

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

20th September, 2023 | Volume - 9 - 03/09

<p>Afghan women’s mental health drastically declines amid Taliban rule</p> <p>Afghanistan Times 19th September</p> <p>The mental health of Afghan women, who have been grappling with the harsh measures imposed by the Taliban since they assumed power two years ago, has shown a disturbing decline across the nation, according to a comprehensive report jointly published by three United Nations agencies on Tuesday. The report, a collaborative effort of U.N. Women, the International Organization for Migration, and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, highlights a concerning trend.</p>	<p>Nepal, India reach deal on boosting cross-border power transmission</p> <p>The Kathmandu Post 21st September</p> <p>Nepali and Indian officials have agreed to open several transmission corridors to boost electricity trade between the neighbours. The 14th meeting of the Joint Technical Team (JTT) under the Joint Steering Committee held in New Delhi on Wednesday reached an understanding on increasing the quantum of power to be traded through the Dhalkebar-Muzaffarpur cross-border transmission line and accelerating the under-construction cross-border lines to boost power trade.</p>	<p>11.7m women added to voter list, but vast gender gap remains</p> <p>Dawn 20th September</p> <p>The gender gap among voters has reduced with the addition of 11.74 million, compared to 9.28m male voters, to the electoral rolls since 2018 general elections, bringing the total number of registered voters in the country to around 127m from the erstwhile 106m. The latest statistics released by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday showed that the difference between men and women of voting age stands at around 10m in country where women make up 49pc of the population.</p>
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PAKISTAN

[PM meets Iranian president on UNGA sidelines](#)

The Express Tribune | 20th September

Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar on Tuesday held a bilateral meeting with the Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi on the sidelines of the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in New York.

Underscoring the close fraternal relations between the two neighbouring countries, the prime minister reaffirmed Pakistan's strong commitment to further strengthen and deepen these ties, with a particular focus on enhancing cooperation in the economic domain.

[Multi-country military exercise 'Eternal Brotherhood-II' begins in Barotha](#)

The News | 19th September

With an aim to further cement military-to-military ties among the friendly countries and benefit from each other's experience against terrorism, a two-week long multi-national special forces exercise "Eternal Brotherhood-II" kicked off in Punjab's Barotha, said Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) on Tuesday. According to the military's media wing, special forces contingents from Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Qatar, Turkey and Uzbekistan are participating in the exercise.

[PM for adequate financing, actions in key areas to meet SDGs](#)

The Nation | 20th September

Pakistan fully supports China's Global Development Initiative (GDI) that focuses on cooperation and partnerships and addresses such issues as extreme poverty, food security and climate change, Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar said Tuesday, while underscoring the need for adequate finance for the development process.

"The GDI can serve as a mechanism to enable developing countries, with assistance from UN agencies, to prepare a pipeline of viable and bankable projects in their priority areas," he told a high-level meeting on GDI and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on the sidelines of the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly. The meeting was presided over by China's Vice President Han Zheng.

SRI LANKA

[USAID pledges to continue to support Sri Lanka's recovery efforts](#)

Colombo Page | 20th September

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) will continue to support Sri Lanka's recovery efforts, the USAID Administrator, Samantha Power has assured the Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, President Wickremesinghe met the USAID Administrator, Samantha Power on the side-lines of the UN General Assembly in New York on Tuesday and held discussions.

[Local, international Met. Depts. unable to forecast SL weather in future: Amaraweera](#)

Daily Mirror | 20th September

An intriguing situation has emerged where both the Sri Lanka Meteorological Department and international weather forecasting agencies find themselves unable to provide weather forecasts for Sri Lanka, Agriculture Minister Mahinda Amaraweera said.

Addressing an event yesterday, he said it has been realized that there are immense challenges against making weather predictions for a small island like Sri Lanka.

