

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

**October 17th, 2016 | Volume: 2 - 7/10**

[Pakistan to head SAARC anti-graft forum](#)

The Express Tribune | 17<sup>th</sup> October  
Pakistan has become the first chairman of Saarc's anti-corruption forum, revealed National Accountability Bureau (NAB) chief Qamar Zaman Chaudhry. He considered it a great achievement for the NAB and Pakistan. The NAB chairman said in a statement that Pakistan is considered as a role model for Saarc countries. Pakistan, according to him, is the only Saarc country who went from 126 to 117 on the Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index.

[Thousands of Daesh Fighters Trying to Sneak Into North: VP](#)

Pajhwok /Outlook Afghanistan | 16<sup>th</sup> October  
First Vice-President Gen. Abdur Rashid Dostum, currently on a visit to Farah province, has said some internal and foreign circles are trying to send 7,500 Daesh, or Islamic State (IS), rebels to northern Afghanistan. He said the IS militants being sent to north the included Chechen, Uzbek, Tajik, Iraqi, Syrian, Lebanese and Libyan fighters. Some regional intelligence agencies were trying to implement their plan before spring, he alleged.

[Sri Lanka must work with Bangladesh and India says US](#)

Colombo Gazette | 16<sup>th</sup> October  
The security of the Indian Ocean is "inextricably" linked to the stability of global economy, the U.S. has said and underscored the need for maritime cooperation between India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh to uphold international norms such as the freedom of navigation.

**AFGHANISTAN**

[India foils beheading plans by ISIS loyalists based in Afghanistan](#)

Khaama Press | 16<sup>th</sup> October

A group of six men have reportedly been arrested in India as they were planning to behead some people on instructions of a loyalist of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group based in Afghanistan. According to local media reports, citing the security sources, the six men were part of an Islamic State-inspired group and were arrested from Kerala earlier this month.

[Airstrike target top Taliban leader's convoy, leaving at least 30 dead](#)

Khaama Press | 16<sup>th</sup> October

An airstrike targeted the convoy of a top Taliban leader in southern Uruzgan province of Afghanistan, leaving at least 30 militants dead. The Ministry of Defense (MoD) said the airstrike took place in Chinartu district and targeted the convoy of Haji Lala, the military commission chief of the group. It is yet not clear if the airstrike was carried out by the Afghan Air Force or the coalition forces based in the country.

### [Russia, India Share Need to Rebuild Afghanistan: Putin](#)

Tolonews/Outlook Afghanistan | 16<sup>th</sup> October

President Vladimir Putin said India and Russia were both interested in deepening "constructive multilateral cooperation" to help rebuild war-torn Afghanistan where decisive action was needed to defeat terrorism, Times of India reported. In an interview with IANS and Sputnik news agencies, Putin said Afghanistan was of concern as the "situation on the territory between India and Russia remains tense".

## **BANGLADESH**

### [‘Teesta issue not discussed’](#)

Prothom Alo | 17<sup>th</sup> October

Prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi had a bilateral meeting on Sunday night when Modi assured her to resolve all the problems with united efforts, reports news agency UNB. Foreign secretary M Shahidul Haque told reporters after the meeting, responding to a question regarding the longstanding Teesta water sharing treaty between Bangladesh and India. The foreign secretary said the issue of Teesta treaty did not come up for discussion at the meeting.

### [World Bank to increase its assistance for Bangladesh by 50 percent, its President Kim says](#)

Bdnews24 | 17<sup>th</sup> October

At a press conference of Monday after meeting Finance Minister AMA Muhith, the global lender's chief said they will give an extra \$1 billion for tackling malnutrition. WB loans, styled International Development Assistance (IDA), come in a three-year bundle. In the 2015-15 fiscal, the global lender committed \$1.18 billion, but finally disbursed \$1.16 billion. The ongoing IDA for Bangladesh expires next year.

## **BHUTAN**

### [Media access curtailed in recent LG election](#)

Kuensel Online | 14<sup>th</sup> October

As the polls closed at 5pm on September 27, a family in Tang, Bumthang stayed glued to their television. They were relying on BBS TV to know the results of the gup election. Happiness knew no bounds when it was announced on BBS TV that their father was the gup-elect. The children waited for their father, who was returning from Chamkhar, to congratulate him. Their happiness was, however, short lived. The father, who was aware of the EVM and postal ballot results, told them the result announced on BBS TV was wrong.

## **MALDIVES**

### [MP Dr. Khaleel appointed to SG in President Yameen’s leadership of PPM](#)

Sun Online | 16<sup>th</sup> October

MP for the Nilandhoo constituency, Dr. Abdulla Khaleel has been appointed as the Secretary General of PPM at the first PPM Council meeting chaired by President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom. He was appointed at the PPM Council meeting held at Dharubaaruge tonight. While Dr. Khaleel was appointed as the Secretary General of the party by President Abdulla Yameen, earlier today, President of PPM and former President of Maldives, Maumoon Abdul Gayoom chaired a Council meeting and promoted the Deputy Secretary General, Abdul Aleem to Secretary General.

