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RICHES TO RAGS FALL OF A CAREER CRIMINAL

Photographs and footage available

A notorious drug trafficker who didn't let prison interrupt his criminal activity has finally gone out of business.

Tariq Dad, 43, controlled a network which distributed heroin and cocaine to dealers in his home city of Bristol and the south west of England. He lost his multi million pound empire after SOCA used new approaches to systematically undermine his reputation and ensure that other criminals were discouraged from dealing with him. The operation, which was carried out in conjunction with Avon and Somerset Police and the Crown Prosecution Service, left no roots from which his criminal empire could grow back.

Tariq Dad was sentenced today to another 11 years in prison, bringing the total sentences for those linked to his activities to over 170 years.

SOCA is also applying for restrictions on his travel, access to bank accounts and use of mobile phones which will take effect when he is released. A breach of any of these could lead to a further five year sentence.

Matt Horne, Head of Investigations for SOCA, said:

"Tariq Dad and his network brought misery and violence to Bristol for years. He thought he was untouchable, using others to do his dirty work while he lived the high life, but we were watching his every move.

"Like every organised criminal, he relied on reputation to stay in business. SOCA and its partners attacked every link in the chain, from street dealers to overseas suppliers, to undermine his status. Eventually other criminals would no longer trade with him for fear of being arrested."

Seizures included 90 kilos of heroin at a warehouse in Istanbul as part of a spin-off operation with the Turkish National Police. Officers also seized 21 kilos from a courier working for Tariq's brother Mazar, and recovered £85,000 in cash from the boot of Mazar's car. Operations carried out by Avon and Somerset Police led to the seizure of over 60 kilos of heroin, 10 kilos of cocaine, and cash totalling £60,000.

Matt Horne added:

"The relentless drug and cash seizures disturbed Dad so much he stopped his drug trafficking activities for nine months. We squeezed him again, by blocking access to

his offshore bank accounts, which contained over £400,000, and arranging for one of his luxury cars to be repossessed.

“He went from being able to afford stays in Dubai’s top hotels to defaulting on the mortgage for his penthouse apartment in Bristol. In desperation for cash he was forced to go hands on with a cocaine deal which gave us the evidence to arrest him.”

Four men were charged with conspiracy to supply cocaine. Mazar Dad and Wakar Shah pleaded guilty while Tariq Dad and Garrie Jones were found guilty following a six-week trial in November 2009.

At Winchester Crown Court today, Mazar was sentenced to nine and a half years, which will run concurrently with a 12-year sentence he recently received for supplying the 21 kilos of heroin. Shah was jailed for eight and a half years and Jones was sentenced to seven and a half years.

A fifth man, Omar Tariq, was dealt with separately for his involvement in the plot to supply cocaine and possession of a firearm. After pleading guilty, he was sentenced to eight years in December 2008.

Tariq and Mazar’s homes, plus Tariq’s offshore bank accounts, are subject to restraint orders. The financial investigation is ongoing and a confiscation hearing will take place later this year. SOCA and the CPS will be asking for restrictions to be placed on the Dad brothers at the same hearing by applying for Serious Crime Prevention Orders.

Chief Inspector Paul Jervis, Head of Serious and Organised Crime Group, Avon and Somerset Constabulary, said:

"The sentencing of these offenders will send a strong message to the criminal fraternity in Bristol that drug dealing and associated crime will not be tolerated in our force area. The residents of Avon and Somerset should be confident that we will continue to detect and dismantle these organised crime groups to maintain the feeling of safety in our towns and cities. I would like to thank those members of the public who supported us throughout this long and complex investigation.

"We will continue to pursue the profits of crime in order to strip criminals of their ill-gotten gains and show that crime does not pay but the offenders will. These men were running a sophisticated drugs business on a commercial scale. They believed they were invincible and that their criminal activity would not be detected. However, working together with SOCA we have taken now taken away their freedom, assets and ability to cause further harm to the community."

Ian Welch, senior lawyer with the Crown Prosecution Service’s Organised Crime Division, said:

“The Crown Prosecution Service, along with SOCA, took steps to freeze Tariq Dad’s assets, including offshore bank accounts, which meant an end to his previously luxurious lifestyle. This meant he had to return to getting his hands dirty with drug deals instead of using lieutenants and creaming off the profits. This led to SOCA investigators gathering more evidence against him about his life of crime.

“This operation and prosecution has also led to the arrest of the man suspected to be the gang’s heroin supplier in Turkey and to the conviction of the London-based supplier of cocaine in another part of the conspiracy, shutting it down from top to bottom.

“CPS lawyers worked closely with SOCA investigators from the start to help bring down this organised crime gang which extended from Bristol to London and the South East and on to Turkey. We advised the investigators on the sort of evidence we needed so we could put a compelling case to the court, leading to guilty pleas and convictions against the main operators.”

Notes to Editors

1. Pictures of all the criminals, the drugs, Tariq Dad and his brother in Dubai, and surveillance stills and footage, are available by contacting the SOCA Press Office on 0870 268 8100 or via www.soca.gov.uk

For more information contact the SOCA press office on 0870 268 8100