STAFF CORRESPONDENT

said yesterday.

The World Bank approved an

International Development

Association (IDA) credit worth

\$62.60 million to revitalise

Bangladesh's agricultural tech-

nology system, a WB statement

agricultural research, agricul-

tural extension, and supply

chain, including strengthening

of national institutions involved

in agricultural research and

Agriculture accounts for

about 22 percent of

Bangladesh's GDP and another

33 percent of GDP is contributed

by the rural non-farm economy,

"Growth of the agriculture

Bangladesh," said Xian Zhu, WB nology system.

and the rural non-farm sectors is

critical to reducing poverty in

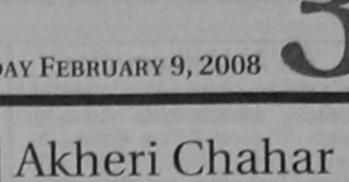
country director in Bangladesh.

which is largely linked to agricul-

ture, the statement added.

extension, read the statement.

The money will be spent for



\$63m IDA credit to boost Shomba Mar 5 agri technology system BSS, Dhaka

decentralised demand-led agri-

cultural extension programme

with greater accountability and

responsiveness to farmers, with

a focus on small and marginal

farming communities in decid-

ing the priorities for agricultural

research, farmer education

priorities, and programme moni-

toring, the project will contrib-

ute towards improving gover-

nance as well as the quality and

efficiency of the delivery of

public services," said Paul S

Sidhu, WB senior agriculture

specialist and project team

The project will support

development of supply chains of

selected commodities through

financing activities related to

strengthening farmer-market

It will be implemented over a

"By giving greater voice to the

farmers.

linkages.

Holy Akheri Chahar Shomba will be observed in the country on March 5 as the moon of the Arabic month

Safar has been sighted. The National Moon Sighting Committee made the announcement yesterday at a meeting presided over by its Chairman and Law and Religious Affairs Adviser AF Hassan Ariff.

JU bird fair Feb 15

A daylong bird fair will be held on the Jahangirnagar University (JU) campus on February 15.

The fair will be organised by the JU zoology department in cooperation with Step Media Limited and Wild Life Rescue Centre.

The fair includes interuniversity bird identification competition, exhibition of birds' photographs, witnessing of birds by children at JU lakes and painting competition for them and speech competition on birds.

The fair is organised every year period of 15 years in three with a view to creating mass awareness to preserve the birds.



Children engrossed in painting at an art competition on Bangla Academy premises in the city yesterday. Bangla Academy organised the competition on the occasion of Amar Ekushey.

Take coordinated steps to avoid food crisis

Menon urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Workers' Party President Rashed Khan Menon has said if the government fails to take timely and coordinated steps, the country would face a food crisis leading to a famine.

He was speaking at an extended meeting of Jatiya Krishak Samity and Bangladesh Khetmojur Union at Shaheed Asad Auditorium in the city vesterday.

fertilisers and seeds in the country and the farmers are merely depending on their fate after sowing the seeds.

He alleged that the government

is not paying proper attention to bilitation. the supply of fertilisers and seeds.

Prof Abdus Sattar presided over the meeting where a report on rural economy and real condition of the farmers was presented by Aminul Islam Golap, general secretary of added. Jatiya Krishak Samity.

caretaker government could gain the public support due to its anticorruption drive, it is now losing that support for its failure to con-Menon said there is a crisis of trol the abnormal price hike of

> It also revealed that there is a lack of coordination in distributing relief among the Sidr-affected centres in coastal areas, and rationpeople and their immediate reha- ing for the village poor.

The government's hope to make up the loss in Aman paddy through increased production of IRRI and Boro, would not be fulfilled if the fertiliser crisis sustains, the report

It urged the government to The report said although the provide the farmer with fertilisers, seeds, insecticides, power pumps and to initiate food for work programme for impoverished villagers.

