



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

August 28th, 2017 | Volume: 3 - 08/8

[Myanmar opens fire on Rohingya refugees at Bangladesh border](#)

bdnews24 | 26th August

Myanmar security forces have opened fire on Rohingya refugees fleeing after the latest attacks by militants in Rakhine state. Security was beefed up at the border after the incident occurred on Saturday afternoon, said Lt Col Manjurul Hassan Khan, commander of Border Guards Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar 34 Battalion. "They fired three to four rounds around 1:15pm," he told bdnews24.com. "There were no casualties." The Myanmar Border Guard Police, or BGP, fired at the Rohingyas seeking refuge on the border with Bandarban's Naikhyangchhari Upazila.

[Rescheduling of talks creates uncertainty about Pakistan ties with US](#)

Dawn | 28th August

The talks between Pakistan and the US on the new American strategy for South Asia got another setback on Sunday when Washington learned from Islamabad that Pakistan would like to reschedule talks with a senior US official that were to begin on Monday. "The visit of acting Assistant Secretary [Alice] Wells has been postponed on Pakistan's request. It will be rescheduled at a mutually convenient time," a senior State Department official told reporters on Sunday.

[Russia and Sri Lanka hold talks on defence cooperation](#)

Colombo Gazette | 27th August

Russian and Sri Lanka held talks on defence cooperation on the sidelines of an international military and technical forum in Moscow. Secretary to the Ministry of Defence Kapila Waidyaratne attended the opening ceremony of 'Army-2017 Expo' held from 22nd to 27th (August) at the Patriot Expocenter in Moscow, Russia.

AFGHANISTAN

[Suicide attack in Helmand leaves more than 30 people dead, wounded](#)

Khaama Press | 28th August

Over thirty people were killed or wounded in a suicide attack in southern Helmand province of Afghanistan late on Sunday evening. According to the local government officials, the incident took place in the vicinity of Nawa district after a suicide bomber detonated his explosives. Provincial governor's spokesman Omar Zwak confirmed that a suicide bomber targeted an armored vehicle of the security forces at around 6:30 pm local time.

[Frustrated with new US strategy, Pakistani FM claims Afghan forces sell US weapons](#)

Khaama Press | 28th August

In an apparent gesture of frustration with the US strategy for Afghanistan and South Asia, the foreign minister of Pakistan has claimed that the Afghan security forces are selling the US supplied weapons. Khawajah Asif made the remarks during an interview with a private Television Channel in Pakistan. Asif further added that more than 90 percent of the attacks in Pakistan were plotted inside the Afghan soil besides claiming that 40 percent of the Afghan soil is under the control of the Taliban insurgents.

[China Seeking Contact with US on Afghanistan Peace](#)

Outlook Afghanistan/ Tolonews | 27th August

Chinese state councilor has called for political dialogue to solve the prolonged issue of Afghanistan, China's foreign ministry said. China is willing to keep communication and coordination with the United States on peace and stability in Afghanistan, Chinese Foreign Ministry's officials said. In a telephone conversation with US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi called for political dialogue to solve the prolonged issue of the war-torn country and conveyed the willingness to coordinate with the United States to create peace and stability in the region, said Hua Chunying, spokeswoman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

BANGLADESH

[Look beyond traditional export markets, says Bangladesh PM Hasina](#)

The Financial Express | 27th August

Urging the industry owners and workers to maintain good relations for mutual benefits, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Sunday called for exploring new export markets as the traditional markets are not in good shape now. "The recent economic condition of the traditional markets is not good for which the [country's] export in some cases has been on downtrend. Those who will find out new markets, their items will get special incentives," she said. The Prime Minister was distributing cheques of compensation to the inheritors of dead workers and crippled workers of RMG sector from the central funds of Labour and Employment Ministry at her office.

[Govt to import 1.5m tonnes food grains if necessary: PM Hasina](#)

The Financial Express | 26th August

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Saturday said the government will import 1.5 million (15 lakh) metric tonnes of food grains, if necessary, for ensuring the food security of people. "We'll distribute food free of cost among the extreme poor who are unable to buy it. Our plan is to ensure that until the next crops are harvested ... not a single person will suffer from hunger," she said while distributing relief materials and seedlings among flood victims on Gobindaganj Upazila Parishad premises on Saturday.

BHUTAN

[PPI records 3.42 percent price rise](#)

Kuensel Online | 26th August

Inflation in the first three quarters of the year, from producers' perspective has increased by 3.42 percent compared to the first quarter of 2016, according to the producer price index. This means that local producers experienced a price rise of 3.42 percent in the first quarter this year. This is different from the consumer price index (CPI), which measures price rise from the consumers' perspectives. PPI or the ex-factory price is the price at which producers sell goods to wholesale dealers and CPI, which is the retail price. It measures changes in the price level of a market basket of consumer goods and services purchased by households.

[Bhutan to host Asian Parliamentary Assembly](#)

Kuensel Online | 25th August

The Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) Standing Committee meeting on social and cultural affairs would be held from August 31 – September 2 at the Convention Centre in Thimphu. According to a press release from the National Council, the Association of Asian Parliamentary (APA) for peace, which was established in 1999, was transformed into Asian Parliamentary Assembly in 2006. It also stated that APA is in pursuit of peace based justice and for closer Asian parliamentary cooperation. Bhutan is hosting the meeting for the first time where parliamentarians from 20 member countries would be participating.

