

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

November 18th, 2016 | Volume: 2 - 6/11

[Arrest warrant for Khaleda on govt's instruction: BNP](#)

Prothom Alo | 17th November
The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) on Thursday reacted to the warrant for arrest of party chairperson Khaleda Zia, calling the step "politics of vendetta". The BNP alleged that the arrest warrant was issued on a former prime minister, Khaleda Zia, on the instruction of the Awami League-led government.

[Draft Agreement Finalized to Link Afghanistan with Black, Mediterranean Sea](#)

Khaama Press | 17th November
The draft agreement for Lazuli route was finalized between Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey to link Afghanistan with Black and Mediterranean Sea. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said the draft agreement was finalized during a meeting at the ministry of transport of Azerbaijan.

[Navies of Pakistan, China begin their fourth joint exercise](#)

DAWN | 18th November
The Pakistan Navy (PN) and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy of China began their fourth joint exercise on Thursday. The exercise will continue till Nov 21. Though the two navies have held joint exercises three times before, the fourth one, which includes harbour and sea phases, is significant because it is aimed at promoting maritime security and stability in the region with focus on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

AFGHANISTAN

[EU Distressed over Afghan Situation, Urges NUG Leaders to Unite](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 17th November

The European Union's Special Representative for Afghanistan Franz-Michael Skjold Mellbin on Wednesday raised deep concerns over the ongoing turmoil in Afghanistan, urging the Afghan political leaders to settle their disputes and unite for the sake of the nation.

[WFP Launches 9-Month Operation to Assist Returnees](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 17th November

The World Food Programme (WFP) has launched a nine-month operation to help Afghanistan deal with the growing number of returnees from Pakistan and internally displaced people (IDPs) by providing emergency food and funds, the UN says.

[Taliban shadow governor among 11 killed in North of Afghanistan](#)

Khaama Press | 18th November

The shadow provincial governor of the Taliban group for northern Sar-e-Pul province was killed during an operation by the Afghan security forces. “Last night, Afghan National Civil Order Police launched a special clearance operation to clear armed Taliban from Aadrang Barghali region, Sar-e-Pul city of Sar-ePul province,” the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said on Wednesday afternoon.

BANGLADESH

[Bangladesh reiterates solidarity with Saudi Arabia in fighting against terrorism](#)

bdnews24 | 18th November

Bangladesh has reiterated its “support and solidarity” with the Saudi Arabia in its fight against terrorism in the wake of recent missile attacks by Yemen's Houthis-Saleh militias targeting the Holy city of Makkah. Foreign Minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali, speaking on behalf of Bangladesh at a special OIC meeting in Makkah, on Thursday also called upon the international community and organisations for their role in preventing recurrence of such attacks.

[BD to set up urea fertiliser factory in Iran](#)

The Financial Express | 17th November

Bangladesh and Iran, under a joint venture investment initiative, will set up a urea fertiliser factory in Iran. Bangladesh responded to the proposal made by Iranian Ambassador to Bangladesh Dr Abbas Vaezi Dehnavi on Thursday when he paid a courtesy call on Industries Minister Amir Hossain Amu at his ministry office, reports BSS. During the meeting, they discussed various issues, including trade and investment, between the two countries.

BHUTAN

[Bhutan's private sector underdeveloped: WB](#)

Kuensel Online | 17th November

Growing unemployment in Bhutan can be attributed to several intra-personal and societal reasons. The demand and preference to join the public sector by jobseekers is one of the main reasons for the rising unemployment problem, especially among the youth and highly educated people.

[Customs Act in the offing](#)

Kuensel Online | 17th November

The National Council (NC) yesterday deliberated on the Customs Bill, which aims to modernise customs administration in the country. The government's aim is to carve out a separate Customs Act as part of the government's commitment to reform customs administration. This will mean taking out the Customs part from the Sales Tax, Customs and Excise Act 2000. Introducing the Bill in the House, finance minister Namgay Dorji said the Bill is important to facilitate and accelerate cross-border trade.

MALDIVES

[Maumoon: Laws being compiled in violation of Constitution](#)

Sun Online | 17th November

Leader of Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM), former Maldivian President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom has remarked that laws in the country were being compiled in violation of the Maldivian Constitution. Speaking during

the function held on Wednesday night after inaugurating PPM Leader's headquarters, Maumoon said that the Constitution was the supreme law, and that no law can be compiled in violation of the Constitution.

