

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

November 8th , 2017| Volume: 3 - 2/11

[NATO to review Afghan mission as the alliance mulls troops increase](#)

Khaama Press| 8th November
The NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg hailed the Afghan people and the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces for their bravery and resilience amid a tough situation the country is facing. Speaking to reporters ahead of the NATO defense ministerial in Brussels, Stoltenberg said the alliance will review its mission, Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, during the defense ministerial.

[Court indicts Nawaz in 3 separate corruption references, rejects plea for clubbing NAB cases](#)

Dawn|8th November
The accountability court hearing corruption cases against Nawaz Sharif and his family members has rejected an application filed by the ousted prime minister for clubbing together the three references filed by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). Supporters surround the car carrying Nawaz Sharif to the court. After the announcement of the judgement, Sharif was called to the rostrum and the judge read out the charges against him. The former prime minister was indicted separately in each of the three references — he plead "not guilty" to all the charges.

[Rohingya crisis: Myanmar says UN move can harm talks with Bangladesh](#)

The Daily Star | 8th November
Myanmar said on Wednesday that the UN Security Council's statement on the Rohingya refugee crisis could "seriously harm" its talks with Bangladesh over repatriating more than 600,000 people who have fled there to escape a Myanmar military crackdown. The Security Council had urged Myanmar, in a statement on Monday, to "ensure no further excessive use of military force" and had expressed "grave concern over reports of human rights violations and abuses in Rakhine State".

AFGHANISTAN

[Quality of Developing Projects Should be Scrutinized; Danish](#)

Daily Outlook Afghanistan| 8th November

Five road construction projects signed on Tuesday between the Ministry of Public Works and contracting

companies in a ceremony which was attended by Second Vice President Sarwar Danish, the Minister of Public Works Yama Yari, Minister of transport Hamid Tahmasi, a number of members of National Assembly, contractors and the media. Referring to the serious will of the National Unity Government (NUG) in developing the roadway across the country, especially in less developed regions, the Second Vice President said that Afghanistan would see a remarkable progress in realm of road construction and developing roadways.

[Government approves new projects worth 1.6 billion Afghanis](#)

Khaama Press | 8th November

The Afghan government has approved new contracts worth 1.6 billion Afghanis during the last meeting of the national procurement commission. The Office of the President, ARG Palace, said the meeting of the national procurement commission was chaired by President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani during which 13 new projects were approved.

BANGLADESH

[Japan admires Sheikh Hasina's role in tackling Rohingya issue](#)

bdnew24 | 8th November

The newly appointed Japanese Ambassador in Bangladesh has praised Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's role in tackling the Rohingya refugee crisis. Hiroyasu Izumi met Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali at his office on Tuesday, the foreign ministry said. During the meeting, he admired the prime minister's "courageous and humanitarian" step to allow the displaced Myanmar nationals to take shelter in Bangladesh in the face of violence committed in Rakhine state. Bangladesh has given shelter to over half a million Rohingyas since Aug 25.

[Google opens merchant account in Bangladesh](#)

The Financial Express | 7th November

The Google Play has finally opened merchant account for app developers in Bangladesh. Previously, Google would not allow app developers to open a merchant account on Google Play from Bangladesh and sell apps on the app store. App developers were only allowed to publish free Android apps and games on this platform. Now the barrier has been finally removed. Earlier this year, State Minister for Information and Communication Technology Zunaid Ahmed Palak received the assurance from the tech giant during his visit to Silicon Valley.

[New 'code of conduct' for banks, NBFIs](#)

The Financial Express | 8th November

The central bank has circulated a 'Code of Conduct' for all banks and non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs) of the country with effect from January 1. All banks and financial institutions have been asked to adhere to the newly-formed guidelines by the Bangladesh Bank (BB). A BB circular in this regard was issued on Monday to ensure integrity and high ethical standards in financial sector in all of their day-to-day activities aligned with the government's Vision 2021.

BHUTAN

[Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen inaugurates Ozone Park](#)

Kuensel | 7th November

Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen graced the commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Montreal Protocol to take steps towards protecting the ozone layer in Thimphu yesterday. Dignitaries and senior officials from the government, United Nations, and private sector attended the event organised by National Environment Commission. At the event, Motithang Park in Thimphu was declared the 'Ozone Park'. With the support from

Thimphu Thromde, the park was remodeled into an ozone advocacy park.

[Legislative Committee proposes amendment of narcotic Act](#)

Kuensel | 6th November

The legislative committee of the National Assembly has submitted a proposal to the Speaker to amend the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and Substance Abuse Act 2015 (NDPSSAA) as an urgent bill in the upcoming winter session. Chairman of the legislative committee, Ritu Raj Chhetri, said that the amendment proposal has also been submitted to the Chairman of National Council, Sonam Kinga (PhD). The committee came up with the proposal after it held consultation meetings with stakeholders such as the Bhutan Narcotics Control Authority (BNCA) on the instruction of the Speaker.

MALDIVES

[State raises MVR 18.1M for Rohingya fund](#)

Sun Online | 7th November

MVR 18.1 million has been raised from the activities initiated by Ministry of Islamic Affairs to raise funds for Rohingya Muslims, says the ministry. Speaking at a press conference this Tuesday, Minister of Islamic Affairs, Dr. Ahmed Ziyad Bagir said more than MVR 12 million was raised from the telethon run in collaboration with the local media. And that the total amount was raised to MVR 18.1 million with the money raised from the charity football match held in association with Football Association of Maldives (FAM).

