

Free Khaleda Zia - BNP in Belgium calls for freedom of former PM

Save Khaleda Zia ,former PM and mother of the Bengali nation

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, January 28, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The European Union is being urged to intervene in the case of a former Bangladeshi PM who claims to be under house arrest in the country, despite being seriously ill.

[Khaleda Zia](#) is a Bangladeshi politician who served as the Prime Minister of her country from 1991 to 1996, and again from 2001 to 2006.



Former PM Khaleda Zia's deteriorated health

She was the first woman in the country's history and only the second in the Muslim majority countries to head a democratic government as prime minister.

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The current illegal government is violating human rights by denying Khaleda Zia, 76years old former PM of Bangladesh and chairperson of the BNP , access to advanced medical treatment abroad.”

Iqbal Hossain Babu ,Secretary general of the BNP party in Belgium

Bangladesh doctors treating the ailing opposition leader say they fear for her life if she is not allowed to fly abroad for medical care.

Zia, the 76-year-old leader of the [Bangladesh Nationalist Party](#) (BNP) and arch-rival of current Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, has been diagnosed with kidney problems and cirrhosis of the liver. Her doctors said she suffered three major internal bleeds recently.

Her supporters took to the streets of Brussels this week to win EU support for her case.

One former Member of the European Parliament and now

a peer in the UK, Lord Wajid Khan, appeared via a video link to an event at the city's press club where supporters gathered to debate her case.

He said he backed their calls for her to be released so that she can get medical attention in Europe.

He said, "This case highlights what is going wrong in the country. This is not just about politics but about human rights."

His comment was echoed by Babu Michel, secretary general of the BNP, who said, "No less than 12 human rights groups have called for her to be allowed to leave the country for treatment. We are calling for the same thing."

Another speaker at the event, Saydur Rahman, president of the BNP (Belgium) and also based in Belgium, said, "She is very, very sick and we do not know how much longer she can live. She cannot access the treatment she needs in the country so must be allowed to leave urgently. It is not acceptable for her to be detained in this way.

"This is a country of 180m people and 60pc of them support the BNP and if something bad happens to the former PM I fear there could be serious civil unrest in the country. This will spill over into Europe with a possible influx of refugees in the event of a civil war. This is one reason why the EU should wake up to this case and intervene now."

Zia has been in the critical care unit of a Dhaka hospital since November 13, just five months after she recovered from COVID-19.

But the leader of the main opposition party has been barred by a court from leaving the country after being convicted on corruption charges in 2018.

As her condition has worsened, BNP activists and supporters have staged protests such as that in Brussels demanding she be allowed to travel for treatment.

Rahman added "We formed a human chain near the European Commission on Wednesday and lit candles to draw attention to this serious human rights violation. The government refuses her permission to leave on the grounds that she faces what are groundless accusations."

It is alleged the former PM mispent funding from the Qatar government in 2007. She strongly refutes the allegations and says the charges are politically motivated.

Rahman said, "This is a clear breach of human rights. The EU is always banging the drum for democracy and human rights so we are asking it to now doing something about this particular breach.

"She did not gain personally from this funding which was sent to a charitable organisation in the country. To now deny her treatment is compounding the crime."

Zia served as PM for three terms in the country, leaving office in 2006.

She claims she has been denied adequate medical treatment and her supporters say she may only have days to live unless she is allowed out of the country to get treatment in another country.

She is widely credited with having progressed the development of democracy, human rights in the country and promoted women's rights and further education

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