

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

March 15th, 2017 | Volume: 3 - 6/3

[Janjua, Pak-Afghan Business Delegation Discuss Trade Prospects](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 15th March

A delegation of Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday met National Security Advisor Lt Gen (R) Nasser Khan Janjua and discussed future prospects of bilateral relations. Members of the delegation stressed upon the need for improving economic ties between the two countries. They highlighted the issues and problems due to the recent border closure and requested to resolve the issue at the earliest.

[PM Hasina's three-day India visit starts Apr 7](#)

Bdnews24 | 14th March

Prime Minister Hasina will pay the "state visit" seven years after her last visit in Jan 2010 and two years after Narendra Modi's visit to Bangladesh in June 2015. The two leaders will hold official talks in New Delhi on Apr 8. "The upcoming visit is expected to further expand the cordial and cooperative relationship between India and Bangladesh and build on the strong ties of friendship and trust between the two leaders," reads a joint statement by the foreign ministries of the two countries.

[Sri Lanka calls for Naval rethink for maritime security](#)

Colombo Gazette | 15th March

Citing the importance of the waterways around Sri Lanka, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe on Tuesday argued for a greater naval role for safety of civilian traffic, The Hindu newspaper reported. Addressing a counter-terror conference in New Delhi over video link from Colombo, Wickremesinghe said more terror attacks were likely to target the maritime sector in the future.

AFGHANISTAN

[32 people freed from Taliban captivity](#)

Afghanistan Times | 13th March

The Afghan National Army freed 32 people from Taliban captivity in southern Helmand province, officials said on Monday. Spokesman for 215 Maiwand Military Corps, Mohammad Rasol Zazai said that 32 people, including four police officers were released from Taliban captivity in Chah Mirza area of Nadali district. He said that the operation has been conducted late last night and the released people shifted to the Shoraba military base. He said that health condition of all release people are well and soon they will be handed over to their families.

[Afghan government approves 15 contracts worth 10.7 billion Afghanis](#)

Khaama Press | 14th March

The Afghan government has approved at least fifteen contracts worth around 10.7 billion Afghanis. The Office of the President, ARG Palace, said the contracts were approved during a meeting of the National Procurement Commission chaired by President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani.

[Deadly airstrike targets Taliban in Paktika, 29 including 2 senior leaders killed](#)

Khaama Press | 14th March

A deadly airstrike targeted a gathering of the Taliban insurgents in southeastern Paktika province of Afghanistan. According to the local government officials, the airstrike was carried out by the foreign in Zeruk district. Provincial governor's spokesman Mohammad Rahman Ayaz said at least twenty insurgents including three commanders of the group were killed in the airstrike.

[Kabul welcomes Moscow's position on peace process](#)

Afghanistan Times | 14th March

The government of the Afghanistan welcomes the Russian Federation's recent position with regards to peace and stability in Afghanistan which states that their recent contacts with Afghan armed groups are aimed at promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region, official said.

BANGLADESH

[Bangladesh signs deep sea exploration deal with South Korean company Posco Daewoo](#)

Bdnews24 | 14th March

The two sides signed the agreement for DS Block-12 on Tuesday at the Petrobangla head office in Dhaka. Deputy Secretary Begum Khadiza Naznin for Energy and Mineral Resources Division, Secretary Ashfaquzzaman for Petrobangla and Senior Executive Vice-President of Daewoo Si Bo Joo signed the agreement. The tenders for Block-12, Block-16 and Block-21 were floated on Feb 5, 2016.

[Bangabandhu satellite may be ready before time](#)

The Daily Star | 15th March

Bangabandhu-1 satellite is on course for its scheduled Victory Day launch, with more than two-thirds of its construction work already completed. "About 70 percent work of the total project is done. We can finish it before the deadline," said Shahjahan Mahmood, chairman of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC).

[Inflation creeps up in Feb](#)

The Daily Star | 15th March

Inflation went up 16 basis points to 5.31 percent last month due to a rise in the prices of food items, especially beef and edible oil. Food inflation crept up 31 basis points to 6.84 percent in February, according to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. The price of per kilogram of beef and per litre of soybean oil rose about 10 percent last month from a year earlier, according to Trading Corporation of Bangladesh.

BHUTAN

[Large-scale commercial paddy farming initiative begins](#)

Kuensel Online | 14th March

In a move that will leave no wet land fallow across the country and help realise the national goal of food self-sufficiency, the Farm Machinery Corporation Ltd (FMCL) has begun large scale commercial paddy farming. The agriculture minister Yeshey Dorji inaugurated the large scale commercial paddy farming initiative in Gelephu yesterday.

[Drangpons disagree on what constitutes net income](#)

Kuensel Online | 14th March

One of the main challenges for drangpons today is the lack of a clear rule defining what constitutes the income of an individual when deciding alimony in matrimonial cases. After more than an hour's debate, drangpons at the annual judicial conference yesterday could not come to a consensus on the issue. The chair of the conference Supreme Court Justice Rinzin Penjore following requests from the floor concluded to ask the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to issue an order to clarify the matter.

MALDIVES

[H1N1 situation becomes more critical, call for tougher measures](#)

Sun Online| 14 March, 2017

IGMH reports 1,098 people have been treated at the hospital over the last four days for symptoms of the flu. Health Minister, has made a visit after Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital (IGMH) has moved their flu clinic to Thaajuddeen School due to overcrowding at the flu clinic at the hospital.

