

Bangladesh: High Court asks why model Meghna Alam should not be freed

Monday 14 April 2025, by [Staff Correspondent, bdnews24.com](#) (Date first published: 13 April 2025).

DB police arrested the model from her home in Dhaka's Bashundhara Residential Area on Apr 9



HC asks why Meghna should not be freed

The High Court has issued a rule asking why the detention of model Meghna Alam under the Special Powers Act should not be declared illegal.

The rule also asked under what law she had been detained from her home, why it should not be deemed unconstitutional and a violation of human rights, and why an order to free her should not be issued.

The home secretary, law secretary, Dhaka district magistrate, and inspector general of police have been ordered to respond to the rule within two weeks.

The bench of Justice Razik-Al-Jalil and Justice Tamanna Rahman Khalidi issued the rule after hearing a writ petition on the matter on Sunday.

Earlier in the day, Meghna's father Badrul Alam had challenged her detention in a writ petition. Barrister Sara Hossain represented the petitioner at the hearing.

Qazi Zahed Iqbal, another lawyer representing the petitioners, said that if there were any specific allegations against Meghna, then action could be taken against her under the relevant law. However, he asked why she had been detained under the Special Powers Act.

The petitioner believes that the detention order was given based on non-specific allegations and that is why it is being challenged, he said.

Meghna was detained from a house in Dhaka's Bashundhara Residential Area on Apr 9.

Shortly before her arrest, she went live on Facebook, claiming that "people identifying themselves as police" were attempting to break into her home. The livestream, which lasted over 12 minutes, was cut off shortly after she was detained and was later deleted from her account, though clips had already spread on social media by then.

Later, the former Miss Earth Bangladesh was presented before a Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate's Court by the Detective Branch (DB) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police. Metropolitan Magistrate Md Sefat Ullah ordered that she be held in custody for 30 days under the Special Powers Act, following a petition by the DB.

Amid mounting criticism of her detention, DB chief Additional Commissioner Rezaul Karim Mallick was removed from his post.

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• bdnews24.com. Published : 13 Apr 2025, 03:42 PM. Updated : 13 Apr 2025, 03:42 PM:
<https://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/4d1330f7151a>