

Hold polls in shortest possible time

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Civil society members yesterday stressed the need to bring about electoral reforms on a priority basis in order to hold a free, fair and meaningful election.

As part of the reforms, the authorities should take immediate steps to make the registration of political parties mandatory, adopt measures for quick disposal of election-related disputes and to recast the constitutional institutions such as Anti-Corruption Commission and Public Service Commission, they said at a roundtable.

They also suggested empowering the Election Commission (EC) to cancel candidature.

They called on the caretaker government to hold an acceptable election in the shortest possible time after preparing a voter list in order to hand over power to an elected government.

Shujan or Shushashoner Janney Nagarik organised the roundtable on 'What needs to be done to hold a fair and meaningful election' at the National Press Club in the city.

The speakers said the candidates must submit their personal information and statements of wealth to the EC so that the people can choose the right person as their representative.

Moderating the roundtable, former adviser to the caretaker government M Hafizuddin Khan suggested involving the Union Parishads in preparing the electoral roll.

The caretaker government should hold Upazila and national elections simultaneously, depoliticise the administration and the Public Service Commission,



M Hafizuddin Khan, 2nd from left, speaks at a roundtable at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right is ASM Shahjahan while on his left are Justice Kazi Ebadul Haque, Syed Abul Maksud and Dr Badiul Alam Majumdar.

strengthen the local government and ensure empowerment of voters, he said.

About the voter list, some speakers said only local government representatives can help prepare an acceptable voter list in the quickest possible time. Otherwise, it will take long time to do so, they added.

Ferdous Ahmed Qureshi said, "We should prepare union-based permanent voter roll and it would be updated with the help of Union Parishad."

Presenting a keynote paper, Shujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar said the political parties

should launch a drive against the bad elements within the party and take action against them.

The political parties should not nominate corrupt people in the election, he said, adding that the election would not be meaningful unless the political parties and candidates comply with the election rules.

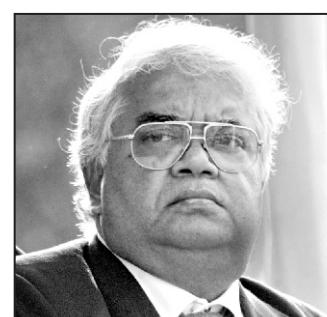
The Election Commission should also take steps to put a curb on the election expenses of candidates and to dispose of election-related disputes quickly, he said.

