

Staff Reporter A special court in Dhaka on Wednesday deferred the recording of statement by prosecution witnesses till September 10 in the Zia Charitable Trust and Zia Orphanage Trust graft cases against BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia and others. Judge Basudev Roy of the Special Judge Court-3 passed the order after BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia appeared before the makeshift court at Bakshibazar in the city around 1 pm. The court mentioned that the recording of testimony will remain pending until the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court resolves the leave-to-appeal filed by BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia against a High Court order that rejected her two writ petitions. Earlier, the lawyer for BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia submitted time petition in the Special Judge Court-3 in connection with the two cases. A stray incident of chase and counter chase took place between police and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists when the BNP chairperson reached the court area. The JCD activists hurled some brick chips towards police, prompting the law enforcers to fire several round of teargas shells to bring the situation under control. On July 27, Judge Basudev Roy of the Special Judge Court-3 deferred until September 3 the hearing on the two graft cases after Taherul Islam Towhid, a counsel for Khaleda, submitted two separate petitions seeking adjournment of hearing in the cases. On August 8, 2011, the ACC filed the Zia Charitable Trust graft case with Tejgaon Police Station accusing four people, including Khaleda Zia, of abusing power in raising funds for the trust from unknown sources. ACC deputy director Harunur Rashid, also an investigation officer of the case, pressed charges against the accused on January 16, 2012. Besides, the ACC filed the Zia Orphanage Trust graft case on July 3, 2008 with Ramna Police Station accusing Khaleda Zia, her eldest son Tarique Rahman, now living in the UK after securing bail, and four others for misappropriating over Tk 2.10 crore which came as grants from a foreign bank for orphans. On August 5, 2010, ACC deputy director Harunur Rashid submitted a charge-sheet to the court in the case against six people, including BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia.