



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

9th August, 2023 | Volume - 9 - 02/08

<p><a href="#"><u>Imran jailed, disqualified for dishonesty</u></a></p> <p>The Nation   6<sup>th</sup> August</p> <p>Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan was arrested from his Zaman Park residence in Lahore by CIA police shortly after the district and session court in Islamabad convicted him in Toshakhana case.</p> <p>The court sentenced the PTI chairman to three years in prison and imposed a fine of one hundred thousand rupees on him for concealing details of Toshakhana gifts.</p> <p>Additional District and Sessions Judge Humayun Dilawar ruled that charges against the PTI Chairman in the</p>	<p><a href="#"><u>Sri Lanka – India business networking event forges new collaborations</u></a></p> <p>Colombo Page   7<sup>th</sup> August</p> <p>Enhancing bilateral relations and leveraging opportunities for investment were among the focus points of a Business Networking event with a multi-sectoral business delegation from India recently hosted by The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce at the Shangri-La Hotel Colombo.</p> <p>The networking event provided an exclusive opportunity for Members of the Ceylon Chamber to meet with the delegates from India representing several sectors of industry and trade, as</p>	<p><a href="#"><u>Plan to Reopen Girls' Schools 'Under Discussion': Officials</u></a></p> <p>TOLO News   7<sup>th</sup> August</p> <p>Officials at the Academy of Science of Afghanistan said that a plan for the reopening of schools for girls above grade six is being discussed by Islamic Emirate officials.</p> <p>Speaking at a press conference of the organization's annual activities, the officials of the Academy of Science of Afghanistan, said that at least 46 projects of scientific research have been completed.</p> <p>"The issue to which you have referred is a general issue. The Islamic Emirate has been considering this issue now and they are</p>
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case were proven. He stated that the PTI Chairman deliberately...	well as explore avenues for business opportunities in both India and Sri Lanka.	trying to find a solution for it," said Rafiullah Niazi, head of the...
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## PAKISTAN

### [Pakistan finds UAE's port terminal offer below par](#)

The Express Tribune | 8<sup>th</sup> August

Pakistan on Monday did not approve the United Arab Emirates (UAE) offer for the development of two Karachi seaports terminals, finding the current value of the future stream of payments over a period of the next 25 years too low to be accepted.

The Cabinet Committee on Inter-Governmental Commercial Transactions (CCoIGCT) reviewed the UAE's offer for the development of clean and bulk cargo terminals on the East Wharf of the Karachi Port, according to the finance ministry.

### [PM announces to dissolve National Assembly on August 9](#)

The News | 6<sup>th</sup> August

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday publicly announced that the National Assembly would be dissolved on August 9, just three days before the lower house of parliament completes its five-year constitutional term.

The premier made the announcement while addressing a mass public rally in Kasur, a city in south Punjab, after laying the foundation stone for the Taray Garh interchange on the Lahore-Bahawalnagar motorway and Rai Mansab Ali Khan interchange on Abdul Hakim motorway on the Bucheki-Nankana road.

## SRI LANKA

### [SL on alert as new COVID variant sparks fears in UK](#)

Daily Mirror | 8<sup>th</sup> August

- Global COVID cases on the rise
- WHO Chief stresses not to let down guard
- Common symptoms of new variant are runny nose, headache, fatigue, sneezing, and sore throat

In the wake of a new variant of COVID-19 dubbed 'Eris' spreading rapidly across the United Kingdom, triggering alarm among health officials, Sri Lankan Health

authorities said they keep a close eye on the new developments of the virus and are on alert.

### [Sri Lanka to launch the Climate Justice Forum \(CJF\) at COP 28](#)

The Island | 7<sup>th</sup> August

Minister of Environment Naseer Ahamed during a press conference themed 'Collective Path to a Stable Country' held at the Presidential Media Centre (PMC) on Sunday, stated. Sri Lanka will launch the **Climate Justice Forum** (CJF) for the vulnerable and developing countries at the 28th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 28) at the upcoming 2023 UN Climate Change Conference.

