

The Times comments
Bangladeshi garment makers vying for slice of global fashionwear market

After phenomenal growth in the past 15 years, Bangladeshi readymade garment manufacturers are vying for a slice of the more lucrative global fashionwear market. The Times, a British daily said in a special issue on Friday, reports BSS.

An article entitled "Rag trade success gives women work" quoted exporters and market analysts as saying that the burgeoning industry is now preparing to produce brand names in children's wear, suits, women's clothes and super quality garments. The article said from a modest beginning in 1978, the export earning reached 1.4 billion pound sterling in 1994-95. Bangladesh is the fifth largest exporter to the United States and the European Union (EU), it said adding "Most of the shirts and T-shirts worn in EU are made in Bangladesh."

It said besides contributing 63 per cent of total foreign exchange earnings of the country, garment making has become the largest source of employment generation. About 1.4 million people, 90 per cent women, work in the garment sector and its ancillary industries.

Today Bangladesh has some 2200 garment factories mostly located in and around Dhaka and its port cities of Chittagong and Khulna, the article said and quoted Parliament member Redwan Ahmed as saying that this industry has created for the first time large scale employment opportunity for women.

Poland keen to buy raw jute from Bangladesh

Poland has shown keen interest to buy a good quantity of raw jute every year, says a press release.

The interest was shown at a meeting between the visiting two-member Polish jute delegation and the members of the Executive Committee of Bangladesh Jute Association held at the Dhaka office yesterday.

The Polish team also discussed raw jute imports to Poland from Bangladesh.

BJA Chairman Prof Md Razuul Kairm MP assured the delegation all possible help in connection with the supply of raw jute.

Food situation reviewed

A meeting of the food planning and storage committee was held here on Saturday with Food and Agriculture Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting discussed in detail the procurement of rice and paddy in the public sector during the coming aman season.

The meeting reviewed the food situation, and expressed satisfaction over the price level and supply position of foodgrains in the country.

Secretaries of the ministries of food, agriculture, planning and the statistical division and concerned senior officials were present in the meeting.

WB mission chief tells seminar Slide in crop output worries scientists

By Staff Correspondent

The country may face 'famine' if the current downward trend of crops yields persist, said the Resident mission chief of the World Bank (WB), attributing it to eminent local agri-scientists.

"Some of Bangladesh's most respected agricultural scientists tell us that there are worrying indications of declining yields. This means that each year more fertilizer is needed to obtain the same output per acre. If this were to continue, it might mean famine in future," said Pierre Landell-Mills, chief of WB mission in Dhaka, without naming the academics and their works.

He was speaking at a two-day workshop on "Bangladesh Agriculture in the 21st Century," jointly organised by Ministry of Agriculture and the WB in the city yesterday.

In another paper, titled "Agricultural Development Strategy in Bangladesh: Critical Issues and Policy Perspectives," Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud suggested redefining of an 'appropriate role' of the public sector after a decade of market-driven liberalising policy regime.

"There is a need for re-

defining the 'appropriate' role of public policy in fostering agricultural growth in such a liberalised market-oriented policy environment, said Mahmud, who is the chairman of the Economics Department of Dhaka University.

Diversified pattern of agricultural growth will also have to be quite different from the one played in the era of rice-led growth. This issue has gained prominence particularly in view of the recent slowdown in agricultural growth, he added.

Noting most indicators of progress in farming methods including irrigated acreage and fertilizer have become sluggish, the WB resident chief said, "Food grain imports have escalated this year. This rice price has risen, bringing a further deterioration in the nutrition and welfare of millions of people."

"Bangladesh's population will rise to over 200 million before the middle of the 21st century. How will this immense population be fed. The ghost of Malthus stalks the paddy fields of Bangladesh,"

said Landell-Mills.

Rashid Faruque, a senior official from the Bank's headquarters, in his paper on "Linking Agricultural Growth with Macroeconomic Policies and Performance in Bangladesh," recommended policy changes in four key areas.

These are: strengthening private sector trade by permanently abolishing restrictions on that trade; making the price stabilisation mechanism more efficient by relying on international trade in place of public storage; targeting the food insecure and removing untariffed subsidies, now partly captured by the affluent and more efficient public food operations by the private sector.

Mahbub Hossain of International Rice Research Institute, in his paper on "Agricultural Growth Linkages" said to maximise the linkage effects, the government should commit additional resources to support technology development research, secondary education and development of rural infrastructure.

