

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

December 14th, 2016 | Volume: 2 - 6/12

[Sri Lanka keen to promote trade with Pakistan – envoy](#)

Colombo Page | 13th December
Sri Lanka's High Commissioner to Pakistan Major General (ret'd) Jayanath Lokuketagodage Tuesday said his country is keen to promote trade with Pakistan as enhanced trade would help in improving living standards of the people of both countries. Addressing business community at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), the envoy said Pakistan was the second largest trading partner of Sri Lanka in South Asia and there were numerous fields in which both countries could develop mutual collaboration, a statement issued here said.

[Urban Development Minister KC off to New Delhi](#)

RSS / My Republica | 13th December
Nepal's Minister for Urban Development Arjun Narsingh KC today left for India today morning to take part in the 6th Asia-Pacific Ministers Conference on Housing and Urban Development slated for December 14 to 16. Talking to media-persons before his departure, Minister KC said he would apprise the participating nations of Nepal's housing policy, situation of urbanization, problems and challenges and strategy adopted by Nepal in resolving them

[Task Force-88: Navy raises force for CPEC, Gwadar security](#)

The Express Tribune | 14th December
Pakistan Navy raised a special task force for maritime security of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and the Gwadar sea port on Tuesday. The force will be known as Task Force-88. The traditional Command Telescope was also handed over to the first commander of the force, Commodore Muhammad Waris, during a special ceremony. The command telescope was handed over to Commodore Waris by CJCS Gen Zubair Hayat, who was the chief guest at the event, according to a press release.

AFGHANISTAN

[U.S. calls government to investigate alleged detention of Ishchi](#)

Afghanistan Times | 13th December

The U.S. embassy to Kabul on Tuesday welcomes the release of engineer Ahmad Ishchi, urging the government to swiftly investigate his allegations, the unlawful detention and reported mistreatment of Mr. Ishchi by the First Vice President. "We would welcome the Afghan government's move to swiftly investigate these allegations," U.S embassy said in a statement. Meanwhile, The European Union (EU) called for a fair and transparent official investigation into reports of gross human rights violations and abuses against Ahmad Ishchi, the former Jawzjan governor.

[Russia must not interfere in our country affairs: senators](#)

Afghanistan Times | 13th December

Scores of Afghan senators on Tuesday alleged Russia of playing double game with Afghanistan, urging Kremlin to stop interfering into internal affairs of the country. Fazlulhadi Muslimyar chairman of the upper house of parliament criticized Moscow for what he called "clear support to Taliban" and interfering the internal affairs of Afghanistan, asking for the urgent stop.

[50 Afghan asylum seekers to be deported from Germany](#)

Khaama Press | 14th December

A group of at least 50 Afghan asylum seekers will be deported from Germany after their applications were rejected by the authorities, it has been reported. Local newspaper, Der Spiegel, citing the government sources, reported Tuesday that the asylum seekers will be deported in line with an agreement reached between the Afghan and German authorities. A spokeswoman for the Ministry of Interior of Germany quoted by Reuters confirmed that there would be a repatriation flight to Afghanistan by the end of the year.

[US conduct more airstrikes in East of Afghanistan, 12 ISIS militants killed](#)

Khaama Press | 14th December

The US forces based in Afghanistan conducted at least three more airstrikes against the loyalists of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group, leaving at least 12 of them dead. The local security officials said the airstrikes were conducted using unmanned aerial vehicle in Achin district. The officials further added that the airstrikes were carried out in different times on Tuesday in Mazdaki, Bazar and Gand areas.

BANGLADESH

[PM seeks to identify cause, resources of militancy](#)

BSS/ the Daily Star | 13th December

Reaffirming her determination to stamp out militancy and terrorism, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today called again to identify their cause and source of money to defeat these social vices. "Militancy and terrorism is a global concern ... to eliminate such an evil practice against civilization, we need to identify the reason and sources of money. We also have to find out a way for preventing these menaces," she said. The premier was addressing the Graduation Ceremony of National Defence Course (NDC) and Armed Forces War Course (AFWC) -2016 at Mirpur Cantonment here this morning.

[Delhi agrees to share bulk capital dredging cost](#)

The Financial Express | 13th December

India has agreed to share the bulk cost of capital dredging of the Ashuganj-Zakiganj and Sirajganj-Daikhawa water transit routes in a bid to enhance round-the-year navigability of the protocol routes between the two countries. Bangladesh and India have reached a consensus in this regard during the recent shipping secretary-level meeting between the countries. The nine-member Bangladesh delegation in the meeting was led by Shipping Secretary Ashoke Madhob Roy, while the eleven-member Indian delegation was led by its Shipping Secretary Rajive Kumar.

[Bangladeshi delegation to attend Vijay Diwas celebrations in India](#)

bdnews24 | 13th December

A 72-member Bangladeshi delegation led by Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal will attend the Vijay Diwas celebrations in Kolkata to recall the victory in the 1971 Liberation War against Pakistan. The freedom fighters, who participated in the war, have been attending the annual reunion for the past 10 years. "The delegation will comprise of 'Mukti Jodhas' and their families along with serving senior Bangladesh Armed Forces officers," said Major General R Nagraj, MGGS, Headquarters, Eastern Command.

