

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

September 23rd , 2016 | Volume: 2 - 10/9

[US welcomes peace accord signing between Afghan govt and Hezb-e-Islami](#)

Khaama Press | 22nd September
The US Embassy in Kabul welcomed the signing of peace agreement between the Afghan government and Hezb-e-Islami led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. "We welcome today's accord negotiated and concluded by the Government of Afghanistan and Hizb-e Islami Gulbuddin (HIG) as a step in bringing the conflict in Afghanistan to a peaceful end," a statement by US Embassy said.

[Bangladesh ratifies Paris climate deal](#)

Bdnews 24 | 22nd September
Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali handed over the Instrument of Ratification of the Agreement to Ban Ki-moon at the UN headquarters in New York, the foreign ministry said. Bangladesh has now become one of the first countries to have made the deal officially valid. "It reflects the firm commitment of Bangladesh and the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in addressing climate change adversities," the foreign ministry said.

[President declares Fuvahmulah a 'city' by decree](#)

Sun Online | 22nd September
President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom, this Thursday, September 22, declared Gn. Fuvahmulah as a 'city'. The change in categorization was announced in a presidential decree issued by Yameen. "I, with the power invested in me, hereby announce that the island of Gn. Fuvahmulah has been categorized as a city," said Yameen, in the decree published on Government Gazette.

AFGHANISTAN

[US Asked to Mount Pressure on Pakistan](#)

Pajhwok /Outlook Afghanistan | 22nd September
Second Vice President Sarwar Danish has said the peace deal with Hezb-i-Islami Afghanistan (HIA), committing the group to cutting ties with militant organisations, was a legal and basic demand of the government and people. He expressed the view during a meeting with US Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Olson in New York on the sidelines of the United Nation General Assembly's (UNGA).

[National Unity Government Leaders Likely to 'Resolve Disputes' before Brussels](#)

Tolonews/Outlook Afghanistan | 22nd September
Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah's office on Wednesday confirmed that some key elements of the political accord, based on which the National Unity Government (NUG) was formed in 2014, have not been implemented over the past two years. However, the CEO's office has expressed optimism that the two leaders will resolve their issues before signing off for the Brussels Summit next month. Based on the NUG accord, the CEO has to report back on its undertakings to the president, something the critics believe has not happened over the past two years since they formed the NUG.

[India, US, Afghanistan reaffirm shared interest against terror](#)

Afghanistan Times | 22nd September

US Secretary of State John Kerry had said late last month during his visit to New Delhi that Washington would launch trilateral talks, which had stopped in 2013, with New Delhi and Kabul. India, the US and Afghanistan have reaffirmed their shared interests in combating terrorism and advancing peace and security in the region as they explored ways to “coordinate and align” assistance in the war-torn country with priorities of the Afghan government.

BANGLADESH

[Work together to root out terrorism](#)

UNB / BSS / The Daily Star | 23rd September

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has called upon the world community to work together to root out militancy and terrorism, and plug the sources of funds, arms and ammunitions across borders. “Terrorists have no religion, caste or creed. We must unite in our resolve to defeat and degrade them in all forms and manifestations. We have to identify the root causes of terrorism and violent extremism,” she said. The PM was addressing the 71st session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA).

BHUTAN

[World Bank provides grant of USD 3.8M](#)

Kuensel Online | 22nd September

The World Bank has provided a grant of USD 3.8 million (equivalent to Nu 258 million) to improve the country’s hydromet services and disaster preparedness. The fund will be pumped into strengthening hydromet services and disaster resilience. The project will be implemented by hydromet, disaster management, and agriculture departments. The project is expected to strengthen capacity for flood forecasting, and hydromet services delivery to the aviation, disaster risk management and agriculture sectors.

MALDIVES

[Maldives establishes diplomatic ties with Saint Kitts and Nevis](#)

Sun Online | 22nd September

Maldives has established official diplomatic ties with the Caribbean island nation of Saint Kitts and Nevis. The agreement between the two countries was signed in the sidelines of the 70th United Nations General Assembly ongoing in New York, United States. The agreement was signed by Minister of Foreign Affairs of Maldives, Dr. Mohamed Asim and his Saint Kitts and Nevis’ counterpart - Mark Brantley.

[Elections Commission takes part in UNDP Capacity Building Program](#)

Sun Online | 23rd September

Maldivian Elections Commission (EC) has taken part in the UNDP Capacity Building Program held in New Delhi, India, to pave for holding elections using the latest technologies. Senior Accounts Officer, Aishath Shaffaaf and Senior Administrative Officer, Shahla Ismail are representing the Maldivian EC at the Program organized by the Indian Elections Commission with the help of the UNDP, is being held from 20-29 September 2016.

