

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

January 6th, 2017 | Volume: 3 - 3/1

[Sri Lanka to go ahead with ETCA agreement with India](#)

Colombo Gazette | 4th January

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe today said that Sri Lanka will go ahead with the proposed Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement (ETCA) with India. The Prime Minister said that Sri Lanka will first finalise the GSP plus deal with the European Union and then the ETCA agreement with India.

[CPEC to help tackle Balochistan's security challenges: Gen Bajwa](#)

The Express Tribune | 5th January

Army chief General Qamar Bajwa has said that the China Pakistan Economic Corridor project (CPEC) will help tackle security challenges and counter efforts to derail peace in Balochistan.

['Afghanistan is still active' Obama says pointing towards major ongoing US fights](#)

Khaama Press | 5th January

The US President Barack Obama has said the fighting in Afghanistan is still active as he pointed towards the major fights the US faces including against ISIS in Mosul and Syria.

AFGHANISTAN

[New Economic Ties](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 5th January

For the sake of Afghanistan's stability, the neighbors, though sometimes part of the problem, can be made part of the solution and won as partners in a cooperative effort. Due to several reasons such as inactive diplomacies, unfriendly policies and overriding bilateral conflicts made this sometimes a difficult task.

[US Supports Moscow Meeting on Afghanistan](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 5th January

The United States has reiterated support for national unity government leaders, stressing the need for an Afghan-led reconciliation process. State Department spokesman John Kirby, addressing a media briefing in Washington on Tuesday, suggested Washington had no objection to a recent trilateral meeting in Moscow on Afghanistan.

[Turkey extends its NATO mission in Afghanistan](#)

Afghanistan Times | 4th January

Turkish Parliament approved a motion to extend Turkish Armed Forces in Afghanistan as part of NATO's support mission, a state-run press agency in Turkey, Anadolu Agency reported. Parliament empowered the government to

continue Turkish troops' presence in Afghanistan for two more years under the NATO mission starting on January 6, the news agency added.

[10 ISIS fighters among 58 militants killed, claims Afghan defense ministry](#)

Khaama Press | 4th January

At least 58 militants including 10 loyalists of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group were killed during the counter-terrorism operations, the Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed Tuesday.

BANGLADESH

[Democracy abolished on 5 Jan: Khaleda](#)

Prothom Alo | 5th January

BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia on Thursday said democracy was abolished in Bangladesh through the one-sided election on 5 January 2014. On the third anniversary of the 10th parliamentary polls, she tweeted that voting rights of the people of the country were scrapped by holding such a ballot. In this context, the BNP leader called on all to work for restoring democracy and voting rights.

[Myanmar covering up Rohingya abuses'](#)

Reuters/The Daily Star | 6th January

Human rights groups said Myanmar's government is trying to cover up abuses against civilians in a Muslim-majority part of Rakhine State after an investigation panel dismissed claims a government crackdown there amounts to "genocide".

[ACC warns its corrupt officials of stern action](#)

The Financial Express | 6th January

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Iqbal Mahmud Thursday said the anti-graft watchdog will take stern action against its officials if any of them is found guilty of corruption and malpractices. He sounded the warning at a daylong workshop on "ACC's Five-Year Strategic Plan and Finalising Time-bound Agendas for 2017" for ACC high officials held at the ACC headquarters, said a press release.

BHUTAN

[13 percent of children experience sexual violence](#)

Kuensel | 5th January

More than one in 10 children experience at least one incident of sexual violence, a study on violence against children in Bhutan has found. The report produced by the National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC), the government and UNICEF Bhutan in May 2016 stated that while the prevalence of sexual violence among children was 12.8 percent, it is more prevalent among girls at 13.5 percent compared to 11.9 percent for boys.

[National education conference next week](#)

Kuensel | 5th January

The education ministry will deliberate whether the class III and VI board exams are still required during its national education conference next week. The class III and VI board exams are among the many issues that will be deliberated.

MALDIVES

[BML Introduces Convenient USD system for travelers](#)

Sun Online | 4th January

Following the recent successful handling of dollar sales for Maldivian travelers by MMA over the busy holiday period, Bank of Maldives has announced the introduction of a convenient new system from 8th January 2017

onwards. Travelers will now be able to use an online portal to purchase up to USD 500 per traveling passenger. They can then simply collect their notes – after check-in – at the Bank’s dedicated collection area at Velana International Airport.

[Dunya appointed to the Health Ministry as State Minister](#)

Sun Online | 5th January

President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom has appointed the resigned Foreign Minister, Dunya Mamoon has been appointed at a State Minister at the Health Ministry. Spokesperson of the President’s Office, Muaz Ali has confirmed the appointment to Sn Media. After her resignation from the Foreign Ministry, Dunya has openly criticized some of the policies of the government.

