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CEE/CIS

**Bosnia & Herzegovina**

**Floods to reverse economic growth this year**

Devastating floods in May will cause economic output in Bosnia to shrink by 1.1% this year instead of growing 2.2% as previously hoped, an international team assessing the damage said on 18 June. "The growth in GDP is going to come down from 2.2% before to a decrease of 1.1%," said the coordinator of a team comprising officials from the Bosnian government, the EU, UN and World Bank. The team said the damage inflicted on Bosnia by the heaviest rainfall in the Balkans in more than a century was in the region of $2.7 billion, or 18.5% of Bosnia's gross domestic product (GDP).

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/06/18/bosnia-flood-economy-idUSL6N0OZ2IE20140618**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/06/18/bosnia-flood-economy-idUSL6N0OZ2IE20140618)

**Turkey**

**Number of Syrian refugees in Turkey exceeds 1 million – minister**

The number of Syrians who are housed in refugee camps and cities in neighbouring Turkey has reached 1.05 million, Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Besir Atalay told a news conference on Thursday. Ankara has maintained an "open border" policy to refugees fleeing the conflict between President Bashar al-Assad's forces and rebels in Syria.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140619073842-irxjq/?source=search**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140619073842-irxjq/?source=search)

**Ukraine**

**Hundreds killed, detained in security breakdown – UNICEF mention**

A steady rise in killings, torture and abductions by pro-Russia armed groups in eastern Ukraine has claimed hundreds of lives since last month, UN monitors in the region said on 18 June. At least 356 people, including 257 civilians, have been killed since 7 May, according to the 34 monitors with the UN human rights office. Among those casualties are 86 Ukrainian military personnel, including the killing of 49 crew and troops who died when a Ukrainian military transport plane was shot down by separatists last week. The other 13 dead were not specified. There have been more than 200 reports of torture, the new report says, and 81 people were being held on 7 June.

**OHCHR -** [**http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/UA/HRMMUReport15June2014.pdf**](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/UA/HRMMUReport15June2014.pdf)

**Biden warns of further costs for Russia over Ukraine violence**

US Vice President Joe Biden told Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko on Wednesday the US would work with its allies to "impose further costs on Russia" if Moscow failed to use its influence to stop separatist violence in eastern Ukraine,the White House said. "The vice president noted that the US would work with our partners to impose further costs on Russia if it continued on its current course,". EU leaders are expected to discuss sanctions at a meeting slated for June 27.

**Reuters -** [**https://research.tdwaterhouse.ca/research/public/Markets/NewsArticle/1314-L2N0P004A-1**](https://research.tdwaterhouse.ca/research/public/Markets/NewsArticle/1314-L2N0P004A-1)

**Ukraine forces battle separatists after truce "refused"**

Ukrainian troops and pro-Russian separatists were locked in fierce fighting in the east of Ukraine on Thursday after rebels rejected a call to lay down their arms in line with a peace plan proposed by President Petro Poroshenko, government forces said. Heavy fighting broke out at around 4 a.m. near the town of Krasny Liman, which itself has been under government control since early this month. "We issued an ultimatum to the terrorists overnight to surrender their weapons. We guarantee their safety and investigation in line with Ukrainian law ... They refused," said government forces spokesman Vladyslav Seleznyov.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140619084746-c8ypg/?source=search**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140619084746-c8ypg/?source=search)

**OSCE calls for immediate release of hostages**

The OSCE renewed its call on 18 June for the "immediate and unconditional release" of its officials taken hostage in Ukraine's restive eastern region, where troops are clashing with pro-Russian forces. Two groups of observers from the OSCE, totalling eight international monitors and a Ukrainian interpreter, have been held captive and incommunicado since separatists picked them up, three days apart, in late May. The abductions came after seven OSCE observers sent to Ukraine were held for eight days by pro-Russian rebels in their stronghold city of Slavyansk and released in early May.

