

Tipu undergoes surgery

By Staff Correspondent

Surgeons at the Bumrungrad Hospital in 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.

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

The 11-member ALPB finalises the list of party candidates.

As many of the AL units in 70 organisational districts are plagued with intra-party bickering, the party leadership thinks that selection of new faces for the coming polls would rather worsen the situation. Opting for veteran and time-tested nominees is seen as a prudent decision to defuse simmering internal feuds at various tiers of the party.

At the moment, AL leadership is rethinking about best possible

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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.

SQ Chowdhury and Anwar Zahid, both recently expelled from BNP, are reportedly looking to like-minded politicians to form a new party as well as an opposition alliance ahead of the election.

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, Salahuddin 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 Shashantra Andolon (ISA), Jagpa, Progressive Nationalist Party, Nationalist Democratic

Alliance and Democratic League observed that teaming up with the Ershad-led Jatiya Party or the two expelled BNP leaders would be a serious blunder.

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 form

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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 Jahid, 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

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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-

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 "barristocrat" (a combination of barrister and aristocrat).

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

Siddhartha Shankar Ray.

After being six months in office of Chief Minister Bhattacharya has not only silenced sceptics but also dispelled a number of myths. In powering the Left Front to a remarkable victory in the just-concluded



Jyoti Basu, West Bengal personalities to pull the



Buddhadev Bhattacharya



4 Jubo Dal leaders jailed in Khulna under PSA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Four Jubo Dal leaders were sentenced to 10 years rigorous imprisonment (RI) yesterday and fined Tk 25,000 each, in default to suffer one year more RI for ransacking Zia Hall, putting up a road barricade at Shibbari Crossing and damaging a van of BTV Khulna station on August 30, 2000.

SKM Anisur Rahman Khan, judge of the Public Safety Act (PSA) tribunal, delivered the judgement.

The punished Jubo Dal leaders are Rafiqul Islam, Babul Hossain Howlader, Nadim Hossain alias Choto Babu and Selim Hossain alias Nachan.

The tribunal also acquitted eight others of charges. They are Mohammad Hasan Musa, Murad, Nahid, Reza, Razzak, Masum, Noor Islam and Shaheed. They all are Jubo

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Will journalist Tipu remain disabled?



The Daily Star- প্রথম আলো

Tipu 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