## **AFGHANISTAN**

### [Afghanistan seeks participation of Russia in Trans-Afghan railway project](#)

The Khaama Press | 5<sup>th</sup> August

Afghanistan invited Russia and Kazakhstan to participate in constructing the Trans-Afghan railway project.

The acting minister of Commerce and Industry, Nooruddin Azizi, asked both countries to take part in a project to build a trans-Afghan railway, according to the ministry.

"We invite Russia and Kazakhstan to join this project. In my view, it's not just about investing in Afghanistan because this railway will benefit everyone, and we are ready to receive working groups from these countries to consider this project together with them," Azizi said on the sidelines of a Kazkhsantan-Afghanistan forum in Astana.

### [US needs \\$2B to deliver aid to Afghanistan](#)

Afghanistan Times | 6<sup>th</sup> August

US Special Representative for Afghanistan, Thomas West, has said the U.S. needs at least \$2 billion to continue to deliver humanitarian assistance to millions of vulnerable Afghan. West said its partners will contribute the required amount only when there is a significant change in Taliban government's conduct.

Speaking to BBC Pashto, West clarified that the reduced aid does not solely come from the United States but is also provided by its close allies who, he said, "share deep concerns that the assistance cannot and should not be delivered absent a significant change in Taliban's conduct.

## **BANGLADESH**

### [Dhaka to welcome two US delegations this month](#)

Prothom Alo | 6<sup>th</sup> August

A number of high-level delegations from the United States are expected to visit Bangladesh ahead of the next national polls. Of them, two delegations are scheduled to arrive in Dhaka this month.

The US state department's coordinator on global anti-corruption, Richard Nephew, is supposed to reach Dhaka on Sunday night, while Brig Gen Thomas J James, director of strategic planning and policy of US Indo-Pacific command, will join a defence dialogue in Dhaka in the second half of August.

### [Govt finding sustainable solutions of climate impacts on health](#)

Bangladesh Post | 8<sup>th</sup> August

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Md Shahab Uddin on Monday said the government is working relentlessly to find innovative and sustainable solutions to climate change impacts on human health, animals and livestock, ecosystem and biodiversity.

"We must take coordinated measures to protect the health and wellbeing of animals, as their resilience is interconnected with the resilience of our ecosystem," he told a brainstorming meeting on finding solutions to adverse impacts of climate change on health at the Department of Environment (DoE) in the capital.

### [FM: Asean values resonate with Bangladesh](#)

Dhaka Tribune | 8<sup>th</sup> August

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen has said the foundation of Asean's success lies in its adherence to the principles of mutual respect, non-interference and consensus-building, and these values resonate with Bangladesh, as they align with Dhaka's own principles of peaceful coexistence and respectful engagement with the international community.

He was speaking at the Asean Day celebration event in Dhaka at the embassy of Thailand on Tuesday.

Asean Day is the annual commemoration of the founding of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) – a regional intergovernmental organization of ten countries in Southeast Asia: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. It was founded on August 8, 1967.

## **BHUTAN**

### [Suicide rates remain a social concern](#)

Kuensel | 4<sup>th</sup> August

A man died after jumping off the Lungtenzampa bridge in Thimphu yesterday morning. The man was a second-year student in college and was suffering from mental health issues, according to sources.

An average of 100 Bhutanese lose their lives by committing suicide yearly. According to the Royal Bhutan Police (RBP) statistical yearbook, 112 Bhutanese committed suicide in 2022, 100 in 2021, 105 in 2020 and 2019, and 90 in 2018.

### [Inflation rises by 3.83% in June 2023](#)

Business Bhutan | 7<sup>th</sup> August

Prices of goods and services consumed by households 3.83% higher in June compared to the same month last year

The price of consumer goods and services saw a rise in the market, with the inflation rate hitting 3.83% in June this year compared to the same month last year, according to the monthly Consumer Price Index (CPI) report released by the National Statics Bureau (NSB).

