

# BDR mutineers must be punished

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amnesty offered to mutineers should be viewed as a strategy of the government to end the crisis but perpetrators must be punished for killing innocents and civilians, speakers said this at a discussion yesterday. Mutiny at border guards' headquarters was pre-planned and a conspiracy to destabilise the government at the time when it was ready to try war criminals who had been nourishing Islamist militants in the country for years, speakers said. "The government dealt with the mutiny successfully which bears the testimony to the government's wisdom," said Prof Kabir

Chowdhury while presiding over the discussion. Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee, a forum for secular Bangladesh and trial for war criminals, organised the discussion titled "Responsibilities of citizens in present crisis of the country" at Women's Voluntary Association (WVA) auditorium yesterday afternoon. "Amnesty can be announced for violating discipline but there cannot be any amnesty for killing human beings. The people involved in the mutiny must be identified and punished," said eminent lawyer barrister Tania Amir.

Speakers also stressed the need for a political solution to the crisis, which is yet to over as border guards at different places in the country are still staging demonstrations at different places across the country. "The government is wasting time perching on the tail of a venomous snake as they are yet to begin the trial of war criminals," said journalist Shahriar Kabir. The government assumed power with two-third majority and people voted them to try war criminals, he reminded the government. Lawmaker Rashed Khan Menon, Shyamoli Nasrin Chowdhury and ambassador Waliur Rahman also spoke.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina consoles family members of the army officers killed during the BDR mutiny at Combined Military Hospital in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1) PHOTO: PID



Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia pays her last respect to an army officer killed in the BDR mutiny at the Combined Military Hospital in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1) PHOTO: STAR

## Fish trader stabbed to death

UNB, Khulna

A fish trader was stabbed to death at a village in Paikgachha upazila on Thursday midnight. The dead was identified as fish trader Jayedur Rahman, son of Alamgir Hossain of Bedbunia village. Police and family sources said Jayed went out of his home by a motorcycle for upazila headquarters at 10:00pm on Thursday. But he did not return home. Local people found the body at Polaikhal char in the Kapotaksha River at noon and informed the police. The body bore injury marks. The police sent the body to hospital morgue for autopsy. Police suspect that muggers might have stabbed Jayed to death to take away his motorbike.

## Road crashes kill four

METRO DESK

At least four people were killed and 32 others injured in separate road accidents in Faridpur and Gaibandha yesterday. UNB from Faridpur reports: Three people were killed and 25 others injured as a bus fell into a roadside ditch at Mashabpur in Bhanga upazila on Dhaka-Barisal highway yesterday morning. One of the dead was identified as Lutfur, 26. Witnesses said as the driver of the Faridpur-bound bus from Madaripur lost control over the steering, it skidded off the road and plunged into the ditch at about 8:30am, leaving two passengers dead on the spot. Another passenger died on the way to hospital. The injured passengers were admitted to Faridpur Medical College Hospital and Bhanga upazila health complex. Condition of nine injured people was stated to be critical. Our Correspondent from Gaibandha adds: A woman was killed and seven others sustained injuries when a speeding truck dashed a passenger bus at Fasilota on Rangpur-Bogra highway yesterday afternoon. The victim identified as Jamila Begum, 60, died on the spot, while other passengers were taken to Gobindaganj health complex for treatment. Police said when a Dhaka-bound passenger bus reached Fasilota under Gobindaganj upazila, a loaded truck hit the bus from the opposite direction. However, the killer truck managed to flee the spot. A case was filed with Gobindaganj Police Station.

