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# The Daily Star

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## Inside today

### International



**Armed forces and police have seized power in Mali and formed a National Reconciliation Council headed by Hamadoun Touman Toure.**

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### Business

**The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry has demanded the withdrawal of all hidden taxes.**

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### Article

**Grandmothers find children of the disappeared**



**A group of grandmothers in Argentina has been painstakingly trying to trace children born or kidnapped in the years under military rule when thousands of people disappeared.**

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### Only one petition questioning poll

Only one election petition questioning the election of a candidate in Comilla has so far been received by the Election Commission. This was stated by the Election Commissioner Justice Syed Mesbahuddin Hussain to BSS Wednesday.

### 110 tolas gold seized at ZIA

The customs seized 110 tolas of gold and ornaments worth about Taka ten lakh from four passengers who came from Dubai by a flight of Bangladesh Biman at the Zia International Airport Tuesday. Customs sources said, reports BSS.

### List of BNP nominees today

By Staff Correspondent  
The list of BNP nominees for 30 seats reserved for women in the parliament will be announced today (Thursday).  
Election to the seats will be held at the conference room of the Election Commission on April 4.

### Medical students boycott classes

By SSM Correspondent  
The students of all medical colleges boycotted their classes Wednesday in protest against the new curriculum of the Bangladesh Medical and Dental Colleges. They also locked the rooms of the department heads at about 9 am

### Kushtia - 2 poll today

By Staff Correspondent  
The election in Kushtia-2 (Bheramara-Mirpur) constituency of the parliament will be held today (Thursday). The election in this seat remained postponed after the death of Marafat Ali, a candidate of JSD (Rab) on February 17.

### Shri and Itar timings

Day	Last time for Shri	Last time for Itar
Monday	4:35 am	6:20 pm
Tuesday	4:34 am	6:20 pm

## 100 including deputy jailor injured in clash between prisoners and guards 8 killed in firing at Comilla jail

From Our Correspondent

COMILLA, Mar 27: Eight prisoners were killed and at least 100 others injured in an armed clash between the rebellious prisoners and the jail guards here this noon.

In the clash, the deputy jailor was grievously wounded as he was repeatedly hit by

'ram daos'. His condition was stated critical.

The clash ensued when a group of jail inmates armed with pipe-guns, lethal weapons and rods came out of their lockups demanding their release. They raised various slogans in favour of their de-

mands which also include better management inside the jail. At one stage, they tried to break open the jail gate.

The guards in an attempt to bring the situation under control opened fire on the violent prisoners killing eight of them on the spot. The jail guards

also sprayed hot water on the prisoners. Of the injured, 30 were admitted to the Comilla sadar hospital while 11 injured prisoners were released after first aid.

The injured persons also include 14 police personnel. Preparations were being taken

