



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

September 8th, 2017 | Volume: 3 - 04/9

[Pakistan's army chief says cannot fight Afghanistan's war in Pakistan](#)

Khaama Press | 7th September
The Chief of Army Staff of Pakistan General Qamar Javed Bajwa has said the country cannot fight Afghanistan's war in Pakistan, apparently gesturing towards the demands by Kabul and Washington to eliminate the sanctuaries of the Taliban and Haqqani terrorist network based in the key cities of the country. The remarks by Gen. Bajwa could be a gesture of Pakistan to reject the calls for the elimination of the terror sanctuaries as he said the country would prefer to remain impartial in the ongoing violence in Afghanistan.

[Trump's plan prompts 'paradigm shift' in foreign policy](#)

The Express Tribune | 7th September
Pakistan on Thursday hinted at bringing a 'paradigm shift' in its foreign policy in view of the fast-changing situation on regional and international fronts, particularly after the new US strategy on Afghanistan and South Asia. Foreign Minister Khawaja Asif, while speaking at a news conference, said the change was necessitated by recent developments "which are perhaps the biggest since the World War II".

[First Lady Emine Erdogan says Turkey will raise Rohingya issue at UNGA](#)

bdnews24 | 8th September
Turkey will raise the Rohingya issue in the next United Nations General Assembly or UNGA, the country's First Lady Emine Erdoğan has said after meeting refugees from Myanmar in Bangladesh. Emine went to coastal district Cox's Bazar, which hosts several refugee camps, hours after arriving in Dhaka on Thursday amid a global outcry for quick action to end persecution of Rohingya Muslims in Buddhist-majority Myanmar. Speaking to the media after a visit to a camp at Kutupalong, Emine said Turkey would always stand by the side of Rohingya refugees. She added her husband President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan will take up the issue at the UNGA for an immediate solution to the Rohingya crisis.

AFGHANISTAN

[Iran is providing arms and equipment to the Taliban in Afghanistan: Top military official](#)

Afghanistan Times | 6th September

The government of Iran has been engaged in providing arms and equipment to the Taliban insurgents in Afghanistan, a top Afghan military official has said. Army Chief of Staff General, Sharif Yaftali, in an interview with the BBC, has said that Afghan army in west part of the country have found documents, showing Iran's support to the insurgents. Without giving further details, he said that President Ashraf Ghani raised the issue with his Iranian counterpart during his visit to Tehran last month.

[Taliban leader among 7 killed, wounded in Maidan Wardak airstrike](#)

Khaama Press | 8th September

An airstrike targeted the Taliban insurgents in central Maidan Wardak province of Afghanistan leaving at least seven of them dead or wounded, the local officials said Thursday. A local commander of the militants was also among those killed during the airstrike. The provincial police commandment in a statement confirmed the airstrike and said at least three people including their commander were killed.

BANGLADESH

[Bangladesh seeks UNIDO support for sustainable industrial development](#)

bdnews24 | 6th September

Bangladesh has sought "greater engagement" of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization or UNIDO for finding the 'right technology' to achieve sustainable industrial development. Foreign Minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali solicited the support when visiting UNIDO Director General Li Yong met him at his office on Wednesday. According to the foreign ministry, the director general stated that UNIDO would continue to provide required support to Bangladesh in the achievement of sustainable industrial development and inclusive growth. A former Chinese public servant, Yong will assume his second term in November 2017. He appreciated Bangladesh's role in the UNIDO and its strong support to the organisation's policies and strategies.

BHUTAN

[WHO calls on ministers to strengthen investment in health](#)

Kuensel Online | 7th September

The WHO (World Health Organisation) South-East Asia Region (SEAR) commended Bhutan and the Maldives for eliminating measles, at the inaugural of the Regional Committee meeting in Malé yesterday. In recognition of the commitment and efforts made by the health ministry for successfully eliminating measles, the WHO will award a certificate of appreciation to both the countries. Health minister of Maldives, Abdulla Nazim Ibrahim and the special envoy of the President of Maldives and the Minister of Fisheries and Agriculture, Dr Mohamed Shainee addressed the meeting's inaugural session. Regional Director for WHO SEAR, Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, said the challenges the region face is real and complex. "In this region, we are committed to the achievement of universal health coverage. Every single country is making headway and we have powerful means to measure progress," she said.

[Amendment of fiscal incentives laws not urgent, say legislators](#)

Kuensel Online | 7th September

The government's proposal to amend laws in the upcoming winter parliament session as urgent bills so as to empower the parliament to grant fiscal incentives could hit legal hurdles in the parliament. The Cabinet believes that some provisions of the Customs Act, the Sales Tax and Excise Act and the Income Tax Act that allow the government to grant fiscal incentives have been superseded by the decision of 9th parliament session to treat fiscal incentives as money bill. Based on this, the government proposed these provisions to be amended.

MALDIVES

[Sameer summoned to the police again](#)

Sun Online | 6th September

Secretary General of Jumhooree Party, Ahmed Sameer has been summoned to the police again. After being arrested near the Jumhooree Party hall at Maafannu Kunooz on 16 August 2017, he was released after a the court set some conditions on him. But police have summoned him before to take statements in their investigation. The Jumhooree Party Secretary General said that he was been ordered to appear at the police station at 5 p.m. tomorrow in relation to his arrest near Kunooz.

