



Highlights from the local media of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka

July 10th, 2017 | Volume: 3 - 4/7

[PM Sheikh Hasina calls international community to put pressure on Myanmar to take back Rohingyas](#)

bdnews24 | 10th July

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has urged the UNHCR and others in the international community to pursue Myanmar to take back Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh. She was speaking to visiting United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi at her parliament office on Sunday. The prime minister said the 'only and ultimate' solution to the prolonged refugee problem is to ensure a 'sustainable repatriation' of the Myanmar nationals to their country, the Prime Minister's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim told reporters.

[Taliban to be designated as global terrorists if pursues violence: Ghani](#)

Khaama Press | 9th July

President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani once again called on the Taliban group to join peace process, warning that the group will be designated as global terrorists if its pursues violence. Speaking during a conference in Kabul, President Ghani said the Taliban group should understand that time is not waiting for them. "They should wholeheartedly accept the peace process or they should get ready to be included in the international list of the globally designated terrorists," President Ghani said.

[JIT submits Panama probe report to SC today](#)

Dawn | 10th July

The most powerful, and perhaps, most controversial joint investigation team (JIT) in the country's history will submit its final report on alleged money laundering by the family of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to the Supreme Court today (Monday). Besides other evidence, the report will consist of the statements of PM Sharif; Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif; the PM's children Hussain, Hassan and Maryam Nawaz Sharif; son-in-law retired Captain Mohammad Safdar; PM's cousin Tariq Shafi; friend Javed Kayani and Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, who is the father-in-law of the PM's younger daughter.

AFGHANISTAN

[Ghani insists on more investments on water resources amid Iran concerns](#)

Khaama Press | 9th July

President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani has said the Afghan government is committed to more investments on

controlling the waters of Afghanistan for the national interests of the country as Iran is concerned that the construction of water dams could badly affect the country. Speaking during a gathering in Kabul on Sunday, President Ghani said the water resources could play a key role in the growth of the country, specifically in the agricultural sector. Calling water as one of the main natural resources of the country, President Ghani said the Afghan government will expedite efforts to invest more on water resources, specifically on its legal sector to turn the waters into the favor of the country.

[‘National Dialogue’ Soon to Address Ethnic Concerns: Ghani](#)

Outlook Afghanistan/ Pajhwok | 10th July

Informing the nation of launching in near future ‘a national dialogue’ to hear demands raised by different groups, President Ashraf Ghani on Sunday stressed reforms in government’s system and promised timely elections to the lower house and district councils. Ghani also emphasized on the importance of peace and stability in the country and promised the Wolesi Jirga or lower house elections would be held next year and the presidential poll at its due time in 2019. Cabinet members, ambassadors of aid-giving countries and representatives from some international partners of Afghanistan attended the day-long meeting organized by the Ministry of Finance.

BANGLADESH

[Illegal migration of Bangladeshis to Europe rising](#)

Prothom Alo | 7th July

There has been a rise in the number of Bangladeshis crossing the Mediterranean sea to illegally reach Europe. Bangladeshis are the highest among those detained while attempting to illegally enter Europe via the Middle East, West Asia and the bordering countries of Mediterranean. About 2,000 Bangladeshis attempting to go to Europe were stranded in Turkey. According to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Bangladeshis are the highest in number among the people crossing the Mediterranean sea in small dinghies. A total of 2800 Bangladeshi nationals reached Italy this year.

[Judges must not engage in inappropriate activities: Chief Justice](#)

The Daily Star | 10th July

Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha in a meeting with the judges of the Supreme Court yesterday cautioned them against getting involved in inappropriate activities. The image of the judiciary cannot be tarnished by the immoral activities of a few judges, he said while presiding over the full-court meeting where the judges of the appellate and high court divisions of the SC were present.

[India to review Chinese FDI in Bangladesh, other South Asian countries](#)

The Financial Express | 10th July

Indian government has decided to review the inflow of the foreign direct investment (FDI) from China to Bangladesh as well as other South Asian countries. The assessment is going to be conducted mainly from India’s national security perspective, according to a news item of The Hindu. “Given the increasing influence of China in the Indian sub-continent and South Asia, the study will be dynamic and is, among other things, expected to look into various trends, tracking a surge, if any, in Chinese FDI in the region,” the report added.

BHUTAN

[ACC suspends top RICBL executives](#)

Kuensel | 8th July

The Royal Insurance Corporation of Bhutan Ltd's (RICBL) management board yesterday suspended its top two executives for investigation of a case concerning collusive practices surrounding the investment of RICBL fund in Nubri Capital Private Ltd. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Namgay Lhendup and Executive Director (ED) Sonam Dorji were suspended after the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), which is investigating the suspected fraud and collusion, directed the insurance company's board of directors to suspend them from work with immediate effect.

[FabLab Bhutan to foster innovative minds](#)

Kuensel | 8th July

Bhutan's 21st century education system will receive a significant impetus with the inauguration of FabLab Bhutan on July 20. Fablab or fabrication laboratory will provide a space to innovative minds. The lab will provide access to modern means for invention and innovation. David Cool, the founder of FabLab in Bhutan, said that he hopes to see young people come forward.

MALDIVES

[Muizzu: Economic benefit to citizens more important than pride](#)

Sun Online | 9th July

Economic benefit from the China-Maldives Friendship Bridge to Maldivian citizens is more important to the government than the pride and prestige associated with such a task, says Minister of Housing and Infrastructure Dr. Mohamed Muizzu. Dr. Muizzu made the statement speaking to press following a tour of the bridge worksite last Wednesday. He noted that a bridge between Male' and Hulhule' had been a topic of discussion for years. And that previous administrations had made random attempts at the project.

[Maldives Ports Limited \(MPL\) to reduce free storage period](#)

Sun Online | 9th July

Maldives Ports Limited (MPL) has decided to bring some changes to their free storage policy for imported goods. A statement issued by MPL said that they are having a shortage of space at the cargo storage warehouses which sometimes delay the off loading of cargo vessels. MPL said that as they aim to off load the vessels without delay and arrange the customs clearing, the company has decided to reduce the duration of free storage. The company currently allows ten days of free storage after import.

MYANMAR

[UK minister reaffirms commitment to Yangon](#)

Myanmar Times | 10th July

"Burma is advancing down the path to democracy, peace and prosperity. I was encouraged by the progress made towards inclusive peace at the recent peace conference which will encourage better and faster economic development, reducing both poverty in the country and Myanmar's dependence on aid in the future. "Burma still faces serious development challenges, and the UK remains committed to helping the country tackle these to make

sure all of its people are healthy, educated and do not go hungry,” said the minister, according to a statement released by the British Embassy in Yangon on July 7.

[Decentralisation of financial powers fosters revenue collection](#)

Myanmar Times | 10th July

The International Growth Centre (IGC) published a policy note, Local resource mobilisation, on May 2, outlining the principles and recommendations for Myanmar’s fiscal and revenue decentralisation, with a focus on sub-national revenue collection. The IGC is a research centre based at the London School of Economics and Political Science in partnership with the University of Oxford, and funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). It is headquartered in London but has an office in Yangon.

NEPAL

[Local levels can get more budget: Minister](#)

The Himalayan Times | 9th July

Minister of Finance Gyanendra Bahadur Karki today told the Parliament that the local levels could get more budget from next year if they performed well. Responding to queries and comments by lawmakers over this year’s budgetary allocations Minister Karki said, “For this year, the government allocated the budget as seed amount as it lacked clear idea about the actual competence of local levels.” He said equal amount of budget was distributed to same categories of local levels mainly because the commission for distribution of natural resources and finance among center, province and local levels was yet to be formed. Minister Karki told the Parliament that the new budget focused on strengthening federalism.

[NRB raises credit for productive sector](#)

The Himalayan Times | 10th July

Nepal Rastra Bank has directed commercial banks to increase the flow of credit to the ‘productive’ sector by five percentage points to 25 per cent of their total lending. Unveiling the monetary policy for fiscal 2017-18 here today, the central bank prioritised lending to the ‘productive’ sector, which encompasses hydropower, agriculture, tourism, export, small and medium industries, pharmaceuticals, cement and garments. The central bank has directed class ‘A’ financial institutions to extend 10 per cent of their total credit to agriculture, five per cent to tourism, five per cent to hydro-power and the remaining five per cent to other productive sectors. This is the first time the monetary policy has determined credit extension for tourism sector.

[NOC increases Thankot depot’s petrol storage capacity to 5,300 KL](#)

The Himalayan Times | 10th July

Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC) has increased the petrol storage capacity at its Thankot depot by almost five-folds to 5,300 kilolitres. In a bid to ensure smooth supply of petrol in Kathmandu Valley, two kerosene reservoirs, each of 2,100 kilolitres capacity, which had remained unused following a drastic fall in consumption of kerosene, have been converted into petrol tanks, informed Sitaram Pokharel, spokesperson for NOC. NOC supplies fuel for Kathmandu Valley from its Thankot depot. Prior to this, NOC had capacity to store only 1,100 kilolitres of petrol at its Thankot depot which could cater to the demand of petrol in Kathmandu Valley for just two days.

PAKISTAN

[In power-short Pakistan, switch to solar power hit by rumours](#)

Express Tribune | 10th July

Power outages scheduled by the strained public electric utilities frequently hit households, lasting as long as 10 hours a day in towns and cities and up to 16 hours in rural areas. The situation is worst during the brutally hot summer months, when air-conditioners often overload the national grid. Buying solar panels to create power at home might seem an obvious way to bridge the gap. Unscrupulous local utility officials, spoke about the dark-colored solar panels, built to absorb the sun's rays and convert them to electricity, and would increase the ambient heat in the buildings they were attached to, pushing the temperature indoors even higher.

SRILANKA

['Political ghosts with double-standards' oppose steps to prevent enforced disappearances - Minister Mangala Samaraweera](#)

Colombo Page| 9th July

Sri Lankan Minister Mangala Samaraweera says 'political ghosts with double-standards' are opposing steps to prevent enforced disappearances in the future. The Minister said in a statement that some sections divided over politics have opposed the Bill on Prevention of Disappearances, which is aimed at preventing forcible abduction, disappearance or imprisonment of citizens in future. Sri Lanka signed the International Covenant on Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance on December 10, 2015, and the government ratified it on May 25, 2016. In order to give legal validity to this, the relevant draft bill was gazetted on 09 May 2017 and submitted to parliament for approval.

[Sri Lanka third on list of foreign diaspora in Coimbatore](#)

Colombo Gazette| 10th July

Sri Lanka has come third on the list of foreign diaspora in Coimbatore in India, according to The Hindu newspaper. Iranians have topped the list. As per statistics provided by the City Police, 75 Iranians are residing in Coimbatore as on May 31, of which 73 are students pursuing various courses in educational institutions. The list also shows the potential of the city as an employer of foreigners. It shows that 46 foreigners are employed in Coimbatore with Indonesia and Germany at the top positions with 15 and 10 employees at various establishments in Coimbatore. There are also five from Korea employed in Coimbatore.

[Sri Lanka FM, Qatar PM discuss enhancing bilateral relations](#)

Colombo Page| 10th July

Qatar's Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani met Sri Lanka's Foreign Affairs Minister Ravi Karunanayake, and the accompanying delegation at Al Bahr Palace in Doha on 9th June. They discussed bilateral relations and means of enhancing them in addition to the latest developments in the region, the official Qatar News Agency said. The meeting reviewed the bilateral relations between the two countries and means of enhancing and promoting them in all fields, especially in the political areas and economic partnership.

About Ananta Aspen Centre

Ananta Aspen Centre is an independent and not-for-profit organisation that seeks to foster positive change in society through dissemination of knowledge. The Centre facilitates discussions on issues of international significance, values-based leadership and cross-sector outreach by engaging the civil society, government, private sector, and other key stakeholders.

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