[President meets Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina in New York](#)

The Island | 20th September

President Ranil Wickremesinghe held a fruitful meeting with the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, in New York on Tuesday (19). The meeting centered on various aspects of bilateral relations and cooperation between the two South Asian nations.

President Wickremesinghe expressed his desire to strengthen the ties between the two countries and his intention of visiting Bangladesh in November or December.

AFGHANISTAN

[Australia rejects 50,000 Afghan humanitarian visa requests](#)

The Khaama Press | 19th September

The Australian government has announced that it has rejected the asylum requests of 50,000 Afghan citizens who had applied for a humanitarian visa in the country after the fall of the resurgence of the Taliban regime in August 2021.

According to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) on Tuesday, in its latest report, it stated that out of 208,000 asylum requests made by Afghan citizens from the beginning of 2021 until now, approximately 50,000 applicants have been rejected by the Australian government.

[Solar Power Project in Kabul Begins, Projected to Produce Ten Megawatts](#)

TOLO News | 19th September

Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, inaugurated a 10-megawatt solar power generation project worth \$6.5 million in the Surobi district of Kabul near Band Naghlu.

Also, his office said online that the Islamic Emirate decided to give the contract for the completion of the next 500-KW transmission line project from Turkmenistan to the Afghan Invest Company in exchange for a mining concession. This initiative is expected to facilitate the transfer of hundreds of megawatts of electricity to Afghanistan, resulting in annual savings of \$200 million.

BANGLADESH

[PM for reorganising financial system to overcome global economic crisis](#)

Prothom Alo | 20th September

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today stressed the need for reorganising international financial mechanism to address the ongoing global economic crisis.

She came up with the importance at a high-level roundtable titled "Towards a Fair International Financial Architecture" in UN headquarters here convened by Spain and the European Council on the sidelines of 78th UNGA session.

[Bangladesh economy growth in FY-2023 is higher than forecast: ADB](#)

Bangladesh Post | 20th September

Growth in the economy of Bangladesh is estimated higher than the forecast for fiscal 2023, the latest Asian Development Bank (ADB) report released on Wednesday.

According to the report, the higher estimate of 6.0% for FY2023 (ended 30 June 2023) reflects strong net exports as imports fell more sharply than expected and export growth slowed less than expected.

On the supply side, manufacturing firms of all sizes leveraged supportive government policies to contribute to growth. Crop losses to floods, cyclones, and droughts were partly offset by subsidies, incentives, and other measures.

[Bangladesh, Germany sign 2 technical coop agreements](#)

Dhaka Tribune | 19th September

Two technical cooperation agreements were signed on Tuesday between Bangladesh and Germany against two projects in the fields of the Sundarbans Mangroves and in tanneries.

The agreements are on the projects titled: "Integrated management of the Sundarbans Mangroves and the Marine Protected Area 'Swatch of No Ground (SoNG)' Bangladesh" and "Good Working Conditions in Tanneries (GOTAN)".

BHUTAN

[Living donor kidney transplant begins in Bhutan](#)

Kuensel | 19th September

A significant milestone was achieved in Bhutan's healthcare sector as the living donor kidney transplant service was inaugurated in JDWNRH yesterday.

This historic event marks the first-ever renal transplant surgery of its kind in Bhutan and is the result of a collaborative effort between Bhutan and the Kingdom of Thailand.

A team of highly skilled medical experts from Rajavithi Hospital in Bangkok is currently in Bhutan to provide crucial assistance and expertise in this ground breaking endeavor.

[King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck's Unofficial Trip to Singapore](#)

Daily Bhutan | 18th September

His Majesty King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck is currently on an unofficial visit to Singapore, where he has been engaged in several significant events and meetings. During his trip, he had met with Singapore's newly elected President, Tharman Shanmugaratnam, as well as Ng Kok Song, one of the three presidential candidates. A highlight of his visit was attending the inauguration ceremony of Tharman Shanmugaratnam as Singapore's 9th President, an event of great diplomatic importance.

