

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

July 11th, 2016 | Volume: 2 - 5/7

TOP STORIES

[NATO to Fund Afghan Forces Through 2020: Stoltenberg](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 10th July
NATO on Saturday decided to sustain its Resolute Support (RS) Mission beyond 2016 in Afghanistan and pledged to continue funding Afghan National Security forces through 2020.

[Decision to ban airing Peace TV](#)

Prothom Alo | 10th July
The cabinet committee on law and order on Sunday decided to ban transmission of Peace TV that broadcasts speeches by Mumbai-based Islamic scholar Zakir Naik. A cabinet committee meeting, presided over by industries minister Amir Hossain Amu, took the decision, following the 1 July Dhaka attack in which one of the militants was allegedly inspired by Peace TV's Zakir Naik's speeches. Naik is under the scanner in India as well, as various reports criticised the preacher.

[India's Petronet aims to setup LNG terminal in Sri Lanka](#)

Colombo Page | 11th July
India's biggest player in liquefied natural gas (LNG), New-Delhi based Petronet LNG, is planning to set up a regasification terminal in Sri Lanka as part of a strategy to expand its footprint outside the country.

AFGHANISTAN

[Taliban worried as ISIS loyalists attempts to expand foothold in Afghanistan](#)

Khaama Press | 10th July

The Taliban militants group is worried regarding the attempts made by the loyalists of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group, saying they are aware of the problems and consequences the country and region could face.

[Canada pledges \\$440 million in military, civilian aid to Afghanistan](#)

Khaama Press | 10th July

The government of Canada has pledged a total of \$440 million in aid to Afghanistan to support the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) and civilian development projects.

[NATO Summit Vows Not to Leave Afghanistan Alone](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 10th July

The NATO summit of heads of states and governments in Poland on Saturday pledged to standby Afghanistan and not allow the country to become safe heavens for terrorists again.

BANGLADESH

[PM Hasina vows to be as tough as needed](#)

UNB/ The Daily Star | 11th July

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government would be as tough as needed to stamp out the scourge of militancy from the country. "We will be very tough and do whatever is necessary to eliminate militancy...we must combat the man-made disaster along with natural calamities," she said.

[Bangladesh improves position on Fragile States Index 2016 report](#)

Bdnews24 | 10th July

Bangladesh has inched closer towards more stable nations, sliding from last year's 32nd position to settle at 36 on the Fragile States Index, this year's report reveals. The Fragile States Index analyses various social, economic and other parameters to prepare a list of fragile nations and rates them in descending order. A slide down the list is an indicator of development on the index.

[US, India discuss Bangladesh security issues in Dhaka following terror attacks](#)

Bdnews24 | 11th July

The visiting US point person for South Asia, Nisha Desai Biswal, has once again met the Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka, Harsh Vardhan Shringla, to discuss security issues in Bangladesh. Biswal arrived in Dhaka Sunday on a two-day visit following the terror attacks and met Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali and Foreign Secretary Md Shahidul Haque to offer US expertise in combating terrorism.

BHUTAN

[Fiscal incentives not hitting target](#)

Kuensel | 10th July

The fiscal incentives rendered to the business establishments through the Economic Development Policy (EDP) did not benefit the cottage and small industries but 39 high-end hotels and nearly 80 percent of business entities availing tax holidays located in Thimphu, Paro and Bumthang.

[Lack of irrigation water puts Govt. under pressure](#)

Kuensel | 10th July

Delayed monsoon and drying water sources is causing irrigation problems leaving farmers in Thimphu, Punakha, Wangdue, and Trongsa at the mercy of the environment and dependent on the interventions of agriculture ministry.

MALDIVES

[Housing Minister Muizzu: Reports of delays in bridge project – baseless](#)

Sun Online | 10th July

Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Dr. Mohamed Muizzu has said that the bridge being built between Male' and Hulhule' was going ahead on schedule, and that reports of delays in the project were baseless. He made the statement in a tweet sent out via his official Twitter account on Sunday night. He also said in his tweet that the bridge was expected to be unveiled on July 26, 2018 – Independence Day.

