. That being the position, we think that this Division can interfere and there is no need for the petitioner to refer this matter to arbitration.

11. The reports prepared by BUET and OSAKA Engineering Ltd are helpful in understanding the factual position. For ease of reference, we set out below the relevant parts of the reports:

BUET:

Total capacity of the gas line, as claimed by TITAS gas, as 1,570,000 cft/hr is correct if Titas Dhanua station gas pressure is 140 psi and atmosphere pressure supply to TMBD site. However, if 45 psi pressure is to be maintained at TMBD site, gas line capacity will be reduced to 1,440,000 cft/hr.

It is clear that gas consumption figures as mentioned in the drawing are feasible. If the supply is less than 140 psi, gas supply figures will be less than the desired values.

Technically it is possible to install automatic gas control valve at TMBD to throttle the gas supply to other factories in case TMBD RMS intel pressure goes down a certain value of 45 psi.

Gas pipeline can supply a certain amount of gas depending on the supply pressure to guarantee a supply of 333333 cft/hr, supply to

