

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

October 12th, 2016 | Volume: 2 - 5/10

[China seeks Bangladesh media cooperation to bolster political, economic ties](#)

bdnews24 | 11th October

Chinese media leaders have solicited Bangladesh media's "positive role" ahead of President Xi Jinping's Oct 14 visit to buoy up both political and economic relations. Editors of the local media at the "China-Bangladesh Media Dialogue" in Dhaka on Tuesday suggested a direct flow of information and the exposure of journalists to China's media world for a better understanding of issues at stake.

[Pakistan seeks bigger Saarc to counter India's influence](#)

DAWN | 12th October

Pakistan is exploring the possibility of creating a greater South Asian economic alliance to counter India's controlling hold on the eight-member South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc), diplomatic observers say. A parliamentary delegation from Pakistan, which is now in New York, pitched this idea during its five-day visit to Washington last week.

[Japan grants Rs. 48 billion loan package to Sri Lanka for economic and social development](#)

Colombo Page | 10th October

The Government of Japan has granted Sri Lanka a loan package of Japanese Yen 33,137 million (approximately Rs. 48 billion) consisting of two loans aimed at facilitating the economic and social development in the country.

AFGHANISTAN

[Taliban pushed back in Farah: Officials](#)

Afghanistan Times | 10th October

Taliban insurgents retreated from Farah city, the capital of the province with the same name when air strikes targeted them, security officials said Monday. Provincial police spokesman, Ibal Bayer, said that the Taliban insurgents came under attack from four different directions late Sunday which at least 27 insurgents were killed. In the meantime, Raz Mohammad Oryakhil, a military commander from 207 Zafar Military Corps believes that "Farah city would not collapse to the insurgents and the security forces would clear the district from presence of militants soon."

[14 killed, 43 injured in attack on worshippers marking Ashoura in Kabul](#)

Afghanistan Times | 11th October

Terrorists targeted Ashoura mourners in the Afghan capital Kabul late on Tuesday in which at least 14 people killed and 43 were injured as they gathered to celebrate Ashoura, one of the most important festivals on the Shia-Muslim calendar. At least one attacker was killed, interior ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said.

BANGLADESH

[Saudi Arabia receives high priority in Bangladesh's foreign policy: Shahriar](#)

bdnews24 | 10th October

Saudi Arabia will always receive “high priority” in Bangladesh’s foreign policy, the state minister for foreign affairs has said. Md Shahriar Alam, during a meeting with Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir, noted that being the host and custodian of the two holy mosques, the Kingdom will always have a place in the “hearts and minds” of Bangladesh’s people.

[Bangladesh army orders single C295W airlifter](#)

The Financial Express | 12 October

The Bangladesh Army has ordered a single Airbus Defence and Space (DS) C295W tactical transport aircraft to be delivered in the second half of 2017, the company announced on 11 October, according to a report by www.janes.com. The Bangladesh Army is to receive a single C295W airlifter in the second half of 2017. (Airbus DS)

[Japan sending delegation to check on Bangladesh's security scenario](#)

bdnews24 | 11th October

A Japanese delegation will “soon” visit Bangladesh to get a security update, a parliamentary vice-minister for foreign affairs has said. Kiyoshi Odawara in a meeting with his Bangladesh counterpart Md Shahriar Alam in Bangkok, however, assured that Tokyo would continue to remain as “strong development partner” of Dhaka. The meeting took place on the sidelines of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) that ended on Monday in Bangkok, the foreign ministry said on Tuesday.

BHUTAN

[PM attends ACD summit](#)

Kuensel Online|11th October

Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay attended the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) summit in Bangkok, Thailand, yesterday. Lyonchoen, in his statement at the summit, reiterated Bhutan’s commitment to pursue the shared aspiration and interests of the ACD community. During Lyonchoen’s time in Bangkok, he also called on the Prime Minister of Thailand, visited the Grand Palace, and met with Bhutanese students

[Apple production falling](#)

Kuensel Online|11th October

More than half of the apples produced in the country are exported and yet Bhutanese apples constitute only 3.55 percent of the total apple market in India and just 1.22 percent in Bangladesh. This is on an average between 2008 and 2012. The findings are according to an export market analysis on apples conducted by the Department of Agricultural Marketing and Cooperatives (DAMC) to validate whether the production is on decline as reported by the Bhutan Exporters’ Association (BEA).