**AFP -** [**http://www.expatica.ru/news/local\_news/osce-calls-for-immediate-release-of-ukraine-hostages\_295309.html**](http://www.expatica.ru/news/local_news/osce-calls-for-immediate-release-of-ukraine-hostages_295309.html)

**UN SC urges probe into journalists' deaths**

The UN SC has called for an investigation into violence against journalists in Ukraine. Council members condemned violence and harassment on the same day two members of a Russian television crew died. The Security Council issued its first statement to date on the Ukraine crisis, offering their condolences after the deaths of two journalists amid the fighting in eastern Ukraine earlier. The statement also called for an investigation into violence against reporters, and expressed anxiety about journalists being detained and harassed as part of the battle to control information about the situation in Ukraine.

**DW -** [**http://www.dw.de/un-security-council-urges-probe-into-journalists-deaths-in-ukraine/a-17716436**](http://www.dw.de/un-security-council-urges-probe-into-journalists-deaths-in-ukraine/a-17716436)

EAP

**Across EAP**

**UNICEF Australia calls for independent monitor of immigration detention**

UNICEF Australia has called for an independent body to monitor and publicly report on the situation and treatment of children in Australian immigration detention. The call has come during Refugee Week and ahead of World Refugee Day, on 20 June. It is being made by child rights organisations seeking better protection of children in detention following allegations of inadequate health care, lack of access to education and fundamental issues of child protection raised in recent weeks.

**UNICEF -** [**http://www.unicef.org.au/Media/Media-Releases/2014-6--June/UNICEF-calls-for-independent-monitor-of-immigratio.aspx#**](http://www.unicef.org.au/Media/Media-Releases/2014-6--June/UNICEF-calls-for-independent-monitor-of-immigratio.aspx)

**China**

**Chinese official shot dead in Tibetan area**

An official in charge of preserving social stability was shot dead in a mountainous area of a Tibetan prefecture in southwestern China last week, state media reported. Simmering ethnic tension in the region has spurred at least 119 Tibetans to set themselves alight in protests against Chinese rule since 2009, often in heavily Tibetan areas of the provinces of Sichuan, Gansu and Qinghai. Most have died. The government's stability drive ranges from crackdowns on protests against land seizures to internet censorship and muffling the dissent of religious and ethnic minorities.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140619053135-hou8v**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140619053135-hou8v)

**China jails anti-corruption activists after high-profile trial**

Three Chinese activists who campaigned for government officials to disclose their wealth were jailed on Thursday in the culmination of a high-profile trial that underscores Beijing's resolve to clamp down on dissent. The activists were among more than a dozen detained in recent months for their anti-corruption activism. Rights groups say the crackdown on the group throws into sharp relief the limits of President Xi Jinping's campaign against graft. Despite a few pilot schemes for low level officials to disclose their assets, any public discussion of the wealth of senior leaders remains strictly off limits.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140619051605-ggl29**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140619051605-ggl29)

**Indonasia**

**Indonesia presidential candidate Prabowo hit by human rights accusations**

Indonesian presidential candidate Prabowo Subianto faced fresh accusations of criminal behaviour on Thursday after his former boss released details of a military council's findings that led to his discharge from the armed forces nearly 16 years ago. Opinion polls suggest that Prabowo has been closing in on the front-runner ahead of the July 9 presidential election. But his campaign has been repeatedly dogged by accusations of widespread human rights abuses during his days as a top general, in particular during unrest that brought down his former father-in-law and long-serving autocrat Suharto in 1998.

