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## Life & works of Shaukat Osman

By Staff Correspondent

Shaukat Osman, author of more than 90 books, was born on January 2, 1917 in Sabalsinghpur village in the Hooghly district of West Bengal.

He was the eldest of three sons and four daughters of Md Yahiya and Guljan Begum. He received his early education in Islamic institutions starting school at a village *maktab*. He attended the madrasah till 1929 and then went to Calcutta to continue his Islamic schooling at Madrasah-e-Alia.

In 1923, he switched to the secular Anglo-Persian division of the institution and in 1934, he got himself admitted to the prestigious St Xavier's College in Calcutta.

Osman's early literary efforts were in poetry. In 1937, he got some of his poems published in the Bulbul, a reputed literary journal. He got married in 1938. He studied Economics in St Xavier's and acquired a BA degree in 1939.

He then studied Bengali language and literature in Calcutta University. After his Masters in 1941, he was able to find a full-time job as a pamphlet writer in the information department of the Bengal Government. In the same year, he was appointed lecturer of Bengali at Calcutta Government Commercial College.

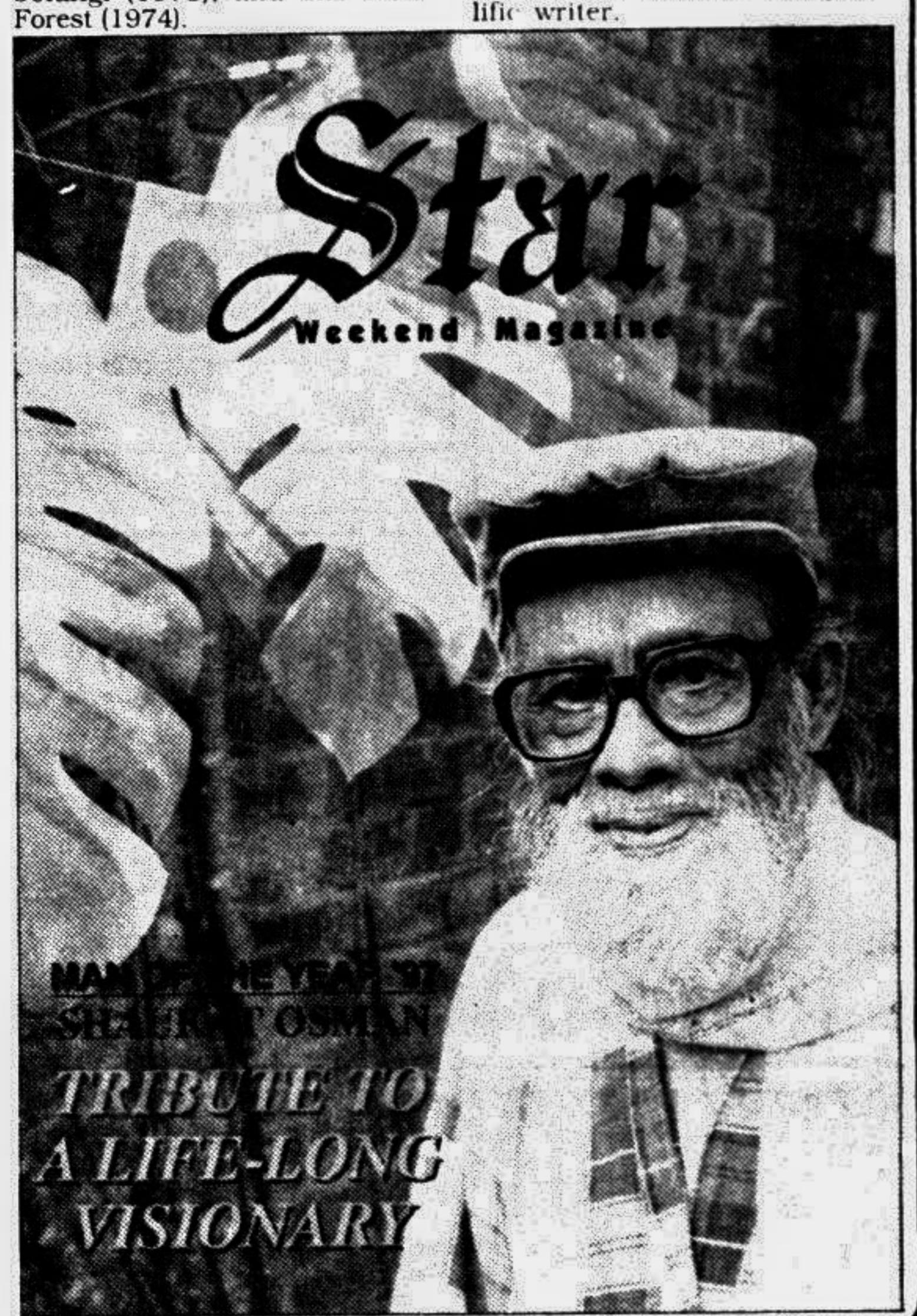
By this time, Shaukat Osman was also writing prose. His early short stories were published in magazines since 1939. His first book was published in 1944. His first novel *Janani* was serialised in Shawgat, a literary monthly, over the next two years. His second novel, *Bati Adam*, was published in the Eid issue of the daily *Azad* in 1946. These two novels established Osman as a budding Muslim writer.

