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## Bill passed: BNP walks out

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Ershad's rule in 1989. Khasru took up points raised by JP lawmakers and clarified confusions regarding various legal aspects, franchise, land-related clauses, provision of oath-taking of chairmen and other members of the hill councils and powers and responsibilities of the hill councils.

He welcomed all observations by lawmakers on the hill council bills and said if one feels like, one could go to the court of law. "We're confident enough to prove that the bills do not go beyond the limits of the Constitution."

Earlier, Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury told the House that except the amendments to the bill proposed by six lawmakers, no other amendment was moved in the House. Though some Treasury Bench lawmakers had also submitted a number of amendments, none of those were moved in the House.

Earlier, the House witnessed a heated debate for one and half hours on the disposal of 4365 notices on the three district council bills submitted by lawmakers.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia also participated in the debate, marked by two walkouts by BNP lawmakers.

The Speaker dropped the regular items including the question-answer session from the Order of the Day.

The debate was sparked off soon after the three CHT bills were placed in the Sangsads as its session resumed at 11:12 in the morning.

All the lawmakers of BNP and the Jatiya Party burst into anger as soon as Humayun Rashid Chowdhury announced that he would dispose of the large number of notices as per the Rules of Procedure and following the precedence in the fifth parliament.

Terming the number of notices "unimaginable", he told the House that submission of such a huge number of notices on any bill was unprecedented in any parliament at home and abroad. He said that finding no such instance in the country's parliamentary history, he had contacted parliaments of some other countries. "But no such instance was reported

### Amendments

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clauses of the bills were submitted by the opposition members. More notices are still coming in.

Giving a breakup, the Speaker said 1,630 notices for amendments were submitted on Rangamati, 1,479 notices on Khagrachari and 1,256 on Bandarban Hill District Council (Amendment) Bills.

Briefing newsmen in the Sangsads Bhaban after the walkout, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury said, "The calculation of the Speaker is wrong."

He said if all the notices were discussed and one minute was given for each notice, it will take 4,500 minutes or 75 hours.

If the Speaker runs Parliament six hours a day, it will take 12 and a half days to dispose off all the notices, he added.

Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia said the current session has been continuing for over four months. It should not be a problem if the Speaker extended the session by 12 more days to allow discussion on such vital national issues.

## JCD rehabilitation

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lowing a JCD-BCL clash which left a BCL leader killed.

The BCL captured all the three JCD-dominated halls — Jasimuddin, Ziaur Rahman and Bangabandhu halls — following the incident, ousting the JCD supporters.

In a development later last night, BCL accepted the decision of the Dhaka University Syndicate to vacate the four dormitories of the University for rehabilitating the displaced JCD activists, sources said.

The BCL accepted the decision during a meeting with the DU Syndicate last night at the residence of the Vice Chancellor.

The BCL, however, stuck to its earlier position that the JCD activists who are students of other halls of the university will not be allowed to return to those halls.

The BCL also demanded that the killers of Partha Protim Acharya should be arrested immediately.

BCL General Secretary Ishaque Ali Khan Panna while talking to The Daily Star over telephone last night said that residents of one hall could not be guests in other halls.

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anywhere."

Referring to disposal of similar cases in the fifth parliament, Chowdhury said that in disposing of the notices on CHT bills he would follow his "qualified" predecessor Shaikh Razzak Ali.

Giving a breakdown, he informed the House that out of the total 4365 notices he received on the three identical bills, 3964 sought amendments to those, 217 suggested eliciting public opinion on those and 184 proposed sending those to the select committee.

Amidst uproar by the opposition lawmakers, Chowdhury said he would follow the same method the Speaker of the fifth parliament did in disposing of similar notices on bills on three CHT district councils.

Despite shouting from the opposition members, he continued: "I'll allow discussions on the proposals for eliciting public opinion on the bills and sending those to the select committee together but throw those to the floor for voting separately."

At this stage, the Speaker invited the Law Minister to seek permission for placing the Rangamati Hill District Local Government Council (Amendment) Bill, 1989 for consideration of the House. BNP MP Major (retd) Hafizuddin Ahmed sought the floor for giving objection but the Chair told him that there was no scope for discussion at that stage. "These notices are not matter of jokes... people are eager to listen to such deliberations."

PM's Parliamentary Affairs Adviser Surjani Sengupta supported the Speaker's decision taken to save time.

Ershad said the CHT bills were opposed to constitutional provisions and demanded that all his party MPs be allowed to speak on their notices.

The Speaker repeated that he was following his predecessor.

Reiterating the BNP demand for allowing all its members to speak on their notices, Khandakar Delwar Hossain blamed the government for attempting to pass the bills "unilaterally."

President Clinton's visit to Bangladesh will be the first by a US President to the country.

Inderfurth said President Clinton's programme would include visits to the projects on social development in Bangladesh.

The US Assistant Secretary of State also commended the momentum in the US-Bangladesh economic cooperation in the areas of energy and power.

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### Bangladesh a model for developing states: Inderfurth

US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Karl F Inderfurth has described Bangladesh as a role model for developing countries even beyond the immediate South Asian region, reports UNB.

Inderfurth said this on April 27 during a meeting with Bangladesh Ambassador to the US KM Shehabuddin at the State Department in Washington, according to a message received in the city yesterday.

It would take three years and eight months for the House to dispose of the 4365 notices if all the members who had submitted those were allowed to speak and the House was in session day and night, the Speaker said.

He lauded Bangladesh's accomplishments in areas like elimination of child labour, women development and micro-credit.

He said this was particularly persuasive in the inclusion of Bangladesh on President Bill Clinton's tour plan to the region sometime November.

President Clinton's visit to Bangladesh will be the first by a US President to the country.

Inderfurth said President Clinton's programme would include visits to the projects on social development in Bangladesh.

The meeting viewed that the BNP through submission of such a huge number of amendments, in fact, is trying to create abnormal situation with an ultimate objective to make the parliament ineffective.

"BNP does not want the country to be run under the parliamentary system," he observed.

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