

SCBA divided

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were related to BNP politics. Zainul Abedin said Justice Khairul criticised the case as pre-emptive. The 16th amendment was 'preconceived'.

"A former chief justice said that the Supreme Court verdict in the 16th amendment case was pre-emptive," he questioned.

"We have to say that Justice ABM Khairul Haque had delivered many judgments, including the one which struck down the caretaker government. Was that judgment preconceived?" he asked.

Zainul Abedin, who is also a BNP leader, said political indiscipline had taken place following the 13th amendment judgment delivered by Justice Khairul.

"Therefore, the people of Bangladesh should vote, and democracy and fundamental values have been damaged," he said.

Justice Khairul in the short judgment in 13th amendment case had criticised the caretaker government should remain in force for two months more.

But, Zainul asked, why did Justice Khairul shift his position when he signed the verdict 16 months into his retirement?

Zainul said Justice Khairul said many irrelevant issues were mentioned in the 16th amendment verdict.

Justice Khairul had intentionally and in a preplanned and irrelevant manner scrapped the fifth amendment verdict in the case when he delivered the verdict in a case regarding acquisition of the land of Moin Cinema Hall in Old Dhaka, Zainul said.

The fifth amendment had legitimised the governments led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Ahsanullah Khan, and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

As pro-Awami League lawyers protested the SCBA president's statement at the press conference, Justice Khairul said he was already submitted a new project proposal along similar lines and if our higher authorities approve it, we shall not have any problem.

Dipok is hopeful. "Our higher authorities are aware of the problem,"

Later in the day, pro-Awami League lawyer and SCBA Vice President Ozi Ullah read out a statement from the same place.

He told reporters that the statements of Zainul Abedin and Mahbub Uddin were not the comment of SCBA. "They are BNP leaders and they are giving speeches for their political purpose."

He also said Justice Khairul made observations on the SC's 16th amendment verdict from his experience as a former chief justice.

Everyone can criticise an SC verdict, as it becomes a public property after it is released, the SCBA vice president stressed.

ROW WITH NORTH KOREA

Trump says maybe it wasn't tough enough' warning

AFP, Baltimore

US President Donald Trump doubled down on his warnings for North Korea yesterday, saying his threat to rain "fire and fury" on it maybe "wasn't tough enough."

Speaking alongside Vice President Mike Pence at his New Jersey club, Trump threatened to "bring a lot more" to pressure Pyongyang to end its nuclear weapons program.

Responding to North Korea's dismissal of his dire warnings as "nonsense," Trump told reporters: "maybe it wasn't tough enough."

"They've been doing this to our country for a long time, many years," he said. "It's about time that some-

body stuck up for the people of this country and for the people of other countries. So if anything, maybe that statement wasn't tough enough."

Trump also warned that "this week it faced 'fire and fury like the world has never seen' if continued with its threat and nuclear programs."

That prompted a defiant Pyongyang to threaten a missile launch from its tiny US territory in the Pacific that is home to a major US air and naval facilities.

The saber rattling set off diplomatic alarm bells, as well as mixed messages from Trump aides about US intentions.

Madaripur monkeys

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decline. In decades to come it may just be that these macaques in Madaripur are not more than a fond memory.

The monkeys used to be plentiful in Chaugaria Bazar, Koldipara and Puratan Bazar areas of the municipality. Says Dipok Ranjan Saha, an assistant forest conservator at the local forest department office. "In the past the Hindu community used to feed a lot of food for the monkeys due to the animals' significance in their religion. But the Hindu population in Madaripur is not what it was, and at the same time areas of jungle suitable for the monkeys have been cleared."

Moreover, the forest department budget dedicated to looking after the monkeys has dwindled. According to the local office of the department, Tk 12 lakh was allocated to support the monkeys in fiscal year 2006-07, but by 2016-17 the budgeted amount had reduced to Tk 3 lakh. In the current year there is no allocation.

