

## Shift BDR HQ, cantt to less populated area

Speakers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday called on the government to shift the BDR headquarters and army cantonment from the capital to any less populated location to protect secrecy of such defence-oriented bodies.

The demands of BDR rebels should not be ignored so that further BDR mutiny would not be taken place in future, they added.

The Editor, an online news agency and newspaper, organised the discussion on '2/25 Pikhana tragedy and proper investigation and trial' at the National Press Club in the city which was conducted by its Managing Editor Dr Shameem Hayder Talukder.

The speakers demanded stern punishment to those BDR personnel who were directly involved in the massacre of army officers.

However, they warned the government not to punish innocent BDR jawans who did not know about the planned conspiracy of the February 25 mutiny.

Speaking as the chief guest, TIB Chairman Prof Muzaffer Ahmad said BDR headquarters and cantonment of army should be shifted to any less populated place to protect their secrecy and save these defence-

oriented bodies from any kind of conspiracy.

"Both the sides would have suffered heavy casualties if army tried to rescue the BDR army officers entering the BDR headquarters on February 25," he added.

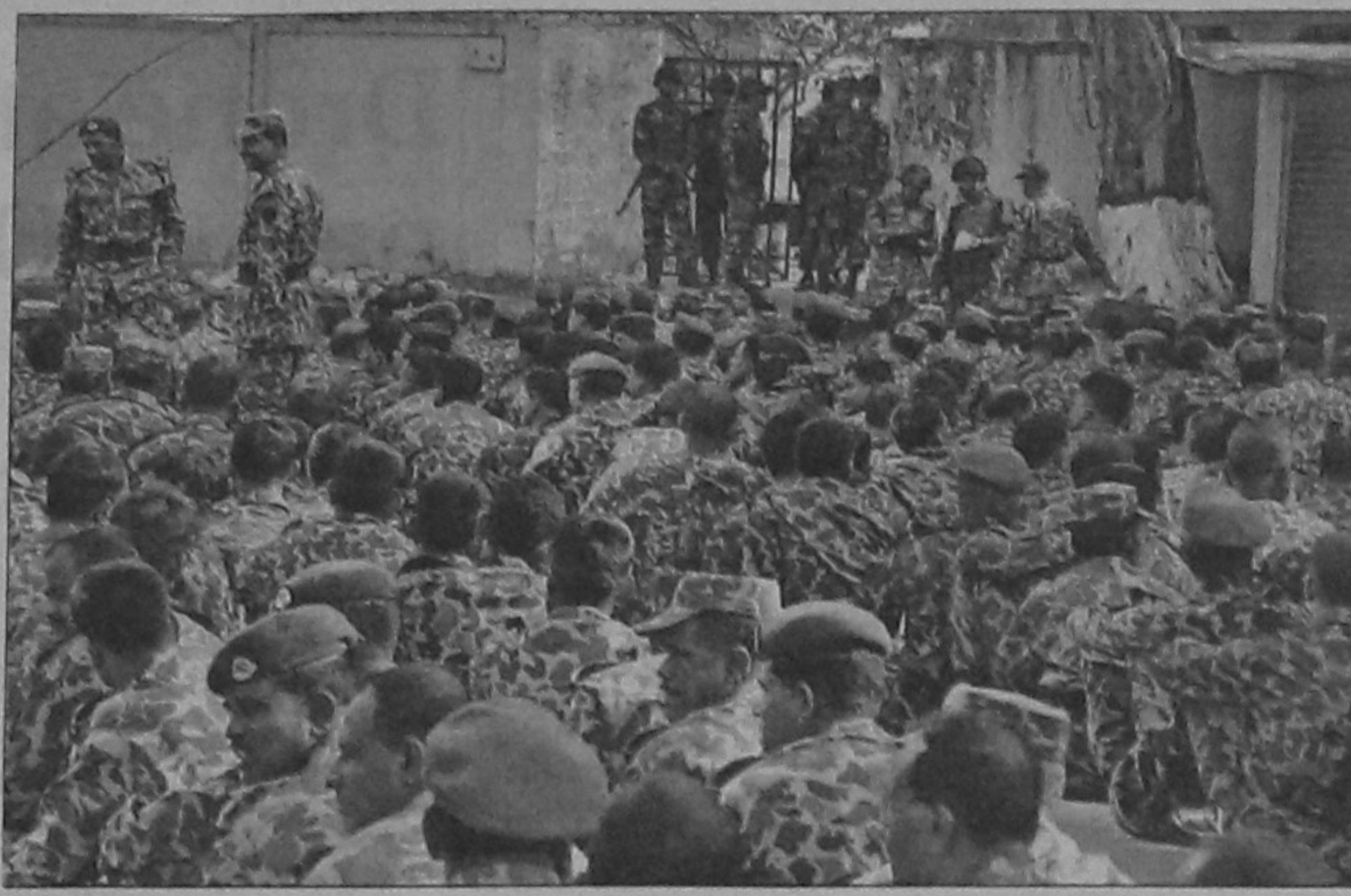
The noted economist said the government and others organisations are now busy to punish BDR rebels but it would be a wise decision if the government does not take steps evaluating the demands of the BDR jawans.

Workers' Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon, MP, said an independent body headed by a former army officer was formed to identify the real culprits.

"It was a planned conspiracy because those army officers, especially Col Gulzer and Col Majid, who were directly involved in arresting the commanders of militancy, were killed during the mutiny," he added.