[MDP Congress pushed back due to lack of funds](#)

Sun Online | 8th September

MDP Congress, originally set for next Friday, has been pushed back due to lack of funds and the party has passed to open a fund. The decision to push back the congress was made at an emergency meeting of the MDP national council held at the conference hall at the building of Salt Café. At the meeting, the Vice President of MDP, Mohamed Sifaz proposed to push back the date of the Congress since the allocated funds for the party from the state budget for political parties has not been received yet.

MYANMAR

[Iran prepares aid for Myanmar Refugees](#)

Mizzima | 8th September

Iran's Red Crescent said Thursday it has prepared an aid package for Myanmar's Rohingya Muslims as they flee a crackdown by security forces, local media reported. "An emergency, food, life support and hygiene package has been prepared by the Red Crescent to be sent to Myanmar," said the head of the organisation, Morteza Salimi, according to the ISNA news agency. The package would be "immediately sent to the oppressed people of this country if we receive authorisation from Myanmar," he said, adding it had been ordered by President Hassan Rouhani. It comprised of a plane-load of aid weighing 40 tonnes and worth around four billion rials (just over \$100,000), Salimi later told AFP. Iranian officials have repeatedly condemned the massive security operations by the Myanmar army that followed a series of deadly ambushes by terrorists belonging to the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) on August 25.

[Northeastern Indians demand easier visa regime](#)

Mizzima | 7th September

India talks of the 'Act East' policy but has done little so far to take up with Myanmar the issue of an easy visa regime. "That is so upsetting for us in Manipur and the Northeast who want closer ties with neighbouring provinces in Myanmar. We spend much more than mainland Indians travelling to Myanmar or even getting a visa," said R.K Shivachandra, convenor of the "Operationalising Act East Committee" of Manipur. Manipur has

the best connectivity with Myanmar among all the states of India and a famous proverb in Manipuri says the state will become prosperous “only if the Eastern gates open”. Indian PM Narendra Modi also referred to this 'Eastern gates opening to Myanmar' on Wednesday. Shivachandra said India and Myanmar must have ‘visa on arrival arrangements’ for nationals of both countries at border checkpoints like Moreh and Tamu or at least visa offices there.

NEPAL

[Nepal, China to expedite cross-border railway](#)

MyRepublica | 8th September

China has expressed readiness to conduct a detailed project survey, design and feasibility study to construct the much-talked-about cross-border railway between the two neighbors at the earliest in a bid to create conditions for a possible China-Nepal-India economic corridor.

[Help govt hold polls in free, fair manner: NHRC](#)

The Himalayan Times | 8th September

The National Human Rights Commission today issued a special appeal urging all stakeholders to help the government hold the third phase of local polls in a free, fair and impartial manner. The rights body urged the government to maintain law and order and to ensure that social harmony is not disrupted during polls.

PAKISTAN

[Responsibility for defeating terror not Pakistan’s only: Jeremy Corbyn](#)

Dawn | 8th September

The chief of Britain’s main opposition party, Jeremy Corbyn, has come out in support of Pakistan and urged the world to respect the country. In an interview to BBC Urdu, Mr Corbyn said it was not the responsibility of Pakistan alone to fight terrorism because the world as a whole needed to beat off the “collective challenge”.

[PPP to file appeals against Benazir case judgement](#)

Dawn | 8th September

The Pakistan Peoples Party has decided to file three appeals against the recent court decision in the Benazir Bhutto assassination case. The appeals will be filed by Latif Khosa on behalf of PPP co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari. The party has also decided that in the Zulfikar Ali Bhutto reference, the executed former prime minister’s grandson Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, to be represented by Senator Farooq Naek, would seek to become a party.

[NAB okays graft references against Sharifs, Dar](#)

Dawn | 8th September

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) approved on Thursday four corruption references against former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, his three children and Finance Minister Ishaq Dar in compliance with the Supreme Court verdict in the Panama Papers case. The references will be filed in Islamabad’s accountability court-I and II on Friday.

SRI LANKA

[Sri Lanka, India navies begin joint naval exercise SLINEX-2017](#)

Colombo Page | 8th September

Sri Lanka Navy's Offshore Patrol Vessels, SLNS Sayura and Sagara arrived at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh on Thursday to participate in bi-lateral naval exercise between India and Sri Lanka - SLINEX 2017. The biennial Joint Indo-Lanka Maritime Fleet Exercise that began on Thursday will conclude on 14th September.

[Sri Lanka's reform agenda prompting growth in ties with US](#)

Colombo Gazette | 8th September

Sri Lanka's commitment to a reform agenda has increased its engagement with the US, including military-to-military relations, a top Trump administration official has said. "The current coalition government's commitment to a reform agenda has prompted growing interest in expanding engagement with the US including in military-to-military relations," Alice Wells, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs told a Congressional Subcommittee in a written submission, the Press Trust of India reported.

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.

To know more, Please log on to www.anantaaspencentre.in