

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

December 2nd, 2016 | Volume: 2 - 1/12

[Pakistan in Well Position to Tap Trade Potential of Afghanistan, Cars: Dar](#)

APP / Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 1st December

Pakistani Minister for Finance Muhammad Ishaq Dar Wednesday said Pakistan was now well positioned to further tap the trade potential of Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics (CARs). "There is a huge trade potential in Afghanistan and five Central Asian states, namely Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, with combined gross domestic product (GDP) of \$ 445 billion and population of 66 million, offer a sizeable market for Pakistani goods, services and investment," Dar said while speaking at the launching ceremony of Pakistan-Afghanistan-Central Asian Republic States Trade Summit (PACTS) here Tuesday night.

[Rohingyas to be sent back](#)

The Daily Star | 2nd December
With hundreds of newly-arrived Rohingya crowding unregistered Rohingya camps in Teknaf and other areas of Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday said they would be sent back to their country at a convenient time. The minister made the remark while talking to reporters after attending a programme organised by Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence in the capital's Mirpur area. He said the government was providing humanitarian assistance to the Rohingyas who already entered the country crossing the border illegally.

[Pak-US relations 'quite complicated': White House](#)

Geotv | 2nd December
The White House has said the relationship between Pakistan and US is 'quite complicated', particularly in matters of national security. In a media briefing, White House spokesman Josh Earnest noted that the relationship between Pakistan and US got more complicated after US conducted a raid in Pakistan that killed Al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden. He added that over the past eight years Pak-US ties could not remain smooth, which was one reason President Obama's wish to visit Pakistan could not materialize.

AFGHANISTAN

[General Ghorri killed in helicopter crash laid to rest](#)

Afghanistan Times | 1st December

General Mohaiuddin Ghorri was laid to rest in western Herat province on Thursday following his death in a helicopter crash two days ago. President Ashraf Ghani, Minister of Defense, Minister of Interior, Head of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) and many other officials attended the funeral of Gen Ghorri in Herat. President Ghani praised Ghorri as a hero, who lost his life on the way to reinforce security and peace in the

country. The president also directed the relevant authorities to provide best medical care to the wounded people of the chopper crash.

[MoF presents fiscal year budget to Wolesi Jirga](#)

Afghanistan Times | 30th November

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) on Wednesday referred the draft of the next year's budget to the Wolesi Jirga (Lower House) of parliament for approval. The draft included both ordinary and development budget, which would be funded through domestic income and donations. Finance Minister Eklil Hakimi, said that 117 big and small projects of education, healthcare, agriculture, economic, rural development and infrastructure are included in the fiscal budget.

[Ghani May Seek More Military Assistance from India](#)

Pajhwok / Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 1st December

Afghanistan may seek additional military assistance from India in battling a relentless Taliban insurgency, a New Delhi-based newspaper reported on Wednesday. President Ashraf Ghani is expected to present Prime Minister Narendra Modi a wish list at their meeting on the sidelines of the Heart of Asia Conference in the Amritsar city of Punjab state next week. As the strategic partnership between the two nations is gradually deepens, India recently supplied the fourth attack helicopter to Afghanistan. Some agreements will also be signed on business and economic ties.

[ISIS Loses Ground in Iraq, Libya, and Afghanistan](#)

MWN / Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 1st December

The Islamic State, commonly referred to as ISIS or ISIL, is losing territory in Iraq as coalition forces continue to advance on Mosul. The Telegraph noted early Monday morning, large amounts of intelligence have been collected by Iraqi security and international coalition forces throughout the city. Phones, laptops, and hard-drives have been confiscated and will soon be passed along to intelligence agencies for processing. The coalition's recent capture of Manbij, a city in the north of Syria which has functioned as a gateway for ISIS militants entering Turkey and Europe, also provided intelligence analysts with a trove of data on the terrorist group and its larger network. The intelligence included crucial information on ISIS's recruits, finances as well as plans for international terror plots in Europe and elsewhere.

