

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

July 8th, 2016 | Volume: 2 - 4/7

TOP STORIES

[8,400 US troops to remain in Afghanistan through January 2017: Obama](#)

KhaamaPress | 7th July

The US Department of Defense has announced that President Barack Obama has decided to keep 8,400 troops in Afghanistan through January 2017. Obama said Wednesday that the decision to keep 8,400 troops in Afghanistan has been taken due to the situation in the country which remains 'precarious'. Obama had planned to draw down the number of American troops in the country to 5,500 by the end of the year. There are currently 9,800 U.S. troops in the country.

[12 Pakistanis arrested following Saudi Arabia suicide attacks](#)

The Express Tribune | 8th July
Nineteen people, including 12 Pakistani nationals, have been arrested in Saudi Arabia following suicide attacks on Monday, including one near Islam's second-holiest site in the city of Madina, the kingdom's Interior Ministry said on Thursday.

[Indian co eyes Rs 50b LNG terminal in Bangladesh](#)

The Financial Express | 7th July

India's biggest gas importing company has taken a plan to set up LNG import terminal in Bangladesh. According to the plan Petronet LNG Ltd will set up a Rs 50 billion (5,000 crore) LNG import terminal at Kutubdia islands as it looks to build terminals to feed demand in neighbouring countries.

AFGHANISTAN

[Raheel Sharif: Pakistan won't allow anyone to use its soil against Afghanistan](#)

KhaamaPress | 7th July
The Pakistani army chief of staff General Raheel Sharif has said Pakistan will not allow anyone to use its soil against Afghanistan, a statement which comes in contrast with the Afghan officials' remarks, claiming that the Taliban group and the notorious Haqqani terrorist network use safe havens in Pakistan to plan and coordinate attacks in Afghanistan. Gen. Sharif made the remarks during a visit to Waziristan tribal region on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr.

[Suicide attack leaves 4 people dead in North of Afghanistan](#)

KhaamaPress | 7th July

At least four people were killed in a suicide attack in northern Sar-e-Pul province of Afghanistan earlier today, local officials said. The incident took place around 10:00 am local time in Sancharak district after the suicide bomber targeted a former Jihadi leader. Provincial governor Mohammad Zahir Wahdat said the former Jihadi leader Rahim Ayoubi survived the attack unhurt but four members of his family were killed.

BANGLADESH

[Attack on Sholakia Eid prayers, cops among 4 killed](#)

The Daily Star | 7th July

Four people, including two policemen, a woman and a suspected assailant, died in the attack near Sholakia Eidgah where hundreds of thousands had gathered for Eid congregation this morning. The incident, taking place within a week of the Gulshan restaurant attack, happened around 9:45am this morning at Sholakia, where hundreds of thousands gather each year for Eid congregation.

[Indian bomb experts to probe Bangladesh terror attacks](#)

The Financial Express | 7th July

India will send bomb experts to Bangladesh after the terror attacks—at a cafe in Dhaka on Friday and near the Sholakia Eidgah on Thursday. In the report on Indian security (NSG) experts head for terror-hit Bangladesh the TV channel NDTV India said India would send bomb experts of the National Security Group (NSG) to Bangladesh to help with investigations into two terror attacks in the country in a week.

[Japan, Italy pledge more cooperation to curb terrorism](#)

The Daily Star | 7th July

Condemning the militant attack on a Gulshan café that killed nine Italian and seven Japanese nationals, leaders of the two countries agreed to expedite global efforts to curb terrorism and prevent the recurrence of such events in the future. On Monday, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe held a telephone talk with Matteo Renzi, president of the Council of Ministers of Italy, for 15 minutes.

BHUTAN

[Revise GDG allocation and its guidelines: RAA](#)

Kuensel | 7th July

Most activities executed under the Gewog Development Grant (GDG) in the last two fiscal years (2013-14 and 2014-15) are of no economic value to the local economy, the Royal Audit Authority (RAA) has found.

[Strengthening literacy and math learning in ECCDs](#)

Kuensel | 7th July

To deliver comprehensive and quality Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) services to children with a focus on improving foundational skills on early literacy and early math skills, a weeklong refresher training for 233 ECCD facilitators from 10 dzongkhags is being conducted in Paro.

MALDIVES

[Saudi Defence Minister to arrive in Maldives on official visit](#)

Sun Online | 7th July

Defence Minister of Saudi Arabia, Mohammad Bin Salman Al Saud has assured the Maldivian Defence Minister, Adam Shareef that he would be arriving in the Maldives on an official visit. The assurance to visit the Maldives in the near future was given at the official talks with the Saudi Defence Minister at the ongoing visit to Saudi Arabia by Minister Adam Shareef.