[Bangladesh Bank responsible for \\$81 million heist: RCBC](#)

Reuters / the Daily Star | 13th December

The Philippines bank through which \$81 million stolen from Bangladesh's central bank was channeled in February today said that the central bank was responsible for the heist, and so any liability should not be passed on. Manila-based Rizal Commercial Banking Corp (RCBC) was responding to comments by a Bangladeshi investigator that some Bangladesh Bank officials deliberately exposed its computer systems and enabled hackers to steal the money from its account at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. Bangladesh Bank had been demanding that RCBC compensate it for the loss, blaming it for ignoring red flags.

BHUTAN

[Austria extends support of Nu 93M to legal sector](#)

Kuensel Online | 13th December

The Austrian government has committed additional support to the legal sector of another Nu 93 million under the legal sector programme. Switzerland and Austria jointly funded the programme, which ended in June this year, with

Nu 174.5 million. The Austrian Development Agency (ADA) contributed a total of Nu 182M including the assistance for the extended phase. The Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) contributed Nu 86M for the programme.

[2.1 billion Yen grant for Bhutan](#)

Kuensel Online | 13th December

The signing ceremony of the Exchange of Notes (E/N) for “the Project for Reconstruction of Bridges on Primary National Highway No.4” will be held on December 16 in New Delhi, according to a press release issued by the Embassy of Japan. In this ceremony, the E/N will be signed between Ambassador of Japan to Bhutan, Kenji Hiramatsu and Ambassador of Bhutan to Japan, Vetsop Namgyel.

MALDIVES

[Permanent Secretary appointed to Islamic Ministry](#)

Sun Online | 13th December

Ibrahim Sameer has been appointed to the position of Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Islamic Affairs. Sameer was appointed to the position yesterday. Letter of appointment was presented at a ceremony held at the Ministry. The President of the Civil Service Commission, Dr. Ali Shameem presented the letter to the Islamic Minister, Dr. Ahmed Ziyad.

[Health Minister warns strict penalties for promotion of sugar-high drinks](#)

Sun Online | 13th December

Minister of Health, Abdulla Nazim Ibrahim has warned of strict penalties for those who market drinks high in sugar-content to children. Minister Nazim expressed his concern over promotion of sugary drinks to children and warned of strict penalties to perpetrators during a function held by Diabetic Association of Maldives on Monday night to launch “Diab Maldives Youth Camp” for young men and women with Type 1 diabetes.

MYANMAR

[Japan’s ANA invests in new airline venture in Myanmar](#)

Mizzima | 12th December

ANA Holdings Inc. has invested in a new airline venture in Myanmar that aims to start international flights in 2018 as the Japanese carrier seeks to capture demand in Asia’s fastest-growing economy, Bloomberg reported on 12 December. ANA has a 49 percent stake and a local company holds the remainder. The companies made a combined initial investment of \$150,000 in the venture, according to the report.

[Another victim of illegal logging and forest crime?](#)

Mizzima | 14th December

The killing in Myanmar of a journalist who covered issues related to illegal logging in the country must be investigated thoroughly and all findings made public. Soe Moe Tun was based in the Sagaing region, working with Eleven Media News in Myanmar. According to initial reports today (December 13), he was found with extensive head and facial injuries; local police have begun an investigation into his death.

[Dusit International signs flagship project in Myanmar](#)

Mizzima | 14th December

Leading global hospitality company Dusit International has signed a management agreement with Myanmar V-Pile Group to operate the Dusit Thani Yangon, according to a statement on 13 December. Located just 15 minutes by car from Yangon International Airport, and approximately 20 minutes’ drive from the city’s main tourist attraction, the Shwedagon Pagoda, the new property sits at the heart of land earmarked by the Myanmar government to become the former capital’s new Central Business District.

NEPAL

[Pakistan ready to help Nepal: Ambassador Javed](#)

My Republica | 13th December

Pakistani ambassador to Nepal Dr Mazhar Javed today said development could not take place as expected only by depending on a single country. Addressing a program organized by the Chitwan Chamber of Commerce and Industry

(CCI) in Chitwan in his welcome, he suggested establishing good relations with various countries for a widespread development of Nepal.

[CJ Karki directs judges to provide prompt justice](#)

RSS / My Republica | 13th December

Chief Justice Sushila Karki has directed the judges to provide the justice being clever to maintain the basic principle of law 'Crucial to the Right to a Fair Trial'. Impartial and independent courts are at the heart of the Right to a fair Trial.

PAKISTAN

[Big powers' pressure may win India NSG entry, fear Pakistani officials](#)

DAWN | 14th December

Pakistani officials feel encouraged by growing support in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) for establishing criteria for membership of non-NPT countries, but are wary of big powers' pressure on smaller countries that could pave the way for exemptions for India in the admission process.

[PML-N unlikely to engage PPP](#)

The Express Tribune | 14th December

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's threats of street agitation have apparently failed to ruffle PML-N's feathers, triggering fears the political scene will get murkier and nastier in coming days. The ruling party appears to be in no mood to engage the PPP to dissuade it from launching a protest movement against the government.

SRI LANKA

[Sri Lanka, Tajikistan sign four agreements to enhance bilateral cooperation](#)

Colombo Page|13th December

Agreeing to enhance cooperation in a number of sectors, including economic and tourism, Sri Lanka and Tajikistan Monday signed several bilateral agreements. The agreements were signed following the bilateral discussions between Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena and President of the Republic of Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmon at the Presidential Secretariat today.

[US to fund projects to boost reconciliation in Sri Lanka](#)

Colombo Gazette| 13th December

The US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) today announced an open competition for organizations interested in submitting applications for projects that support the DRL policy goal to bolster and enhance transitional justice and reconciliation processes in Sri Lanka at the provincial and national levels.

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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