Seminar on quality management held BSTI to launch awareness campaign on ISO 9000

A seminar on 'quality management and ISO-9000' was held here yesterday to discuss ways and means for export-led growth of the economy through quality improvement of products, reports BSS.

Jointly organised by Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI), German Federation of Small Business (ZDH) and Technonent Asia

in Bangladesh, the seminar was inaugurated by Secretary of the Ministry of Industries Dr. A M M Shawkat Ali in the DCCI auditorium here.

Experts and participants drawn from various private trade organisations exchanged views on two subjects — quality management in the changing scenario of the business world and ISO-9000 in the context of free

market economy.

In his inaugural address, Dr A M M Shawkat Ali said the basic compulsion of early adoption of ISO-9000 had arisen out of the globalisation of economy and government's policy to enhance external competitiveness.

"This compulsion should be seen as an opportunity because adoption of ISO-9000 has its advantage also, he said adding, by obtaining ISO-9000 certification, consignment of goods can freely move from one country to another without any intermediate assessment for quality.

"The certification is a passport for entry into the international market," he also said.

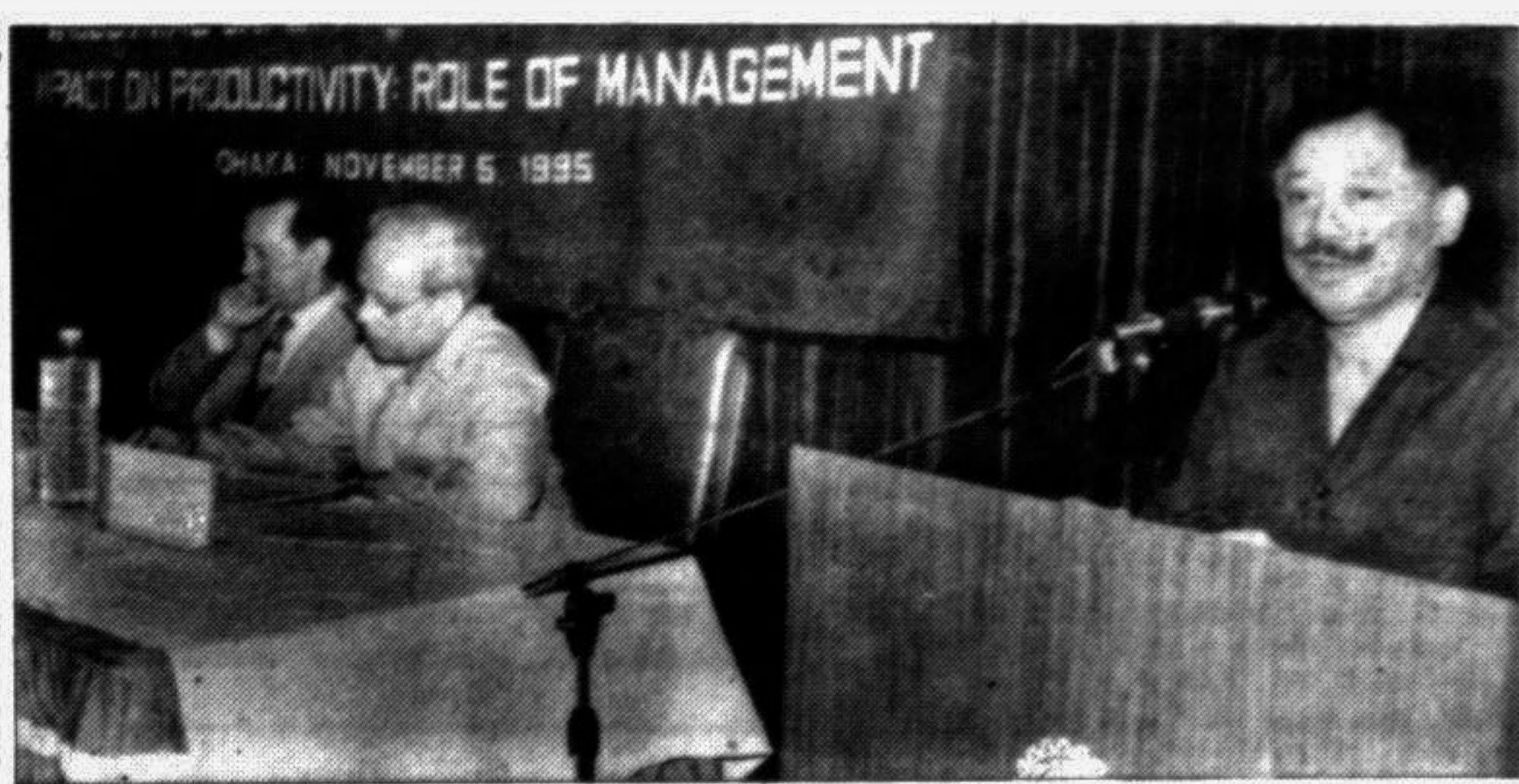
Dr Ali said Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institute (BSTI) had already taken the initiative of translating into Bangla the core standards of ISO-9000.

