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Tarique held at midnight

Ex-health minister Mosharraf, Ctg Mayor Mohiuddin, Jamaat's ex-MP Tahir, Janakantha editor Masud also held; raid on Sudha Sadan

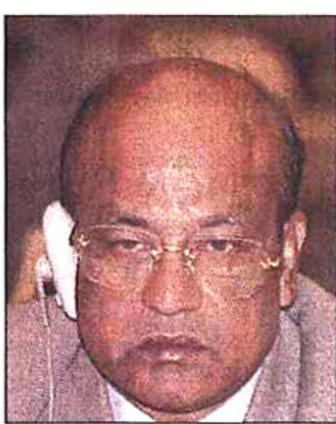
STAR REPORT

Tarique Rahman, the man who was allegedly at the centre of the rampant corruption unleashed in the last five years of the BNP-Jamaat regime and who from BNP's political office Hawa Bhaban controlled everything from civil administration to political arena, was arrested in the early hours of today from the cantonment residence of his mother, former prime minister Khaleda Zia.

In a massive crackdown on the persons linked to corruption in the past regimes, armed forces surrounded his house, disconnected all telephone connections includ-



Tarique Rahman



Khandakar Mosharraf Hossain



ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury

ing mobile ones, and finally stepped into his house at 12.10am to cause the final downfall of the man, who once looked untouchable to anyone.

At 1.34am, he was led away from his house and put in a car with tinted glass. Then he was whisked away to an unknown destination.

When the endgame came, Tarique looked nervous and unsure, sources who were present during the raid said.

Joint forces also raided AL President Sheikh Hasina's house, Sudha Sadan, twice last night and in the early hours of today in search of Hasina's cousin Sheikh Helal

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Next target

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has prepared a list of 50 influential political leaders and businessmen for the second phase of the joint forces' anti-corruption drive.

The Daily Star last night received a copy of the list from a reliable source. The persons listed are:

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General and former prime minister Khaleda Zia's son Tarique Rahman, Former health minister Khandakar

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

National Security Council on cards

Strengthening security, crackdown on the corrupt key objectives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The caretaker government has made a move to reconstitute the high-powered National Security Council (NSC) to make it effective, to strengthen the ongoing crackdown on corrupt individuals, and to ensure national security and accountability in the government.

Chief Adviser Fakhrudin Ahmed will lead the NSC while the chiefs of three armed forces, chief of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), and civil society personalities will be its members.

Adviser to the Caretaker Government Maj Gen (retd) MA Matin yesterday said a new NSC will be formed soon.

"The framework of the council is

yet to be formulated," Matin said while talking to BBC Bangla Service yesterday. He said the framework will include the council's functions, responsibilities, and spheres of work in detail.

Asked about its necessity he said the NSC will also deal with the issue of accountability in the government. "If the council sits and discuss such matters, transparency and accountability will be ensured."

An NSC was formed in 1985 during the regime of military ruler HM Ershad. After restoration of democracy with the introduction of the parliamentary form of government in 1991, NSCs were formed during the regimes of BNP

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Tough taskforces to fight graft, crime

8 central, 64 district teams include army, law enforcement agencies

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

Aiming at curbing corruption, irregularities and criminal activities across the country, the government has formed eight central and 64 district-based taskforces comprising members of the army, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and different intelligence agencies.

The cabinet division recently issued a notification regarding the taskforces, sources said.

The government has also initi-

ated a move to form 20 more anti-graft teams to enquire into the graft allegations against big corruption suspects on the second list of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) that may be revealed by month-end.

