



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

**July 21st, 2017 | Volume: 3 - 9/7**

[Terrorism rose in Bangladesh last year: US](#)

The Daily Star | 21<sup>st</sup> July

The US Department of State has said while terrorist attacks in 2016 decreased by 9 percent globally, at the same time Bangladesh experienced a significant increase in such activities. However, the department praised Bangladesh's efforts and cooperation with the United States and international community in counter terrorism, law enforcement and strengthening control of its borders.

[Nepal attracts Rs 15.17 billion in foreign investment in FY 2016\17](#)

My Republica | 20<sup>th</sup> July

Foreign investment worth Rs 15.17 billion has entered industry sector of the country in the fiscal year 2016\17, according to the Department of Industry (DoI). A total of 395 industries (small-scale 370, 16 medium and nine big) received the investment. Of the investment amount, Rs 6.22 billion had gone to big industries, Rs 1.17 billion to medium and Rs 7.61 billion to small. China topped the list of investors with a total of Rs 6.24 billion investment in the total 183 industries (six big, seven medium and 170 small).

['No safe haven': Pakistan rejects US report on Taliban, Haqqani network](#)

The Express Tribune | 20<sup>th</sup> July

Pakistan rejected on Thursday the US State Department's annual assessment that it did not take substantial action against the Afghan Taliban or Haqqani network or limit their ability to threaten US interests in Afghanistan. "We have taken indiscriminate and all out action against terrorists," Foreign Office Spokesperson Nafees Zakaria told reporters during his weekly press briefing, while reacting to the US State Department's annual "Country Reports on Terrorism."

**AFGHANISTAN**

[Taliban insurgents suffer casualties in US drone strike in Nangarhar](#)

Khaama Press | 20<sup>th</sup> July

The Taliban insurgents suffered casualties in an airstrike conducted by the US forces in eastern Nangarhar province of Afghanistan, the local officials said Thursday. The airstrike was carried out late on Wednesday night using Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, drone, in Lalpur district. The provincial government media office in a statement confirmed the airstrike on the Taliban insurgents.

### [Ghani Vows to Transform Afghanistan into Big Exporter](#)

Outlook Afghanistan/Pajhwok | 20<sup>th</sup> July

President Ashraf Ghani has promised facilitating the export of Afghanistan's fruits to different cities of India and giving traders access to the international market for fresh fruits. The president held out the promise during a video conference with governors of Kandahar, Baghlan, Ghazni, Parwan, Kunduz and Nangarhar provinces on Tuesday evening, his office said on Wednesday.

### [Trump Reviews Afghan Policy with Veterans](#)

Outlook Afghanistan/Pajhwok | 20<sup>th</sup> July

The US President Donald Trump Tuesday reviewed the Afghan policy with four Afghan war veterans as he told reporters that he wants to hear from them the situation on the ground. "These soldiers have) spent a lot of time in Afghanistan and (I am) going to be talking to you about Afghanistan. What you think, your views, these are people on the ground, know it probably better than everybody, I think you know it pretty well right? We're going to be getting some of your views," Trump said. Trump was joined by his National Security Advisors, Lt Gen H R McMaster and the Vice President Mike Pence at the Roosevelt Room luncheon with four military guests.

### [Kazakhstan Pledges Support for Afghan Air Force](#)

Outlook Afghanistan/Pajhwok | 20<sup>th</sup> July

The defence minister of Kazakhstan has pledged sharing its experiences with the nascent Afghan Air Force (AAF), the National Security Council (NSC) said on Wednesday. National Security Advisor (NSA) Mohammad Hanif Atmar, during his visit to Kazakhstan, met Beibut Atamkulov, defence and aerospace industry minister, a statement from the council said. He said regional countries had reached the conclusion that stability in Afghanistan was vital to regional peace and prosperity.

### [Indo-Afghan Commerce Chamber Stresses New Trade Opportunities](#)

Outlook Afghanistan/Pajhwok | 20<sup>th</sup> July

The Indo-Afghan Chamber of Commerce Director Mr. Kanwarjit Bajaj has met Afghan envoy to India and discussed the company background and future activities, a media report said on Wednesday. The meeting took place on Tuesday at the Afghan envoy Shaida Abdali's office in New Delhi. During the meeting, the Indo-Afghan Chamber of Commerce briefed the Ambassador about the company's background, activities and the future plans. Indo Afghan Chamber of Commerce provides a platform for traders of both the countries to interact with each other, get to know about the new trade opportunities at national and international levels.

## **BANGLADESH**

### [World Bank ready to help transform Dhaka](#)

The Daily Star | 21<sup>st</sup> July

If the government comes up with a clear vision and a new comprehensive plan, the World Bank is ready to support and finance the transformation of Dhaka, said Martin Rama, the WB chief economist for South Asia. "If there is request or interest from the government, I am sure there will be willingness from us," he said during an exclusive interview with The Daily Star at the Dhaka Sonargaon Hotel.