[19 Maldivian Companies take part in the biggest travel show in Russia](#)

Sun Online| 14 March, 2017

A total of 19 Maldivian companies have taken part in the biggest travel show in Russia, the Moscow International Exhibition Travel and Tourism (MITT). Russia is one of the biggest tourism markets for the Maldives. And so the number of Russian tourists that came to the Maldives went up by 5 percent last year compared to 2015 raising the number to 46,255.

MYANMAR

[Myanmar's National Security Advisor meets with Russian Security Council chief](#)

Mizzima| 14th March

Russian Security Council chief Nikolai Patrushev met in Moscow on Monday with the national security adviser of Myanmar's government, U Thaung Tun to discuss cooperation between the two countries and regional security, Russia's Tass news agency reported on 13 March. According to the report the two discussed different aspects of Russia-Myanmar cooperation as well as the situation in the sphere of regional security.

[2 killed, 36 injured in Myanmar earthquake](#)

Mizzima| 15th March

Two people were killed and 36 others injured due to wall collapse of a residential quarter after an earthquake struck Taikkyi, Myanmar's Yangon region Monday, a health official said Tuesday. The two victims are a 58-year-old military officer and a six-year-old child. All the injured were hospitalized and 31 of them already discharged, Dr. Than Myint, Deputy Director of the Directorate of Township People's Health, told Xinhua.

[Locals call again for stop to dam building on Ayeyarwady basin](#)

Mizzima| 15th March

To mark International Rivers Network day which fell yesterday a protest was held at Myitsone with participants calling for a stop to all hydropower projects being built upstream on the Ayeyarwady basin in Kachin State. The protest was jointly organised by local people who live at Myitsone, the confluence of Maykha and Mayka rivers, and Kachin CSOs.

NEPAL

[Pokhara Airport design to be sent to Chinese bank for loan](#)

The Kathmandu Post| 15th March

The Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (Caan) is preparing to send the preliminary 'procedural design' of the proposed regional international airport in Pokhara to China EXIM Bank to acquire financing to build the much-awaited project. The design contains aircraft operating procedures, details on airspace and runway threshold and the type of aircraft that can land at the airport, among other vital information.

[How Jhapa residents taught a big lesson to the SSB](#)

My Republica| 15th March

Highhandedness of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), Indian border security forces, was a serious issue for villagers in Jhapa along the Nepal-India border areas. SSB personnel would storm in their house anytime in Prithivinagar, Bahundangi, Kakadbhitta, Kechana, Baniyani, Jyamirgadhi and Khajurigachhi, among other villages and terrify the locals.

[High-level commitment must to control terrorism: DPM Nidhi](#)

The Himalayan Times| 15th March

Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister Bimalendra Nidhi has said that high-level commitment was essential to control terrorism as it has become a serious global challenge. At an inaugural of the Third International Conference on Counter Terrorism that began in New Delhi, India, on Tuesday, DPM Nidhi expressed the view that security became the issue of grave concern for international community.

PAKISTAN

[Pakistan, Afghanistan to hold high-level talks in London today](#)

Express Tribune| 14 march, 2017

Pakistan and Afghanistan will hold high-level talks in London on Wednesday to ease the current tensions, the Afghan ambassador Omar Zakhilwal said on Tuesday. The meeting will focus on a mechanism for genuine Pak-Afghan cooperation on fighting terrorism, the current tense bilateral relations and the closures of crossing routes between the two countries, he said.

[K-P govt for inclusion of 9 projects in CPEC](#)

Express Tribune| March 15, 2017

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) government has prepared a list of nine projects for inclusion in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and in this regard a delegation of experts will visit China next month. The list includes seven projects of 1,978 megawatts costing \$6,919 million in the hydel sector in Chitral, and two projects of oil refinery in Kohat and a transmission line from Chitral to Chakdara in oil and gas sector.

SRI LANKA

[EU wants Sri Lanka to show concrete progress for GSP](#)

Colombo Page| 14th March

The European Union (EU) has noted that importance of Sri Lanka making prompt and concrete progress in fulfilling international commitments on human rights and labour rights and environmental protection in order to obtain the EU's Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+).

[EU, Govt. gives priority to its full implementation](#)

Daily News| 15th March

The full implementation of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) Resolution of October 2015 has been declared as a priority by both the European Union and the Sri Lankan government delegation headed by Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe. The above was communicated through a communique released by the EU delegation yesterday after the second meeting of the Working Group on Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights under the European Union-Sri Lanka Joint Commission held in Colombo on March 13-14, 2017.

[Saudi Arabia pledges to support Sri Lanka in desalination projects](#)

Colombo Page| 15th March

Saudi Arabia, the largest producer of desalinated water in the world, has pledged to support Sri Lanka in desalination projects by offering its technical expertise in the field. Saudi Arabia has made this offer during a meeting between Sri Lanka's Minister of Urban Development, Water Supply and Drainage Rauf Hakeem and his counterpart, Abdul Rahman bin Abdul Mohsen Al-Fadhli, Minister of Water, Environment And Agriculture, in Riyadh on Tuesday.

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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