

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

October 21st, 2016 | Volume: 2 - 9/10

[War Caused Over 8,000 Civilian Casualties This Year](#)

Khaama Press|20th October
The United Nations says the war in Afghan has caused more than 8,000 civilian casualties, including nearly 2,600 deaths, in the first nine months of 2016. The U.N. Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, UNAMA, while releasing the casualty toll Wednesday, renewed its call for all parties to the conflict to prevent harm to civilians. The Mission said it has been deeply concerned by the continuing increase in child casualties since 2013.

[Pakistan, US remain committed to expanding ties](#)

The Express Tribune|21st October
Pakistan and the United States remain committed to working together to expand bilateral and investment ties, aimed at tapping potential on both sides. The statement was made in a joint communiqué by US Trade Representative Michael B Froman and Pakistan Minister for Commerce Khurram Dastgir Khan at the end of the co-hosted 8th annual US-Pakistan Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) Council meeting held this week.

[Indian Foreign Secretary to visit Sri Lanka this weekend](#)

Colombo Gazette|19th October
Indian Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar is to visit Sri Lanka with a business delegation this weekend, to promote Indian business and investment in the island nation in accordance with the Narendra Modi Government's policy of using diplomacy to promote India's trade and investment abroad, the New Indian Express reported.

AFGHANISTAN

[Taliban's mine making factory destroyed in Helmand province](#)

Khaama Press|20th October
A factory producing Improvised Explosive Device (IED) for the Taliban militants was destroyed during an operation of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) in southern Helmand province. Officials in the 215th Maiwand Corps of the Afghan National Army (ANA) forces said the factory was destroyed during an operation in Nad-e-Ali district.

[US Supportive of Afghan Peace Bid, won't Engineer it](#)

Outlook Afghanistan|20th October
The United States is supportive of the Afghan-led peace process and is not looking to engineer it, a State Department official said on Tuesday, but declined detailing its role in the latest talks between Kabul and the Taliban in Qatar. "I'm not going to speak about what our role may or may not be with regard to this new initiative.

As we made clear before, we believe a peace accord is really the primary or the only pathway to ensuring peace and stability in Afghanistan,” the State Department deputy spokesman said.

BANGLADESH

[Enjoy freedom, but be more responsible:PM tells journos](#)

BSS/ The Daily Star| 21st October

Highlighting her government's various steps for the welfare of the mass media and journalists, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon all concerned to be more responsible while discharging their duties.

[Saudi to set up cement, power, paper plants in BD](#)

The Financial Express | 20th October

Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia signed a deal at a function on Thursday for installing cement, paper and power plants. On this account Saudi enterprise Al Rajhi Company for Industry and Trade signed a memorandum of understanding with state-run Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC), reports BSS citing an official statement.

BHUTAN

[Common forums for North Thimphu by-election begin today](#)

Kuensel Online| 20th October

Common forums for the by-election in the North Thimphu constituency will start today at the RNR centre in Kawang gewog although the election campaign officially began from October 14. Kezang Wangmo, 26, is the opposition DrukPhuensumTshogpa's (DPT) candidate while 33-year-old Tshering represents the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP). Kezang Wangmo said she has been busy meeting people to garner support for her candidature. Tshering has also started his campaign and is prepared for the common forums.

MALDIVES

[Indian HC encourages Maldivian student participation in Indian projects](#)

Sun Online | 20th October

Indian High Commissioner to Maldives, Akhilesh Mishra has called out for Maldivian students to be allowed to actively participate in projects run by Indian companies in Maldives. Speaking during the inauguration of luxury apartment project – Renaatus Ithaa Muiy – by RPP Group's subsidiary - Renaatus Projects in Hulhumale', Mishra spoke of the importance of strengthening individual relations between people of India and Maldives, same as the strength of diplomatic partnership between the two countries.

[Minister requests increase in quality of audit reports](#)

Sun Online | 20th October

Minister of Finance, Ahmed Munawwar has requested Auditor General's Office to increase the quality of its audit reports. Minister Munawwar made the appeal during his meeting with Public Finance Committee of People's Majlis on last Wednesday, October 19, to discuss proposed budget for AG Office for 2017. He stressed that simply issuing reports was not enough, and said that the reports lacked vital information Ministry of Finance needed for its work.

MYANMAR

[New Investment Law Enacted](#)

The Irrawaddy| 20th October

The long-awaited Myanmar Investment Law was signed into being by President U Htin Kyaw on Tuesday after both houses approved the bill earlier this month. The local business community is now waiting for State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to reveal the government's more detailed investment policies this coming Saturday. The release of vague policy outlines in late July had failed to satisfy investors and businessmen craving detail and substance.

