

# Niko graft case: Next deposition on Sept 17

September 12, 2023

The then Anti-Corruption Commission's (ACC) assistant director Muhammad Mahbubul Alam gave his statement against eight persons, including BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, in Niko graft case before a court in Dhaka's Keraniganj on Tuesday.

Judge Sheikh Hafizur Rahman of Dhaka Special Judge's Court-9 at Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj recorded the deposition of the former ACC officials for the second consecutive day. He was then questioned by the defense lawyers. The court fixed September 17 for the next testimony as the interrogation of the accused was not completed.

Before starting the deposition today, Khaleda Zia's lawyer filed a petition seeking adjourned of the testimony. But the ACC protested it. After hearing from both sides, the court rejected the plea and started taking deposition. The ACC on December 9, 2007, filed the case against five, including Khaleda Zia with Tejgaon Police Station, for abusing power in signing a deal with Canadian company Niko for exploring and extracting gas.

On March 19 this year, Judge of Dhaka Special Court-9 Sheikh Hafizur Rahman framed charges against Khaleda and seven others in Niko graft case. The court also set May 23 for recording testimonies of the witnesses. The anti-graft body pressed charges in court against 11 people, including Khaleda, in May 2008.

The other accused in the case are former principal secretary Kamal Uddin Siddique, Khandaker Shahidul Islam, CM Yusuf Hossain, former Bapex general manager Mir Mainul Haq, Giasuddin Al Mamun, former parliamentarian MAH Selim and former vice-president of South Asia affairs of Niko Kashem Sharif. Among the accused, BNP standing committee member Barrister Moudud Ahmed, former state minister AKM Mosharraf Hossain and former secretary of Bapex Shafiur Rahman died during the trial proceedings.