

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

July 29th, 2016 | Volume: 2 - 13/7

[Dhaka, Delhi to up anti-terror cooperation](#)

The Daily Star | 29th July
Bangladesh and India yesterday pledged to enhance bilateral cooperation to counter terrorism by agreeing to immediately operationalise the agreement on combating terror and organised crime and illicit drug trafficking. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed between the two countries to amend the extradition treaty to make it more effective.

[Russian team will visit Pakistan next week to start talks on commercial contract of \\$2b LNG pipeline](#)

The Express Tribune | 29th July
Pakistan and Russia are set to start negotiations on a commercial contract for laying a \$2-billion liquefied natural gas (LNG) pipeline next week following the go-ahead given by the Ministry of Law for the project despite US sanctions against the Russian firm selected to execute the scheme. A Russian team will reach Islamabad next week to negotiate the commercial deal. Earlier, talks on the project reached a deadlock after the US imposed sanctions on the Russian company – RT Global – working on the project.

[Japan agrees to fund Sri Lanka's light rail system proposed in megapolis development plan](#)

Colombo Page | 29th July
Following the conclusion of a visit by a high level delegation of the Japanese Government Thursday, the Sri Lankan government has confirmed that Japan is willing to fund the Light Rail Transit (LRT) system proposed in the Megalopolis Development plan.

AFGHANISTAN

[Abdullah vows to introduce administrative reforms in Takhar](#)

Afghanistan Times | 27th July
Chief of Executive Abdullah Abdullah in a meeting with the elders and representatives of Takhar province, pledged to take measures for reforms in this Northern Province, his office said Wednesday in a statement. He said that the government team completed the report regarding Takhar and submitted it to the government, which will be discussed in ministers' council.

[US Military Mission in Afghanistan Not Ending Soon: Gen. Dunford](#)

Pajhwok / Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 28th July
US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph F. Dunford has said military mission in Afghanistan was not complete and could not be completed in the near future. A media report said on Wednesday. During a joint

Pentagon news briefing on Monday afternoon, US Secretary of Defence Ashton Carter said that the United States would continue to provide military support to Afghan security forces to make sure that they were successful.

[Govt. Seeks Alternate for Electoral Reforms Amid Setbacks](#)

Tolonews / Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 28th July

The Afghan government is likely to announce an alternate to implementing electoral reforms after the Wolesi Jirga's (Lower House of Parliament) recent rejection of President Ashraf Ghani's second legislative decree on the issue. This has however, scuppered the hopes of monitoring groups and the Afghan public that reforms in the election system would take place.

[NATO, Afghanistan, Pakistan Agree on Combating Daesh](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 28th July

In a tripartite session Afghanistan, NATO and Pakistan have agreed to launch serious combat on removing Daesh and other militancy groups, officials in Ministry of Defense have stated if Pakistan doesn't fulfill its commitments the following country will experience problems coming from the International community.

BANGLADESH

[Trainer of Gulshan café attackers' among dead](#)

The Daily Star | 29th July

Raihan Kabir, identified by law enforcers on 28th July as one of the nine militants killed in early Tuesday's operation at Kalyanpur, had trained the Gulshan cafe gunmen, according to a top DMP official. In police file, he is named Tareq, a 22-year-old from Rangpur's Pirgachha, who was already wanted for the murder of a policeman in Ashulia in November last year, said Monirul Islam, DMP's counterterrorism unit chief, in a press briefing yesterday.

[Businesses urge govt to provide security for establishments](#)

The Financial Express | 29th July

The country's leading businessmen on Thursday urged the government to restore foreign buyers' confidence after two grisly terrorist attacks by providing security to business establishments. They also called upon the government to continue the ongoing drive against militancy/ terrorist activities and prevent recurrence of such incidents.

[Stay alert to use of ICT by terrorists: PM Hasina](#)

UNB/ The Financial Express | 29th July

Renewing her resolve to crush terrorism and militancy with the help of people, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged all to stay alert as terrorists were using ICT in their evil activities. "Although good works are done through ICT, terrorists and militants are also using it... we'll have to be very alert to this," she told the inaugural ceremony of the Civil Service in Development Innovation 2016 summit at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Novo Theatre in the city.

MALDIVES

[Constitution to be republished with new amendments](#)

Sun Online | 28th July

The current Constitution of the Republic of Maldives was published eight years ago during the Presidency of Maumonn Abdul Gayoom ratified of 7 August 2008. Constitution is the body of fundamental principles and established precedents to which the Maldives acknowledged to be governed. The current Constitution in effect contains 14 Chapters with a total of 301 Articles.