BANGLADESH

[India proposes to raise capacity of Bangladesh armed forces](#)

The Daily Star | 2nd December

India has proposed a number of new initiatives to enhance the capacity and capabilities of the Bangladesh Armed Forces. Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar concluded his two-day visit to Bangladesh yesterday and had wide-ranging discussions with the political and military leadership of Bangladesh to further strengthen the ties between the armed forces of the two countries.

[Full Implementation of CHT Accord: Frustrations over failure in 19 years](#)

The Daily Star | 2nd December

The country's civil and other bureaucracies are still not in favour of full implementation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord, alleged Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma, president of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS). He also said it is very difficult to fully implement the accord when bureaucracies are against it and want to destroy the existence of the Jumma people. The PCJSS leader, popularly known as Santu Larma, was addressing a discussion yesterday, a day before the 19th anniversary of the CHT accord signing.

[Bangladesh, UNDP inks \\$31m deal for development of Chittagong](#)

The Financial Express | 1st December

Bangladesh and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) signed an agreement for a new project, focusing on sustainable and inclusive development of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). The agreement was inked on Thursday, the eve of the 19th anniversary of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord, signed in 1997.

"Bangladesh reaffirmed its commitment to fully implement the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord", reports BSS citing the UNDP said in a release on Thursday.

BHUTAN

[Indo-Bhutan trade pact receives support](#)

Kuensel Online | 1st December

The Assembly will endorse the agreement on December 5. Deliberating on the Indo-Bhutan Trade, Commerce and Transit Agreement in the National Assembly yesterday, parliamentarians hailed the good relations between the two neighbours. The renewed agreement was signed on November 12 by economic affairs minister LekeyDorji and Indian state minister for commerce and industry Nirmala Sitharaman in Thimphu

[Local government capacity questioned](#)

Kuensel Online | 1st December

Local governments have been found to have inadequate human resources which resulted in poor quality and delay of the of gewog development grant-funded (GDG) activities. This was pointed out in the latest Performance Audit Report on GDG 2016. The need to strengthen human resources in the LG offices was also pointed out in the Anti-Corruption Commission's annual report 2015.

MALDIVES

[President Yameen meets with Malaysian PM](#)

Sun Online | 1st December

Maldivian President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom, who is in Malaysia, has met with the Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Sri MohdNajib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak. The meeting took place this Thursday morning at the sidelines of the ruling Malaysian political party -United Malays National Organization (UMNO) General Assembly held earlier at Putrajaya World Trade Centre.

[Court orders 2-month postponement to Council Election](#)

Sun Online | 1st December

Civil Court has granted Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM) its request for a two-month postponement to the upcoming Local Council Election. PPM filed the lawsuit requesting a two-month postponement to the election citing "unavoidable circumstances" which rendered the party unable to prepare for the election in time for January 14.

MYANMAR

[Myanmar, Singapore to discuss investment treaty](#)

Mizzima | 1st December

Singapore and Myanmar will begin discussions on a bilateral investment treaty, as well as update an avoidance of double taxation agreement, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong announced on 30 November, according to a report by Channel News Asia.

[Myanmar child rape cases surge 40 percent: state media](#)

Mizzima | 1st December

Child rape cases in Myanmar have surged by 40 percent this year, state media said Wednesday, highlighting a growing problem for the country still grappling with a dark past of rights abuses. Poverty and weak laws mean Myanmar's children are highly vulnerable to abuse, with many of them sold into to labour or forcibly recruited to fight in the country's borderlands.

[China tightens control along Myanmar border](#)

Mizzima | 2nd December

China has tightened control along its border with Myanmar and is prepared to respond to emergencies, the Chinese defence ministry spokesman said. The Chinese military has shown great concern over the northern Myanmar conflict and has urged Myanmar to take effective measures to protect Chinese people, Yang Yujun told a monthly briefing Wednesday.

