

**THE BEST QUALITY
EVERY TIME GUARANTEED
BSRM**

THE NATION'S
LARGEST ROD
MANUFACTURER

BSRM
building a safer nation

DHAKA METRO RAIL PROJECT

Proud Construction Partner

SHAH CEMENT

TK 21CR BRIBERY CASE Tarique, seven others cleared

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday acquitted BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman, former state minister for home Lutfozamun Babar and six others in connection with a Tk 21 crore bribery case.

Tarique has now been acquitted of most of the criminal cases filed against him during the army-backed government in 2007 and 2008 and the Awami League regime.

A graft case in which he was sentenced to nine years in prison has not been dismissed yet, his lawyer Zakir Hossain Bhuiyan told The Daily Star.

He was sentenced to jail in several cases, including the ones filed over a grenade attack on an AL rally. After the fall of the AL regime last year, Tarique was acquitted in five cases.

The six others acquitted in the bribery case are Bashundhara Group Chairman Ahmed Akbar Sobhan alias Shah Alam, his two sons Shafiq



SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

ACC sues Saima Wazed 'for abuse of power, fraud'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday filed two cases against Saima Wazed Putul, daughter of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, multiple ACC sources confirmed.

In one case, Saima is accused of abusing power and having recourse to fraud and forgery to secure the position of regional director at the World Health Organization's South-



SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

87.5pc people left without basic services

Finds the National SDG Report 2025

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 87.5 percent, or 15 crore, of Bangladesh's citizens do not have access to all eight basic services such as clean drinking water, basic education, and sanitation facilities, according to a recent study.

The other basic services include hygiene facilities, clean fuel and technology, basic information services, basic mobility in rural and urban contexts, and basic waste collection services, according to the National SDG Report (VNR) 2025.

The study was prepared by the Citizen's Platform for SDGs in collaboration with the government and the UNDP, with support from Switzerland. Towfiqul Islam Khan, a senior research fellow at the Centre

- 15cr with no access to 8 basic services
- Food security a concern for large segment
- 71.2pc have access to safely managed drinking water

for Policy Dialogue (CPD), presented the study findings at a programme held at the Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Centre in Dhaka.

The progress in implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is

still low in many areas although only six years are left to reach the target, the study found.

For instance, the gender gap persists though it has been decreasing in certain cases. Disparities exist between rural and urban areas and regions, such as Chittagong Hill Tracts, are prone to vulnerability.

Many vulnerable groups are not counted in official statistics, while the gains in poverty reduction are rather fragile.

Food insecurity is still persistent, dealing a blow to the zero-hunger commitment.

Despite significant economic growth over the past decade, more than 26 percent

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Four children raped in 3 days

STAR REPORT

Police arrested a 65-year-old man in Gazipur yesterday on charges of raping a three and a half years old girl.

Besides, three children were raped in the capital on Tuesday and Wednesday, according to cases filed with Mugda Police Station.

In Gazipur, suspect Yunus Ali, a labourer from Kurigram, was held hours after her mother filed a case yesterday afternoon, said Abdul Halim, officer-in-charge of Joydebpur Police Station.

According to the case, the girl was alone in the house during the incident. When she started screaming, locals broke in and caught Yunus, reads the case statement.

The girl was admitted to a hospital for treatment, and there was evidence that she had been raped, said Abul Bashar, sub-inspector of Joydebpur Police Station.

In the capital, the three girls, aged between 12 and 15, were admitted to a one-stop crisis centre after their parents, residents of Mugda area, filed three rape cases on Wednesday night, police said.

Sazedur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Mugda Police Station, said all the accused -- Jabbar, Siam Ahmed and Pintu Ranjan Das -- were arrested.

Jabbar is accused of raping a 12-year-old girl before Iftar on Wednesday when she was alone at her house. Pintu faces charges of raping a 13-year-old girl and Siam of raping a 15-year-old girl.

Meanwhile, police on Wednesday sent a

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Scuffle breaks out at NCP event

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

A scuffle broke out between members of the National Citizen Party (NCP) and activists of the Students Against Discriminations (SAD) during a meeting in Barishal yesterday evening.

The district unit NCP had organised the meeting, followed by an iftar, to welcome NCP Convener Nahid Islam, who was visiting Barishal with other central leaders.

Held at the Amrito Lal Dey Auditorium in Barishal Club, the event began with discussions among NCP leaders, activists, and local dignitaries after iftar.

However, a group of SAD activists entered the venue and demanded a separate discussion with Nahid, according to witnesses.

As a central leader attempted to restore order using the microphone, a heated exchange quickly escalated into pushing and shoving, the witnesses said.