"We used to provide food for the monkeys under the auspices of the Bangladesh Biodiversity Project," says forest officer Md Faramuz Hossain, "but that project has ended. We have already submitted a new project proposal along similar lines and if our higher authorities approve it, we shall not have any problem."

Dipok is hopeful. "Our higher authorities are aware of the problem,"

he says. "It is sure to be solved very soon. In the meantime the monkeys are left to fend for themselves.

The macaque population nowadays stands at about 2,000 animals. Those that remain face a food and shelter crisis. "Mostly the monkeys are left to take shelter in the abandoned JTC and Adamiji milk company store-houses," Dipok says, "as well as on roofs of schools and colleges and some neighbouring houses."

Local reaction to the animals is mixed. "Sometimes the monkeys attack homes for food," says one town-dweller. "They are known to snatch food from children and passersby, which creates panic."

"Monkeys are a part of nature," says Masud Sunon from Charmugia, "but now because they are suffering a food and shelter shortage they are sometimes aggressive."

"Monkeys are very important for our environment," says Ajoy Kundu from the same area. "The forest department should try to ensure they don't disappear altogether."

"It is time the authorities again provided food and shelter for the wellbeing of the monkeys," says an environmentalist. "The monkeys are the environment from Syed Abul Hossain Khan in Kalkini. "If we do not work to protect them we will suffer significant environmental loss."

Fresh blow to Sundarbans

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Committee (WHC) held last month in Krakow, Poland.

Prof Anwar Muhammad, secretary general of the National Committee for Saving the Sundarbans, said the government was failing to keep its promises.

Earlier, it did not permit any polluting industries in the ECA of the Sundarbans but now the government has decided to allow polluting industries to move the movement against the Rampal power plant is logical and is required to save the Sundarbans," he said.

He demanded the government stop the power plant project and not allow any polluting industries in the ECA of the Sundarbans.

The environment ministry stopped issuing environmental clearance certificates to gazettes in the ECA in 2016 following a gazette notification in this regard.

"The ministry has a large number of clearance certificate applications piled up. There were 16 applications for new permits and 118 for permit renewals. The ministry is present in last week's meeting said the government decided to relax some rules to allow LPG bottling plants in the ECA and changed the existing environment policy to permit polluting industries in the ECA."

The Bangladesh Rules 1997 does not mention LPG bottling plants, but all kinds of industrial gas, including

Oxygen, Nitrogen and Carbon-dioxide, were put in "red category".

Currently, the ministry categorises the LPG bottling plants in red, industries of which are not allowed in the ECA.

The Environment Conservation Committee and the forest department rejected the permit for the LPG bottling plants to be put in "orange category".

Of the 149 industries already set up in the Sundarbans ECA, 27 are in red, 56 are in orange, and 66 are in orange-A categories.

Apart from these, 21 industries of Mongla Port Industrial Area, 21 industries of Mongla Export Processing Zone (EPZ), and five other industries near the port area have the environment clearance even though those are in the ECA.

Sixteen other industries, eight of them LNG bottling plants, in the ECA have sought environment clearances.

Besides, many industries have bought farmland in villages near the Rampal power plant. Some of them have gotten environment clearances to set up industries on the land while some are waiting for their certificates.

This move is likely to encourage more hazardous industries in the villages, some of which are within a kilometre of the power plant.

Last week's National Environment Committee meeting was after August 9. In the previous meeting in 2009, the committee decided to permit industries in the Bhalwal forest.

North Korea

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an intercontinental ballistic missile, bringing much of the US mainland within its range.

US Secretary of Defense James Mattis said, "We are facing a mini Cuba Missile Crisis," John Delury, professor at Seoul's Yonsei University, told AFP.

The European Union yesterday announced that it was expanding its sanctions against North Korea, adding 11 new individuals and entities, after repeated violation of UN resolutions on its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes.

Trump's "fire and fury" remarks were a lot of nonsense, said General Kim Rak-Gyom, the commander of the North's missile forces, according to Pyongyang's official Korea Central News Agency.