NEPAL

[PM Dahal calls on President Bhandari](#)

RSS / My Republica | 1st December

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal discussed the latest political developments with President Bidya Devi Bhandari today. During the meeting held at RastrapatiBhawan, Sheetal Niwas, President Bhandari suggested Prime Minister Dahal to take every political party on board in implementing the constitution. In the almost an

hour-long meeting, matters relating to contemporary political situation were discussed, according to the President's personal secretary Bhesh Raj Adhikari.

[ADB gives \\$186.8 million to upgrade road](#)

RSS / My Republica | 1st December

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$186.80 million loan for starting a project to improve the country's domestic and regional transport connectivity. The new loan has been sanctioned to upgrade 160 kilometers (km) of Nepal's strategic road network (East-West Highway). The project will upgrade the sections of 115-kilometer Narayanghat-Butwal road and the Bhairahawa-Taulihawa (45 km) feeder road.

[Govt willing to hold local polls: Deuba](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 1st December

Nepali Congress (NC) President Sher Bahadur Deuba met United Nations Resident Coordinator Valerie Julliard and Craig Jenness, director of Electoral Assistance Division in the Department of Political Affairs with the United Nations Secretariat in New York, at the former's residence in Budanilkantha on Thursday. According to a press statement issued by NC party office, during the meeting the trio discussed Nepal's overall political situation and the prospects of local elections.

[Govt moves to expedite petro pipeline project](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 2nd December

In its bid to expedite construction of much-delayed 41km Raxaul-Amlekhgunj petroleum pipeline, the Ministry of Supplies is holding a multi-stakeholder meeting in Amlekhgunj, Bara, on Friday, which will discuss issues related to environment and local land use. The ministry has also formed two high-level committees in Bara and Parsa districts led by respective Chief District Officers. The committees will hold consultations with all stakeholders concerned to facilitate the pipeline construction process and avoid any possible complications in the future. The committees, each having 18 members, include representatives from Land Revenue Office, Nepal Police, Nepal Electricity Authority, Municipalities, Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC) and Bara-Parsa National Park.

PAKISTAN

[India rules out talks on 'Heart of Asia' fringes](#)

The Express Tribune | 2nd December

Despite Pakistan's efforts to reach out to India even as tensions flare between the two rivals along the Line of Control, New Delhi has once again shot down any chance for dialogue as Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's foreign affairs adviser heads to Amritsar for a key regional summit.

[India reminded of obligations under waters accord](#)

Dawn | 2nd December

The Foreign Office reminded India on Thursday of its obligations under the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) and cautioned that New Delhi's own credibility would suffer if the accord was violated. Speaking at the weekly media briefing, FO spokesman Nafees Zakaria said: "India has to abide by its international obligations, if it wants to be taken seriously by the international community."

SRI LANKA

[US Vice President-elect telephones President Sirisena](#)

Colombo Gazette | 1st December

US Vice President-elect Mike Pence telephoned President Maithripala Sirisena today and discussed future US-Sri Lanka relations. Pence and President Maithripala Sirisena had reportedly discussed further strengthening US-Sri Lanka relations under President Donald Trump.

[Indian, Sri Lankan officials to meet this month on FTA](#)

Colombo Gazette | 1st December

Senior officials of India and Sri Lanka will meet this month in the island nation to discuss broadening of the

existing trade deal by including services and investments, the Press Trust of India reported. The officials are expected to meet by the middle of this month in Sri Lanka, an official said.

[Sri Lanka's Q3 industrial production index up 3.0 percent compared to 2015](#)

Colombo Gazette| 2nd December

The Index of Industrial Production (IIP), a key indicator to gauge industrial performance and to forecast the future economic performance, for the third quarter of this year rose 3.0 percent compared to the production in same period in 2015.

[French Agency for Development supports its first integrated urban development project in Anuradhapura](#)

Colombo Page| 1st December

The French Agency for Development (AFD) has recently approved a 52 million Euro loan to Sri Lanka to finance the Anuradhapura Integrated Urban Development Project.

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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