Former adviser to the caretaker government ASM Shahjahan stressed

ACC list of 40 persons



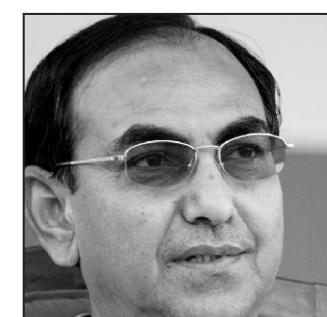
Salauddin Quader Chowdhury



Barrister Nazmul Huda



Mohammad Nasim



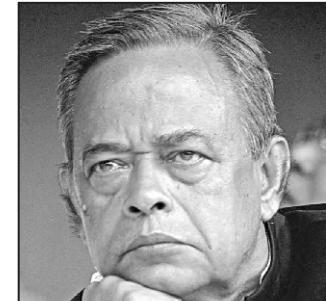
Mirza Abbas



Salman F Rahman



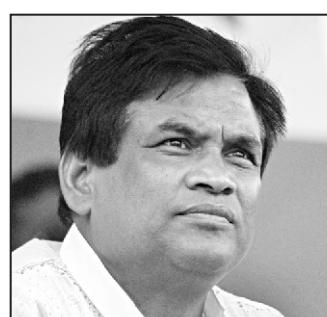
Abul Hasnat Abdullah



Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir



Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya



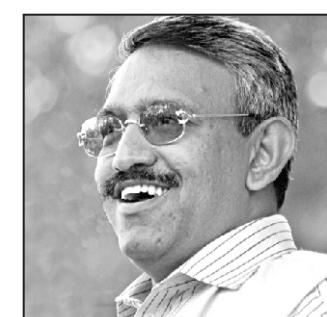
Amanullah Aman



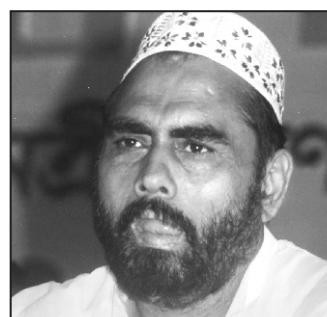
Nasir Uddin Ahmed Pintu



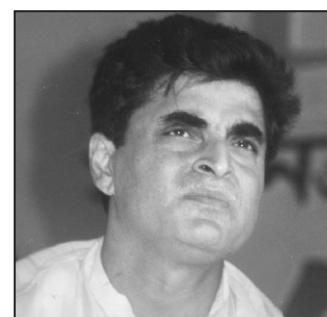
Salauddin Ahmed



Mosaddeq Ali Falu



Maqbul Hossain



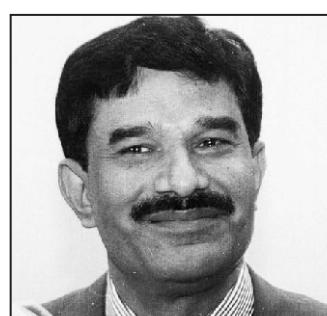
Dr HBM Iqbal



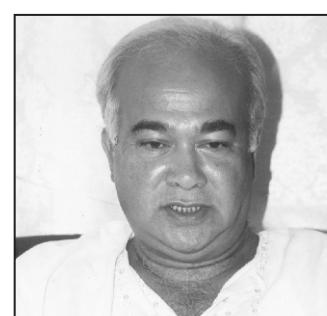
Hazi Selim



Joinal Hazari



Harris Chowdhury



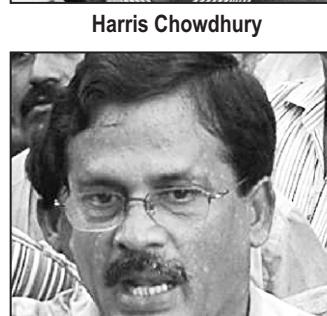
Engineer Mosharaff Hossain



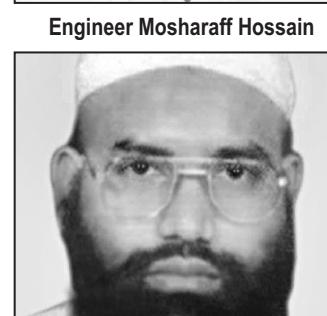
Mir Nasir Uddin



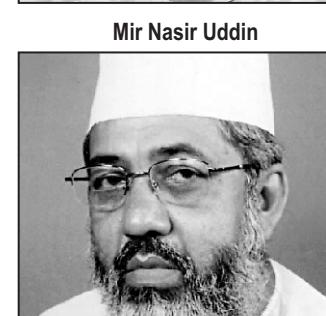
Iqbal Hasan Mahmud Tuku



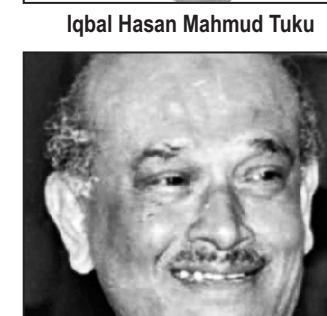
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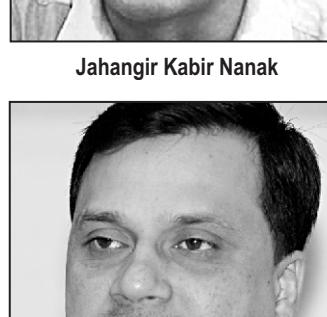
Mufti Shahidul Islam



