



Foreign Minister Dipu Moni calls on Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at the latter's office in New Delhi yesterday. PHOTO: PIB, INDIA

# Manmohan repeats old pledges

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Sources said Manmohan reiterated to Dipu Moni India's vision on water resources and asserted nothing inimical to Bangladesh's interests would be done.  
Manmohan added that water continued to flow to Bangladesh and data-sharing in this regard was also taking place regularly, the sources said.  
A proposed deal on Teesta water-sharing was held up by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in September, 2011 when she opposed it at the eleventh hour and pulled out of the Indian prime minister's entourage to Dhaka on an official visit.  
Asked if Jaitley gave any categorical assurance to her about BJP backing the land boundary agreement, Dipu Moni told reporters that the BJP leader told her that he would consult his party colleagues and firm up a

response.  
Replying to a question about land boundary agreement, she, however, said: "I thought I have got a very positive response from both the Indian prime minister and the BJP leader."  
Asked again specifically about Jaitley, she said: "I thought his response was very positive."  
Dipu Moni said the Indian PM conveyed to her that New Delhi was "totally committed" to implementing all the decisions taken during the visits of the two prime ministers in the last four and a half years.  
"He [Manmohan] has assured that India will not do anything to harm the interests of Bangladesh," she said.  
She added the two countries had brought to near-completion the Teesta water-sharing and land boundary agreements and that they were now waiting for results.  
Replying to a question

about BJP's stand on the land boundary deal, she said, "Sometimes domestic political compulsion does not allow one to see the larger picture. But I think that across the board, all political parties in India should support the land boundary agreement."  
"We must be able to resolve these two issues and put them behind us. We now have a good opportunity to do so and it will be good not only for India and Bangladesh but for the entire neighbourhood."  
Manmohan suggested that Bangladesh join as a stakeholder in the Tipaimukh multipurpose project in northeastern state of Manipur surrounding which there has been widespread concern about the possible effect on water flow downstream, Indian officials said.  
The sources added that during the meeting, Manmohan underlined that India-Bangladesh trade had grown impressively and that

exports by both countries to each other had risen significantly.  
Exports from Bangladesh to India last year stood at \$565 million, the highest ever to India.  
In the meeting, there was recognition of cooperation in power sector, and by September 2013, 500 MW of power would be flowing to Bangladesh with inter-grid connectivity, the sources said.  
India's state-owned National Thermal Power Corporation-assisted power project in Khulna would be initiated by September, 2013 they added.  
There was also discussion on Indian financial assistance to Bangladesh. It was noted that the \$1 billion Line of Credit by India to Bangladesh had been flowing in a satisfactory manner, including the \$200 million grant of which \$150 million has already been provided to Bangladesh.

# Hostages freed after 17 days

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had rescued the abductees around 4:30am, about three hours after they had been freed in Merung border area. The rescued were then handed over to police.  
The released are: Assistant Engineer of Bi Technology Akhter Hossain, its technicians Hameyet Uddin, Imrul and Suja Miah, and Abdul Mojid, a second-year student of Khagrachhari Government College.  
They were handed over to their families soon after their statements had been recorded before a Rangamati court.  
According to the rescued, the abduction took place on July 8 in Baribindughat area of Baghaichhari upazila where they were installing a tower for state-run mobile phone operator Teletalk.

Initially the kidnapers had picked up six people, including caretaker of the tower Montu Chakma. But the very night of the incident Montu was freed.  
Akhter Hossain, one of the abductees, said the kidnapers had first taken them to Rupkari area of Baghaichhari on seven to eight motorbikes and then shifted them to a boat blindfolded. This was where the victims had lost trace of their whereabouts.  
He said the gang had kept changing their positions, sometimes on foot and other times on boat, to dodge law enforcers. During the time, the kidnapers had provided them with rice and bamboo shoot curry twice a day.  
"I was deeply shocked thinking of what could be in store for us. Now that we are freed, I feel very happy,"

said Akhter Hossain.  
"Last night, after walking for miles, the kidnapers suddenly told us to descend a hill in Merung. We understood that we were being freed," he said, adding, "We only know them [kidnapers] by their faces."  
Meanwhile, at a press briefing in her office yesterday, Superintendent of Rangamati Police Amena Begum said, "Soon after the abduction, we received specific information about the kidnapers and tried to pursue them to free the hostages."  
She said the number of kidnapers might be between six and eight. She suspects although the abductors had claimed to be members of United People's Democratic Front (UPDF), it was not right.  
On July 11, Assistant Engineer of Bi Technology

