



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

April 26th, 2017 | Volume: 3 - 10/4

[US tested its weapon in Achin: Officials](#)
Afghanistan Times | 25th April

A number of officials in Nangarhar province condemned the US largest non-nuclear bomb drop in the Achin district. Members of provincial council said Tuesday in Jalalabad city, the provincial capital that the United States tested its weapons under the pretext of targeting Daesh terrorist group. Deputy head of provincial council, Lal Mohammad Dorrani said that they had already expressed criticism against the US attack, but they didn't share their concerns with the media because they were collecting information. Spojmay Radio reported that the provincial officials called the US attack against the international principles, asking the United Nations Security Council to investigate it.

[India-owned BHEL gets \\$1.5 billion order to build Rampal Power Plant](#)

bdnews24 | 24th April
Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited has secured the contract to build the controversial Rampal Power Plant. The state-owned Indian company announced it got the \$1.5 billion export order for the 1,320 MW thermal power station in a notice posted on its website on Tuesday. BHEL won its biggest order following stiff competition in international bidding for the coal-fired power plant, a joint initiative of India's state-owned National Thermal Power Corporation and Bangladesh Power Development Board, the notice said.

[Ranil arrives in India on five-day working visit](#)

Colombo Gazette | 25th April
Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe arrived in New Delhi today on a five-day working visit to India. He will hold talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi tomorrow over lunch. Union Ministers Sushma Swaraj, Rajnath Singh and Nitin Gadkari will call on him during his stay in New Delhi, theindianawaaz.com reported.

AFGHANISTAN

[2 Haqqani network members killed, large cache of weapons seized in Logar](#)

Khaama Press | 25th April

At least two operatives of the Haqqani terrorist network were killed and five others were arrested during an operation in central Logar province of Afghanistan. The Afghan Intelligence, National Directorate of Security (NDS), said the two militants were killed during a special operation conducted by the intelligence operatives that also led to the apprehension of five others. A statement by NDS said the militants were deployed to Logar province by Haqqani network commander Jalil Muqadas to conduct insurgency activities but two of them were killed during the clashes with the intelligence operatives.

[Afghan government approves 5 contracts worth 5.5 billion Afghanis](#)

Khaama Press | 25th April

The Afghan government has approved five contracts worth 5.5 billion Afghanis during a meeting of the National Procurement Commission. The Office of the President, ARG Palace, said the meeting of the National Procurement Commission was chaired by President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani and was organized late on Sunday evening. The

contracts approved during the meeting included procurement of fuel for the departments of the Chief Executive Office and the Afghan Attorney General's Office, survey and study for the master plan of the capital commercial center in the 1st police district of the city.

[US to Engage with Russia on Arms Supply to Taliban](#)

Outlook Afghanistan/ Pajhwok | 26th April

Russia is providing weapons to Taliban insurgents, alleges commander of US and NATO forces in Afghanistan. Earlier in the week, the Russian ambassador to Afghanistan said their contacts are limited to boosting security and persuading the rebels to enter talks with the government. Gen John Nicholson told reporters at a news conference in Kabul on Monday he would "not refute" that Moscow's involvement included supplying arms to the rebels.

[China urges conflict parties to start peace talks](#)

Afghanistan Times | 25th April

China has expressed its deep concerns over the burning flames of terrorism in Afghanistan, urging all the parties involved in conflict to start result-oriented negotiations, aimed at defusing the threatening situations. The Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman has condemned Friday's terrorist attack on Shaheen 209th Corps base, situated on the outskirts of Mazar-i-Sharif, capital city of the northern Balkh province. Addressing a press briefing in Beijing, Geng Shuang said: "We are greatly shocked by the heavy casualties and condemn the attack in strongest words".

