



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

July 28th, 2017 | Volume: 3 - 12/7

[Saudi Arabia to recruit 3,000 more Bangladeshi workers in 2017](#)

bdnews24 | 27th July

Saudi Arabia will recruit 3,000 more Bangladeshis to work in various sectors in 2017, according to a major recruiter. Eastern Recruitment CEO Fahad Al Sulaim praised Bangladeshi workers and informed Bangladesh Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Golam Mosi of the plans at a meeting in Riyadh on Thursday. Ambassador Mosi also spoke with top officials of various Saudi corporations, including Nesma, Al Yamama and Nasser S Al Hajri, and encouraged them to recruit skilled Bangladeshi workers at a meeting in Saudi Arabia's Dammam on the same day.

[Myanmar seeks WHO help with deadly swine flu outbreak](#)

Mizzima | 28th July

Myanmar health authorities have asked the UN's health agency for help to combat a deadly outbreak of swine flu that has sparked alarm in the commercial capital. At least six people have died and 30 more have been infected over the past week, most of them in the country's biggest city Yangon, a senior health ministry official said Thursday. Fearful rumours have swirled on social media since the first deaths were reported and many Yangon residents have donned surgical masks in the hope of warding off the virus. Government officials have called for calm and warned the public to avoid crowded places such as shopping malls.

[SLPA has paid China Rs. 47 billion so far for Hambantota port](#)

Colombo Gazette | 27th July

The Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) has paid China Rs 47 billion so far for constructing the Hambantota port, Ports Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe said. The Minister said the money was paid back using funds collected by the SLPA through ports operations in the country. "SLPA has been paying back the loan since 2011. All this was paid from SLPA funds. Nothing was taken from the treasury," the Minister said.

AFGHANISTAN

[Pakistani militia forces among dozens killed in Paktia province of Afghanistan](#)

Khaama Press | 27th July

Dozens of insurgents including several Pakistani militia forces were killed during the clashes with the security

forces in southeastern Paktia province of Afghanistan. According to the local security officials, the militants and Pakistani militias were killed during the clashes in Jani Khel district. Provincial police spokesman Sardar Wali Tabasoom confirmed the report and said more than 50 insurgents were killed during the clashes which started four days ago. He said at least sixteen Pakistani militia forces are among those killed and at least 25 insurgents were also wounded.

[Pakistani envoy claims evidences available about terror sanctuaries in Afghanistan](#)

Khaama Press | 27th July

The Pakistani Ambassador to Pakistan Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry has claimed that evidences are available regarding the existence of the sanctuaries of terrorist groups in Afghanistan. Chaudhry made the claims during his speech at the International Institute of Strategic Studies on Wednesday. "The terrorists escaped to neighbouring Afghanistan after Pakistan launched military operation Zarb-e-Azb have their sanctuaries there," he said. The Pakistani envoy also claimed that the terrorists based in Afghanistan are conducting insurgency activities both against Afghanistan and Pakistan.

[U.S, EU Pledge to Finance Next Elections: IEC](#)

Outlook Afghanistan / Tolonews | 27th July

An official from the Independent Election Commission (IEC) on Wednesday said that the United States and the European Union (EU) have pledged to provide financial aid for the next parliamentary and provincial council elections in Afghanistan. The international community has made a commitment to finance the next elections, said the IEC spokesman Abdul Badi Sayyad. He said that the election management body has also started working on a number of programs related to the elections including the training of employees and a public awareness campaign. "The commission and the Afghan government have finalized the first phase of the elections, also the international donors have called for the e-voting system, the second phase of the process will start next week; we have invited all chiefs of the ID and public awareness campaign from the provinces; tablets which have been purchased for the commission are there now, and training will be provided," said Sayyad.

BANGLADESH

[Biman suffers Tk 3.05bn loss as it leases two Egypt Air planes](#)

bdnews24 | 27th July

Biman Bangladesh Airlines has suffered a Tk 3.05 billion loss because of two Boeing 777-200ER airplanes brought in on lease from Egypt Air, a parliamentary watchdog's investigation has found. The planes' leasing procedure and repair of engines have been steeped in 'gross negligence and irregularities', according to the probe conducted by the parliamentary standing committee on civil aviation and tourism ministry.

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BHUTAN

[Summit focuses on youth as change makers](#)

Kuensel Online | 27th July

About 90 participants gathered for the eighth youth summit, which the Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy (BCMD) organised in Thimphu. The five-day summit, which began yesterday, intends to make the participants realise their potentials and develop action plans towards achieving it.

Themed 'youth as change makers', the summit aims to providing a platform to the youth for interaction with young leaders to inspire, discover and explore one's potential in a democracy. A BCMD press release states that it is also providing a platform to discuss and exchange ideas on social issues in the country.

