



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

**July 3rd, 2017 | Volume: 3 - 1/7**

[McCain urges India, Pakistan to hold talks on Kashmir issue](#)

Dawn | 3<sup>rd</sup> July

The visiting US Congressional delegation led by Senator John McCain on Sunday urged both India and Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir issue through dialogue and asserted that peace in Afghanistan could not be possible without Pakistan's help. The delegation met Adviser on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz and discussed with him important bilateral issues, including terrorism, Pakistan's relations with India and Afghanistan and regional peace. Other members of the US delegation were Lindsey Graham, Sheldon Whitehouse, Elizabeth Warren and David Perdue.

[Malaysia to consider action against Myanmar over blocking of UN fact-finding mission](#)

Mizzima | 3<sup>rd</sup> July

Malaysia will consider action against Myanmar following the latter's decision to deny entry to a United Nations fact-finding mission probing alleged abuse of Rohingya in the country, the Straits Times reported on 2 July. The report quoted Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi stating that the government will seek the foreign ministry's advice on whether humanitarian or diplomatic action would be taken.

[Khalili Sworn in as New HPC Chief Amid Peace Talks Stalemate](#)

Outlook Afghanistan | 3<sup>rd</sup> July

President Ashraf Ghani on Sunday officially introduced Mohammad Karim Kahlili, a former vice president to ex-president Hamid Karzai, as the new head of the Afghan High Peace Council (HPC). The newly appointed HPC Chief Khalili said the peace facilitating body so far has failed to make a breakthrough in the process and that the integration of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of Hizb-e-Islami, in the peace process has not reduced the scale of violence in the country. However, he hailed the peace accord recently signed between the Afghan government and Hekmatyar and said it was a step forward. According to Khalili, joining the peace process does not mean surrendering, but it is a positive deal.

## AFGHANISTAN

### [New alliance on the way: This coalition is not for national interest, rather for privileges: Parliamentarian](#)

Afghanistan Times | 2<sup>nd</sup> July

Some members of the Wolesi Jirga or the Lower House of Parliament on 1<sup>st</sup> July said that the three-part new alliance is not for the national interests—rather it has been formed to seek more privileges. According to report the new alliance formed by leaders from three Afghan political parties, such as Jamiat-e-Islami, the National Unity of People of Afghanistan, and the National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan on Friday in Turkey. A lawmaker, Arian Yoon, said, “The new alliance has not been formed to preserve national interests, rather it is for their own interests to seek more privileges.” “Representative of the three parties had been played several games in the past 16 years aimed at receiving more privileges,” the lawmaker added.

### [Wolesi Jirga Wants Next Elections to be Fair](#)

Outlook Afghanistan | 2<sup>nd</sup> July

The Wolesi Jirga (WJ) or lower house of parliament on 1<sup>st</sup> July welcomed the announcement of a date for holding parliamentary and district council elections, but asked the election bodies to ensure the ballot was free and fair. The Independent Election Commission (IEC) last month set a July 7, 2018 date for conducting the long-delayed elections. Nader Shah Bahar, a lower house member from western Ghor province, said no step had been taken since the announcement of the election date to make sure the next polls would be fair and free. “I hope all necessary arrangements will be put in place for the parliamentary and district council elections and past experiences may not be repeated,” he added.

## BANGLADESH

### [Top court set to deliver verdict on 16th Amendment Monday](#)

bdnews24 | 2<sup>nd</sup> July

The Supreme Court will judge on Monday the appeal against a High Court ruling that the parliament's powers to remove judges was illegal. The top appeals court on Jun 1 set Jul 3 for its verdict after hearing the state's arguments against the lower court ruling. The verdict is on top of the agenda for Monday, according to the Supreme Court website. The 16th Amendment to the Constitution, passed in 2014, allows the parliament to remove judges on grounds of incompetence and misconduct.

### [Bangladesh, India to be criticised if Sundarbans dropped](#)

Prothom Alo | 2<sup>nd</sup> July

Both Bangladesh and India will be castigated internationally if the Sundarbans is dropped from the list of World Heritage Sites as the world's largest mangrove forest will be destroyed because of the Rampal power plant being constructed jointly by these two countries. National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power, and Ports convener Sheikh Muhammad Shahidullah and member secretary Anu Muhammad made the observation in a statement issued marking the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO. They

alleged Bangladesh and India were jointly “going ahead obdurately with the project detrimental to the ecosystem as well as to the Sundarbans”.

