

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

**November 2nd, 2016 | Volume: 2 - 1/11**

[Mi-25s supplied by India prevented further deterioration of security: Ghani](#)

Khaama Press|1<sup>st</sup> November  
The Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani said Tuesday that the Mi-25s supplied by India prevented further deterioration of the security situation of the country. Speaking during a joint conference of the leadership of security institutions, President Ghani said “The situation could further deteriorate if the Mi-25s supplied by India would not arrive on time.” Hailing the Afghan Air Force (AAF) leaders for their efforts to provide air support to the Afghan forces during the ongoing fighting season, President Ghani said “We were forced to use the Mi-17 transport helicopters as gunships during the last Afghan fiscal year.”

[Dhaka to raise Delhi's anti-dumping probe at trade talks on Nov 16](#)

The Financial Express | 1<sup>st</sup> November  
Bangladesh is likely to raise the issue of anti-dumping investigation India has launched on jute goods from Bangladesh at the upcoming commerce secretary level meeting, official sources said. India would request Bangladesh to reduce the tariff structure for steel billets, milk and some fruit items while focusing on bringing down Bangladesh's sensitive list of products.

[China hits out at allegations raised in Sri Lanka](#)

Colombo Gazette| 1<sup>st</sup> November  
The Chinese Government today hit out at several allegations raised over its role in Sri Lanka. The Chinese Ambassador to Sri Lanka, Yi Xianliang insisted that the Chinese Government has no hidden agenda in Sri Lanka. He also insisted that the Chinese companies involved in several projects in Sri Lanka had not offered bribes for any projects.

**AFGHANISTAN**

[Rifts in NUG: Jihadi, political leaders offers mediation](#)

Afghanistan Times|1<sup>st</sup> November

Expressing serious concerns over widening rifts between the National Unity Government (NUG) leaders, the

Council of Jihadi and National Political Parties (CoJNPP) on Tuesday said that it was ready to mediate in order to resolve the differences. "State affairs are in a sensitive stage which is a matter of concern for people and the CoJNPP. Therefore, we exert utmost efforts to overcome challenges," said Head of CoJNPP, Sebaghatullah Mojadidi.

#### [Pakistan main obstacle to peace process: Meshrano Jirga](#)

Afghanistan Times | 1<sup>st</sup> November

First Deputy Chairman of the Meshrano Jirga (Senate) Farhad Sakhi said on Tuesday that Pakistan was the main obstacle in front of direct peace talks between the Afghan government and Taliban. "Pakistan does not want a peaceful Afghanistan and the country will never stop its interference in Afghanistan's affairs. This country prevents Taliban from joining peace talks," he said. Recently reports emerged that Pakistan has issued a stark warning to the Afghan Taliban over being sidelined from the Taliban's secret talks with the government. The Associated Press citing two Taliban officials reported that Islamabad has told the Taliban to either include Pakistan in the negotiations or have all the top Taliban leaders leave the country with their families.

#### [Turkmenistan Builds Railway to Afghanistan](#)

Outlook Afghanistan | 1<sup>st</sup> November

Construction of the Atamyrat-Imamnazar (Turkmenistan) - Akina (Afghanistan) section of the Asian International Railway Transport Corridor (Phase 1) has been completed, the Foreign Ministry of Turkmenistan said in a message Oct. 31. Construction of the Turkmen-Afghan railway started June 5, 2013. The total length of the transnational highway is 88 kilometers, 85 kilometers of them run through the Turkmen territory, and the remaining 3 kilometers run between Imamnazar and Akina border points.

### **BANGLADESH**

#### [Attacks on Hindus: Good Samaritans outnumbered](#)

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

When religious zealots were rampaging through Hindu houses and temples in Brahmanbaria's Nasirnagar on Sunday, some Muslims in the upazila tried to put up a resistance against the criminals. However, all their efforts went in vain as the attackers outnumbered them. Many Muslim families also gave shelter to their Hindu neighbours to save them from the attackers, several local Hindus told The Daily Star.

#### [B'desh to import 1.0m tonnes rice from Thailand](#)

The Financial Express | 1<sup>st</sup> November

Bangladesh will ink an agreement with Thailand for importing one million tonnes of rice annually through the government channel. The import will depend on the production condition in the two countries and the price level that prevails on the international market. Thai commerce minister Apiradi Tantraporn on Tuesday at a bilateral meeting in Bangkok, reassured Bangladeshi Food Minister Md. Qamrul Islam of signing the memorandum of understanding (MoU) this year, said a statement issued by Bangladesh embassy in Bangkok.

### **BHUTAN**

#### [Bhutan slips in ease of doing business ranking](#)

Kuensel Online | 31<sup>st</sup> October

Bhutan has slipped two places in the "ease of doing business" ranking released last week by the World Bank. Bhutan is ranked at 73 in the Doing Business 2017 report among 190 countries. The World Bank ranked Bhutan at 71 among 198 countries last year. Doing Business measures aspects of business regulation for domestic firms through an objective lens.