Monirul Islam lodged a case with Baghaichhari Police Station.  
On Sunday, police arrested Montu Chakma, who was the first to be released by the kidnapers, and Kironmoy Chakma, 42, son of Surya Kumar Chakma of Babupara village in Baghaichhari, suspecting their involvement in the abduction.  
They had been produced before a court and placed on a five-day remand. Their remand ended on Thursday.  
On February 7, two employees of Grameenphone were kidnapped from Kutukchhari in sadar upazila of the district. They were also released later.  
(Our correspondents from Khagrachhari and Rangamati contributed to the story.)

# Concern over execution

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the war criminals, said legal complexities were slowing down the ongoing trials.  
He feared war criminals could get released with presidential pardon. He said there should be no option for presidential pardon in the case of crimes against humanity.  
He said the option should be removed before the tenure of this government ended, preferably in the next parliament session.  
Saying that Ghulam Azam deserved the capital punishment, which the tribunal judgement also mentioned, Shahriar said the tribunal went beyond its jurisdiction to consider his age.  
Shahriar made it clear that he was not challenging the judgment of the tribunal but was urging the state to appeal.  
He urged the judges of the Appellate Division to dis-

pose of war crimes appeals quickly. "We have waited for the last 40-42 years to see the execution of war criminals. Please don't make us wait any longer," he added.  
Eminent historian Muntassir Mamoon explained why the executions of condemned war criminals might not happen during this government's tenure.  
"Only a sentence will not be enough. Full copy of the judgment will be required. There will be a review petition. Then there is the petition before the president. And by this time the government would be out," he said.  
"You can appeal [for quick disposal] to the attorney general but he [the attorney general] has nothing to do with it," Muntassir said.  
"A section in the government, state and us do not

want to see the implementation of the verdict," he claimed.  
Shaheen Reza Noor, president of Projonmo-71, an organisation of the children of martyrs of the Liberation War, demanded the trial of Jamaat-e-Islami as an organisation.  
Among others, Air Vice-Marshal (ret'd) AK Khandaker, planning minister and chairman of Sector Commanders Forum, lawyers Tureen Afroz and Rana Dasgupta, and Gonogajoron Mancha spokesperson Imran H Sarkar also addressed the programme.  
The tribunals had so far handed down punishment to six war criminals and gave the death penalty to four of them and jail terms to the other two for crimes committed during the Liberation War.

# Tall women

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linked to a 13 percent higher risk of getting cancer.  
"Ultimately, cancer is a result of processes having to do with growth, so it makes sense that hormones or other growth factors that influence height may also influence cancer risk," said lead author Geoffrey Kabat, senior epidemiologist at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University in New York.  
After 12 years of following women who entered the study without cancer, researchers found links between greater height and higher likelihood of developing cancers of the breast, colon, endometrium, kidney, ovary, rectum, thyroid, as well as multiple myeloma and melanoma.  
The height association remained even after scientists adjusted for factors that might influence these cancers, such as age, weight, education, smoking habits, alcohol consumption and hormone therapy.  
Some cancers saw an even higher risk among taller women, such as a 23 to 29 percent increase in the risk of developing cancers of the kidney, rectum, thyroid, and blood for each additional 10 centimeters of height.  
None of the 19 cancers studied showed a lower risk with greater height.  
The study did not establish a certain height level at which cancer risk begins to rise, and Kabat said it is important to remember that the increased risk researchers found was small.  
"It needs to be kept in mind that factors such as age, smoking, body mass index, and certain other risk factors have considerably larger effects," he said.  
"The association of height with a number of cancer sites suggests that exposures in early life, including nutrition, play a role in influencing a person's risk of cancer."

