



P8 What Rana Plaza tragedy means in 2024



P9 \$23 billion to slaughter women and children



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina handing over a bouquet of flowers to Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani during their meeting at the Prime Minister's Office in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Trade at centre stage between Dhaka, Doha

10 deals signed on various sectors; Emir Al Thani ends Bangladesh tour

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Looking to diversify trade and investments in a changed geopolitical atmosphere, Qatar and Bangladesh yesterday signed 10 deals, including agreements on cooperation on ports, and overseas employment and welfare.

Visiting Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday had a bilateral meeting in which ways to expedite collaboration on trade and investment, power and energy, employment, defence, education, maritime security, agriculture, and food security were discussed.

Both leaders expressed concerns over the escalation of tension and violence in the Middle East and called for global leaders to take effective measures for a sustainable solution to the issue of Palestine. They also talked about the repatriation of the Rohingyas.

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Most parties shun May 8 upazila polls

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE and RASHIDUL HASAN

Most political parties are either boycotting or did not field candidates for the upazila elections set to begin in phases from May 8.

Some major political parties are boycotting the local polls in line with their political stance, while many smaller parties are not joining due to weak organisational base as well as for the 10-fold increase in the mandatory security deposit amount set by the Election Commission.

BNP and its like-minded parties officially decided to shun the polls, saying they will not be a part of the "farical election". The 12 party alliance, which includes Jatiya Party

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Halt bank mergers

TIB urges govt, says it'll give impunity to loan defaulters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Transparency International Bangladesh has urged the central bank to stop the process of merging weaker banks with the relatively stronger ones.

This is because the way it is now proceeding can sidestep the main problem in the banking sector and give impunity to those responsible for loan default and forgery, the anti-graft watchdog said in a press release yesterday.

Recently, the central bank has initiated steps to merge under-performing banks with stronger counterparts to save weak banks in the sector, which has created anxiety and uncertainty among the people in the banking sector.

The TIB highlighted the lack of transparency in the merger process, particularly concerning the management of default loans of weak banks.

Citing media reports, Dr Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of the TIB, said only one bank had shown interest in voluntary merger that suggests that the entire process has been imposed on them arbitrarily.

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An April way hotter than 30-year average

PINAKIROY

Over the last seven days, temperatures in the capital and other heatwave-affected places have been consistently four to five degrees Celsius higher than the corresponding seven days in the last 30 years, according to Met department data.

Dhaka's average temperature on April 23 for three decades has been 33.6 degrees Celsius. But yesterday, mercury rose to 38.4C.

As the country sees blistering temperatures of 42C or more, high levels of humidity are making it particularly uncomfortable for the people.

"Due to humidity, it feels like the weather is four to five degrees hotter," said AKM Nazmul Hoque, a meteorologist at the Bangladesh Meteorologist Department.

Experts say the average temperature of a place on a given date is calculated by making an average of the temperature on that date over 30 years.

April 22's average temperature in Dhaka city was 33.7C. But on Monday, the temperature hit 37.8C, a rise of over 4C.

On the same date, the country's highest 40.6C was recorded in Jashore, Khulna and Chuadanga, which is way more than the average - 35.7C, 34.7C, and 36C in the districts respectively. Yesterday's temperatures in Khulna

was 5.9C higher than the average, in Jashore 4.9C higher, and in Chuadanga 4.6C higher.

This year's highest so far has been 42.6C in Chuadanga on April 21. That day's average in the district is 37.5C.

The Met department's heat alert for 72 hours ends today. Officials say the heatwave may persist until the end of this month.

Experts say the heatwave is generated by El Nino which is currently impacting the South and South Eastern regions and it will continue to sear the country till the end of this month.

"The temperature is rising as the El Niño flips to La Niña and it could be the hottest year on record," said Rashed Chowdhury, senior global futures scientist at Julie Ann Wrigley Global Futures Laboratory.

When El Niño is in play, the trade winds weaken, and the surface water in the equatorial Pacific becomes warmer and east winds blow weaker than normal, said Rashed Chowdhury.

He also said, the ocean measurements currently show warm surface temperatures in the Pacific. However, El Niño is likely to give way soon, ushering in a quick switch to its opposite atmospheric and ocean pattern, La Niña.

El Niño and La Niña are climate patterns in the Pacific Ocean that can affect weather worldwide.

THE WEEK IN BLISTERING HEAT

YEAR 2024	HIGHEST TEMPERATURE	
	DHAKA	ACROSS COUNTRY
April 23	38.4 °C	40.4 °C Jashore
April 22	37.4 °C	40.6 °C Jashore
April 21	38.2 °C	42.2 °C Chuadanga
April 20	40.4 °C	42.6 °C Jashore
April 19	38.4 °C	41.5 °C Chuadanga
April 18	36.8 °C	40.4 °C Chuadanga
April 17	36.3 °C	40.8 °C Chuadanga

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