### **MALDIVES**

#### [DRP proposes alliance with PPM's Yameen faction](#)

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

Dhivehi Rayyithunge Party (DRP) has reached out to President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom for an alliance

with his faction of Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM). PPM's Secretary-General appointed by Yameen's faction, Dr. Abdulla Khaleel spoke to "Sun" this Tuesday and said DRP had proposed an alliance with them.

#### [MIFCO response ends fishermen's protest](#)

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

The protest held at sea by a number of fishermen from Lhaviyani atoll calling to improve the services to fishermen has come to an end after Maldives Industrial Fisheries Company (MIFCO) responded to the protest. The protest which began this morning called for the dismissal of the heads of the Lhaviyani Felivaru fish factory accusing them of corruption.

## MYANMAR

#### [Myanmar calls for monetary reform in addressing fiscal challenges](#)

Mizzima | 1<sup>st</sup> November

Myanmar government is calling for speeding up monetary reform in addressing fiscal challenges as the country experienced some instability with its local currency. Finding that Inflation is caused by consecutive deficit and imbalanced demand and supply, President U Htin Kyaw made the call to accelerate reform in the monetary sector.

#### [Over 60 factories charged over labour rights violations in Yangon](#)

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

Yangon region authorities took action against more than 60 factories for violation of labour rights, according to the Factories and the General Labour Laws Inspection Department, state media reported on 2 November. A total of 64 factories have been charged under existing laws after authorities found that the employers of those factories broke labour-related provisions. The investigators say that many workers, especially from garment factories, were forced to work over the set time frame.

#### [Myanmar's Suu Kyi arrives in Japan for talks](#)

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

Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi arrived in Tokyo on Tuesday for talks with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, her first visit since becoming her country's de facto leader earlier this year. She and Abe are expected to discuss economic assistance and Myanmar's peace-building process with its ethnic minorities, according to a Japanese foreign ministry official.

## NEPAL

#### [Oil falls as non-OPEC yet to pledge concrete output steps](#)

My Republica | 31<sup>st</sup> October

Oil prices extended declines on Monday after non-OPEC producers made no specific commitment to join OPEC in limiting oil output levels to prop up prices, suggesting they wanted the oil producing group to solve its differences first. Officials and experts from OPEC countries and non-OPEC nations including Azerbaijan, Brazil, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Oman and Russia met for consultations in Vienna on Saturday and only agreed to meet again in November before a scheduled regular OPEC meeting on Nov. 30, they said in a statement.

#### [Gurkha soldier killed in alleged Pakistani firing](#)

My Republica | 1<sup>st</sup> November

A Gurkha soldier serving in Indian Army was killed in an alleged Pakistani firing along the Line of Control (LoC) in border districts of Poonch and Rajouri in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday, Indian media reported. The slain soldier is identified as Rifleman Bimal Tamang, 20 of Dharan, Nepal. He is survived by mother.

#### [Indian President arriving today](#)

RSS / The Kathmandu Post | 2<sup>nd</sup> November

Indian President Pranab Mukherjee is arriving here in Kathmandu on Wednesday for a three-day state visit to

Nepal at the invitation of President Bidya Devi Bhandari. President Bhandari will receive her Indian counterpart at the VVIP lounge at the Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA). All necessary security preparations have been made for the state visit.

## PAKISTAN

### [Soaring prices: Core inflation touches 19-month high at 5.2%](#)

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

The era of historically low interest rates may end soon, as core inflation jumped to 5.2% in October, further narrowing down the gap between the real interest rate and the State Bank of Pakistan's key policy rate. Core inflation – excluding the price impact of food and energy products – stood at 5.2% in October compared to the same month of last year, reported the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) on Tuesday.

### [Pakistan Railways: 62 out of 104 trains continue to incur losses](#)

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

The earnings chart of the cash-strapped Pakistan Railways (PR) illustrates patent inequality in its passenger earnings segment, with only 40% of trains contributing over 80% of the revenue for fiscal year 2015-16. The remaining 60% of trains have failed to reach their break-even point and have instead incurred losses amounting to Rs1.75 billion, according to PR documents.

## SRI LANKA

### [EU lawmakers tell Sri Lanka “tangible progress” needed](#)

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

A visiting European Parliament delegation told Sri Lanka it needs to show “tangible progress” in improving human rights conditions to win back the GSP Plus trade deal giving duty free access to the European Union. The four-member delegation, led by Jean Lambert, Chair of the Delegation for Relations with the Countries of South Asia, also urged Sri Lanka to “seize the moment” for national reconciliation.

### [EU Delegation urges Sri Lanka to improve human rights to get GSP+ back](#)

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

The leader of a delegation from the European Parliament urged Sri Lanka on Tuesday to improve its human rights conditions, including the replacement of a tough anti-terrorism law, if it wants to regain lucrative EU trade concessions which the island nation lost six years ago, Associated Press reported.

### [Transparency International Sri Lanka calls for timely AG action on COPE Report](#)

Colombo Page| 2<sup>nd</sup> November

Transparency International Sri Lanka (TISL), the local chapter of the global movement against corruption said it is encouraged by the Committee on Public Enterprise (COPE) issuing a unanimous report on the Central Bank bond controversy, following days of conflicting and contradictory statements.

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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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