

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

October 5th, 2016 | Volume: 2 - 2/10

[EU to pledge \\$1.1 billion in aid to Afghanistan until 2020](#)

Khaama Press | 4th October

The European Union (EU) is expected to pledge an aid package of \$1.1 billion in annual aid to Afghanistan until 2020 as a major conference is due to kick off on Afghanistan in Brussels on 4th October. A head of the summit, the European Commission said it would commit an extra 200 million euros (\$224 million) a year to strengthen state structures in the war-ravaged country, according to Germany's international broadcaster, Deutsche Welle.

[Bangladesh will be with India](#)

The Daily Star | 5th October

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal yesterday said Bangladesh would stay beside India if the neighbouring country came under attack as a result of ongoing tension with Pakistan. "We defeated Pakistan in 1971. We don't want to think about them. Besides, we have no common border with Pakistan. The country is situated 1,200 miles away, so we don't need to bother about that country," he said.

[Switzerland signs deal with Sri Lanka to repatriate refugees](#)

Colombo Gazette | 4th October

Swiss Justice Minister Simonetta Sommaruga and Sri Lankan Interior Minister Seneviratne Bandara Nawinne have signed a bilateral immigration treaty in Colombo.

AFGHANISTAN

[Brussels Conference Kicks Off](#)

Outlook Afghanistan | 5th October

The two-day Brussels International Conference on Afghanistan kicked off in the Belgium capital on Tuesday. Today, the European Union and the government of Afghanistan will co-host the Brussels Conference that will gather more than 70 countries and 20 international organisations and agencies. The gathering will provide a platform for the Kabul administration to set out its vision and track record on reform. For the international community, it will be the opportunity to signal sustained political and financial support to Afghan peace, state-building and development

[56 Daesh terrorists killed in Nangarhar](#)

Outlook Afghanistan | 5th October

At least 56 militants loyal to the Islamic State, known as Daesh, were killed during joint clearing operations lunched by security forces and international forces in eastern Nangarhar province, local official said Tuesday. The provincial police spokesman Hazrat Hussain Mashreqiwal said the terrorists were killed in Pikhe-Khwar area of Achin district.

BANGLADESH

[Pvt cos. banks unwilling to contribute a part of profit](#)

The Financial Express | 4th October

Local companies, including commercial banks and the government are at loggerheads over the former's contribution of a portion of their profits to the workers' welfare fund. Different companies including commercial banks are still reluctant to contribute to the government-run Bangladesh Workers' Welfare Foundation (BWFF), formed by the government, despite repeated reminders to comply with the law, ministry officials said.

[Borders with India: Dhaka 'agrees' on new fencing](#)

The Daily Star | 5th October

India yesterday said it was "agreed" with Bangladesh on putting up a new fence to secure over 250 villages outside the existing barbed wire fence along the International Border to curb cross-border crimes and alleviate problems of the population there. The new fence would be closer to the 'zero' line. How close it would be to the 'zero' line would be determined later at the operation level, KK Sharma, director general of the Indian Border Security Force, said after a meeting with his Bangladesh counterpart in New Delhi.

[World's top 3 green factories in Bangladesh](#)

Prothom Alo | 5th October

The top three environment-friendly garment and textile factories in the world are located in Bangladesh, keeping pace with the growing demand of green factories worldwide. Envoy Textiles, Remi Holdings and Plummy Fashions have taken the garment and textile factories of Bangladesh to new heights.

BHUTAN

[India releases Nu 500.5M](#)

Kuensel Online | 4th October

The Government of India (GoI) released Nu 500.467 million to the Royal Government under the Project Tied Assistance project, according to an Indian embassy press release. The released fund is for blacktopping of gewog connectivity roads. Indian embassy's head of chancery, Neetu M Bhagotia handed over the cheque to GNHC secretary Thinley Namgyel yesterday.

MALDIVES

[President Yameen meets with the Saudi Foreign Secretary](#)

Sun Online | 4th October

President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom has met with the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, Adel Al-Jubeir on his visit to Saudi on the invitation of the Saudi King, bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud. At today's meeting, the President and the Saudi Foreign Minister spoke extensively on a wide range of bilateral and multilateral issues. President Yameen and the Saudi Foreign Minister reaffirmed solidarity in the fight against the threat of terrorism.

