



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

**September 18th, 2017| Volume: 3 - 07/9**

[Ghani to meet Trump on the sidelines of UN General Assembly](#)

Khaama Press | 17th September  
President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani is expected to meet his US counterpart President Donald Trump on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York. A spokesman for the Presidential Office Dawa Khan Meenapal confirmed the scheduled meeting between President Ghani and President Trump. Speaking to reporters in Kabul, Meenapal said President and his American counterpart will hold talks on peace and security situation of Afghanistan. This will be the first meeting to be held between President Ghani and President Trump after the announcement of the new US strategy for Afghanistan and the South Asia.

[High stakes in Myanmar as Suu Kyi to address Rohingya crisis](#)

Mizzima | 17th September  
As Rakhine state burns and Rohingya flee, Aung San Suu Kyi is preparing to address Myanmar on the crisis for the first time - a high wire act seeking to soothe global outrage without baiting an army that is again showing its teeth. Suu Kyi took office last year as Myanmar's first civilian leader after 50 years of junta rule. She has since focused her energy on the delicate political dance between her civilian government and the generals who still hold many of the levers of power. On Tuesday the Nobel laureate will give the biggest speech of her time in office. The nationally-televised turn will break a near silence since the ulcerous ethnic and religious hatreds in western Rakhine state erupted into killings on August 25, sending 400,000 Muslim minority Rohingya fleeing into Bangladesh. Some 30,000 ethnic Rakhine

[Nepal PM to address UNGA Sept 23](#)

MyRepublica | 18th September  
Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba is leaving for New York on Tuesday, leading Nepali delegation to the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). Deuba will address the UNGA on September 23 and hold bilateral meeting with the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres the same day, according to the foreign ministry. The High Level Segment of the UNGA will begin 19 September 2017 with the theme of 'Focusing on People: Striving for Peace and a Decent Life for All on a Sustainable Planet'.

Buddhists and Hindus have also been internally displaced.

## AFGHANISTAN

### [Atmar, McMaster discuss US-Afghan Strategy](#)

Afghanistan Times | 17th September

According to a statement released by the National Security Advisor office, the National Security Advisor of Afghanistan, Mohammad Haneef Atmar, spoke to his US counterpart H.R. McMaster on Thursday. The two sides had a detailed discussion of the new US strategy for Afghanistan and South Asia. This included a friendly exchange of views on the implications of the US policy and the implementation of the Compact regarding the bilateral cooperation between Afghanistan and the United States. The two sides also talked about the participation of Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani in the 72nd United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), and his planned meetings with his US counterpart and other partners on the sidelines of the UNGA.

### [NATO Commander Reaffirms Strong Support to Afghanistan](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 17th September

The commander of the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan General John Nicholson reaffirmed the strong support of the alliance to Afghanistan after a suicide attack claimed the life of a Romanian soldier. Gen. Nicholson who is also in lead of the US Forces for Afghanistan, said “Our hearts go out to our Romanian comrades for the loss of their soldier.”

## BANGLADESH

### [Bangladesh condemns North Korea's missile test over Japan, aligns with UNSC resolution](#)

bdnews24 | 16th September

Bangladesh has observed with "grave concern" and condemned the successive launching ballistic missiles by North Korea over Japan.

“We find it equally disconcerting that within a month North Korea in defiance of the international community has launched such tests for the second time,” the foreign ministry said in a statement on Saturday. “Through this unilateral act, North Korea has clearly undermined regional peace and security.” “Bangladesh would like to align itself with the recent resolution of the UN Security Council that has strongly condemned the highly provocative ballistic missile tests conducted by North Korea.”

North Korea should demonstrate through its acts that it is willing to work for reducing tension on the Korean Peninsula, Dhaka said.