MALDIVES

[3 Chinese navy ships in Maldives on peace mission](#)

Sun Online | 27th August

Three Chinese navy ships arrived in Maldives this Sunday in a friendly visit. The three navy ships – Chang Chun, Jing Zhou and Chao Hu arrived in Maldives this Sunday morning. Chang Chun is currently harbored at the Male' Commercial Harbor. The three navy vessels were dispatched on a peace mission by President of China, Xi Jinping on April 23, 2017. It is set to visit 23 countries and conduct maritime training in collaboration with the militaries of the countries.

[Foreign Affairs Minister: Youth need to be attuned to changing global political trends](#)

Sun Online | 27th August

It is important for Maldivian youth to be attuned to changes in the global political arena, says Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Mohamed Asim. Dr. Asim made the comment on Saturday night, during the closing of Model United Nations Conference held at Maldives National University by the Maldives Model United Nations. Minister Asim said the Maldivian economy and the livelihood of the Maldivian people were interlinked with the global community. He said the Maldivian youth, therefore, needed to attuned to changing global trends, and contemplate on the changes and how it could impact Maldives.

MYANMAR

[Census report: People with disability trapped in vicious circle of poverty and exclusion](#)

Mizzima | 28th August

A new census report reveals that poverty and disability in Myanmar are intertwined in a vicious circle where both factors reinforce each other. There are twice as many people with disability in the poorest 20 percent of the population compared to the richest 20 percent. The findings come from the 2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census Thematic Report on Disability, published by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population and UNFPA. The report shows that many of those living with a disability cannot access education, employment and health services.

[India concerned over Rakhine](#)

Mizima | 27th August

India has expressed deep concern over the renewed violence in northern Rakhine State. In a statement, the ministry of external affairs described the attackers as terrorists and said it was saddened by loss of lives of Myanmar security personnel. "The perpetrators of these crimes will surely be brought to justice and they deserved strongest condemnation." "We stand beside the Union of Myanmar at this hour of crisis," the statement said.

NEPAL

[PM defends his controversial remark in India](#)

The Himalayan Times | 28th August

Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba defended his remarks on the constitution amendment bill in a joint conference held in New Delhi with his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi on August 24. The PM said he was right when he said in India that the government put the constitution amendment bill to vote but the bill failed in the Parliament this time and the government would try again to amend the constitution when it would have two-third majority.

[Govt to provide Rs 1.25b in relief to flood-affected farmers](#)

MyRepublica | 28th August

The government has announced a relief package for the flood-affected farmers. Organizing a press meet in Kathmandu on Sunday, the Ministry of Agriculture Development (MoAD) has declared a relief package of Rs 1.25 billion for the flood-affected farmers of 30 districts. Speaking at the event, Minister for Agriculture Development, Ram Krishna Yadav said that the relief package has been brought as per the ministry's commitment to bring it by the last week of August.

PAKISTAN

[Zardari celebrates his acquittal in NAB references](#)

Dawn | 28th August

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari celebrated on Sunday his acquittal in all nine references of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and being a 'free man' after 19 years litigation. A number of senior party delegations visited Zardari House and congratulated their leader for his acquittal in the last case two days ago by an accountability court in Rawalpindi.

['Selective audit' of ministries reveals Rs3tr irregularities](#)

Dawn | 28th August

The Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP) has raised objections over mismanagement, irregularities and weak financial control over Rs3.12 trillion of public money by 36 federal ministries during the audit year 2016-17. Submitted to the president of Pakistan and laid before the parliament in accordance with the requirements of Article 171 of the Constitution, the AGP has put on record that its findings were based on the scrutiny of public funds released to 36 out of 60 federal ministries and divisions.

[Afghan Taliban are US and Afghanistan's problem, not ours: Khawaja Asif](#)

The Express Tribune | 27th August

Foreign Minister Khawaja Asif said on Sunday that Afghan Taliban were the US and Afghanistan's problem, not Pakistan's. He added that Pakistan had suffered a great deal for being an ally of the US and the latter should stop pinning the blame for its own 16 years of failures on the former.

SRI LANKA

[Sri Lanka President's national welfare programs aim to strengthen country from grassroot level](#)

Colombo Page | 26th August

'Puravesi Athvela' and 'Grama Shakthi', the two comprehensive national programs introduced under a concept of Sri Lanka's President Maithripala Sirisena aim to strengthen the island nation from grassroot level. President Maithripala Sirisena says the two programs covering all districts in the country are being carried out to make the country victorious.

[Indian Ocean Conference 2017 in Colombo to focus on 'Peace, Progress and Prosperity' of the region](#)

Colombo Page | 27th August

Indian Ocean Conference 2017 (IOC 2017) being organized by the Delhi-based think tank, India Foundation, will be held from 31 August - 2nd September 2017 at Temple Trees in Colombo. India Foundation will host the conference in collaboration with Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) of Singapore and National Institute of Fundamental Studies of Colombo under the theme 'Peace, Progress and Prosperity' in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

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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