

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

**January 2nd, 2017 | Volume: 3 - 1/1**

[Ghani Orders Security Reforms, Clearing Operations](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 31st December  
President Ashraf Ghani has directed the Ministries of Defence and Interior to ensure respect for security reforms in clearing operations and streamlining the police force.

[Mahato sounds warning](#)

The Himalayan Times | 1st January  
Nepal's Sadbhawana Party National Chairperson Rajendra Mahato on Sunday urged all to beware of secessionist forces that would rise in the country if the statute amendment move and federalism failed.

[Dossier on Indian interference finalised](#)

DAWN | 2nd January  
A dossier on captured Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav and evidence of attempted violation of maritime boundary by an Indian submarine will be handed over by Pakistan's permanent representative to the United Nations Dr Maleeha Lodhi on Monday (Jan 2) to Mr Guterres on his first working day at the UN headquarters in New York, officials said here.

**AFGHANISTAN**

[RS Warns of Intensified War Next Year](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 31st December

Charles Cleveland, a spokesperson for the Resolute Support (RS) mission in Afghanistan, has warned that the war will intensify next fighting season as the Taliban have already started preparing for it.

[Poppy Cultivated on Taliban-Grabbed Govt Land](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 1st January

The Batikot district chief in eastern Nangarhar province says the illicit poppy crop has been cultivated on government-owned land this year. Ghalib Mujahid told Pajhwok Afghan News in an exclusive interview poppies had been grown at the canalisation department's land.

[Taliban suffer heavy casualties in Uruzgan air and ground raids](#)

Khaama Press | 1st January

The Taliban militants suffered heavy casualties in the ground and airstrikes conducted by the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) in southern Uruzgan province.

**BANGLADESH**

### [Bangladesh and India to continue fight against common enemies: Former Foreign Minister Dipu Moni](#)

bdnews24 | 1<sup>st</sup> January

Former foreign minister and Awami League leader Dipu Moni has said that Bangladesh and India have common enemies and the two neighbouring countries will continue to fight those enemies. “Bangladesh which other than common culture, history, literature, heritage and language also have enemies in common and shall continue to fight together against them,” she said in Tripura while attending the 45th Victory Day programme organised by a local daily ‘Arshi Katha’.

### [Bangladesh and the new economic world order](#)

The Daily Star | 2<sup>nd</sup> January

Bangladesh has so far been watching from the sidelines as a major international shake-up currently takes shape in the global economic and political landscape. While all the major pieces of this new global scene, which I will call “The Twenty-first Century International Economic Order” (TCIEO), are not yet in place, we can sense from recent moves by USA, UK, Germany, Russia, and China that it will have USA and Russia forging greater ties, and China carving out its own area of influence in the Pacific Rim, and some major realignments of trade relationships.

### [Bangladesh and India to continue fight against common enemies: Dipu Moni](#)

bdnews24 | 1<sup>st</sup> December

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### [Dhaka's cost of living rises 6.47pc in 2016](#)

BSS / Prothom Alo | 1<sup>st</sup> January

Cost of living increased by 6.47 per cent while prices of commodities and services by 5.81 per cent in the capital in the just concluded year. Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) revealed this information in a study report published on Sunday. According to CAB statistics, cost of living had increased by 6.38 per cent in 2015, which was 0.09 per cent more than the rise in 2016.

## **BHUTAN**

### [Private money lending and micro-finance rules approved](#)

Kuensel | 1<sup>st</sup> January

To regulate private money lending businesses and bring such activities under the purview of the financial sector the Royal Monetary Authority (RMA) approved the Private Money Lending Rules and Regulations 2016 (PMLRR) on December 29, according to an RMA press release.

### [LG members want government intervention on entitlement issue](#)

Kuensel | 1<sup>st</sup> January

Two important stakeholders of democracy – the Election Commission of Bhutan (ECB) and the National Council (NC) – have clarified that members of Local Government (LG) are “declared elected” from the day the election results are declared, and not on the day they are administered oath.

