

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

July 4th, 2016 | Volume: 2 - 2/7

TOP STORIES

[Dhaka attack: 20 hostages killed Friday night, says ISPR](#)

The Daily Star | 2nd July
Gunmen killed 20 people, mostly with sharp weapons, shortly after taking hostage a number of diners at a café in Dhaka's diplomatic zone last evening, according to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). As per instruction by the honourable head of the government, Bangladesh Army conducted Operation Thunderbolt, Brig Gen Nayeem Ashfaque Chowdhury, director of military operations, told journalists at a press briefing this afternoon. Joint security force led by army recovered 20 bodies during a search on the compound of the Spanish restaurant, Holey Artisan Bakery after the operation was launched, Brig Gen Nayeem said.

[Afghanistan receives military equipment from China](#)

KhaamaPress | 3rd July
Afghanistan received military equipment from China on Sunday months after Beijing announced expanded military aid to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF). The Office of the National Security Adviser said the military aid by China was received by National Security Adviser Mohammad Hanif Atmar. A cargo plane loaded with the military aid including transport vehicles and other military equipment landed in Kabul's Military Airport.

[Pakistan overtakes India in money stashed in Swiss banks](#)

The Express Tribune | 4th July
Money kept by Pakistani nationals in Swiss banks has risen by more than 16 per cent to 1.5 billion Francs making it the 69th country with most money stashed in the country's banks. A new report released by the Swiss National Bank on Thursday states that the total funds linked to Pakistan in Swiss banks stood at CHF 1,513 million at the end of 2015, up nearly 16 per cent from CHF 1,301 billion a year ago.

AFGHANISTAN

[Taliban's Eid attack plot foiled in Balkh, bomb making factory busted](#)

KhaamaPress | 3rd July
A bomb making factory of the Taliban group was busted during an operation in northern Balkh province of Afghanistan, by the Afghan intelligence on Sunday. The National Directorate of Security (NDS) said the factory was discovered in Robot village located in Chemtal district. According to a statement by NDS, two experts working in the factory to manufacture Improvised Explosive Device (IED) were also detained during the operation.

[Top security officials investigated for deadly Kabul attack](#)

KhaamaPress | 3rd July
Top Afghan security officials in the Ministry of Interior were investigated for a deadly attack in capital Kabul that targeted a

convoy of the Afghan police cadets. Sources in the Ministry of Interior (MoI) have said at least 10 senior officials have been investigated, apparently for any negligence that led to the death of at least 33 police cadets. The incident in Kabul took place on Thursday after a suicide bomber targeted the convoy of the vehicle and second blast took place minutes after the first explosion.

[Pakistan, US Agree to Push for Afghan Reconciliation](#)

DailyOutlookAfghanistan | 4th July

Pakistan and the United States, despite a mismatch of perceptions on drone strikes, have agreed on continued cooperation on the issue of peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan. US Special Representative Ambassador Richard Olson and Foreign Secretary Aizaz Chaudhry reached the agreement at a meeting in Islamabad late on Saturday. US-Pakistan relations soured after a May drone strike in Balochistan killed Afghan Taliban chief Mullah Akhtar Mansour and congressional calls stronger action against the Haqqani network.

[Kabul to Win Long-Term Pledges At Warsaw Summit: CEO](#)

DailyOutlookAfghanistan | 4th July

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah on Sunday said Afghanistan would go to NATO summit in Poland's capital Warsaw next week with full preparations in areas of defence and security. Abdullah expressed these views during a meeting with NATO senior civilian representative Ismail Aramaz at his office in Kabul, a statement from the CEO office said. The statement said Abdullah and Aramaz discussed next week's heads of states summit of the alliance in Warsaw and Afghanistan's preparations for the July 8-9 gathering.

BANGLADESH

[PM Hasina to join ceremony for paying homage to victims of Dhaka cafe terror attack](#)

bdnews | 3rd July

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will pay her respects to the victims of the terror attack at a Gulshan cafe in a ceremony on Monday. Press Secretary to the PM Ihsanul Karim told bdnews24.com that the ceremony will be held at the Army Stadium and the prime minister will pay homage at 10am. The homage ceremony between 10am and 12pm will be open for all, he said. The Awami League said in a statement that its central leaders will also pay respect on Monday.

[Khaleda for unity against terrorism](#)

The Daily Star | 4th July

Denouncing the Gulshan terror attack, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday called upon all, irrespective of party and opinion, to unite against terrorism without any further delay. "Let's build a peaceful, democratic and safe Bangladesh, forgetting all divisions among us. "It's no longer a big issue as to who will be in power. Now the present and the future of this country are at stake. No achievement is going to last if we can't resist terrorism and ensure safety of people's lives," Khaleda said at a press briefing at her Gulshan office in the capital after a meeting of her party's standing committee members.

[Bangladesh RMG industry trembles after terror attack](#)

The Financial Express | 4th July

Some leaders of Bangladesh's \$26 billion garment industry expect Western fashion retailers to review their ties with the world's second-largest garment exporter after Islamist militants killed at least 17 foreigners in an attack on a Dhaka restaurant, reports Reuters.

BHUTAN

[Ratification of EIB deferred](#)

Kuensel | 3rd July

The joint sitting of Parliament yesterday deferred the deliberations on the framework agreement between the European Investment Bank (EIB) and Bhutan through majority votes as proposed by the joint committee.