# Call for proper probe into BDR mutiny, role of intelligence

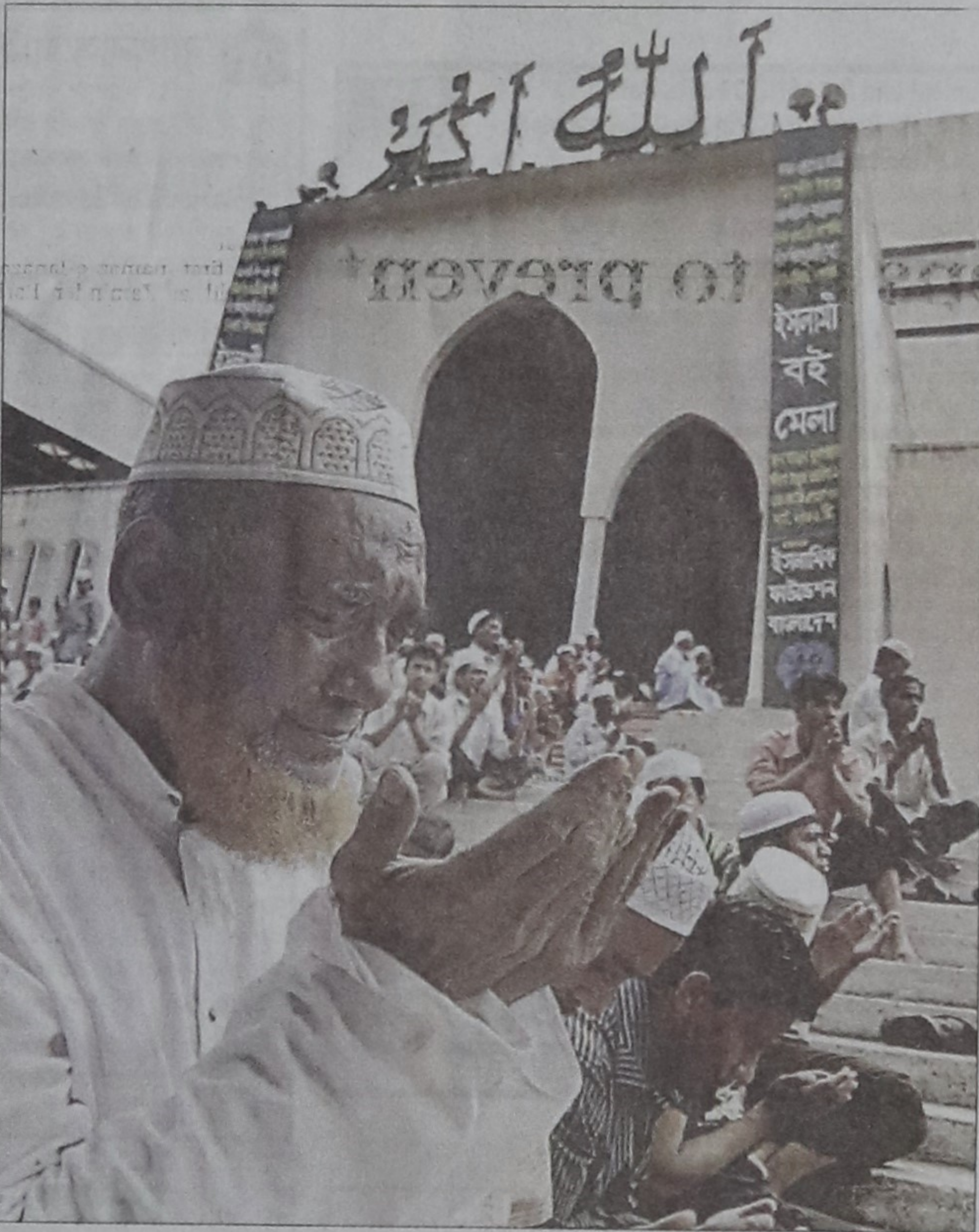
BSS, Dhaka

Political leaders and eminent personalities yesterday lauded the role of the government for its successful resolution of the bloody mutiny at Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) headquarters peacefully on Thursday. Talking to the news agency, they lauded Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's bold steps in tackling the BDR revolt through discussions, averting further conflicts and blood-

shed. They suggested proper inquiry into the tragic incident of bloodshed in the BDR headquarters and find out those responsible for it. Workers' Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon congratulated the premier for successfully tackling the mutiny. "The prime minister has faced the crisis with patience, courage and wisdom," he added.