[Bhutan Airlines resumes scheduled flight operations to New Delhi and Kathmandu](#)

Business Bhutan | 18th September

After a coronavirus pandemic-induced hiatus in the past more than two years, Bhutan Airlines (Tashi Air Pvt. Ltd.) is set to resume its scheduled flight operations to Kathmandu, Nepal, and New Delhi, India, starting from 16 September.

Bhutan Airlines (Tashi Air Pvt. Ltd.) is delighted in bringing back the joy and ease of traveling to these destinations for our valued passengers.

MALDIVES

[Parliament approves October 30 for referendum with MDP backing](#)

The Edition | 20th September

Parliament on Wednesday, September 20 has approved the referendum resolution to directly inform Elections Commission (EC) to hold voting on October 30.

The resolution was submitted by The Democrats' presidential candidate and Hulhudhoo MP Ilyas Labeeb earlier with a key amendment.

He revised the resolution to schedule the referendum on October 30, which should be instructed to the EC directly by the parliament.

[China embassy asks Maldives to investigate fake news](#)

Sun | 17th September

The Chinese embassy in Maldives says it has noticed a number false media reports to smear China, and has asked the Maldivian authorities to investigate media outlets spreading false information.

In a [statement](#) on Sunday, the embassy said that China always follows a policy of non-interference into other countries' internal affairs.

"What we have done in Maldives is only to help its economic and social development, from which the local people have benefited a lot," reads the statement.

[State revenue reaches MVR 22.9 billion](#)

Raajje | 16th September

The Ministry of Finance has revealed that the state revenue has reached MVR 22.9 billion so far in 2023.

Statistics released by the Finance Ministry show that the state revenue reached MVR 22.9 billion by 07 September 2023. The state revenue at 07 September, 2022 was at MVR 19.7 billion.

The Ministry's statistics show that income generated from tax currently sits at MVR 17.5 billion. During the same period last year, the state earned MVR 14.2 billion as tax revenue.

MYANMAR

[As Hunger Surges in Myanmar, China and Russia Weaponize Business](#)

The Irrawaddy | 20th September

As sickness and starvation increasingly stalk the people of Myanmar during the intensifying post-coup economic crisis, China and Russia are continuing to increase their ties with the pariah regime—and humanitarian assistance is not at the top of their lists.

Since early September, at least 11 junta ministers and Union-level officials have visited China and Russia, signing agreements and memoranda of understanding. The governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar and Union Election Commission officials have both visited Russia and China.

[Military still deploying warships in southern Myanmar battles](#)

Myanmar Now | 20th September

The junta army is continuing to rely on support from the navy in its fight against resistance forces in Palaw Township, Myeik District, located on the Andaman Sea coast in southern Myanmar's Tanintharyi Region.

Junta warships began shelling several of the township's coastal villages—including To, Pi Tat, Ma Daung and Let Ku—from offshore using heavy artillery on the morning of September 11, according to members of the People's Defence Forces (PDF).

NEPAL

[PM Dahal meets with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres](#)

The Himalayan Times | 18th September

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', who is currently in New York, USA to attend the 78th United Nations General Assembly, met with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres in the UN Headquarters earlier today.

During the meeting, matters related to different issues including Nepal's peace process, peacekeeping, climate change, Sustainable Development Goals, Least Developed Countries and development financing were discussed.

[Remittance inflow increased by 26 per cent in the first month of the current fiscal year](#)

Onlinekhabar | 18th September

The Nepal Rastra Bank reported that remittance inflow in the country has surged by 25.8 per cent to reach Rs 116.02 billion in the first month of the current fiscal year.

This marks an increase from the 20.3 per cent growth observed during the same period in the previous fiscal year.

Over Rs 1 trillion in remittances came into the country in fiscal year 2022/2023. Similarly, the central bank stated that the number of Nepali workers obtaining approval for foreign employment stood at 39,152 in the first month.

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