[Islamic Ministry: Want to work with religious organizations on the same platform](#)

Sun Online | 4th October

Ministry of Islamic Affairs has said that they want to work with the religious organizations on the same platform. In an interview with Sun Media, the Deputy Minister of the Islamic Ministry, Mohamed Mustafa Ibrahim said that the Ministry's thinking is to work together with the religious organizations on different religious events and matters and so far, one such activity has successfully been conducted.

MYANMAR

[Myanmar monks join the 5th Buddhist Conclave in India](#)

Mizzima | 5th October

Myanmar monks have joined an important international Buddhist gathering in India. Organized by the Indian Ministry of Tourism, the International Buddhist Conclave held in three cities in India is running from October 2

to 6. The conclave takes in the three cities of New Delhi, Varanasi and Bodhgaya, the latter two considered the “Land of the Buddha” – where Buddha taught and became enlightened 2,500 years ago.

NEPAL

[Indian prez Nepal visit slated for Nov 2](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 3rd October

The date for the visit of Indian President Pranab Mukherjee to Nepal has been confirmed for November 2-4. Mukherjee will arrive in Nepal following Tihar festival upon the invitation of his Nepali counterpart Bidhya Devi Bhandari.

[Finance Secy-level meet after BRICS, China hints](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 4th October

The postponed Nepal-China Finance Secretary-level meeting may take place after the BRICS Summit takes place in Goa, India, on October 15-16, government officials said. The meeting scheduled to be held on August 24 in Kathmandu was postponed indefinitely after the Chinese side expressed its inability to attend the event citing other “important engagements”.

[Govt tables three poll-related bills](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 5th October

The government on Tuesday tabled three election-related bills in Parliament. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs Bimalendra Nidhi tabled Bill to Amend and Integrate Laws related to the Election Commission, Bill Related to Voters’ List and Bill to Amend and Integrate Laws Related to Political Parties.

PAKISTAN

[Basit calls for talks between Pakistan, India](#)

DAWN | 5th October

Pakistan’s High Commissioner to India Abdul Basit has called for “result-oriented engagement” between Islamabad and New Delhi in order for them to establish a durable peace in the region. In an interview with Indian Express daily, Mr Basit said Pakistan did not see dialogue as a favour that could be extended by one country to another.

[Pakistan's prospects of 5% growth rate at risk, says World Bank report](#)

The Express Tribune | 5th October

Prospects of Pakistan’s economy growing at a decent pace of 5% a year are at risk due to delays in the implementation of the \$46-billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects, warns a new World Bank report released Tuesday.

[White House shuts down anti-Pakistan petition](#)

DAWN | 5th October

The White House has shut down [an ongoing petition](#) that sought to designate Pakistan a state sponsor of terrorism, saying that it is doing so on suspicion of fraud. In a blurb captioned, ‘Closed Petition’, the White House announced that the “petition has been archived because it did not meet the signature requirements. It can no longer be signed.”

[Rights activist questions grant of sweeping powers to Pemra chief](#)

DAWN | 5th October

The Pemra Board on Tuesday granted sweeping powers to its chairman Absar Alam to revoke or suspend the licences of TV channels, cable operators or FM radios airing foreign content without even issuing them prior notices. However, rights activists opposed the grant of such powers to a single individual.

SRI LANKA

[Prime Minister to have key discussions in India](#)

Colombo Gazette| 3rd October

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe will be in India tomorrow leading a delegation for the India Economic Summit. The Prime Minister will attend the Opening Plenary of the India Economic Summit along with Mrs. Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of State (IC) for Commerce and Industry on October 6 2016.

[World Bank lowers Sri Lanka's projected economic growth to 5.0 percent in 2017](#)

Colombo Gazette| 4th October

The World Bank in its Fall 2016 South Asia Economic Focus Report projected Sri Lanka's economy to grow at 5.0 percent in 2017, up from 4.8 percent 2016.

[Taiwan-Sri Lanka economic forum held in Colombo](#)

Colombo Page| 4th October

The first Taiwan-Sri Lanka Economic Forum was held Monday in Colombo, with the two sides promising to further strengthen bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

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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