MYANMAR

[Japan and Myanmar to increase defence cooperation](#)

Mizzima | 23rd September

Japan’s Defence Minister Tomomi Inada and her Myanmar counterpart, Sein Win, on Wednesday confirmed that

the two countries will increase their defence cooperation and exchanges, Japan News reported on 23 September. Japan will support Myanmar's efforts to strengthen military capabilities and accept students from the Southeast Asian country at its National Defence Academy, Inada told Sein Win at a meeting in Tokyo.

NEPAL

[Minister Mahat bats for making SAARC more effective](#)

Rastriya Samachar Samiti / The Himalayan Times | 22nd September

Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Prakash Sharan Mahat stressed the need to make SAARC more effective and relevant. He made the statement while addressing an informal meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the SAARC member nations in New York on Wednesday. The meeting took place on the sidelines of the 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in the United Nations Headquarters.

[World Bank sub-regional boss meets PM Dahal](#)

The Himalayan Times | 22nd September

The World Bank's Country Director for Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal Qimiao Fan on Thursday paid a visit to Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal at the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers at Singhadurbar. In the meeting, PM Dahal requested the WB representative to develop policies that would help in infrastructure development of Nepal. Fan informed Dahal that the World Bank would help in development of energy resources, hydropower, transmission line and solar power in the country.

[PM concerned about delay in reconstruction grant distribution](#)

Himalayan News Service / The Himalayan Times | 23rd September

Concerned about non-fulfillment of his pledge made to quake-affected households, Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal discussed reconstruction issues with concerned government officials yesterday and today. According to Acting Chief Secretary Tanka Mani Sharma, the PM discussed the issue with government officials, including Chief Executive Officer of National Reconstruction Authority Sushil Gyawali.

[Kamini Rajbhandari appointed Nepal Telecom MD](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 23rd September

The government on Wednesday appointed Kamini Rajbhandari as the Managing Director of Nepal Telecom. A Cabinet meeting held at Singha Durbar decided to promote senior Deputy Managing Director Rajbhandari to the post of MD.

PAKISTAN

[Iran wants to be part of CPEC, says Rouhani](#)

The Express Tribune | 22nd September

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani in a meeting with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on the sidelines of the UNGA on Wednesday expressed a desire to be part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as both leaders expressed satisfaction over the positive trajectory in Pak-Iran bilateral ties.

[Nawaz at UNGA: Pakistan wants peace with India, urges resolution of Kashmir issue](#)

DAWN | 22nd September

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, while addressing the United Nations General Assembly session on Wednesday, said Pakistan wants peace with India but maintained it is "not possible without resolving the Kashmir issue".

[Pakistan unlikely to assist Delhi in base attack probe](#)

The Express Tribune | 23rd September

Pakistan is unlikely to accept India's offer seeking its cooperation to investigate the Uri attack because of Modi

government's 'malicious campaign' to defame Islamabad by prematurely blaming it for the latest incident, officials familiar with the development said on Thursday.

[UN court to decide Marshall Islands case against Pakistan, India, Britain next month](#)

AFP/The Express Tribune | 23rd September

The United Nations' top court announced Thursday that it will render its decision early next month in the case the Marshall Islands has brought against India, Pakistan and Britain for not abandoning the nuclear arms race. "On Wednesday October 5, 2016, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, will deliver its judgements" in these cases, the court said in a statement.

SRI LANKA

[Sri Lanka will be made a hub supporting naval, air, communication and business operations - PM](#)

Colombo Page | 22nd September

Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe on Thursday said arrangements have been finalized to make the island nation a strong economic and technological hub in the Indian Ocean region extending necessary support for naval, air, communication and business operations.

[Sri Lanka to deepen economic cooperation with the Republic of Korea](#)

Colombo Page | 22nd September

Minister of Development Strategies and International Trade Malik Samarawickrama underscored Sri Lanka's interest to further strengthen economic relations with Korea, at a meeting with the Korean Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Strategy and Finance Yoo Il-ho on Tuesday 20 September in Seoul, the Foreign Affairs Ministry said in a statement.

[Pakistan, Sri Lankan envoys discuss bilateral relations](#)

Colombo Gazette | 22nd September

Amari Mandika Wijewardene, High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to the United Kingdom called on Syed Ibne Ali, Pakistan High Commissioner to the United Kingdom at his office, ARY News reported.

[Taranjit Singh Sandhu appointed India's envoy to Sri Lanka](#)

Colombo Gazette | 23rd September

The Indian Government has appointed Taranjit Singh Sandhu as the next High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka, the ANI news service reports.

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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