"Sound dialogue is not possible with such a belligerent of reason," he added in a statement.

the Japanese prefectures of Shimane, Hiroshima and Kochi.

They would have a flight time of 17 minutes 45 seconds, travel 3,556.7 kilometres (around 2,086 miles) and cover 30 to 40 kilometres away from Guam, it said - which would put the impact points just outside US territorial waters.

Japan, which has in the past warned it would send down any intercontinental missiles that threaten its territory, concluded that it could "never tolerate" provocations from the reclusive state.

The western Pacific island of Guam is home to long-range bombers and military jets and submarines, which are regularly deployed for shows of force in and near the Korean peninsula, to Pyongyang's fury.

Two supersonic US bombers took off from the island on a fly-over mission to Korea early this week.

Professor Yang Moo-jin of Seoul's University of North Korea Studies said the level of detail in Pyongyang's declaration was unusual.

Get rid of hajj

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MEASURES" in case the situation continued to deteriorate.

Asked about the measures, he said Biman might apply to the Saudi Arabia Civil Aviation Authority for permission for operating extra hajj flights.

On request, the airlines has recently got permission to run 14 such flights.

If necessary, Menon said, Biman would open a large number of flights on other routes to facilitate operating more hajj flights.

Currently, six Boeing aircraft are dedicated to carrying pilgrims to Saudi Arabia, said Biman General Manager (Public Relations) Shakil Meraj.

He also said another Boeing would be brought on lease from Malaysia within August 15.

As of yesterday morning, a total of 52,483 pilgrims were sent to Saudi Arabia by flights of Biman and Saudi Arabian Airlines, he added.

'SOME HAJJ AGENCIES TO BLAME' Religious Affairs Minister Mottur Rahman yesterday came down on a section of hajj agencies, blaming it for the proliferation of hajj flights.

Addressing a programme in the capital, he said Biman had to cancel the flights as the agencies did not send pilgrims on time.

He alleged the agencies try to send the pilgrims at the last moment to make a profit.

He said the agencies would have to spend less for food and accommodation for the hajjis if they were sent late, he added.

PILGRIMS "CHEATED" Hajj of 33 pilgrims from Ghoraghat upazila of Dinajpur has become untraceable as their agent allegedly went into hiding with their money on August 6, reports our correspondent in the district.

On behalf of the 32, Jahangir Alam Badsha, of Krishnapur village in Ghoraghat upazila of Dinajpur, and Upazila Nirbahi Officer on August 8.

UNO TMA Momin asked police to take necessary actions in this regard. Jahangir said the 32 pilgrims paid Tk 80 lakh in hajj package cost to the travel agency in Ranjani Bazar area.

However, his bond has been closed since August 6. Its signboard was removed and the owner's mobile phone was switched off, he said.

Israil Hossain, officer-in-charge of Ghoraghat Police Station, said they were investigating the matter.

Observations

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The party leaders said Chief Justice SK Sinha's observations in the SC were undervalued.

At the meeting, AL Presidium Member Mohammed Nasim said Bangabandhu and parliament were demeaned in the observations.

Referring to the CJ's observations that "No nation, no country is perfect," he said, "another President Member Abdul Razzak said this was totally 'unacceptable' and 'unacceptable'."

At that, the PM, in a rather lighter vein, said he would better file the case, according to meeting sources.

The PM also asked her party colleagues to prepare for the next national polls by setting up a committee under the Election Commission in line with the constitution.

The UNB reported that the PM in her introductory speech earlier urged the public to remain alert against those who opposed the country's independence.

"Those who opposed the country's independence and those who didn't want it had been engaged in genocide, rape, looting and arson during the civil war," he said in Bangladesh and want to strike whenever they get a chance."

She said if forces like the BNP-Jamaat alliance grab power as they did in 2001, the country would again plunge into chaos.

