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**WEDDING**  
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## RELEASE OF TEACHERS

## Duta yet to finalise next steps

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) is yet to decide about its next course of action to free the detained teachers and students, although the government deadline for their release expired a week ago.

The government on December 9 said it would free the detainees by December 23, following which Duta postponed its demonstration for two weeks.

Acting Duta president Prof. Tazmeri SA Islam said they could not hold a general meeting since December 23 due to scheduled closure. The offices of the university opened yesterday.

Duta holds today an urgent general meeting to take decisions about the detainees' release and its election to the executive committee for the year 2008. The election, however, is not possible within the constitutional timeframe -- December 31.

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## Decomposed body of Sidr victim found

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

One more decomposed body was found at cyclone Sidr-hit Chhoto Taltali village under Sadar upazila of Barguna district yesterday.

The victim was identified as Sumi Akter, 13, daughter of Kabir Khalifa of the village.

The villagers found the body on a cropland in the morning and recovered it with the help of a team of Ganosasthaya Kendra. The body was later buried.

With the recovery of this body, the official death toll from the November 15 cyclone in the district now stands at 1372.

## Prayer Timing

December 30

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5:30	6:05
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:00	4:15
Maghrib	5:27	5:30
Esha	7:00	7:30

Source: Islamic Foundation



## Sundarbans' Phoenix of recovery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nature tries to catch up as quickly as possible to regenerate what has been destroyed of the Sundarbans in Cyclone Sidr six weeks ago, with signs of thriving flora and fauna.

The trees in vast areas of the world's largest mangrove forest seemed to be dead after the cyclone. Their leaves turned brown, giving a sad image of devastation.

However, a visit to badly hit areas showed that most Keora trees, which thanks to their flexibility suffered less damage than others, are now back in fresh green. Also Gewa, the so-called Blinding Mangrove, is getting green again. As a fast growing soft wood, this species will be among the first ones starting to fill up the holes in the forest caused by the cyclone.

Most trees, which turned brown, were not killed as it seemed at first. They probably suffered from unusually high salinity

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The photo shows a trail of fresh tracks of a Royal Bengal Tiger on a beach in the Sundarbans where the forest is regenerating and the wildlife is recovering from the devastation of cyclone Sidr.

PHOTO: STAR

## NRBs for transfer of educational skills

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expatriates have sought government help in transferring their educational skill achieved abroad in a bid to enlighten next generations in Bangladesh with world-class education.

Global education curriculum changes every day to follow new innovations, ideas and thoughts, but Bangladesh still lags behind due to not having sustainable educational vision, they said.

The expats were sharing their views on the concluding day of the three-day conference of Non-Resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel yesterday. Farrukh Mohsen of Computer Literacy Program, New Jersey, USA moderated yesterday's morning session on areas of education and research.

The NRBs working in educational development abroad made five presentations focusing how they can contribute to their motherland's education system.

Md Momtazul Islam, secretary to the Ministry of Education, and M Msharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, secre-

tary to the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, also spoke at the session as government representatives.

Dr Ataul Karim, vice-president, research, of Old Dominion University presented a keynote paper styled "How NRBs can improve Education in Bangladesh" through videoconferencing.

He said Bangladesh's public educational institutions have failed to yield expected results due to strong political interference. Such political interference also more or less compromised on quality education, he added.

On the other hand, despite a boom in the private sector education in the last few years, it is motivated by profit, he observed.

"Prospect of state-owned educational institutions to be world class is becoming slim by the hour," he added.

Speaking on "Importance of Excellence in English Education in Bangladesh", Dr Fakruddin Ahmed placed stress on English learning from primary to higher education to compete in the global market.

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## One killed as train rams microbus

UNB, Chuadanga

A Saidpur-bound inter-district train from Khulna crashed into a microbus at a level crossing in Jibannagar upazila yesterday morning leaving a microbus passenger dead and four others injured.

Ashrafun Nahar Keya, 35, a lawyer practising in Dhaka, died on the spot while her husband Nazrul Islam, daughter Protha, 10, son Zarif, 4, and maid Fatema were critically injured. They were admitted to Sadar Hospital.

Witnesses said the accident took place at about 11:15am when the microbus was passing through the unmanned level crossing in between Sabdarpur and Ansarbari stations.

Farmers working in the nearby field rushed to the spot, rescued the injured from the twisted microbus and sent them to the hospital.

Hailing from Andulbaria village in Jibannagar upazila, the victims were returning to Dhaka after celebrating Eid at home. Injured Nazrul Islam is an assistant engineer of Roads & Highways Department.

## Polls by end of 2008 crucial for foreign investment

US Senator Clarke tells The Daily Star

SHAMIM ASHRAF

Michigan State Senator of the US Hansen Clarke thinks the current atmosphere in Bangladesh is congenial enough to attract foreign investors, but he also said a corruption-free environment remains the precondition.

Election of a democratic government by the end of 2008 and handover of power to a new government as promised, are also very crucial to attract investors, Clarke, son of a Bangladeshi expatriate from Sylhet, said on the sidelines of Non-resident Bangladeshis (NRB) Conference 2007 in the capital yesterday.

