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SHAH CEMENT

Outrage, shock over Nusraat Faria's arrest

Actor sent to jail; home boss defends arrest, Farooki calls it 'embarrassing'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sent actor Nusraat Faria to jail in connection with an attempted murder case linked to the July uprising.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Sarah Farzana Haque passed the order after police produced her before the court.

The court set May 22 to hear the bail petition after her lawyer Iftekhar Hossain submitted her travel documents and stated that she had been in Canada between July 9 and August 13, when the offence occurred in Dhaka's Bhatara area.

Meanwhile, Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury has defended her arrest, saying, "If a case is pending against her, what can you do?"

Cultural Affairs Adviser Mostofa Sarwar Farooki, on the other hand, said, "The arrest of Nusraat Faria is an embarrassing incident for us."

The arrest has drawn widespread criticism from artistes and cultural figures, especially those who were vocal during the July uprising.



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In quiet despair, a man sits amid the charred ruins of his home in the Bhasantek new slum in the capital's Mirpur-13 yesterday. The two chickens beside him are all he could save from the blaze that tore through the slum on Sunday evening.

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

Act against advisers 'out to destabilise the country'

BNP urges Yunus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed yesterday said the party has urged Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus to take action against certain advisers who are "conspiring to destabilise the country".

"We've informed the chief adviser of their activities. Now he must act," he said while inaugurating BNP's membership drive at Sylhet Shilpakala Academy.

Addressing the chief adviser, Salahuddin said, "I am speaking softly, honourable chief adviser. Maybe it will reach your ears; maybe not. If it does, that's good. But if you choose not to listen, it will be bad for everyone."

The BNP leader further said, "The path you are walking is undemocratic. You are speaking in a language that opposes democracy, and your actions go against the rule of law."

He called on the chief adviser to honour the pledge to hold the national

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Inter-ministerial meet today on Indian curbs

Goods-laden trucks stranded at land ports

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

The commerce ministry has convened an inter-ministerial meeting today to work out ways to address India's restrictions on imports from Bangladesh through land ports.

Speaking to this correspondent over the phone yesterday, Md Abdur Rahim Khan, additional secretary (export) at the commerce ministry, said the government would take a decision in consultation with senior officials of the relevant ministries and departments on how to respond to the curbs on Indian port use for the shipment of Bangladeshi goods.

Meanwhile, Bangladeshi exporters remain anxious as goods-laden vehicles are still stranded at various land ports along the border.

Humayun Rashid, chairman of Energypac Fashions Ltd, said three trucks carrying garments for India have been waiting to be unloaded at Benapole land port since Saturday, when the restrictions were imposed.

"We are expecting a positive outcome within the next day or two, as my Indian importer has been working seriously to release the goods from the port," he said, adding that he will decide on upcoming consignments to India in consultation with the importer.

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Over 48,400 arrested in one month

MUNTAKIM SAAD and SHAMHEEN MOLLAH

Police have arrested over 48,400 people across the country over the last one month, according to data from the Police Headquarters.

On average, the number of daily arrests over the past month stood at around 1,560 -- a figure higher than that recorded during "Operation Devil Hunt" earlier this year, which saw an average of around 1,330 arrests per day.

The highest number of arrests in a day, 2,271, was on May 10, just two days after former president Abdul Hamid left the country, sparking protests from various political and religious groups.

On May 12, the government officially banned all activities of the Awami League and its affiliated bodies on allegations of killings, crimes against humanity, and other grave offences during the July uprising.

Since then, law enforcement agencies have stepped up their actions, arresting AL leaders and activists, including several former lawmakers.

Shahjada Md Ashadujjaman, additional deputy inspector general (operations) at the Police Headquarters, told The Daily Star that the number of arrests has risen recently -- not due to any special drive, but because police have

"Members of banned political parties attempting to continue their activities are also being detained, contributing to the rise."

SHAHJADA MD ASHADUJJAMAN Addl DIG at PHQ

become more active.

He added that several months ago, around 1,000-1,100 people were arrested daily.

"Members of banned political parties attempting to continue their activities are also being detained, contributing to the rise," he said when asked about the political arrests.

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), along with its Detective Branch, has detained over 175 AL leaders and activists over the last one month, including eight ex-lawmakers.