**Reuters -** [**https://news.yahoo.com/indonesia-presidential-candidate-prabowo-hit-human-rights-accusations-101557830.html**](https://news.yahoo.com/indonesia-presidential-candidate-prabowo-hit-human-rights-accusations-101557830.html)

**Myanmar**

**As Myanmar's Rakhine Buddhists gain strength, so does anti-Muslim apartheid**

A campaign to isolate Muslims living under apartheid-like conditions is gathering steam in western Myanmar, driven by Buddhist activists emboldened by the country's transition from military rule. Religious violence since 2012 has killed hundreds of Rohingya Muslims and displaced more than 140,000 in Rakhine State. Survivors live as virtual prisoners in camps or in segregated villages, subject to restrictions on travel, and, in some areas, marriage and the number of babies they can have.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140618205711-8fiwv/?source=jtHeadlineStory**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140618205711-8fiwv/?source=jtHeadlineStory)

**Philippines**

**11 towns in Maguindanao flooded**

Heavy rains over the past few days have swamped at least 11 towns in Maguindanao, flooding the homes of more or less 7,000 families, officials said Wednesday. The water level in the Liguasan Marsh has been rising following days of moderate to heavy downpours in the provinces of North Cotabato, South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat and Maguindanao. Runoff from the mountain ranges of North Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat flown down to Maguindanao, raising the water level in the marsh. The affected towns include Ampatuan, Rajah Buayan, Mamasapano, Datu Abdullah Sangki, Datu Piang, Datu Salibo, Shariff Saidona Mustapha, Datu Montawal, Pagalungan, Northern Kabuntalan and Sultan Kudarat.

**GMA - <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/photo/62107/heavy-rains-leave-11-maguindanao-towns-flooded>**

**Philippine militants kill 7 gov’t forces in clash**

Philippine military officials say six soldiers and a marine have been killed in clashes with Abu Sayyaf militants in the south. Military spokesman Lt. Col. Ramon Zagala says government forces assaulted an Abu Sayyaf camp, sparking fierce fighting in which a marine was killed after dawn Thursday in Patikul town in Sulu, a predominantly Muslim province in the south. Army reinforcements were hit by mortar fire 10 minutes later, killing six soldiers. Zagala says there was no report of casualties among the militants, who have been holding a number of hostages in Sulu, including two European bird watchers who were kidnapped two years ago.

**WP-** [**http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia\_pacific/philippine-militants-kill-7-govt-forces-in-clash/2014/06/19/7f732160-f78b-11e3-9e63-ec28e320b8bf\_story.html**](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/philippine-militants-kill-7-govt-forces-in-clash/2014/06/19/7f732160-f78b-11e3-9e63-ec28e320b8bf_story.html)

**Philippines seeks speedy UN ruling on China sea dispute**

The Philippines said Thursday it would ask a UN tribunal to expedite its appeal to declare China's expansive claims to the South China Sea invalid, as tensions over the contested waters worsen. A formal request will be filed seeking a resolution on the case within the year or early 2015, foreign department spokesman Charles Jose said. "We are consulting our legal team to present a request to the tribunal if it can hasten its process earlier, rather than later," Jose told AFP. He declined to say when the request would be formally transmitted, however. Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario separately said a speedier ruling was necessary "because the situation is getting worse by the day in the South China Sea".

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/philippines-seeks-speedy-un-ruling-china-sea-dispute-041919444.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/philippines-seeks-speedy-un-ruling-china-sea-dispute-041919444.html)

ESA

**Somalia**

**One killed in Somalia hospital car bomb blast**

A doctor was killed and seven others wounded on Wednesday when a car bomb exploded at a hospital in Somalia's capital Mogadishu, aid officials said. The bomb, believed to have been attached to a car belonging to a staff member, blew up at Keysansey hospital in northern Mogadishu, which is run by the Somali Red Crescent Society.

**AFP -** [**http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/1-killed-in-Somalia-hospital-car-bomb-blast-20140618**](http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/1-killed-in-Somalia-hospital-car-bomb-blast-20140618)

**South Sudan**

**South Sudan appeals to Uganda on Kiir job**

The South Sudan government has requested Uganda to explain to the international community that President Salva Kiir “cannot step down” as demanded by the rebels led by former vice-president Riek Machar. The South Sudan vice president, Mr James Wani Igga, said the demand to have President Kiir resign is unrealistic. “You have been our good Samaritan. Help us tell the world that the rebels only control 10 per cent of South Sudan. It has never happened anywhere in the world that an elected president leaves office just because rebels have demanded,” Mr Igga said.

