



King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, (C-R), who was the chief guest at India's Republic Day celebration, and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (C-L) at Rajpath in New Delhi yesterday. India showcased its military might and cultural diversity in its annual Republic Day parade under high security.

## Blasts, strike mark Indian Republic Day

REUTERS, Patna

Across the sprawling city, thousands of police checked vehicles and guarded key buildings to thwart a possible strike by Islamic militants opposed to Indian rule in Kashmir. In October, 66 people were killed by three bomb blasts in New Delhi blamed on Pakistan-based militants.

In the eastern state of Bihar, Maoists blew up a bridge over a river near Gaya, about 100km from Patna, the state capital at around midnight, police said. The bridge was on one of the main rail links to east and northeastern India.

Armed rebels earlier stormed a small station at Rafiganj.

In neighbouring Jharkhand, Maoist rebels -- who say they are fighting for the rights of landless labourers and poor peasants -- set off a series of blasts on road bridges and rail tracks.

Overnight, the rebels also surrounded a police station in Palamu district in Jharkhand and blew up a portion of the building. A firefight took place between federal police and Maoists

## US, UN hail Lankan peace breakthrough

AFP, REUTERS, Washington/United Nations

The United States and United Nations welcomed an agreement by the Sri Lankan government and Tamil Tiger rebels to resume peace talks and urged them to take immediate action to prevent violence.

Norway on Wednesday broke a near three-year deadlock in the peace process by clinching a deal for the warring parties to meet face-to-face in Geneva by mid-February.

Shares soared in Sri Lanka yesterday as fears of a return to full-scale war faded after the government and Tamil Tiger rebels agreed to their first face-to-face meeting in three years.

The announcement that Norwegian-brokered talks would take place next month in Geneva reversed sharp falls on the stock market registered since President Mahinda Rajapakse came to power in November, traders said.

"The United States remains fully committed to the Sri Lankan peace process," State Department spokes-

## MUSHARRAF URGES INDIA OVER KASHMIR ROW Grasp the moment

AFP, Davos

President Pervez Musharraf called yesterday on India to join Pakistan in working out a mould-breaking solution to their Kashmir dispute that could lead to self-governance and make the Line of Control "irrelevant."

In comments on the margins of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Musharraf urged a step-by-step approach that would start with defining Kashmir's borders and end with a joint cross-border administration.

"I am extremely flexible, and I am bold enough to go for an out-of-the-box solution," he told reporters.

"But we cannot clap with one hand. I expect India to join."

"Grasp these fleeting moments at this time," he went on. "Fleeting moments come and go. It is incumbent on all leaders to grasp these moments, otherwise they are not leaders."

Pakistan and India, regional and

## Empty streets in Nepal as strike bites

REUTERS, Kathmandu

Baton-wielding riot police guarded key government buildings and patrolled deserted streets across Nepal, as a nationwide strike began yesterday against municipal elections and King Gyanendra.

The dawn-to-dusk closure across the restive Himalayan kingdom was called by the country's main political parties, who have organised fierce, often violent, street protests to press the monarch to restore multi-party democracy.

Thursday's strike coincides with the day when contestants for Feb 8 elections for 58 municipal councils were expected to file nomination papers.

"We'll demonstrate in front of the election office to urge people not to stand for the elections," said Minendra Rijal, a spokesman of the Nepali Congress (Democratic) party, a member of the seven-party, anti-king alliance.

In Kathmandu, hundreds of helmeted police patrolled the



Nepalese demonstrators shout slogans and wave flags as they take part in a rally during a day-long general strike in Kathmandu yesterday. The strike was called by the seven-alliance political parties on the first day of candidate registration for the forthcoming municipal elections.

## Veteran Pak politician Wali Khan no more

AFP, Peshawar

Veteran Pakistani politician and nationalist ethnic Pashtun leader Abdul Wali Khan, who had close ties with Moscow and New Delhi, died yesterday, his party said. He was 89.

Khan had been in a coma since suffering a stroke three days ago and died at a hospital in Peshawar, capital of North West Frontier Province bordering Afghanistan, a spokesman for his Awami National Party said.

Khan strongly opposed Pakistan's support for Afghan Mujahedin fighting against the 1979-89 Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and forged friendly ties with Moscow as a result.

He was the son of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, known as the "Frontier Gandhi" for his friendship with India's freedom movement leader Mahatma Gandhi.