Although his real name was Sheikh Azizur Rahman, he opted to use his pen-name, Shaukat Osman, as a writer.

Shaukat Osman was drawn to Marxism and he became a member of the Cultural Majlis, a small group of like-minded young poets and writers in 1940.

Osman opted for Pakistan during the partition of India in 1947 and was transferred to the Chittagong Government Commerce College.

Osman did not write a novel for the next 15 years, although he wrote some satirical plays and short stories. He wrote two allegories — The Laughter of the



## Shaukat Osman dead

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the Baitul Mukarram Mosque after Jum'a prayers today and will be buried at the Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard at Mirpur.

Earlier, when the health condition of the writer was deteriorating, a medical board was constituted at the directive of the prime minister, headed by Prof Timothy Lee of the National University Hospital in Singapore, to examine him.

In a condolence message, President Shahabuddin Ahmed expressed his deep shock and profound grief at the death of the octogenarian litterateur. The President recalled Shaukat Osman's glorious literary career and said that his contribution in the development of Bengali literature is praiseworthy.

The President conveyed his heart-felt sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul.

The Prime Minister expressed deep shock at the death of the eminent litterateur.

In a condolence message, Sheikh Hasina said the nation has lost an elderly guardian in the death of Shaukat Osman, a vanguard of the Liberation War.

"The loss is irreparable," she said.

Different socio-cultural and political organisations and individuals condoled the death of Shaukat Osman.

Messages of condolence were issued by Uyya Samannoi Committee, Muktiyoddha Samriti Sangrakshan Sangsad, Ekatturer Ghatai Dalir Nirmul Committee, Prof Abdul Mannan, Vice Chancellor of Chittagong University, Shishu Sahitya Parishad, Mujibnagar

## Three new NEC members of BNP

BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday nominated three leaders to different positions of the party's National Executive Committee, reports UNB.

Md Shahjahan, MP (Noakhali-4) was nominated to the post of Organising Secretary while Sayed Wahidul Alam, MP (Chittagong-5) as Assistant Organising Secretary and A U Ahmed of Moulana as its member, said a press release.

## Orion Infusion hides default loan status

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closed for a year by the bank to give its decision on loans," Karim said. "we have made our own estimate of the loan by deducting the interest accrued during the year of closure, and the financial losses incurred during the time. We are now claiming this amount. This is why we have stuck to the amount shown in the book as loan. We do not accept any amount above our estimate. Since this is still a matter of dispute, we should have given a note in the balance sheet regarding our position on loans. I also agree that there should have been a disclosure in this regard. We did not show the total amount of loan in the balance sheet because the bank may then use the balance sheet as an evidence."

Interestingly, instead of repaying bank loans, the company invested cash money in their own companies. Is it serving the shareholders' interest, the big question. The form of investment is also not disclosed. Is it preferred share, or general equity investment, or loan? Nothing is mentioned in the balance sheet in this regard.

Orion Infusion declared 32 per cent cash dividends for two years — 15 per cent for 1995 and 17 per cent for 1996 — and a right share against every two holdings for Tk 100 each when its loans were stuck up with banks and Agrani Bank had asked it to make a down payment of Tk four crore to reschedule the loans.

