Bangladesh’s five-year telecommunications development program will be assisted by a credit of $20.0 million equivalent from the INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (IDA), an affiliate of the WORLD BANK. Development of the telecommunications system is essential to the development of agriculture, industry and government.

The telecommunications sector comprises the Bangladesh Telephone and Telegraph Department (BTT) which is responsible for the development, operation and administration of all public telecommunications services including external services. The five year program launched in 1972 includes BTT’s efforts to meet increased demand and the relief of congestion. The total cost including elements being financed under previous IDA credits is estimated at about $139.0 million.

The IDA credit to the People’s Republic of Bangladesh will cover part of the foreign exchange requirements. The credit will be onlent, under the terms of the agreement, to the Telegraph and Telephone Board, due to be constituted as the successor to BTT.

Among those present at the signing of the credit documents on June 26, 1974 were, from left to right: Mr. Matiul Islam, Alternate Executive Director of the WORLD BANK and IDA for Bangladesh; His Excellency Muhssin Ali, Ambassador of Bangladesh; Mr. Mervyn Weiner, Acting Regional Vice President, WORLD BANK and IDA; and Dr. S.R. Sen, Executive Director of the WORLD BANK and IDA for Bangladesh.

Photo: Edwin G. Huffman for WORLD BANK and IDA.