



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

**October 13th, 2017 | Volume: 3 - 05/10**

[Arrest warrants issued against Khaleda Zia](#)

The Daily Star | 13<sup>th</sup> October  
Arrest warrants have been issued against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in two cases filed in connection with Zia Orphanage Trust corruption and undermining the country's map and national flag. With this, four arrest warrants have so far been served on the BNP chief in different cases. On completion of recording self-defence statements in Zia Orphanage Trust graft case yesterday, Judge Md Akhtaruzzaman of the Special Judge Court-5 set up at a makeshift court in Bakshi Bazar issued an arrest warrant for Khaleda. Her lawyers submitted a petition, seeking an adjournment of hearing the case. But the court dismissed it, saying it was filed only to delay the trial proceedings.

[US sends high-level delegation to Pakistan in move to repair relations](#)

DAWN | 13<sup>th</sup> October  
Strains in the Pak-US relationship appear to be disappearing fast as the two sides on Thursday agreed to continue bilateral engagement at all levels and reinvigorate relationship to achieve the common objective of defeating terrorism.

[Sri Lanka Defense Secretary underscores the need to stay abreast of technology to counter security threats](#)

Colombo Page|12<sup>th</sup> October  
Sri Lanka's Defense Secretary Kapila Waidyaratne Thursday underscored the need to stay abreast of the latest developments especially in the field of technology to counter security threats as low-cost, asymmetric threats have proven dangerous for military forces and security within a state. Delivering the keynote address at the inaugural session of the 3rd 'Colombo Air Symposium', held in Ratmalana, the Defense Secretary said the asymmetric warfare and more generally the violent attacks in recent times by unconventional actors destabilize societies by being viable asymmetric opponents to the established system and law and order.

**AFGHANISTAN**

[Why the World Turns a Blind Eye to Narcotic Drug?](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 12<sup>th</sup> October

The product of narcotic drug is one of the great challenges in Afghanistan and has supported the war. This is also

an international issue and devastated a large layer of human society. Its harm to mankind needs the attention of international community. Based on census, there are three million addicted individuals, including one million women, in Afghanistan. Despite this fact, combating the cultivation and smuggling of drug is not included in international agenda regarding Afghanistan. In the “Region Counter Narcotics Senior Experts’ Conference” held on Monday in Kabul, Afghan counter-narcotic minister said that the sporadic and single struggles of state would not be a remedy for this problem.

#### [Top Taliban leaders say the group has no intentions to participate in talks](#)

Khaama Press | 12<sup>th</sup> October

Top Taliban leaders have said the group has no intentions to participate in the upcoming talks regarding the peace process in Oman. Two senior Afghan Taliban leaders, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Reuters the group’s leadership council met on Tuesday and decided it would not send a delegation to Muscat even if the group was invited to participate. “Till that time, we were not invited, but even if we received any invitation, our senior members decided not to participate in the meeting,” said one of the Taliban leaders.

#### [Taliban leader among 5 killed as A-29s pound their hideouts in Mirza Olang](#)

Khaama Press | 12<sup>th</sup> October

At least five Taliban militants were killed in the airstrikes of the Afghan Air Force in northern Sar-e-Pul province of Afghanistan. The 209th Shaheen Corps of the Afghan national army in the North said the A-29 fighter planes pounded the hideouts of the Taliban insurgents in Mirza Olang area of Sayad district. According to the Shaheen Corps, a local leader of the group identified as Mullah Syed Ahmad was among those killed. At least two Taliban insurgents were critically wounded in the airstrikes, the Shaheen Corps added.

#### [Karzai warns of growing US-Russia rivalry in Afghanistan, slams Taliban for destructions](#)

Khaama Press | 12<sup>th</sup> October

The former Afghan President Hamid Karzai warned regarding the growing rivalries between the United States and Russia in Afghanistan as he once again reiterated his opposition towards the new US strategy for Afghanistan and South Asia. Speaking to reporters during a press conference in Kabul, Karzai the United States and Russia were engaged in rivalries against each other during the Jihad times against the Soviet forces.

## **BANGLADESH**

#### [Bangladesh ranked 88th of 119 on global hunger index](#)

Prothom Alo | 12<sup>th</sup> October

Bangladesh continues to remain at the lower end of the Global Hunger Index. According to the Global Hunger Index-2017 of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Bangladesh is ranked 88 among 119 countries. But it is ahead of India (100), and Pakistan (106). The country was ranked 90th among 118 countries in 2016. Bangladesh scored 26.5 in the GHI this year, whereas Pakistan 32.6 and India 31.4, estimated the IFPRI. Myanmar (77), however, ranked better than Bangladesh with the score of 22.6. Among other South Asian countries, Nepal placed 72nd, Sri Lank (84), and Afghanistan (107).