**Monitor -** [**http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/South-Sudan-appeals-to-Uganda-on-Kiir-job/-/688334/2353468/-/71a1q4z/-/index.html**](http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/South-Sudan-appeals-to-Uganda-on-Kiir-job/-/688334/2353468/-/71a1q4z/-/index.html)

LAC

**Across LAC**

**Overcrowded, unsanitary conditions for children seen at US immigrant detention centers**

Facing growing controversy over reports of crowded and unsanitary conditions, Border Patrol officials on Wednesday provided the first limited public access to two youth immigration detention facilities in Texas and Arizona, allowing reporters on brief, controlled tours for glimpses of children and a few mothers detained there at the end of their often long journeys from places as far away as Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. An internal Border Patrol study, based on interviews with 230 migrants detained in the valley, found the immigration had been driven by violent conditions in Central America and by widespread erroneous reports that a new U.S. law allows women with children to secure a permiso, or pass, to stay in the U.S. indefinitely.

**LA Times -** [**http://www.latimes.com/nation/nationnow/la-na-nn-texas-immigrant-children-20140618-story.html#page=1**](http://www.latimes.com/nation/nationnow/la-na-nn-texas-immigrant-children-20140618-story.html#page=1)

**Increased numbers of non-accompanied minors fleeing from violence**

The President of Honduras stated that the Central American children who reach the United States in mass quantities "are displaced by war" so that there is a need to further address the causes of violence that cause them to flee. Honduras is considered one of the most violent countries in the world, where about 325 young people under 23 have lost their lives in the first four months of 2014. The number of children crossing alone the border to the USA is estimated at 47 000 (during the last 7 months) and most are from Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. This has led the United States government to mobilize more resources for what they called a "humanitarian situation".

**CFAP -** [**http://americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2014/06/18/92056/5-things-you-need-to-know-about-the-unaccompanied-minors-crisis/**](http://americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2014/06/18/92056/5-things-you-need-to-know-about-the-unaccompanied-minors-crisis/)

**Venezuelan and Cuban activists lobby UN on human rights**

Venezuelan and Cuban activists lobbied the UN on Wednesday to investigate the deaths of dozens of student protesters in Caracas and the jailing of Cuban dissidents. "We came to Geneva to ask the UN to send a mission to Venezuela to evaluate the cases of human rights violations that students have been subjected to," Eusebio Costa, a student activist and President of the Student Center at the Catholic University Santa Rosa in Caracas, told a news briefing. He said 117 students are still being held, some in high-security military prisons, after three months of protests that began in the major oil-producing nation in February. Forty-two people including 38 students were killed in the violence. The government says the protests were a veneer for a US-backed conspiracy to oust the successor to the late Hugo Chavez.

**Reuters -** [**http://af.reuters.com/article/energyOilNews/idAFL6N0OZ11E20140618**](http://af.reuters.com/article/energyOilNews/idAFL6N0OZ11E20140618)

**Cuba**

**Country confirms 6 cases of chikungunya virus**

Cuban health authorities on 18 June confirmed the country's first six cases of chikungunya fever, a debilitating, mosquito-borne virus that is suspected of afflicting tens of thousands across the Caribbean since its arrival in the region last year. In a statement published by the newspaper Granma and other official media, the Health Ministry said those sickened were islanders who travelled recently to Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Their condition was "evolving favourably." According to a report by the Pan American Health Organization, there have been about 166,000 suspected and 4,600 confirmed cases of Chikungunya in the Caribbean as of mid-June.