At the DEMANDS CJ'S REMOVAL

Food Minister Qamrul Islam yesterday demanded removal of the CJ for his "irrelevant and objectionable observations" in the verdict in the 16th amendment case.

"If the chief justice doesn't step down by this month, lawyers would launch a vigorous movement next month to remove him," he said at a discussion, organised to mark the National Mourning Day, in the capital.

"You [the CJ] would not be able to stay in your post, siding with the anti-liberation forces, including the BNP," he added.

NBR seeks

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judgments. Exercise restraint," he said. Arazim Sinha wedded anybody can criticise an SC verdict in a constructive way once it is delivered and history will be the best judge.

"Constructive criticisms of Supreme Court verdicts can be made. We accept such criticisms. But if the criticism is not constructive, the judiciary will be harmed."

The lawyers led by Supreme Court President Justice Zainul Abedin and Secretary AM Mahbub Uddin criticised the apex court for a contempt of court rule against former chief justice Khairul Haque. They said his comments were highly contemptuous.

Since the release of the full verdict, lawyers and cabinet members have been lambasting it.

On Wednesday, Justice Khairul at a press conference at his office strongly criticised the SC verdict, terming it immature, preconceived and irrelevant.

He said that the SC made observations overlooking "the main issue of the case" and it seems from the verdict that Bangladesh is no more a republic but a constitutional monarchy.

Citing the comments of Justice Khairul, SCBA President Zainul Abedin told the apex court that they came to uphold the dignity of the judiciary.

He said the justice replied that there is nothing wrong with lawyers speaking of the dignity of the judiciary.

He, however, added, "When a judgment is delivered, it can be criticised in a constructive way, and we accept constructive criticisms."

Zainul also said that Justice Khairul, holding a responsible position like law commission chairman, cannot make

comments about the SC verdict in such a manner.

Sinha then said they are aware of it and will look into it. "We, the seven judges, have delivered the judgment [in 16th amendment case] unanimously and the judiciary will not issue any rejoinder [against criticisms]," he added.

Advocate SM Rezaul Karim, an Awami League leader and former secretary of the SCBA, who was present at the court, said the SCBA president did not pass any resolution on the decision about any move against Justice Khairul.

At one stage of the proceedings, former BNP minister barrister Moudud Ahmed told the SC that the comment of Justice Khairul Haque is contemptuous.

BNP leader and former SCBA president advocate Khandakar Mahbub Hossain told the court that the comments of Justice Khairul has scandalised the judiciary.

Secretary AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon prayed to the court to issue a contempt of court rule against the Law Commission chief.

The apex court on August 1 released the full text of its judgment upholding a 16th amendment of the constitution. The 16th amendment had empowered parliament to remove SC judges for incapacity or misconduct.

In the verdict, the SC observed the government became arrogant and uncontrolled in the absence of checks and balances and effective watchdog mechanism.

"Human rights are at stake, corruption is rampant, parliament is dysfunctional, the people are deprived of basic healthcare and mismanagement in the administration is acute," it said.

To BNP, it's Magna Carta

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the context of the prevailing political and social conditions in the country.

Magna Carta is a charter of liberties signed by a duress by King John of England in 1215 that influenced the development of many important modern legal and constitutional principles.

Justice Khairul on Wednesday termed SC verdict "misconceived, irrelevant and immature."

According to Fakhrul, there was no difference between the statements of Awami League leaders and Justice Khairul. "We strongly condemn Justice Khairul's statement for his regretting for his deeds, he gave statements in favour of injustice."

The people were well and truly realising how much "damage" the verdicts of then chief justice Khairul had caused to Bangladesh's democracy, he said.

The BNP leader alleged that the annulments of the 5th, 7th and 13th constitutional amendments created country which made democracy fragile.

"Political tension, instability and frustration increased in the country after the delivery of verdicts by Justice Khairul. The government became dictatorial and allowed the caretaker government system was abolished. The Awami League took out the philosophy of a multiparty democracy and introduced almost a dictatorship. There is no functioning parliament," he said.