[Former Maldivian President Waheed advises leaders to prioritize national interest over individual ambition](#)

Sun Online | 28th July

Former Maldivian President Dr. Mohamed Waheed Hassan Manik has appealed to current President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom and former presidents – Maumoon Abdul Gayoom and Mohamed Nasheed to prioritize national interest over their own political ambitions and aspirations. Waheed made the appeal in a tweet he sent out on Thursday morning with Yameen, Maumoon and Nasheed tagged in it.

MYANMAR

[UWSA and NDAA leaders to meet with Aung San Suu Kyi](#)

Mizzima | 29th July

Leaders from the United Wa State Army (UWSA) and National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA), will meet with State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and military chief General Min Aung Hlaing in Nay Pyi Taw today to try to build trust among the parties prior to the government's major peace conference, RFA has reported.

[Landmark Development on track to be completed by 2020](#)

Mizzima | 28th July

The Landmark Development is a collaboration between FMI, Yoma Strategic Holdings Ltd and The Hongkong and Shanghai Hotels, Limited, Mitsubishi Corporation, Mitsubishi Estate, the International Finance Corporation and the Asian Development Bank. The Landmark Development is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2020.

[Chief Minister Proposes Youth Committee to Address Rangoon's Challenges](#)

The Irrawaddy | 28th July

To solve current challenges in the commercial capital, the Rangoon divisional government will form a coordination committee with young entrepreneurs, said Chief Minister Phyo Min Thein. Phyo Min Thein, Chief Minister admitted that the regional government is unable to solve every problem in Rangoon, identifying some of the most pressing issues as traffic congestion, growing squatter communities and poor rail transport.

NEPAL

[MoE asked to prepare draft bill at the earliest](#)

Himalayan News Service / The Himalayan Times | 29th July

The Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources has directed Ministry of Energy (MoE) to immediately finalise the Bill on National Energy Crisis Alleviation and Electricity Development Decade so that it could be tabled in ongoing House session.

[Unesco committee gives Nepal a year to restore Valley's world heritage sites](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 29th July

The earthquake-damaged world heritage sites in Kathmandu Valley are at risk of being put on the Unesco List of World Heritage in Danger if they are not renovated within a year. The 40th session of the Unesco World Heritage Committee that concluded in Istanbul on July 20 gave Nepal government one more year to restore the damaged heritage sites at the request of Nepali delegation, led by Prem Kumar Rai, secretary at the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation.

[Parliament endorses President's decision](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 27th July

Despite reservations from the Nepali Congress and the CPN (Maoist Centre), the Legislature-Parliament on Tuesday endorsed President Bidhya Devi Bhandari's decision to remove constitutional difficulties in forming a

new government. On the recommendation of the KP Sharma Oli-led Cabinet, President Bhandari on Monday removed the difficulties as per Article 305 of the Constitution of Nepal.

PAKISTAN

[Accords worth \\$110m inked with Chinese firms](#)

The Express Tribune | 29th July

A delegation of the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FCCI) along with Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif has inked four agreements worth \$110 million with Chinese engineering companies during their visit to the neighbouring country.

[Shahbaz offers free-of-cost land to Chinese investors](#)

DAWN | 29th July

The chief minister has offered free-of-cost land to big Chinese investors if they invest in Punjab. Shahbaz Sharif made the offer while addressing Punjab-Qingdao Business Seminar on Thursday during his ongoing visit to China, says a communique. He also assured the Chinese industrialists of provision of the best facilities for the programme of shifting industries along with technology to Pakistan.

[Pakistan, Turkey likely to revive 2003 road deal](#)

The Express Tribune | 29th July

A bilateral road transport agreement signed between Pakistan and Turkey in 2003 is likely to become operational in 2017 after a break of 14 years. The second meeting of Pakistan-Turkey joint commission on road transportation was held here under the framework of bilateral road transport agreement between Pakistan and Turkey signed on June 15, 2003.

[India's home minister to visit Pakistan next week](#)

The Express Tribune | 29th July

India's home minister will visit Pakistan next week to attend a ministerial meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Countries (Saarc) even as tensions persist between Islamabad and New Delhi over the situation in Kashmir.

SRI LANKA

[ADB approves \\$ 118 million financial assistance to fully electrify Sri Lanka](#)

Colombo Page | 27th June

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has granted over \$ 118 million of financial assistance to help Sri Lanka to fully electrify the island including its small isolated islands.

[China grants scholarships to 15 Sri Lankan students](#)

Colombo Gazette | 28th July

Fifteen Sri Lankan students will go to China to further their studies after being awarded Chinese Government Scholarships, a Sri Lankan official said on Thursday in Colombo, according to the Xinhua news agency.

[Modi asserts assistance to Sri Lanka based on Lanka's priorities](#)

Colombo Gazette | 28th July

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi today said that India's Development Cooperation with Sri Lanka is based on the choices and priorities set by the people, the leadership and the Government of Sri Lanka.

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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