

Tarique remanded in extortion case

Mosharraf, Mohiuddin Chy, MAH Salim, Tahir, Atikullah Khan sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Clad in a black bullet proof jacket inscribed with 'RAB' in yellow and a helmet, arrested Tarique Rahman, son of former prime minister Khaleda Zia, was yesterday brought to a Dhaka court under heavy security and remained for four days.

Tarique has been charged with extortion of Tk 1 crore from a construction firm, Al-Amin Construction, a concern of Amin Mohammad Foundation.

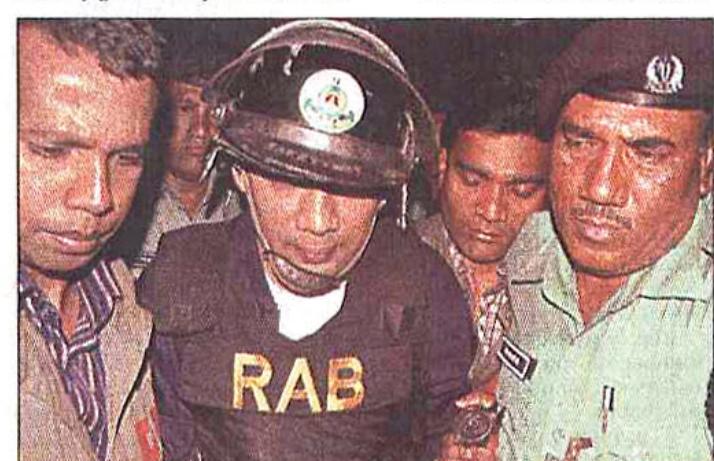
Owner of the construction firm, Amin Ahmed, who got ticket as a BNP candidate from a Noakhali constituency for the cancelled January 22 election, filed the case against Tarique with Gulshan Police Station yesterday.

At 11 at night, a white microbus carted Tarique to the court under strict security. Flanked by Rab and police personnel, the man who is believed to have virtually ruled the country for the last five years from

the Hawa Bhaban, could hardly be recognised under the armour of his protective gear that reminded people present in the court of the security given to top militants like

Bangla Bhai. He walked to the court as a heavy crowd pushed and shoved to get a view of the joint forces' top catch.

"I am a victim of domestic and



BNP's Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman clad in bullet proof vest and helmet being taken to a Dhaka court yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

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General (retd) MA Matin, the taskforces will be authorised to conduct search or confiscate properties of people linked with any types of crime.

The central committee of the coordination body, which drafts in all seven GOCs as members, will then recommend taking legal actions against listed culprits.

Once in action officially, these

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Taskforces handed enormous power

Empowered to detain without warrant, freeze or confiscate property of the accused, recover money and wealth illegally transferred abroad

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

The government plans to hand the still-unofficial taskforces enormous authority to crack down on corrupt people and culprits.

Under the supervision of a National Co-ordination Committee headed by Communication Adviser Major

which will evaluate list of culprits put forward by different auxiliary agencies.

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BANANI 'BNP PALLI'

Fast completing structures only show the nexus

PINAKI ROY

A vast swath of expensive land in the posh section of Banani in the capital, popularly known as 'BNP Palli' (BNP village), is bristling with under construction multi-storey residential buildings although Rajdhani Unnayan Katripakkha (Rajuk) claims that it suspended the process of plot allotment there.

Most of the allottees there happen to be former ministers, state ministers and lawmakers of BNP.

Mizanur Rahman Minu, mayor of Rajshahi, and Mujibor Rahman Sarowar, mayor of Barisal, are now next-door neighbours. Houses of former BNP state ministers Alamgir Kabir of Naogaon, and Prof Razaul Karim of Narayanganj are

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political activities under the State of Emergency Rules 2007, different political parties conducted their political activities and the government took a lenient view thereof.

"But, it was noticed that different political parties were misusing the government's liberal attitude," said the press note.

The embargo came in the wake of a drive against bigwig politicians, businessmen and bureaucrats on charges of corruption and crime.

Commentary

How could BNP come to this stage?

MAHFUZ ANAM

Nobody represents the rot that ate away into the very vitals of BNP more dramatically than Tarique Rahman. President Ziaur Rahman for all his constructive (Saarc) and shameful (Indemnity Act) actions was universally respected for his financial honesty. Tarique, as his elder son, on the contrary, appeared hell bent on destroying that core image. Leave alone being concerned, he seemed to bask in

his reputation of corruption and never for a moment gave the slightest impression that he was either bothered by it or would ever do anything against it. He considered himself as the product of destiny and took the leadership of BNP to be his proprietary right.

It was his nonchalance about the rule of law that perhaps represented his most fearful side. Rules just did not matter, only his personal interest did. In a vulgar display of his arrogance he used to

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BNP demands release of Tarique, others

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With the arrest of her elder son Tarique Rahman and a number of top ranking party leaders, immediate past prime minister BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia now seems a bit worried about the future of her party.

Party Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan in a statement yesterday demanded immediate release of the political leaders including BNP Standing Committee Member Khandakar Mosharraf Hossain and party joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman against whom there are no specific allegations.

Bhuiyan yesterday met Khaleda Zia at her cantonment residence and had discussions with her, especially on Tarique's arrest, sources said.

The BNP chairperson yesterday remained the most conspicuous

absentee at Hawa Bhaban while her programme there with Jatiyatabadi Mohila Dal on the International Women's Day was postponed.

BNP and its front organisations' failure to bring any strong protest against Tarique's arrest came as a shocking surprise to Khaleda, sources said.

Many BNP leaders, who hold the chairperson responsible for failure to check widespread corruption and power abuse by her son and his close associates, are now reluctant to meet her.

"Tarique Rahman was our future leader but he destroyed himself in last five years... Some of his associates misguided him and earned huge illegal money," said a former BNP lawmaker.

A few leaders including former state minister for home affairs Lutfozzaman Babar and former

The mayor's shenanigans

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Having enjoyed popularity as the Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) mayor for a long time, ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury suddenly became a different person after being elected to the post for the third time in May 2005.

Allegations of nepotism, misconduct with CCC officials and staff, encroaching on government land, and corruption surfaced against him during the past 22 months since the last mayoral election.

Instead of fulfilling his 40-point pledge, Mohiuddin, who has 14 cases filed against him by the Anti-Corruption Commission, began his third tenure consolidating his own interests, sources alleged.

Mohiuddin has been mostly criticised for his ill behaviour with the CCC officials and staffs, who would often come under attack of his abusive words, sources said.

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