[PAC reviews implementation of hydropower recommendations](#)

Kuensel | 1st July

Decreasing consumption of electricity among low voltage users and increasing household expenditure on electricity coupled

with increase in usage of energy from other sources could be attributed to the raise in power tariff making electricity unaffordable.

MALDIVES

[Former Vice President Adheeb questioned as suspect in Gulf Craft launch fire](#)

Sun Online | 3rd July

Former Vice President Ahmed Adheeb Abdul Gafoor has been questioned on suspicion of his involvement in the fire on the engine of a Gulf Craft launch “Souvenir 18” traveling to Club Med Kani Finolhu Resort from Hulhulé with 24 passengers. Sources say that Adheeb was questioned sometime this evening. The Police questioned the former Vice President if he funded the arson or was involved in any way.

MYANMAR

[Human Rights Situation Still Dire: UN Envoy](#)

The Irrawaddy | 2nd July

Rights abuses are ongoing in Burma despite the election of the country’s first democratically-elected government in half a century, according to UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Burma Yanghee Lee. Lee ended her 12-day visit to Burma with a press conference in Rangoon, where she said there was no difference between the human rights conditions now and under the previous quasi-civilian government.

NEPAL

[Trust deficit among parties](#)

The Himalayan Times | 4th July

Nepali Congress leader Krishna Prasad Sitaula today said implementation of the constitution and delineation of federal structures were being delayed due to lack of trust among political parties.

[Members see opportunity for new beginning in ties](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 4th July

The first meeting of the Nepal-India Eminent Persons Group starts in Kathmandu on Monday, which the EPG members say is open to reviewing the bilateral relations in the changed context.

[Nepal India will soon sign a pact to harmonise standards of goods](#)

The Himalayan Times | 4th July

Nepal and India concluded the Intergovernmental Committee (IGC) meeting headed by the commerce secretaries from both countries on Thursday, in New Delhi. The IGC is a mechanism constituted under Nepal-India Treaty of Trade to resolve issues of trade and transit between the two countries.

[Govt released Rs.990 million so far for solar street lamps](#)

My Republica | 4th July

The Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFALD) has so far released Rs 990 million of the total Rs 1 billion allocated for installing solar street lamps in municipalities under the ministry's Solar Power Street Lamps installation program.

PAKISTAN

[Canada to set up solar plants in Balochistan](#)

DAWN|3rd July

The governments of Canada and Balochistan have signed an agreement to set up solar plants of 1,000MW in different parts

of the province. Using its constitutional powers devolved to it under the 18th Amendment, the provincial government held direct talks with the Canadian government for investment in the energy sector.

[OIC, China supporting Pakistan's stance on drone strikes: Lodhi](#)

DAWN|4th July

Pakistan's Ambassador to the UN Maleeha Lodhi on Sunday said the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) and China are supporting Pakistan's stance on drone strikes in the UN. Talking to Geo News, the ambassador who had demanded immediate cessation of such strikes in the UN General Assembly on Saturday, said Pakistan has successfully gathered support over the issue, and OIC, China and a number of other countries agree over the point that UN should take notice of the Human Rights Council's (HRC) reports on the subject.

[Democrats to maintain pressure on Pakistan if Clinton wins](#)

DAWN|4th July

The new Democratic administration "will continue to push for an Afghan-led peace process and press Pakistan to deny all terrorists sanctuary on its soil," says the Democratic Party's election manifesto released this weekend. The manifesto, which is called the "party platform" in the United States, shows that the Hillary Clinton administration, if elected, would continue President Barack Obama's foreign policies, particularly in South Asia.

SRI LANKA

[Dr. Indrajit Coomaraswamy appointed new Central Bank Governor](#)

Colombo Gazette| 2nd July

Dr. Indrajit Coomaraswamy has been appointed as the new Central Bank Governor, President Maithripala Sirisena said. He said that he made the appointment after consulting all parties concerned. "After consulting all parties concerned, I appointed top economist Dr. Indrajit Coomaraswamy to lead the Central Bank of Sri Lanka," the President said.

[TNA denies claims it struck deal with US on resolution](#)

Colombo Gazette| 3rd July

The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) led by R Sampanthan, has rejected rumors that have been appearing in the public media stating that the TNA, Government of Sri Lanka and the United States have come to an agreement with regard to the implementation of the UN resolution 30/1, especially with regard to the accountability processes.

[Sri Lanka to introduce a legislative act to strengthen \\$3 billion cooperative sector](#)

Colombo Page| 4th July

Sri Lanka, recognizing the contribution of cooperatives to the country's economy, is taking a variety of measures to strengthen the cooperative sector and plans to introduce a National Cooperative Act and a cooperative policy are among the measures.

[Green Climate Fund approves USD 38.1 million for Sri Lanka to strengthen smallholder farmers in dry zone](#)

Colombo Page| 4th July

The Green Climate Fund (GCF), the main international funding body for climate action, at its 13th Board Meeting has approved USD 38.1 million in funding for Sri Lanka for its proposal titled "Strengthening the resilience of smallholder farmers in the Dry Zone to climate variability and extreme events through an integrated approach to water management".

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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