#### [‘Bangladesh has the highest child marriage rate in Asia’](#)

Dhaka Tribune | 13<sup>th</sup> October

Bangladesh has the highest rate of child marriage in Asia, while a huge number of young adults are unable to access sexual and reproductive health services, rights and family planning services, said UNFPA official Abu

Sayed Hasan. Speaking during the Second Bangladesh National Youth Conference on Family Planning (BNYCFP 2017) on Thursday, Sayed, technical officer for family planning at UNFPA, said every hospital and clinic should have a youth-friendly corner to address the needs of the young and adolescent. The event was organised by International Youth Alliance for Family Planning (IYAFFP) and SERAC-Bangladesh in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNPFA) Bangladesh, Partners in Population and Development (PPD) and Right Here Right Now Bangladesh.

#### [Bangladesh to set up sub-station to import power from India](#)

Dhaka Tribune | 13<sup>th</sup> October

Bangladesh is set to build the country's third 500MW back-to-back high-voltage direct-current (HVDC) sub-station in Comilla to import electricity from India. "We have sent a report to the Power Division that a HVDC sub-station is required in Comilla, for importing an additional 340MW power from India," a chief engineer of Power Development Board told the Dhaka Tribune on Thursday, on condition of anonymity. India's state-owned NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam Ltd will supply 340MW power from several Bongaigaon power plants in Assam by December 2019, he added.

### **BHUTAN**

#### [Bhutan attends WIPO General Assembly in Geneva](#)

KuenselOnline | 12<sup>th</sup> October

Economic affairs secretary Dasho Yeshe Wangdi led a Bhutan delegation to the 57th series of meetings of the assemblies of the member states of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) in Geneva from October 2 to 11. The 57th assembly provided members the opportunity to participate in discussions on the budget and programmes report for the period October 2016-2017 and future budget and programmes of WIPO. "One topic of relevance, particularly to countries like Bhutan was the deliberation on the intergovernmental committee's progress in preparing a framework for dealing with traditional knowledge, traditional cultural expression and genetic resources," a press release from Department of Intellectual Properties stated. On the sidelines of the meeting, the Bhutanese delegation met with WIPO's Director General and sought WIPO's assistance in training Intellectual Property officials through internship in WIPO's offices dealing with trademark, patent, industrial design and copyright. The delegation also had bilateral discussions with representatives from other Intellectual Property offices and discussed areas of mutual interest.

#### [JAB conducts media literacy workshop](#)

KuensilOnline | 12<sup>th</sup> October

Journalists' Association of Bhutan (JAB) conducted a day-long media literary and advocacy training for the community of Sakteng in Trashigang on October 9. The programme highlighted the importance of the media, the role of the media in a democratic system, the responsible use of social media, and intelligent reading of advertisements. "A session on the responsible use of social media included the highlights of the government's social media policy. Some participants were known to use WeChat," a press release from the JAB stated. "The training underlined that, as consumers of media, advertisements should not be taken at face value for not all advertisements are factually correct and stand true to the promise they make."

### **MALDIVES**

#### [FPID, Air Maldives corruption under investigation](#)

Sun Online | 12<sup>th</sup> October

The State has begun investigation into the biggest corruption scandal in Maldivian history – the Fisheries Projects Implementation Department (FPID) embezzlement scandal and the Air Maldives corruption scandal to recover State assets.

## MYANMAR

### [Pope to push for peace in visit to Myanmar](#)

Mizzima | 13<sup>th</sup> October

Pope Francis will push for peace during his visit to mainly-Buddhist Myanmar, a church official said Thursday, a trip that plunges the pontiff into the centre of a simmering religious conflict which has sparked an exodus of Muslim Rohingya. Myanmar's western Rakhine state has been torn apart by communal bloodshed, sending more than 520,000 Rohingya fleeing to neighbouring Bangladesh since late August. The leader of the world's Catholics will visit both nations on a highly charged trip in late November -- although there are currently no plans to stop in strife-torn Rakhine or the refugee camps in Bangladesh.

