

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

January 9th, 2017 | Volume: 3 - 4/1

[India and Lanka disagree on some changes in ETCA](#)

Colombo Gazette|8th January
Negotiations between India and Sri Lanka on an Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement (ETCA) hit the hard road at an officials-level meeting held in Colombo on January 4 and 5, the New Indian Express reported.

[Afghanistan signs \\$205m road construction project with a Chinese firm](#)

Khaama Press|8th January
A major road construction project was signed with a Chinese firm in the presence of Mohammad Ashraf Ghani this evening. The project road project, Dara-e-Suf to Yakawlang, was awarded to a Chinese firm after its bid of \$204.9 million was approved by the government and was signed by Public Works Minister Mahmood Baligh.

[Islamabad urges World Bank to restart arbitration](#)

Dawn|9th January
Pakistan has asked the World Bank to restart the process of arbitration in its water dispute with India despite New Delhi's objections. In its communications with the bank, Pakistan argued that only arbitration can save the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), which has successfully resolved water disputes between India and Pakistan for more than half a century.

AFGHANISTAN

[Taliban factions clash in West of Afghanistan leaving 10 dead](#)

Khaama Press|8th January

At least ten Taliban insurgents were killed in the latest infighting among the Taliban factions in western Farah province of Afghanistan. According to the local officials, the latest infighting was ignited following a roadside bomb explosion that left several militants dead.

[2 top Pakistani leaders of Haqqani terrorist network killed in Nangarhar](#)

Khaama Press|8th January

2 top Haqqani network leaders hailing from Pakistan killed in Nangarhar. Two senior commanders of the Haqqani terrorist network were killed during an operation of the Afghan National Police (ANP) Special Forces.

[Emergency assistance; 210,000 IDPs, returnees need winter aid: MoRR](#)

Afghanistan Times | 8th January

Ministry of Refugee and Repatriation (MoRR) on Sunday said that 210,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) and returnees are the most vulnerable and need urgent assistance during winter across the country.

[Key Taliban base seized in Nimroz](#)

Afghanistan Times | 8th January

The Afghan security forces have captured an important base of the Taliban insurgent and killed six insurgents in an operation in Khashrod district of southwestern Nimroz province, an official said on Saturday.

BANGLADESH

[President Hamid calls for tolerance among political parties for fair elections](#)

bdnews24 | 9th January

President Md Abdul Hamid has urged for tolerance of others' views among the political parties in order to have fair elections. The president made the call during a meeting with the Ganaforum at the Bangabhaban on Sunday as part of the ongoing dialogue with political parties on forming the next Election Commission. The president also sat with the Ganatantri Party and Khelafat Andolan later in the day.

[No changes in sharia banking practices](#)

The Daily Star | 9th January

The recent reshuffle in the board of Islami Bank will not lead to any change in its core banking practices based on sharia law, Arastoo Khan, the new chairman of the bank, said yesterday. The bank's institutional preamble, which states its vision, mission and objective, "will never be prejudiced under any circumstances", he said at a press briefing.

[Bangladesh fifth top disaster risk country](#)

The Financial Express | 9th January

Bangladesh stands fifth among the top disaster risk countries in the world, according to ActionAid Bangladesh, reports BSS. The South Africa-based NGO said the risk potentials were discussed at both academic and public domain, but pragmatic steps have yet to be taken from policy level to minimize the risks and reduce post-disaster casualties.

BHUTAN

[Public shaming: legal?](#)

Kuensel Online | 7th January

Thimphu police arrested two minors for shoplifting on December 24, 2016. The incident occurred a day before at around 11am in a shop near the Clock Tower Square in Thimphu. According to the complainant's statement to police, she was busy attending to customers that day and later found that her handbag was missing from her cash counter.

[OAG to investigate charges against DPT](#)

Kuensel Online | 7th January

Druk Phuensum Tshogpa has successfully withdrawn its defamation case against Dasho Paljor J Dorji with only Nu 0.45 million to be paid as compensation. The closing of the case, however, could open a floodgate of problems for the party as the court has found a 'prima facie case of sedition against the party'.

MALDIVES

[Education Minister: Target for 2017 – technological revolution to education](#)

Sun Online | 8th January

Minister of Education, Dr. Aishath Shiham has pledged to expand integration of technology in education of school students during the academic new year, 2017. Minister Aishath Shiham made the pledge during her address to mark the start of the academic new year this Sunday, January 8.

[BML starts issuing USD from airport](#)

Sun Online | 8th January

Bank of Maldives (BML) has started issuing USD from Velana International Airport – as part on its convenient new dollar system for travelers – the BML USD Booking Portal. Travelers will be able to book the amount of USD (maximum USD 500 per passenger) through their BML debit card via the BML USD Booking Portal and then collect the money from the BML counters at the departure terminal on the day of departure.