**AP -** [**http://www.ctvnews.ca/health/cuba-confirms-6-cases-of-mosquito-borne-chikungunya-virus-1.1874653**](http://www.ctvnews.ca/health/cuba-confirms-6-cases-of-mosquito-borne-chikungunya-virus-1.1874653)

MENA

**Across MENA**

**US urges 'restraint' as Israel hunts kidnappers**

The US on Wednesday called on both Israel and the Palestinians to show restraint as Israelis tightened their grip on the West Bank hunting for three kidnapped teenagers. Israeli troops have pressed their biggest arrest operation in years, imposing a tight lockdown on huge swathes of the West Bank in the hunt for the three boys kidnapped six days ago. So far, there has been no claim of responsibility for the teens' disappearance. Since the Israeli searches began early Friday, troops have arrested 240 Palestinians, searched more than 800 locations and raided 10 Hamas-run institutions, the army said.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/us-urges-restraint-israel-hunts-kidnappers-195215177.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/us-urges-restraint-israel-hunts-kidnappers-195215177.html)

**Israel aims to break Hamas as hunt for abducted teens intensifies**

Israel Aims to Break Hamas as Hunt for Abducted Teens Intensifies Israel stepped up efforts to crush Hamas in the West Bank on Tuesday as the hunt for three Israeli teenagers believed kidnapped by the Islamist movement entered its fifth day. Thousands of Israel troops engaged in the search for the youths turned their attention during the night to the northern West Bank city of Nablus and surrounding area, arresting 41 Palestinians, the army said. So far, Israel has arrested around 200 Palestinians, most of them Hamas members, as it conducts a vast search operation for the students, two of them minors.

**NDTV -** [**http://www.ndtv.com/article/world/israel-aims-to-break-hamas-as-hunt-for-abducted-teens-intensifies-543002**](http://www.ndtv.com/article/world/israel-aims-to-break-hamas-as-hunt-for-abducted-teens-intensifies-543002)

**Bahrain**

**Bahrain activist urges sanctions against his country**

Prominent Bahraini activist Nabil Rajab appealed on Wednesday for the world to impose sanctions on his country, which he said had slipped into "dictatorship". Rajab, who was released last month after spending two years in jail for taking part in "unauthorized demonstrations", said the country had "turned much worse" during his absence. The head of Bahrain's Center for Human Rights was arrested after taking part in a month of Shiite-led protests in 2011 demanding political reforms. During his time in prison, "a lot of laws were created, a lot of measures were taken which have changed the system into dictatorship," he told reporters in Geneva.

**AFP -** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/135528-bahrain-activist-urges-sanctions-against-his-country**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/135528-bahrain-activist-urges-sanctions-against-his-country)

**Iran**

**Tehran, world powers 'begin drafting nuclear deal'**

Iran and world powers started drafting Wednesday a comprehensive nuclear agreement but still face many sticking points, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said. "Today we have slowly begun to draft the final agreement... but there are still many differences" over the text, ISNA news agency quoted Zarif as saying from Vienna. "This does not mean we have reached an agreement," said Zarif, according to IRNA news agency. "Fundamental disagreements" continue to divide Iran and the P5+1 powers - Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States plus Germany -- he said.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/tehran-world-powers-begin-drafting-nuclear-deal-says-183032395.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/tehran-world-powers-begin-drafting-nuclear-deal-says-183032395.html)

**Iraq**

**Iraqi Kurds forms government after months of wrangling**

Iraq's autonomous Kurdish region formed a new government after months of wrangling, with premier Nechirvan Barzani using the occasion to call for defending disputed northern territory. "Today we announce the formation of the government in complicated circumstances," said Barzani, the nephew of the region's president. The division of ministries was not immediately clear, but the government includes the Goran movement, which had been in opposition. Previously, the government was formed by the historic duopoly of Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan of ailing Iraqi President Jalal Talabani.

