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BDR TRAGEDY JS to adopt obituary reference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The House will adopt an obituary reference today on the massacre of army officers in a bloody mutiny by some disgruntled Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) members at the BDR headquarters at Pilkhana.

The sitting of parliament will also be adjourned immediately after adoption of the obituary motion suspending other scheduled businesses included in the orders of the day for being transacted.

Speaker Abdul Hamid at his office yesterday said the House will mourn the deaths through adoption of the resolution.

Chief Whip Abdus Shahid told The Daily Star over the telephone that today's sitting

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Fresh exam to be arranged for affected SSC candidates

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ongoing SSC examinations will continue as per schedule, but separate examinations will be arranged for the candidates from families affected by the BDR mutiny if they were unable to take the exams.

The separate exams will be arranged on March 19 for the candidates who will not be able to appear in the exams today.

The affected candidates will have to appeal to the head of their institutions or the controller of examinations of their respective boards in this regard.

A schedule for the examinations will be announced

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Victims asked to contact for financial support

UNB, Dhaka

The army officers or their families who fell victims to BDR mutiny have been asked to contact the Welfare and Rehabilitation Department at the Army Headquarters for the financial support declared by the authorities.

The military authorities are providing Tk 5 lakh to the family of the each army official killed at the BDR Headquarters to meet their initial emergency needs. The money is being provided from the Army Fund.

The phone numbers for contact are -- 01713332437, 01713257628 and 01711563691, said an ISPR release.

Mindless massacres imprinted on HQ

KAILASH SARKAR

It looks like a war zone with hundreds of thousands of bullet cartridges, several hundred pairs of boots and as many caps littering the premises of the BDR Headquarters.

The windows, glasses and walls of different buildings bear the marks of indiscriminate firing. The bloodstained walls and floors of different establishments would remind anyone of houses of the death.

The rampaged Darbar Hall where the assassination is suspected to have been launched is almost destroyed. The wall near the stage and glasses of the Hall received innumerable bullets.

According to witnesses, countless holes were found on the glasses as bullets ripped through those, breaking some into pieces.

During a random visit, all the pieces of furniture inside the Hall were found ransacked and displaced. Over 200 crests were still lying on a table near the stage. Those were supposed to be disbursed among the winners, who took part in various cultural functions and sports.

Massacre was committed at the residences of Maj Gen Shakil Ahmed, director general of BDR, and Col Mujibul Huq, sector commander of Dhaka and also former chief of Dal-Bhat Programme.

Maj Gen Shakil's residence was found totally ransacked with hundreds of bullet marks all around. The floor and walls were found bloodstained, while all the pieces of furniture and utensils were damaged.

Witnesses say the entire first floor of the duplex residence was bloodstained, while the walls were hit by a hail of bullets.

It seems the attackers opened indiscriminate fire on the building from out-

side and also sprayed bullets when they made the break-in.

The entire stairway of the building was bloodstained as bullet-hit bodies were dragged out from the upper floor.

The atrocities were no less at Col Mujibul Huq's residence, which was badly burned. Two grenades were still lying in front of the house, possibly abandoned by the culprits.

Hundreds of shoes and pieces of uniforms were found lying mainly near the walls around the border guards' HQ.

Sources say the soldiers fled the area jumping over the walls leaving their uniforms and boots behind. The boots and uniforms were also found abandoned at different tents of the soldiers who came from outside the capital.

They left the tents in a hurry, leaving all the valuables, dresses and uniforms behind.



The ransacked bedroom of slain BDR chief Maj Gen Shakil Ahmed's Pilkhana residence. Another picture, right, shows media personnel from private TV channels on the staircase inside Maj Gen Shakil's house where bloodstains trace the way through which a wounded body was dragged down and out through the front door of the house.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ



Obama sets 18 months to end Iraq pullout Congress finds consensus on plan

AP, Camp Lejeune/Washington

President Barack Obama signed the Iraq war to history on Friday, declaring he will end combat operations within 18 months and open a new era of diplomacy in the Middle East.

After years of bitterly debating whether to set a timetable for troop withdrawals in Iraq, Congress has agreed to one.

