



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

**November 22nd , 2017| Volume: 3 - 7/11**

[Afghanistan receives 495 new armored personnel carriers from US](#)

Khaama Press| 21st November  
The Ministry of Defense (MoD) officials on Sunday confirmed the Afghan security forces have taken delivery of 495 new armored personnel carriers from the United States. MoD spokesman Gen. Dawlat Waziri said the Afghan national defense and security forces continue to receive new modern equipment as part of the ongoing efforts to bolster their capabilities. He said the Afghan security forces have received new batches of weaponry as well as 495 new armored personnel carriers from the United States. Gen. Waziri further added that the weapons and vehicles will be used by the Afghan commandos, 201st, 203rd, 205th, and 209th Corps of the Afghan military.

[Pakistan calls for negotiated end to Afghan war](#)

Dawn | 22nd November  
Pakistan has called for a negotiated end to the Afghan war, claiming that neither side could “impose a military solution” on the other. “Neither the coalition and Kabul nor the Afghan Taliban can impose a military solution on each other,” said Pakistan’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations Maleeha Lodhi while speaking at a debate in the UN General Assembly on the situation in Afghanistan.

[Rohingya crisis: Dhaka-Naypyitaw talks begin](#)

UNB/ The Daily Star | 22nd November  
Bangladesh and Myanmar on Wednesday began their long-sought two-day talks with high hopes that it will yield outcomes to sign an MoU enabling both the countries to start the repatriation process of all the Rohingyas from Bangladesh to their homeland Myanmar. The international community is also watching the talks and its subsequent outcome as they want to see the safe and dignified return of the Rohingyas as quickly as possible. The talks between senior officials of the two countries began with Foreign Secretary M Shahidul Haque leading the Bangladesh delegation. Bangladesh Ambassador in Yangon M Sufiur Rahman, officials from the foreign ministry, home ministry, Prime Minister’s Office are also attending in the meeting.

### [Germany Reiterates Support to Intra-Afghan Dialogue](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 21st November

President Ashraf Ghani on Monday said the United States new strategy for Afghanistan is beneficial for stability of the region. "Opportunities should be effectively availed," the president was quoted as saying in a statement from the Presidential Palace during a meeting with Germany's special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Markus Potzel. Potzel called on President Ghani on Monday morning at the Presidential Palace and both sides conferred on key regional issues, the statement said. The issues discussed included ensuring security and stability in Afghanistan and effectiveness of the new US strategy for South Asia and Afghanistan.

### [US, Afghan Forces to Face War Crimes Investigation, Alongside Taliban](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 22nd November

The International Criminal Court's prosecutor has requested a full investigation in Afghanistan. US and Afghan military personnel could be indicted, along with Taliban members, for committing crimes against humanity. The chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court on Monday formally asked for judicial authorization to open a full investigation into the possibility that war crimes and crimes against humanity have been committed in Afghanistan: by the Taliban, by Afghan forces and by the American military. Judges are expected to give Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda the go-ahead after more than a decade of preliminary consideration by her office.

### [Afghanistan's Economy Slowly on Rise, to Grow 2.6 Percent this Year: WB](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan | 22nd November

Afghanistan's economy is expected to grow 2.6 percent this year, up slightly from the previous year despite deteriorating security, the World Bank (WB) said in a report on Tuesday. While the figure is up from 2.2 percent last year, it does not keep up with the country's population growth of roughly 3 percent, meaning that gross domestic product per capita continues to decline. "In the next three to four years, there are things that can be done to boost growth to between 4 and 5 percent," said Shubham Chaudhuri, the World's Bank's Country Director for Afghanistan. Chaudhuri, presenting a report on Afghanistan's economy at the World Bank's fortified headquarters in Kabul, said that agriculture, mineral attraction and the country's youth were its biggest assets, as well as its geography as a regional land bridge.

## **BANGLADESH**

### [Ex-Jamaat MP, 5 other Gaibandha war criminals get death](#)

The Daily Star | 22<sup>nd</sup> November

A special tribunal in Dhaka today handed death penalty to six people from Gaibandha, including a former Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker, for committing crimes against humanity during the Liberation War in 1971. The accused are Jamaat's ex-MP Abu Saleh Md Abdul Aziz Mia, Ruhul Amin alias Manju, Abu Muslim Md Ali, Abdul Latif, Najmul Huda and Abdur Rahim Mia. Latif is now in jail while the others are absconding. While delivering the verdict, the three-member panel of International Crimes Tribunal-1 led by Justice Md Shahinur Islam asked the Inspector General of Police (IGP) and the home ministry to secure the arrest of the fugitives. The accused were facing three charges -- looting and killing of a Hindu man at Moujamali village in Gaibandha Sadar upazila, killing of a Chhatra League leader, and killing of 13 chairmen and members of five unions in Sundarganj of the district.

### [Bangladesh needs 20pc more new power connections annually: UNCTAD](#)

The Financial Express | 22<sup>nd</sup> November

Bangladesh requires some 20-30 per cent more new electricity connections every year to achieve the universal access to electricity by the year 2030. The projection has been made in the Least Developed Countries Report 2017, prepared by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). It said Bangladesh and the Comoros are the LDCs facing challenge in this connection substantially while Senegal and Sao Tome and Principe are faced with much more challenge where 75 per cent annual increase in electricity connection is required.

## **BHUTAN**

### [NA passes Bhutan-Bangladesh double tax avoidance agreement](#)

Kuensel | 21<sup>st</sup> November

The National Assembly endorsed the double taxation avoidance agreement between Bhutan and Bangladesh yesterday. Signed during the visit of Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to Bhutan in April 2017, the agreement plans to do away with double taxation of incomes between the two countries.