The speakers at the meeting also demanded subsidy in agriculture, poultry and livestock sectors, farm loan at 5 percent interest, cyclone

Tk 6 lakh electric cables seized

UNB, Dhaka

Detective Branch (DB) of police seized a huge quantity of fake electric cables worth about Tk 6 lakh from two unauthorised factories at Shyampur in the city and arrested four people yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of plainclothes policemen raided the house of Hashmat Ullah at Battola in East Shyampur at about 2:30am and arrested Aynal Hossain, 28, Mehedi Hasan, 25, Shahidul Islam, 25, and Mohammad Sohel alias Sony, 20, from two rooms of the house -- one used to manufacture fake BRB cables

and another Eastern cables. Meanwhile, DB police also arrested nine members of a gang of muggers who used to target people

withdrawing money from banks. Acting on a tip-off, the police arrested gang leader Abdur Rob alias Aangul Kata Roba, 50, Abbas, 42, Rubel, 22, Rafiqul, 37, and Zakir, 32, in front of Pir Yemini Market in the city at about 10:00am.



Zhu said, "Improved agricul-

tural research and technology

will be critical to achieve this

growth and accelerate for the

process of diversification into

higher value crops and post-

He said over the last three

decades, there has been a sig-

nificant increase in the pro-

duction of rice to achieve near

self-sufficiency in food grains.

However, this is threatened by

increasing population, declin-

ing land base and stagnating

value crops is slow with poor

post-harvest management

and limited processing

Agricultural Technology

Project' has been designed to

enhance the effectiveness of

The project will also support a phases.

the national agricultural tech-

The project titled 'National

Diversification into higher

harvest processing."

capacity.

A family lives under the open sky as more than 130 shanties burned down in a fire at a slum at Boiler Avenue near the BRTC Bus Station in Chittagong in the early hours of yesterday. The fire rendered about 200 families homeless.



Young readers mob eminent writer Dr Muhammad Zafar Iqbal to have their books autographed by the author at Amar Ekushey Book Fair on the Bangla Academy premises in the city yesterday.

Dhaka will play major role in climate change debate

Iftekhar tells European parliamentary team

UNB, Dhaka

issue, Bangladesh will continue to play an active role in the global debate on the subject, said Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury.

He made the remark when a European Parliamentary the UN debate on climate change

Padma on Thursday night.

Since climate change is a priority most from their consequences.

He said developed countries, including those of the European Union, have an obligation to help implement requisite preventive and adaptation projects.

Committee on Climate Change during the last General Assembly met him at the State Guesthouse session with Dutch Prime Minister Belkenende.

Iftekhar said countries like Bangladesh made an active tional reforms being imple-Bangladesh, which is also the contribution to the Bali mented by the government to current chair of the Group of Conference and will continue to ensure stable and sustainable LDCs, are least responsible for play a major role in the debate democracy.

greenhouse gas emissions and during the lead-up to the planned global warming, yet they suffer the Copenhagen Conference in 2009, headded.

The European Parliamentary Committee delegation led by Romana Jordan Cizeli of Slovenia appreciated the priority that Bangladesh placed on He said Chief Adviser the subject and expressed the nine-member delegation of Fakhruddin Ahmed co-chaired confidence that Bangladesh's active engagement would

> enrich the deliberations. The adviser also briefed the delegation on the current institu-