The BSTI also plans to launch awareness campaign on ISO-9000, employ quality assessors and auditors, modernise BSTI laboratory and introduce lab accreditation as per ISO guidelines, he said.

The industries secretary referred to the ISO-9000 and other associated reform measures and said Bangladesh was now entering the new era of development of trade and industry based on competitive market economy in a global context.



Atiqur Rahman, Finance Director of Transcom Ltd, seen speaking at a presentation on various aspects of ICMAB and CMA profession organised by the Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Bangladesh at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel recently.



Lt Gen (Retd) Mir Showkat Ali, Bir Uttam, Minister for Labour and Manpower, addressing a seminar on "Industrial Safety and Health and Their Impact on Productivity: Role of Management" organised by Bangladesh Employers' Association in collaboration with International Labour Organisation in the city yesterday.

Protestors demand Roh's arrest for slush fund

SEOUL, Nov 5: Thousands of protestors demanding the arrest of scandal-plagued former President Roh Tae-woo rallied across South Korea today, honking car horns and waving white handkerchiefs, according to AFP.

A protest rally that drew some 10,000 people at a public park in central Seoul turned violent when police blocked a march along Chongro street, one of the busiest avenues in Seoul.

Hundreds of students wielded sticks and hurled Molotov cocktails at teargas-firing riot police troops, causing a havoc with the traffic in downtown Seoul.

Police detained some 60 of the students but there were no immediate reports of injuries.

Thousands of students and civil rights activists calling for Roh's arrest rallied in Seoul and in 16 major provincial cities across South Korea earlier today.

At the stroke of 3:00 pm (0600 GMT), Chongro street erupted with deafening sounds of car horns, while pedestrians, commuters, and bus passengers and drivers waved handkerchiefs in a gesture to demand Roh's arrest.

ISC opens office in city Wednesday

Industry Sector Certification Ltd (ISC) will inaugurate its office in Dhaka on Wednesday, says a press release.

ISC is an independent certification body performing quality management systems registration to ISO 9000 series of standards.

It is the first time that the company is opening its office in Dhaka to facilitate the local exporters of goods and services to obtain their ISO 9000 series standard certificates.

To start with ISC will provide certification for textile and textile products, food-stuff, shipping and other general products and services.

European and other overseas markets are now asking exporters all over the world producing different industrial products and services to have ISO 9000 series standard certificates.

Workers get Tk 3cr compensation for industrial accidents

Authorities had to pay nearly Tk three crore in compensation to the workers affected by a large number of industrial accidents in the country in last three years, reports UNB.

The disclosure came from the Department of Inspection for Factories at a seminar on "Industrial Safety and Health and Their Impact on Productivity: Role of Management" here yesterday.

The department estimated that some 4,010 industrial accidents occurred in 1994, 6,994 in 1993 and 8,349 in 1992. The authorities had to pay Tk 75,21,914, Tk 1,15,48,962 and Tk 99,73,303 respectively in compensation to the workers for the mishaps.

Bangladesh Employers' Association (BEA) and International Labour Organisation (ILO) jointly organised the seminar in the auditorium of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI).

Inaugurating the day-long seminar Labour and Manpower Minister Mir Showkat Ali said the government would work in collaboration with the Employers' Association to extend services of routine safety maintenance for reducing industrial accidents.

The minister said rate of occupational hazards and accidents in workplaces in Bangladesh was higher than other countries due to import of second-hand capital machinery as well as insufficient safety measures.

To improve welfare of the workers, he said, the government has already established 26 welfare centres in different industrial belts of the country to look after health, educational, recreational and cultural needs of the workforce.

In her speech, BEA President Laila Rahman Kabir said major accidents took place for absence of routine safety maintenance. This should be prevented through annual inspection of mills and factories.

