

# Niko graft case: HC bench for holding hearing on Khaleda's plea fixed

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**Online Desk:** An High Court bench of Justice Mostafa Zaman Islam and Justice Md Aminul Islam will hold a hearing on BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's petition that sought cancellation of charge framing order in Niko graft case. The Anti-Corruption Commission's lawyer Md Khurshid Alam confirmed the matter on Sunday.

Earlier on May 17, Khaleda Zia's lawyer submitted a petition with the High Court on behalf of her seeking cancellation of charge framing order in Niko graft case. The Anti-Corruption Commission (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.