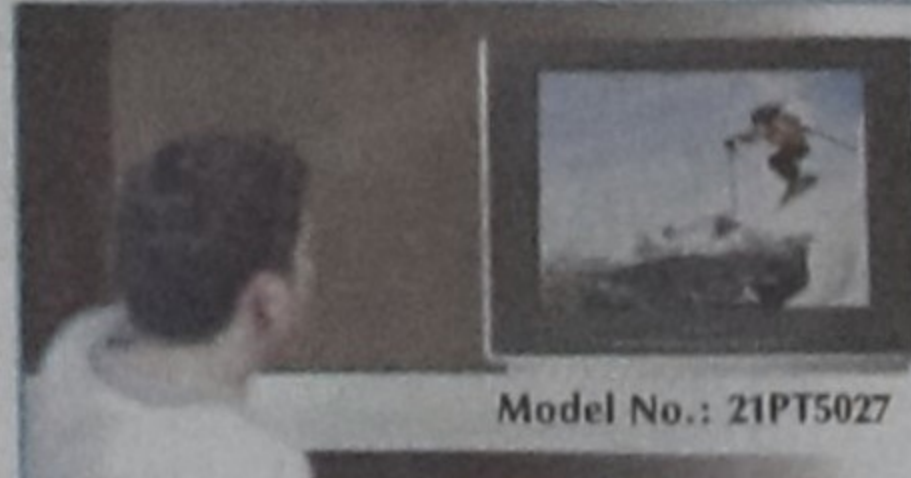




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Qatar labour minister in city
Official talks today

UNB, Dhaka
Labour and Social Affairs Minister of Qatar Sultan Bin Hasan al-Dhahbi Al-Dosari arrived in Dhaka yesterday on a two-day visit.
Foreign Adviser Iftakhar Ahmed Chowdhury received the minister at Zia International Airport (ZIA).
Official talks between the foreign adviser and the Qatari minister will be held at state guesthouse Padma today. Following talks, a protocol will be signed to protect the interest of the Bangladeshi workers in Qatar.
Talking to newsmen, the foreign adviser hoped that the signing of

Ex-dy minister Salam Pintu not yet handed over to police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
BNP leader and former deputy minister for education Abdus Salam Pintu, reportedly detained by joint forces for his suspected involvement in the August 21 grenade attacks on an Awami League rally in 2004, is yet to be handed over to police or produced before court.
Intelligence agencies said they did not know anything in this regard.
"We do not know whether Pintu has been arrested or not," Phani Bhushan Choudhury, chief of Criminal Investigation

A rare good Tigers' day

STAR SPORT DESK
Debutants Tamim Iqbal and Zunaed Siddiqui put on a record partnership for the first wicket as Bangladesh staged a dramatic turnaround in their second innings against New Zealand on the second day of the first Test at the University Oval in Dunedin yesterday.
The left-handed duo added 148 runs for the unbroken first wicket that not only trimmed a 220-run first innings deficit to 72 with all wickets still standing but also gave the Tigers hopes of at least avoiding an innings defeat.
At stumps Tamim was on 72, his second successive half-century, and Zunaed on 69 after centuries by Matthew Bell and Jacob Oram took the hosts to a commanding 357.
Interesting it is that the efforts of the two young guns not only surpassed the collective first innings

AL city unit for movement to free Hasina

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The Awami League's Dhaka city unit yesterday called on their central leadership to announce specific programmes to free party chief Sheikh Hasina from jail.
The city leaders were speaking at a meeting at their central office on Bangabandhu Avenue in the capital.
Presided over by MA Aziz, acting president of city unit AL, the meeting was addressed by Advocate Quamrul Islam, Foyezuddin Miah, Sheikh Bazlur Rahman, Mukul Chowdhury, Gazi Lutful Kabir Benu, Abdul Haq Sabuj and Abdul Kuddus.
Urging the government to take necessary steps for Hasina's treatment, the AL leaders also called for

Prayer Timing
January 6

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-30	5-35
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

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Govt's talk with parties a must to end crisis