**AFP -** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/140618/iraqi-kurds-forms-government-after-months-wrangling**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/140618/iraqi-kurds-forms-government-after-months-wrangling)

**Lebanon**

**Lebanese Army raids refugee camps, steps up security efforts**

The Lebanese Army carried out raids targeting Syrian refugee camps on Lebanon’s border with [Syria](javascript:void(0)) Wednesday, in further attempts to protect the country from regional turmoil. “The Lebanese Army launched a wide-scale search operation in the mountainous outskirts of Arsal and the camps of Syrian refugees in search for armed men and wanted people,” an Army statement said.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2014/Jun-19/260685-lebanese-army-raids-refugee-camps-steps-up-security-efforts.ashx#axzz352QMoQ39**](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2014/Jun-19/260685-lebanese-army-raids-refugee-camps-steps-up-security-efforts.ashx#axzz352QMoQ39)

**Lebanon again fails to elect new president**

Lebanese lawmakers failed for the seventh time Wednesday to elect a new president, Lebanon's Naharnet reported. Speaker Nabih Berri scheduled an eighth session to elect the country's new president for July 2nd. The failure to choose a successor to President Michel Suleiman, whose term expired May 25th, came as a result of the boycott by the majority of the March 8 alliance's MPs.

**Al-Shorfa- <http://al-shorfa.com/en_GB/articles/meii/newsbriefs/2014/06/18/newsbrief-13>**

**Morocco**

**Morocco repression of peaceful protests growing**

The repression of peaceful protests in Morocco is growing, the country's main independent rights group said Wednesday, condemning the "false accusations" against political detainees. The Moroccan Association of Human Rights (AMDH), in its annual report, said that in addition to the "growing repression" of non-violent demonstrations, numerous protests had been banned, journalists subjected to physical aggression, and the February 20 pro-reform movement targeted. It said the number of political detainees last year reached 317, adding that the state had "excelled in leveling false accusations of common crimes against detainees to hide the reason for their detention." The interior ministry did not immediately respond to AFP request for comment.

**AFP -** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/135488-morocco-repression-of-peaceful-protests-growing**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/135488-morocco-repression-of-peaceful-protests-growing)

**Syria**

**Russia says Syria agrees to aid access from Iraq, Turkey, Jordan**

Russia said it has gained Syrian approval to open four border crossings from Iraq, Jordan and Turkey to deliver aid to millions of people under a "far-reaching formula" proposed to UN SC members. The Russian UN Ambassador declined to elaborate on the formula, but diplomats familiar with the plan said it involved using international monitors to inspect humanitarian aid convoys entering Syria. He said Syria had accepted Moscow's plan to open the four border crossings named in the draft text.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/06/17/us-syria-crisis-un-aid-idUSKBN0ES34I20140617**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/06/17/us-syria-crisis-un-aid-idUSKBN0ES34I20140617)

ROSA

**Afghanistan**

**Iraq crisis stirs fears Afghanistan could be next**

The deteriorating situation in Iraq is giving Congress pause about President Barack Obama's plan to withdraw US forces from Afghanistan by the end of 2016, with fears that hard-fought gains could be wiped out by a resurgent Taliban. Senior Obama administration officials insist that Afghanistan is not Iraq, with a population far more receptive to a continued US presence and the promise of a new unity government. But the officials could offer no assurances that Afghanistan won't devolve into chaos after Americans leave, as Iraq has.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/iraq-crisis-stirs-fears-afghanistan-could-next-040527184.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/iraq-crisis-stirs-fears-afghanistan-could-next-040527184.html)

**Pro-Abdullah protest as Afghan election dispute deepens**

About 100 supporters of Afghan presidential candidate Abdullah Abdullah demonstrated in Kabul on Thursday against alleged election fraud in the first public protest of a growing political crisis. Abdullah boycotted the vote count on Wednesday, saying he was the victim of "blatant fraud" in the run-off election to chose a successor to President Hamid Karzai in Afghanistan's first democratic transfer of power. His announcement threw the election into doubt as Afghan officials and international diplomats scrambled to keep the process on track ahead of preliminary results due out on July 2.

**AFP -** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/135616-pro-abdullah-protest-as-afghan-election-dispute-deepens**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/135616-pro-abdullah-protest-as-afghan-election-dispute-deepens)

**Pakistan**

**Polio virus linked with Sukkur city of Sindh has been found in Quetta: UNICEF said**

The Balochistan government has announced launching of a special campaign in areas bordering the Sindh province. “Wild Polio virus type 1 (WPV1) still exists in the provincial capital of Balochistan as samples collected from the city’s sewage system suggested the persistence of the virus in the environment,” Dr Jawahir Habib, a UNICEFcommunication specialist. Meanwhile, the health authorities in Sukkur are on high alert after they detected polio virus in the city’s drainage system.