#### [Water sharing: Bangladesh wants India to travel some distance](#)

bdnews24 | 3<sup>rd</sup> July

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md Shahriar Alam has said that Bangladesh-India relations is now "at its best", but there are still some challenges to overcome. “Yes, there are still areas like sharing common water resources where we look forward to India to travel some distance for the benefit of the people of the two friendly countries,” Alam said on Sunday, speaking at a dialogue in Guwahati. The state minister did not mention the name of any of the 54 rivers crisscrossed the two countries, but, Teesta water sharing is the known major issue remained pending for a long time due to the opposition from West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee.

### **BHUTAN**

#### [India expresses concern over road construction in Doklam](#)

Kuensel Onlnie | 1<sup>st</sup> July

India is concerned with the recent actions of China in the Doklam area and has conveyed to the Chinese government that the construction of the road in Doklam area would represent a significant change of status quo with serious security implications for India, the ministry of external affairs stated in a press release yesterday. Doklam is one of four disputed areas between Bhutan and China in the western region of Haa and Paro dzongkhags.

#### [Dismissal of fiscal incentives accusations draws criticism](#)

Kuensel Online | 1<sup>st</sup> July

The government’s outright rejection of the allegations against it violating the Constitution by granting the Fiscal Incentives 2016 without the parliament’s approval has irked the Opposition, the National Council and Druk Nyamrup Tshogpa (DNT). Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay, in a live interview on BBS on June 27, and at the Meet the Press on June 23, dismissed the accusations as unsubstantiated. The Prime Minister said that the accusations of the Opposition and DNT were politically motivated.

### **MALDIVES**

#### [Government drops electricity price](#)

Sun Online | 2<sup>nd</sup> July

The price of electricity being provided nationwide by the government companies has been received. Speaking at a press conference at the PSM Radio Building toniday, The Minister for Environment and Energy, Thoriq Ibrahim said that the government has decideby 1d to lower the price of electricity by ten to 15 percent starting this month and will be effective in the next bill. Minister Thoriq said change is due to the drop in oil prices and the reduced import duty of oil from ten to five percent. The Minister said that the bringing down the import duty will bring productive changes to all sectors using the oil.

### [Deputy AG: Amendments will be suggested for Criminal Procedure Act](#)

Sun Online | 2<sup>nd</sup> July

The Attorney General's Office will be suggesting amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act – which took effect this Sunday, reports Deputy Attorney General Ahmed Usham. Usham reported that the amendments initially proposed to the Criminal Procedure Act were withdrawn due to concerns raised by some lawmakers. And that new amendments will be address the concerns. The biggest concern raised by lawmakers had been the amendment which granted police entry to certain places without a search warrant.

## **MYANMAR**

### [The KIO Dilemma](#)

Mizzima | 3<sup>rd</sup> July

The civil war which continues to rage in Kachin State has been going on for six years. The conflict started on 9 June 2011, and since then a ceasefire has not yet been achieved and domestic and international attention is slowly diminishing. To date, after years of continuous Myanmar Army attacks including ground forces, artillery and airstrikes, thousands of combatants have lost their lives on the battlefields.

### [Myanmar security forces on high alert in northern Rakhine state](#)

Mizzima | 3<sup>rd</sup> July

The Myanmar security forces has been put on high alert in Maungtaw, northern Rakhine state, following spate of killings by armed men and fear of fresh attacks, official report said on Sunday. In the past two weeks, six civilians have been murdered and two have gone missing or been abducted. The incidents have prompted nearly 200 Rakhine Buddhist villagers to flee the area.

## **NEPAL**

### [DPM Mahara leaves for New Delhi](#)

The Himalayan Times | 2<sup>nd</sup> July

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Krishna Bahadur Mahara today left for New Delhi, the capital of India, at an invitation of his Indian counterpart Sushma Swaraj on Sunday. Ambassador of Nepal to India Deep Kumar Upadhyay and other high level officials had welcomed DPM Mahara at the Indira Gandhi International Airport this afternoon.

