



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

October 9th, 2017 | Volume: 3 - 03/10

[Afghan President Ghani asks Taliban to carefully opt between peace and violence](#)

Khaama Press | 8th October
Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani once again called on Taliban group to renounce violence and join peace process, insisting that the option lies with the group and therefore they should be specific in their review. Speaking during a ceremony for the transfer of the UH-60 Black Hawks to the Afghan forces in Kandahar Airfield, President Ghani said the Taliban should forget the perceptions that they can defeat the Afghan security forces. He said the Taliban are still in a position where options lies with the group and the government extends the hand for peace.

[China willing to promote Bangladesh-Myanmar peace talks to resolve Rohingya crisis](#)

bdnews24 | 9th October
China says it is willing to set the stage for mediation between Myanmar and Bangladesh to resolve the Rohingya crisis. China has backed its longtime ally Myanmar in the military crackdown against the Rohingyas in Rakhine State after insurgent attacks on security forces on Aug 25. Bangladesh is “appreciative” of China’s ‘One Belt One Road’ initiative, believing it will bring “important opportunities” for Bangladesh’s goal of becoming a middle-income country by 2021 and a Developed Country by 2041. Under the initiative which comprises the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, China is focusing on building a trade and infrastructure network for connecting Asian countries with Europe and Africa along the ancient Silk Road routes.

[Macroeconomic risks in Pakistan increasing: World Bank](#)

Dawn | 9th October
The World Bank has warned that macroeconomic risks in Pakistan have increased substantially during the fiscal year 2017, as the external balance is particularly vulnerable given the persistent current account deficit, affecting the country’s reserve position. Pakistan’s weaker macroeconomic discipline has led to vulnerabilities in the balance of payments. Since the IMF programme came to an end, external indicators of the economy have deteriorated, says ‘The South Asia Economic Focus Fall 2017’ released on Sunday ahead of the World Bank and IMF annual meetings.

[Certain circles in ANDS ranks have no capability or will to end war, claims Hekmatyar](#)

Khaama Press | 8th October

The leader of Hezb-e-Islami Gulbuddin Hekmatyar has said certain people exist among the security forces ranks who are not having the capabilities or the will to end the war. Hekmatyar made the remarks during a meeting with the tribal and Jihadi leaders from the northern Parwan province of Afghanistan, according to the media wing of the party. However, he did not provide any further information regarding his latest claims regarding the security forces ranks. He said the circles are intentionally and willfully attempting to extend the war in the country.

[Pakistan can't hide its global isolation: Ministry of Defence Spokesperson Waziri](#)

Afghanistan Times | 8th October

The Ministry of Defense on Sunday strongly rejected Pakistan foreign minister's remarks regarding the Afghan security forces capability, saying 'the entire world has recognized Pakistan a state sponsoring terrorism.' Pakistan Foreign Minister Khawaja Asif during his ongoing trip to Washington had alleged that the Afghan security forces were unable to take security responsibility of their country. He had said around 40 percent of the Afghanistan territory was under Taliban control and also alleged that widespread corruption in the security sector of Afghanistan hampered the abilities of Afghan forces. MoD Spokesman Maj. Gen. Daulat Waziri told Pajhwok Afghan News that the international community recognized Pakistan as state supporting terrorism and had changed relations with Islamabad.

BANGLADESH

[At least 12 drown in Rohingya boat capsizes](#)

AFP/ Prothom Alo | 9th October

At least 12 people died and scores were missing Monday after a boat packed with Rohingya refugees -- many of them children -- capsized, the latest tragedy to strike those fleeing violence in Myanmar's Rakhine state. Coast guard and border guard officials said the boat was overloaded with about 100 people when it sank late Sunday in the mouth of the Naf river that separates Myanmar from Bangladesh. Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) official Abdul Jalil told AFP 12 bodies had been recovered after an all-night rescue operation, saying "they include 10 children, an elderly woman and a man".

[Bangladesh Bank fines seven errant banks for extralegal share market activities](#)

The Financial Express | 9th October

The central bank fined seven commercial banks for their recent share-market activities by violating the legal sanction, officials said. "We've imposed the fines with substantial amount of money on the banks for violating the rules of the existing Banking Companies Act and the central bank's instructions on share-market investment," a senior official of the Bangladesh Bank (BB) told the FE Sunday. He wouldn't name the names of the errant banks and the amount of money which will be deducted from their accounts as penalty. Sources, however, said the central bank has already informed the banks concerned about

BHUTAN

[Energy trade quandary](#)

Keunsel | 7th October

Although hydropower, which is supposedly the clean energy, is the country's major energy resource, it's spending on dirty energy such as fossil fuel is negating the hydropower revenue. While the electricity sector is the leading contributor to growth of the economy – its share to GDP accounts for 13.38 percent of the total GDP in 2016 –

transport sector is completely dependent on fossil fuels. And this sector is growing rapidly. In fact, between 2015 and 2016, consumption of fossil fuels increased more than the supply of electricity from hydropower plant.