MYANMAR

[South Korea and Myanmar to enhance bilateral cooperation](#)

Mizzima | 6th July

South Korea's top trade official met his Myanmar counterpart Tuesday to discuss ways to enhance bilateral cooperation, Yonhap reported on 5 June quoting Seoul's trade ministry. Trade and Energy Minister Joo Hyung-hwan and Myanmar's Minister for Commerce, Dr Than Myint, held the talks in Seoul, the ministry said, noting that the two ministers agreed to set up an organization, dubbed "Korea Desk," in Yangon to assist South Korean firms in making inroads into the Myanmar market.

[Asia Green Development Bank - First in Myanmar to Offer EMV-certified ATM Transactions](#)

Mizzima | 7th July

Asia Green Development Bank Ltd. now accepts EMV-based VISA and MasterCard chipcard transactions in all its ATMs, becoming the first bank in Myanmar to offer the service, Wincor Nixdorf announced today in a statement.

NEPAL

[Nepal proposes August date for meeting in India](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 7th July

Nepal has proposed a fourth meeting of Nepal-India Joint Commission at the Foreign Ministers' level for August 22 and 23 in New Delhi. The Indian side has not confirmed the dates yet, according to senior Foreign Ministry officials. "Once we agree on the date for the meeting, we will start consultations with line ministries to follow up on the progress being made since the previous joint commission meeting," an official said.

[Oli proposes fresh deal on power sharing, urges NC to join govt'](#)

The Kathmandu post | 8th July

While calling on the Nepali Congress (NC) to join the government, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has also proposed a fresh power-sharing agreement in a bid to forge national consensus among the major parties. The proposal was made during his meeting with the NC President Sher Bahadur Deuba and CPN (Maoist Centre) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal.

[Preps to give final shape to Pancheshwar DPR by Oct](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 8th July

Preparations are being made to give final shape to the detailed project report of the Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project by October. It was agreed during the fourth joint meeting of the Energy Secretaries of Nepal and India that concluded on Wednesday to give the DPR its final shape and finalise all other remaining issues, said Mahendra Bahadur Gurung, chief executive officer of the Pancheshwar Development Authority.

[MPs' team to visit India to learn about disaster response](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 8th July

A 13-member delegation of the Development Committee of Parliament is embarking on a weeklong visit to India beginning Friday. The delegation constitutes 10 lawmakers and three officials of the Parliament Secretariat. The delegation will hold discussions with various agencies of India on preparations necessary to tackle natural disasters and on works related to post-earthquake reconstruction and recovery.

PAKISTAN

[Pakistan will protect Afghanistan but expects same approach from them, says Gen Raheel](#)

DAWN|7th July

Army Chief General Raheel Sharif said Pakistan will do all efforts to protect the integrity and sovereignty of Afghanistan but expects the same level of commitment from the neighbouring country. Gen Raheel said this during his visit to meet troops deployed at forward bases in North and South Waziristan Agency on Eidul Fitr, the military's media wing said on Wednesday.

[CTD foils major terror bid in Karachi](#)

Daily Times|5th July

Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) on Tuesday claimed to have foiled a major terror bid, while recovering a huge cache of weapons and explosives in Manghopir area of Karachi. On a tip-off, the CTD personnel raided a hideout in Malir area of Karachi.

[India subjecting Kashmiris to worst kind of state terrorism: Mirwaiz](#)

Daily Times|6th July, 2016

The Hurriyat forum, led by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, has said that India is subjecting the Kashmiri people to the worst kind of state terrorism for continuing struggle to get rid of its bondage.

SRI LANKA

[Sri Lanka, India to start negotiations on ETCA on a fast track for early conclusion](#)

Colombo Page| 5th July

Sri Lanka and India have agreed to start negotiations on an expedited track for an early conclusion of the proposed Economic and Technology Co-operation Agreement (ETCA).

[India to upgrade railway network in Sri Lanka](#)

Colombo Page| 6th July

India and Sri Lanka on Tuesday have discussed various issues regarding overall development of railway network in the island nation during the Sri Lankan Minister of Development Strategies and International Trade Malik Samarawickrama's visit to India on 4-5 July.

[Chinese Foreign Minister in Sri Lanka tomorrow](#)

Daily News| 7th July

The Chinese Foreign Minister is expected to hold talks with President Maithripala Sirisena, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and his counterpart Minister Mangala Samaraweera.

[Sri Lanka's foreign reserves benefited from Brexit, Finance Minister says](#)

Colombo Page| 7th July

Sri Lanka's Minister of Finance Ravi Karunanayake says despite the negative impact of Brexit, UK's departure from the European Union, on the world, Sri Lanka has seen a benefit from it with an upward movement in foreign reserves.

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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