

## SC halts bail order for Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday stayed a recent High Court (HC) order for granting bail to detained former prime minister and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in a graft case regarding awarding Gatco a contract.

Following an appeal of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), the full SC bench headed by Chief Justice Mohammad Rulul Amin also stayed the HC decision of staying proceedings of the case against Khaleda and her younger son Arafat Rahman Koko and 11 others.

Lawyers concerned with the

case told reporters that following the SC order now there will be no bar to continuing the proceedings of the Gatco graft case filed by the ACC.

Khaleda and Koko filed separate writ petitions on September 27, challenging the initiation and continuation of the case. The HC granted bail to Khaleda and stayed the proceedings of the case on Sunday.

The SC also stayed five other HC orders following ACC's appeal against Monday's HC decision that stayed the proceedings of the graft cases against BNP leaders Tarique Rahman, Moudud Ahmed and Nazmul Huda and his wife, Rulul

Kuddus Talukder Dulu and businessman Nurul Islam Babul. The ACC filed the case against these persons for amassing wealth beyond their known sources of income.

All seven accused had also challenged the legality of bringing the graft cases against them under the Emergency Power Rules (EPR).

The ACC moved in the SC chamber judge's court on Tuesday seeking stay on the HC decisions. But Chamber Judge Hassan Ameen fixed today for hearing all matters in the regular full bench of the Appellate Division.

An ACC deputy director filed the

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## Taskforce quizzes her on wealth statement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-member team of the anti-graft national taskforce yesterday interrogated former prime minister Khaleda Zia at sub-jail about her wealth statement submitted to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

Led by ACC Deputy Director Golam Shahriar Chowdhury, they questioned the detained BNP chairperson about her property including the two houses that she co-owns and owns in the city's Gulshan and Cantonment's Shaheed Mainul Road.

During the 40-minute questioning that started at 3:45pm, the anti-graft team members also asked Khaleda about her bank accounts, FDRs, cars and lands at Savar in details, sources said. Khaleda's

counsel Advocate Ahmed Azam Khan was present.

In order to avoid the media, the task force team entered the sub-jail through the jail's west gate.

In her wealth statement submitted to the ACC on August 6, Khaleda mentioned that she has property worth Tk 3.54 crore. Her statement also shows that she has Tk 1.89 crore as bank balance.

Her wealth statement also includes a 1300 CC Toyota car bought in 1995, two Toyota SUVs and one Nissan SUV bought in 1990.

"Madam (Khaleda Zia) very firmly told the ACC team that there is no inconsistency or irregularity in the wealth statement," Advocate Azam told the reporters emerging from the sub-jail.

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## CORRUPTION SUSPECTS

## ACC makes public list of 35

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) published the forth list of graft suspects yesterday, comprising 35 people including 11 former BNP legislators, five former Awami League lawmakers, a former Jatiya Party MP and five bureaucrats.

The list includes high-profile names like BNP leader and Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, AL leaders Tofail Ahmed and Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, former BNP state minister Maj (retd) Kamrul Islam, former BNP state minister AKM Mosharraf Hossain, former deputy

minister for food Asadul Habib Dulu, former BNP whip and former Red Crescent Society chairman Shahidul Haque Jamal, Khulna City Corporation Mayor Sheikh Tayebur Rahman and former adviser to a caretaker government Justice Fazlul Haque.

The names on the list of 35 are derived from the list of 80 graft suspects, which was made available to different media and published on September 27.

"The fourth list of 35 people whom the government suspects to be corrupt people," ACC Secretary Mukles Ur Rahman said declaring the publication of the list during a

regular meeting with newsmen at the commission's head office yesterday afternoon.

The list also includes the name of former chairman of Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) Taimur Alam Khandaker, Proshika Chairman Kazi Faruque Ahmed, former managing director of Essential Drugs Company Ltd Harun-Al Rashid and former managing director of Teletalk Md Obaidullah.

Three out of the 11 former BNP lawmakers and one out of the five former AL lawmakers are behind bars on different charges. BNP

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## EC not upset with political parties

Says CEC at electoral reform talks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda yesterday said the Election Commission (EC) is not frustrated with the political parties and it is to them that the EC owes its existence.

"We are not frustrated with the political parties at all...The political parties are our main clients and we need not be here if the parties do not exist," Huda said when his attention was drawn to the present situation where only the political parties and politicians are blamed for all wrong and giving a frustrating impression of the parties.

Huda was speaking at the electoral reforms talks between the EC

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## UN PEACEKEEPING Dhaka vies for senior posts

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has made a strong case for senior positions at the headquarters and field-level of the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations as the country is one of the major contributors of troops to the UN missions.

Dhaka made the plea when Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury met the UN's Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, on Wednesday evening in New York.