### [UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator ends Myanmar tenure](#)

Mizzima | 12<sup>th</sup> October

The UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Myanmar Renata Lok-Dessallien announced yesterday that she will be completing her assignment after nearly four years. According to UN statement, she will use her remaining time until the end of the month to further the UN system's efforts to promote peace and security, human rights, as well as humanitarian and development assistance for all people in Myanmar. Ms Lok-Dessallien was the focus of a BBC investigation last month in which she was accused of suppressing internal discussion on Rohingya Muslims. In the BBC investigation, sources in the UN and aid community told the BBC she had also tried to stop human rights officials from visiting areas where the army allegedly persecuted the Rohingya minority.

## NEPAL

### [Government signs agreements worth \\$3.07 billion for reconstruction](#)

The Himalayan Times | 13<sup>th</sup> October

The Nepal government has signed agreements worth \$3.07 billion out of the total commitment of \$3.43 billion from the development partners for post-earthquake reconstruction. According to the International Economic Cooperation Coordination Division (IECCD), under the Ministry of Finance, the government has signed agreements with the development partners as per their pledge to support the country's post-quake reconstruction drive.

### [NC fears 'militant' cadres of UML and Maoist Center could influence polls](#)

MyRepuublica | 13<sup>th</sup> October

Arguing that 'militant cadres' of CPN-UML and CPN (Maoist Center) could unduly influence the polls, a section of leaders from the ruling Nepali Congress (NC) are exerting pressure on Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba to hold the two-phases of polls in one go. The NC leaders have asked the party's top leaders to defer the first phase of the polls scheduled for November 26 and hold both the polls across the country in one go on December 7 arguing

that the parties in the left alliance could concentrate their "militant cadres" in the districts witnessing the polls and unduly influence the voters.

## PAKISTAN

### [President Donald Trump thanks Pakistan for 'doing more'](#)

AFP / The Express Tribune | 12<sup>th</sup> October

US President Donald Trump has praised Pakistan for the safe recovery of a Canadian-American couple and their three children from Taliban's captivity. "This is a positive moment for our country's relationship with Pakistan. The Pakistani government's cooperation is a sign that it is honouring America's wishes for it to do more to provide security in the region," Trump said in a statement issued by White House.

### [Sky-high debt: Pressure mounts on Ishaq Dar to quit](#)

The Express Tribune | 13<sup>th</sup> October

Opposition senators on Thursday demanded resignation of Finance Minister Ishaq Dar in the wake of a worrying analysis of Pakistan's economy, particularly the country's 'sky-high debt', given by the Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa in a major speech the other day.

### [US sends high-level delegation in move to repair relations](#)

DAWN | 13<sup>th</sup> October

Strains in the Pak-US relationship appear to be disappearing fast as the two sides on Thursday agreed to continue bilateral engagement at all levels and reinvigorate relationship to achieve the common objective of defeating terrorism.

### [Maryam, Safdar's indictment suspended till Oct 18 due to PML-N lawyers' racket](#)

DAWN | 13<sup>th</sup> October

The accountability court adjourned the hearing of graft cases against the Sharif family soon after ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif's daughter and son-in-law — Maryam Nawaz and Captain (retd) Safdar — arrived in court, as PML-N lawyers and supporters created a racket while trying to enter the courtroom.

## SRI LANKA

### [Sri Lanka's 2018 budget aims at empowering private sector through public-private partnership](#)

Colombo Page|12<sup>th</sup> October

Sri Lanka's Minister of Finance and Mass Media Mangala Samaraweera said the next year's 'designer budget' is aimed at creating a robust, flourishing and modern economy and will focus on a start - up culture of empowering the private sector for the development of the country. Minister Samaraweera made this statement at a meeting with the Regional Director for World Bank's International Finance Corporation (IFC) South Asia Mengistu Alemayehu in Washington, DC. Deputy Minister of Economic Development Dr. Harsha de Silva also participated in the discussion; The Minister briefed the IFC Director on empowering the private sector through the public-private partnership and the implementation of the Inland Revenue Act.

### [Sri Lanka Railway unions call off strike](#)

Colombo Page|12<sup>th</sup> October

The strike action launched by the Sri Lanka railway unions has been called off following discussions held this afternoon between the unions and the Secretary to the President. President's Media Division said the Railway strike was called off after a discussion with President's Secretary Austin Fernando on the instructions of

President. The Locomotive Operating Engineers and Drivers' Union and the Association of Railway Guards initiated the unannounced strike on Wednesday. The unions said following discussions with the Secretary to the President Austin Fernando this afternoon, they have suspended the strike.

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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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