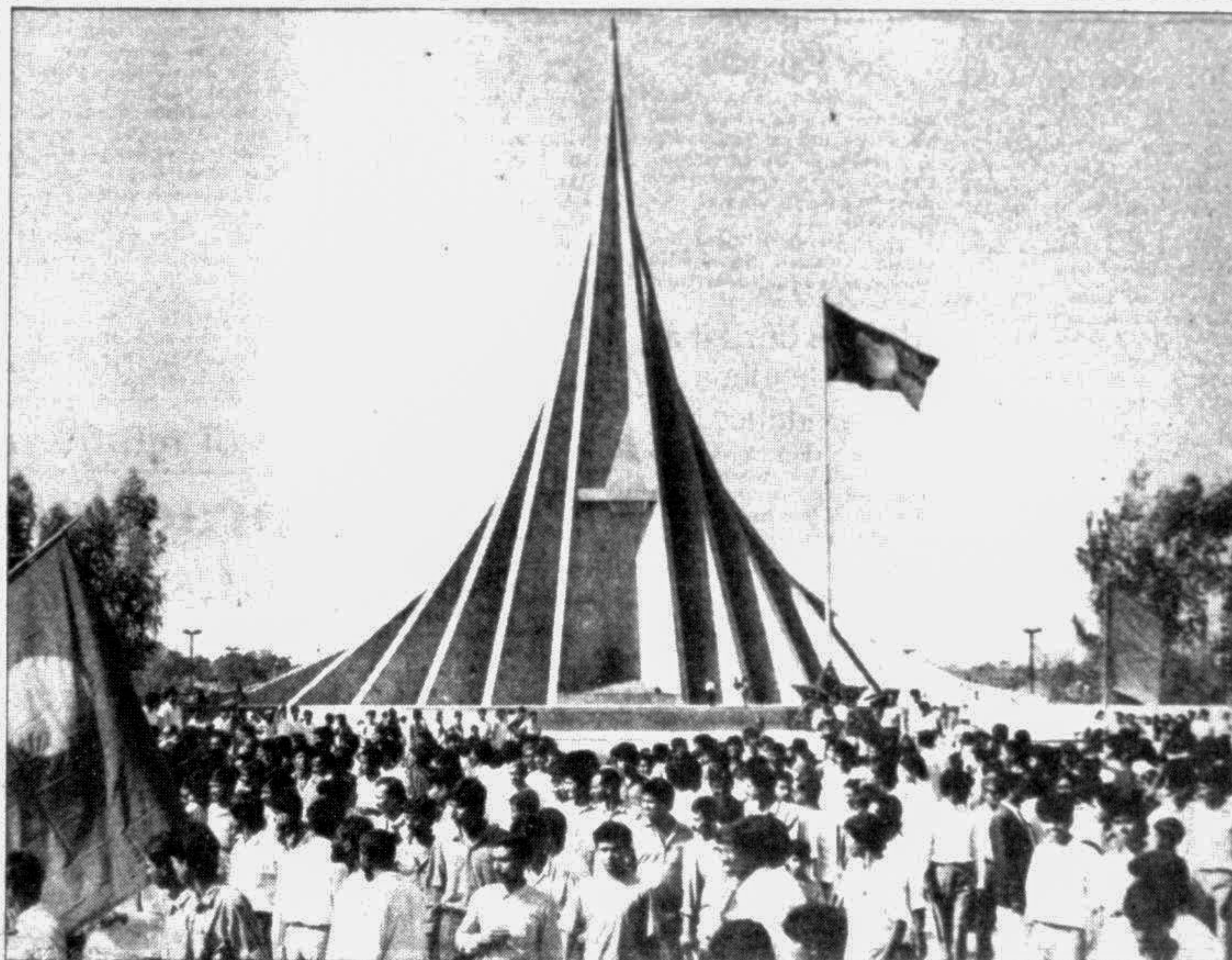
to shift the deputy jailor to Dhaka.

Eyewitness accounts said they heard sounds of firing inside the jail at about noon today but the disturbances began in the morning.

The identities of the dead See Page 10 Col 5

### Press Note

Eight prisoners of Comilla Central Jail were killed and 25 jail guards including a Deputy Superintendent injured when jail guards opened fire on the runaway prisoners Wednesday. See Page 10 Col 6



People from all walks of life flocked to the National Memorial at Savar on the Independence Day Tuesday to pay homage to martyrs of the Liberation War. —Star photo

## Independence Day celebrated with renewed enthusiasm Vow to build a happy nation

By Staff Correspondent

The nation celebrated its 21st Independence and National Day on Tuesday amid great enthusiasm and widespread jubilation.

The day bore a special significance to the people as it was celebrated after the end of a nine-year autocratic rule.

On this historic occasion, homage was paid to the martyrs of the Liberation War and the nation took a fresh vow to build a happy and prosperous Bangladesh.

A day-long comprehensive programme taken up by socio-cultural organisations included discussions on the significance of Liberation War and rallies and special prayers at mosques and temples to invoke divine

blessings for the progress and prosperity of the country. The day was a public holiday.

A 21-gun salute heralded the beginning of the day in Dhaka city. The national flag was hoisted atop all public and private buildings on the occasion.

The Acting President, Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed hosted a reception at Bangabhaban in the evening to celebrate the day.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia visited the National Mausoleum at Savar and placed wreaths there on the auspicious day. She also attended as chief guest a grand rally of children held at Dhaka Stadium in the morning.

Impressive physical feasts, march past and dances depicting the cultural life of the people performed by little children enthralled the audience at the packed stadium.

