

Graft case against Tarique, Zubaida: 5 prosecution witnesses summoned on May 21

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Online Desk: A Dhaka court today summoned five prosecution witnesses, asking them to appear before it on May 21 in a graft case filed against BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman and his wife Zubaida Rahman by the Anti-Corruption Commission in 2007. ACC Deputy Director Momammad Zahirul Huda, also the complainant of the case, is one of the five prosecution witnesses.

Judge Md Asaduzzaman of Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order after the ACC Public Prosecutor Misharraf Hossain Kajol submitted an application in this regard. In the application, the PP said the complainant could not appear before the court today due to unavoidable circumstances. That's why, the PP appealed to the court to summon the complainant to appear before it the next scheduled date. The PP also appealed the court to summon four more witnesses on the same day.

On April 13, the same court framed charges against them in their absence. Tarique and Zubaida have been in London since 2008. While Tarique is also accused in 15 other cases, mostly filed during the caretaker government in 2007 and 2008, Zubaida has been indicted in only one. No other case was filed against her in the country. The same court on November 1 last year had issued arrest warrants against the duo after accepting the charges brought against them.

On June 26 last year, the HC declared Tarique and Zubaida "fugitives" and rejected their writ petitions challenging the filing of the graft case.

On September 26, 2007, the ACC filed the case with Kafrul Police Station against the two and Zubaida's mother Syeda Iqbal Mand Banu, on charges of amassing assets worth Tk 4.82 crore through illegal means and concealing the information of Tk 2.16 crore in their wealth statements.

However, trial proceedings against Zubaida's mother were rescinded. Earlier, Tarique was sentenced to life term imprisonment in the August 21 grenade attack cases. He was also sentenced on different terms of punishment in two other cases, including the Zia Orphanage Trust graft case.