

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

October 28th, 2016 | Volume: 2 - 12/10

[Nepal, India agree to accelerate 7 projects](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 28th October
Nepal and India have agreed to expedite seven projects related to infrastructure, cross-border connectivity and utilisation of the Indian aid for Nepal's reconstruction. The agreement was reached during the fourth meeting of the Nepal-India Joint Commission attended in New Delhi on Thursday. According to the Foreign Ministry, the meeting reviewed the Nepal-India relations under five broad clusters--political, security and boundary; economic cooperation and infrastructure; trade and transit; power and water resources; culture and education. In order to ensure the expeditious implementation of bilateral projects, the Joint Commission decided to convene within a month the first meeting of the joint oversight mechanism of the officials of both the governments, the ministry said in a statement.

[Pakistan eyes Central Asia access via Peshawar-Kabul motorway](#)

Khaama Press | 27th October
Pakistan aims to access the Central Asian markets as Islamabad mulls to start work on the construction of Peshawar-Kabul motorway, it has been reported. According to the local media reports, Islamabad has given a go-ahead to the National Highway Authority (NHA) to begin the process of hiring consultants who will carry out a feasibility study on the proposed Peshawar-Kabul Motorway. The Express Tribune which has obtained documents related to the project, reported that NHA is undertaking the process to hire consultants for the project.

[Indian govt formally announces Prez Mukherjee's Nepal visit](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 27th October
The state visit of Indian President Pranab Mukherjee to Nepal has been officially announced on Thursday. In a statement issued today, India's Ministry of External Affairs Ministry (MEA) informed that President Mukherjee will pay a state visit to Nepal from 2-4 November 2016. He will be accompanied by a high-level delegation of India. This will be the first visit of a President of India to Nepal in 18 years.

AFGHANISTAN

[4,000 Afghans benefitted ITEC program in India](#)

Afghanistan Times | 27th October

Some 4,000 Afghan students have benefitted from the India Technical Economic Cooperation program since New Delhi started to offer the scholarship to Afghans in 2005, said Indian ambassador to Kabul. "The then premier of India Dr. Manmohan Singh during his visit to Afghanistan announced the award of 500 scholarships every year for Afghan students for undergraduate and postgraduate University education in India," Ambassador Manpreet Vohra said Wednesday.

[Ghor senators threaten to cut ties with government if massacre is not prosecuted](#)

Afghanistan Times | 27th October

The representative from Ghor province in the Mishrano Jirga (Upper House) and political experts came hard on the government for neglecting security, threatening they would cut ties with central government if the massacre of 33 civilians is not prosecuted seriously in the province. Senators condemned the killing of 33 civilians by fighters loyal to Daesh (Islamic State) in the western Ghor province on Tuesday evening and asked government to dispatch a delegation including people representative and bring perpetrators before justice as soon as possible.

[Qatar Ready to Support Afghanistan Peace Effort](#)

Outlook Afghanistan | 27th October

The Qatari leadership has assured President Ashraf Ghani of support in different fields especially the Afghanistan's peace effort, the Presidential Palace said on Wednesday. In a statement, the Presidential Palace said President Ashraf Ghani, at the head of a high-ranking delegation, on Tuesday left for Qatar to condole with Qatari leaders the demise of the former Emir Khalifa bin Hamad Al-Thani, who died on Sunday aged 84.

BANGLADESH

[PM opens 0.5m-mt capacity silo in Mongla](#)

The Financial Express | 27th October

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Thursday inaugurated a 0.5 million (50,000)-metric tonne capacity silo with jetty at Joymonirghol around 17 kilometers downstream of Mongla Port in Bagerhat district. Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the silo through a videoconference from her official residence Ganobhaban in Dhaka.

[Ban on drone fly in Bangladesh airspace](#)

UNB/ Prothom Alo | 27th October

The Civil Aviation Authority, Bangladesh (CAAB) on Thursday imposed a ban on the operation of any flying object like drone, remotely piloted aircraft system and remote control plane/toy plane, in the Bangladesh airspace without its prior permission.

[No fair polls without consensus: BNP](#)

Prothom Alo | 27th October

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has blasted its rival Bangladesh Awami League (AL) for its no dialogue remark and said a fair election is not possible without consensus among major political parties. Criticising the AL general secretary for his comment that there is no need to hold any dialogue with BNP, its secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir on Thursday said engaging in talks is essential for the sake of a credible and inclusive election, reports UNB news agency.

BHUTAN

[Enhancing trade between Bhutan and Austria](#)

Kuensel Online | 27th October

Bhutan and Austria need to transform their friendship into business and investment, the economic affairs minister Lekey Dorji said during the Bhutan-Austria economic forum yesterday. The minister said that Austria is a

potential investor in the field of hydropower, agriculture, tourism, mining and small enterprises (the five jewels of the economy) because it has the expertise.

MALDIVES

[Supreme Court rules in favor of President Yameen in PPM case](#)

Sun Online | 27th October

Supreme Court, too, has supported the ruling by the Civil Court ordering President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom to take over running of Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM) from its leader, former Maldivian President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom. The PPM case was appealed at the Supreme Court today, the court ruled that there is no legal objection to overrule the verdict from the Civil Court which also supported by the High Court. And so the Supreme Court Judges have unanimously that case cannot be permitted for an appeal.

