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# Mauritius hiring only female workers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mauritius is phasing out its Bangladeshi male workforce and it is not renewing their job contracts. The country, however, continues to hire female workers in readymade garment sector and fish packaging factories, recruitment agencies said.

"Mauritius has not been issuing work visas to male workers for several months now as part of its policy. But it is hiring female workers as per demand," said a recruiting agent.

Quoting official sources, the media yesterday reported that Mauritius would send back 6,000 Bangladeshi male workers by the end of this year.

The recruiting agent said the southern African island nation would not send back workers before their job contracts expire. The

nation now has a policy of not hiring male workers from Bangladesh, Pakistan and India, the agent noted.

Recently, Mauritius approved companies there to hire 5,000 female workers from Bangladesh for garment and Tuna packaging factories, said the recruiting agent, requesting anonymity. Of them, 4,000 will work in garment factories.

"Yesterday (Wednesday) alone, 86 female workers flew to Mauritius," the recruiting agent told The Daily Star yesterday.

An official of the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment said a recruiting agent sought the ministry's permission to send several hundred female workers.

Meanwhile, the ministry sent a fax to Bangladesh's honorary consul general in

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JS body blasts Dhaka mission in Kenya for failure

RASHIDUL HASAN

A parliamentary standing committee yesterday criticised officials at Bangladesh embassy in Kenya, also in charge of maintaining diplomatic relations with Mauritius, for their failure to inform the government about the situation of Bangladeshi workers in Mauritius.

It also issued a show-cause notice upon the officials there.

The committee on expatriate welfare and overseas employment ministry said embassy officials in Kenya must be held accountable for their failure to forecast and inform the government about the Bangladeshi workers' situation.

"I admit that we did not

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Dhaka Wasa demolishes illegal structures built on a canal in Rupnagar of Mirpur in the capital yesterday.

Wasa clears canal shanties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka water supply and sewerage authority (Wasa) yesterday demolished around 200 shanties and one concrete structure on Rupnagar canal bank during the second day's drive to revive the canal.

Magistrate Kazi Wasiuddin of Wasa led the drive.

Once a brimming stream, the Rupnagar canal has now become a drain due to continuous sand filling by encroachers, which continued till a few days ago, locals said.

They feared that if the authorities concerned failed to recover the canal, residents of Rupnagar, Arambagh, Arifabad and Pallabi extension would suffer water-logging even after a light shower.

The 60-foot wide canal stretching from Haji road of

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Pakistan promises to net Mumbai attackers

Manmohan holds talks with Gilani on Nam sideline

AP, Sharm el-Sheikh

Pakistan promised India yesterday that it will do everything in its power to bring the Mumbai terror attackers to justice, a key demand by New Delhi to improve relations.

The prime ministers of the two nuclear powers also agreed that action on terrorism should not be linked to their peace talks, the joint statement said, something that has been asked for by Islamabad.

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his Pakistani counterpart Yusuf Gilani met on the sidelines of the Non-Aligned Summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, in a much anticipated meeting that comes after a seven-month freeze in dialogue due to an attack by Pakistani gunmen on India's financial capital of Mumbai that killed 166 people.

"Prime Minister Singh reiterated the need to bring the perpetrators of the Mumbai attacks to justice. Prime Minister Gilani

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Army officer manhandled by police SI

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A police sub-inspector allegedly manhandled an army officer on the Sylhet-Tamabil highway yesterday afternoon.

The incident happened as captain Arif along with Lt Sharif were going to Jalalabad cantonment on a motorbike at about 8:00pm. On-duty SI Sanjib at Dashpara check post asked them to stop and produce the documents of the car, sources said.

As the officers declined to produce documents an exchange of heated words followed. At one stage, the SI slapped the captain, sources added.

A group of army officers from the cantonment reached the spot as the stunned

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bsti with the help of Rab personnel bust an unscrupulous jam, sauce and herbal energy drink factory at Shanir Akhra in the capital with evidence of the products being adulterated.

PHOTO: STAR

## Clarification

In a clarification sent to The Daily Star, the Kumudini Welfare Trust of Bengal (BD) Ltd has denied hiring any untrained nurse in the Kumudini Hospital and said following a report published in this paper on July 5, it wrote a letter to the Registrar of the Bangladesh Nursing Council (BNC) disagreeing with the statement she made to The Daily Star.

The Trust also explained that upon notices published in March this year asking for stoppage of running courses for aide nurses, it complied with the BNC regulation and stopped training aide nurses.

As the Kumudini Welfare Trust contested only the portion of The Daily Star report

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## 47,000 children born for shortage of contraceptives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 47,000 children were born last year in addition to the general population increase in the country due to unexpected pregnancies caused by an acute shortage of contraceptives, according to a study.

