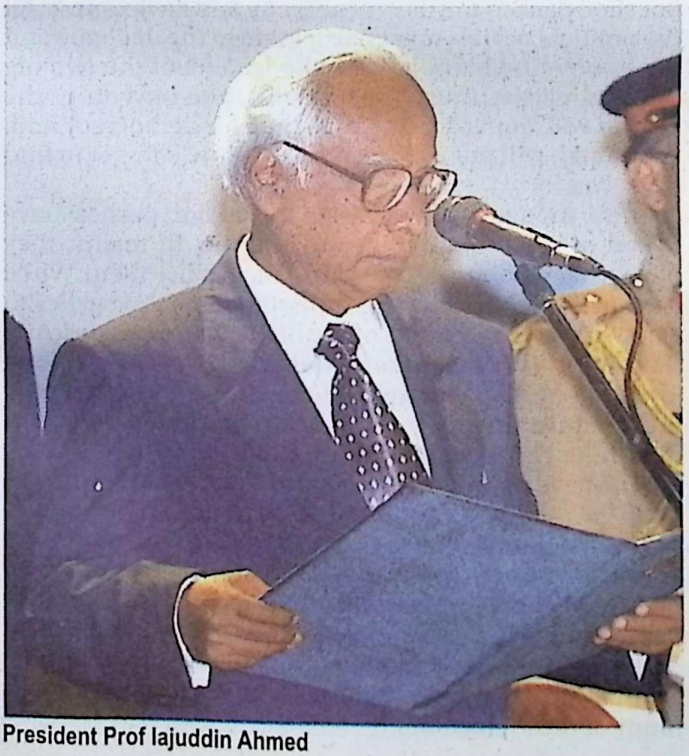
Voters are still waiting for 'clean candidates'.



President Prof Iajuddin Ahmed

When democracy was restored in 1990 through a mass upsurge we expected a vibrant and accountable democratic system to take root, instead we saw a dysfunctional democracy where, instead of becoming the first among the equals, the office of the Prime Minister has been used in the most tyrannical manner. Her wishes remained command for her party MPs; a coterie was formed around her inner circle, which manipulated government tenders, gave shelter to killers and earned millions through extortion and selling nomination papers. Politics became synonymous with plundering of the public office. In the last 16 years, we have witnessed the birth of Al Capone-like mafias in the country. It is little wonder that within a few years, Bangladesh has earned the infamous title of being the most corrupt country in the world. This problem was more acute in the last five years, when Hawa Bhaban, an alternative centre of power was created, making Tariq Rahman, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's son, as the successor to the Zia dynasty. From manipulations of international tenders to appointment of police officers, the long hand of Tariq and his men were stretched afar, creating a parallel administration. An ever-pervasive culture of corruption and impunity was born and spread its tentacles.