The joint forces accompanied by a magistrate and a forest officer raided the house of the former minister, also a former BNP lawmaker, at around 11.00am and seized four deer, two emus, three golden pheasants, eleven turkeys, seven peacocks and two mynahs, a dove and four pigeons of rare species.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

A mini zoo at Tuku's house 34 animals, birds seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

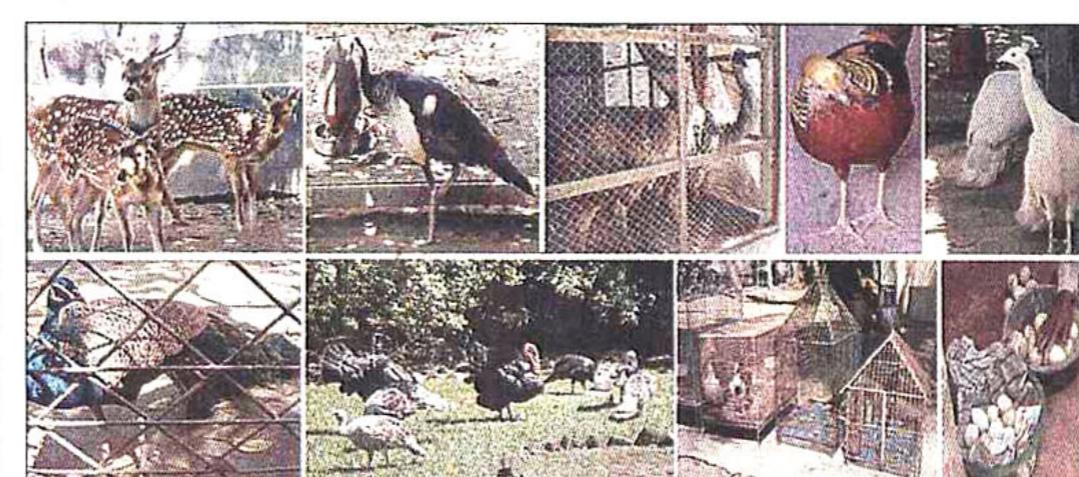


PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Thirty-four wild animals and birds were seized by the joint forces from former state minister for power Iqbal Hassan Mahmood Tuku's house in Sirajganj yesterday. These include four deer, seven peacocks, two emus, three golden pheasants, eleven turkeys, two mynahs, a dove and four pigeons of rare species.

