



AL stages brief walkout

By Staff Correspondent

The opposition Awami League yesterday staged a brief walkout in Parliament in protest against the rejection of a bill to repeal the recently promulgated Anti-Terrorism Act.

AL MP A K M Jahangir Hossain tabled the bill on the private members' day alleging that the ruling party had been using the law to persecute opposition activists.

Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, however, said the law had already been proved to be effective and helpful in curbing violence and terrorism. Giving examples of its effectiveness, the Home Minister said the government will review the law after two years, as it was promulgated for a period of two years.

The AL staged their five-minute walkout just before Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali put the bill to vote. The private bill was rejected by a voice vote in the absence of the AL members.

The Jamaat-e-Islami, the Jatiya Party and the NDP MPs voted 'yes' favouring the bill.

Workers' Party leader Rashed Khan Menon and Ganatantri Party leaders Suranjan Sengupta were not in the House at the time.

Three other bills, one by AL MP Professor Rafiqul Islam and two others by JP member Ebadur Rahman Chowdhury, were also placed yesterday but were rejected by voice vote.

Placing the Anti-Terrorism Act (Repeal) Bill, K M Jahangir said the law is being abused and the opposition political activists are being harassed under the laws.

The AL MP said since September 15, 1992 when the law was enacted, some 2119

No plan to sell gas field, JS told

Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khondaker Mosharraf Hossain informed Parliament yesterday that the government has no plan to sell any gas field to private entrepreneurs, reports UNB.

Replying to a supplementary during question hour, the Minister, however, said the government will encourage private companies to join the exploration of gas fields in the country alongside government initiatives.

At present, there are 17 gas fields in the country. Six of them are now in production.

Victoria College extends closure

COMILLA, Sept 23: The authorities of the Comilla Victoria College have extended the closure of the college up to September 30 apprehending further violence on the campus, reports UNB.

College sources said the decision was taken as the tension was mounting on the campus following the recent bloody clashes in different educational institutions of the country, including Rajshahi University.

Earlier, the college was declared closed till September 19 following clashes between the rival student groups on September 9.

Urgent power suspension

As power will be suspended from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Maniknagar Grid Substation Bangabhaban Circuit-1 due to urgent maintenance work to be carried out by Grid Maintenance Divn., Dhaka South, PDB, power will be suspended at Purana Paltan, Motijheel Colony, Arambagh, Motijheel C.A. (partly), Fakirapool, Naya-Paltan, Abhoy Das Lane, R.K. Mission Road, Gopibagh, South Kamalapur through alternate arrangement. Power may remain suspended at the abovementioned areas if any fault occurs in the alternate power distribution system at the abovementioned time. The valued consumers are informed through this notification.

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Rutskoi forces plan attack

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all other property passes under the management of the Presidential administration', said the decree.

Yeltsin later announced today that presidential elections would be held next June 12, exactly three years after he was elected to the post.

In a decree, a copy of which was received by AFP, Yeltsin proposed that the federal assembly to emerge from the snap general election he called for December 11 and 12 adopt a law on presidential elections before February.

Yeltsin, who became Russia's first democratically-

MOSCOW, Sept 23: Russian deputies opened an emergency session of the Congress of People's Deputies here today aimed at impeaching Yeltsin. The session began at 10:10 pm (1810 GMT), reports AFP.

elected President in 1991, accepted to cut short his tenure by two years.

He also indicated that he would stand for a third term.

Meanwhile, parliament Vice-Speaker Nikolai Ryabov resigned today to protest what he called 'the strategy of confrontation of the parliamentary leadership.'

The only viable issue is a new legislative body through elections and holding presidential elections,' Ryabov told the parliament.

Earlier the head of the parliamentary committee on defence and security, General Sergei Stepashin, said today he was resigning citing serious disagreements among the leaders of the dissolved legislature.

It's agony,' Itar-Tass news agency quoted Stepashin as saying, describing a full meeting today of the parliament's governing Presidium, chaired by Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov.

Stepashin was the first senior official in the camp of the parliament, dissolved Tuesday by Yeltsin, to disclose splits among the parliament's leaders.

'The country is covered in



Two Pro-Communist supporters Wednesday tying a Soviet flag onto a statue that stands next to the Russian Parliament in Moscow. Pro-Communist supporters camped the night and most of the day outside the building after Boris Yeltsin dissolved Parliament.

— AFP photo

shame. Its prestige is zero whether the parliament stays or goes. This coup d'etat must be put down,' he said.

Hard-liners in parliament ordered Yeltsin to surrender to legitimate authorities or leave the country and announced presidential elections within three months, asserting Yeltsin had no authority to order an election. Lawmakers said parliament elections could follow the election of a new president.

'Let us assume that the Supreme Soviet and the constitutional court are not the ex-president (Yeltsin) triumphs,' a sombre Khasbulatov told parliament. 'Nothing will change. It is already impossible to reverse what has been done by the ex-president.'

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lies.

Mizam, while making his query, told the House that Mizan Chowdhury's constituents were not interested in listening to him for his party's autocratic role in the past and the local people had staged a demonstration against the JP.

The district administration was compelled to impose Section 144 to maintain order and save the leader from the public's wrath,' the minister added. The JP leader, however, rejected the minister's version and termed it untrue.

Fazlul Rahman Patil, State Minister for Social Welfare, stood to protest Tofael's allegation of election rigging by the government.

Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda took the floor at this point to protest Mizam's observations and argued that the political situation in 1991 could not be compared with that of the present.

Refuting allegations that the government had rigged any elections, the Information Minister said if it were so the ruling party would not have graciously embraced defeat in by-elections held during the past three years.

Tofael Ahmed of the Awami League (AL), rising on a point of order, protested the Information Minister's observation about the holding of fair elections under the BNP government and claimed that the Mirpur by-election had been rigged by the ruling party.

Mizan Chowdhury, referring to some recent incidents in the northern districts, alleged that the government had imposed Section 144 to prevent the holding of his party's scheduled rally.

The major theme of this year's conference was 'Managing the Transition to a Market-Oriented Economy and World Economic Situation.'

The Finance Minister will go to Washington DC from the Bahamas to attend the annual World Bank-IMF meeting to day.

Earlier, on the day, the two-day conference was formally opened by Prime Minister of Bahamas Hubert Ibrahim. The opening session was addressed, among others, by Minister of Planning of the Bahamas, the Secretary General of the Commonwealth and the Bangladesh Finance Minister.

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