

Govt has nothing to do about Khaleda's treatment abroad: Law Minister

September 25, 2023

Online Desk: Law Minister Anisul Huq on Monday said the government has nothing to do about BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's treatment abroad considering the legal aspect. "I have told it earlier that the BNP chief got the conditional release as per the section 401 (1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure which is a generosity of the Prime Minister. If any change is brought in this legal position then her conditional release has to be canceled first. Then other things may be considered in this regard," he said. The law minister said these while talking to reporters at the Secretariat on Monday.

On Sunday BNP secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir issued an ultimatum to the government to take necessary steps to send Khaleda Zia abroad for better treatment within 48 hours, or be held responsible if anything happens to her. Replying to a question about Home Minister's statement over Khaleda issue, Anisul said, "The application has to be sent to the Home Ministry first and the Home Ministry will send it to the Law Ministry and it depends on the opinion of the Law Ministry. I think that the government can't do anything more as per the law."

Earlier on September 18, the Security Services Division under the Home Ministry issued a notification extending the suspension of Khaleda's jail term by another six months. Khaleda Zia has to receive treatment in Dhaka, and she will not be allowed to go abroad during this period, said the notification.

The 78-year-old former prime minister has been suffering from various ailments, including liver cirrhosis, arthritis, diabetes, kidney, lung, heart, and eye problems. Since her conditional release in 2020, the BNP chief has been receiving treatment at the hospital under a medical board headed by cardiologist Prof Shahabuddin Talukder.

Khaleda was sent to the Old Dhaka Jail after a lower court sentenced her to five years' imprisonment in the Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case on February 8, 2018. Later, she was found guilty in another corruption case the same year. Amid the coronavirus outbreak, the government of Bangladesh temporarily freed Khaleda Zia from jail through an executive order suspending her sentence on March 25, 2020, with the condition that she will stay in her Gulshan house and not leave the country.