BEA Secretary General C K Hyder and International Labour Organisation (ILO) Area Office Director Paul J Bailey also spoke at the inaugural session.

Chairman of the Association of Safety and Process Engineers R N Bagchi, former Chief Inspector of Factories and Establishments Dr A Q Mahfuzul Haque and former Managing Director of Chhatak Cement Company Ltd, Eng Taibur Rahman presented three seminar papers.



Shafat Ahmed Chaudhuri (L), MD and Actuary of Delta Life Insurance Company, handing over a loan cheque to Ahsanul Haq Chowdhury (R) under the 'Home Loan Scheme' of the company yesterday.

Mongla Port earns Tk 60cr revenue in '94-95

BAGERHAT, Nov 5: Mongla Port, the country's second largest sea port earned a record Taka 60 crore revenue during the last fiscal, showing an increase of Tk 10 crore in comparison with the previous year, reports UNB.

This was informed to the State Minister for Shipping Shahjahan Shiraj by the port officials when he went on a visit to see for himself the activities of the port on Saturday.

The State Minister witnessed various procedures of loading, unloading and preserving goods, and anchoring the ships while going round the jetty, transit shade, ware house, container yard and channel of the port.

He told the port officials, users CBA leaders and workers that steps would be taken to make the activities of the port more dynamic considering its importance in contributing in the national economy.

Shahjahan Siraj expressed his satisfaction at the proper execution of port activities as the officials told him that *hartal* is not observed in the port area.

Seminar on agriculture held at BAU

MYMENSINGH, Nov 5: Speakers at a seminar here on Saturday stressed the need for technological advancement, diversification of crops specially rice to boost the country's agricultural production, reports BSS.

The seminar, jointly organised by Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA) and Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology Faculty of Agriculture University, discussed the present trend of agriculture in Bangladesh.

Presided over by the Dean of the Faculty Prof Rashid Ahmed, eminent economist and Chairman of Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) Prof Rehman Sobhan, Dr Quazi Shahbuddin, Dr Mahbub Hossain, General Secretary of BEA and Dr Debapriya Bhat-tacharya spoke on the occasion.

Dr Quazi Shahbuddin presented the agriculture chapter of the Independent, Review of Bangladesh's Development 1994/95 by CPD which will formally released on November 8 at the seminar.

While presenting the chapter, he said that production forecast for 1994/95 for *aus* and *aman* production is estimated at 1.79 million tons and 8.50 million tons respectively as compared to 1.85 and 9.42 million tons in 1993/94.

He said total rice production is most likely to decline by 1.25 to 1.75 million tons in 1994/95 depending on the boro harvest, compared to the level attained in the previous year.

A number of teachers of Agriculture University took part in the seminar and presented their views on the independent reviews.

Prices of copper soar while tea, coffee fall over the week

LONDON, Nov 5: Copper rallied strongly this week on the London Metals Exchange, after an earthquake in Chile raised fears of disruption to supplies, according to AFP.

The ravages of hurricane Angela in the Philippines, meanwhile, pushed up coconut and sugar prices as alarm about the harvests grew.

Rubber performed well, after heavy rains in Thailand and Malaysia affected the crops in those two countries. Cocoa prices fell on market expectations of a bumper harvest this year in Ivory Coast, the world's largest producer, in spite of social unrest -- which so far has not affected production.

Among the precious metals, gold remained sustained by healthy demand in the run-up to Christmas, and by large Japanese buying.

GOLD: Calm. The metal fluctuated narrowly around 382 dollars per ounce. Some analysts estimated that the metal should hold steady between 380 and 382 dollars, especially since the run-up to Christmas is always a period of strong demand. But

gold is likely to hit a resistance level at 386 dollars, because of probable sales at this level by Australian and South African producers.

PLATINUM: Uncertain. The metal lost around 1.50 dollars to 207.75 dollars per ounce, after a week of saw-saws. Rumours of a new catalytic system developed by US group Engelhard, which would be made without platinum, prompted a sharp fall in prices mid-week. Platinum dived to 405.5 dollars, the lowest point for eight months.

But it recovered after an Engelhard official explained that the product in question was a device attached to car radiators to reduce pollution, and that the system was designed to complement, and not replace, the traditional catalytic converters made with platinum.

SILVER: Weak. After its recent rally, silver lost nearly 10 cents to 5.31 dollars per ounce.