Roundtable told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Dialogues between political parties and the government are an imperative to resolve the present political crisis in the country and to pave the way towards holding a free, fair and credible election, said speakers at a roundtable yesterday.
Former advisers to caretaker governments, the military secretary to the president, leaders of Awami League (AL) and BNP, and civil society leaders were among the speakers.
They said failures of the present caretaker government will jeopardize the countries future.
The speakers also urged the government to dispel all doubts in the public mind about the next election.
Criticising the government for its lack of dynamism in running the country, they said it has failed in some aspects of running the country.
The Daily Prothom-Alo arranged the discussion titled 'Election, Democracy and Future Bangladesh' in its office at Karwan Bazar of the capital.
Moderated by Prothom Alo Editor Matur Rahman, the meeting was addressed by former advisers

to caretaker governments Dr Akbar Ali Khan, Sultana Kamal, Dr Wahiduddin Mahmud and M Hafizuddin Khan, Military Secretary to the President Maj Gen Aminul Karim, Prof Muzaffer Ahmad, AL Acting General Secretary Syed Ashraf Islam, BNP standing committee appointed Acting Secretary General Maj (ret) Hafizuddin Ahmed, former attorney general AF Hasan Arif, President of the International Chamber of Commerce Bangladesh Mahbubur Rahman, and Chairperson of the Department of Politics and Government at Illinois State University Dr Ali Riiaz.
Akbar Ali Khan said policy makers of the government do not take into consideration the suggestions made by civil society leaders.
"There is no reflection of what we say in government activities," the former adviser to a caretaker government said.
"There was an emergency political situation in the country, when this caretaker government took power," he said adding that currently an 'emergency economic situation' is prevailing in the country.
He stressed the need for holding



DREAM COME TRUE DEBUT: Debutant opening pair Tamim Iqbal (R) Zunaed Siddiqui complement each other during their record unbroken 148-run stand in Bangladesh's second innings in the first Test against New Zealand at Dunedin's University Oval yesterday.

Zardari blames govt elements for killing Scotland Yard examines Benazir murder scene

AP, AFP, Islamabad/Rawalpindi
The husband of slain opposition leader Benazir Bhutto yesterday accused elements within Pakistan's government of responsibility for her murder and urged Britain and the United States to support a UN investigation into the killing.
"An investigation conducted by the government of Pakistan will have no credibility, in my country or anywhere else," Asif Ali Zardari said in a commentary published in The Washington Post. "One does not put the fox in charge of the hen house." Zardari now heads Benazir's political party, which intends to contest elections next month.
Meanwhile, British anti-terrorism police yesterday started examining evidence in the assassination of Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto, officials said.
Armed commandos enforced a security cordon as Scotland Yard detectives made their first inspection of the Liaquat Bath public park where Benazir Bhutto was murdered as she left a campaign rally

on December 27, an AFP photographer witnessed.
The arrival of the five-man British squad on Friday has only deepened the conspiracy theories swirling around the gun and suicide attack on Benazir, which sparked violent unrest across Pakistan and set vital elections back six weeks.
"The Scotland Yard team is examining the venue where she addressed a rally and the site where she was attacked," a Rawalpindi police official told AFP on Saturday.
Pakistan's interior ministry has blamed the attack on an alleged al-Qaeda militant and says Benazir died from an accidental head wound sustained as she ducked for cover as a gunman opened fire on her motorcade.
Benazir's killing in a gun and suicide bomb attack on Dec. 27 thrust already volatile Pakistan into deep political crisis at a time of rising attacks by al-Qaeda and Taliban extremists. It also added to political pressures on President Pervez Musharraf, a key US ally in the war against terrorism.
Zardari's remarks were the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Razakars' list being made in Patuakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Bangladesh Mukti Joddha Sangsad's Patuakhali unit has started preparing a list of Razakars, the local collaborators of Pakistan Army during the Liberation War, in the district.
They included the names of 33 Razakars of Itbaria union in the list yesterday, the first day of preparing the list.
Mukti Joddha Sangsad also organised a public meeting in front of the primary school playground where local people provided it with information about alleged Razakars who sided with the Pakistani occupation forces during the liberation war.
Advocate Habibur Rahman Shawkat, deputy commander of Patuakhali sub-sector during the liberation war, told the journalists that they started preparing the list of Razakars in the greater interest of the nation.
Primarily, they would make a list of Razakars of all the 68 unions in seven upazila. Then they would



Freedom fighters including commanders of seven upazilas attend a meeting yesterday at Itbaria in Patuakhali as part of Mukti Joddha Sangsad's move to prepare a list of Razakars of the district.

British MP arrives to discuss elections

UNB, Dhaka

British Conservative Party MP Anne Main arrived here yesterday on a weeklong visit to discuss elections and other issues with the government and opposition leaders and civil-society representatives.
Main, also vice-chair of All Party Parliamentary Group, is expected to meet the foreign affairs adviser and leaders of major parties like Awami League and BNP during the private tour.
She may also meet Election Commission (EC) officials to apprise herself of preparation of the voter list, being made in preparation for the polls.
Main may also look into whether due process is being followed properly in holding trial of former prime ministers Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia and other politicians.

