News in brief

**Sri Lanka corporals jailed**
Colombo, Sri Lanka: Nine army soldiers were sentenced to life imprisonment at the Supreme Court for the gang rape of a 19-year-old schoolgirl near Colombo in August 2018, in a case that generated international attention.

**Mali**

President Roch Marc Kaboré has dissolved the National Assembly of Mali and suspended the country’s constitution, a move that is expected to pave the way for new elections. The move comes amid protests against the government’s handling of the country’s economy and the ongoing security situation in the north.

**Malaysia**

Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak has called for a snap election amid growing criticism of his government. The move follows a series of anti-corruption investigations into the 1MDB state investment fund and the $700 million in cash that was reportedly awarded to his personal bank accounts.

**Azerbaijan**

President Ilham Aliyev has been re-elected for another term, despite international criticism of the election process. The election, held on March 31, was marred by reports of voter fraud and limits on press freedom.

**India**

The government has announced plans to build a new parliament building in New Delhi, a project that is expected to cost around $1.5 billion and take more than five years to complete. The project is part of a wider national development plan that aims to modernize the capital city.

**Europe**

European Union leaders have agreed to extend the Brexit divorce period to October 31, providing more time for talks between the EU and the UK on a future relationship.

**Latin America**

President Juan Carlos Varela of Panama has announced plans to hold a referendum on changing the country’s constitution, which currently allows him to serve up to two more terms. The referendum is expected to be held in the second half of 2019.

**South Africa**

The government has announced plans to increase the minimum wage by 10% over the next three years, in an attempt to address high unemployment rates and improve living standards among the country’s workers.