[SAARC to improve regional tourism](#)

Kuensel Online | 26th July

The lack of connectivity and information sharing among the countries of South Asia, which hinders the development of tourism sector in the region, will be addressed by encouraging regional tourism among the countries. Lack of connectivity makes travelling difficult for tourists, which affects the tourism sector in South Asia region. President with South Asian Association Regional Corporation Chamber for Commerce and Industry (SAARC CCI), Suraj Vaidya, said that South Asia is the least connected region in the world and the focus of the meeting has been to make travelling easier in the region. "The aim is to make visa much easier for the south Asia region and make connections in different areas," he added.

MALDIVES

[PM Nawaz Sharif concludes visit to Maldives](#)

Sun Online | 27th June

Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and First Lady Kalsoom Nawaz Sharif have concluded their official visit to Maldives. They were seen off at Velana International Airport by Maldivian President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom and First Lady Fathimath Ibrahim this Thursday morning. PM Nawaz Sharif was invited to Maldives by President Yameen to celebrate the 52nd Independence Day of Maldives.

MYANMAR

[United Nations' Human Rights Council replaces chairwoman in Myanmar inquiry](#)

Mizzima | 28th July

The United Nations' Human Rights Council has replaced the chairwoman of a team investigating allegations of killings and rape by Myanmar's security forces, it said on July 27, amid concerns over her perceived bias, Reuters reported on 27 July. Indian Supreme Court advocate Indira Jaising was initially named to chair the fact-finding mission, which has a focus on the western state of Rakhine that is home to the stateless Rohingya Muslim minority.

[Amnesty calls for release of journalists](#)

Mizzima | 28th July

Amnesty International has called for the release of journalists facing prison over charges linked to reporting from Shan State. The Myanmar authorities must immediately and unconditionally release three journalists who were arrested in conflict-ridden northern Shan State last month, Amnesty International said ahead of their trial on July 28. Aye Nai and Pyae Phone Aung, both reporters for the Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB), and Thein Zaw (aka

Lawi Weng), a reporter for the Irrawaddy newspaper, were arrested on 26 June, along with four other people they were travelling with.

NEPAL

[PM proposes holding provincial, parliamentary polls simultaneously](#)

MyRepublica | 28th July

Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba has proposed with the Election Commission (EC) to conduct both the provincial and central parliamentary elections simultaneously citing time constraints. The prime minister's remark comes as just six months remain for conducting both the elections. In a meeting with election commissioners Thursday, Prime Minister Deuba sought the election body's view on his proposal. "He [prime minister] asked the election commissioners if it was possible to conduct both the elections simultaneously. Election commissioners said they need to discuss the proposal at their board meeting," said the prime minister's press advisor Govinda Pariyar.

[People living below poverty line to get identity cards](#)

The Himalayan Times | 28th July

The government today decided to distribute 391,831 identity cards to households living below poverty line in 25 districts. A meeting of Council of Ministers presided over by Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba took a decision to this effect. According to Finance Minister Gyanendra Bahadur Karki, the government will distribute identity cards to households living below poverty line in Kapilvastu, Bhojpur, Siraha, Khotang, Gorkha, Rautahat, Tanahun, Rolpa, Sindhuli, Baglung, Bardia, Jajarkot, Pyuthan, Rukum, Ramechhap, Kalikot, Mugu, Arghakhanchi, Dolpa, Humla, Jumla, Bajhang, Bajura, Achham and Kailali districts.

PAKISTAN

[Make-or-break verdict for Nawaz Sharif today](#)

Dawn | 28th July 2017

All eyes are on Courtroom No. 1 today (Friday), where a five-judge Supreme Court bench is set to announce the much-awaited verdict in the Panama Papers case, which will not only decide the fate of a thrice-elected prime minister, but is also likely to chart the country's political future.

[Nisar to give up NA seat, ministry once Panamagate verdict is announced](#)

Dawn | 27th July 2017

Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar finally held his much-awaited press conference on Thursday to announce that he would leave his ministry and the National Assembly the day the Panamagate verdict was announced.

[Lawmakers' tax returns show stunning spikes](#)

The Express Tribune | 27th July 2017

The federal government on Thursday published the fourth tax directory of parliamentarians, showing stunning increases in their tax contributions, spiking as high as almost 3,900% in individual cases, indicating that legislators have started disclosing their 'real incomes' after the Panamagate scandal.

SRILANKA

[UNIDO reiterates support to Sri Lanka for sustainable industrial development](#)

Colombo Page | 27th July

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has reiterated its support for Sri Lanka's sustainable industrial development. The UNIDO is to usher an Inclusive and sustainable industrialization framework to Sri Lanka as part of a vast array of strategic interventions under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed globally in 2015, Minister of Industry and Commerce Rishad Bathiudeen says. Minister Bathiudeen held discussions with a visiting New Delhi based UNIDO Regional Representative, Rene Van Berkel on Tuesday in Colombo on Sri Lanka's development of industries.

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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