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GENERAL

**Across Regions**

**U.N. study finds peacekeepers avoid using force to protect civilians**

United Nations peacekeeping missions routinely avoid using force to protect civilians who are under attack, intervening in only 20 percent of cases despite being authorized to do so by the U.N. Security Council, an internal U.N. study found. "There is a persistent pattern of peacekeeping operations not intervening with force when civilians are under attack," the report by the Office of Internal Oversight Services said. "Peacekeepers are absent from many locations when civilians come under attack, and when they are present, are unable or unwilling to prevent serious physical harm from being inflicted," the 26-page report said. Of 507 incidents involving civilians that were included in U.N. reports between 2010 and 2013, 101 sparked immediate response from peacekeepers, the report said.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/16/us-un-peacekeepers-civilians-idUSBREA4F0M220140516**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/16/us-un-peacekeepers-civilians-idUSBREA4F0M220140516)

**Myanmar fencing off the Bangladesh border**

The construction of a fence along Myanmar’s border with Bangladesh has resumed in Arakan State. New checkpoints will also be built to stop people entering Myanmar illegally. The Bangladesh government had objected to the construction. Now, as ethnic unrest tears though the Arakan State, security efforts at the border are being stepped up.The fence will run along the 210km land border between the two countries and will also stretch along the maritime border of the River Naf passing Maungdaw.

**DVB -** [**http://www.dvb.no/dvb-video/building-barriers-fencing-off-the-bangladesh-border/40644**](http://www.dvb.no/dvb-video/building-barriers-fencing-off-the-bangladesh-border/40644)

CEE/CIS

**Across CEE/CIS**

**Toll mounts as thousands in Serbia, Bosnia flee historic floods**

Thousands of people crammed into boats and army trucks fled their homes in Serbia and Bosnia on 18 May after record rainfall turned the Sava river into a deadly torrent and caused the worst floods in more than a century. According to officials in both countries, the disaster has killed at least 44 people. Some towns have been completely cut off and rescue teams feared the worst as improving weather allowed them to move in. Some 10,000 people have been evacuated so far from the worst affected areas of northern Bosnia. The worst rainfall since records began in the late 19th century caused landslides that brought more destruction and also prompted a landmine warning.

**AFP -** [**http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/world/410440/toll-mounts-as-thousands-in-serbia-bosnia-flee-historic-floods**](http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/world/410440/toll-mounts-as-thousands-in-serbia-bosnia-flee-historic-floods)

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/18/us-balkans-flood-idUSBREA4G03P20140518?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/18/us-balkans-flood-idUSBREA4G03P20140518?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews)

**Bulgaria**

**Lom prepares for flood amid heavy rains in Western Balkans**

The water level of the Danube River near Bulgaria's Lom rose by 54 centimeters over the past 24 hours to 824 centimeters, causing the lowest sections of the port to flood. Work continues only in the high berths of the port complex, while the activities at the others have been stopped and power supply has been cut, according to reports of the Bulgarian National Radio. The local authorities have ordered for temporary dykes to be built. The city of Lom will be one of the first places to be flooded if the water level rises further, exceeding 940 centimeters.

[**http://www.novinite.com/articles/160614/Bulgaria's+Lom+Prepares+for+Flood+amid+Heavy+Rains+in+Western+Balkans**](http://www.novinite.com/articles/160614/Bulgaria's+Lom+Prepares+for+Flood+amid+Heavy+Rains+in+Western+Balkans)

**Turkey**

**Police detain 24 in mine disaster investigation**

Turkish police detained 24 people, including mining company executives and personnel, as an investigation into last week's mine disaster got underway and the last of the 301 victims were buried on 18 May. Police formed a cordon around the court house in Soma as a crowd of onlookers, journalists and relatives of those detained grew steadily. Inside, prosecutors questioned company employees, a police official reported. Prosecutors have sent 11 people before the court with the request that judges remand them in custody, and they continued questioning of the remaining 13 suspects, the reports said.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/18/us-turkey-mine-idUSBREA4H04320140518**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/18/us-turkey-mine-idUSBREA4H04320140518)

**Ukraine**

**Children swept up in violence, says UNICEF**

UNICEF is deeply concerned about the unrest in Ukraine and its damaging impact on the lives of children. We know that children have been involved in violent demonstrations and we are examining reports of children being killed and injured in Odessa. UNICEF condemns these grave violations of children’s rights in the strongest possible terms. UNICEF reports an increase in the demand for psychosocial services for children alongside the disruption of access to education and health services. It is dangerous and detrimental to a child’s health and wellbeing to be witness to or become swept up in violence.

**UNICEF -** [**http://www.unicef.org/media/media\_73507.html**](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_73507.html)

**FM calls on West to impose tougher sanctions on Russia**

The West should impose tougher sanctions on Russia, which is waging a "hidden war" in eastern Ukraine, Ukraine's acting FM Andriy Deshchytsia said in an interview. The United States and the European Union have already imposed several rounds of sanctions on Russian individuals and some companies, accusing Russian President Vladimir Putin of stoking the eastern rebellions, a charge Putin has denied. "The West should impose more severe sanctions that hit specific economic sectors such as banking and target Russian decision makers," he said in an advance copy of an interview due to be published in Saturday's print edition.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/17/us-ukraine-crisis-deshchytsia-idUSBREA4G00120140517?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/17/us-ukraine-crisis-deshchytsia-idUSBREA4G00120140517?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews)

**Two million votes at risk in east**

Almost two million people in eastern Ukraine could be prevented from voting in the presidential election if the government fails to ensure security in rebel areas, the country's election body warned on Saturday. The Central Election Commission said it could be impossible to organise the 25 May vote in the eastern regions of Donetsk and Lugansk, where pro-Russian insurgents fighting Kiev's rule have declared their own independent republics. The commission cited cases of "threats and physical pressure" against local election officials and said there were a number of offices where the security of its staff could not be assured.

**AFP -** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/130980-two-million-votes-at-risk-in-east-ukraine**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/130980-two-million-votes-at-risk-in-east-ukraine)

**Turmoil threatens farmers and global markets**

With prices for petrol, equipment and seeds all soaring, daily life for Ukrainian farmers has become a real struggle -- with knock-on effects not just for the local economy but for markets across the globe. Ukraine's vast swathe of "black earth" is among the most fertile regions on the planet, making the country the world's third biggest producer of maize and sixth for wheat, according to the International Grains Council. Ukraine's maize production is expected to drop to 23.3 million tonnes, down 18% on the last harvest, according to monitoring agency Agritel. Wheat is forecast to drop 16% to 18.3 million tonnes.

**AFP -** [**https://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/ukraine-turmoil-threatens-farmers-global-110413991.html**](https://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/ukraine-turmoil-threatens-farmers-global-110413991.html)

EAP

**Across EAP**

**China evacuates 3,000 nationals from Vietnam**

China has evacuated more than 3,000 of its nationals from Vietnam after a wave of anti-China unrest following Beijing's deployment of an oil rig in contested waters. The announcement on Sunday came after Vietnamese civil society groups on Saturday called for fresh demonstrations against China following riots earlier in the week which left two Chinese workers dead and more than 100 injured. Vietnamese authorities, which have occasionally allowed protests to vent anger at its neighbor, warned they would "resolutely" prevent any further outbursts.

**Al Jazeera -**[**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2014/05/china-evacuates-3000-nationals-from-vietnam-201451720204843212.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2014/05/china-evacuates-3000-nationals-from-vietnam-201451720204843212.html)

**Lao DPR**

**Plane crash kills 16 people, including Defense Minister**

A military plane has crashed in Laos, killing 16 people on board, including the country's defense minister, according to Thai authorities. A Lao Defense Ministry source said that the sole survivor was a nurse who was pulled from the wreckage along with two others who later succumbed to injuries. "A Laos air force plane has crashed on its way to Xiang Khouang province in the north of the country," a defense official said. "The mayor of Vientiane, the defense minister of Laos and his wife were on board." The accident also killed the Minister of Public Security, the Secretariat of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party's Central Committee and Head of the Propaganda Training Committee and the Mayor of Vientiane.

**ABC -** [**http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-05-17/an-laos-plane-crash/5459886**](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-05-17/an-laos-plane-crash/5459886)

**Myanmar**

**Aid fears for civilians in conflict-torn north**

Humanitarian groups have sounded the alarm over the fate of thousands of civilians caught in clashes between Myanmar's army and rebel fighters in northern Kachin state, the UN said. Conflict in Kachin along the border with China has displaced 100,000 people since a 17-year ceasefire collapsed in 2011, and a new peace deal has proved elusive, with skirmishes spilling into neighbouring Shan State. Heavy fighting near several displacement camps in southern Kachin caused 2,700 people to flee in April, according to OCHA, which said there was a "deteriorating security situation" in the region.

**AFP -** [**http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asia/410183/aid-fears-for-civilians-in-conflict-torn-northern-myanmar**](http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asia/410183/aid-fears-for-civilians-in-conflict-torn-northern-myanmar)

**UN News Centre -** [**http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=47814#.U3aPFK3D\_cs**](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=47814#.U3aPFK3D_cs)

**Solomon Islands**

**Police out in force to prevent fresh riots in Solomon Islands capital**

Extra police have patrolled the streets in the Solomon Islands capital, Honiara, to stop a second night of rioting after civil unrest and looting overnight on Friday. Acting police commissioner Juanita Matanga says she has launched a major security operation, sending a number of police units to reinforce patrols in Honiara and surrounding communities. Many of the rioters were presumed to be flood victims who are unhappy with the government's relief program. There has been increasing tension over the distribution of aid and the slow pace of resettlement.

**Australia Network -** [**http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-05-17/an-solomon-riots/5460094**](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-05-17/an-solomon-riots/5460094)

**Thailand**

**Protest leader promises final push for alternative PM**

Anti-government protesters in Thailand are to stage mass rallies in coming days to try to get a new prime minister installed, but their leader said if this final push in a six-month fight did not succeed, he would surrender to the authorities on 27 May. The Prime Minister was forced to step down on 7 May when the country's Constitutional Court found her and nine ministers guilty of abuse of power. Remaining cabinet members selected the Commerce Minister to replace her, but the anti-government protesters said they had no authority to do that and want all the ministers replaced.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/17/us-thailand-protests-idUSBREA4G03820140517**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/17/us-thailand-protests-idUSBREA4G03820140517)

ESA

**Rwanda**

**Rwanda accused of 'Forced Disappearances'**

An increasing number of people have been forcibly disappeared or have been reported missing in Rwanda since March 2014, Human Rights Watch said in a report Friday, blaming the national army for some of the cases. HRW said it had documented "detailed accounts of 14 people who have been forcibly disappeared or who have been reported missing" in Rubavu, a district in the Rwanda's Western Province, close to the border with DRC. It also said there were "indications of involvement of state agents in the disappearances."

**AFP -** [**http://www.ndtv.com/article/world/rwanda-accused-of-forced-disappearances-525711**](http://www.ndtv.com/article/world/rwanda-accused-of-forced-disappearances-525711)

**HRW -** [**http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/05/16/rwanda-spate-enforced-disappearances**](http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/05/16/rwanda-spate-enforced-disappearances)

**Somalia**

**UN troops deploy in capital to defend staff**

A special UN military force to protect aid workers deployed for the first time in Somali capital Sunday, amid a wave of attacks blamed on Al-Shabaab. The 400-strong "defensive" guard force of Ugandan troops, based at the heavily fortified Mogadishu airport, is "mandated to protect UN staff and installations" in the capital. “The deployment of the UN Guard Unit is an important step as we continue to expand our operations in support of the Somali people," UN envoy to Somalia Nicholas Kay said at a ceremony Sunday to mark the start of operations.

**AFP -** [**http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/655718-un-troops-deploy-in-somali-capital-to-defend-staff.html**](http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/655718-un-troops-deploy-in-somali-capital-to-defend-staff.html)

**South Africa**

**Strike-hit Implats says violence is 'devastating'**

Impala Platinum described on Friday as "devastating" the impact on its employees of a 16-week strike at its main South African operation in Rustenburg and said it had lost more than $500 million in revenue. The company signaled it expects the strike to drag on. "The human tragedy that is unfolding as a result of our employees not earning any income and the violence and intimidation being experienced on the platinum belt is devastating," it said in its third-quarter production report.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/16/us-safroca-strikes-implats-idUSBREA4F0C920140516?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/16/us-safroca-strikes-implats-idUSBREA4F0C920140516?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews)

**South Sudan**

**New report sounds alarm for children caught in conflict**

The dire conditions of hungry and displaced children in South Sudan will get unimaginably worse unless urgent measures are taken to reverse a rapidly deteriorating situation, a new report warns. The meeting of governments in Oslo is the opportunity for funds to be pledged to avert a humanitarian catastrophe, says World Vision in “Sounding the Alarm: The desperate plight of children in South Sudan.” Almost a quarter of a million children will be severely malnourished by the end of the year, and up to 50,000 children under 5 may die if treatment is not scaled up immediately, the report notes.

**World Vision -** [**http://www.worldvision.com.au/Libraries/HEA\_reports/Sounding\_The\_Alarm.pdf**](http://www.worldvision.com.au/Libraries/HEA_reports/Sounding_The_Alarm.pdf)

**UNICEF fears the worst for hundreds of thousands of children**

On the eve of the Oslo Humanitarian Pledging Conference, UNICEF warned that hundreds of thousands of children in South Sudan’s three most conflict-affected states are at imminent risk of death and disease, including the threat of cholera. The UNSG has said that by the end of this year, half of South Sudan’s 12 million people will be either in flight, facing starvation, or dead.  At least half of these are children – the most innocent victims in what is increasingly becoming a children’s emergency.

**UNICEF -** [**http://www.unicef.org/media/media\_73555.html**](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_73555.html)

LAC

**Across LAC**

**US intensifies fight against coffee rust in Latin America**

The US administration is teaming up with researchers from Texas to intensify the battle against a fungus that has caused $1 billion in damage to coffee plants across Latin America and the Caribbean, US foreign aid officials said on 18 May. The so-called leaf rust, or roya, is a yellow and orange-colored fungus that has swept coffee fields from Mexico to Peru over the past two years, threatening to stunt production. Moreover, the blight is jeopardizing the livelihood and food security of about 500,000 people who make their living in the coffee industry, especially small farmers and seasonal workers, according to the USAID.

**Reuters -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/u-intensifies-fight-against-coffee-rust-latin-america-200435366--sector.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/u-intensifies-fight-against-coffee-rust-latin-america-200435366--sector.html)

**Brazil**

**Prisoners take scores hostage**

Inmates have taken 122 hostages in a prison in Brazil's northeastern state of Sergipe, AFP news agency reports quoting a prison spokeswoman. Sandra Melo, said on Sunday that negotiations had started for the release of the hostages, who were mainly visitors to the Advogado Jacinto Filho prison, near Aracaju city. The hostages were taken during a riot on Saturday that had calmed, Melo added. Brazil's prison population is 548,000, but the country has space for only 340,000, according to Conectas, an NGO specialising in inmate rights.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/americas/2014/05/prisoners-take-scores-hostages-brazil-201451843652958554.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/americas/2014/05/prisoners-take-scores-hostages-brazil-201451843652958554.html)

**Dominican Republic**

**Proposed immigration law gets mixed reaction**

Proposed legislation offering a path to citizenship for tens of thousands of Dominican-born children of immigrants met mixed reactions on Friday from human rights groups, with some saying it does not protect enough people who could lose citizenship due to a court ruling. President Danilo Medina sent a bill to Congress on Thursday that would provide documentation to some children of immigrants and give permanent residency to others with the opportunity to apply for citizenship. Dominican officials have been criticized as xenophobic and racist since a high court ruling last year that stated children born in the country to undocumented immigrants were not automatically entitled to citizenship.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/16/us-usa-dominican-immigration-idUSBREA4F0QR20140516?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/16/us-usa-dominican-immigration-idUSBREA4F0QR20140516?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews)

**Guyana**

**Drought sounds alarm, fuels hunger fears for indigenous people**

Thousands of indigenous people near Guyana's border with Brazil are battling drought so persistent they fear crop failure and hunger. A council was this week to assess the water shortage in the township where residents rely on Brazil for drinking water because Guyana's state-owned water company supplies poor quality treated water. Residents of other parts of the sprawling Rupununi region, predominantly populated by indigenous people, said their mainstay cassava farms have dried up -- scorched by the hot sun. And planting vegetables is impossible in those conditions.

**AFP -** [**http://www.brecorder.com/world/south-america/173032-drought-sounds-alarm-fuels-hunger-fears-for-indigenous-guyana.html**](http://www.brecorder.com/world/south-america/173032-drought-sounds-alarm-fuels-hunger-fears-for-indigenous-guyana.html)

**Venezuela**

**President urges re-start of political dialog**

President Nicolas Maduro urged opposition leaders on Friday to return to political talks intended to stem unrest around the country or face the "repudiation" of the nation. Moderate leaders of the Democratic Unity (MUD) coalition broke off dialog this week, saying government officials were insulting them and rebuffing requests for releases of opposition-linked prisoners. Unrest has flared again in Caracas in recent days, with more than 100 youths arrested during violent clashes with security forces and attacks on government buildings.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140516225306-2dx9b/?source=fiTheWire**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140516225306-2dx9b/?source=fiTheWire)

MENA

**Egypt**

**Cairo bomb wounds at least three at pro-Sisi rally**

A bomb wounded at least three people at a Cairo election rally for presidential frontrunner Abdel Fattah al-Sisi on Saturday, security sources said, underscoring Egypt's instability nearly a year after he toppled Islamist leader Mohamed Mursi. A man riding on a motorcycle threw the homemade device in the direction of Sisi supporters at the street gathering of about 150 people in a north-eastern district of the capital, the sources said. Former army chief Sisi, who was not present, is expected to win the election on 26-27 May, after gaining the support of many Egyptians who backed his ouster of Mursi after mass protests against his rule. Sisi has avoided public appearances during his election campaign, apparently for security reasons.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/17/us-egypt-violence-sisi-idUSBREA4G09120140517?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/17/us-egypt-violence-sisi-idUSBREA4G09120140517?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews)

**Hundreds of Brotherhood supporters sentenced for 'protest violence' in Egypt**

An Egyptian court on Sunday sentenced 126 supporters of ousted president Mohammed Mursi to 10 years in prison each over protest violence, judicial sources said. They were found guilty of taking part in riots, attacking security forces and participating in violent clashes on August 16, two days after police killed hundreds of Mursi supporters in Cairo. They were also charged of membership in a banned group.

**AFP -** [**http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/19820**](http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/19820)

**Libya**

**Renegade general says parliament suspended**

A group led by a renegade Libyan general said Sunday it suspended parliament after launching an attack against the legislative body. Gen. Mokhtar Farnana, speaking on a Libyan television channel, said a group led by Gen. Khalifa Hifter had assigned a 60-member constituent's assembly to take over for parliament. Farnana said Libya's current government would act on an emergency basis. Farnana said forces loyal to Hifter carried out Sunday's attack on parliament. He also said Sunday's attack on Libya's parliament was not a coup, but "fighting by the people's choice."

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/rogue-libyan-generals-troops-attack-parliament-23768466**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/rogue-libyan-generals-troops-attack-parliament-23768466)

**Death toll in Libya’s Benghazi rises to 70**

The death toll from fighting over the weekend in Libya’s eastern city of Benghazi between troops loyal to a rogue general and Islamist militias has risen to 70, the Health Ministry said on Sunday. It said 141 people were also injured in the fighting, which broke out on Friday. Benghazi was quiet on Sunday, but its airport remained closed for the second successive day. Libya’s central government describes the offensive, which began Friday by Gen. Khalifa Hifter, and included air support, as tantamount to a coup.

**AP -** [**http://time.com/103951/death-toll-in-libyas-benghazi-rises-to-70/**](http://time.com/103951/death-toll-in-libyas-benghazi-rises-to-70/)

**Sudan**

**Arrest of top opposition chief undermines crisis talks**

The arrest of Sudan's former PM and leading opposition figure Sadiq al-Mahdi undermines talks aimed at finding a way out of the country's multiple crises, observers said. Mahdi was arrested for alleged treason by agents of the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) from his home on Saturday night, officials of his Umma Party said. Prosecutors questioned him on Sunday at the Khartoum-area Kober Prison where he is being held, Umma's secretary general Sara Najdallah, told reporters. The arrest came after Mahdi reportedly accused a counter-insurgency unit, the Rapid Support Forces, of rape and other abuses of civilians in Darfur. Sudan's state security agency on Sunday NISS to deploy around the capital Khartoum.

**AFP -** [**http://zeenews.india.com/news/world/arrest-of-top-sudan-opposition-chief-undermines-crisis-talks\_933141.html**](http://zeenews.india.com/news/world/arrest-of-top-sudan-opposition-chief-undermines-crisis-talks_933141.html)

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/05/sudan-arrests-mahdi-making-abuse-claims-20145171942591111.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/05/sudan-arrests-mahdi-making-abuse-claims-20145171942591111.html)

**UN condemns death sentence of Sudanese pregnant woman over apostasy**

The UN human rights office voiced deep concern about the situation of Meriam Ibrahim, the pregnant Christian Sudanese woman who was sentenced to 100 lashes and to death by a Sudanese court for apostasy and adultery. On 11 May, Sudan's Criminal Court supported the charges of apostasy and adultery against Ms. Ibrahim, nullified her marriage with a Christian man and gave her three days to 'declare her return to Islam', according to OHCHR. Following her refusal yesterday to renounce her Christian faith, the 27-year-old was found guilty under the 1991 Criminal Act.

**CA -** [**http://en.ca-news.org/news:541484/**](http://en.ca-news.org/news:541484/)

**Syria**

**Death toll in Syria's war tops 160,000: SOHR**

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights says the number of people who have died in the Syrian conflict so far has exceeded 160,000. The Observatory said on Monday that it has documented 162,402 deaths since the fighting started in March 2011. The Observatory says the figure includes civilians, rebels and members of the Syrian military. It also includes militiamen fighting alongside President Bashar Assad's forces, as well as foreign fighters battling with the rebels for Assad's ouster.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/activists-death-toll-syrias-war-tops-160000-23773598**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/activists-death-toll-syrias-war-tops-160000-23773598)

**Yemen**

**Gunmen kill two Yemen soldiers**

Gunmen killed two soldiers in an ambush on an army patrol in southeastern Yemen on Monday, a security official said. "Unknown gunmen opened fire at a military vehicle killing two soldiers," the source said. The attack took place at the entrance to Shehr, a coastal town in Hadramawt province. The ambush coincided with an army operation launched 29 April against suspected Al-Qaeda militants, centred on Abyan and Shabwa in the south and the central province of Baida.

**AFP -** [**http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2014/May-19/256981-gunmen-kill-two-yemen-soldiers.ashx#axzz329amulY9**](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2014/May-19/256981-gunmen-kill-two-yemen-soldiers.ashx#axzz329amulY9)

ROSA

**India**

**Modi leads BJP to historic poll win**

Narendra Modi, India's Prime Minister-elect, has promised to work to "fulfil the dreams of 1.2 billion people" as he addressed his supporters for the first time after he led his Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party to a landslide election victory. Thousands of his supporters from across his constituency of Vadodara in western Gujarat state turned out to hear the 63-year-old former tea boy who is poised to become prime minister of the world's second-most populous nation.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/05/india-modi-leads-bjp-historic-poll-win-2014516143751892711.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/05/india-modi-leads-bjp-historic-poll-win-2014516143751892711.html)

**Pakistan**

**Army deploys to help combat polio**

Pakistan launches a major immunisation campaign, ordering soldiers to protect health workers in troubled areas. The PM says the country is on a war footing to deal with the spread of polio and the army has been called in to help. WHO has asked Pakistan, Cameroon and Syria to ensure that all residents and long-term visitors are vaccinated for polio before travelling abroad. WHO says the disease has been diagnosed in 10 countries. This year there have been 74 registered cases of polio worldwide and 59 of them have come from Pakistan.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/05/pakistan-deploys-army-help-combat-polio-20145176949130460.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/05/pakistan-deploys-army-help-combat-polio-20145176949130460.html)

**Teenager shoots dead man accused of blasphemy in police station**

A teenager walked into a Pakistani police station on Friday and shot dead a 65-year-old man from a minority sect accused of blasphemy, their spokesman said, the second murder involving the country's controversial blasphemy laws in as many weeks. Rights activists said the attack, and a spike in the number of blasphemy cases, was evidence of rising intolerance in the mainly Sunni country. The deceased was a member of the minority Ahmadi community, a sect who say they are Muslim but whose religion is rejected by Pakistan..

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140516152858-dm7z5**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140516152858-dm7z5)

**Is Pakistan losing the battle against measles? – UNICEF mention**

Pakistan has seen a growing number of measles cases in recent years, with more than 25,000 reported last year, including 321 deaths. “It is vital we bring the situation under control to save the lives of children and offer people better health care,” said Anita Zaidi, professor of paediatrics at the Aga Khan University Hospital in Karachi. In 2012 there were nearly 15,000 cases, and in 2011, 4,380 cases. The steady rise comes despite a government measles vaccination programme that has been running for more than 35 years. Although confirmed deaths so far this year stand at only 13 from 1,329 reported cases, health officials are still concerned not enough is being done to deal with the repeated outbreaks of measles.