Among the MPs are Momtaz Begum (Manikganj-2), Jebunnesa Afroz (Barishal-5), Kazi Monirul Islam Monu (Dhaka-5), Zafar Alam (Cox's Bazar-1), Amirul Alam Milon (Bagerhat-4), Selina Islam (reserved seat-49, Cumilla), and Shamima Akhter Khanom alias Shamima Shahriar (reserved seat-21, Sunamganj).

Besides, former Narayanganj City Corporation mayor and also AL leader Salina Hayat Ivy was arrested on May 9 following a night-long raid at her residence.

Outside Dhaka, drives by police against AL members are also ongoing. Several union parishad chairmen in different areas have also been detained.

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Yunus to visit UK on June 9

PORIMOL PALMA

Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus is set to visit the UK on June 9-13 and will likely hold meetings with King Charles and Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

The detailed schedule and agenda of the visit to London are being worked out, said a foreign ministry official.

Repatriation of laundered money, trade and investment, development partnership, Rohingya crisis and regional cooperation in South Asia will be on the agenda during the trip, The Daily Star has learnt from diplomatic sources in London and Dhaka.

Top officials from the Bangladesh Bank and Anti-Corruption Commission, among others, will be accompanying him during the visit to discuss ways to repatriate the laundered money.

The UK has been one of the major destinations for the laundered money from Bangladesh.

"This will be a high priority visit after the China tour from political, economic and global perspectives," said a

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Liberation War founding pillar of the state

Nahid says NCP stands against religious extremism and secularist ideologies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Asserting that the Liberation War is one of the founding pillars of the state, National Citizen Party Convener Nahid Islam yesterday said his party does not subscribe to religious extremism or secularist ideologies.

"NCP's journey is based on the ideals of equality, justice, and human dignity that arose from the Liberation War and the aspiration for a discrimination-free and democratic state system born from the 2024 mass uprising."

He also said the party considers the continuation of the struggle by Bangladeshis against colonialism and elitism as its political and historical basis as well.

In a Facebook post, titled "NCP's perspectives on several issues", Nahid outlined the party's positions on various matters, stating that the NCP respects citizens' religious beliefs and spiritual sentiments.

"The religion of the majority is Islam--its ethics and humanism, as well as the language, culture, and lifestyle of Bangalee Muslims, are valued by the NCP. NCP will ensure the protection of the religious, cultural, and civic rights of minority religious and ethnic communities. NCP believes the state should preserve the religious and cultural integrity of every community."

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WORLD BEE DAY

The hum beneath our harvests

NAZIBA BASHIER

In a country where rice paddies stretch endlessly and mustard fields glow golden, the soft hum of bees often fills the air. These tiny creatures -- nature's most vital workers -- are the quiet pulse beneath our harvests.

Globally, the buzz is fading. But in Asia, a rare story of resilience is unfolding.

As we mark World Bee Day today, the question before us is urgent: what more can we do to protect and promote healthy bee populations -- not just globally, but here at home?

Bees are more than honey-makers. They are the backbone of our food system. Nearly 75 percent of global crops depend, at least partly, on pollination -- and bees are the most efficient pollinators. From fruits and vegetables to oilseeds and pulses, the presence of bees directly shapes our diets.

Encouragingly, Asia has shown a more hopeful trend than much of the world. While Western



PHOTO: TITU DAS

nations report sharp declines in bee populations, countries like China -- the world's top honey producer with over 400,000 metric tons harvested annually -- are seeing stability or growth. Rich biodiversity, longstanding beekeeping traditions, and growing commercial interest have all played a role.

Bangladesh, too, has seen steady progress. According to the Bangladesh Sugarcrop Research Institute, as of 2017, 1,551 beekeepers were managing 42,911 bee boxes across the country. Mustard fields hosted the highest concentration, reflecting the crop's significance to bees. This structured beekeeping not only boosts honey yields but also improves pollination, strengthening food security.

Yet, this progress is fragile. The most pressing threat comes from pesticides. Chemicals like neonicotinoids are used freely across our farmlands, often with little awareness. These

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Palestinian women and children make their way with their belongings as they flee their homes after the Israeli military issued evacuation orders for eastern Khan Younis, in the southern Gaza Strip, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP