

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

September 26th , 2016 | Volume: 2 - 11/9

[Gov't, HIA Ink Peace Agreement](#)

Outlook Afghanistan| 24th September

The much awaited peace agreement between Afghan government and the Hekmatyar-led Islamic party the Hizb-e-Islami was inked here on Thursday to boost peace process and national reconciliation in the insurgency-ridden country. The agreement was signed by Mohammad Amin Karim, head of Hizb-e-Islami delegation and Pir Sayed Ahmad Gilani, chief of the government-backed peace body the High Peace Council, at a ceremony attended by ranking officials and supporters of Hizb-e-Islami in Kabul.

[Maldives applies for UN Security Council](#)

Sun Online|25th September

Maldives has applied to become a member of United Nations Security Council for the first time in its history. The announcement was during Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Mohamed Asim's speech on early Sunday morning during the ongoing UN General Assembly. Maldives has applied for an electoral seat at UN Security Council for the one-year-term from 2019 to 2020.

[SBP tells banks to freeze terror financing accounts](#)

DAWN|26th September

In a major move to clamp down on terrorism financing, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has directed all banks in the country to freeze accounts worth millions of rupees linked to 2,021 individuals listed on the Fourth Schedule of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) 1997.

AFGHANISTAN

[5 civilians, 4 militants killed as Taliban rocket explodes in Kunar](#)

Khama Press|25th September

At least 5 civilians and 4 militants were killed after a Taliban rocket exploded prematurely in eastern Kunar province of Afghanistan, the security officials said Sunday. The 201st Silab Corps of the Afghan National Army (ANA) forces said the incident took place on Saturday evening in Dangam district. The incident took place as the militants were transporting an artillery shell that went off on the way, the 201st Silab Corps said, adding that 5 more civilians were wounded.

BANGLADESH

[17 rescued while being trafficked to India](#)

Prothom Alo|26th September

Members of Border Guard Bangladesh rescued 17 Bangladeshi nationals including five women from Daulatpur

border area in Benapole of Jessore on Sunday night while they were being trafficked to India. The detainees hail from Khulna, Barisal and Narail districts, reports UNB news agency.

[EC to hold union council polls in former enclaves on Oct 31](#)

BD News 24|25th September

EC Secretary Md Sirajul Islam said the final voter list of those former enclaves was ready.

“Smart ID cards will also be distributed soon at Kurhigram’s Dashiarchharha union. We hope the people of those areas will be able to exercise their voting rights without any trouble,” he told bdnews24.com.

Implementation of a land swap deal with India saw the inclusion of 111 enclaves into the geo-political map of Bangladesh with effect from Aug 1 last year. Similarly, 52 enclaves were handed over to India. Some 35,535 people of those 111 enclaves have been granted Bangladeshi citizenship as part of the implementation of the deal.

BHUTAN

[An unwelcome credit growth](#)

Kuensel Online|25th September

While the country’s credit market is concentrated in housing and personal consumption, a few sectors are starving for credit. As per the Asian Development Bank’s (ADB) assessment of financial sector development, agriculture accounts for about 16 percent of GDP but gets only about three percent of the credit pie.

MALDIVES

[FM: Stop evaluating Maldives based on ‘inappropriate’ benchmarks](#)

Sun Online| 25th September

Minister Foreign Affairs of Maldives, Dr. Mohamed Asim has appealed to the international community not to evaluate small States such as Maldives based on inappropriate benchmarks. Minister Asim made the appeal during his address to the ongoing United Nations General Assembly in New York, early Sunday morning.

MYANMAR

[Tata group opens new office in Yangon](#)

Mizzima|23rd September

The Tata group has announced the establishment of a new office premises in Yangon, strengthening its presence in Myanmar, the company said in a statement on 22 September. The office, set up by Tata International, will be a central hub for Tata companies, and will further enhance and strengthen the group’s engagement with stakeholders in Myanmar. It will facilitate growth of Tata companies in the region through furthering their existing capabilities and exploring new opportunities across sectors like agro, power, infrastructure, renewable energy, hospitality, tourism, and consumer products.

[Australia-Myanmar Chamber of Commerce provides principles for investors](#)

Mizzima|24th September

The Australia-Myanmar Chamber of Commerce Responsible Investment Working Group has launched a Position Paper: Incentivising Shared Value at the Asian Forum on Corporate Social Responsibility in Naypyidaw on 19 September. In response to questions from Mizzima Weekly, the AMCC discussed responsible investment principles in Myanmar

NEPAL

[Leader Paudel wants to expand Nepal-Japan relations](#)

Rastriya Samachar Samiti / The Himalayan Times | 25th September

Nepali Congress senior leader Ram Chandra Paudel today stressed the need of expanding Nepal-Japan relations for trade and investment in Nepal. Addressing a programme organized by the Nepal Chamber of Commerce, on the occasion of 60th establishment of Nepal-Japan diplomatic relations, Paudel urged the Japanese government to provide support in agricultural technology for the advancement of agricultural sector in Nepal.

[Chinese president keen to visit Nepal, says Speaker’s Secretariat](#)

Himalayan News Service / The Himalayan Time | 25th September

Chinese Vice Premier Liu Yandong told Nepal's Speaker Onsari Gharti Magar that Chinese President Xi Jinping was keen to visit Nepal. According to a press release issued by the speaker's Secretariat, Chinese Vice Premier Liu, during the speaker's visit to China, also told her to make preparations through diplomatic channel for the visit of the Chinese president.

[PM asks secretaries for action plan to implement new announcements](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 26th September

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal on Sunday instructed senior government officials to submit detailed plans with necessary budget to implement the programmes that he announced during his address in Parliament three weeks ago. At a meeting organised to review the progress in enacting his announcements, PM Dahal asked the secretaries from various ministries to divide the schemes into those which need fresh budgetary allocation, those requiring policy decisions and those calling for new legal provisions before proceeding with their implementation.

PAKISTAN

[Pakistan positive about future ties with India: envoy](#)

DAWN|26th September

Pakistan will remain positive and constructive in its ties with India and expects both countries to pull out of the current crisis with maturity from their leaders, High Commissioner Abdul Basit has said.

[India's anti-graft body head arrives to attend Saarc meeting](#)

DAWN|26th September

The head of India's anti-corruption body arrived in Islamabad on Sunday to attend a conference of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc). The two-day meeting will begin on Monday.

SRI LANKA

[IMF notes significant progress in reaching agreement with Sri Lanka](#)

Colombo Gazette| 23rd September

A staff team from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) led by Jaewoo Lee visited Colombo during September 13-23, 2016 to hold discussions on the first review of the Sri Lankan authorities' economic program that is being supported by a three-year Extended Fund Facility (EFF).

[Pakistan provincial government of Punjab to increase cooperation with Sri Lanka on education](#)

Colombo Page|25th September

Pakistan's provincial government of Punjab has decided to explore the prospects of increasing mutual cooperation with Sri Lanka on education sector reforms. The Punjab Government has constituted a working group for collaboration with Sri Lanka, under the chairmanship of Additional Chief Secretary Punjab, Shamail Ahmad Khawaja.

[Indian minister with a high-level delegation to arrive in Sri Lanka tomorrow](#)

Colombo Page| 25th September

India's Minister of Commerce and Industry Nirmala Sitharaman and a delegation comprising high ranking officials will arrive in Sri Lanka tomorrow, local media reported.

[Digital payments driving growth in Sri Lanka](#)

Daily News| 26th September

With the emergence of a next generation of consumers, factors that will shape the way tomorrow's transactions are made. These key factors include the impact of technology, shifting customer expectations, changing global demographics, the rise of e-commerce, and the growing regulatory supervision.

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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