Moreover, instead of disbursing the dividends, the company used the money as working capital, which experts say, is illegal. When this was pointed out, the MD of Orion admitted the fact.

These facts indicate that the company had deliberately taken the risk of declaring dividends without having sufficient funds.

Obaidul Karim agreed to the conclusion and said, "you may say we had intentionally done

## PM warns

From Page 1  
the thana health complex of her ancestral home Tungipara, doctors are not available most of the time.

More than 3,000 posts of doctors have been created and steps taken to fill up the vacant posts in the medical colleges, she said, adding steps have also been taken to appoint 4,000 nurses on emergency basis.

Earlier, the Prime Minister distributed BMA awards to eight doctors for their contribution to the liberation war, democracy movement, health sector and organisational activities.

The BMA awards were given to Shaheed Dr Abdul Alim Chowdhury (posthumous), Shaheed Dr Shamsuddin Ahmed (posthumous), Late Dr A K Mansur, Late Dr Ali Hafiz Selim, Shaheed Dr Shamsul Alam Khan Milon, Dr Sarwar Ansari, Dr Sultan Ahmed Chowdhury and Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin.

## Housewife beaten to death in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, May 14: A housewife was beaten to death allegedly by her husband at Galilamara village in Bashkhali thana here today, reports UNB.

Police said Faridul Alam hit his wife Morseda with an iron rod as she refused to bring Tk 50,000 from her father as dowry. She died on the spot.

Neighbours said during the last five years of their marriage, Alam often forced her wife to bring money from her father.

Later, Farid was arrested by police.

## Khaleda

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for protecting the country's independence. "If this government remains in power, the country will be destroyed and it will become subservient."

"This government is not doing anything for the welfare of the people, there is no plan for improving the lot of common man," she said.

They are only busy with corruption and nepotism, and politicising everything, Begum Zia alleged.

Dwelling on the economic situation, she said the country is on the verge of collapse. Everything from mills, factories and business establishments to educational institutions are facing ruination, she added.

## UN deplores

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Tokyo's ambassador from New Delhi.

Calling India's nuclear tests unacceptable, China's foreign minister has urged governments worldwide to pressure New Delhi to abandon its nuclear weapons programme, a Chinese official said today.

Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan, in a telephone call with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright on Wednesday, said China was "deeply shocked" at India's latest nuclear tests.

After five nuclear explosions in three days, India says it plans no more tests, even if neighbour and rival Pakistan conducts its own test.

An Indian official close to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, speaking on condition of anonymity Wednesday, said India had already taken Pakistan's possible response into account.

## Titas Gas

From Page 1  
Court.

Billal, a supervisor at the Titas Gas head office in Kawranbazar, was killed allegedly by his rivals at the office on July 9, 1992.

## It also tried to rationalise his action, saying "We could not give dividend because of our liquidity crisis caused by the bank. We did not have sufficient working capital and as a result we used the dividend amount in inventory. According to normal course, separate cash is kept for giving dividend. We thought that since we were having dispute with the bank, we could not even dream that it would persist for such a long period. So we used the dividend money as working capital in stocks and inventory so that we can run for the time being. Later, when the problem with the bank would be solved and sufficient working capital would be available, we would again segregate the dividend amount."

But Orion's loan defaulted since December 1995 and the company declared its dividend more than a year later in February 1997. Orion should have anticipated that it may take more time to settle its loan issue with the bank. Therefore, it should not have declared dividends on the assumption that the bank would again start rescheduling the loans.

Orion Infusion declared 32 per cent cash dividends for two years — 15 per cent for 1995 and 17 per cent for 1996 — and a right share against every two holdings for Tk 100 each when its loans were stuck up with banks and Agrani Bank had asked it to make a down payment of Tk four crore to reschedule the loans.

These facts indicate that the company had deliberately taken the risk of declaring dividends without having sufficient funds.

Obaidul Karim agreed to the conclusion and said, "you may say we had intentionally done

## Probe body recommends setting up of CCTV cameras at BG Press

A police inquiry committee has recommended setting up of CCTV cameras in the confidential wing of the BG Press and reducing the wing's manpower to avert leakage of question papers and other important documents, reports UNB.

The 5-member committee formed following the leakage of SSC question papers last month, submitted its five-point recommendations to the Education Ministry recently.