COPPER: Rise. Copper prices soared on news of an earthquake in Chile and as the physical market became tighter.

The Chile quake, 6.3 on the Richter scale, provided a boost, on market fears of disruption to Chilean copper shipments. But mines and ports were later reported undamaged.

LEAD: Steady. Copper's gains pushed the metal up to a January high of 704 dollars during the week, but the metal fell back later on profit-taking to end the week four dollars higher at 689 dollars per tonne.

The International Lead and Zinc Study Group (ILZSG) predicted that world consumption of lead in 1996 will rise two per cent to 5.54 million tonnes, while production will expand 1.3 per cent to 5.49 million tonnes.

ZINC: Rise. The metal rose around 40 dollars to 1,068 dollars per tonne, lifted by copper's performance. But gains were limited by a modest stocks fall of 5,000 tonnes on Friday, which disappointed analysts.

The ILZSG forecast that the worldwide consumption of zinc in 1996 will expand 1.8 per cent to 7.43 million tonnes and production will rise 2.5 per cent to 7.39 mil-

lion tonnes.

LME stocks fell by 6,525 tonnes to 723,625.

ALUMINIUM: Rise. The price of the metal advanced by around 30 dollars to 1,706 dollars per tonne.

Strong gains during the week on the back of copper's rally, however, were limited on Friday by an unexpected rise in LME stocks of over 13,000 tonnes, which pushed the weekly stocks up 12,650 to 543,625 tonnes.

NICKEL: Modest. The price of the metal climbed a modest 50 dollars to 8,887 dollars per tonne, with a more subdued tone in trading after the sharp rally last week.

Billion metals quoted an official at Russia's Norilsk saying that output at the giant producer would be 10 per cent higher this year than in 1994, when it was 162,500 tonnes.

Exports in the first nine-months of this year.

But Billion metals said China's exports would total 30,000 tonnes in 1995, well above the 20,000 tonne quota agreed with the Association of Tin Producing Countries.

LME stocks declined by 565 tonnes to 13,460.

COFFEE: Weak. Prices lost around 20 dollars to 2,295 dollars per tonne.

London trading house GNI reported that European experts have forecast a Brazilian crop this year of 30 to 34 million sacks (60 kilograms each), a figure it finds too high. GNI predicts 24 to 26 million sacks, on the basis that many coffee trees have not fully recovered from last year's frosts.

TEA: Slight fall. Medium quality teas lost three pence to 122 pence per kilogram on the London weekly auctions, where only east African teas continued to advance.

SUGAR: Stable. The price of sugar advanced around three dollars to 334.5 dollars, supported by good demand from Russia.

Buying orders from Syria also helped sentiment, reflecting consistent demand from the Middle East.

COTTON: Slight rise. After the recent decline, prices in Liverpool gained 55 cents to 89.60 dollars per pound. They were boosted by a rally on the US market early in the week, due to fears of declining supplies from California and Texas.

Traders expect the US Department of Agriculture shortly to revise downwards its estimate for the US harvest, by more than one million bales from the current forecast of 19.2 million bales (480 pounds each).

However, the expectation of higher than expected harvests in India and Pakistan pushed prices lower at the end of the week in the United States.

WOOL: Stable. The reference price on the British market held steady all week at 458 pence a kilogram.

On the auctions in Bradford, Northern England, prices climbed while in Australia the trend was firm, especially for high quality merino wool.

Office of the Chief Engineer
Project IV, BWDB
Rangpur

Addendum No. 02 to
Tender Enquiry
No. 01/Teesta/SFD/95-96

- The selling date of the Tender Document is extended up to 15.11.95. So correct the date by '15.11.95' in place of '14.10.95' in 7th line of Serial-3, 1st page of the Tender Notice.
- In the specimen Bid Bond Form (Bank Guarantee) as enclosed with the Addendum No 01/Teesta/SFD/95-96 following correction is hereby made:-
The validity of the Bank Guarantee will be up to 30th April '96 or any extended time as will be required by the Buyer. So, correct the date by '30th April, 1996' in place of '30th April, 1995' in the 1st line of last para, 1st page of the specimen form.
The Bid Bond (Bank Guarantee) to be submitted in Non-Judicial Stamp of Tk 50.
All other terms & conditions as stipulated in the Tender Document will remain unchanged.

Ghulam Mustafa
Addl. Chief Engineer
Project-IV, BWDB
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PANI-123/94-95
DFP-26919-1/11
G-1638

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