

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

November 30th, 2016 | Volume: 2 - 11/11

[Senior Taliban intelligence official arrested in Helmand](#)

Afghanistan Times | 29th November

A senior intelligence official for the Taliban was arrested during an operation launched by security forces in southern Helmand province, security officials said Tuesday. In a statement ministry of interior said the operation was conducted in Lashkar Gah city, the provincial capital late Monday. "The terrorist was identified as Mullah Attaullah how involved in different terrorist activities in the province," the statement said. Separately, a Taliban senior commander was killed along with his eight fighters during an airstrike in the center of Uruzgan province, ministry of interior said.

[General Bajwa takes charge as Pakistan's 16th army chief](#)

DAWN | 30th November

Outgoing military chief Gen Raheel Sharif on Tuesday handed over the command of the army to Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa. He passed the baton of command to Gen Bajwa at a ceremony held in the Army Hockey Stadium, close to the General Headquarters (GHQ). The command stick of the Pakistan Army is made of traditional Malacca Cane. In his final speech as army chief, Gen Raheel Sharif stressed the need for institutions to work together for the nation's progress, and cautioned India against adopting an aggressive stance in the region.

[India and Sri Lanka hold talks on maritime related issues](#)

Colombo Gazette | 29th November
Chief of the Naval Staff of Indian Navy, Admiral Sunil Lanba, called on the Chief of Defence Staff Air Chief Marshal Kolitha Gunatilleke at the Office of the Chief of Defence Staff today. During the cordial discussion, the Chief of Defence Staff and the Indian Naval Chief shared thoughts of military history of both countries and exchanged views on matters of bilateral interest.

AFGHANISTAN

[Ready to safeguard mega projects: Taliban](#)

Afghanistan Times | 29th November

In a media statement the militant group said that it backs all uplift projects in Afghanistan and would provide security to them. "The Islamic Emirate [Taliban] not only backs all national projects which are in the interest of the people and result in the development and prosperity of the nation but are also committed to safeguarding them," the statement said. According to the statement the group has drafted guidelines in order to back the important projects including the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline (TAPI), CASA-1000

electricity transmission line, Mes Aynak copper mine, highway and railway projects as well as power and agricultural dams.

[Afghanistan: From Land Lock to Land Link](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 30th November

The railway running 85 km from Atamyrat, Turkmenistan to the Ymamnazar border crossing point and 3 km towards Afghanistan's border facilities at Akina was officially opened by Turkmenistan's President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and President Ashraf Ghani in a ceremony on November 28, 2016.

[Management of Security Institutions in North Needs Review: Ghani](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 30th November

President Ashraf Ghani on Tuesday praised good coordination among security institutions in the north, but said their management needed to be reviewed. On his return from a three-day visit to Turkmenistan, the president landed in Balkh province and attended a briefing on the security situation in the largely clam north. The briefing, organised by the Shahin Military Corps, was also attended by Balkh Governor Atta Mohammad Noor and top security officials. Ghani praised good coordination among security organs in the region but said their management should be reviewed.

BANGLADESH

[Hasina hopes Bangladesh's ties with Hungary will reach 'full potential'](#)

bdnews24 | 29th November

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has expressed the hope that Bangladesh's ties with Hungary will reach its full potential. Her remarks came in a joint statement on Tuesday after a meeting with Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán. "We want to see a world which is free from poverty, hunger, injustice and inequality. We are obligated to build a peaceful world for our children. Our common resolve is to work together for shared prosperity of our peoples through mutually beneficial economic cooperation," said Hasina. Bangladesh has signed three MoUs with the European country to boost cooperation in water management and agriculture and between the two countries' foreign offices.

[Dhaka urges Filipino senate to reopen probe into \\$81m BB heist](#)

Prothom Alo | 29th November

Bangladesh has requested Philippine senate to re-open the investigation on the \$81 million cyber-heist, reports Filipino media outlet Inquirer.net. Bangladesh came up with the diplomatic move on same day when Philippine's Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. (RCBC) issued a statement saying that the RCBC is not liable to compensate Bangladesh for tens of millions of stolen dollars that went missing in Manila, reports Reuters. In the statement, the RCBC's lawyer pinned the blame on the central bank in Dhaka for being "negligent".

[Bangladesh tops old ship scrapping](#)

The Financial Express | 28th November

While four Asian countries accounted for approximately 95 per cent of known ship scrapping in last year across the world, Bangladesh tops the league, according to a latest report of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The report showed that some 7,419 thousands of gross tons of old ships were demolished in Bangladesh in the last year, followed by 4,940 thousands of gross tons in India; 4,143 thousands of gross tons in Pakistan; and 3,970 thousands of gross tons in China.

BHUTAN

[A hot topic](#)

Kuensel Online | 29th November

A ban on imported chillies as a result of high levels of pesticides being detected and limited local supply is causing chilli prices to skyrocket in our markets. A kilogramme of chillies today is Nu 300, up from Nu 200 not too long

ago. We import a lot of chillies and most of it is consumed during the winter months. Clearly, we should be producing our own chillies, and while we are, production is not enough. The problem is the winter months. The government is already attempting to encourage local farmers to cultivate more chillies, along with other import-restricted vegetables for this winter. It is also considering importing chillies from other markets in India.

MALDIVES

[President: Martyr yourself for the nation, its unity](#)

Sun Online | 30th November

President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom has called out to the people of Maldives to give no room for anything which could disrupt national unity, and be unflinching in face of whatever sacrifice was required to carry forward the nation into the hands of the next generation. President Yameen made the appeal during his message of felicitation to the people of Maldives on occasion of the 70th National Day, which is being celebrated this Wednesday.

