

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

**November 21st, 2016 | Volume: 2 - 7/11**

[Stoltenberg Has 'Good Talk' with Trump on NATO Future](#)

Outlook Afghanistan|8<sup>th</sup> November  
NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg said Friday he had had a positive talk with U.S President-elect Donald Trump on the future of the U.S-led alliance, amid concerns in Europe about Washington's commitment. "Good talk with U.S President-elect Donald Trump. We both underlined the enduring importance of NATO and increased defense spending," Stoltenberg tweeted. Trump caused consternation among NATO allies in Europe during the election campaign when he suggested Washington might think twice about coming to the rescue of an ally under threat if it had not paid its NATO dues.

[CPEC project: Nascent industries afraid of big Chinese firms](#)

The Express Tribune | 21<sup>st</sup> November  
Despite prospects of hefty benefits in many aspects, the business community sees the \$45-billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project a threat to the domestic industry if the government does not come up with certain preemptive measures to give protection to vulnerable sectors of the economy.

[ADB launches SASEC operational plan in Sri Lanka](#)

Colombo Page| 21<sup>st</sup> November  
The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has launched the new South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Operational Plan 2016-2025. This marks the program's first comprehensive long-term plan to promote greater economic cooperation among the member countries.

**AFGHANISTAN**

[India reaffirms support to restore Afghanistan's role as land bridge of the region](#)

Khaama Press|20<sup>th</sup> November

India has reaffirmed support to Afghanistan and to work with the neighboring countries to restore Afghanistan's role as the land bridge of the region. The Indian envoy to United Nations Syed Akbaruddin made the remarks during a meeting of the United Nations on Afghanistan. The UN General Assembly Adopted resolution supporting Afghanistan's efforts as speakers vowed to help the conflict-affected nation achieve untapped potential. Akbaruddin expressed alarm at the expansion of the theatre of war in Afghanistan and increasing casualties suffered by the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces.

[Govt. Set to Announce Election Committee Appointments](#)

Outlook Afghanistan|20<sup>th</sup> November

Following the completion of the interviewing process of candidates for electoral bodies, the Afghan government

on Saturday said the final list of selected candidates will be announced by the end of the upcoming week. However, electoral monitoring bodies said the presence of former election commissioners will discredit the electoral reform process. "Those who committed fraud in previous elections should be removed from the list and even they should be prosecuted," said Naeem Azghari, a member of the Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan (FEFA).

#### [All illiterate Afghans must be covered by literacy program by 2030: UNESCO](#)

Afghanistan Times | 20<sup>th</sup> November

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on Sunday while granting the first lady "Bibigul Literacy Prize Award" insisted that all illiterate Afghans must be covered through literacy program across the country. Illiteracy program must be run in better manner to ensure that all illiterate Afghan including men and women achieved literacy and numeracy in Afghanistan, said Program Manager of UNESCO Naomi Matsumoto.

## BANGLADESH

#### [Study finds 10 percent students in Bangladesh universities support terrorism](#)

bdnews24 | 21<sup>st</sup> November

One in every 10 university students in Bangladesh supports terrorism, according to a study. The research has found more than half (51.7 percent) of those students who support terrorism are from well-off families. In terms of age groups, 54.7 percent of the students who bear such radical ideas are aged between 18 and 25 years. East West University conducted the research amidst a nationwide campaign against terrorism and militancy after the July 1 terror attack on a cafe in Gulshan where 22 persons, mostly foreigners, were killed.

#### [BGB, coast guards on alert to check infiltration](#)

The Daily Star | 21<sup>st</sup> November

Paramilitary force Border Guard Bangladesh and Bangladesh Coast Guard are on alert along the border with Myanmar so that people from Myanmar cannot enter Bangladesh territory, says Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan. "A sense of unease is prevailing along the border with Myanmar," the home boss said while talking to journalists after emerging from a meeting of national committee on resisting smuggling yesterday.

#### [Bangladesh to import only cleaner gasoil from 2017](#)

The Financial Express | 20<sup>th</sup> November

Bangladesh will lower the sulphur content of its gasoil imports from January 2017, in line with a global trend towards cleaner fuel, two energy officials said on Sunday, reports Reuters via Yahoo News. It will limit imports to gasoil with 500 parts-per-million (ppm) sulphur and no longer buy the 2,500 ppm grade, two senior officials at the Bangladesh Petroleum Corp (BPC) told Reuters.

## BHUTAN

#### [Opposition questions Govt. on Code of Conduct](#)

Kuensel Online | 19<sup>th</sup> November

The opposition party questioned the government on if the education minister Norbu Wangchuk had breached the Code of Conduct by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with local shoe and socks manufacturers in September this year. Panbang MP Dorji Wangdi, during the Question Hour session in the National Assembly yesterday, asked whether the education minister signing an MoU with Dodo and Druk Shoes and socks manufacturer Tshesang Norlha Plants wasn't a violation of the code of conduct. The local manufacturers under the MoU agreed to supply shoes and socks to Central Schools.

### [NC members laud Govt.'s decision to introduce GDG](#)

Kuensel Online | 19<sup>th</sup> November

The Good Governance Committee of the National Council (NC) has submitted recommendations for judicial use of the Gewog Development Grant (GDG) by local government, one of which was to educate the people about the scheme. Presenting the recommendations in the House yesterday, member of the committee, Kamal Bahadur Gurung, said besides reviewing the findings of the Royal Audit Authority (RAA), the committee also studied the responses provided by the Ministry of Finance against each of those findings.