The lawmaker conveyed sympathies to the bereaved family members and hoped the country would be marching forwards overcoming the losses. TIB Chairman Prof Muzaffer Ahmad said the elected civil government faced the BDR mutiny in its own way without using any other forces, and all political parties supported its move. With the support of the opposition to the government in this regard, there has been a

political consensus. It is good, though the incident itself is very sad, he added. The whole incident, including the role of intelligence, will have to be investigated, and the grievances of the soldiers addressed properly, he said, adding that the prime minister's pledges to the BDR jawans should be met properly. Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique said the way the prime minister proceeded to resolve the crisis is in conformity with the hopes and aspirations of the people. Nobody wanted more conflicts and casualties after such a big accident and prime minister was proceeding that way, he added. The premier successfully applied modern-age tactics used in international negotiations to defuse tensions from the very beginning, the VC mentioned. He appreciated various steps, including sending a state minister and a parliament whip to the agitating BDR jawans and holding talks with their representatives. Prof Arefin said those who were responsible for the mutiny must be found out. He said it should be traced whether the intelligence agencies had failed to discharge their duty or somebody else failed to execute as per the information provided by them. The BDR incident proves that indiscipline can take place even in a disciplined and orderly force. Therefore, caution should be maintained in future, he added. Jamaat-e-Islami Assistant Secretary General Md Kamaruzzaman said the prime minister has resolved the BDR mutiny well through discussions, avoiding conflicts. "The government faced the overall situation with its unflinching courage," he added. Kamaruzzaman said the countrywide spread of unrest could have been averted if the prime minister issued the ultimatum to the mutineers on the first day instead of the second day.



Devotees offer special prayers for salvation of the departed souls of the army officers killed in the BDR mutiny after Juma prayers at Baitul Mokarram National Mosque in the city yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

# Rescue teams search for survivors after mutiny ends

RASHIDUL HASAN

After searching a sewer pipe for about 10 minutes, Chand Miah, a rescue worker, came out of a manhole near the No. 3 gate of the BDR headquarters and informed the rescue team leader that nobody was found there. "Sorry, sir, I searched about 60 feet of the sewer pipe but did not find anybody," Chand Miah told Major Afzal, who was leading a rescue team. To rescue survivors of the gun attack during the mutiny, several rescue teams started searching the manholes around the BDR headquarters after the mutineers surrendered their arms on Thursday evening. Major Afzal was carrying out the rescue operation shortly after midnight on

Thursday and the areas in and around BDR headquarters were plunged into darkness. Very few people were seen moving in the areas around the BDR headquarters such as New Market, Zhigatola, Dhanmondi, Azimpur and Hazaribagh. Several armoured vehicles of the army were seen standing at Shankar near the Abahani playground at about 1:20am yesterday. As the rescue operation was going on, an army officer came over to Major Afzal and said, "Sir, I have specific information about one of the officers who managed to survive by hiding in a manhole." "Yes, I have also got the same information. So, I am searching different manholes near No. 3 gate of the BDR headquarters," replied Major

Afzal. The surviving officer has sent an SMS (short message service) saying that he is now inside the manhole near the butcher's shop, the other officer told Major Afzal. Then with the help of local people, the rescue team rushed to that manhole located near 5 No. gate of the headquarters. Major Afzal also told this correspondent that they would inform him of the outcome of rescue operation later. Another rescue team also went to the Azimpur graveyard on Thursday night with the hope to find any survivors hiding there. However, the army officer who sent the SMS was finally found dead in a manhole yesterday morning, sources said.

## Mass killing at BDR HQ condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different social and political organisations yesterday condemned the mass killing at the BDR Headquarters in the city's Pilkhana area. In separate statements Bangladesh Workers' Party, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD), Bangladesh Democratic Party (BDP), National Front of Teachers and Employees (NFTE), Islamic Front Bangladesh, Jatiya Party, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Suranjan Ghosh, former trustee of Hindu Dharmiyoy Kalyan Trustee expressed deep shock at the killings and inhuman suffering the family members of the army officers had to endure in those 33 hours. They demanded proper investigation into the incident and punishment to the masterminds and those who were directly involved in the killing.



Children flip through books at the Amar Ekushey Book Fair on the Bangla Academy premises in the city yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

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