MALDIVES

[Majlis sitting continued despite protest by opposition MPs](#)

Sun Online | 9th October

The first sitting of the third session of the People's Majlis was carried out this Monday morning despite protest by opposition parliamentarians inside the Majlis chamber. Parliamentarians were due to hear the General Purpose Committee's review of the amendment proposed to Article 207 of People's Majlis Regulation by Speaker Abdulla Maseeh Mohamed, and vote on the amendment this Monday.

MYANMAR

[UN, EU, NRC call on Myanmar for action on refugees](#)

Mizzima/AFP | 7th October

The United Nations, the EU and the Norwegian Refugee Council are calling on the Myanmar government for action on humanitarian grounds to help ease the crisis in Rakhine State. The lack of humanitarian access granted by Myanmar's government to Rakhine state, where more than half a million Rohingya Muslims have fled violence, is "unacceptable", the UN said Friday.

[Hybrid power units deployed in Myanmar](#)

Mizzima | 9th October

Flexenclosure, a Sweden-based designer and manufacturer of prefabricated data centre buildings and hybrid power systems for the ICT industry, announced an order from energy service company Nordic Tele Services Ltd (NTS) for 22 eSite x10 hybrid power systems to be deployed at telecom sites in Myanmar.

NEPAL

['1950 treaty will not remain the same'](#)

The Himalayan Times | 9th October

The fifth meeting of the Eminent Persons Group on Nepal-India relations concluded here today, with the Nepali side claiming 'things would not be the same' as far as the 1950 Nepal-India Treaty of Peace and Friendship was concerned. Bhekh Bahadur Thapa, coordinator of the EPG from the Nepali side, said the group would re-study the developments so far and would come up with a recommendation to 'either replace the treaty or to put in place something new' in its final report. "As we have said this treaty will not remain the same, it does not matter however you name it — amendment or replacement," added Nilambar Acharya, another EPG member representing Nepal.

[Quitting of senior RJPN leaders creates ripples in Province-5](#)

MyRepublica | 9th October

Within a few days of quitting Rastriya Janata Party Nepal (RJPN), Pashupati Dayal Mishra decided to run for the

upcoming elections from Banke (constituency number 2) with the election symbol 'sun' of CPN-UML. The UML's decision to give ticket to Mishra has triggered ripples in the RPJN. Such incidents have sent shockwaves to RJPN in most of the districts of Province-5, from Nawalparasi to Banke. Not just within the RJPN, but the incident is expected to create ripples in the provincial politics as a whole.

PAKISTAN

[Maryam Nawaz appears before accountability court in Islamabad](#)

Dawn|9th October

Maryam Nawaz, daughter of ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif, has arrived to appear before an accountability court in Islamabad in connection with a reference prepared against her by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). Maryam arrived at the court amid tight security, accompanied by senior PML-N leaders and ministers. Her husband, retired Captain Muhammad Safdar, who was taken into custody by NAB, is expected to arrive at the court soon. Capt Safdar is being transported to the court in an armoured vehicle, DawnNews reported. The son-in-law of Nawaz Sharif and his wife had arrived from London on Monday morning to appear before the accountability court in connection with the NAB reference pertaining to London properties owned by the Sharif family.

[Federal Law Minister Zahid Hamid meets Shahbaz](#)

Dawn|8th October

Federal Law Minister Zahid Hamid clarified his position to Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif regarding controversy over the clause dealing with Khatm-i-Nabuwat. In his speech during a party convention in Alhamra Hall, Shahbaz lambasted the federal minister who was [allegedly] responsible for making changes to a clause of the election laws which dealt with Khatm-i-Nabuwat. The chief minister asked his elder brother Nawaz Sharif to take the responsible to task because he had hurt the sentiments of millions of Pakistanis. "Mr Hamid called on Shahbaz and clarified his position. He told the chief minister that he was not responsible for the mistake as it was somehow overlooked," an official told Dawn.

SRI LANKA

[Sri Lanka Opposition Leader highlights the need for merger of Northern and Eastern provinces](#)

Colombo

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October

Sri Lanka's Opposition Leader and the leader of the main Tamil party Tamil National Alliance (TNA) R. Sampanthan has highlighted the need for the Northern and Eastern Provinces to merge to function as one province as a majority of Tamil speaking people live in the two provinces. During his meeting with visiting UK Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific, Mark Field on Wednesday at the British High Commissioner's official residence, Westminster House in Colombo, the TNA leader stressed that that the majority Sinhala community need not to be afraid of the merger as there will be a constitutional protection preventing any move towards separation.

About Ananta Aspen Centre

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significance, values-based leadership and cross-sector outreach by engaging the civil society, government, private sector, and other key stakeholders.

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