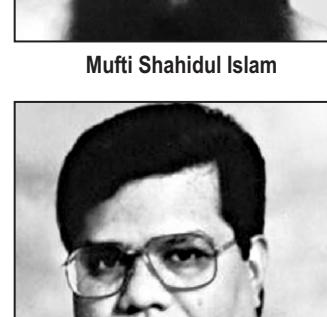
Shajahan Chowdhury



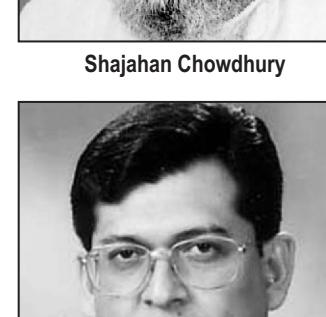
Akhteruzzaman Chowdhury Babu



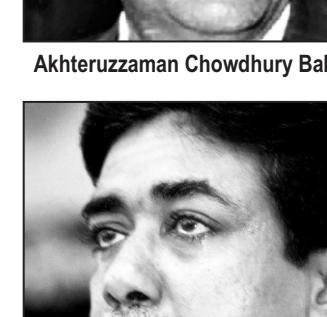
Gias Uddin Al Mamun



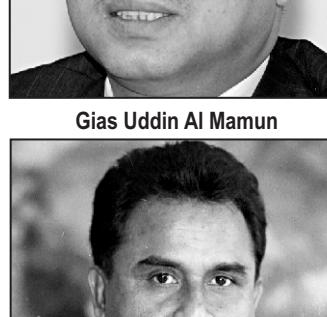
Manjurul Ahsan Munshi



Salauddin Ahmed



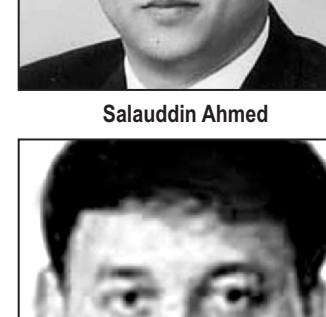
Shamim Osman



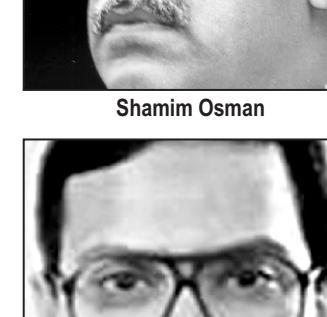
AHM Mostafa Kamal



Ali Azgar Lobi



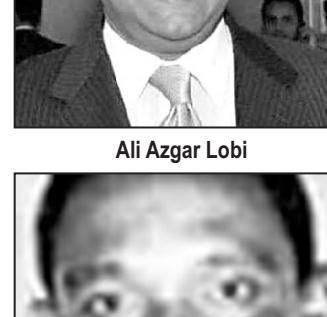
Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan



