



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

**October 6th, 2017 | Volume: 3 - 02/10**

[Taliban and ISIS members join peace process in East of Afghanistan](#)

Khama Press | 5th October

A number of the Taliban militants and insurgents belonging to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) Khorasan have joined peace process in eastern Nangarhar province of Afghanistan. Officials in the 201st Silab Corps of the Afghan National Army in the East said the militants were previously busy conducting insurgency and terrorist related activities in the southern parts of the province. The officials further added that a total of eight insurgents renounced violence and joined peace process on Wednesday. According to the Silab Corps officials, the militants also handed over nine assault rifles and a hand grenade to the security forces.

[Refugees fleeing Myanmar say army redoubling push to clear villages](#)

Mizzima/AFP | 5th October  
Rohingya refugees arriving in Bangladesh amid a fresh exodus from strife-torn Myanmar have described whole villages being emptied and thousands marching to the border as security forces redouble efforts to drive remaining Muslims from their homes. More than 500,000 Muslim Rohingyas have fled ethnic bloodshed in Myanmar in the past month and numbers are again swelling, with Bangladesh reporting 4-5,000 civilians now crossing the border each day after a brief lull in arrivals.

[World Bank signs accord to set up Centre of Excellence for Urban Dev](#)

The Financial Express | 5th October

The World Bank (WB) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with four Bangladeshi professional institutions to set up a Centre of Excellence for Urban Development (CEUD) to support cities and its local agencies to improve the lives of citizens. According to a press release on Thursday, the MoU was signed between the WB and the Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP), the Institute of Architects of Bangladesh (IAB), the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) and the Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB) at a function in the city on Wednesday.

## AFGHANISTAN

### [Ghani calls on Pakistan to intensify state-to-state dialogue for regional peace](#)

Khama Press | 5th October

President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani once again called on Pakistan to intensify the state-to-state dialogue in a bid to help secure regional peace and stability. Speaking during a meeting of the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) in Kabul, President Ghani said "I call, once again on Pakistan to intensify the state-to-state dialogue with us to secure regional peace and security. He also spoke against the moves to provide sanctuaries to the non-state malign actors, apparently gesturing towards the terror groups having safe havens on the side of the line, mainly the Haqqani terrorist network. He called on Taliban to join peace process and said "The successful peace agreement with Hezb-e-Islami should demonstrate to Taliban groups that we have the capacity and the political will to enter and successfully conclude an intra-Afghan dialogue."

## BANGLADESH

### [Temperature rise may cut Bangladesh's per capita GDP by 1.5%: IMF chief](#)

AFP/ Prothom Alo | 6th October

International Monetary Fund chief Christine Lagarde said Thursday a worldwide economic recovery is taking hold, opening a window for countries to enact reforms aimed at attaining broader, lasting prosperity. "The long-awaited global recovery is taking root," she said in an address Thursday evening at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Lagarde termed climate change 'a threat to every economy and every citizen.' She said a one-degree increase in average annual temperature in country like Bangladesh would cut per capita GDP by almost 1.5 per cent.

## BHUTAN

### [Eight percent growth highest since 2013](#)

Kuensel | 4th October

The country's economy recorded the highest growth of 7.99 percent last year after having witnessed one of the lowest growths in 2013. The economy continued to perform better compared with a growth of 5.7 percent in 2014 and 6.6 percent in 2015. Consequently, the country's GDP or the size of the economy expanded from Nu 132B to Nu 148.67B.

### [National saving increases by Nu 19 billion](#)

Kuensel | 5th October

From a negative growth of 16.02 percent in 2015, the country's gross national saving saw a growth of 65.64 percent in 2016, an increase of almost 82 percentage points. In absolute terms, gross national saving increased to Nu 47.13B in 2016 compared with Nu 27.85B in 2015. Of the total national saving, government saving constituted Nu 4.10B. Private savings (Households, Private and Public Corporations) constituted Nu 43.02B.

## MALDIVES

### [Government: EU resolution against the Maldives is biased](#)

Sun Online | 5th October

The Foreign Ministry has said that the government of Maldives categorically rejects the one-sided non-binding resolution on the Maldives adopted by the European Parliament in Strasbourg today. The Ministry said that the

resolution is highly motivated by one-sided political rhetoric and contains inaccuracies, contradictions, misrepresentations and baseless allegations and aimed at undermining the Constitution of the Maldives. A statement issued by the Foreign Ministry today said that it is unfortunate that European Parliament has adopted such a resolution with complete disregard to the considerable gains made by the Government of Maldives in terms of socio-economic development, consolidating democracy and upholding the rule of law, over the past few years.