### [Bangladesh 2nd largest provider of 'online labour'](#)

The Financial Express | 20<sup>th</sup> July

Bangladesh is the second largest supplier of online labour, says a recent report, analysing data from e-platforms

connecting freelancers with employers. India is the traditional labour outsourcing destination for online labour accounting for 24 per cent of the total labour, according to Online Labour Index worker supplement study by the Oxford Internet Institute.

#### [Bangladesh tourists in India jump by 40pc in Jan-June](#)

The Financial Express | 21<sup>st</sup> July

Bangladeshi tourist arrival in India jumped by 40 per cent in the first half of the current calendar year, according to the latest statistics of Indian tourism ministry. The estimate showed that some 0.90 million Bangladeshi tourists visited India in January-June period of 2017 while the number was 0.64 million in the same period of 2016.

### **BHUTAN**

#### [Protests in Sri Lanka affect medical students](#)

Kuensel Online | 20<sup>th</sup> July

Classes for 120 Bhutanese medical students in Sri Lanka have been disrupted for more than five months following protests against the educational and medical standards of the only private medical university, South Asian Institute of Technology and Management (SAITM).

Department of Adult and Higher Education (DAHE) officials said that out of more than eight state medical universities in Sri Lanka, 35 Bhutanese students are studying medicine at the University of Colombo, 42 at University of Kelaniya, 43 at University of Peradeniya and 43 at Kotelawala Defense University (KDU). Except for KDU, which is under the armed forces, all other medical colleges including Universities of Colombo, Kelaniya and Peradeniya have been affected by anti-SAITM campaigns.

#### [“People are coming to register with us” DNT’s general secretary](#)

Kuensel Online | 20<sup>th</sup> July

With the election strategies chalked out, the Druk Nyamrup Tshogpa (DNT) has started preparing for next year’s parliamentary elections. The first priority for the party is to book their maiden berth in the general elections, which will ensure their place in the 47-member National Assembly either as an opposition or the ruling party. If DNT is to make it to the parliament, it must unseat either the ruling People’s Democratic Party or the opposition Druk Phuensum Tshogpa.

### **MALDIVES**

#### [Presidential Commission established to recover embezzled funds](#)

Sun Online | 20<sup>th</sup> July

A Presidential Commission – Commission on State Asset Recovery - has been set up to recover embezzled State funds. The announcement was made by Attorney General Mohamed Anil during a press conference held at President’s Office this Thursday morning. Anil said relevant authorities had come short in their efforts, and that the purpose of the commission was to recover State funds in cases of embezzlement identified by Auditor General’s Office and Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

### [Home Minister Azleen: Facilities for death sentence will be completed in two months](#)

Sun Online | 19<sup>th</sup> July

Home Minister, Ahmed Azleen has said that the facilities needed to carry out the death sentence are estimated to be completed in the next two months or so. Minister Azleen told Sun Media tonight that President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom has put him in charge to arrange the facilities to implement the death sentence and so the necessary arrangements are being made. And so the materials needed for it are being imported and the facilities will be completed in the next two months or so. But the exact date to begin implementing the death has not been decided yet.

### [Elections informs dismissal of four PPM MPs to Parliament](#)

Sun Online | 19<sup>th</sup> July

President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom has notified the PPM Council members that the Elections Commission has notified the parliament of the MPs that have lost the membership of PPM. A member of the PPM Council told Sun Media that in an emergency meeting of the council tonight, President Yameen has informed them that the Elections Commission have finalized the dismissal of four MPs and informed the decision to the parliament. The member said that MPs dismissed from the party are the MP for Maduvaari constituency, Mohamed Aameeth, MP for Thulusdhoo constituency, Mohamed Waheed Ibrahim, MP for Villingili constituency, Saud Hussain and the MP for Dhiddhoo constituency Abdul Latheef Mohamed.

## **MYANMAR**

### [Over 100 Myanmar nationals rescued after Thai authorities break migrant trafficking ring](#)

Mizzima | 21<sup>st</sup> July

Over 100 Myanmar nationals were rescued this week after Thai authorities busted a human trafficking ring on the outskirts of Bangkok, Myanmar state media reported on 21 July. Members of the Thai-based migrant rights organisation Aid Alliance Committee (AAC), Labour Rights Promotion Network-LRP were alerted on Tuesday about the ring after five victims managed to escape. That same evening, the AAC teamed up with the Thai Department of Special Investigation and went to a house in Mahachai — located approximately 45 kilometres southwest of Bangkok — where the victims were reportedly being held. There, they found 81 men and 38 women totalling 119 Myanmar workers who had had their passports confiscated by the brokers and were being forced to stay in the locked house with no access to external communication, the report said.