BNP leader Brig Gen (ret'd) Hannan Shah said the Pikhana tragedy is a deep-rooted conspiracy to destroy the government's defence-oriented bodies, including BDR and army.

Dr Atiur Rahman, barrister Tania Amir, Prof Syed Anwar Hossain, Ayesha Khanam, Mahi B Chowdhury and Badiul Alam Majumder also took part.



BDR members who came to report back sit in rows at the Rifles Square in the city yesterday before they are allowed to enter the headquarters.

## Mayors, councillors to be allowed to hold party posts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mayors and councillors of city corporations and municipalities will be allowed to hold political party posts as the new bills for enacting laws on the local government bodies removed the restrictions imposed earlier on them to do so.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam is scheduled to place the two bills seeking to enact laws on city corporations and municipalities to reinforce the effectiveness of the two ordinances promulgated by the immediate-past caretaker government, excluding some provisions.

The minister has already placed a bill in parliament seeking to revive Upazila Parishad Act 1998 with some amendments instead of ratifying the upazila parishad ordinance.

The upazila parishad bill did not impose any restriction on upazila chairmen and vice chairmen to hold party posts, though the restriction was imposed by the ordinance.

Similarly in the ordinances of local government (city corporation) and local government (municipality), the interim government imposed restrictions on the mayors and councillors to hold party posts in a bid to free the local government

institutions from partisan influence.

As per the provisions of the now-defunct ordinances, mayors and councillors elect would have to resign from party posts if they hold any before taking the oath to their offices.

But the new bills, though aimed at reinforcing the effectiveness of the ordinances, do not have the provisions that imposed restrictions on elected representatives on holding the party posts.

The ordinances ceased to have effect on February 25, as they were not ratified in the parliament within the stipulated time frame.

The Daily Star managed copies of the bills from the parliament secretariat.

The bills, however, will propose to reinforce a significant provision made in the ordinances empowering the city corporations and municipalities to ask tutorial schools, coaching centres and private hospitals run under their territories to get them registered with a certain amount of fees.

The defunct ordinances made the provisions to increase

the income of the local government institutions.

The bills will also propose to support another significant provision of the ordinance asking the local government bodies to ensure people's access to information on their activities.

The new bills include the provisions empowering the Election Commission to formulate rules to conduct elections to city corporations and municipalities.

## Post-poll violence kills 12, injures 998 in Feb: Odhikar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twelve people were reportedly killed and 998 injured in post-election violence in February.

Odhikar, a human rights organisation, revealed this on Sunday at its report on human rights situation in February.

The report said activists of the ruling party student wing and its supporters were involved in most incidents of violence including educa-

Jamaat demands fair probe into BDR mutiny

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Refuting the allegations of its involvement in the BDR mutiny, Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday demanded a fair investigation into the massacre and exemplary punishment to the persons responsible.

A probe committee comprising representatives from the judiciary, defence, law enforcement agencies and all parties in parliament should be formed to unravel the mystery surrounding the BDR mutiny.

Jamaat Ameer Matiur Rahman Nizami said at a press conference at the party office said, "The probe committee led by the home minister is not acceptable as the home ministry cannot avoid its responsibility for the incident."

Jamaat Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujahid, Muhammad Kamaruzzaman and Abdul Kader Mollah were also present.

tional institutes - Rangpur Medical College and Jahangirnagar University.

Government Titumir College, Comilla University, Kushtia Government College, Dhaka University, Chittagong University, Sylhet Government College,

During January 1 to 28, a total of 26 women and girls reportedly became victims of rape.

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## 14 members of Hizbut Tahrir arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested 14 members of Hizbut Tahrir Bangladesh in the city and in Gazipur yesterday.

The law-enforcers arrested 12 in Dhaka and two in Tongi on charge of distributing provocative leaflets regarding Bangladesh Army and Bangladesh Rifles.

The arrestees were identified as Raihan, Sayeed Arefin, Syed Nasir Uddin, Zafar Sadiq, Zahidur Rahman, Manir Hossain,

Ibrahim, Khalequr Rahman, Ahmed Zisad, Hassan, Jobayer Ahmed, Shamim, Kamal Uddin Jewel and Shakil Mahmud.

Raihan, Arefin and Nasir were arrested by Dhanmondi police while Zafar by Darus-Salam police, Zahidur Rahman by Tejgaon police, Manir Hossain by Pallabi police, Ibrahim and Khalequr Rahman by Mirpur police, Zisad and Hasan by Khilgaon police, Jobayer and Shamim by Shahbagh police and Jewel and Shakil by Tongi police.

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## Japan cultural festival begins tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The bonsai exhibition, animations show and drama performance of Embassy of Japan will begin tomorrow, says a press release.

The opening ceremony of the cultural festival will be held at 10.00am at Shilpakala Academy in the city.

Earlier, the Embassy cancelled the first half of 'Japan Cultural Festival 2009' in observance of the national mourning day.

**DHAKA TODAY**

**Roundtable**  
CRP organises a roundtable on exploring sustainable mechanism to establish people with disabilities right through self-help groups'.  
Venue: CRP, Mirpur. Time: 9:30am.

**Workshop**  
Dhaka Ahsania Mission organises a workshop on tobacco control act.  
Venue: Ahsania Mission auditorium. Time: 9:30am.

**Rotary Dhaka**  
The regular meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka will be held. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 5:30pm.

আমরা শোকাহত

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