## **MALDIVES**

### [President Yameen: Past year was a success in achieving key pledges](#)

Sun Online | 1<sup>st</sup> January

President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom has said that 2016 was a success in achieving key Administration pledges. In the President’s address on the occasion of the new year, the President sent warm greetings of the occasion to all the Maldivians going on to state that the past year had graced us with peace and harmony and that meaningful action was taken on several fronts to fulfil the basic needs of Maldivians.

## MYANMAR

### [Action will be taken against policemen caught beating villagers in Rakhine](#)

Mizzima | 2<sup>nd</sup> January

State Counsellor Office Press Committee Secretary Zaw Htay said that some policemen who violated human rights during an area clearing operation conducted in Maungdaw area, Rakhine State will face legal action.

### [Villagers escape to IDP camps in Shan State](#)

Mizzima | 31<sup>st</sup> December

More than 150 villagers have fled to camps in Kyaukme township in the northern part of Myanmar's volatile Shan state to escape intensified fighting between government soldiers and Ta'ang National Liberation Army troops, a local lawmaker told Radio Free Asia this week.

## NEPAL

### [A year of governance disaster](#)

Republica | 2<sup>nd</sup> January

Nepal's governance status remained disastrous in 2016. Lokman Singh Karki faced an impeachment motion, the first time a CIAA chief is going through this. The impeachment motion charging him with abusing his authority to benefit his family business and silence opponents is still pending in Parliament. With the impeachment motion, Karki has been suspended from his post.

### [Govt intensifies talks with opposition UML](#)

Kathmandu Post | 2<sup>nd</sup> January

In a bid to end the stalemate over the constitution amendment bill that the government is preparing to table in Parliament, leaders from both the ruling coalition and the opposition have intensified talks.

### [Banking industry faces deadline rush to meet new paid-up capital requirements](#)

Republica | 2<sup>nd</sup> January

As the mid-July deadline to increase paid-up capital is drawing closer, bank and financial institutions (BFIs) are intensifying efforts to meet the new requirements.

## PAKISTAN

### [Missile development, CPEC security termed major successes](#)

DAWN | 2<sup>nd</sup> January

According to a message released on social media by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) director general on New Year's Eve on Saturday, an enhanced version of the Babur cruise missile and the indigenously produced air-launched Ra'ad missile were successfully tested during the year.

### [Pakistan faces India-sponsored terrorism: FO](#)

The Express Tribune | 2<sup>nd</sup> January

Accusing India of using terrorism as an instrument of state policy, Pakistan on Sunday slammed a 'politically motivated' move by New Delhi to have Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) chief Maulana Masood Azhar designated as global terrorist by the UN Security Council.

### [Pakistan's to-be thriving port suffering from crippling water scarcity](#)

The Express Tribune | 2<sup>nd</sup> January

Imagine a deep-sea port where, while so-called development experts enjoy a breath-taking view from their regal five

star hotel rooms located on the grand Koh-e-Batil hill, indigenous fishermen are left with little choice except migrating permanently to far-flung harbours.

## SRI LANKA

### [Third round of Sri Lanka, India talks on ETCA on Jan 4 and 5](#)

Colombo Page| 30<sup>th</sup> December

The third round of talks between India and Sri Lanka on the proposed Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement (ETCA) will be held on the 4th and 5th of January in Colombo.

### [Sri Lankan government to provide free health insurance policy for school children in New Year](#)

Colombo Page| 1<sup>st</sup> January

The Sri Lankan government will provide a free health insurance policy for all school children from 2017 and the government has allocated Rs. 2.7 billion in this year's budget for the purpose, the island's Finance Minister announced.

### [UN remains committed to support people of Sri Lanka](#)

Colombo Gazette| 1<sup>st</sup> January

The incoming United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres officially begins his 5 year term today after being sworn in on the 12th of December. Guterres, a former Prime Minister of Portugal (1995 to 2002) and former UN High Commissioner for Refugees (2005-2015) took the oath of office on the 12th December following the Assembly's tribute to outgoing Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who steps down after leading the global Organization for the past 10 years.

## ***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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