

Bangladesh again closes schools nationwide due to heat wave

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A Bangladeshi court orders a nationwide shutdown of schools on due to an ongoing heat wave.

A Bangladeshi court ordered a nationwide shutdown of schools on Monday due to an ongoing heat wave, the day after the government sent

millions of children back to class despite searing temperatures.

Extensive scientific research has found climate change is causing [heat waves](#) to become longer, more frequent and more intense.

Average temperatures in the capital Dhaka over the past week have been 4-5 degrees Celsius (7.2-9 degrees Fahrenheit) higher than the 30-year average for the same period.

The government said at least seven people had died as a result of the extreme heat since the start of April, with [maximum temperatures](#) in the capital forecast to remain above 40 degrees until Thursday.

A two judge bench of the High Court passed an order "closing all primary and [secondary schools](#) and madrasas... due to the heat wave," deputy attorney general Sheikh Saifuzzaman told AFP.

Saifuzzaman said the court passed the order after it was told by lawyers that several teachers had died in the heat wave, without giving further details.

Bangladesh follows the Sunday-Thursday Islamic work week. The order directs schools to remain closed for an estimated 32 million students until the coming Sunday.

The government had imposed a weeklong national school closure beginning April 21 as the heat wave persisted, but lifted the order over the weekend.

Classes had resumed in Dhaka on Sunday with anxious relatives accompanying their children to the school gates.

"Keeping schools shut is difficult because the children don't want to

study at home," mother Fatema Tuz Zohor told AFP on Sunday. "But how can they come to the schools in this heat?"



A child playfully takes a dip in a lake to get respite from the heat in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

'We will see more'

Bangladesh's weather bureau has said that temperatures would not recede until Thursday at the earliest.

Meteorologist Muhammad Abul Kalam Mallik told AFP on Sunday that Bangladesh had not seen such an intense heat wave since records began

in 1948.

"It is a record as far as the duration and the coverage area in the country are concerned," he said, adding that the searing temperatures were affecting about three-quarters of the country.

Mallik said [climate change](#) and man-made causes including [rapid urbanization](#), [forest clearance](#), shrinking [water bodies](#) and increased usage of air conditioning were to blame.

"The trouble is, we will see more such severe heat waves in the future," he said.

Government medical officer Kazi Abdul Momin said that nine students and a teacher had been brought to a [health clinic](#) in his village Salitha after falling ill in the heat.

"Based on our assessment, they may have fallen ill due to the heat wave," he told AFP.

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