### [UNHCR seeks \\$30m aid for Rohingyas](#)

Prothom Alo | 16th September

UN refugee agency UNHCR has sought an initial emergency aid of US\$30 million for Rohingyas. It made the call, two days after it jointly launched with the UN's migration organisation IOM an appeal for enhanced global assistance as surges of refugee continued to hit Bangladesh. "Based on the numbers of arrivals and needs assessments made by (our) field staff, UNHCR urgently requires additional funds to meet the immediate needs of

new arrivals and to provide protection and life-saving assistance," UNHCR spokesperson Andrej Mahecic told a press briefing at UN's Geneva office on Friday.

## **BHUTAN**

### [Lack of funds hinder patient evacuation](#)

Kuensel Online | 16th September

Inadequate budget for ambulance services and no follow-up on patients referred are some of the issues in transportation and evacuation of the patient referrals. This was discussed during the second day of the 4th Biennial health conference at the Convention Centre in Thimphu yesterday. Chief programme officer with the Department of Medical Services' emergency medical services division, Jamtsho, said accessibility to ambulance services has increased with access to road over the years. He said that there were also few incidences of ambulance accidents in the country.

### [ECB shifts its focus on 2018 elections](#)

Kuensel Online | 16th September

The Election Commission of Bhutan (ECB) shifted its focus on 2018 parliamentary elections with the celebration of the fourth National Voters' Day in the dzongkhags yesterday.

ECB organised various programmes to observe the day under the theme "Mission 2018: Participation By All In The 3rd Parliamentary Elections". The day coincided with the International Day of Democracy. "This year, as ECB shifts its focus on the parliamentary elections 2018, this national event gives platform to renew our commitment to the vibrant democracy envisioned by our visionary monarchs and enshrined in our Constitution," ECB in a press release stated. The primary objective of the day was to enthuse the citizenry and encourage them to engage meaningfully in the democratic process, it added.

## **MALDIVES**

### [Maldivian delegation at SAYS given warm welcome in Bhubaneswar](#)

Sun Online | 16th September

The Maldivian delegation participating in the first South Asian Youth Summit (SAYS) was provided a warm welcome from the city of Bhubaneswar upon arrival. SAYS 2017 will be held in Bhubneswar City, the capital of the East Indian State Odisha from September 17 – 20. The 34 Maldivian delegates arrived in Bhubaneswar for the Summit this Saturday afternoon after a one-day stop in Chennai.

## **MYANMAR**

### [Myanmar-China summit held in Yangon as part of 24th WCEC](#)

Mizzima | 18th September

A Myanmar-China business summit was held at the Sule Shangri-La Hotel in Yangon Saturday evening as part of the 14th World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention (WCEC), Xinhua reported. The summit, sponsored by the China Federation of Overseas Chinese Entrepreneurs (CFOCE), took place under the topic "The Belt and Road Promotes Cooperation and Mutual Benefits". The summit was followed by the signing of a contract project investment agreement on strategic cooperation between the Myanmar Chinese Chamber of Commerce and CFOCE. The summit gathered about 300 participants involving Chinese embassy officials, Myanmar government

officials, leaders of delegations attending the 14th WCEC, representatives of Myanmar's business circle and the CFOCE delegation, the report said.

## NEPAL

### [Economy to grow by 4.6pc in current fiscal](#)

The Himalayan Times | 18th September

The country's economic growth is projected to moderate at 4.6 per cent in this fiscal as agriculture output is expected to drop due to the recent floods and both export growth and remittance growth have been tapering along with the oil price shock in the Gulf countries. Unveiling the 'Nepal Development Update – 2017', the World Bank Group has said that service sector growth will take a lead among agriculture, industrial and service sectors, which are the key sectors of the economy. As per the projection of the World Bank, service sector is expected to grow by 5.8 per cent, industrial sector by five per cent and agriculture sector by 2.7 per cent in the current fiscal as compared to 6.9 per cent growth in service sector, 10.9 per cent growth in industrial sector and 5.3 per cent growth in agricultural sector in the last fiscal 2016-17.

