

ACC finds Koko's Tk 11cr stashed in S'pore bank

He conceals his firm's money in wealth report

EMRAN HOSSAIN

Arafat Rahman Koko, youngest son of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, has foreign currencies worth around Tk 11.43 crore deposited in a Singapore bank but he concealed its information in his wealth statement submitted to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

With the help of Singapore government the anti-graft watchdog came to know that Koko has 20.61 lakh Singaporean dollars and 2.61 lakh US dollars. The ACC revealed the stunning information at a routine press briefing yesterday.

It also informed that the son of the former prime minister owns a firm named ZASZ Trading and Consulting Pvt Ltd in Singapore jointly with a Singapore national, who is Koko's paid service agent. The whole amount was deposited in the joint account of that firm at different times in 2005.



Non-resident foreigners cannot open a company in Singapore and has to have a Singaporean agent to do that, ACC sources said.

Interestingly, 17 days after anti-corruption drive was launched in Bangladesh, Koko transferred 20.13 lakh Singapore dollars (SGD) to an account

with the Singapore branch of French bank Credit Industriel et Commercial from the ZASZ joint account.

Singapore government recently froze the ZASZ account and sent necessary documents to the ACC, prompting the commission to initiate legal procedures.

Of the amount, China Harbour Engineering sent about 18 lakh SGD to that account and the rest came from other sources. The performance of China Harbour Engineering in Bangladesh is questionable for reasons including delaying to carry out work on various pretexts.

ACC Director General (Admin) Col Hanif Iqbal told reporters that they received evidence and necessary papers that confirm Koko's ownership of the money.

"Legal procedures have already been initiated and the commission is currently enquiring the matter. Once the enquiry finds the allegations are true, legal

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Alamgir, Babar get back candidacy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chamber judge of the Supreme Court's Appellate Division yesterday directed the Election Commission to accept the candidacy of Awami League leader Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir and BNP leader Lutfozzaman Babar for the December 29 general election.

The EC disqualified the two from the polls on grounds of their convictions under the now repealed Emergency Powers Rules, 2007.

Justice Md Joyal Abedin also stayed the High Court (HC) orders upholding the EC decisions.

Earlier in the day, the full-bench Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice MM Ruhul Amin dropped from its cause list Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir's appeal against the HC order for lacking necessary documents.

Alamgir, former state

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EC in deep soup as court clears more JS polls candidates

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The Election Commission (EC) yesterday decided to allow 21 candidates it had ruled out earlier to be in the parliamentary race on orders from the Supreme Court (SC).

The decision that comes only 10 days before the December 29 election might hamper the electoral process as preparations including printing of ballot papers are at the final stage, fear EC officials.

It signifies the predicament the EC finds itself in for more and more of the discarded contestants getting SC rulings in their favour.

The returning officers (RO) who completed allocation of electoral symbols on December 12 will now have to assign symbols to the 21.

The EC will have to get rid of ballot papers if printed for any constituencies of the latest entrants and print new ones.

Of those who had their electoral bids ruled valid after publication of the final list of candidates on December 14, six are from BNP, three from Awami League, two from Jatiya Party and

the rest are independent candidates.

Most of them had been screened out for convictions and defaulting on loans or utility service bills.

As of filing this report at 10:30am, the EC Secretariat was working to issue letters directing the ROs to allocate symbols to the 21, said sources.

Talking to reporters at his office yesterday evening, a visibly frustrated Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda said, "We'll keep accepting candidacy till the day before election."

"If the High Court thinks we can correct and print ballot papers even till the day before the polls, we will do so; we'll have to do so."

Asked how they will allocate electoral symbols now, he said, "We can do that as well. We have magical powers, we are supermen."

Queried if the EC accepts candidature till December 28, then when it will have ballot papers printed and dispatched to polling stations, Huda said the election in that case would

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BNP chief Khaleda Zia hands over a sheaf of paddy to Jamiruddin Sircar at rally in Thakurgaon Bara Math yesterday introducing him as a BNP candidate for Panchagarh-1.