### [Ali Waheed charged under Anti-Terror Act](#)

Sun Online | 17<sup>th</sup> October

Chairperson of Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP), Ali Waheed has been charged under the Anti-Terrorism Act, with the first hearing in the case scheduled for this Monday, October 17. Ali Waheed has been living in self-imposed exile in the United Kingdom soon after his release from police detention after arrest after the opposition protests on May 1, 2015. Customs has had his Maldivian passport revoked in September 22.

## **MYANMAR**

### [Three attackers killed in Myanmar as violence persists](#)

AFP/Mizzima | 17<sup>th</sup> October

Three police officers were attacked with machetes in restive north western Myanmar on Saturday by assailants who were shot dead, the military has said, amid lethal violence that authorities have blamed on home grown Islamist insurgents. Security forces have killed at least 29 people since attacks were launched a week ago on police posts along the Bangladesh border, according to state media.

## NEPAL

### [Xi, Dahal stress connectivity](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 17<sup>th</sup> October

The meeting between Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Chinese President Xi Jinping on Saturday primarily focused on enhancing connectivity between the two countries, officials have said. The two sides focused mainly on road and railway connectivity between Nepal and China along with finalising the protocol of the Trade and Transit agreements.

### [Nepal, India PMs for implementing pacts](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 17<sup>th</sup> October

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal held delegation level talks with his Indian counterpart on the sidelines of Brics Summit in Goa on Sunday. During the meeting, they agreed to put emphasis on implementing agreements reached during Dahal's state visit to India in September. The two prime ministers also agreed to address the outstanding issues during the Joint Commission meeting led by respective foreign ministers to be held on October 27 and 28, according to Nepal's Foreign Minister Prakash Sharan Mahat, who was present during the talks.

### [Dahal says BIMSTEC can be engine of growth](#)

My Republica | 17<sup>th</sup> October

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal has said BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multisectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) that connects two vibrant regions - South East Asia and South Asia - and be a dynamic engine of growth and development. "Development potentials of this grouping are huge. With over 1.5 billion of population and combined GDP of US \$2.5 trillion, this region can be a dynamic engine of growth and development," said Dahal while addressing the BIMSTEC Leaders' Retreat in Goa, India on Sunday. "The engine of growth and development cannot perform in full capacity without intensifying cooperation. And BIMSTEC provides that vital platform for integration and cooperation."

### ['Nepal wants to be dynamic bridge between India, China'](#)

My Republica | 17<sup>th</sup> October

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal has said that Nepal wants to benefit by becoming a dynamic bridge between neighbors India and China. According to a press note issued by the Prime Minister's Office on Sunday, PM Dahal stressed a tri-nation strategic partnership between Nepal, India and China during a tri-lateral meeting held between Dahal, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian PM Narendra Modi, late Saturday evening in Goa, India.

## PAKISTAN

### [IMF warns of looming CPEC bill](#)

The Dawn | 17<sup>th</sup> October

Growing Chinese investments in Pakistan have the potential to lift the economy's potential output, but the repayment obligations that come with this investment will be serious, warns the IMF in its latest and final review of the just concluded programme. "During the investment phase, as the 'early harvest' projects proceed, Pakistan will experience a surge in FDI and other external funding inflows," says the Fund in a short evaluation of the impact of CPEC related investments on Pakistan. However, the import requirements of these projects "will likely offset a significant share of these inflows, such that the current account deficit would widen" within manageable levels during these years.

## SRI LANKA

### [Chinese President calls for high-level contacts with Sri Lanka](#)

Colombo Gazette | 17<sup>th</sup> October

Chinese President Xi Jinping met with Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena, vowing to deepen bilateral pragmatic cooperation within the Belt and Road framework, the Xinhua news agency reported today.

### [China agrees to provide Rs. 2.6 billion worth military assistance, OPV to Sri Lanka](#)

Colombo Page | 17<sup>th</sup> October

Sri Lanka and China have reviewed the entire range of defense cooperation between the two countries during the recent visit of Sri Lanka's Secretary of Defense to Beijing, to participate in the 2nd China - Sri Lanka Defense Cooperation Dialogue.

[Sri Lanka calls on BIMSTEC nations to take collective action to bring optimum benefits to people](#)

Colombo Page| 16<sup>th</sup> September

Reiterating Sri Lanka's commitment to regional and inter-regional cooperation, Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena today called on the member states of the Bay of Bengal initiative for Multi-sectoral technical and economic cooperation (BIMSTEC) to take collective action to bring optimum benefits to the people.

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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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