The Prime Minister encouraged the juvenile participants by clapping her hands.

The children's rally had a festive atmosphere with Begum Khaleda Zia releasing multi-coloured balloons into the air and pigeons too.

A band played Shaheed Ziaur Rahman's favourite song 'Pratham Bangladesh Amar Shesh Bangladesh' (the first Bangladesh, my last Bangladesh) as Begum Zia mounted the red-carpeted See Page 10 Col 7

## Private sector will get Govt's full support

Star Economic Report

The government will extend all-out support through policy redirections to encourage private sector to set up new industries and introduce market-oriented reforms.

This was stated by Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan on Wednesday at a meeting with the representatives of the private sector at the office of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI).

The meeting was presided over by Al-haj Md Akram Hossain, president of FBCCI. Among others, M Akbar Ali, MP, former Vice-Chairman of Dhaka Stock Exchange, Khorshid Alam, former presi- See Page 10 Col 7

## Ershad's arms case Prayers to adjourn proceedings rejected

By Staff Correspondent

Two petitions for adjourning proceedings in Ershad's arms case were yesterday rejected by the one-Judge Special Tribunal set up to hear the case.

Rejecting the petitions Judge Mohammad Habibullah observed that it was clear from the statements of the Defence Counsel that efforts were being made by the Defence to try to delay the proceedings unnecessarily.

The Tribunal resumed yesterday after a seven-day adjournment. The time was given after the Defence Counsel Shahadat Hossain pleaded that time was needed to bring a

lawyer to defend the accused. However, no new lawyer turned up yesterday to defend Ershad.

The accused former President H. M. Ershad was present at the Tribunal and sat quietly in the dock.

In his first petition to the Tribunal the Defence Counsel said that the accused wanted to challenge the March 19 order of the Tribunal and as such needed adjournment of the Tribunal for at least one more week.

The Judge rejected the petition saying that the order of the Tribunal could be challenged. See Page 10 Col 3

## Police firing at Bheramara: Two killed, 25 hurt

From Our Correspondent

BHERAMARA (Kushtia), Mar 27: Two people were killed and at least 25 others injured when police opened fire to disperse a mob at Bheramara Bazar Tuesday afternoon.

Official sources confirmed one death and ten injured including five policemen.

The trouble started when three of some 200 reserve police, brought here for election duty, exchanged hot words with some shopkeepers over seizure of Indian sares. The policemen reportedly took away three pieces of Indian sares forcibly from some shopkeepers and beat up them.

See Page 10 Col 4

## Restore Liberation War spirit, urges Hasina

Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina Tuesday vowed to protect Bengalee language, culture and heritage and re-establish the spirit of the Liberation War, reports BSS.

She said that her party would resist all injustices and repression and continue struggle for the establishment of an accountable government and a sovereign Parliament.

Addressing a gathering at the national martyrs memorial at Savar in the morning, Sheikh Hasina said by establishing an exploitation-free society and bringing smile in the faces of distressed, Awami League would take revenge of the killing of Bangabandhu

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the father of the nation.

Sounding a note of warning, Sheikh Hasina said the independence which was attained at the cost of 30 lakhs martyrs and dignity of 2 lakhs women was under a threat due to the conspiracy being hatched by the reactionary forces, enemies of democracy and communal forces. She said the unholy attempts of destroying the values of the Liberation War that began with the killing of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15, 1975 was still going on.

Sheikh Hasina lamented that Independence Day was being celebrated, but no respect was shown at state level to the

See Page 10 Col 1

## JP will support AL in parliament if Sirajul Haque defends Ershad

Star Report

Awami League presidium member and senior lawyer Sirajul Haque will defend deposed President Ershad in the arms case and appear as defence counsel from the next hearing.

Ershad sought permission to engage a foreign lawyer but the Bar Council provision proposed. See Page 10 Col 6

## BNP PP meets today

Star Report

The BNP Parliamentary Party will meet at the Sangsad Bhaban today at 11 am. The meeting will discuss the party strategy to be adopted in the inaugural session of parliament on April 5.

The ruling party, BNP will come under pressure from opposition Awami League and its allies for amending the Constitution to revert to parliamentary form of government. Jamaat-e-Islami and Jatiya Party MPs may not join Awami League in the move.

