

Judgment of Khaleda Zia's appeal in Zia Orphanage Trust case tomorrow

BSS- The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court (SC) today set tomorrow to pronounce its judgment on an appeal filed by BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia challenging a High Court order that extended her five-year jail term to 10 in the Zia Orphanage Trust graft case.

"Hearing is concluded and tomorrow for judgment," said the order passed by the Appellate Division bench headed by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed.

The apex court gave the order after holding a hearing on the appeal in the case.

Senior lawyers Zainul Abedin, AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon, Badruddoza Badal, Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal, Kaiser Kamal, and Adv Gazi Qamrul Islam Sazal took part in the hearing for the former prime minister.

Attorney General Md Asaduzzaman, Additional Attorney Generals Mohammad Arshadur Rouf and Aneek Rushd Haque stood for the state, while Adv Md Asif Hasan argued for the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

The apex court on November 11, 2024, allowed two leave to appeal petitions filed by BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, staying the High Court order that extended her five-year jail term to 10 in Zia Orphanage Trust graft case.

Begum Khaleda Zia's counsels in their arguments stated that the prosecution could not able to show any documents that she approved any note, or signed any cheque; they could not show any signature of Begum Khaleda Zia on any government document.

“Even the fund, we are talking about, is in the bank intact,” Barrister AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon said.

“This infamous case was filed with a political scheme. The lower court concerned in February 2018, gave the judgment illegally. The High Court after that, being politically biased, gave a judgment illegally, enhancing Begum Khaleda Zia’s five-year jail term to 10 years after holding a one-sided hearing,” Barrister Kayser Kamal said earlier.

“Even the ACC counsel after reading out the FIR said a single penny wasn’t embezzled from fund of Taka 2.33 crore. The whole fund is in the bank,” he added.

Dhaka Special Judge Court-5 on February 8, 2018, convicted former Prime Minister and BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia and sentenced her to five years’ imprisonment in the case.

It also sentenced five others including her son and BNP acting Chairman Tarique Rahman to 10 years’ imprisonment each.

The High Court on October 30, 2018, extended the BNP chief’s jail term to 10 years.