

Tipu undergoes surgery

By STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Surgeons at the Bumrungrad Hospital at Bangkok performed a seven-hour operation on journalist Tipu Sultan yesterday, according to a message received in Dhaka.

Hospital sources said the operation was successful and normal functioning of left hand of the injured journalist is likely to be restored.

Tipu might also need more surgical operations. He needs prolonged physiotherapy.

Muscleman of ruling party MP in Feni Jinal Hazari had abducted Tipu, Feni correspondent of UNB, on January 25 and brutally assaulted him causing multiple bone fractures. He was under treatment at the

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AL may maintain status quo in nominating party candidates

REAZ AHMAD

The ruling Awami League (AL) is likely to maintain *status quo* in nominating party candidates in the coming general elections.

Sources in the party said unless old age or personal unwillingness stand in the way, it is almost certain that all the candidates who came out successful in the 1996 polls would get nomination this time also.

AL won 146 out of the 300 seats in the '96 election of the Jatiya Sangsad. Besides, 133 party nominees secured second position in the electoral race.

The sources also said that AL would prefer to give another chance to most of those who put up a good fight but finished as second in close contest.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who also heads the AL Parliamentary Board (ALPB), has already hinted at giving party tickets to most of the present AL lawmakers and party nominees who failed but polled enough votes in their respective constituencies in the last election, they pointed out.

Colleagues of Ershad and SQ Chowdhury, both now abroad, said that a new political polarisation would take place in the country soon after their return home.

Sources said like-minded politicians of different parties categorically denied having responded to the calls of Ershad, Salauddin Qader Chowdhury and Anwar Zahid to form a new political combine.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, senior leaders from Jamaat-e-Islami, Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ), Islami Shashantrana Andolon (ISA), Jagpa, Progressive Nationalist Party, Nationalist Democratic

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Pro-Islamic parties rule out alliance with ousted BNP men or Ershad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of different small rightwing and pro-Islamic political parties have ruled out any new opposition alliance with Ershad or the two recently expelled BNP leaders.

They said forming a new opposition alliance ahead of the general election when people have already sided with either Awami League or BNP is not reasonable. Also, they said, as people may be broadly divided into pro- and anti-Awami League camps, the anti-AL voters would definitely choose the BNP-led alliance over any other opposition alliance considering BNP's better chance to win.

Even leaders of pro-Islamic parties admitted that religion-based politics alone does not guarantee votes in Bangladesh but rather other important factors enter the equation.

A senior ISA leader, on condition of anonymity, said that Ershad after his release approached their party chief Syed Fazlul Karim about forming a new political combine.

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Three alleged criminals held from Dhaka court premises

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Three alleged criminals were arrested from the premises of the District and Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka yesterday.

Plainclothes policemen, acting on a tip-off, arrested Iqbal, 22, Shahin, 20 and Jahan, 23 at about 10 am.

Police also recovered a knife and *ganja* from their possession. They were handed over to Kotwali Thana.

The arrested are residents of Amligola under Lalbagh Thana in the city, police sources said.

Two separate cases one under Arms Act and other under Narcotics Control Act were filed with Kotwali Thana.

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Swearing-in tomorrow

West Bengal to have a smaller cabinet

BSS, Kolkata

The West Bengal state secretariat of the CPM has decided to form a smaller cabinet infused with new blood under Buddhadev Bhattacharya this time, party sources said yesterday.

They said the state secretariat decided to bring down the 48-member 'jumbo' cabinet to "ensure speed and efficiency in the government."

The CPI-M politburo yesterday joined a meeting in New Delhi, which is expected to be followed by the announcement of the new cabinet, to be the first Left Front cabinet without Jyoti Basu at its helm since the reds stormed Bengal in 1978.

An axis of three key CPM leaders in Bengal—Jyoti Basu, Buddhadev Bhattacharya and Anil Biswas—is structuring the complex business of ministry-making.

PTI adds: Buddhadev tendered his resignation to Governor Viren J Shah.

The governor, later on Tuesday, dissolved the 12th assembly after the election commission issued a notification for constitution of the 13th state assembly under the representation of the People's Act.

The CPI (M) state committee would meet today to formally endorse

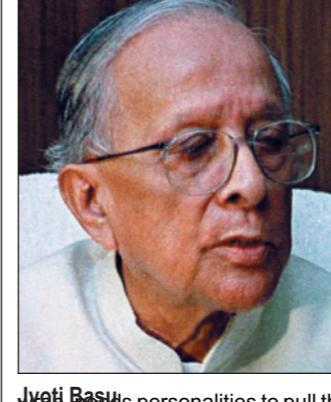
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News Analysis

Buddhadev steps out of Jyoti Basu's shadow

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Marxists may not believe in personality cult; however, the sub-continental society, which is not hamstrung by ideological time-



Jyoti Basu needs personalities to pull the

masses and provide leadership.

And when CPI (M), the lead partner of West Bengal's ruling Left Front, chose 56-year-old Buddhadev Bhattacharya last November to succeed octogenarian communist patriarch Jyoti Basu as chief minister and lead the alliance in assembly elections, it raised quite a few eyebrows.

The questions asked at that time were: will Bhattacharya be able to come out of the shadow of Basu? Will he have the same charisma to pull non-committed voters to the Left?

After all, the most successful chief ministers of West Bengal—Bidhan Chandra Roy and Basu himself—have either been aristocrat or "barristerocrat" (a combination of barrister and aristocrat).

Another West Bengal Chief Minister, who has been "barristerocrat", is Basu's friend



Buddhadev Bhattacharya

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Will journalist Tipu remain disabled?



The Daily Star—অথবা আলা
Tip Treatment Fund

Donate generously to this Fund
Save Tipu from Disability

Send donations to: Savings Account No. 25002111
Dhaka Bank Ltd, Karwan Bazar Branch, Dhaka

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