BNP sources told The Daily Star that the party is committed to establish a government accountable to the

See Page 10 Col 6

## MPs yet to be sworn in take oath Mar 30

The oath taking ceremony of the MPs-elect, who are yet to be sworn-in, will be held on March 30 at 9 am at the number one committee room of the east block of the Sangsad Bhaban at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, a Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat press release said Wednesday, reports BSS.

The Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abdur Rauf, will administer the oath. The concerned MPs-elect See Page 10 Col 6

## Orientation programme for MPs Apr 1

Mostafa Kamal Majumder

A day-long orientation programme for the newly elected Members of Parliament (MPs) will be held at the Sangsad Bhaban on April 1.

All parties represented in the present parliament have been requested to ask their MPs to attend the orientation programme, being organised by the MPs Club with the support of the Parliament Secretariat.

The orientation programme is the first of its kind in Bangladesh. Similar programmes are organised in India and some other countries.

The orientation programme is basically designed to acquaint the new MPs with the See Page 10 Col 2

## Attack on PDB men leaves Mirpur without electricity

By Staff Correspondent

A large number of people of Kalyanpur in the city are living in darkness after power supply to the area was suspended following a clash between some Power Development Board (PDB) employees and dwellers of a Mirpur slum on Monday.

PDB sources said the dwellers of Natunbazar area attacked the PDB men with lethal weapons when they went there to cut some illegal electric lines at 11 am. The attackers armed with axes, ram See Page 10 Col 5

## Yaqub Khan resigns

ISLAMABAD, Mar 27: Pakistan's veteran Foreign Minister, Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, has resigned, a government spokesman said today, reports Reuter.

Yaqub Khan sent his resignation to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on March 20, Khan told reporters.

"He has laid down his pen," he said. No successor has yet been named.

Yaqub Khan held the office for about a decade under late military ruler General Mohammad Zia Ul-Haq and three subsequent civilian Prime Ministers.

## KGB vows to crush Yeltsin rally at Kremlin

MOSCOW, Mar 27: Soviet security forces armed with water cannon, rubber truncheons and tear gas vowed today to crush a banned anti-government rally outside the Kremlin, reports Reuter.

Moscow city officials said hundreds of thousands of demonstrators were expected to march to the Manezh Square, at the gates of the Kremlin, tomorrow in defiance of a ban on all protests in the capital.

President Mikhail Gor-

bachev has launched a fierce attack on his opponents, saying they offered no credible alternative to his government and lacked ideas for ending the Soviet Union's political and economic crisis.

In a 90-minute interview with Soviet television on Tuesday, Gorbachev said he was optimistic about healing the country's deepening economic and political wounds with a new anti-crisis programme and a treaty between the centre and the republics.

Gorbachev criticised both the leadership of the Russian federation, the biggest Soviet republic, and of Moscow city council, which says Thursday's protest will go ahead as planned despite government warnings.

He said members of the opposition were doing everything in their power to aggravate the Soviet Union's problems and called for restraint. "The instigators will meet resistance from those who are defending the Constitution," he said.

The main Communist Party daily Pravda warned on Tuesday that Thursday's rally would be used by radicals "to despatch demonstrators to the very walls of the Kremlin."

KGB officers, responsible for security at Red Square, cordoned off the area with small metal barriers.

Our people will act in accordance with the law, but the column shall not pass, vowed Major-General Isef Belyansky of the Soviet Interior Ministry. The Interior Ministry an-

nounced it had prepared anti-riot measures, including water cannon, horse patrols, rubber truncheons, tear gas and a brigade of police dogs.

KGB units and local police, placed under direct central control by a special order of President Mikhail Gorbachev, declared their readiness in a scare campaign clearly designed to discourage demonstrators from taking to the streets.

But Moscow city officials, backed by leaders of a big min-

ers' strike, branded the three-week ban unconstitutional and said city council members would lead marchers, acting as human shields.

They predicted hundreds of thousands would turn out in support of populist Boris Yeltsin, under attack by the communists and locked in a bitter struggle with Gorbachev.

The leaders of the big Russian Federation -- which Yeltsin leads as President of the republic's parliament -- also declared the Kremlin ban illegal.