According to them, the situation briefly calmed but flared up again when Nahid was about to

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3



Battery-run rickshaws being taken away from the streets in the capital's Shantinagar area yesterday. Police said that the running of such three-wheelers is prohibited on thoroughfares of the city.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN



PRAYER TIMING MARCH 21

Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:46	12:30	4:45	6:10	7:45

JAMAAT	4:56	1:15	5:00	6:25	8:15
--------	------	------	------	------	------

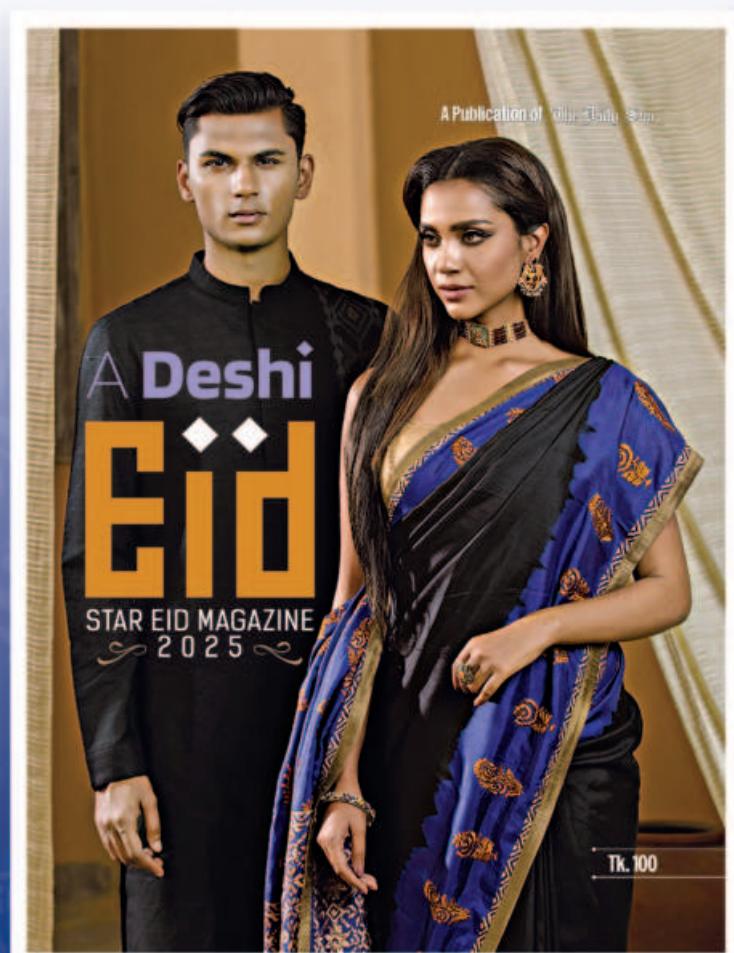
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN	MARCH	SEHRI	IFTAR
20	21		6:10
21	22	4:44	6:11
22	23	4:43	6:11

AVAILABLE NOW

Contact your hawker now



WE MOURN

We mourn the loss of renowned ophthalmologist Dr S M Munirul Huq, Senior Consultant & Surgeon, Bangladesh Eye Hospital & Institute Ltd. on Sunday March 9th at Evercare Hospital in Dhaka. He dedicated his life to advancing Eye care in Bangladesh. Dr. S. M. Munirul Huq was Professor of Ophthalmology, Holy Family Red Crescent Medical College, Dhaka, Bangladesh. He was former Chief Consultant and Director of Lions Eye Hospital, Dhaka and Bangladesh Country Representative of Sight Savers, UK. He took active interest to organize Lions Eye Bank at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Dhaka. He obtained Fellowship of Royal College of Surgeons of Glasgow (FRCS) in 1989. He also obtained Fellowship of the College of Ophthalmologists of UK in 1989. He obtained Fellowship of American College of Surgeons in 2013. In 1991, he established his own dedicated Eye clinic with advanced equipment, thinking well beyond traditional eye care treatment and creating the platform for many to follow. He has authored several textbooks on Ophthalmic surgery and was involved in Postgraduate teaching. His generosity knew no bounds, his compassion touched countless lives, and his tireless dedication inspired all who knew him. Though he is gone, he will never fade. His legacy is woven into the lives he touched, his spirit etched into the hearts of those who loved him. He is survived by his wife, daughter, son, son in law, daughter in law and 3 grandsons.

US welcomes interim govt steps for citizen safety

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United States has said that it welcomes measures taken by Bangladesh's interim government to ensure safety and security for all citizens.

Tammy Bruce, spokesperson for the US Department of State, made this remark during a press briefing yesterday.

She was responding to questions regarding recent comments made by US Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard about "Islamist extremism in Bangladesh" and alleged efforts to establish an Islamist caliphate.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6