MALDIVES

[Maldives earns MVR 11.49 bn in tax by end of third quarter](#)

Sun Online | 11th October

State has earned total MVR 11.49 billion in tax revenue through Maldives Inland Revenue Authority (MIRA) by end of third quarter. Statistics released by MIRA show the State earned 11.49 billion in tax revenue by end of September, which is an increase compared to the MVR 10.53 billion it received during the same period last year.

[President: I have no problem with Afrasheem murder talk](#)

Sun Online | 11th October

President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom has said that he had no problem with people talking about the murder of former lawmaker and Islamic scholar, Dr. Afrasheem Ali. President Yameen made the remark in his speech during his special visit to Fuvahmulah last Monday – in which he said that talk of Afrasheem’s murder should, however, not escalate into defamatory comments against anyone.

MYANMAR

[U.S. gems and jewellery reps return to Myanmar](#)

Mizzima|11th October

Representatives of the U.S. gem and jewellery industry have made their first visit to Myanmar since President Barack Obama said the country will lift remaining economic sanctions, trade website *Diamonds.net* reported on 10 October. According to the report, the delegation was aimed at re-establishing lines of commerce between the two nations.

[UK Government to strengthen gas sector in Myanmar](#)

Mizzima|11th October

A UK Government-supported programme, to strengthen the development of a modern, dynamic oil and gas sector in Myanmar, is to be launched later this month, according to a joint press release from the British Embassy in Yangon and Aberdeen International Associates (AIA). Mr Gordon McIntosh, Aberdeen City Council's former Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure, and now Director and Chairman of AIA, will visit Myanmar from 17-23 October. He will meet with Myanmar's Government to identify areas where British expertise and experience can help build the capacity of government officials in areas

[Myanmar buries slain police in restive Rakhine as troops pour in](#)

Mizzima|12th October

Myanmar's border guard on Tuesday buried nine officers killed in mysterious raids in the western state of Rakhine, as the military tightened control over a region long scarred by violence between Buddhists and Muslims. Uniformed officers carried the wooden coffins draped with national flags through rain and thick mud before laying them to rest in a cemetery in the town of Maungdaw.

[Prisoners in Mandalay Region protest for better conditions](#)

Mizzima|12th October

Hundreds of prisoners held in a jail in Mandalay Region held a rare protest on Tuesday calling for the replacement of the prison's superintendent and to demand greater rights, a government official said. Min Tun Soe, deputy director of the Correctional Department of Ministry of Home Affairs, said about 700 prisoners in Myingyan Prison in Mandalay Region, central Myanmar, began shouting slogans at around 7 am.

NEPAL

[Minister Mahat attends ACD forum](#)

RSS / My Republica | 11th October

Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Prakash Sharan Mahat has said terrorism, religious extremism, violence and organized crime have become a challenge in the Asia region as well. He said this while addressing the Second Summit of the Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) in Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, today. He underlined the need of collective efforts for controlling such activities taking them as crime against humanity.

PAKISTAN

[China aims to thaw frosty India, Pakistan ties](#)

The Express Tribune|12th October

A senior official of China's foreign ministry voiced hope on Tuesday that tensions between Pakistan and India will defuse after the upcoming summit of five emerging economic powers in a western Indian state later this month.

[Country's biggest port set to begin trial run](#)

DAWN|12th October

After a delay of about six years, the country's biggest port strategically located at the eastern side of the Karachi port with a capacity of handling mother ships is set to begin test operations in the first week of next month.

[Pakistan's ecommerce industry to surpass 'several hundred million dollars' by 2020](#)

The Express Tribune|12th October

Pakistanis are likely to spend "several hundred million dollars" on online shopping by 2020 as a greater part of the country adopts digital technology and sees the launch of more ecommerce portals. Pegged by greater smartphone penetration and digital payments solutions, the country's ecommerce industry is expected to grow to "several hundred million dollars by 2020 from the current figure of \$30 million", said the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) in its Annual Report 2016.

SRI LANKA

[Sri Lanka signs DC Sustainability Pledge in US](#)

Colombo Gazette| 11th October

Demonstrating the support for the District of Columbia's environmental and sustainability goals, Sri Lanka's Ambassador to the US, Prasad Kariyawasam joined over 62 Ambassadors and Embassy representatives at the Embassy of Italy to sign the DC Sustainability Pledge.

[Sri Lanka cabinet to take final decision on signing ETCA with India, Minister says](#)

Colombo Page| 10th October

The proposed Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement with India will be signed only if it is beneficial to the people in Sri Lanka and the cabinet of ministers will make the final decision on the pact, a government minister said.

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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