The party spokesman said delegations from India and Afghanistan were expected to attend Khan's funeral in his home town of Charsadda on Friday, but gave no immediate details.

**SME ব্যাংকিং** SME ব্যাংকিং SME ব্যাংকিং

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“আর্থিক প্রতিষ্ঠান সমূহের সাথে আলোচনা করুন”

“আপনার ব্যবসা সম্পর্কে কথা বলুন”

“SME ব্যাংকিং সম্পর্কে জানুন”

আসুন এবং SME ব্যাংকিং সম্পর্কে জানুন

অংশগ্রহণ করুন ফ্রি ট্রেনিং-এ

- “কিভাবে SME লোন পেতে পারেন?”
- “আর্থিক প্রতিষ্ঠান সমূহ কিভাবে লোন প্রাপ্তি মূল্যায়ন করে?”
- “মহিলা উদ্যোক্তাদের জন্য ব্যাংকিং”

ফ্রি ট্রেনিং-এ যোগ দিতে ফোন করে রেজিস্ট্রেশন করুন (মোবাইল এবং টি এণ্ড টি ইনকামিং)

০১৭৫-৮৮৮০১৮, ০১৯১-৪১৮৩৬৩ এই নম্বরে

অথবা নিম্নবর্ণিত ব্যাংক এবং লিজিং কোম্পানী সমূহে যোগাযোগ করুন :

**SME BANKING**

**road show**

Dhaka • Sylhet  
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**CHITTAGONG**

আয়োজনে:

**IFC**  
International Finance Corporation  
World Bank Group

**seef**  
South Asia Enterprise  
Development Facility

হোটেল আধাবাদ, চট্টগ্রাম  
২, ৩ ও ৪ ফেব্রুয়ারী, ২০০৬ ইং  
সকাল ১০.০০ টা থেকে সন্ধ্যা ৭.০০ টা পর্যন্ত

**AB BANK**

**Bank Asia**

**BRAC BANK**

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**KATALYST**  
growth through business services

**VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT**

KATALYST is a development project funded by European donors. The Industry and Rural Services Division of KATALYST works in different sectors of Bangladesh with an aim to improve the growth and competitiveness of enterprises in those sectors. This Division is looking for dynamic, independent, hardworking professionals, who have the vision to contribute to the growth of the business sector of Bangladesh, for the following positions:

- Research Specialist (1 position)**
- Communications Specialist (1 position)**
- Business Consultant - Monitoring & Evaluation (1 position)**
- Business Consultant - Rural sectors (2 positions)**
- Business Consultant - Industrial sectors (1 position)**

**Required qualifications:**  
All candidates are required to have the following:

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Must be able to communicate effectively in English and Bangla
- Excellent team playing aptitude
- Computer literacy is must

**Research Specialist (1)**

- At least a graduate degree in business, social sciences or a closely related field from a reputed university in Bangladesh or abroad
- At least 5 years of practical experience in planning, designing and executing qualitative, quantitative research, particularly in social and economic research
- Experience in Monitoring & Evaluation of development projects, understanding of market development and how market development projects work will be an added advantage
- Willing to travel extensively to different parts of the country

**Communications Specialist (1)**

- At least a graduate degree in business, mass communication, journalism or a closely related field from a reputed university in Bangladesh or abroad
- At least 3 years of practical experience in writing social and economic reports for different audiences, publication designing, advertising and creative writing
- Understanding of market development and of market development projects, particularly in terms of communications will be an added advantage

**Business Consultant (4)**  
(for Industrial sectors, Rural sectors and Monitoring & Evaluation)

- At least a graduate degree in business, engineering or relevant field from a reputed University in Bangladesh or abroad
- Excellent analytical skills with capacity of doing research and produce quality reports
- Able to manage mini-projects
- Willing to travel extensively to different parts of the country
- Knowledge of agricultural markets will be an added advantage for those applying for rural sectors

Attractive compensation and benefit packages will be offered to the deserving candidates.

If your profile fits one of the above positions, you are requested to send a resume with 1 passport size photo and a cover letter stating suitability for the position, addressed towards the Manager, Industry & Rural Services Division to the following address:

**KATALYST**  
House # 20, Road # 6  
Baridhara, Dhaka

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for interviews. Telephone enquiries or any form of persuasion will lead to disqualification. Please mention the name of post applied for on the top left corner of the envelop. Please submit applications by 11 February 2006.