[SATA Visitors Choice: Maldives takes 5 out of 7 awards](#)

Sun Online | 17th November

Maldivian travel and tourism businesses have taken five out of seven Visitors Choice Awards at South Asian Travel Awards (SATA). The awards were announced during the SATA 2016 Gala Night held at the picturesque Mount Lavinia Hotel in Sri Lanka on Wednesday night. Maldives won five out of the seven Visitors Choice Awards, while Sri Lanka and India won one apiece.

MYANMAR

[Information Committee formed for issues in Rakhine State](#)

Mizzima | 17th November

The President's Office announced yesterday the formation of the State Counsellor Office's Information Committee, state media reported on 17 November. The formation of the committee is aimed at real time releasing of information related to issues in Rakhine State, according to the announcement.

[Dollar Exchange Rate Climbs, Shakes Up Burma's Business Community](#)

The Irrawaddy | 17th November

The US dollar exchange rate—at its highest since the new government came to power in April—has Burma's business community looking for better trade policy. "In the black market, the exchange rate is currently 1306 kyats [US\$1] per dollar; it's too high for importers. If the import demand increases, it could impact the prices of daily commodities, making them increase, too," said U Zaw Min, a rice trader in Rangoon.

NEPAL

[Split Province 5 and break impasse: PM](#)

The Kathmandu Post | 18th November

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal has floated a new proposal—creating an eighth province by splitting Province 5—to resolve the problems surrounding provincial boundaries. The proposal, according to PM Dahal's Chief Political Adviser Chakrapani Khanal, aims to address the agitating parties' demand that there should be at least two provinces—without hill districts—in the plains.

[Main three parties close to consensus on constitution amendment](#)

RSS / My Republica | 17th November

The main three political parties have reached closer to agreement on amending some provisions of the constitution. In the talks held among the top leaders of the Nepali Congress, the CPN (UML) and the CPN (Maoist Center) at the Prime Minister's residence in Baluwatar this morning, positive discussions were held on the issue of constitution amendment and they agreed to register a proposal on this in the Legislature-Parliament at the earliest.

[Nepal Army chief Chhetri calls on Bangladeshi President](#)

RSS / My Republica | 17th November

Chief of the Army Staff Rajendra Chhetri has paid a courtesy call on President of Bangladesh Abdul Hamid in Dhaka, Bangladesh on Wednesday. Dhaka based Nepali embassy has informed that they discussed bilateral ties, matters of mutual benefits and friendly relations between the armies of the two countries among other issues as well.

[Finance committee directs govt to ease Indian currency exchange process](#)

RSS / My Republica | 17th November

The meeting of the Finance Committee under the Legislature-Parliament today has directed the government to ease the exchange of Indian currency notes of 500 and 1,000. The meeting has directed the Ministry of Finance and Nepal Rastra Bank in this connection. The committee President Praskash Jwala has shared the decision to this end adding that such currency holding Nepalis were facing difficulties to exchange them.

PAKISTAN

[Debt indicators paint bleak picture](#)

The Express Tribune|18th November

Pakistan's debt sustainability indicators have significantly worsened in the past one year due to increase in foreign exchange and refinancing risks, which appears to be the result of reckless borrowing, showed an official report.

[Eight Da'ish suspects detained](#)

The Express Tribune|18th November

Eight alleged members of Da'ish were arrested here on Thursday by officials of Punjab's Counter Terrorism Department. The suspects were identified as Nabeel Ahmad alias Abu Abdullah alias Artat, Abu Bakar alias Sarmad, Muhammad Abdullah Dar, Muhammad Iqbal, Syed Yusif ul Islam, Badarul Islam, Haq Nawaz and Hafiz Raheel. All of the arrested suspects were planning to leave for Syria and Afghanistan to join Da'ish.

SRI LANKA

[Government defends renewed relationship with China](#)

Colombo Gazette| 17th November

Government today defended its renewed relationship with China. Speaking in Parliament, leader of the House Lakshman Kiriella said that Sri Lanka has a long-standing relationship with China dating back to the rubber rice pact of 1952. "The US and UK had opposed the rubber rice pact but we went ahead and signed the agreement," he said.

[Turkey expresses willingness to partner with Sri Lanka's Megapolis Project](#)

Colombo Page| 17th November

World's second ranked construction economy, Turkey has come forward to partner with Sri Lanka's ambitious Megapolis Project, Sri Lanka's Minister of Industry and Commerce Rishad Bathiudeen says.

[Business delegation from China's Guangdong Province explores investment opportunities in Sri Lanka](#)

Colombo Page| 19th November

A business delegation from Guangdong Province of China visited the Sri Lanka's investment promotion agency, Board of Investment (BOI) to explore investment opportunities in Sri Lanka, the agency 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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