### [Revenue mobilization below target in first two months of 2017/18](#)

MyRepublica | 18th September

Revenue collection figure of all major trading points with India is lower than the target due to Goods and Services Tax (GST) of India which came into implementation from July 1. This slowdown in customs duty collection is contrary to statements of government officials and some experts who had earlier said that the integrated tax system of India would bring positive results. India has been charging GST of 0 to 28 percent on its products and services. Revenue mobilization by major customs points has always surpassed the target set by the government. India accounts for more than two-thirds of Nepal's foreign trade.

## PAKISTAN

### [Pakistani provinces vying for control of oil, gas, mineral resources](#)

Dawn | 18th September

The provinces are seeking the implementation of powers, granted to them under the 18th Amendment, to exercise joint, equal and individual control over oil, gas and mineral reserves inside their respective boundaries, and want a review of the federal government's petroleum policy that they claim is 'stagnating investments'. A senior federal government official told Dawn that the four provinces were jointly pushing the federal government for implementation of Article 172(3) of the Constitution, and would like the Council of Common Interests (CCI) to take a decision at its forthcoming meeting. The subject is expected to be first taken up for consensus at a meeting of the Inter-Provincial Coordination Committee (IPCC) on Tuesday, which will also discuss provincial complaints against the Centre for alleged violation of certain constitutional provisions, the LNG policy and gas sector reforms.

### [Conspiracies continue against PML-N: Abbasi](#)

Dawn | 18th September

Minutes after a meeting with his predecessor Nawaz Sharif in London on Sunday, Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi conceded that conspiracies against his Pakistan Muslim League-N party continued but added that one should fight against such plots. Before leaving for New York to attend the upcoming session of the UN General Assembly, Mr Abbasi called on the ousted prime minister who is currently in London in connection with the medical treatment of his wife Kulsoom. As soon as he came out of the meeting, he was surrounded by reporters

who threw a volley of questions at him. However, the PM spoke briefly to the media and avoided a direct answer to political questions. When asked about allegations being levelled by certain party members regarding a plot against the PML-N, he said, with a smile: “Conspiracies are continuing and there is nothing new about it. Conspiracies shall be dealt with [politically].”

## SRI LANKA

### [Report of the Presidential Committee to Resolve Issues Related to SAIMT handed over to President](#)

Colombo Page | 17th September

The Presidential Committee appointed by President Maithripala Sirisena to resolve the issue of South Asian Institute of Technology and Medicine (SAITM) handed over its report to the President on the 11th September, 2017, Deputy Minister Dr. Harsha de Silva said. The 'Presidential Committee to Resolve Issues Related to SAIMT' was chaired by the Deputy Minister of Policy Planning and Economic Development Dr. Harsha de Silva. The Committee comprised Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education and Highways D.C. Dissanayake, Secretary, Ministry of Health, Nutrition, and Indigenous Medicine Janaka Sugathadasa, Attorney-General Jayantha Jayasuriya (Represented by Additional Solicitor General Sanjay Rajaratnam), and Chairman, University Grants Commission (UGC) Prof Mohan de Silva as members.

### [Flexible working hours from today at government offices in Battaramulla](#)

Colombo Page | 18th September

The Sri Lankan government's pilot project to introduce flexible working hours for the public sector currently serving in government offices situated in Battaramulla area begins from today. The project is launched as a solution to the traffic congestion in Colombo. Initially the public sector workers in Battaramulla area will be given the opportunity to work for three months from September 18 to December 17 with the permission of the Heads of the Institutions. According to a government instructions given to the Ministry Secretaries, Provincial Chief Secretaries and Department Heads, drivers should work for nine hours between 7.30 am and 5pm; minor staff should work for 8 hours and 45 minutes while other officers should work for 7 hours and 45 minutes per day.

\*\*\*\*\*

### ***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.*

To know more, Please log on to [www.anantaaspencentre.in](http://www.anantaaspencentre.in)