[Suu Kyi conveys 'surgical strike' concerns to Delhi](#)

Mizzima | 20th October

Aung San Suu Kyi has cautioned the Indian government that she would not accept a repeat of New Delhi's chest-thumping violation of her country's territory last year, 'The Telegraph' reported. The Indian newspaper said that the caution came hours after India's junior home minister Kiren Rijiju publicly revived memories of that surgical strike in a tweet that was later deleted.

[DKBA Splinter Group Clashes with Burma Army, Casualties Reported](#)

The Irrawaddy | 20th October

Casualties were reported in fighting between a splinter group of the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA) and a joint force of the Burma Army and the allied Border Guard Force (BGF) on Wednesday in Kawkaik Township of Karen State. "During the attack, four of our soldiers died," Maj Saw San Aung, a leader of the DKBA splinter group—which calls itself the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army—told The Irrawaddy on Thursday. "The fighting lasted over 30 minutes and we heard that one civilian was injured."

NEPAL

[Basnyat assigned acting chief of CIAA](#)

My Republica | 20th October

Following the suspension of Chief Commissioner of the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) Lokman Singh Karki, CIAA Commissioner Deep Basnyat has been appointed as the acting chief commissioner of the anti-graft body on Thursday. Karki was suspended after an impeachment motion was registered against him on Wednesday.

[Upadhyay stresses on improving trilateral relations](#)

My Republica | 20th October

Proposed Ambassador of Nepal to India, Deep Kumar Upadhyay has stressed the need to advance economic development sector by improving trilateral relations between Nepal, India and China. At a press conference organized by the Nepal Press Union, Kapilvastu at Taulihawa on Thursday, Upadhyay said, "Cooperation from neighboring country, India, is inevitable for sustainable peace, political stability and economic prosperity of Nepal".

[Parties defer House to discuss impeachment informally](#)

My Republica | 21st October

Major political parties represented in parliament on Thursday deferred House meet in a bid to forge common stance to move forward the impeachment motion against the chief of the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA), Lokman Singh Karki. The House meeting initially scheduled for 11 am was deferred twice as the largest party in parliament, Nepali Congress (NC), sought time to discuss the issue within the party. The impeachment motion against Karki was on the likely business advisory of Thursday's parliament meeting.

PAKISTAN

[Pakistan lodges protest with India over killing of civilian in cross-border firing](#)

DAWN | 20th October

Pakistan on Thursday summoned Indian Deputy High Commissioner JP Singh to lodge a protest over the death of a civilian due to firing across the Line of Control (LoC) a day earlier, and demanded an investigation into the incident.

[India has deployed additional troops along LoC, standing committee told](#)

DAWN | 20th October

India has deployed additional contingents of troops along the Line of Control (LoC) and aircraft squadrons on forward bases, Senator Mushahid Hussain told the media in Islamabad on Thursday. The chairman senate standing committee on defence was briefing the media after a Senate Standing Committees on Defence and Foreign Affairs on relations with India and Afghanistan.

[Pakistan, ADB to ink \\$250m loan next week](#)

The Express Tribune | 21st October

Pakistan and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) will sign a \$250 million loan agreement next week, in a bid to boost cross border trade activities with India and Afghanistan as part of a regional strategic initiative, backed by multilateral institutions and some friendly countries. The loan agreement will be signed on the side-lines of the 15th Ministerial Conference of Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) that will take place in Islamabad on October 25-26.

[PSO dismisses fears of petrol shortage](#)

The Express Tribune | 21st October

Pakistan State Oil (PSO) has assured consumers that its outlets across the country will have no shortage of motor gasoline (petrol) in coming days in the wake of government's decision to import higher grades of fuel and the resultant compliance by all oil marketing companies.

SRI LANKA

[Sri Lanka enlightens European Parliament on good governance measures taken to regain GSP+ concession](#)

Colombo Page | 20th October

Sri Lanka's Prime Minister accompanied by his delegation have met with various representative parties of the European Parliament on Wednesday to discuss the European Union's Generalized System of Preferences Plus (GSP+) tariff concession and the spaces for support and assistance for Sri Lanka.

[High level delegation of Belgian government to visit Sri Lanka next week to promote bilateral relations](#)

Colombo Page | 21st October

Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel has assured his Sri Lankan counterpart that his country will closely work with Sri Lanka to revive the relations between the two nations that had weakened during the past few years.

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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