**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report/100088/is-pakistan-losing-the-battle-against-measles**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/100088/is-pakistan-losing-the-battle-against-measles)

**Sri Lanka**

**War widows still struggle to support their families**

According to the Durable Solutions Promotion Group, a voluntary group comprised of experts on aid policy, human rights, and humanitarian experts from the UN and INGOs, there are over 40,000 families in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka headed by single women, many of whose husbands were killed, are missing or are in government detention for suspected affiliation with the defeated rebel LTTE. Saroja Sivachandran, who heads the Centre for Women and Development in northern Jaffna, said that as Sri Lanka reduced assistance to returning families and humanitarian agencies began pulling out, single female-headed families faced a precarious situation. “

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140516213859-q54id/?source=jtOtherNews2**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140516213859-q54id/?source=jtOtherNews2)

WCA

**Across WCA**

**West Africa leaders vow to wage "total war" on Boko Haram**

West African leaders on Saturday agreed to work together to wage "total war" on Boko Haram saying the group had become a regional problem that threatened all of them. Nigeria's neighbors Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Benin, and Western officials, met in Paris to flesh out a plan enabling them for the first time to share intelligence, coordinate action and monitor borders. The countries agreed to launch coordinated patrols and rescue operations, share intelligence, put in place a mechanism to prevent weapons' smuggling and monitor borders. Intelligence services and army heads would also meet soon to come up with a region-wide strategy to fight terrorism.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140517181710-l4kf5/?source=jtOtherNews1**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140517181710-l4kf5/?source=jtOtherNews1)

**Boko Haram kill one Chinese, 10 missing in Cameroon**

A Chinese national was killed and 10 others were feared kidnapped after an overnight attack in northern Cameroon believed to have been carried out by Boko Haram militants from Nigeria, a police said on Saturday. "The Boko Haram militants were heavily armed, they came in five vehicles," an official in Waza, near the site of the attack in a northern Cameroonian region near the Nigerian border, told AFP. A police officer said the militants also attacked the police post in Waza overnight and raided its armory.

**AFP -** [**http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-147985-Boko-Haram-kill-one-Chinese,-10-missing-in-Cameroon:-police**](http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-147985-Boko-Haram-kill-one-Chinese,-10-missing-in-Cameroon:-police)

**CAR**

**Over 1,000 children released from armed groups this year – UNICEF**

UNICEF and partners have secured the release of over 1,000 children from armed groups in CAR this year, more than five times the total number of children released in 2013. However, thousands more children remain among the ranks of armed groups in the war-torn country. Since violence escalated in December last year, their estimated number nearly doubled from 3,500 to around 6,000. “The growing number of children who continue to be used in this brutal fighting is yet another reminder of the unspeakable atrocities children are living every day,” said Souleymane Diabaté, UNICEF Representative in CAR.

**UNICEF -** [**http://www.unicef.org/media/media\_73533.html**](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_73533.html)

**Mali**

**'At war with terrorists' after 36 people die in clashes**

Mali's PM said on Sunday the country was "at war" with terrorists in the northern city of Kidal after clashes between separatist militants and the Malian army left 36 dead. Eight soldiers and 28 insurgents were killed in fighting on Saturday outside the regional governor's offices during a visit by the PM to the town, the government said, adding that around 30 civil servants were being held hostage. "The terrorists have declared war on Mali, so Mali is at war against these terrorists. We will mobilise the resources to fight this war," the PM reported.

**AFP -** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/140518/mali-at-war-terrorists-after-36-die-clashes**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/140518/mali-at-war-terrorists-after-36-die-clashes)

**Nigeria**

**Suicide car bomb kills 5 in bar district of Kano**

A suicide car bomber killed five people on a street of popular bars and restaurants in the northern Nigerian city of Kano on Sunday evening, in an area mostly inhabited by southern Christians, police said. Kano police spokesman Musa Majiya said the bomber struck Gold Coast Street in the Sabon Gari or "foreign quarter" of the North's biggest city. There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but blame is likely to fall on violent Islamist group Boko Haram.

**Reuters -** [**http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/05/18/uk-nigeria-violence-idUKKBN0DY0PM20140518**](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/05/18/uk-nigeria-violence-idUKKBN0DY0PM20140518)

The Brief is produced by UNICEF's Emergency Operations Centre (OPSCEN) and is a daily compilation of the main humanitarian, political and security-related media stories from around the world. It aims to provide field offices and senior decision-makers with critical information related to humanitarian emergencies and staff security.

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