



## Parents worried as schools reopen amid heat alert

SAJJAD HOSSAIN and ARAFAT RAHAMAN

As primary and secondary schools, along with colleges, reopen today, parents are expressing concerns about the scorching heat and its potential impact on their children's health.

This reopening follows a seven-day holiday extension declared by the government on April 20.

It had decided that all primary and secondary schools, and National University-affiliated colleges across the country will remain closed from April 21 to 27.

They were supposed to reopen on April 21, after the 27-day Eid and Pahela Baishakh holidays.

The primary and mass education ministry yesterday said primary schools, which operate in one shift, will be open from 8:00am to 11:30am every day. For schools



A winding queue of women and children waiting in the searing heat to fill their containers with water in the backyard of Dharmarajika Buddhist Temple in the capital's Basabo. Locals say the water pumped to the temple is cleaner than the water supplied by Dhaka Wasa. The monks provide free water to the locals three times a day.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## ROAD SURFACE MELTING Bargain bitumen failing to bear extreme heat

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

As the country is baking in heatwave, road surfaces in several districts have melted due to what experts say is the use of bitumen that cannot withstand this extreme heat.

In many cases, sub-standard materials and poor construction work are leading to the untimely damage, they say.

Unless the authorities take immediate measures based on research, the problem will become more serious, says transport expert Prof Hadiuzzaman.

A record 25 days of this month were heatwave days with the country seeing temperatures of 42C or more.

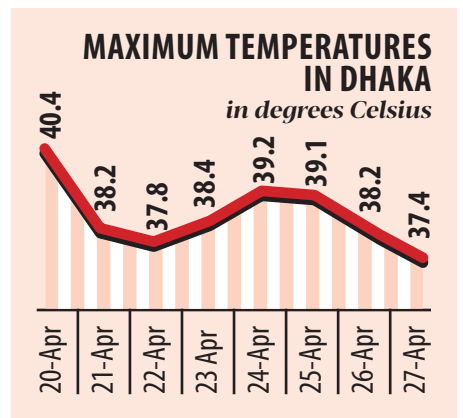
According to climate researchers, a rising trend in the frequency and duration of extreme temperature events in Bangladesh seen over the last few decades may persist in the future.



In recent days, the surface of roads and highways in several places in Jashore, Chuadanga, and Shariatpur has melted, which is a safety hazard.

In recent years, Prof Hadiuzzaman says the authorities have been using 60/70 grade bitumen which is not performance-based and begins to soften at around 60C. Three Roads and Highways Department engineers agree to this view and another put the softening point even lower.

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operating in two shifts, it said the first will be from 8:00am to 9:30am, and the second from 9:45am to 11:30am. Assemblies will not be conducted until the temperature comes down to a tolerable level.

However, the ministry added that pre-primary classes will remain closed until further notice.

Although the authorities have

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## IMPROVING SUMMER POWER SUPPLY Govt pays half the subsidy power ministry needs

Dollar crunch still bogging down furnace oil imports

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and ASIFUR RAHMAN

The Finance Division last week disbursed Tk 1,500 crore in subsidy against the power ministry's demand for the immediate release of Tk 3,000 crore to boost electricity supply during the summer months.

The latest disbursement takes the amount of subsidy to Tk 18,799 crore so far this fiscal year. The government allocated a Tk 35,000 crore subsidy for the power sector for the

current fiscal year to ensure uninterrupted electricity supply.

However, this move will not help the Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB) improve the electricity supply significantly as the problem in opening letters of credit (LCs) to import furnace oil stemming from a shortage of dollars is another reason for the insufficient power supply.

The PDB is now enforcing 1,500 megawatts

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## Abdul Monem Group's rejoinder and our reply

Abdul Monem Group has sent a rejoinder to a story headlined "NBR halts Abdul Monem Group's import, export" published in The Daily Star on April 24, 2024. We are publishing the unedited rejoinder in full followed by our response.

### REJOINDER

We have noticed the headline news titled 'NBR halts Abdul Monem Group's import, export'. The report mentions that the National Board of

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Rows of trucks parked on the road in front of Jatrabari kitchen market leave little room for traffic. Motorists say the inconsiderate behaviour and blatant violation of rules cause long tailbacks on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway.

PHOTO: STAR

## SPORT



### Baptism by fire

Umpire Shathira Jakir Jessy made history on Thursday, becoming the first Bangladeshi woman to officiate in a fixture of Dhaka Premier League - country's top-tier men's cricket competition. However, the watershed event ended up being a contentious affair, with officials from participating teams reportedly voicing dissatisfaction with her appointment in a high-stakes clash.

STORY ON PAGE 11

## How drugs find their way inside prisons

A section of jail officials, guards largely involved in narcotics trade

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

In a midnight raid on February 8, Jashore police arrested Ashrafur Murad Rubel, a guard at the district's central jail, for his involvement in drug trade.

The raid was prompted by intelligence indicating that there was a drug trader operating near the Char Khamba intersection.

Upon searching Rubel, police found 100 yaba pills hidden in his jacket pocket. Further interrogation then led police to raid Najir Sankarpur area, from where they arrested another drug dealer - Torab Ali - with 150 yaba pills in his possession. Torab too was jail guard.

Both Rubel and Torab were found to be heavily involved in a narcotics trade racket.

However, they did not just sell the drugs outside jail.

Jail guards were, in fact, found smuggling and trading narcotics inside secure prisons across the country.

On December 18 last year, Saiful Islam, chief jail guard of Kashimpur High-Security Jail, was arrested with 300 yaba pills when he was attempting to smuggle those inside the prison.

Earlier in September, a guard of Kashimpur Jail-2 was arrested with 200 yaba pills inside the prison. A week earlier, Sohel Rana, another guard of the same jail, was caught with four sachets of marijuana and a subsequent search of his belongings led to the discovery of one kilogram of the drug in his trunk.

He too was arrested by the jail authorities.

Earlier in September, a guard of Kashimpur Jail-2 was arrested with 200 yaba pills inside the prison.

According to data of the Department of Prisons, disciplinary actions have been taken against at least 25 jail guards for drug trafficking in the past year alone.

Despite this, drug trade inside jails continued unabated, with the rackets mainly being led by a section of unscrupulous jail guards.

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বাংলাদেশ সিকিউরিটিজ অ্যান্ড এক্সচেঞ্জ কমিশন (বিএসইসি) অনুমোদিত

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