PRICE HIKE OF ESSENTIALS Govt plans import duty cut, checking unfair business

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

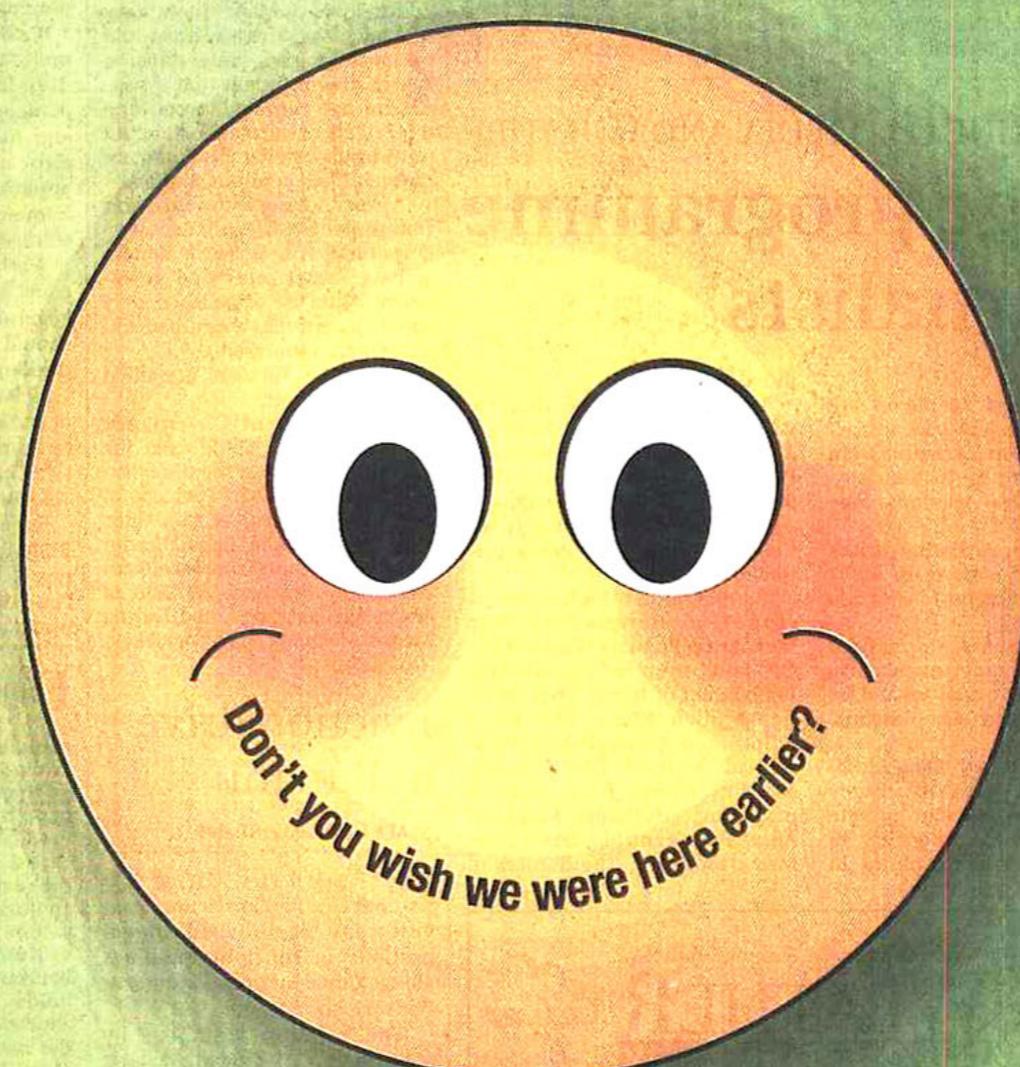
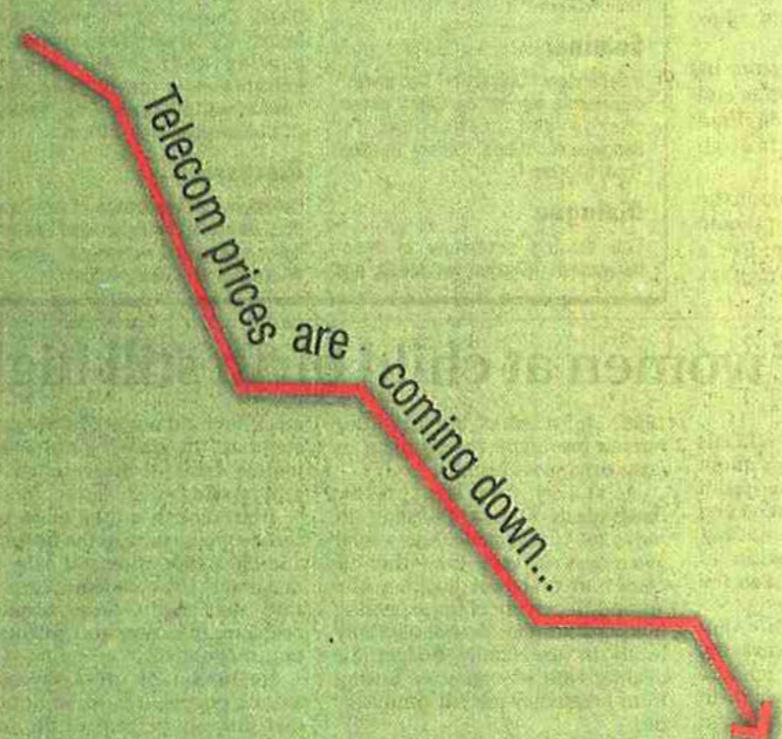
The interim government yesterday decided to cut import duties on commodities, ensure increased supply commodities in the market and ask the joint forces to coordinate their drives targeting the corrupt and dishonest businesses only.

High-level officials of Bangladesh Bank (BB) and the

armed forces in a meeting on Tuesday with Chief Adviser Fakhrudin Ahmed in the chair discussed ways to restrain the spiralling prices of essentials, sources said.

Sources said BB officials in the meeting drew attention on various negative impacts of the ongoing drives by the joint forces. They observed that the drives panicked

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



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