[Adhurey: PPM, only political party in Maldives](#)

Sun Online | 7th November

Vice President of PPM, the MP for Fonadhoo constituency, Abdul-Raheem Abdulla (Adhurey) has said that PPM is the only active political party in the Maldives. Speaking at the PPM press conference at their office today, Adhurey criticized every other political party in the country. "PPM is the only political party in the Maldives. We believe there are no other political parties." The Vice President of PPM said.

MYANMAR

[Myanmar army vows to throw out Indian rebels](#)

Mizzima | 7th November

Myanmar's army has vowed to throw out all anti-Indian rebels from the country's Northeast from Burmese territory. While speaking at the recently held India-Myanmar regional border committee meeting, Major General Phone Myat, commander of Tatmadaw's North West Command told the Indian commanders that his forces would fight these rebel groups and chase them out of Myanmar. "We will not allow our soil to be used against India," Maj-Gen Myat told the three-day meet at Imphal, capital of India's Manipur state, that ended on November 3. "We will fight them under the leadership of our commander-in-chief Senior Min Aung Hlaing."

[UN turns up pressure on Myanmar over Rakhine crisis](#)

Mizzima | 7th November

The UN Security Council on Monday called on Myanmar to rein in its military campaign in Rakhine state and allow hundreds of thousands of Muslim Rohingya driven from their homes to return. In a unanimous statement backed by China, the council strongly condemned the violence that has forced more than 600,000 Rohingya to

flee across the border to Bangladesh. The council expressed "grave concern" over human rights violations, "including by the Myanmar security forces" against the Rohingya such as killing, sexual violence and burning of homes and property.

NEPAL

[EC may let poll duty staff cast votes](#)

The Himalayan Times | 8th November

The Election Commission is likely to allow government employees deployed on election duty to cast votes in the upcoming provincial and parliamentary elections slated for November 26 and December 7. Spokesperson for EC Nabaraj Dhakal told THT that the poll panel had already formed a committee under the leadership of Joint Secretary Dinesh Ghimire to study possibilities of letting government employees deployed on poll duty cast their votes.

[Japanese businesspeople show investment interest in Nepal](#)

MyRepublica | 8th November

A delegation of Japanese businesspersons and industrialist has arrived in Kathmandu to look for business opportunities in Nepal. The 12-member delegation has representatives of eight different companies associated with Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) in Singapore. Nepali business leaders are encouraged by the visit and their interest to invest in Nepal.

PAKISTAN

[France to continue cooperating in higher education with Pakistan](#)

The Express Tribune | 8th November

France will continue cooperating in higher education with Pakistan and improving bilateral academic ties. This was stated by Dr Marc Barety, the newly appointed France Ambassador to Pakistan on Tuesday in a meeting with Higher Education Commission (HEC) Chairman Dr Mukhtar Ahmed. Dr Ahmed hoped that bilateral collaborative efforts between Pakistan and France will be further strengthened in the days to come.

[Iran's supreme leader throws weight behind Pakistan on Kashmir](#)

The Express Tribune | 7th November

DG ISPR Maj-Gen Asif Ghafoor, flanked by his Iranian counterpart, has addressed a joint press conference with his Iranian counterpart after the COAS Gen Qamar Bajwa met Iranian officials as part of his official visit to Tehran. On behalf of the Pakistani army chief, he thanked the Iranian military and government for hospitality extended during the visit. Gen Asif Ghafoor briefed Iranian media about Pakistan's efforts, achievements and sacrifices in war against terror and towards regional peace. He also thanked Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei for his 'supportive statement' on Kashmir issue.

SRI LANKA

[Sri Lanka Premier says government plans for an expanded economic zone connecting major cities](#)

Colombo Page | 7th November

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe says the government is working towards generating an expanded economic zone which will connect Colombo, Kandy, and Hambantota. The Prime Minister made this remark addressing the 30th International CityNet Congress held at the Hilton Colombo on Monday as the Chief Guest. The CityNet

Congress commenced Monday under the patronage of the Prime Minister. Speaking at the event, the Premier said the economic growth of Asia is given by the cities, which are the main beneficiaries of the economies and it has been observed that within the last 20-30 years emergence of cities as economic centers of Asia.

[Minister calls for strict action against mafias creating artificial shortages in power and energy sector](#)

Colombo Page | 8th November

Minister Patali Champika Ranwaka has called the relevant authorities to conduct an investigation to detect the mafia style activities and those who are responsible for those acts in power and energy sector. He said that strict punishment must be introduced against the culprits. Commenting on the current petrol crisis at a press conference today at the Megapolis and Western Development Ministry in Colombo, the Minister reminded that a similar incident occurred in 2012. These types of malpractices are a common phenomenon in the electricity generation sector, he said.

[Sri Lanka Cabinet subcommittee appointed to look into fuel crisis](#)

Colombo Page | 8th November

Sri Lanka's Cabinet of Ministers has appointed a subcommittee to investigate causes for the recent fuel crisis. The subcommittee is headed by Minister Patali Champika Ranawaka and comprises ministers Anura Priyadarshana Yapa and Sarath Amunugama. At a media conference held at the Party headquarters Tuesday, Minister Duminda Dissanayake said that the failure to maintain oil stocks, place orders under the time frame and the simultaneous breakdown of the refinery need to be probed. The President had appointed a committee to look into the crisis and intend to solve this problem by tomorrow, the Minister 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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