### [Seven dead, four missing in flooding, landslides](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 3<sup>rd</sup> July

Monsoon rains continued to wreak havoc in various parts of the country on Sunday, with at least seven people losing their lives in separate incidents of landslide and flood in Parbat, Kaski, Pyuthan and Syangja districts in the past 24 hours. With this, the death toll from water-induced disasters has reached 14 this year. Monsoon this year arrived in Nepal on June 12. Four persons have gone missing.

### [Nepal to seek access to two land, three sea ports in China](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 3<sup>rd</sup> July

Nepal is set to propose Beijing for access to two land and three sea ports in China for enhancing connectivity with Europe. The Ministry of Commerce has prepared a draft and sent it to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) for consultation. The proposal will be put on the table “in the near future” at a meeting to be held in Kathmandu for formulating a protocol on the Transit Transport Agreement (TTA), according to an official at the Ministry of

Commerce. The TTA was signed with China in March last year during then prime minister KP Sharma Oli's visit to Beijing.

### [Cabinet expansion likely next week](#)

My Republica | 3<sup>rd</sup> July

Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba is planning to expand his eight-member cabinet early next week, a month after his election as the head of government. Deuba had formed small cabinet by inducting three ministers from his party Nepali Congress (NC), three from CPN (Maoist Center) and one from Nepal Loktantrik Forum (NLF) on June 7, a day after his election. Then he had delayed cabinet expansion in view of the June 28 elections.

## **PAKISTAN**

### [IGP Khowaja says excluding him from transfer, posting process to hit police performance](#)

Dawn | 3<sup>rd</sup> July

Sindh's Inspector General of Police A.D. Khowaja has said that provincial government's decision to exclude IGP's input from the process of transfers and postings of senior police officers will certainly have adverse implications as the chief minister has already had such powers. He said at an Eid Milan party held in honour of heirs of martyred policemen and later told journalists in police ground on Saturday night that the issue would hopefully be cleared after the Sindh High Court's judgement in this regard.

### [PTI threatens to move court against PPP for repealing NAO](#)

The Express Tribune | 3<sup>rd</sup> July

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has vowed to move the court against the Pakistan Peoples Party-led Sindh government for repealing the National Accountability Ordinance (NAO), 1999 through a bill likely to be passed today (Monday) in the Sindh Assembly session. The Sindh Cabinet, on Friday, had unanimously approved repealing the NAO to the extent of its applicability to the province and had decided to introduce a proposed amendment in the provincial assembly for approval.

## **SRILANKA**

### [Norwegian experts to consult on Sri Lanka's crisis-ridden multi-purpose Uma Oya development project](#)

Colombo Page | 1<sup>st</sup> July

Sri Lanka President Maithripala Sirisena has assured that the Government will look into the future activities of the Uma Oya Multipurpose Development project while giving priority to resolve the problems faced by the people affected by the project. President Sirisena Friday chaired a special discussion with the representatives of the civil organizations representing the people affected by the multipurpose development project.

### [Sri Lanka Army sets up and equip temporary wards at Negombo Hospital for dengue patients](#)

Colombo Page | 2<sup>nd</sup> July

Sri Lanka Army troops have constructed two new temporary wards in the Negombo General Hospital premises for Dengue patients after hospital authorities brought the lack of adequate warding facilities to the attention of the President when he recently visited the hospital. As a result of the Dengue spreading rapidly in Negombo and the surrounding areas there was congestion in the Dengue ward complex at the Negombo Hospital and after witnessing the shortage of facilities during his visit to the Hospital on June 28th, the President directed the officials to take swift action to expand required facilities.

## [Austin Fernando appointed as the Secretary to the President](#)

Colombo Page| 2<sup>nd</sup> July

Former Governor of the Eastern Province Austin Fernando was appointed as the Permanent Secretary to the President Maithripala Sirisena from 1 July. Austin Fernando, a senior Sri Lanka Administrative Service officer, was the peacetime Secretary to the Ministry of Defense during the previous United National Party government. Fernando's appointment follows the resignation of former Secretary, P.B Abeykoon, who served as the Secretary since the election of President Sirisena in January 2015.

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### ***About Ananta Aspen Centre***

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