MYANMAR

[Forty-six percent of Myanmar employees happy at work: survey](#)

Mizzima | 7th January

How are things in Myanmar's workplaces? A survey on workplace happiness with over around 5,000 employees was conducted by the country's largest employment website, Jobnet.com.mm. The survey resulted that just 46 percent of those who participated in a survey were satisfied in the workplace.

[TNLA clash with Myanmar Army in Kutkai](#)

Mizzima | 9th January

About 30 members of the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) clashed with government troops about one mile from Honaung Village yesterday, state media reported on 9 January. According to the report, government troops exchanged fire until the TNLA, which is a member of the Northern Alliance – Burma, retreated to the south.

[4 suspects involved in border outpost attack in Myanmar's Rakhine state captured](#)

Mizzima | 9th January

Four suspects involved in October violent attack on Kyikanpyin, one of the three border outposts in Maungtaw in Myanmar's northern Rakhine state, have been arrested, Myanmar News Agency reported Sunday. The four suspects were captured in a hide-out in Myitnar and Kyatyopyin villages on Saturday afternoon when the security forces carried out area clearance operation.

NEPAL

[Court disqualifies Karki as CIAA chief](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 9th January

In a landmark verdict, the Supreme Court on Sunday disqualified Lokman Singh Karki as the chief of the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority. A full bench of Justices Ishwor Raj Khatriwada, Ananda Mohan Bhattarai and Anil Kumar Sinha ruled that Karki did not hold the "high moral character" required to lead the CIAA and did not meet the criteria set to head the constitutional body. The order annulled Karki's appointment.

[Bill tabled in House amid opposition](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 9th January

The second amendment to the Constitution of Nepal was tabled in Parliament on Sunday amid commotion from the opposition parties objecting to the bill. Speaker Onasari Gharti, who had earlier deferred several meetings due to protests from the opposition parties, took the House business ahead, ignoring sloganeering by the nine parties.

[Implementation of ExIm code](#)

The Himalayan Times | 9th January

In a bid to regulate traders involved in import of goods, the Department of Customs is preparing to introduce export, import code on International Customs Day – January 26 – this year. The ExIm Code Implementation Guidelines, endorsed by the director general of the Department of Customs, has envisioned some critical reform measures that are expected to control bogus firms and revenue leakage and introduce price uniformity in the market.

[National Planning Commission okays 14th periodic plan](#)

The Himalayan Times | 8th January

The National Planning Commission on Sunday endorsed the draft of the 14th periodic plan (FY 2016/17-2018/19). A meeting of the supreme national planning body presided over by Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal endorsed the document.

PAKISTAN

[Make-or-break day for PTI in top court](#)

The Express Tribune | 9th January

With the final round of the legal battle between the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf beginning this week, Monday will be crucial for the opposition party's lead counsel to impress the top court bench.

[Tableeghi Jamat gathering: Govt accused of denying visas to 5,000 preachers](#)

The Express Tribune | 9th January

Religious scholars belonging to the Deobandi school of thought have accused the government of not issuing visas to 5,000 preachers from over 100 countries, willing to participate in the annual religious meeting of Tableeghi Jamat, scheduled to take place in Raiwind this year.

[Islamabad urges World Bank to restart arbitration](#)

Dawn | 9th January

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[US bombings in Pakistan drop to record low](#)

Dawn | 9th January

US bombings in Pakistan dropped to a record low – three – in 2016, compared to more than 24,000 bombs it dropped in Iraq and Syria last year, says a study by a US think-tank, Council on Foreign Relations. The statistics indicate a change in situation on the ground in Pakistan's tribal areas, which US defence experts say are used for launching attacks at American and Afghan troops in Afghanistan.

[Sharif can't save himself in Panamagate, says Imran](#)

Dawn | 9th January

Launching his party's mass contact campaign here on Sunday, Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan alleged that the prime minister had bought assets abroad in the name of his daughter through "ill-gotten money" and he would not be able to save himself as the Panama case was going to be decided soon.

SRI LANKA

[China to invest US\\$ 5 billion in new industrial zone](#)

Colombo Gazette | 7th January

The Chinese Government hopes to invest US\$ 5 billion in the Hambantota industrial zone over the next 3-5 years. The Chinese Ambassador to Sri Lanka Yi Xianliang said the investment will see the creation of 100,000 jobs in the country.

[Sri Lanka President launches new national program 'Shrama Shakthi' to overcome poverty](#)

Colombo Page| 8th January

Sri Lanka's President Maithripala Sirisena entering the third year of his tenure today as the leader of the island nation said he is happy about what Sri Lanka has been able to achieve collectively as a country during the first two years in office.

[Sri Lanka Navy arrests 10 Tamil Nadu fishermen for poaching in Sri Lankan waters](#)

Colombo Page| 8th January

Sri Lanka Navy said it has arrested ten Indian fishermen on two separate occasions on Saturday for allegedly crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) and fishing in Sri Lankan waters.

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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