At present, some 125 employees are working in the confidential wing of the BG Press and the number is too much to maintain secrecy, committee sources said.

There is every chance of question paper leakage if the section remains over-staffed, they said.

The committee also suggested computerising the press and printing system in BG Press, and deploying personnel from the law enforcing agencies to ensure security and secrecy.

It further suggested that more senior officials of the press should be involved in supervising the printing, binding and packaging of any sensitive documents like the question papers.

The committee also identified the negligence of the BG Press officials and employees as one of the major causes of question leak-out.

## Ministers advised not to visit Barisal-5 constituency

The Chief Election Commissioner, Muhammad Abu Hena, has advised ministers, state and deputy ministers, and any other individual of equal status not to pay any official or unofficial visit to Barisal-5 constituency till the holding of the by-election there, an official handout said yesterday, reports BSS.

The advice was given to keep all activities related to the by-election above all controversy, it added.

## CHT budget

From Page 1  
area are poor communication system, scarcity of drinking water, poverty, low rate of literacy, lack of facilities for healthcare, and marketing of products, absence of modern agriculture system and inadequate employment opportunities. The government has taken up massive plans in these sectors, he said.

Dr Alamgir told a questioner that the government was expecting foreign assistance for implementing the development plans for the CHT. In case of non-availability of such assistance, the government itself would mobilise the funds. He mentioned that the government has already started discussions with the development partners.

Releasing a fact-sheet on the ministry-wise plans for development of the CHT various sectors, the state minister said the government has attached top priority to development of communication network as it was a pre-requisite for development of other sectors.

Dr Alamgir told another questioner that the government was still maintaining restriction on foreigners' visit to the CHT area, apprehending that the opponents of the peace accord might create a situation. But the restriction will be lifted soon, he said.

Suranjan Sengupta said implementation of the CHT peace accord will start soon after the President assents to the bills in this regard..

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## Rape victim handcuffed

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people but they denied me justice. Several times, Alam tortured me, none dared to say anything because he is a notorious terrorist of the area," she said.

Sitting on her hospital bed with one hand tied to it and a female jail guard hanging around nearby, a pale-looking Bakul said that in the early morning of May 1, a fisherman found her unconscious by the river bank. "I don't know his name. He took me to a nearby house but the inmates refused to help me. Then the man took me to a field nearby and poured water on my head."

When contacted, the IO, Khandakar Ayub Hossain of Savar thana, said that police had arrested two persons in this connection on May 1. They were identified as Mujib Rahman, 30 and Sohel, 25, both from Ulal area. Two others — Alam and Mintu — were absconding. Hossain said that the arrested were on remand until Saturday (tomorrow) and a case has been filed under Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, 1995. He said that Bakul was under safe custody and was under treatment at the Dhaka Central Jail.

## Kibria

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BNP lawmaker Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury suggested expansion of tax base by bringing people of different professional groups, mainly the lawyers and doctors, under the tax net. "Road tax and bridge taxes for motor vehicles should be raised," he said.

S M Akram MP of Awami League urged the government to make its role clear about the capital market. "Why the government should shoulder the responsibility to stabilise the capital market? Leave it to the private sector to determine the ideal price index," he said.

Also proposed lowering tax rate to bring more people under the purview of tax.

## Peace march

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criticised by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and other leaders of the ruling party.

Reacting to the opposition programme, the PM said in the Jatiya Sangsad on Wednesday that the long march would go in vain while Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed said the programme was designed to obstruct the on-going trial of Bangabandhu's killers.

Addressing a press conference in the city yesterday, Prime Minister's Parliamentary Affairs Adviser Suranjan Sengupta said the people of CHT may go for a peace march the same day the BNP's long march is planned for.

## Home Minister

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Hashem Mridha could not be traced.

Rafiq said the Interpol authorities told him that they will take steps against the absconders.

The home minister and his delegation members met the Interpol chief Raymond Kandell and high officials of France and discussed the modernisation of the police and fire service department.

The minister later visited London and exchanged views with the British Secretary of State for Home Jack Straw and his deputy Micheal Brand.

Replies to a reporter's question on Surat Miah murder at Zia International Airport (ZIA), the home minister said the case is under re-investigation and the accused must be put under trial immediately.

## BNP urges govt

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liberation regime and for a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing.

The statement said