[President ratifies amendment, international port fee increased](#)

Sun Online | 29th November

President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom has ratified the amendment to law on ports, approving an increase in port fees for international ships which use Maldivian territorial waters. The amendment takes effect immediately this Tuesday with President's ratification. The amendment to impose a higher port fee was submitted to People's Majlis by Vaamah MP Azhaan Fahmy. MP Azhaan said the port fee was set 38 years back, and that it needed to be amended based on changes to commodities.

MYANMAR

[Political parties call for Intervention by NDSC](#)

Mizzima | 30th November

The Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) and 12 other political parties have called for a meeting of the country's National Defense and Security Council (NDSC) over the government's handling of the crisis in the northern part of Rakhine state, RFA reported on 29 November. The joint declaration signed by the USDP and other smaller political parties noted that the security council (NDSC) should hold a meeting on the situation in conflict-racked Rakhine State because the country's territorial sovereignty is at stake.

[Border trade activities start to resume in Myanmar northern state](#)

Mizzima | 29th November

Border trade activities between Myanmar's northern Shan state and China has resumed after several days' suspension due to outbreak of military conflicts last week, Myanmar's ministry of information said Monday. About 800 members of four ethnic military groups in Shan State launched coordinated attacks on government posts and the Muse border trade zone on Nov. 20.

[FMI's net profit increases more than 50% in the first half of the fiscal year](#)

Mizzima | 30th November

First Myanmar Investment Co., Ltd. has announced its financial results for the six months ended 30 September 2016 (HY 2015-16). The Groups overall operating performance was strong, with significant increases in revenue and profit from key subsidiaries, FMI said in a statement on 29 November.

[Myanmar Rohingya abuse may be 'crimes against humanity': UN](#)

Mizzima | 30th November

Myanmar's Rohingya may be victims of crimes against humanity, the UN's rights agency said Tuesday, as former UN chief Kofi Annan arrived in the country for a visit that will include a trip to northern Rakhine. The army has carried out a bloody crackdown in Rakhine, and thousands of the Muslim minority have flooded over the border

into Bangladesh this month, making horrifying claims of gang rape, torture and murder at the hands of security forces.

NEPAL

[Negotiations underway to free Nepalis abducted in Sudan](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 29th November

The United Nations has informed the government that negotiations are underway to release two Nepali citizens who were kidnapped by armed men from Sudan's strife-torn Darfur region. Two Nepalis and a Sudanese national working for UNHCR were abducted Sunday in Geneina, the Capital of West Darfur state, according to AFP.

[Govt registers 7-point constitution amendment bill](#)

My Republica | 30th November

The government on Tuesday evening registered a seven-point constitution amendment bill at the parliament secretariat, proposing, among other things, to take all the hill districts out from Province 5. The amendment bill proposes to leave only six districts, namely Nawalparasi (west of Susta Bardaghat), Rupandehi, Kapilbastu, Dang, Banke and Bardiya in the province, taking out the six hill districts of Palpa, Arghakhanchi, Gulmi, Rukum, Rolpa and Pyuthan.

[Butwal locals protest amendment bill registration](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 30th November

People took to the streets in Butwal on Wednesday to protest against the registration of the constitution amendment bill in the parliament with the proposal of splitting Province 5. Locals and Nepal Students' Association (NSU) led by the All Nepal National Free Students' Union (ANNFSU) have obstructed the movement of vehicles in Butwal.

PAKISTAN

[Panama leaks: Opposition holds up inquiry commission bill in National Assembly](#)

The Express Tribune | 29th November

The opposition on Monday successfully stymied a government attempt to get the National Assembly to adopt a crucial bill by staging a walkout and pressing for an abrupt adjournment of the house over a lack of 'quorum'. If passed, the Pakistan Commissions of Inquiry Bill-2016 could have provided a mechanism to probe the Panama leaks.

[Azizabad weapon recovery case: Police ask court to suspend probe due to lack of evidence](#)

DAWN | 30th November

Police investigators on Tuesday submitted a plea before an anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Karachi, requesting the court to suspend the ongoing investigation into the Azizabad weapon recovery case due to lack of evidence. The plea was submitted by an investigation officer in Karachi's anti-terrorism court on Tuesday, the plea also requested the court to categorise the case as 'A-Class' as police officials failed to produce and submit any substantial evidence.

SRI LANKA

[Comprehensive cyber security strategy sought for Sri Lanka](#)

Colombo Gazette | 29th November

The growing reach of the Internet, social media and the rapid spread of mobile information and communications technologies (ICTs) have presented increased potential for cyber violence against women and girls. The UN

Gender Theme Group, as part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence, organized a policy dialogue on Cyber Security at the BMICH today.

[U.S. welcomes Sri Lanka's contribution to security in the Indo-Asia-Pacific Region](#)

Colombo Page| 30th November

Admiral Harry B. Harris, Jr., Commander of U.S. Pacific Command, visited Sri Lanka November 27-29 to attend the Galle Dialogue 2016 maritime security conference and meet with senior government and military leaders, including President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe.

[Sri Lanka Central Bank takes extensive measures to enhance transparency in government securities market](#)

Colombo Page| 30th November

The Central Bank of Sri Lanka has taken a number of measures to increase the transparency of the government securities market, the Governor of Central Bank Dr. Indrajit Coomaraswamy says.

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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