### [Cabinet endorses reforms in procurement process](#)

Kuensel | 21<sup>st</sup> November

The Cabinet has approved the revision of criteria that is used to secure a work in the procurement process. Most reforms that the Ministry of Works and Human Settlement (MoWHS) proposed comes into effect from June next year.

## **MALDIVES**

### [High Court supports ten-year prison sentence for Thol'hath](#)

Sun Online | 21<sup>st</sup> November

High Court has supported the ten-year prison sentence passed against the former Defence Minister, Thol'hath Ibrahim Kaleyfaanu, by the Criminal Court for his involvement in the unlawful arrested of the Chief Judge of the Criminal Court, Abdulla Mohamed. Thol'hath appealed the sentence at the High Court in 2015. The first hearing in the appeal case was held in March 2015. Delivering the High Court verdict today after reviewing the case, the court decided that the ten-year prison sentence against Thol'hath was passed down by the Criminal Court is legitimate as the charge of terrorism sticks.

## **MYANMAR**

### [Myanmar must work with UN on Rakhine: US congressional delegation](#)

Mizzima | 22<sup>nd</sup> November

The US congressional delegation now in Myanmar have called upon the country's leadership to work with the UN to facilitate the return and rehabilitation of Rohingya refugees and ensure credible investigations into the atrocities in Rakhine in the last three months. Led by Senator Jeff Merkley, the delegation however condemned the serial attacks by the ARSA terrorists on Aug 24-24 and said it was important to track their backers and those funding them. "The world is watching. It is important for Myanmar to deliver on promises by its government to take and resettle the Rohingyas when they come back." said Senator Merkley. He told journalists they were aware of the civil-military dynamics in Myanmar but insisted that the government has to 'include' the UN in both the repatriation process and in doing credible investigations to get to the bottom of the truth about what happened in

Rakhine.

### [Cambodia and Myanmar sign MoU to promote tourism](#)

Mizzima | 22nd November

Cambodia and Myanmar signed a memorandum of understanding on Saturday to promote the flow of national and third-country tourists to the temples of Angkor in Siem Reap and to the ancient city of Bagan in Myanmar, according to a Khmer Times report. The agreement was signed by Cambodian Tourism Minister Thong Khon and U Onh Maung, Myanmar's Minister of Hotel and Tourism, on the side-lines of the first International Cambodia Travel Mart (CTM) at the Sokha Hotel in Siem Reap. Tith Chantha, secretary of state of the Ministry of Tourism, was quoted as saying that the MoU aimed to strengthen and promote tourism cooperation between both nations, as well as boosting the flow of tourists between Cambodia and Myanmar, and from third countries.

## NEPAL

### [No force can stop left alliance from uniting: UML leader Khanal](#)

MyRepublica | 22nd November

Former Prime Minister and CPN-UML senior leader Jhala Nath Khanal has said no force on earth could stop the left alliance from getting united. "There will be a unification of the left coalition. No force can halt it," he said while addressing an election campaign at Maijogmai rural municipality-6 in Ilam on Tuesday. He also said that development and prosperity is the agenda of the leftist party, and that change would occur under the leadership of the left alliance.

### [Nepal-India border along Rautahat, Sarlahi, Mohattari to be sealed for 3 days](#)

The Himalayan Times | 21st November

The security officials of Nepal and India have agreed to seal Nepal-India border along Rautahat, Sarlahi and Mohattari districts for three days prior to the upcoming elections. A joint security meeting held at Sitamadi in India today, decided to seal the border to prevent untoward activities during the House of Representatives and State Assemblies elections on November 26 in Nepal

## PAKISTAN

### [Nawaz Sharif, Maryam, Captain Safdar appear in accountability court](#)

The Express Tribune | 22<sup>nd</sup> November

Ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif, his daughter Maryam Nawaz and son-in-law Captain (ret'd) Muhammad Safdar arrived at an accountability court in the federal capital on Wednesday.

### [Islamabad sit-in: Govt names six-member clerics committee for talks](#)

The Express Tribune | 22<sup>nd</sup> November

The government on Tuesday notified a six-member clerics committee, headed by Pir Haseenuddin Shah, to hold talks with the protesters staging a sit-in in Islamabad for the last 16 days. The committee only includes clerics from the Bareilvi sect and has no representative of the government either.

### [Top cooperation body okays CPEC long-term plan](#)

Dawn | 22<sup>nd</sup> November

The Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) approved on Tuesday

the Long-Term Plan (LTP 2017-30) envisaging broad parameters for future cooperation, but could not conclude agreements on development projects and special economic/industrial zones.

### [China says Pakistan a priority in neighbourhood diplomacy](#)

APP / The Express Tribune | 22<sup>nd</sup> November

China always regards Pakistan as a priority in its neighbourhood diplomacy and China's development should first and foremost benefit its good neighbours, especially Pakistan, a Chinese foreign ministry's spokesperson said on Tuesday.

## **SRI LANKA**

### [Prime Minister arrives in India on a four-day official visit](#)

Colombo Page | 21st November

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe arrived in New Delhi on Tuesday starting a four-day official visit to India to attend the 5th Global Conference on Cyberspace. The Premier will take part in the opening ceremony of the opening ceremony of the 5th Global Conference on Cyberspace to be held in The Aero City, New Delhi which the Prime Minister of India will inaugurate.

### [Speaker orders investigation into alleged violation of parliamentarians' privileges](#)

Colombo Page | 22nd November

Sri Lanka's Speaker Karu Jayasuriya has ordered the Parliamentary Privileges Committee to investigate whether there was a violation of privileges of the parliamentarians during the Treasury Bond issue probe conducted by the Presidential Commission. The Speaker said the matter will be taken up at the party leaders meeting soon. Addressing the parliament, speaker Karu Jayasuriya said that several parliamentarians expressed their views regarding the manner of Treasury Bond commission.

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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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