The general consensus came Friday in the form of statements endorsing President Barack Obama's plan to bring home roughly two-thirds of the US military force in Iraq by August 2010.

"Let me say this as plainly as I can: By August 31, 2010, our combat mission in Iraq will end,"

Obama told Marines who are about to deploy by the thousands to the other war front, Afghanistan.

Even so, Obama will leave the bulk of troops in place this year, contrary to hopes of Democratic leaders for a speedier pullout. And after combat forces withdraw, 35,000 to 50,000 will stay behind for an additional year and half of support and counterterrorism duties.

Just six weeks into office, Obama used blunt terms and a cast-in-stone promise to write the last chapter of a war that began six years ago. It has cost more in lives, money and national stamina than ever envisioned.

Like Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon

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Janaza of army officers postponed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The namaz-e-janaza of the slain army officers, scheduled for 3:00pm yesterday, was postponed due to making arrangements of burial ceremony for all at a time as more bodies were being retrieved from new mass graves discovered at Pilkhana.

Two more mass graves of those massacred by mutinous BDR members have been discovered at Pilkhana from where more bodies of the army officers and their relatives were being recovered,

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Hazari back in action in Feni Re-occupies gymnasium land

UNB, Feni

Former Awami League leader Joynal Hazari's musclemen have occupied the land of once constructed Vendu Hazari Gymnasium soon after he returned to his hometown Feni on Friday.

The boundary walls of the land were pulled down late Friday night though it had been returned to its legal owners in mid-2001.

Romana Ahmed, one of the landowners, said the administration was duly informed about the forcible action of Hazari's musclemen.

Supporters of Hazari said they would compel those who had demolished it in the absence of their leader to rebuild the gymnasium.

Returning home after about nine years of hiding in neighbouring India, Hazari surrendered to the High Court on February 22 and secured bail in one case with order to appear

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Editors for all-party probe body

BSS, Dhaka

Editors and senior journalists of the national dailies and news agencies yesterday termed the unexpected incidents at BDR headquarters as a deep-rooted conspiracy and demanded constitution of an all-party parliamentary inquiry committee.

Their demand came during a meeting with Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad yesterday at his ministry.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni also attended the meeting.

The information minister sought suggestions from the

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Ekushey book fair ends

Total sale Tk 18cr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The month-long Ekushey Boi Mela 2009 ended yesterday with a total sale of Tk 18 crore, down by only two crore from the previous year.

The annual event, ended on a low morale because of the tragic events in the country. Crowds were thin over the last couple of days while the

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Prayer Timing		
March 1		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-10	5-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-07	6-11
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

Housewife, her two daughters murdered in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mother and her two children were killed at their South Jatrabari residence in the city's Jatrabari area yesterday.

The victims were identified as Shahnaj Akther Nazma, 38, and her daughters Urmi Akhter, 14, and Rumi, 4.

Shahnaj and Urmi were strangled and Rumi was drowned in a big water container at their fourth floor flat in a six-storey building.

Shahnaj's husband Abdur Rashid Khan and police suspect that her brother Masud along with two accomplices committed the murders.

Rashid, who is plastic trader, said Masud has criminal records and he might have killed his wife and two daughters as they resisted his bid to commit robbery at his house.

Police however suspect family feud over property might be the cause behind the killings.

Rashid and his son Kabir were not at the house when the incident occurred.

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PHOTO: STAR

Residents in Azimpur area near the BDR headquarters cover their noses against the stench from decomposing bodies as the army continues its search for more bodies yesterday, two days after the mutiny ended.

Rohingyas to be taken back if they claim to be Bangali

Says Myanmar

BBC ONLINE, Bangkok

The Myanmar government has said it will take back ethnic Rohingyas who have fled to neighbouring countries.

But it will only do so if they identify themselves as Bangali, as it refuses to recognise the Rohingyas as one of its official minorities.

Tens of thousands of Rohingyas have left Myanmar (former Burma) in recent years and washed up in Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia.

In December, the Thai military began dragging boats of Rohingya asylum seekers to

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