The foreign adviser, who is now in New York for the UN General Assembly's 62nd session, asserted that Bangladesh has consistently remained among the top troop contributors and so naturally expects posts commensurate with

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PHOTO: STAR

Serpentine queues inside Kamalapur Railway Station in the capital yesterday as hundreds eager to spend Eid holidays with their dear ones outside Dhaka rush there to buy train tickets in advance.

## US trade office hears rights group plea for scrapping GSP

Bangladesh groups oppose move

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A crucial hearing on an appeal by a US rights group for withdrawal of the US Generalised System of Preference (GSP) for Bangladesh products was due to begin yesterday with Dhaka hoping that Washington would not discontinue the GSP facilities.

The hearing was scheduled to take place at the United States Trade Representatives (USTR) office in Washington from 10:00 am (around 8:30 pm Bangladesh time). American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organisations (AFL-CIO) made the appeal alleging that Bangladesh does not allow labour rights in its export processing zones (EPZs).

President of Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) Anwarul Alam Chowdhury Parvez said their lobbyist firm has worked there to convince the USTR officials that the appeal was not based on facts.

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## BANGLADESHI WORKERS IN KL Dhaka looks forward to withdrawal of ban

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka believes the suspension of the recruitment of Bangladeshi workers is temporary and looks forward to seeing the withdrawal of the decision by Kuala Lumpur soon, said M Khairuzzaman, Bangladesh high commissioner to Kuala Lumpur, while talking to Malaysian newspaper The Star.

Meanwhile, Malaysian Employers' Federation (MEF) expressed serious annoyance over the Malaysian government's decision to ban fresh recruitment of Bangladeshi workers, while Tenaganita, a migrants and women rights organization in Malaysia, termed the ban unjust and inhumane.

The Malaysian cabinet on October 3 decided to freeze employment of fresh workers from Bangladesh yet again following problems created by employers in Malaysia and their recruiting agents -- both in Bangladesh and in Malaysia.

Bangladesh High Commissioner to Kuala Lumpur, M Khairuzzaman, told The Star that the Bangladesh government was confident that the matter could be resolved in the best interest of the workers.

The workers were not to blame at all, he said adding that the recruiting agents in Bangladesh have to bear the blame for what had happened.

"I will try to meet Danuk Seri Radzi. Of course, the ban is disheartening...We hope it is only for weeks, not months or years...If there are loopholes in the system, let's plug it," said the high commissioner.

In Dhaka, Foreign Secretary Touhid Hossain told The Daily Star yesterday, "A total of 3 lakh workers had been approved by Malaysian authorities and around 1.8 lakh are already there. The rest, 1.2 lakh, will be allowed to enter Malaysia."

There were problems on both the sides and "we want to ensure that workers do not suffer," he added.

The Press Information Department yesterday in a press note said the government of Malaysia decided to suspend the recruitment of Bangladeshi workers so that the existing problems of the workers do not worsen further. The remaining workers, who had already been approved, would be allowed to go to Malaysia, the note added.

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## UK official backs EC's polls roadmap

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Asia director of Britain's Foreign Office, John Dennis, yesterday backed the Election Commission's roadmap for elections by end of 2008 but urged the government, army and law-enforcement officials to act impartially and respect human rights.

The British diplomat at a press conference said he is encouraged to see that the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) ensures principles of neutrality to individuals charged with corruption.

Earlier in the day Mr Dennis met Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed and Army Chief Moeen U Ahmed to wrap up his three-day visit.

Stressing the need for sustainable democracy in Bangladesh, Mr Dennis said, "We support Bangladesh's commitment to a roadmap for gold-standard elections -- transparent, inclusive and fair -- before the end of 2008."

"We recognise there are challenges but it is important that nothing is allowed to deflect Bangladesh from its commitment to restoring democratic processes and hold elections as per the roadmap," he said.

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## Polls by Dec '08 CA reiterates

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday reiterated that the next general election would be held by December 2008.

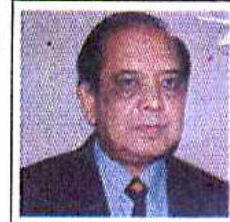
He said the goal of the caretaker government is not only to hold the next general election in a free, fair and credible manner, but also to set up a standard process so that future elections could take place

fairly.

The chief adviser made the remarks when Director for Asia at the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office John Dennis made a courtesy call on him at the CA's office.

The British official renewed the UK government's support to the caretaker government, particularly its various reform programmes as

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## Qulkhwani

Late Mr. Rafiqul Islam Khan, Ex-Managing Director, National Bank Limited and Director of ACI Limited passed away on 30 September 2007 (Inna lillahe wa inna illahe rajeun).

His Qulkhwani will be held on Friday, 5 October after Asr prayer at his Dhanmondi residence.

Family, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend and pray to Almighty Allah for the peace of his departed soul. We are grateful to those who expressed their sympathy.

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