Fakhrul said truth was exposed with the delivery of the verdict. "The frustrated nation has seen a ray of hope through this judgment. That's why we welcomed the verdict and greeted it with Applause throughout the Supreme Court."

About the AL's reaction to the verdict, he said the party was frustrated and aggrieved. "They still are not realising that the monster created by the 16th amendment is still alive."

Speaking at the press conference, NBR seeks

BNP Standing Committee Member Moudud Ahmed questioned the legality of Justice Khairul's press conference on Wednesday.

"[The Justice Khairul] is an official paid from the public exchequer. Holding of such a press conference by a government official is a complete violation of the government's code of conduct," he said.

Moudud claimed that the purpose of the press conference was to expose Justice Khairul's "political character."

He also said while pronouncing the verdict on the 13th amendment to the constitution, Justice Khairul had said that the general elections could be held under caretaker government.

But he released the full verdict after 16 months and did not write anything about the matter in it, alleged the BNP leader.

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Speaking at the press conference, NBR seeks

7-yr-old boy

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This went on for about 15 minutes in broad daylight on Wednesday at Chouria village of Kushtia's Kumbhariya area.

Two of the alleged torturers Tanjil Al and Rokeya Khan were arrested hours after the incident as photos of the abuse taken by onlookers spread in the local area. The other torturer, Meru Mia, had fled the area, said police.

Abdul Khaleq, officer-in-charge of Kumarkhali Police Station said Rokeya lost her mobile phone earlier in the day and her son-in-law Tanjil had stolen it.

Tanjil and his friend Meru picked Jewel up from the tea stall in front of Lalon Shah's shrine and tied him to a metal pole near Rokeya's house and tortured him.

Hafezur Rahman, a shopkeeper of the area, told this correspondent that he saw the boy being tortured by the three in-laws.

He added that he didn't have the courage to intervene since the torturers were influential people.

Jewel's elder brother Robbel rushed to the scene about 20 minutes after the torturers left him tied to the tree and took him to Kushtia General Hospital, Hafejur added.

Tapos Kumar Sarkar, resident medical officer of the district, said the torturers were a major injury, the boy was in shock.

He added that there were bruises all over his body.

Jewel and Robbel were brothers-in-law of their family as their father Serajul Islam left them three years ago.

As photos taken by onlookers spread in the local area, the police arrested SM Mehed Hasan, superintendent of police in Kushtia about the matter.

Instructed by the SP, a team of Kumarkhali police arrested two of the suspects about 300 metres away from the spot.

Robbel filed a case accusing Tanjil, Meru and Rokeya with Kumarkhali police station later that night.

A chief judicial magistrate court in Kushtia ordered the two arrestees to jail yesterday.

OC Abdul Khaleq said they were trying to arrest Meru.

Woman

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said Sirajul had an altercation with his wife Wednesday morning. At one point, the husband shouted "talk to the vicem." He later tried to force the vicem to join with their three children out of the house.

As the victim refused to leave, Sirajul, Ilyi and Abdikakar began to torture her.

Hearing her screams for help, local residents in the scene and rescued her and took her to a hospital. Fakhrul Islam, officer-in-charge of Dinajpur Sadar Police Station, said.

Hassan Parvez, indoor medical officer of the hospital, said the woman's injuries were life threatening.

Typewriting

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Typists are found at courthouses, government offices, private firms and other legal documents for sale as 25 rupees (39 cents), the click-clack of the ancient machines echoing around a noisy typewriting technology.

Abhyankar, whose institute has been teaching stenography skills for more than 80 years, estimates roughly 700,000 students across the state sit for a manual typing certification every year.

These certificates are a ticket out of unemployment and village life for many poor youngsters, who pursue the typewriting skills as a means to get government clerks and stenographers.

These clerks are becoming increasingly redundant amid "Digital India," a government-run initiative to promote digital technology.

roll out e-services across the subcontinent of 1.3 billion.