Tulip Siddiq Calls Herself 'Collateral Damage' in Hasina-Yunus Rivalry



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British Parliament member and former Treasury Minister Tulip Siddiq has described herself as 'collateral damage' caught in the political conflict between Bangladesh's former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and economist Dr. Muhammad Yunus, the current Chief Adviser of the interim government, following corruption charges filed against her in Bangladesh. Siddiq insists that all allegations against her are baseless and politically motivated.

The 42-year-old Labour Party MP revealed that she learned last week, through a journalist, that she and 20 others have been formally accused of illegally influencing land allocations in Dhaka's Purbachal area. The initial court hearing is scheduled for August 11. However, Siddiq has yet to receive any formal summons or access the charge sheet.

"I feel trapped in a bizarre nightmare where a trial is imminent, yet I remain unaware of the exact allegations against me," she said.

Bangladeshi authorities have stated that due to the absence of an extradition treaty between the United Kingdom and Bangladesh, the trial may proceed in her absence if necessary.

Siddiq explained that following the Labour Party's electoral victory in July last year, she served as Economic Secretary and City Minister in the UK and was dedicated to her work. Meanwhile, student-led protests in Bangladesh led to the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government. After the regime change, economist and longtime Hasina rival Muhammad Yunus assumed power as Chief Adviser, after which various allegations against Siddiq began to surface.

Among the accusations, she was charged with accepting a $5 billion bribe related to a contract with Russia for the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant project, a claim she vehemently denied as "completely false." Additionally, she faced allegations of receiving a flat as a gift in London's King's Cross in 2004, which she also refuted.

Siddiq faced criticism for residing in a property owned by someone else due to security concerns. However, Sir Laurie Magnus, the independent adviser overseeing the UK ministerial code of conduct, reviewed her financial matters and cleared her of any wrongdoing.

She alleges that since the change of government in Bangladesh, 'dirty politics' has been waged against her. "This is the fallout of the political rivalry between Dr. Yunus and my aunt, former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. I have been made collateral damage. While those guilty of crimes in Bangladesh should face justice, I am not among them," Siddiq asserted.