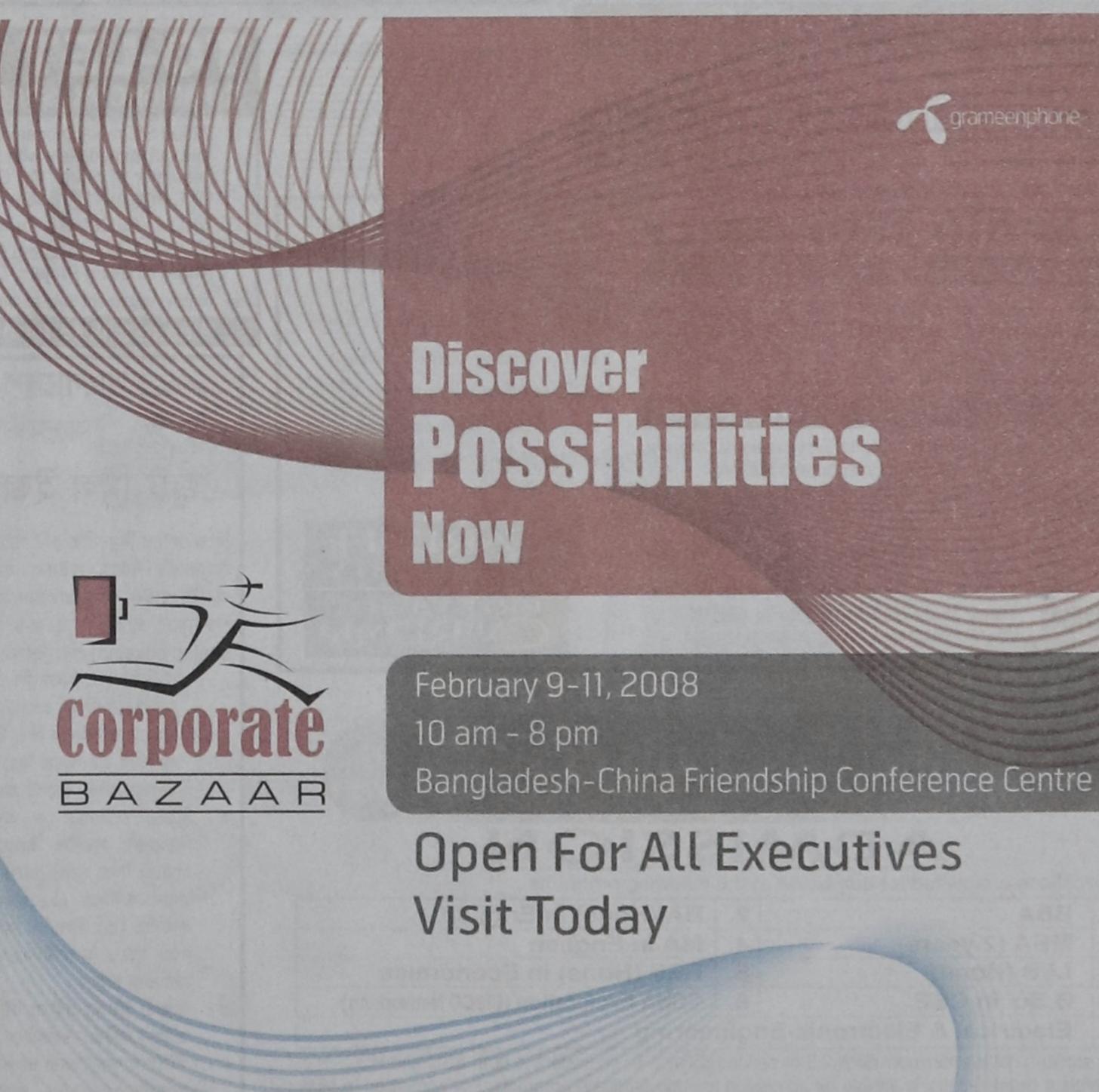
| Int'l seminar on welfare of persons with disabilities

BSS, Dhaka

A five-day international seminar on 'One for all -- Disabled Persons' Self Initiatives in Development (PSID)'

will begin in the city tomorrow. Chief of Army Staff General Moeen U Ahmed will formally inaugurate the seminar at Dhaka Regency Hotel at 6:00pm today. Australian High Commissioner Douglas Foskett will join the function as the special guest.

Bangladesh Protibandhi Kalyan Samity (BPKS) is organising the seminar to highlight PSID, an initiative for the welfare of the physically challenged people. A total of 12,000 persons with disabilities are leading self-reliant life with the implementation of PSID method in the country's 30 districts.

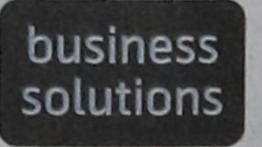


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