

Khaleda to be flown to London after midnight as condition remains critical

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Online Desk : BNP Chairperson and former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is expected to be flown to London after midnight Thursday as her health remains in a “critical” state, her personal physician and BNP Standing Committee member Professor Dr AZM M Zahid Hossain said on Thursday. “If everything goes well, Begum Khaleda Zia will be taken to London for treatment in the early hours of the morning or in the morning,” Dr Zahid told reporters outside Evercare Hospital in Dhaka.

Party sources have said that a total of 16 people, including doctors and close aides, will accompany the BNP chief.

The team includes Sayeda Shameela Rahman, wife of Khaleda Zia’s younger son Arafat Rahman; Dr AZM Zahid Hossain; Dr Fakhruddin Mohammad Siddiqui; Dr Shahabuddin Talukder; Dr Nuruddin Ahmed; Dr Richard John Bell; Dr Ziaul Haque; Dr Zafor Iqbal; Dr Mohammad Al Mamun; Hasan Shahriar Iqbal; Syed Shamin Mahfuz; Abdul Hai Mallick; and Masuder Rahman. Khaleda Zia’s caregivers Fatema Begum and Rupa Sikder will also be part of the entourage.

Dr Zahid noted that the decision to fly her abroad was made unanimously by a medical board comprising local and foreign specialists. The team plans to transport her using a Qatar Airlines, with several doctors from home and abroad accompanying her.

He sought prayers from the nation and conveyed the gratitude of BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman, the family, and various foreign embassies for their support.

Meanwhile, BBC Bangla, citing multiple senior BNP sources, reported that Tarique Rahman’s wife, Dr Zubaida Rahman, is travelling to Dhaka from London. She is expected to assess Khaleda Zia’s condition before accompanying her on the onward flight. Qatar has also announced its readiness to provide an air ambulance if needed.

British specialist Dr Richard Bell arrived in Dhaka on Wednesday to join the expanded medical team overseeing her treatment. The 80-year-old former prime minister was admitted to Evercare Hospital on November 23 after developing acute breathing difficulties. She is currently in the hospital’s Coronary Care Unit (CCU) with severe lung and heart infections, pneumonia, kidney issues, liver cirrhosis, diabetes, and arthritis. While the BNP has repeatedly described her condition as “very critical,” the party’s press wing said on Wednesday that her status remained “stable but unchanged.”