[Japan provides 415 mn to develop digital terrestrial broadcasting](#)

Sun Online | 27th October

Japan has provided MVR 415 million in non-reimbursable financial assist for the project to develop digital terrestrial television broadcasting network in Maldives. The exchange of notes was signed in a ceremony held at Ministry of Foreign Affairs this Thursday morning by Japanese ambassador, Kazumi Endo and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Mohamed Asim.

MYANMAR

[First case of Zika virus infection in Myanmar confirmed](#)

Mizzima | 28th October

A pregnant foreign woman in Yangon has been diagnosed with Zika, Channel News Asia reported on 27 October quoting an MRTV report. "A foreign woman in Yangon who is pregnant was found to have contracted Zika virus and further examination is being carried out," MRTV reported without giving further details.

[Refugees try to adapt to camp life after fleeing violence in western Myanmar](#)

Mizzima | 28th October

In normal times the Danyawaddy football grounds in Sittwe are a place where people gather to play sports, but the grounds are Thursday a temporary shelter for hundreds of refugees in Myanmar's western Rakhine State. Over 600 people of the Rakhine ethnic group moved into makeshift tents here about a week ago after they fled an outbreak of violence in the town of Maungdaw near the border with Bangladesh, an epa journalist reports.

[Suu Kyi presented with Helen Keller award](#)

Mizzima | 28th October

Helen Keller International presented the Helen Keller International Humanitarian Award 2016 to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs, in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, in recognition of her outstanding dedication to philanthropic causes, state media reported on 28 October.

NEPAL

[US extends Nepal's TPS by 18 mths](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 27th October

The United States has extended the designation of Nepal for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for a period of 18 months—effective from December 25. Two months after the devastating earthquake in Nepal in 2015, the United States had announced in June last year that it had designated Nepal for TPS and that eligible Nepali nationals (and people without nationality who last habitually resided in Nepal) residing in the US could apply for the TPS. The announcement to re-designate Nepal for TPS was made on Tuesday by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) of the US, allowing eligible Nepali nationals (and aliens having no nationality who last habitually

resided in Nepal) to retain TPS through June 24, 2018, so long as they otherwise continue to meet the eligibility requirements for TPS.

[Big 3 on same page but have different readings](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 28th October

An impeachment motion against Lokman Singh Karki may have brought a semblance of unity among major parties, but differences continue to persist when it comes to the way forward. House adjournment for two weeks on Tuesday after starting discussion on the impeachment motion against Karki, who is currently suspended as the chief of the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA), was aimed at creating a window for the parties to reach a deal on the impeachment motion and CIAA leadership change, constitution amendment and local elections.

PAKISTAN

[New Delhi, Islamabad expel diplomats](#)

The Express Tribune | 28th October

Relations between Pakistan and India, which have already been strained by ongoing tensions, hit a new low on Thursday after New Delhi and Islamabad decided to expel officials posted in each other's diplomatic missions on charges of espionage.

[CPEC: Chinese barred from working at Sost Dry Port](#)

The Express Tribune | 28th October

In a move that could hurt Pakistan-China cooperation, a court in a ruling this week decided to end the role of Chinese at the Sost Dry Port in Gilgit-Baltistan. The decision follows a two-year-old dispute between employees of a local company and those of a Chinese company.

[Bani Gala 'under siege' after crackdown on PTI](#)

The Express Tribune | 28th October

Law enforcers laid siege to the Bani Gala residence of Imran Khan late Thursday night hours after a crackdown was launched against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf supporters. The opposition party responded by announcing nationwide protests against what it called 'terrorism' of the government.

[Government makes fresh borrowing of \\$1.8 billion](#)

The Express Tribune | 28th October

The federal government took \$1.8 billion in fresh foreign loans over the past three months including \$900 million from commercial banks in an effort to keep foreign currency reserves at historic highs amid growing external debt repayments.

SRI LANKA

[Sri Lanka wants IORA to move to new era of dynamism](#)

Colombo Gazette | 27th October

Sri Lanka today called for the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) to move into a new era of dynamism. Addressing the 16th Council of Ministers Meeting (CoMM) of IORA held in Bali, Indonesia today, Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera said that it was necessary for IORA and the members to take collective steps to ensure the security of the Indian Ocean.

[Indonesia, Sri Lanka agree to take forward several bilateral initiatives to elevate relationship](#)

Colombo Page | 27th October

Indonesia and Sri Lanka have agreed to take forward several initiatives on the bilateral political and economic fronts and also strengthen cooperation within the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) as well as international fora with a view to elevate the relationship when Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera met with his Indonesian counterpart Retno Marsudi on Wednesday.

[Sri Lanka PM outlines economic plan for next five years](#)

Colombo Page| 27th October

Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe outlining his economic plan for the next five years in parliament today said a revolutionary thinking, bold policies and initiatives are required to take forward Sri Lanka's economy.

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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