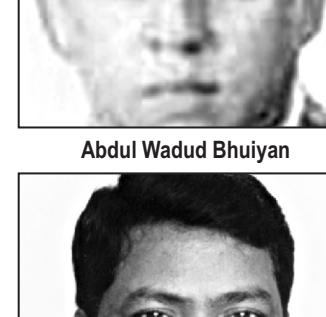
Naser Rahman



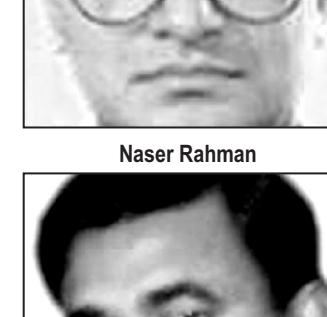
BM Bakir Hossain



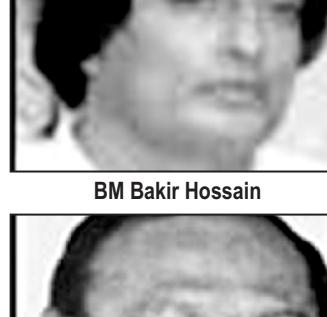
Chowdhury Alam



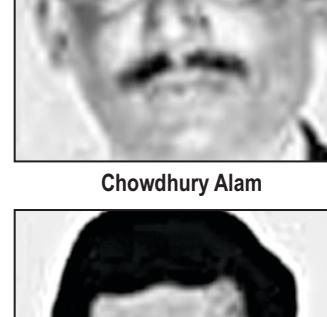
Ruhul Quddus Talukder Dulu



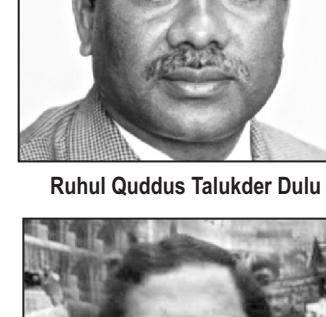
Pankaj Debanath



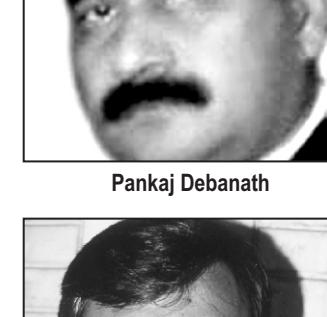
Ahmed Akbar Sobhan (Shah Alam)



ANH Akhter



Mirza Azam



Gias Uddin

Russia moves to stop spread of deadly bird flu strain

AFP, Moscow

director of veterinary inspection for a agricultural agency Rosselkhoznamzor.

"The farms have been disinfected. The experts are treating vehicles that are leaving the areas where the virus was discovered," said Vlasov, adding that access in and around the region had been restricted.

Last month, the H5N1 virus was reported in poultry plants in the Krasnodar region, 1,000 kilometres south of Moscow, but the current outbreak is the first near the capital, home to more than 10 million people.

The Russian find follows recent outbreaks in Britain and Turkey, while Hungary reported the first detected case of the strain in

January, the first such outbreak in the European Union since mid-2006.

"Poultry plants in the region have been put under strict control for a year," said Vlasov, adding that the Russian public had nothing to fear.

Russian authorities on Saturday said another farm at Podolsk, 40 kilometres south of the capital, was suspected of being contaminated after 44 dead birds were found, but tests had still to confirm this.

And on Sunday a fourth farm at Taldom, 110 kilometres north of Moscow, was under suspicion of having a further outbreak, with authorities still conducting tests.

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Two cousins drown in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two children drowned in a ditch at Mohammadpur in the city on Friday night.

The deceased, who were cousins, were identified as Ashamony, 6, and Al Amin, 6, residents of Dhaka Uddan Housing at Mohammadpur.

Police said the incident might have been occurred in the evening when they were playing beside the ditch at Nabinagar Housing sand field.

Locals found the floating body of Ashamony at around 8:00pm when both of their parents were searching for them. Later they found Al Amin's body.

The bodies were sent to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy.

Birth anniversary of Ramakrishna today

The 172nd birth anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna will be celebrated today, says a press release.

The Ramakrishna Mission in Dhaka has drawn up five-day programmes on the occasion.

Special puja, devotional songs and reading from the scriptures are part of the today's programme.

Besides, a discussion on 'Sri Ramakrishna: The universal concept of religion' will be held at 5:00pm, with Dr Pares Chandra Mandal in the chair.

Former chief adviser to the caretaker government Justice Mohammad Habibur Rahman will attend the discussion as the chief guest while Deputy High Commissioner of India Sarvajit Chakraborty and Deputy Chief of Mission of Nepal Embassy Ramesh Prasad Khanal will be present as the guests.

Dr Aminul Islam, Shuddhananda Mahathera and Father Arturo Speigal will be present as special guests.

A drama titled 'Sadhu Nag Mahasaya' will be staged after the discussion.

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