#### [Arrests and searches in police operation](#)

Sun Online | 5th October

Masked officers of the Special Operations (SO) of the Maldives Police Service has conducted searches in different areas of the capital, Malé City, and made a number of arrests as part of a special operation. In the special operation, a young man was arrested near the Petral Hotel in Mahchangolhi while a number of others in the area were stopped and searched.

### **MYANMAR**

#### [Bangladesh scuttles boats, jails captains to curb refugee influx](#)

Mizzima/AFP | 6th October

Bangladesh has destroyed at least 30 wooden fishing boats to deter local captains from smuggling Rohingya refugees and illegal drugs across the border from strife-torn Myanmar, officials said Thursday. Border guards seized the vessels and arrested the captains after they were intercepted Tuesday evening bringing more than 700 Rohingya Muslims across the river from Myanmar's westernmost Rakhine state.

#### [Terrorists started new Rakhine fires: Myanmar army chief office](#)

Mizzima/AFP | 6th October

Rohingya terrorists have set fire to houses in Rakhine state in recent days to intensify the exodus of the Muslim minority, the office of Myanmar's commander-in-chief said Thursday, in an apparent rebuke to fresh accusations of arson by the army. More than 500,000 Muslim Rohingya have run from communal bloodshed in Myanmar in the last six weeks and numbers are again rising.

### **NEPAL**

#### [Contract process for India-funded road projects begins](#)

MyRepublica | 5th October

The government has started contract process for projects to be developed by utilizing Line of Credit III announced by India in 2014. The process is finally taking off after the southern neighbor withdrew its proposal of carrying out contract process from New Delhi itself. The process was halted for at least six months after Nepal denied the Indian proposal. To begin with, the government is beginning contract process for road projects worth Rs 35 billion. It is utilizing another Rs 20 billion from the soft loan for irrigation projects.

#### [House to pass nine bills today](#)

The Himalayan Times | 6th October

The Parliament Secretariat has listed nine bills for today's House meeting out of which four to five bills are likely

to be passed. The government wants maximum number of bills passed as the term of the current Parliament will end on October 21.

## PAKISTAN

### [Pakistan warns India against targeting its N-installations](#)

Dawn | 6th October

Foreign Minister Khawaja Mohammad Asif warned on Thursday that if India launched a surgical strike on the country's nuclear installations, nobody should expect restraint from Pakistan either. Indian Air Force chief B.S. Dhanoa said on Wednesday that if India needed to carry out a surgical strike, his aircraft could target Pakistan's nuclear installations and destroy them. The foreign minister addressed the Indian air chief's remarks at a talk at the US Institute of Peace in Washington on Thursday, urging Indian leaders not to contemplate such actions as those could have dire consequences.

### [Govt left red-faced by outbursts of allies in National Assembly](#)

Dawn | 6th October

The government faced embarrassment in the National Assembly on Thursday when, one after the other, members from the treasury benches lashed out at their political leadership. Soon after the lower house of parliament approved two amendments to the recently-passed Elections Act, former prime minister Zafarullah Khan Jamali, who joined the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) after being elected as an independent candidate in the 2013 polls, fired the first salvo by asking Nawaz Sharif to fulfil his commitment to accept the Supreme Court's verdict in the Panama Papers case.

## SRI LANKA

### [Sri Lanka Prime Minister to undertake an official visit to Finland to enhance bilateral relations](#)

Colombo Page | 4th October

Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe will undertake an official visit to Finland with the aim to enhance bilateral relations. Prime Minister Wickremesinghe is scheduled to leave the country on a private visit to Germany on Thursday, 5th October. After his tour in Berlin, he will lead a Sri Lankan delegation to Finland on the 9th October. The Sri Lankan Prime Minister and his delegation is scheduled to meet Finland's Prime Minister Juha Sipila and several other high level leaders to hold bilateral discussions. The Premier's visit intends to strengthen ties between the two countries and to form new ties in the economic, trade and Industrial sectors, the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement.

### [No decision to raise fuel prices, Petroleum Minister says](#)

Colombo Page | 5th October

Minister of Petroleum Resources Development Arjuna Ranatunga has said that no decision has been taken by the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC) to increase the fuel prices. Minister Ranatunga said the other fuel supplier, Lanka Indian Oil Company (Lanka ) held a discussion with himself and the Ministry of Finance on raising their fuel prices and the government has requested them not to increase fuel prices. He said that if the Lanka IOC

increased the prices of fuel, considering the burden on the people the CPC would supply oil at the existing price even if the Corporation incurs losses. However, if the government decides to increase fuel prices, then it would have to be increased, the Minister said.

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