Khaleda doubts EC neutrality, fair polls

STAR REPORT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia said her party will not accept any "plan" to hand over power to a "puppet government" through the polls.

The former premier also expressed doubt whether a free and fair election will take place on December 29 as both the caretaker government and the EC have "lost" neutrality.

The BNP chief said this at different election rallies yesterday, the second and final day of her two-day election tour in Northern parts of the country.

Making different pledges, Khaleda said if voted to power, the four-party alliance will give

subsidy on agriculture, boost food production, control food prices, generate employment for youths and women, and make free female education up to honours level.

She also urged the young and new voters to cast votes in favour of 'sheaf of paddy' for a bright future.

"The caretaker government and the Election Commission both have lost their neutrality," Khaleda said at a rally at Birol High School ground, Dinajpur.

"Despite that, we are contesting the election as the government has fulfilled our demands," she added.

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Awami League President Sheikh Hasina speaks during a rally held at the Khan Jahan Ali College ground in Bagerhat yesterday. She was on the third day of her election campaign in the southern districts.

Tight security for JS polls

Law enforcers meet EC, pledge peaceful atmosphere

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The army started fanning out to different destinations across the country yesterday for deployment from tomorrow while the law enforcement agencies assured the Election Commission (EC) of maintaining a peaceful atmosphere for holding a free and fair national election.

High officials of law enforcement agencies at a meeting with the EC yesterday morning said law and order is now under

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RULES VIOLATION AL complains to EC against 4-party leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) yesterday lodged a written complaint with the Election Commission (EC) against the 4-party alliance leaders for violating the electoral code of conduct.

The leaders against whom the AL complained of violating the electoral code of conduct include BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia, Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Motiur Rahman

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4-party faces rebel threat in 29 seats

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

The BNP-led four-party alliance faces trouble in at least 29 constituencies across the country in this election as rebel leaders of alliance partners could take away large chunks of votes from alliance nominees.

Rebel BNP candidates are becoming a threat to candidates of the alliance in at least 25 constituencies while the alliance's supporters are divided in another eight seats as those have candidates of BNP and its allies. The four-party officially has four constituencies where BNP and Jamaat candidates are battling as rivals.

Alliance partners Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote both have two rebel candidates each fighting against alliance nominees in the polls.

In addition to this disorder in the four-party camp, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) leaders Col (retd) Oli Ahmed and Redwan Ahmed and

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Hasina for secular, hunger-free country

HASAN JAHID TUSHER, from Khulna

Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday pledged to take measures to stop repression on religious minorities and build a developed Bangladesh free from poverty and hunger, if voted to power.

"Cast your vote for boat and we shall build a secular and democratic Bangladesh free from torture and repression where all religious communities will be able to practise their religions freely," said Hasina.

The AL president addressed six election rallies in different constituencies in Bagerhat and Khulna yesterday, the third day of her election campaign in the country's southwestern part.

She alleged that hundreds of people of minority communities were tortured and repressed across the country soon after the BNP-Jamaat coalition government assumed power in 2001.

Hasina also criticised BNP for nominating 'corrupt leaders and godfathers' once again for the upcoming parliamentary election.

"If those who resorted to corruption and misuse are brought to power again the country will be ruined completely," said the AL chief.

Terming Islam a religion of peace, Hasina said those who patronised militancy and terrorism in the name of religion are the enemies of Islam and urged the people not to cast vote for them.

While addressing a huge rally on Khulna Circuit House ground, the former premier pledged to bolster operation of the Mongla port through construction of a deep seaport there.

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Human haulier ploughs into AL procession

1 killed, 15 hurt

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

A Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activist died yesterday and 15 Awami League (AL) workers were injured when a human haulier ploughed into an election campaign procession at Kaliakoir in Gazipur.

The deceased was identified as Shamim Ahmed, 18.

Among the injured Shamsuddin Samu, 45, and Badruddin Buddu, 35, were admitted to Bangladesh Medical College in Dhaka.

Witnesses and police said the procession of AL Mouchak union, which had a few hundred people chanting slogans for AL candidate AKM

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