

Developing states need \$ 700b for water projects: World Bank

WASHINGTON, Sept 17: The World Bank said yesterday that water projects needed in developing countries will require an estimated 700 billion dollar in investments over the next 10 years, reports AFP.

Improvement of water resource management in those countries is even more crucial because of rapid population growth and urbanization, the bank said in its policy paper "water resources management."

Water scarcity is a major problem in the Middle East, central Asia, North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, where populations are growing fastest.

In much of Africa, the capacity to manage water resources is

strained by frequent bouts of prolonged drought.

Pollution is the largest problem affecting water resources in some countries, notably in Eastern Europe. The World Bank is involved in all the major cleanup projects in Europe: The Danube river and the Baltic, Black and Mediterranean Seas.

Water investments represented more than 15 per cent of the total amount of lending by the end of 1991.

The World Bank proposed a new approach to managing water resources based on the adoption of a comprehensive water policy framework and the treatment of water as an economic good.

The bank said it would help governments develop an overall water policy that include pricing to encourage efficient water use and environmental protection measures.

Citing concern for governments' limited financial and administrative resources, the bank said it will support central government efforts to decentralize water resource responsibilities to local governments and privatise service delivery functions.

At the local level, the bank will encourage the participation of communities, especially women who are essentially in charge of domestic water, in

water resource management.

"Social fees," expenses paid by the better-off to subsidize the poor, can be used. Inadequate water services have a particularly disastrous impact on the poor, facilitating the spread of disease, especially in crowded low-income areas, the report said.

To assure better protection of the environment, the bank will promote the use of "the-polluter-pays" principle through the imposition of pollution charges to encourage water conservation and reduce pollution.

The bank said it would review the implementation of the new water policy in two years.

Air France plans to cut 4000 jobs by '94 end

PARIS, Sept 17: Air France, the ailing state-owned airline, said Wednesday it plans to eliminate 4,000 jobs by the end of 1994 as part of a cost-cutting package that also includes abandoning 30 unprofitable routes, says AP.

Following a meeting of the Air France executive board, the airline said it expects to post a loss for the first half of 1993 that would be greater than its full-year loss in 1992.

The airline hopes to save 5.1 billion francs (about 927 million dollar) by the end of 1995 with its austere cost-cutting plan that features staff reductions equivalent to 4,000 full-time jobs, sale of a portion of the Meridien Hotel chain, the sale of Saresco duty free shops and the elimination of about 30 destinations and 15 stopovers from its routes.

The 4,000-strong payroll cut — 3,000 ground employees and 1,000 in flight personnel — comes on top of 5,000 posts eliminated over the past three years.

Air France Chairman Bernard Attali began a belt-tightening programme in 1990, hoping to break even by this year. But airline industry overcapacity and the recession that is gripping Europe prevented a recovery.

Dhaka Stock Prices

Weekly comparison: At the close of trading on September 29 and September 16, 1993

1992-93					
		September 9	Sept 16	High	Low
Company	FV/ML*	Taka	Taka	Taka	Taka
BANKS (12)					
Al Baraka Bank	1000/1	815.00	820.00	950.00	800.00
A.B Bank	100/5	160.00	160.00	200.00	160.00
City Bank	100/5	325.00	325.00	355.00	268.00
Eastern Bank	100/20	110.00	110.00	110.00	110.00
IDLC Ltd	100/20	205.00	216.00	242.00	200.00
IFIC	100/5	155.00	160.00	198.00	150.00
Islami Bank	1000/1	1415.00	1401.00	1750.00	1300.00
National Bank	100/5	91.00	95.00	104.00	85.00
Pubali Bank	100/5	100.00	100.00	100.00	90.00
Rupali Bank	100/10	69.00	68.29	80.00	65.00
U.C.B.L	100/5	99.75	115.00	120.00	80.00
Uttara Bank	100/5	90.00	90.00	103.00	87.00