BANGLADESH

[China to invest \\$2 billion in Bangladesh construction materials sector](#)

bdnews24 | 26th April

The China Building Materials Federation has presented a plan to Bangladesh Investment Development Board (BIDA) offering \$2 billion investment in the sector. BIDA says a 12-strong delegation met its Executive Chairman Kazi M Aminul Islam on Tuesday and expressed their interest. The chairman said they would get 'one stop service' in Dhaka. The Chinese side gave a proposal on 'Cooperation Proposal for China-Bangladesh Building Material Upgrade Project and the Development of Industrial Park' for the investment in construction materials such as bricks, tiles, cement, ceramics and mosaic. Both sides also agreed to sign a MoU for an institutional framework of the proposal.

[Bangladesh to use Indian \\$4.5b credit in 17 projects](#)

The Financial Express | 25th April

The latest Indian credit of \$4.5 billion will be used in 17 projects, high official of Bangladesh said. Economic Relations Divisions Secretary Shofiqul Azam, who was present at a meeting between Finance ministers of India and Bangladesh in Washington. Bangladesh Finance Minister MA Muhith had recently a bilateral meeting with Indian Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on the sidelines of the annual Spring Meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

[All govts behave 'step-motherly' with judiciary: Chief Justice](#)

Prothom Alo | 25th April

Chief justice Surendra Kumar Sinha on Tuesday lamented that the judiciary faces a 'step-motherly' behaviour from all the successive governments, reports UNB. "The executive department never wants the judiciary to function independently although it provides security to the administration, too. The bureaucracy always considers the judiciary a rival," he said.

[12,000 illegal Bangladeshi immigrants ready to leave Saudi Arabia](#)

bdnews24 | 25th April

A total of 12,000 Bangladeshis have received clearance from the Saudi government to leave the kingdom before Jun 30. The government of Saudi Arabia has set the deadline for illegal immigrants to leave the country. Those meeting the deadline will be spared under 'general pardon' and may visit Saudi Arabia legally again in the future. But those failing to honour the deadline will face jail terms and fine.

BHUTAN

[Council to introduce audit bill](#)

Kuensel | 25th April

Speaking at the pre-session press conference in Thimphu yesterday, the deputy chairperson of the National Council, Tshering Dorji, said it is important for Parliament members to interact with the media to disseminate the right information to their constituents. The Council calls a press conference twice every session – one in the beginning of the session and another at the end. The first session was held in May 2016 and yesterday's was the fifth.

MALDIVES

[UN calls for probe into Yameen's death](#)

Sun Online | 25th April

The United Nations has called for the investigation on the murder of the social media activist and blogger, Yameen Rasheed be up to the international standards. The High Commissioner of Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein condemned Sunday's stabbing saying that "killing comes in the context of what appears to be an upsurge in arrests and prosecutions of the political opposition." The 29-year-old was discovered on the stairwell of his residence of Maafannu Spatula in Male' City with multiple stab wounds and was taken to the hospital where he died.

MYANMAR

[China's help crucial to Myanmar's reform](#)

Global Times / Mizzima | 26th April

It has been over a year since the National League for Democracy (NLD) came to power under the leadership of Aung San Suu Kyi in Myanmar. The ruling party and its leader have gone through numerous trials and tribulations since taking office. Though the NLD government has made immense progress in the face of domestic and foreign obstacles, there are also missteps and deficiencies in its governance.

[MADB's ministry relocation aims to improve efficiency](#)

Myanmar Times | 26th April

Myanma Agricultural Development Bank (MADB), the only state-owned bank in the agriculture sector, was under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOALI). But from now on, the institution has been relocated to the Ministry of Planning and Finance (MOPF) which will make loan processes more efficient, according to ministry officials.

[President's Office instructs USDP to return development funds](#)

Myanmar Times | 26th April

The President's Office has ordered the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) and relevant organisations to hand over regional development funds paid by hand-dug well entrepreneurs during the previous administration to the Magwe regional government.

NEPAL

[Supreme Court orders Nepal Police not to probe DIG Silwal](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 26th April

The Supreme Court on Tuesday ordered the government to stop probe into Deputy Inspector General of Police Nawaraj Silwal until a case on the Nepal Police chief appointment row is heard on May 2. The apex court directed the government not to subject DIG Silwal to any sort of investigation or interrogation. A full bench argued that the ongoing police probe of DIG Silwal goes against its earlier verdict, deeming it as "illegal and objectionable".