The study said that the total loss caused to sufferers due to a shortage of oral pills, injections and condoms during the period is equivalent to 4,306 million hours in terms of time and Tk 61,353 million in terms of monetary value.

Prof Abul Barakat, chairman of Economics Department of Dhaka University, at a seminar in the city hotel yesterday, presented the findings of the study.

Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB) and Human Development Research Centre (HDRC) jointly organised

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## 64 schools have no headmaster in Jhenidah

AZIBOR RAHMAN, Jhenidah

Sixty-four government and non-government secondary schools are running without headmasters and assistant headmasters in the district amid serious difficulties in academic and administrative activities.

Sources say none of the three government schools and 61 of the 281 non-government institutions have headmasters in six upazilas in the district.

Jhenidah Govt Model School, Govt Girls' School in the town and Harinakundo Upazila Govt Girls' School are running without headmasters.

Besides, 18 of the 80 privately run secondary schools in the sadar upazila are operating without headmasters.

Besides, 18 of the 80 privately run secondary schools in the sadar upazila are operating without headmasters.

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## UN body probes Benazir's death

AFP, Islamabad

The UN commission set up to investigate the assassination of Pakistani former prime minister Benazir Bhutto opened its first inquiries in Islamabad yesterday and held talks with her widow.

Bhutto, the first woman to become prime minister of a Muslim country, was killed in late December 2007 in a gun and suicide attack after addressing an election rally in Rawalpindi, a garrison city near the capital Islamabad.

The government called for a UN inquiry after Benazir's party won a general election in February 2008 with her supporters angered by conflicting accounts of how she died and who was responsible.

## 'Magic pipe' method produces more rice, saves money, water

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rice scientists have developed a technology called "Alternate Wetting and Drying" (AWD) that reduces production cost by 25 percent but increases production with less irrigation during Boro season.

The technology that has already been validated in the last two to three years can help maintain the balance of underground water, which is depleting fast due to excessive use during dry season, rice scientists said yesterday at a press briefing at BRAC Centre Inn in the capital.

International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) and Rural Development Academy (RDA) devised and experimented the method.

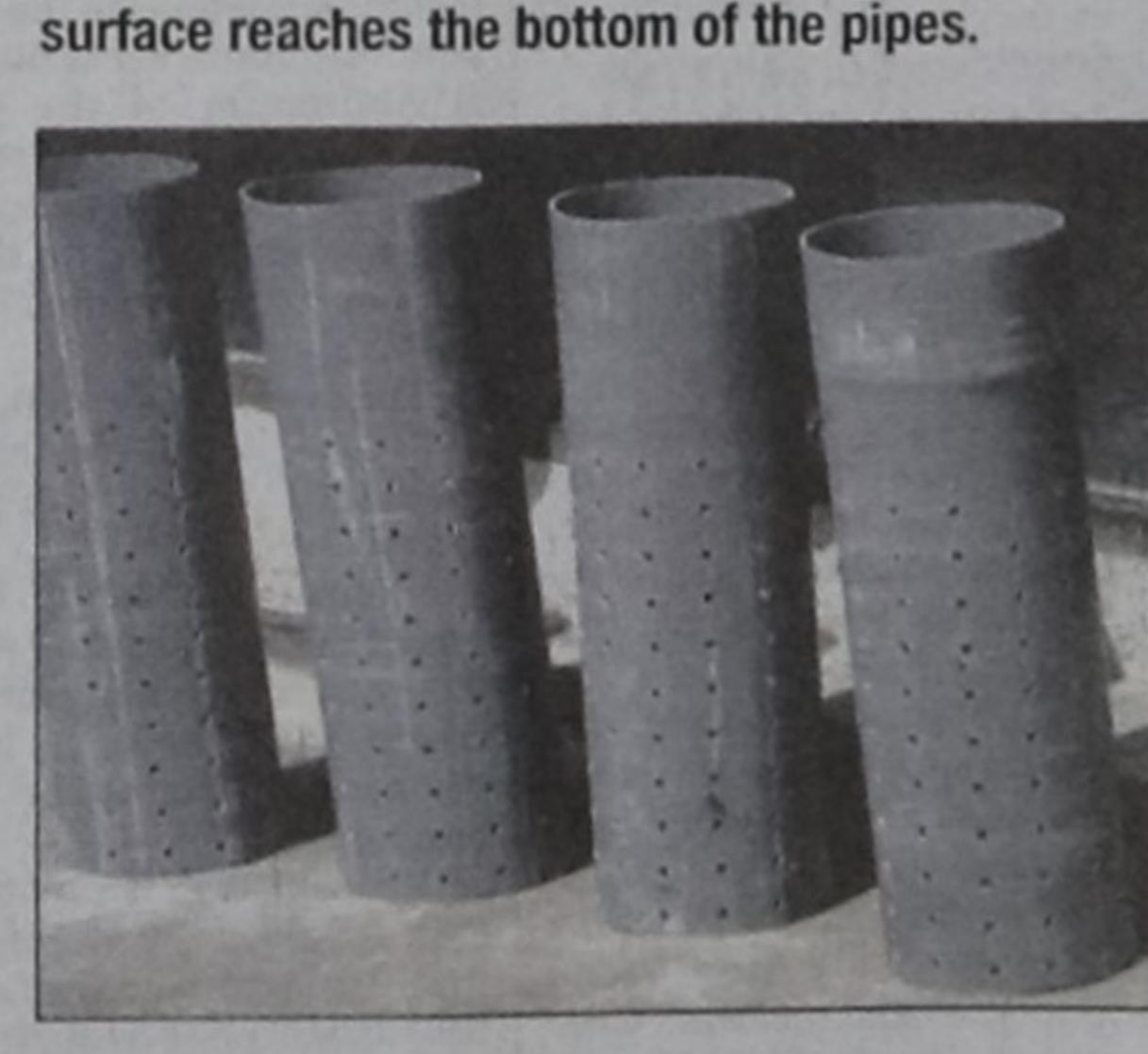
"Only 1,500 litres of water is enough to grow a kilogram of rice where farmers in Bangladesh apply 3,000 to 5,000 litres wasting much water and fuel," said TP Toung, senior scientist of IRRI in Bangladesh.

