

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

July 15th, 2016 | Volume: 2 - 7/7

[Vicious criticism of Pakistan by US Congress panel](#)

DAWN|14th July

A US congressional panel has demanded cutting off all US assistance to Pakistan to persuade Islamabad to act against the Afghan Taliban groups allegedly using its territory to launch operations into Afghanistan, a move that Foreign Affairs Adviser Sartaj Aziz says is motivated by “baseless concerns” of “a section of US lawmakers”.

[Nabil release secret docs about Pakistan’s support to Afghan militants](#)

KhaamaPress| 15th July

The former Afghan Intelligence, National Directorate of Security (NDS) Chief, Rahmatullah Nabil has released classified documents about the support of Pakistan to the Afghan militant groups, specifically the notorious Haqqani terrorist network. The six documents released by Nabil include formal letters by Pakistani military and the military intelligence of the country, Inter Services Intelligence (ISI).

[Bangladesh targets 8 percent growth in export earnings for FY 2016-17](#)

Bdnews24 | 14th July

Bangladesh government plans to achieve a \$37 billion mark in export earnings in 2016-17 financial year, which started from July 1, a growth target that is 8 percent more than the last fiscal’s. Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed set the new target at a meeting on Thursday, a day after latest data showed that export earnings jumped 10 percent in the 2014-15 fiscal compared with the previous fiscal. “Our target is to export goods worth \$37 billion and increase growth by 8 percent. And we’ll cross this target in future,” he said.

AFGHANISTAN

[Pakistan uses terrorism as a tool for its strategic needs: US lawmaker](#)

KhaamaPress| 14th July

A US lawmaker has said Pakistan is using terrorism as a tool for its strategic needs as a handful of US lawmakers sought additional measures against Pakistan insisting that the country has failed to take action against terrorist groups. Keating is a ranking member of the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Non-Proliferation and Trade.

[India pledges \\$25 million in fresh aid to Afghanistan](#)

KhaamaPress| 14th July

The government of India has pledged a fresh aid to \$25 million to Afghanistan which would be utilized to fund

micro development projects in the country. Ten Memorandums of Understanding were signed in the presence of Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah, Indian Ambassador to Afghanistan Manpreet Vohra and some Afghan ministers.

[No plans to revive peace talks with Taliban, says Afghan official](#)

KhaamaPress | 14th July

An official in ARG Presidential Palace has said there are no plans to revive peace talks with the Taliban group as efforts to bring the group have not yielded any positive result. President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani's spokesman Haroon Chakhansuri has told The Associated Press that a four-nation group comprising Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and the United States has no plans to meet again after previous rounds of meetings produced no results.

[The Outcome of Warsaw Summit!](#)

DailyOutlookAfghanistan | 14th July

With the escalating militancy and terrorist attacks, Afghan civilian and soldiers have sustained large casualties within the last two years despite having the upper hand in battlefields. Afghanistan is in the throes of insurgency as the Taliban declared "Omari Operation" and the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) gained foothold in the country.

BANGLADESH

[Worried yet rallying for Bangladesh](#)

The Daily Star | 15th July

The foreigner community in Bangladesh is diverse not only in country of origin but life situation. Some arrive to fill short-term contracts; for others Bangladesh is home. Regardless of circumstances, the Gulshan and Sholakia attacks give reason to reconsider their future address. Chinese national Ying, employed in the education sector, has lived in Bangladesh for over a decade. She has a Bangladeshi family. "Bangladesh has problems," she says, "poverty, poor infrastructure, corruption and a violent political culture; but there's steady progress and I'm happy to work for its development. The main attraction is its big-hearted people."

[BNP hobnobbers again ask Khaleda Zia to sever ties with Jamaat-e-Islami](#)

Bdnews24 | 15th July

The call came from pro-BNP professionals Rafiq-ul Haque and Zafrullah Chowdhury on Thursday night in the wake of Khaleda's call for a concerted anti-terror stand after the Gulshan and Sholakia attacks. Several people who attended a meeting convened by Khaleda at her Gulshan office confirmed Rafiq and Zafrullah's positions.

[Bangladesh targets 8 percent growth in export earnings for FY 2016-17](#)

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BHUTAN

[Search continues for missing workers](#)

Kuensel | 14th July

At least 100 individuals combed the banks of the Amochhu yesterday in search of the seven non-Bhutanese labourers who were washed away when the Denchukha-Dophuchen bridge located in Pultar, Dorokha dungkhag in Samtse collapsed on July 11.

[Improved mobile and internet services by August end](#)

Kuensel | 14th July

Mobile and internet services are expected to improve when the ongoing infrastructure upgradation initiatives of Bhutan Telecom and Tashi InfoComm are completed by the end of August. Bhutan Telecom is erecting five new 3G towers in Thimphu and 17 additional 3G towers in other dzongkhags. The company is also upgrading its 3G network bandwidth from 1.5 gigabits per second (Gbps) to 3 Gbps.

