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# School-goers hit hard by heat

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and TAMANNA KHAN

With a heat wave sweeping the country for weeks, school-going children are falling sick due to the scorching summer sun.

Braving the sweltering heat, nine-year-old Rifat from Swaruppur village in Feni's Daganbhuiya kept walking to his school about half a kilometre from his home but eventually fell sick.

"After going to school six days ago, he got a fever. We first took him to a local hospital. The doctors there referred him to Dhaka," Rifat's mother Kohinoor Begum told The Daily Star at the emergency ward of Dhaka Shishu Hospital in the capital's Agargaon yesterday afternoon.

"The doctors here are now saying they found problems in his kidneys," she said.

Faika Farzana, 6, of Dhaka got a fever on Thursday after coming back from her school in Dhanmondi.

"Her first terminal examination is going on," said her father Parvez Hossain yesterday. "So we called the school today requesting if she could take the exam later but they said there was no such option."

"So, I took her to the school and her condition got worse. Her temperature rose to 102 Fahrenheit and she started vomiting. We then brought her to Dhaka Shishu Hospital," he said at the hospital.

Contacted, the school's class coordinator concerned said, "If a child fails to attend the exam for any valid reason, we consider their overall performance during promotion at the end of the year."

She, however, admitted that many children were becoming sick probably due to the summer heat. "The government can take some steps like announcing school closure during this kind of weather," suggested the school official, wishing anonymity.

Tahmina Rahman Rimi, who teaches at an English school in the capital, had a similar opinion.

"Schools can remain closed now and make it up by reducing the duration of the summer vacation, given so many children are becoming sick," she said, noting that many guardians had already requested the school authorities to do so.

Similar reports are coming in from outside the capital as well.

Asma Khan, of Victoria Road area in Tangail, said, "I sent my daughter Sarita Jerin Joye, a second grader, to her Anandapath School at 9:00am today [yesterday]."

"But two hours later, the school informed me that Joye had become sick. I rushed to the school and brought her home."

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PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Second-grader Yamin Rahman in an icddr hospital bed after he became sick at a Banasree school in the capital due to heat exhaustion yesterday afternoon. The heat wave sweeping across the country is taking a toll on the people, especially children, and many are opting to stay indoors.



## Half-day hartal tomorrow

Women's rights bodies extend support to the strike protesting govt failure to nab killers

DU CORRESPONDENT

Progressive Students' Alliance and Anti-Imperialist Students' Union will observe a half-day countrywide hartal tomorrow protesting the government's failure to arrest the killers of Sohagi Jahan Tonu.

The students will also bring out a torch procession in the evening today in favour of the shutdown. The announcement of the procession came from a joint press conference of the two alliances of 11 student organisations at Modhur Canteen of Dhaka University yesterday.

Expressing solidarity with the shutdown, six feminist organisations -- Bangladesh Nari Mukti Kendra, Nari Sanghati, Biplobi Nari Forum, Sromojibi Nari Moitri, Hill Women's Federation and Biplobi Nari Mukti -- yesterday brought out a procession and held a rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the capital, said a press release.

Speakers at the rally said it was shameful for the whole nation that no criminal was arrested or brought to book yet although a month has passed since the murder of Tonu, the press release added.

They urged all to support and join in to make the hartal a success. They also urged students of all the educational institutions across the

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## Protest pours in over arrest of top editor in Nepal

STAR REPORT

Eminent editors and media figures as well as intellectuals, activists and scholars from India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Australia, US, the UK, and Sri Lanka have called for release of Himal Editor Kanak Mani Dixit who was arrested on Friday in Kathmandu by anti-graft officials.

In a joint press statement issued yesterday, some 45 renowned personalities said they were

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## 'Shafik arrested for Joy's FB post'

Says BNP; claims allegation of prime minister's son was imaginary, baseless

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday alleged that journalist Shafik Rehman was arrested and taken on remand because of a Facebook status of the prime minister's son Sajeb Wazed Joy.

Joy had written that the US Department of Justice discovered Shafik Rehman's direct involvement in the plot to kidnap and kill him.

Terming the allegation of a plot to abduct and kill Joy "imaginary and baseless", BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir claimed that the US court, which tried Rizvi Ahmed Caesar and an FBI agent, did not take into cognisance the allegation brought by Joy.

Speaking at a press conference at BNP chief Khaleda Zia's Gulshan office, Fakhrul also questioned as to why there was no discussion "on Joy and a dubious transaction of \$300 million which surfaced in the trial of the case in the US court".

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## Being a widow can improve your health!

MAIL ONLINE

Being a widow can be good for a woman's health because they suffer less stress after her husband dies, according to new research.

Women who have lost a spouse are much less likely to suffer frailty in their twilight years than peers whose partners are still very much alive.

But the same is not the case for men who become more at risk of wasting away once their wife dies - possibly because they have become over-reliant on them.

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### NOTICE

Due to unavoidable circumstances, our Arts & Entertainment page is not being published today. We regret any inconvenience.



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### PRAYER TIMING

APRIL 24  
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 4-25 12-45 4-45 6-27 8-00  
JAMAAT 5-00 1-15 5-00 6-31 8-30  
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## Teacher hacked for protest over playing cricket

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A school teacher in city's Adabor area was attacked with a sharp weapon by local goons yesterday allegedly after an argument over playing cricket in front of a school.

Victim Pranab Kumar Sarkar, 40, is the head teacher of Prabhati Kindergarten at Shekhertek area under Adabor Police Station.

Quoting locals, police said the incident occurred around 10:00am when a group of people, including children, was playing cricket on the road in front of the school.

The head teacher told them not to play cricket there as it disrupted school activities. This led to an altercation between Pranab and some of the locals, police said.

At one point, a young man called Rana attacked Pranab with a sharp weapon, injuring him in his abdomen, hands and face, Sheikh Shahinur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Adabor Police Station said.

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Despite a ban and several attempts by the authorities concerned to get them off the roads, locally made three wheelers ply roads and highways unabated. These photos of people crammed on to one such vehicle were taken at Narsingdi on Dhaka-Sylhet highway yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Obama lands in Brexit storm

Eurosceptics take on the US president after stark trade warning

AGENCIES

US President Barack Obama yesterday implored young British people not to pull back from the world, a day after sparking a row by bluntly telling Britain it should remain in the European Union to preserve its remaining global clout.

Obama angered critics of the EU on Friday by warning that Britain would be at "the back of the queue" for a trade deal if it left the club - one of the strongest US interventions in the affairs of a western European democracy since the Cold War.

Speaking to about 550 invited British young people at a "town hall" event yesterday, Obama sought to pitch a more optimistic message to young Britons, who are considered to be more pro-European, if less active, voters than their parents.

Obama said he wanted young people to reject the cynicism piped towards them by TV and Twitter, and he lauded both the European Union and Nato for sustaining peace and prosperity in Europe after centuries of war and strife.

The US president, whose term ends next January, made an unusually detailed and heartfelt intervention in the politics of another country and repeatedly spoke of the "special relationship" between Britain and the United States.

But his most significant remarks came on trade, reflecting growing concern in Washington at the prospect of Britain leaving the EU.

Asked what would happen if Britain did vote to quit, Obama said that while "maybe at some point" it could seal a trade deal with the United States, "it's not going to happen any time soon".

"The UK's going to be at the back of the queue," Obama added.

Obama also told German newspaper Bild ahead of a visit

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