# Billboards choke Ctg

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dealing with hoardings, told The Daily Star that they had a draft policy, which was waiting for approval from the railway high-ups.  
He, however, could not provide details of the draft.  
More than 200 large hoardings were on railway land and hills in the port city and at least 35 were illegally installed, he said, adding that they would form a committee soon to prevent putting illegal hoardings on railway land.  
AQM Shahjalal Majumder, executive engineer of National Housing Authority, told The Daily Star that they had approved installations of many hoardings on their land despite not having any

policy in this regard.  
He said if the CCC issued a letter on the matter, they would take initiatives to remove the billboards.  
Anupam Saha, executive magistrate of the Chittagong Port Authority, said the estate department of the port authority supervised hoardings and if the department notifies them regarding any illegal ones on their land, they would conduct a drive to remove it.  
He too said that if the CCC issues a letter they would take action accordingly.  
Najia Shirin, executive magistrate to the CCC, said they would start sending letters to the port authority, railway and the National Housing Authority urging

them to remove illegal hoardings immediately.  
Abul Mansur, the CCC inspector of billboards, said the CCC had formed a 50-member team for conducting drives to remove illegal hoardings. Representatives from the other organisations must also take similar initiatives, he added.  
However, a CCC official, seeking anonymity, said the CCC had no official inspection committee to regularly monitor hoardings.  
A railway official, wishing not to be named, said leaders of Jubo League, Bangladesh Chhatra League and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal were behind the installation of illegal hoardings on CCC land.



The mangled wreckage of Awami League lawmaker Golam Shabur Tulu's microbus in Chumurdi area of Bhanga upazila in Faridpur yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

# AL MP killed in Faridpur

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Primary School Harunur Rashid were admitted to Bhanga Upazila Health Complex.  
Later, they were shifted to Faridpur Medical College Hospital as their condition deteriorated.  
At night, Golam Shahid Nilu and Harunur Rashid were flown to Dhaka by a helicopter for treatment.  
Shabur's body was also flown to the capital by another chopper. The law-

maker is survived by his wife, three daughters and a host of relatives.  
His first namaz-e-janaza will be held at the South Plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad today at 11:00am.  
Then his body will be flown to his home district Barguna for a second janaza. From there, the body would be brought back to Dhaka and will be buried at Banani graveyard, said an AL press release.  
President Abdul Hamid,

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, Deputy Speaker Shawkat Ali, LGRD Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam, Finance Minister AMA Muhiht, Communications Minister Obaidul Quader, Jute Minister Abdul Latif Siddique, Law Minister Shafique Ahmed, Land Minister Rezaul Karim Hira, Primary and Mass Education Minister Afsarul Ameen, Health Minister AFM Ruhul Haque, AL Joint

General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif and lawmaker Abdur Rahman expressed deep shock at the death of Shabur.  
In separate condolence messages, they said in Shabur's death, AL has lost a skilful and dedicated grassroots organiser.  
They prayed for the salvation of the departed soul and expressed sympathy to the bereaved family members and relatives of the legislator.

# Dhaka, Washington

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Labour Organisation on the recently announced Sustainability Compact."  
It said officials from USTR and the Departments of Labour and State will discuss with officials from Dhaka implementation of the Bangladesh Action Plan, given by the US government on July 19 along with a statement on labour rights and factory safety in

Bangladesh.  
Implementation of the actions outlined in the plan could provide a basis for US President Barack Obama to consider the reinstatement of the generalised system of preferences for Bangladesh.  
On June 27, the trade benefit was suspended due to Bangladesh's "insufficient progress in affording

internationally recognized labour rights".  
The suspension becomes effective on September 3.  
The July 19 action plan provides a list of measures related to fire and building safety, as well as worker rights in the garment industry, export processing zones, and shrimp sector.

