

# Non-farm sector fuels more jobs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rural non-farm economic (RNF) activities in Bangladesh are catching up with the formidable challenge of providing employment opportunities to the growing labour force of an already saturated agriculture sector.

But while the RNF sector outpaced the growth in agriculture sector, non-availability of credit from the formal channels and lack of marketing linkage handicapped the sector from advancing at a faster rate.

These observations were made at a brainstorming dialogue organised by the leading independent thinktank Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) at a city hotel yesterday.

Presenting two separate papers in the dialogue, entitled, 'Promoting Rural Non-farm Economy: Is Bangladesh Doing Enough?' the researchers recommended for a 'National Coordination Council' for policy formulation, and coordination of 13 government ministries and other agencies engaged in promotion and financing of rural enterprises.

Industries Minister MK Anwar and former agriculture minister Begum Matia Chowdhury attended the half-day dialogue as chief and special guests respectively.

Dr Mahabub Hossain, Head of the social sciences division of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Philippines, presented a paper on the current status of RNF sector in Bangladesh while former mem-

ber of Planning Commission, Prof MA Sattar Mandal, and a Research Director of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), Dr M Asaduzzaman, co-authored the other paper of the day presented at the dialogue.

With CPD Chairman Prof Rehman Sobhan in the chair, the brainstorming session saw lively participation of all major stakeholders. The participants included, among others, ex-finance minister M Sayeduzzaman, ex-advisor of the last caretaker government Mueyed Chowdhury, industries secretary Al Amin Chowdhury, Prof Moazzem Hossain, former secretary Dr Taufiq Elahi Chowdhury, Planning Commission Member Mumtazuddin Ahmed, economists Sajjad Zahir, Hossain Zillur Rahman, Abdur Rob of ITDG and Jahangir Alam of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC).

Eliciting data from a repeat survey carried out at household level at 62 villages in 57 districts, Dr Mahabub Hossain said that recent growth in household income mostly came from RNF sector. "The income from RNF activities increased at 6.8 percent per year compared only 1.4 percent per year growth in agricultural incomes."

The internationally reputed economist Dr Mahabub Hossain laid special emphasis on the emergence of the RNF sector as he observed that agriculture sector could hardly absorb the incremental rural labour force

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4



Part of the Mohakhali intersection in the city has been fenced off to facilitate construction of the flyover.

# 'Missile Man' new Indian president

## Tight security around Kalam in the face of death threats

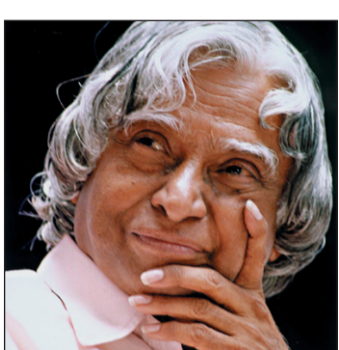
AFP, New Delhi

Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam, a former paperboy who became the architect of India's missile arsenal, won the presidential vote yesterday and immediately urged a new vision for the poverty-hit country.

"We need a sound vision to transform ourselves into a prosperous, poverty-free, healthy and developed nation," Kalam, 71, said shortly after being declared victor of Monday's poll by an overwhelming majority.

"We need a mission, a mission that transforms India into a developed nation from a developing country in 20 years so that we can banish poverty," he added.

Kalam will succeed incumbent Kochoeril Raman Narayanan in the largely ceremonial post when he



A P J Abdul Kalam

completes his five-year term on July 24.

Voting for the new president was carried out by national and provincial lawmakers making up a special electoral college.

Of the total of 4,785 votes cast, Kalam received 4,152 and his lone

challenger, 87-year-old Lakshmi Sahgal, received 459, poll chief returning officer RC Tripathi announced. There were 174 invalid votes.

Police in New Delhi said yesterday that they had increased security around the president-elect recently in the wake of death threats issued against him.

"Keeping in mind Mr Kalam's status and position and the death threats he has received, we are providing maximum security and ensuring that nothing untoward happens," JK Sharma, the additional police commissioner of security in Delhi, told AFP.

