

Main objective of BDR mutiny was to demoralise the Army: Fakhrul

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Online Desk: BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has alleged that the main objective of the BDR mutiny was to demoralise the Bangladesh Army. He made the remarks on Saturday after placing wreaths at a monument set up at Banani Army Graveyard in memory of the army officials killed in the Pilkhana Carnage, marking the 14th anniversary of the incident. Fakhrul said the conspirators had committed the BDR mutiny at Pilkhana in a very planned way. Their objective was to demoralise the Army.

But, there was no proper investigation into the killings of 57 army officers in the BDR mutiny in 2009. “We think the way this incident should have been investigated and the way the investigation process should have been conducted to bring out the real offenders and the masterminds through a fair investigation, that didn’t happen unfortunately,” he said. The BNP leader said February 25 is a very shocking and disgraceful day for the nation. “Fifty-seven patriot Army officials were brutally killed on that day. Bangladesh had also not to lose so many Army officials in the War of Liberation.” He said that the Army had conducted an investigation into the BDR mutiny incident, but the nation had not yet got the full report of that probe.

The BNP leader said some people were awarded death sentences and life imprisonment in a case filed in connection with the mutiny and subsequent killings. But he lamented that the trial of another case filed under the Explosive Substances Act in connection with the same incident has not yet been completed, forcing many soldiers of the Bangladesh Rifles who claim themselves innocent still stay in jail. “I was in prison a few days ago. I saw there that many former BDR personnel who were made accused in this case have been living inhuman lives in prisons for 13 to 14 years. Hearing of the case against some 7,000 soldiers who claimed themselves innocent has not yet completed. Their families and future have ruined. They should be released,” Fakhrul said.

He demanded that the government should take steps to complete the trial in the Explosive case so that those who were innocent can return to normal life with their families. In February 25-26 in 2009, a mutiny in the then Bangladesh Rifles left 74 people, including 57 army officers, murdered at the Pilkhana Headquarters. On 5 November 2013, a Dhaka court awarded death sentences to 150 BDR members and two civilians, and life imprisonment to 160 others in the case. On 27 November 2017, the High Court confirmed the death penalty for 139 out of 152 accused.

Following the heinous killings of the army officers at the Pilkhana headquarters, the government renamed the mutiny-hit paramilitary force BDR as Border Guard Bangladesh, changing its logo as well as uniform.

Fakhrul along with some ex-army officials went to the graveyard and placed wreaths at the monument and offered special prayers there seeking eternal peace of the departed souls of the slain army officers. The BNP leader expressed deep homage to the slain army officers whom he described as the assets of the nation in protecting independence and sovereignty. He also talked to Rakin Ahmed Bhuiya, son of then BDR director general Maj Gen Shakil Ahmed who was killed in the mutiny along with her wife.