[Nepal-China first ever joint military drill concludes](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 25th April

The first ever joint military drill between Nepal and China has concluded on Tuesday. The military exercise was organised with an aim to deal with terrorism. The 10-day long military exercise was focused on common interests like disaster management and counter terrorism, among others.

[Reconstruction should get top priority: Industry minister](#)

My Republica | 26th April

Minister for Industry Nabindra Raj Joshi on Tuesday said that the government has requested industrialists to

provide construction materials required for reconstruction at lower price. Inaugurating a workshop entitled 'Lesson Learned From 2015 Gorkha Earthquake and Evaluation of Seismic Hazard in Nepal', Joshi said that cheap construction materials will help earthquake-affected people and the government to complete the reconstruction work at the earliest. "The government is committed toward completing reconstruction of settlements and heritage sites which were destroyed or damaged by the earthquakes of 2015. We have realized that reconstruction work should get top priority," he added.

PAKISTAN

[PML-N's carrot and stick approach](#)

Express Tribune | 26th April

The ruling PML-N has developed a two-pronged strategy to deal with those demanding Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to step down in the wake of the Supreme Court judgment in the Panamagate: engaging the legal community and countering political parties. After the verdict, major political parties and the legal fraternity asked the prime minister to resign, claiming "he is left with no moral justification to remain in office after the Panamagate verdict".

[Nisar says western borders fencing to check illegal movements](#)

Express Tribune | 26th April

Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan has said fencing of Pakistan-Afghanistan border together with installation of an effective surveillance mechanism will significantly help in checking illegal and cross border movement of unwanted elements within 2-3 years. "The present government has taken decision of fencing of the western border in view of frequent cross border movement and has regulated this movement by making travel documents mandatory for the crossing purposes," Nisar said on Tuesday.

[Bitter foes PTI, PPP launch attack on Sharif](#)

Dawn | 26th April

The leaders of the country's main opposition parties raised the "Go Nawaz go" slogan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, demanding that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif step down following the Supreme Court's verdict in the Panama Papers case. But plans for a grand opposition alliance seemed a distant dream on Tuesday, as Asif Ali Zardari and Imran Khan also took aim at each other's parties in speeches that seemed more suited to the campaign trail than as precursors to a possible alliance.

SRI LANKA

[President discusses plans for streamlining solid waste management](#)

Colombo Page | 25th April

President Maithripala Sirisena has given instructions to the relevant officials to pay a monthly allowance of Rs.50,000 for three months, to each family evacuated from the high risk area around the Meethotamulla garbage dump in one payment. The objective of this payment is to eliminate the difficulties faced by the people when giving advance payments while renting houses on a temporary basis.

[Pakistan's National Defence University delegation in Sri Lanka](#)

Colombo Gazette | 25th April

An 18-member high-powered delegation from the National Defense University (NDU) of Pakistan, led by Commodore Shahid Sohail, is currently visiting Sri Lanka on a week-long foreign study tour from April 23 to 28, 2017. The delegation comprises of senior officers from Pakistan's Armed Forces, Civil Services and Officers from Germany and Nepal, who are undergoing National Security and War Course at NDU.

[Sri Lanka-Korea trade association formed to boost bilateral trade](#)

Colombo Page | 25th April

The Korea Importers' Association (KOIMA) with the support of the Sri Lanka Embassy in the Republic of Korea launched the KOIMA Trade Promotion Partners Committee (TPPC) of Sri Lanka on Tuesday 18th April 2017 at the Sri Lanka Embassy in Seoul. The CEOs of five Korean companies, i.e., CAC Trading Co., Green Natural Corp, Daichung Industrial Corp, Chunghan Chem Int'l Ltd., and Phil Co., engaged or interested in importing products from Sri Lanka became the first members of TPPC - Sri Lanka at the event.

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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