Clarke flew in on Thursday to join the first ever NRB conference with a mission to find investment potentials in Bangladesh for entrepreneurs of his state.

In an interview with The Daily Star yesterday, he touched upon Bangladesh's politics, current



Hansen Clarke

situation, and what role NRBs can play in the country's economy.

"I've talked with the leaders of our chamber of commerce. They said they would be willing to invest here as long as it goes to investment, not to the politicians or private bank accounts in some

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## Best Air starts passenger flights Jan 14

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Domestic airline Best Air will start operating passenger flights on domestic routes on January 14.

Best Air, which launched its cargo operations in 1999 to transport shrimp fries to domestic destinations, will operate passenger flights with two Boeing-737 aircraft.

"We shall start our passenger service on the Dhaka-Chittagong route," M Haider Uzzaman, chairman of Best Aviation Ltd, which owns Best Air, said at a press briefing in the capital yesterday.

Experts are of the opinion that the launching of passenger flights by the airline will intensify competition in the country's growing aviation market.

\* FULL STORY ON STAR BUSINESS PAGE 8

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**1<sup>st</sup>**  
Position

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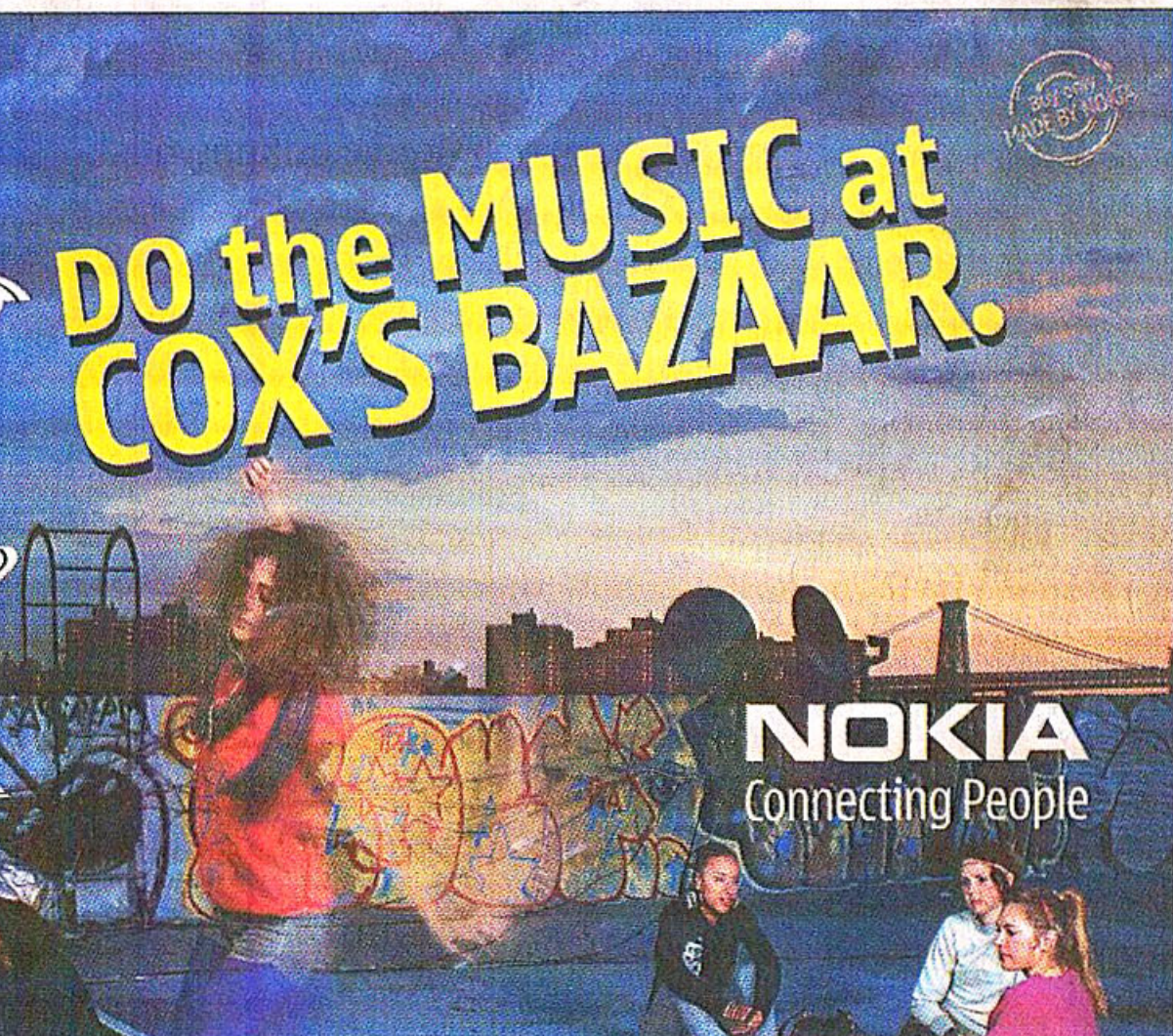
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