"The security arrangements for Mr Kalam are being supervised by very senior police officers round-the-clock," Sharma said.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

# More deaths as Kashmir flares up again

AFP, Srinagar

Four separatist Muslim militants and four Indian army soldiers were killed in three separate overnight clashes in Indian-administered Kashmir,

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
July 19		6-48 pm
July 20	5-22 am	

Prayer Timings		
July 19		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-45
Juma	12-15	1-20
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-56	7-00
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

police said yesterday. Three rebels and a soldier were killed in a fierce gunfight near the town of Sopore, 50 kilometres north of Indian Kashmir's summer capital Srinagar late Wednesday, a police spokesman said.

The clash occurred when the counter-insurgency wing of the Indian army sealed off the village of Shivbagh, near Sopore, after being tipped off that three militants were hiding in an apple orchard.

The rebels opened fire to break the cordon, killing an army radio operator and also injuring an army colonel.

"In the retaliatory action, all three militants were killed," the police spokesman said.

The injured colonel was airlifted to the military hospital in Srinagar. In another incident overnight,

three Indian soldiers were killed and three injured in an ambush by separatist militants near Bandipora, 60 kilometres north of here.

In the third incident, a militant was killed by soldiers in the neighbouring district of Kupwara, the spokesman said.

Meanwhile officials said yesterday that more than 3,000 people are unaccounted for in Kashmir since the beginning of an Islamic insurgency against Indian rule in 1989.

The state's Criminal Investigation Department registered 3,184 missing people between January 1990 and June 2002, Kashmir's Home Minister Khalid Najeeb Soharwardhy told the state assembly.

He said 2,351 of the missing were from the Muslim-majority Kashmir

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

# Policy on private TV coverage of JS soon

NAZRUL ISLAM

After undermining the electronic media's right to coverage of parliamentary sessions, Acting Speaker Akhter Hamid Siddiqui has admitted that the House needs a code of conduct for the private television channels.

With a few exceptions, the authorities barred Ekushey Television (ETV), Channel i and ATN Bangla from covering the budget session. The camera crews were stopped even at the main gate of the parliament building. By contrast, the state-run Bangladesh Television covered the session unhindered.

"We need a policy to ensure the private television channels' coverage on parliamentary sessions. We will sit at our convenient time to settle the matter," the acting speaker told The Daily Star Wednesday night. He cited security as a reason for refusal.

Experts on the constitution termed such discrimination in parliamentary coverage violation of the Article 39 of the constitution that guarantees freedom of thought, conscience and speech, and freedom of the press.

Seemingly, the denial of the visual media's entry to the House and the parliament building as well made them hostile to the authorities.

The restriction on the visual media coincided with the ongoing repression on journalists by various quarters, mainly by the ruling party musclemen across the country.

Reports say that over 150 journalists, one shot dead and another

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

# Elections to 8 municipalities tomorrow

UNB, Dhaka

Election to the country's eight pourasavas will be held tomorrow.

The pourasavas are Patgram in Lalmonirhat, Singair in Manikganj, Sreepur in Gazipur, Bhanga in Faridpur, Sharishabari in Jamalpur, Kamalganj in Moulvibazar, Ramgati in Laxmipur and Swandip in Chittagong districts.

The government has announced public holiday in the pourasava areas on the day.

The government has banned rallies and processions in the pourasava areas for 48 hours from midnight on Thursday.

Besides, plying of motorbikes, auto-rickshaws, minibuses, jeeps, pickups, cars, buses, trucks, tempos, mechanised vans and boats, launches and speedboats in the election areas has been banned for 30 hours from midnight tonight.

# Days without channel hopping

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Waiting for their favourite satellite programmes and all they got were flies on their TV screens. This was enough to bake those couch potatoes into a rage. The plight of their sufferings knew no bounds.

The indefinite strike on all satellite channels has caused serious disappointments among the crores of viewers across the country.

With the shutdown of the channels at noon yesterday, viewers who have taken the 'dish' for granted over the years, have now been thrust into confusion with the 'limitless' time they now have in hand.

The Cable Operators Association of Bangladesh (COAB) and the Bangladesh Satellite Cable Network Owners' Association (SCNOA) jointly enforced the strike to press for their seven-point demand, including the withdrawal of a 15 per cent VAT.

The two organisations decided to go on a strike after staging a grand rally on Wednesday. They decided to continue the strike until the fulfilment of their demands.

Other demands include the formulation of a national policy for cable business, withdrawal of supplementary taxes on pay channels, declaration of a tax holiday on cable business for the next five years and the imposition of unlimited imports of pay channels by the distributors.

They also demanded that the government form a 'Satellite Channel

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8