### [UNAIDS report finds AIDS-related deaths in Myanmar decreased by 52% in the past 6 years](#)

Mizzima | 21<sup>st</sup> July

A UNAIDS report on the global HIV epidemic finds AIDS-related deaths in Myanmar have dropped by 52% in the past 6 years which is the steepest decline in Asia and the Pacific, the organisation said. Since 2010, annual new HIV infections have also fallen by 26%. This is double the regional average of 13%. The new report Ending AIDS: Progress towards the 90-90-90 targets was launched at an event in Paris, France on 20 July.

### [Asean Politicians Demand Release of Myanmar Journalists](#)

The Irrawaddy | 20<sup>th</sup> July

Southeast Asian politicians called for the immediate release on Wednesday of three journalists arrested last month in Shan State and the cessation of laws in Myanmar used to curb media freedom. Asean Parliamentarians for Human Rights (APHR) released a statement rebuking the detention of The Irrawaddy's senior reporter Lawi Weng (U Thein Zaw), and Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) reporters U Aye Naing and Ko Pyae Phyo Naing after

the reporters' hearing date was unexpectedly moved forward a second time. "Myanmar authorities must immediately release and drop all charges against these dedicated journalists, who have been targeted on flimsy pretexts for simply doing their jobs," said APCR Chairperson Charles Santiago, a member of the Malaysian Parliament.

## NEPAL

### [NSPN and FSN to undergo merger by August 11, Yadav to be chairperson](#)

My Republica | 21<sup>st</sup> July

The unification process between Baburam Bhattra-led Naya Shakti Party, Nepal (NSPN) and Upendra Yadav-led Federal Socialist Forum-Nepal(FSN) has reached the final point. Preparations are being made for merging the two parties by August 11, it has been learned. "All the things except few trivial technical matters have already been settled as part of the preparations for the merger of the two parties", Rekha Yadav, a member of Political Committee under the FSN told Republica Online.

## PAKISTAN

### ['Bilawal to lead 'go Nawaz go' rallies in August'](#)

Dawn|21<sup>st</sup> July 2017

SAHIWAL PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will lead rallies in Attock and Sahiwal during the first week of the next month as a part of the first phase of party's 'go Nawaz go' campaign in Punjab. This was stated by PPP Punjab leader Nadeem Afzal Chan while talking to the media at the house of party's district president Zaki Chaudhry on Thursday.

### [NAB closed 129 cases against politicians since 2014](#)

Dawn|21<sup>st</sup> July 2017

Since 2014, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has closed 129 cases against different politicians, including 12 cases involving the Sharif family, according to the report of the Joint Investigation Team (JIT) probing money laundering allegations against Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his family members.

### [Robbers make off with Rs3m in year's fifth bank heist in Karachi](#)

Dawn|21<sup>st</sup> July 2017

Around a dozen suspects stormed a private bank in Gulshan-i-Iqbal on Thursday afternoon, held the security guards and staff at gunpoint and took away over Rs3 million as the management allegedly did not follow the standard operating procedure (SOPs) prescribed by the State Bank of Pakistan to prevent such robberies, police said.

### [Soldier martyred, 13 'terrorists' killed during Operation Khyber-IV](#)

Geo|20<sup>th</sup> July 2017

One soldier was martyred and 13 terrorists killed during the ongoing Operation Khyber-IV, Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement on Thursday. According to ISPR, the operation in Khyber Agency's Rajgal Valley was progressing as planned with troops including special services group clearing 90 square kilometres and now squeezing the terrorists.

## SRILANKA

### [UN Chief commends Sri Lankan government for establishing Office of Missing Persons](#)

Colombo Page| 21th July

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres congratulated the Sri Lankan Government for setting up an Office of Missing Persons (OMP). Farhan Haq, Deputy Spokesman for the Secretary-General in a statement said the Secretary-General commends the Government of Sri Lanka for establishing the Office of Missing Persons (OMP), "a significant milestone for all Sri Lankans still searching for the truth about their missing loved ones." "The United Nations stands ready to support this process and the Secretary-General looks forward to becoming operational as soon as possible, starting with the appointment of independent commissioners," said the Deputy Spokesman for the Secretary-General. Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena on Thursday signed the Office of Missing Persons gazette paving the way to set up the Office on Missing Persons.

### [Japan grants US\\$ 611,000 for demining activities in Northern Sri Lanka](#)

Colombo Page| 21th July

The Government of Japan has extended a grant assistance of US\$ 611,000 to Sri Lanka for de-mining activities in Northern Sri Lanka. The grant assistance from Japan aims to accelerate the Sri Lankan government's program to provide livelihood assistance to the resettled people in the North. The agreement for the grant assistance was signed yesterday at the Japanese Embassy in Colombo. The mine clearance project for livelihood development in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka is being implemented with the assistance of Japan. Over US \$ 30 million has been offered under the program to de-mining since 2003. Over the past three years, Japanese assistance has helped to clear over 100,000 landmines in the North and East.

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### ***About Ananta Aspen Centre***

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