BSF kills 1

A CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) shot dead a Bangladeshi cattle trader on Ratanai border under Baliadangi upazila early yesterday.
The victim was identified as Akhter Hossain, 35, son of late Abdus Sattar of Mridhapara village of the upazila.
Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) sources said the Indian border guards of Sonamoti camp open fire on Akhter when he reached near border pillar S-382/2 at around 4:00am. Akhter died instantly.
Locals said Akhter was going to India to buy cattle.
The BSF men took away the body to their camp. BDR sent a protest note, asking its Indian counterpart to return the body.

Govt asked to follow int'l procedures

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Panellists at the BBC Bangladesh Sanglap yesterday demanded immediate trial of the war criminals of 1971.
Amnesty International (AI) Secretary General Irene Khan, one of the panellists, suggested following international rules in the trial process so that it does not appear to be an act of revenge.
"The war criminals must be tried early, urgently and fairly," she said.

Irene Khan said the people could mount pressure on the government to bring the war criminals to justice. And it is always the government's responsibility to try them, she said adding that if there is no trial for these crimes, then the heinous acts would occur again and again.
BBC Bangla Service in conjunction with the BBC World Service Trust organised the event at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the capital yesterday. Kamal Ahmed of BBC

Bangla Service moderated the event.
Awami League Organising Secretary Mahmudur Rahman Manna said the war criminals could be brought to justice if the current government took initiative.
BNP Joint Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan said the government would have their support for the trial of war criminals.
Mahfuz Anam, editor of The Daily Star, observed that the war

Troops overrun LTTE bunkers: 26 killed

AP, AFP, Colombo

Soldiers overrun separatist Tamil rebel bunkers and traded artillery fire across Sri Lanka's embattled north yesterday leaving 26 insurgents dead, the military said, just days after the country's 2002 ceasefire collapsed.
Troops destroyed four bunkers in the Nagarkovil and Muhamalai areas of the Jaffna peninsula killing six Tamil Tiger rebels, the Defense Ministry said in a statement.
Soldiers meanwhile attacked two bunkers in Adampan village, Mannar district, and exchanged artillery rounds with the rebels, killing 10 of them, the statement said.
In Parappaankandal village,

also in Mannar, soldiers overrun six rebel bunkers and killed 10 guerrillas, the military's statement said.
Eight soldiers were wounded in Saturday's clashes, it added.
According to the government figures, 38 rebels have died in separate clashes since the start of this month while three soldiers have been killed.
Rebel spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan was not immediately available for comment.
Meanwhile, Sri Lanka urgently needs an international rights monitoring mission following Colombo's decision to pull out of a ceasefire pact with Tamil rebels, a London-based rights group said yesterday.

One crushed under train

RU CORRESPONDENT

A man was killed on Friday evening as a Dhaka-bound train ran over him near Arani rail station in Rajshahi.
The dead was identified as Abdur Rashid, 30, of Malai Nagar village.
Police said Rashid was run over by Dhaka-bound Padma Express while trying to save an elderly person who was crossing the rail track near Arani rail station.
Arani police recovered the body and sent it to the Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital (RMCH) for autopsy.
An unnatural death case was filed with Arani police station.

Iraqi soldier guns down 2 US troops

Roadside bombs kill 7 in Iraq
AFP, Baghdad/Baquba

Two American soldiers killed during a joint US-Iraq patrol in the northern city of Mosul last week were deliberately shot by an Iraqi soldier, the US and Iraqi militaries said on Saturday.
The announcement marks the first time such an incident has been made public since the US-led invasion of the country in 2003.
"Two US soldiers killed during a combined Iraqi Army and Coalition operation in Nineveh province on December 26 were allegedly shot by an Iraqi soldier," the US military said in a statement.
"For reasons that are as yet unknown, at least one Iraqi army soldier allegedly opened fire killing Captain Rowdy Inman and Sergeant Benjamin Portell," the statement said.
The incident happened when US and Iraqi soldiers were setting up a combat outpost, it said.



Students of Dhaka University wrapping burial clothes around their heads stage a sit-in yesterday demanding release of the detained teachers and students.

Correction
We regret the inadvertent mistake in a caption yesterday that described Raju Bhaskorjo (sculpture) on Dhaka University campus as Aparajeyo Bangla.