## **MALDIVES**

### [Vice President Abdulla Jihad travels to India for inauguration of Investment Forum](#)

Sun Online | 20<sup>th</sup> November

Vice President Abdulla Jihad has departed to India for the inauguration of Maldives Investment Forum 2016. VP Jihad left for India this Sunday morning along with Minister of Economic Development, Mohamed Saeed. Maldives Investment Forum III is scheduled to be held at Taj Palace, New Delhi on November 22.

### [Maldives Monetary Authority: USD can be purchased with debit card](#)

Sun Online | 20<sup>th</sup> November

Central bank, Maldives Monetary Authority (MMA) has announced that United States Dollars can also be purchased from them using debit cards. MMA announced on Saturday that it will be selling USD to Maldivians travelling abroad directly from its headquarters from November 20, 2016 to January 7.

## **MYANMAR**

### [China urges all parties to exercise restraint to end conflict in Myanmar](#)

Mizzima | 21<sup>st</sup> November

The Chinese Embassy in Myanmar issued a statement Sunday night, expressing grave concern over the outbreak of conflict in northern Myanmar. The statement urged all parties in the conflicts to exercise restraint by taking concrete and effective measures for an immediate ceasefire so as to resume peace in the China-Myanmar border area as soon as possible.

### [Three 'handmade bombs' explode in Yangon supermarket: official](#)

Mizzima | 21<sup>st</sup> November

Three suspected handmade bombs exploded in a supermarket in southern Yangon on Sunday, authorities said, although no casualties were reported. Security forces locked down the area with sniffer dogs after the blasts went off around 5:30 pm in Thakeyta Township.

### [More Rohingya villages razed in Myanmar's Rakhine: HRW](#)

Mizzima | 21<sup>st</sup> November

More than 1,000 houses in Rohingya villages have been razed in northwestern Myanmar, according to analysis of satellite images from Human Rights Watch released Monday, 21 November, that fly in the face of government denials. Troops have poured into a strip of land along the Bangladesh border, an area which is largely home to the stateless Muslim Rohingya minority, since a series of coordinated and deadly attacks on police border posts last month.

## **NEPAL**

### [Impeachment motion tabled to divert attention from national agendas](#)

My Republica | 21<sup>st</sup> November

Nepali Congress (NC) leader Ram Chandra Poudel on Sunday said that impeachment motion against CIAA chief Lokman Singh Karki was raised in the parliament to overshadow national agendas. Stating that the impeachment

motion was registered in the parliament by CPN (Maoist Center) and CPN-UML without consulting the NC, Poudel said his party would now play a role to deliver justice.

#### [Parliament passes Company Act \(first amendment\) Bill](#)

RSS / My Republica | 20th November

The Legislature-Parliament has unanimously approved the proposal seeking consideration on the Company Act (first amendment) Bill-2073. Sunday's meeting of the parliament approved the proposal seeking consideration on the Bill presented by Minister for Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation, Hridayaram Thani, on the behalf of the Industry Minister.

#### [Govt to annul Fast Track deals with Indian firm](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 21<sup>st</sup> November

The government has decided to terminate all memoranda of understanding and decisions reached with an Indian consortium that was preparing to build the 76-km expressway linking Kathmandu with Nijgadh, Bara. Following the move, the government is gearing up to build the project on its own and make the highway a "public expressway", where no toll will be levied on road users, Minister for Physical Infrastructure and Transport Ramesh Lekhak told a joint meeting of the parliamentary Finance and Development committees on Sunday.

### PAKISTAN

#### [Pakistan, Russia, China seek to crack Afghan conundrum](#)

The Express Tribune | 21<sup>st</sup> November

In international diplomacy, there are no permanent friends or foes. This oft-repeated cliché perfectly illustrates the current transformation of Pakistan-Russia relationship. When Afghanistan was in turmoil in the 1980s, Moscow and Islamabad were in opposite camps. But their Cold War rivalry has taken a dramatic turn. And the two countries are now exploring options to become partners for bringing peace in Afghanistan.

#### [Govt to step up diplomatic drive on Kashmir issue](#)

The Express Tribune | 21<sup>st</sup> November

As India continues to ramp up tensions with Pakistan, the federal government is set to implement key decisions taken last month at top legislative and executive forums to keep the Kashmir issue in the international spotlight.

### SRI LANKA

#### [IMF approves US\\$162.6 million disbursement to Sri Lanka](#)

Colombo Gazette | 19<sup>th</sup> November

The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has completed the first review of Sri Lanka's economic performance under the program supported by a three-year extended arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) arrangement.

#### [Sri Lanka eyes Qatar LNG to fuel power plants](#)

Colombo Gazette | 21<sup>st</sup> November

Sri Lanka is keen on importing liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Qatar as part of government policy to shift to clean energy, Minister of City Planning and Water Supply Rauff Hakeem has said. The Gulf Times quoted Hakeem as saying LNG-generated power plants are going to be the next futuristic power generation option in Sri Lanka.

#### [ADB support for Sri Lanka in future to focus on business development, increasing revenue](#)

Colombo Page | 21<sup>st</sup> November

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) in the past ten years has made a substantial contribution to expanding

infrastructure services in the country but not on financial reforms and in the future the lender will focus on business development and increasing revenue to the government.

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### ***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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