MYANMAR

[Myanmar Navy says a media report saying they opened fire on Bangladeshi fishermen is false](#)

Mizzima | 5th January

The Daily Star newspaper’s online report saying six Bangladeshi fishermen were injured when Myanmar Navy opened fire at them is false, according to the Commander-in-Chief’s Office (Navy).

[Myanmar stresses aid for Rakhine should be meant for both communities](#)

Mizzima | 5th January

The State Counsellor office on January 4 issued an announcement saying humanitarian aid for Rakhine State should be meant for both communities without any discrimination.

NEPAL

[Nepal Oil Corp refuses to reduce fuel price](#)

Himalayan News Service / The Himalayan Times | 6th January

Going against the direction of the Parliamentary sub-committee on Commerce, Industry and Consumer Welfare Relation, Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC) has refused to bring down the price of petroleum products citing that its sole supplier, the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), has increased the rate of petroleum products for the first half of January.

[Revenue collection exceeds target](#)

Himalayan News Service / The Himalayan Times | 6th January

Exceeding the set target by Rs 13.89 billion, the government’s revenue collection stood at Rs 208.72 billion in the first five months of this fiscal 2016-17. With this, the government has collected around 37 per cent of the total annual collection target of the current fiscal.

[Ministry 'leaked' info to hydro developers](#)

My Republica | 5th January

Minister for Energy Janardan Sharma endorsed directives at midday Wednesday, opening license applications for over 150 hydropower projects in 'government reserves'. But the information had already been leaked to some hydropower developers, it has come to light.

[Madhes parties suggest removing constitutional difficulties](#)

My Republica | 6th January

The agitating Madhes-based political parties have suggested to the ruling Nepali Congress (NC) and CPN (Maoist Center) to remove constitutional difficulties for endorsing the constitution amendment bill through Parliament. The suggestion has come in the wake of the Supreme Court ruling on Sunday over the constitution amendment bill.

[Change in provincial boundaries not demand of Nepalis: Oli](#)

RSS / My Republica | 6th January

CPN-UML Chair KP Sharma Oli has said the change in the boundaries of the provinces was not the demand of the Nepali people. Attending an interaction program organized by Press Chautari Nepal on the eve of mass demonstration announced by nine parties in the opposition including the CPN-UML tomorrow, former Prime Minister Oli accused the government of bringing the proposal unilaterally.

PAKISTAN

[Civil-military huddle decides to reach out to New Delhi, Kabul](#)

The Express Tribune | 4th January

Pakistan will make fresh peace overtures to its estranged neighbours — Afghanistan and India — in a new initiative by the government to mend ties with the two countries, officials said on Tuesday.

[Sharif family can be summoned if stance on London flats contradicted: Supreme Court](#)

The Express Tribune | 5th January

The Supreme Court on Thursday said members of Sharif family can be summoned if they contradict their stance regarding London flats.

[Several China-sponsored power projects hit snags](#)

The Express Tribune | 5th January

Only about half of the planned generation of 8,810 megawatts from China-sponsored energy projects will be available by 2018 as inter-ministerial disputes and inclusion of financially unviable projects at the initial stage of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) prevent the two sides from meeting the target.

[Govt plans 10-paisa per unit surcharge to cover Neelum-Jhelum cost overruns](#)

DAWN | 6th January

The government is expected to impose 10-paisa per unit surcharge for all electricity consumers for at least 18 months to finance cost overruns of Rs500 billion Neelum-Jhelum Hydropower Project and extend Rs3 per unit reduction in power tariff for industrial consumers for six months.

SRI LANKA

[India, Sri Lanka Coast Guard chiefs discuss cooperation](#)

Colombo Gazette | 4th January

Indian Coast Guard Director General Rajendra Singh met his Sri Lankan counterpart Rear Admiral Samantha Wimalathunga in India on Wednesday and discussed more maritime cooperation, especially in the context of fishermen from both countries, the Indo-Asian News Service reported today.

[Sri Lanka readies a high level business delegation to accompany President to Iran](#)

Colombo Page | 4th January

Sri Lankan officials have started to assemble a high-powered national business delegation to send to Iran as President Maithripala Sirisena, is scheduled for a visit to Tehran later this month to expand relations with the Islamic Republic.

[Two Pakistan Maritime Security ships arrive in Sri Lanka on a goodwill visit](#)

Colombo Page | 5th January

Sri Lanka Navy, in accordance with naval traditions, welcomed two Pakistani Maritime Security ships arrived at the Port of Colombo today. Two Pakistan Maritime Security Ships PMSS Hingol and PMSS Basol arrived at the Port of Colombo on Thursday, 5th January on a goodwill visit, the Navy said.

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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