The technology is very simple, he said, adding that this requires only a plastic pipe, a hollow bamboo or a plastic water bottle measuring 30cm long and 10cm in diameter. Two-thirds of the pipe or bottle should be perforated.

After ten days of transplanting boro seedlings to the field, the pipe should be installed in the field with its perforated part under the surface. The earth inside the pipe then should be

perforated PVC pipes, below, are installed in paddy field after ten days of transplanting seedlings with perforated portion under the surface. Then earth is scooped out of the pipes.

Irrigation starts when water level below the surface reaches the bottom of the pipes.



scooped out, Toung explained to the press.

He continued, "Now wait and see till the water level goes down below the surface and reaches the bottom of the pipe or bottle. When it does, the farmers should prepare for irrigation."

Generally, farmers keep their fields stagnant with water thinking it helps boost production, said the rice scientist, adding that this orthodoxy is actually wrong.

The AWD method, also known as "Magic Pipe", makes sure that the plants do not suffer from water crisis though the field may apparently look dry. It saves both water and energy but increases yield.

MA Sattar, head of Irrigation and Water Management Division of BRRI, said paddy plants produce more stems with intermittent dryness in the field.

"But, farmers must discontinue AWD process when paddy flowers. Water must be stagnant during flowering," he said.

Experiments of AWD method in various parts of the country proved that farmers can save 29 percent water and at the same time rice production can increase by 0.35 to 0.80 tonnes per hectare. "Altogether, a farmer can save 25 percent of his production cost," Sattar said.

BRAC Executive Director Moshabub Hossain said AWD is

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## Tipai dam to choke Bangladesh rivers

Seminar told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh might face a severe ecological imbalance if India builds the proposed Tipaimukh dam on the Borak river, said speakers at a discussion yesterday.

If the dam is constructed, some major rivers that have been playing a vital role in maintaining the country's environmental balance over the years would be affected seriously, they said at a discussion at Shaheed Munir Chowdhury auditorium of Teacher-Student Centre building at Dhaka University.

Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (SCF), a left-leaning student organisation, organised the discussion titled "Dam on Tipaimukh, its effect on Bangladesh and relationship between India and Bangladesh".

Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal Convener Khalequzzaman said, "People of Bangladesh and India are against the construction of the proposed dam. But, we become sufferers due to the Indian government's aggressive stance and weakness in Bangladesh government's policy."

Prof Akmal Hossain of DU stressed the need for holding discussions between water experts from both Bangladesh and India on the dam's possible effects on environment.

Engineer M Enamul Haq said not only the people of Bangladesh but also the people of Mizoram and Manipur would

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Please cast your vote at [www.thedailystar.net](http://www.thedailystar.net)

**Online Poll** ✓

Do you think Anti-Corruption Commission is considering withdrawing cases including cases against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina under pressure?

Yes (92.1%)

No (6.7%)

No Comments (1.2%)

Total votes: 1372

**TODAY'S POLL**

Do you feel assured by Indian PM Manmohan Singh's promise to Sheikh Hasina of taking no anti-bilateral steps in Tipaimukh Dam?

Please cast your vote at [www.thedailystar.net](http://www.thedailystar.net)

**Prayer Timing**

July 16	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-15	5-50
Juma	1-30	2-15
Asr	6-00	6-15
Maghrib	7-54	7-58
Esha	9-15	9-45

Source: Islamic Foundation