This means that the prices of goods and services consumed by households were 3.83% higher in June compared to the same month of the previous year.

## **MALDIVES**

### [Historic presidential race sees largest ever pool of contestants](#)

The Edition | 8<sup>th</sup> August

Eight candidates submitted their candidacy to contest in the upcoming presidential elections as the deadline to submit forms expired at 2pm on Monday, August 7.

This marks the largest number of candidates participating in a presidential election in the history of Maldives. The previous record was set in 2008 when six candidates competed in the election.

The political parties that have submitted candidacy forms include the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP), Jumhooree Party (JP), The Democrats, The People's National Congress (PNC), and the Maldives National Party (MNP).

### [MVR 50 million generated as green tax in June 2023](#)

Raajje | 7<sup>th</sup> August

Ministry of Finance has disclosed that the state has generated MVR 50 million as green tax in June 2023.

Statistics released by the Finance Ministry show that most of the green tax was generated from tourists visiting the resorts, with a total of MVR 46.9 million generated during the month. MVR 1.8 million was generated from tourists visiting guest houses and 661,336 was generated from tourists visiting tourist hotels.

Statistics show that MVR 883,055 was generated from tourists that visited live-aboard vessels during May.

## **MYANMAR**

### [US Closes Sanctions Window For Myanmar Junta Banks](#)

The Irrawaddy | 7<sup>th</sup> August

The US has started enforcing its sanctions against two junta-owned banks in Myanmar by closing a window for businesses to wind down all transactions with them, according to the US Department of State.

The US designated sanctions on military-controlled Myanma Foreign Trade Bank and Myanma Investment and Commercial Bank on June 21 as they have been instrumental in facilitating the regime's use of foreign currency to procure arms and jet fuel abroad, to access international markets using offshore accounts.

### ['Dramatic increase' in Myanmar war crimes: UN probe](#)

Myanmar Now | 9<sup>th</sup> August

UN investigators said Tuesday they had gathered strong evidence of surging war crimes in Myanmar, including mass executions and sexual violence, and were building case files to help bring perpetrators to justice.

The Southeast Asian country has been ravaged by deadly violence since a coup deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi's government in February 2021, unleashing a bloody crackdown on dissent that has sparked fighting across swathes of the nation.

## **NEPAL**

### [Jaishankar: Border Indian states benefit from better connectivity with Nepal](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 9<sup>th</sup> August

Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said there has been a sea change in India's infrastructure development due to improved connectivity with Nepal after the Bharatiya Janata Party came into power in 2014.

The "easier movement" and connectivity between Nepal and India were creating bigger business opportunities in Indian states such as Uttar Pradesh, Jaishankar said at an interaction with journalists in New Delhi on Monday.

### ['Nepal can become prime destination for Chinese investment'](#)

The Himalayan Times | 8<sup>th</sup> August

Chandra Prasad Dhakal, president of Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FNCCI), has expressed his belief that Nepal has the potential to emerge as a primary destination for both Chinese investment and tourists. This sentiment was shared during a formal meeting held here today, where FNC- CI President Dhakal engaged with Chinese Ambassador to Nepal, Chen Song.

During the discussion, Dhakal highlighted the promising opportunities for foreign investment across various sectors in Nepal, including productive industries, energy, and tourism infrastructure.

### [IT professionals thriving in Nepal without government backing](#)

Onlinekhabar | 9<sup>th</sup> August

Skilled IT professionals offering IT outsourcing services from Nepal are bringing in around Rs 2 million annually.

A study conducted by the [Institute for Integrated Development Studies](#) (IIDS) showed that skilled IT freelancers export services worth USD 15,322 on average annually.

Unlike in some other countries where the government actively promotes the information technology sector through policy measures, Nepal's IT companies and professionals are forging ahead in the field of information technology services without substantial government support, say experts.

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