**The news - <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-2-256556-Polio-virus-detected-in-Quetta,-Sukkur>**

**Tens of thousands flee Pakistan offensive**

About 30,000 people have fled a major military offensive against the Pakistani Taliban in a tribal area in the country's northwest, after authorities eased a curfew. The military has deployed troops, tanks and jets in North Waziristan, on the border with Afghanistan, in a long-awaited crackdown on the Pakistani Taliban and other rebel fighters in the tribal area. "Some 30,000 people arrived in Bannu from Mir Ali town of North Waziristan since this morning," Arshad Khan, director general of the FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas) Disaster Management Authority, told AFP news agency.

Khan said 92,000 people have now fled North Waziristan since the military began air attacks against the Pakistani Taliban last month, adding that 130,000 more are expected to be displaced in the coming days.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/06/tens-thousands-flee-pakistan-offensive-201461962456202251.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/06/tens-thousands-flee-pakistan-offensive-201461962456202251.html)

**Sri Lanka**

**Sri Lanka opposes UN-backed war crimes probe**

Sri Lanka's parliament rejected on Wednesday an investigation by the United Nations human rights body into alleged crimes during the island nation's civil war that ended five years ago. Ruling coalition lawmakers overwhelmingly voted Wednesday for a motion that says such a probe "should not be carried out on the ground that such a course of action is detrimental to the process of reconciliation and peace and that it erodes the sovereignty, dignity and stature of Sri Lanka." The probe by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights comes after a US -sponsored resolution was approved by the UN Human Rights Council in March. The refusal of Sri Lanka's parliament is not binding on the investigation.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/sri-lanka-opposes-un-backed-war-crimes-probe-194209662.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/sri-lanka-opposes-un-backed-war-crimes-probe-194209662.html)

WCA

**Across WCA**

**Death toll from West Africa Ebola hits 337 - WHO update**

The death toll from an outbreak of Ebola in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone has hit 337 since February, WHO said on Wednesday, as weak local health services struggle to contain the highly contagious disease. WHO said 47 new cases and 14 deaths had been reported in the region in the last week alone, months after international experts were first sent to help tackle the widest-spread outbreak of Ebola recorded in Africa. Guinea remains worst affected, with 264 Ebola-related deaths, the WHO data showed, but the toll in Sierra Leone and Liberia has recently spiked, hitting 49 and 24 respectively.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140618115433-lvip9/?source=quickview**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140618115433-lvip9/?source=quickview)

**Mali**

**UN calls for immediate dialogue**

The UN peacekeeping chief urged Bamako and armed groups in Mali's north to engage in political dialogue immediately, emphasizing that the country's "status quo" was no longer acceptable. "The time for peace talks is now," Herve Ladsous told the UNSC, as it met to consider renewal of the mandate for the UN mission in Mali. Since a preliminary agreement was reached between Mali and rebels a year ago, Ladsous said, "the government and the armed groups have made little progress towards real, substantive dialogue."

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/un-calls-immediate-dialogue-mali-184837481.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/un-calls-immediate-dialogue-mali-184837481.html)

**Nigeria**

**Nigerian military arrest senior Boko Haram member: police**

Nigerian security forces discovered a senior member of Boko Haram among a convoy of nearly 500 travelers arrested this week in the southern state of Abia, a military spokesman said on Wednesday. News of the arrest comes as militants are killing civilians almost daily, particularly in the largely north. At least 14 people were killed on Tuesday when a bomb tore through a venue in the northeast where fans had gathered to watch a World Cup match.

**Reuters -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/nigerian-military-arrest-senior-boko-haram-member-police-195220688--sow.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/nigerian-military-arrest-senior-boko-haram-member-police-195220688--sow.html)

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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