MALDIVES

[PPM summoned to court](#)

Sun Online | 15th July

Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM) has received notice to attend Civil Court in the lawsuit filed by PPM lawmakers Hulhudhoo MP Mohamed Shahid and Naifaru MP Ahmed Shiyam. Shahid had spoken to “Sun” on Thursday and said the lawmakers had retracted their lawsuit as PPM leader, former Maldivian President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom had relinquished his hold over committee meetings. Civil Court has however served notice to PPM, summoning them to court on Sunday, at 1:30 pm.

MYANMAR

[Suu Kyi and Committee Stakeholders Discuss Challenges in Arakan State](#)

The Irrawaddy | 14th July

As head of the Central Committee for Arakan State Peace, Stability and Development, Aung San Suu Kyi invited stakeholders to discuss in Naypyidaw the challenges they face when implementing local development projects, according to a statement from the State Counselor’s Office.

NEPAL

[India provides Rs 219.9 million for construction of Dharmashala](#)

My Republica | 15th July

Construction of Nepal-Bharat Maitri Pashupati Dharmashala at Tilganga is set to commence after the Embassy of India, Kathmandu, awarded the contract for the construction to Lama-Raman JV on Thursday.

[Govt releases monetary policy for FY 2016/17](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 14th July

Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB), the central bank of the country, on Thursday released the Monetary Policy for the Fiscal Year 2016/17, focusing on harmonising with the goals and priorities adopted by the budget as well as the national and international economic outlook.

[PM tells lawmakers to brace no confidence vote](#)

My Republica | 15th July

Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has informed CPN-UML lawmakers about his plan to face no confidence motion registered against him in parliament and not to quit the government voluntarily.

[Swarup mum on developments in Kathmandu](#)

My Republica | 15th July

India has refrained from making official comments on the recent political developments in Nepal. Speaking at a weekly media briefing here on Thursday, Spokesperson for the External Affairs Ministry of India Vikas Swarup

said the recent political developments in Kathmandu are the country's internal matters. "How can I make comments on something that is internal matter of Nepal," Swarup said.

[Cannot risk nat'l interests in the name of good neighbourly relation: PM](#)

The Kathmandu Post| 15th July

Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, who now faces a no-confidence motion in the parliament, said he cannot compromise national security on the name of maintaining cordial relationship with neighbours.

PAKISTAN

[UN chief offers mediation](#)

DAWN|14th July

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon stands ready to mediate peace talks between Pakistan and India amid heightening tensions, provided the two neighbours accept his good offices, a spokesman said on Wednesday.

[Move to give anti-terror law a new lease of life](#)

DAWN|15th July

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz government on Thursday started efforts to get the period of the antiterrorism law — Protection of Pakistan Act (PoPA) — extended, with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif constituting a four-member committee to win the opposition's support for the purpose.

['Mumbai-style' terror bid foiled in Islamabad](#)

The Express Tribune|15th July

Islamabad's top cop revealed on Thursday that police thwarted a Mumbai-style terrorist attack in the federal capital in the first week of June. Inspector General of Police Tariq Masood informed the Senate Standing Committee on Interior that the terror bid was foiled with the help of surveillance cameras recently installed across the city under the multimillion-rupee Safe City Project.

SRI LANKA

[Germany awards Sri Lanka Euro 13 million Technical Cooperation Grant](#)

Colombo Page| 13th July

The Federal Republic of Germany has agreed to provide a Euro 13 million Technical Cooperation Grant to Sri Lanka during President Maithripala Sirisena's visit to Germany in February 2016.

[Call to include Batticaloa under India's railway project](#)

Colombo Gazette| 14th July

The willingness of the Indian government to lay a new railway line in Sri Lanka, connecting Trincomalee in the Eastern province with Medawachchiya in the North Central, has prompted a demand for including Batticaloa, another important city in the East, too under the proposed rail network.

[Sri Lanka can count on strong support of U.S. for economic growth - Biswal](#)

Colombo Page| 14th July

Colombo: As Sri Lanka continues on its path of economic reform towards growth, it can count on the strong support of the United States with development assistance and investments, a top ranking U. S. official said.

[Income generation increases in Q1](#)

Daily News| 15th July

The government's income generation has increased by 19.5% in the first three months of 2016, in comparison to the same period in 2015, the Finance Ministry said. During the corresponding period, the Gross National Income reported as Rs 2,903,036 million or a growth of 9.6%. It is against Rs 2,649,323 million during the first quarter of 2015. This is a growth of Rs 253,713 million this year.

[Sri Lanka plans to get preferential access to regional markets and resurrect GSP+ with EU to boost trade](#)

Colombo Page| 14th July

Sri Lanka has initiated negotiations with India to transform the existing Indo-Lanka Free Trade Agreement into a more comprehensive Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement (ETCA) and with China on a new comprehensive FTA to get preferential access to markets in the region, the Ministry of Development Strategies & International Trade 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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