[President ratifies amendment, allowing lease of islands without open-bidding](#)

Sun Online | 10th July

President Abdulla Yameen has ratified the amendment to Tourism Act, allowing for lease of islands, lagoons and land for tourism without an open-bidding process. Yameen signed off on the amendment on Sunday. The amendment was passed by People's Majlis on June 29, during the 7th sitting of its second session..

MYANMAR

[Aung San Suu Kyi to meet with UNFC Chairman N'Ban La on 17 July](#)

Mizzima | 11th July

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the United Nationalities Federation Council's Delegation for Political Negotiation (DPN) led by N'Ban La will hold talks on 17 July in Yangon for the first time, state media reported on 11 July.

[NLD 'Will Not Take Ma Ba Tha Demands Seriously'](#)

The Irrawaddy | 8th July

Win Htein, spokesperson for the National League for Democracy (NLD), said that the party will not take seriously a demand by ultra-nationalist monks that the government punish a regional minister for recent remarks criticizing their hardline Buddhist group.

NEPAL

[MPs urge India to expedite projects](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 11th July

Amid reports that India-funded projects in Nepal are not making satisfactory progress, visiting Nepali lawmakers have requested the Indian side to speed up the construction of pending projects to enhance an environment of trust between the two countries.

[Delay in bridge repair affects Darchula villages](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 11th July

People in several VDCs of Darchula district have been affected as a suspension bridge at the Nepal-India border over Mahakali River is out of order for the past two months.

[Fuel supply pact with China not likely any time soon](#)

My Republica | 11th July

Putting aside plan to sign commercial petroleum supply agreement with China, the government has started a study on the prospects of producing fuel in the country itself.

[Central bank likely to tighten monetary policy](#)

My Republica | 11th July

Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) is tightening its monetary policy for the fiscal year 2016/17 to balance the government's expansionary fiscal policy, according to the officials at the central bank.

PAKISTAN

[Trial of suspects in Mumbai attacks case stalled](#)

DAWN|11th July

The trial of seven Pakistani suspects in the Mumbai attacks case remains at a standstill due to a row between the governments of Pakistan and India over the testimony of 24 Indian witnesses. In January this year, the government contacted its Indian counterpart asking it to send the 24 witnesses to Pakistan to testify against the seven suspects, including the alleged mastermind of the attacks.

[Pakistan friend or foe, asks US Congress panel](#)

DAWN|11th July

Senior US lawmakers and their witnesses are gathering on Capitol Hill on Tuesday to once again ask Pakistan if it is America's friend or foe. The House Subcommittees on Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Trade and Asia and the Pacific are jointly holding this hearing, hoping that it would help them determine how to deal with Pakistan, an old ally many in Congress no longer trust.

[Sartaj Aziz fends off Afghan claims, pledges sincerity](#)

The Express Tribune|11th July

Pakistan is making sincere efforts for peace in Afghanistan even as Kabul continues to blame Islamabad for its instability, Prime Minister's Adviser on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz said on Sunday.

[Sindh, KP accuse centre of stealing their electricity](#)

The Express Tribune|11th July, 2016

Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have accused the centre of stealing their share of electricity and never consulting the provincial governments while planning development projects as a result of which the people and industries in the two provinces suffer a lot.

SRI LANKA

[China says relationship with Sri Lanka is now healthy](#)

Colombo Gazette| 9th July

The relationship between China and Sri Lanka has returned to healthy and stable development after the change of Sri Lankan government, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Saturday.

[Joint opposition wants a no-confidence motion against FM now](#)

Colombo Page| 10th July

Sri Lanka's self-appointed joint opposition in parliament now wants to bring a no-confidence motion against Minister of Foreign Affairs Mangala Samaraweera.

[Nigeria wants to elevate relations with Sri Lanka to a higher level](#)

Colombo Gazette| 11th JulyThe High Commissioner of Sri Lanka in Nigeria Thambirajah Raveenthiran paid a courtesy call on the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nigeria Geoffrey Onyeama. During the brief courtesy call the Minister and the High Commissioner exchanged views on the matters of common interests to both Countries.

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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