# Most Indian

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Bangladesh while 46 percent picked Russia, said the poll that was published yesterday.  
Explaining the high trust in Dhaka, India's former high commissioner to Bangladesh Deb Mukharji told The Hindu: "I think this is largely to do with developments in the past five years where Bangladesh has addressed our security concerns very comprehensively whereas in previous regimes, trouble makers were given support."  
He said public attitudes often do not take history

into account but rather go by 'immediate impression and recent past'.  
"I am speculating that this could also be a result of a sense of guilt because India has not delivered what India should have delivered on and reciprocated, be it on Teesta waters or the land boundary agreement," he added.  
There is also a growing recognition that Bangladesh has performed well on social indicators.  
In their recent book "An Uncertain Glory" economists Amartya Sen, winner

of Nobel prize, and Jean Dreze have noted that India has a lot to learn from Bangladesh in human development index.  
The poll said 54 percent of the respondents feel India should have "no trust at all" in Pakistan while only 14 percent say there should be a "great deal" of trust or somewhat.  
Thirty-three percent of respondents of the poll said India should have trust in China while 31 percent believes there should be "no trust at all" in Beijing.

# Rush for Eid tickets

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within an hour.  
Yesterday, the Bangladesh Railway (BR) authority sold around 18,000 advance tickets for travel on August 4.  
Raihanul Abedin, a resident of Mirpur, said he had gone to Kamalapur Railway Station after having his Iftar on Thursday night.  
Though he was in the front section of a queue, he failed to buy a first class ticket, Raihanul said, adding that he finally returned home with 'showon' chair tickets for Mymensingh route.  
Asked about the complaint, Abu Taher, director general of BR, told The Daily Star the problem had arisen due to a small number of first class cabin available on different routes.  
Taher, who visited the station yesterday morning,

hoped that no complaint of selling tickets on the black market will arise this year as they had taken special measures.  
An official of BR said there were a cabin and a coach in each train for the first class passengers.  
Of the first class tickets reserved for a train, 25 percent are sold by e-ticketing, five percent are kept for VIP passengers, five percent for railways staff, he said, adding that the rest of the first class tickets are sold to passengers.  
Tickets of August 5 would be sold today, while those of August 6 tomorrow, August 7 on July 29 and August 8 on July 30.  
The advance sale of return ticket will start from August 2. Ticket of August 11 will be sold on August 2, while those

of August 12 on August 3, August 13 on August 4, August 14 on August 5 and August 15 on August 6.  
SPECIAL TRAIN  
Like the previous years, the rail authority has arranged special train services during Eid holidays this year.  
Two trains will start carrying passengers on Dhaka-Dewanganj-Dhaka and Chittagong-Chandpur-Chittagong routes, three days before the Eid.  
A couple of trains will also start running on Parbatipur-Dhaka-Parbatipur and Dhaka-Khulna-Dhaka routes three days before the Eid.  
Apart from these, a couple of trains will ply the Bhairab-Kishoreganj-Sholakiya and Mymensingh-Kishoreganj-Sholakiya routes.

ONLINE TICKET  
Passengers will be able to buy train tickets via internet. To purchase the ticket, they will have to visit: www.railway.gov.bd  
Twenty-five percent tickets will be sold online, said an official of the railway.  
BUS TICKETS  
Bus operators were taking advantage of people's desperation to go home for Eid, charging additional amount for advance tickets.  
Badsha Mollah had to pay Tk 550 for a ticket of August 7. Earlier, he used to pay Tk 400 for his journey to Chuadanga.  
Foyez Ahmed, counter manager of JR Paribahan at Gabtali, said they were charging Tk 550 which was Tk 500 last year for Dhaka-Chuadanga route.

# 6.2 quake hits off Vanuatu: USGS

AFP, Sydney  
A 6.2-magnitude quake hit off the South Pacific island of Vanuatu yesterday, the US Geological Survey said, but it was not expected to generate a tsunami.  
The US Geological Survey said the tremor at 0707 GMT was 135 kilometres (84 miles) deep and some 48 kilometres northeast of Luganville, and more than 270 kilometres from the capital Port Vila.  
Geoscience Australia estimated the quake at 5.7-magnitude and said it was unlikely to have caused any damage due to its depth.  
"If there was any damage it would only be light," duty seismologist Steve Tatham said.  
Earthquakes regularly hit near Vanuatu, with a 6.8-magnitude shaker hitting off the South Pacific island in December without generating a destructive tsunami.  
The island lies on the so-called "Pacific Ring of Fire", a zone of frequent seismic activity caused by friction between shifting tectonic plates.