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GENERAL

**Across Regions**

**UNHCR expresses shock at new Mediterranean boat tragedy**

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees expressed his shock that yet another boat tragedy in the Mediterranean has cost the lives of at least 26 people, mostly women and children. Mr. Guterres commended the joint action taken by the Maltese coast guard to rescue 147 people and the Italian navy, which rescued 56. But according to survivors, there were as many as 400 Syrians and Palestinians on the boat, many now missing and feared drowned. The rescue took place 60 miles south east of Lampedusa, in Maltese waters.

**UNHCR -** [**http://www.unhcr.org/52594c6a6.html**](http://www.unhcr.org/52594c6a6.html)

**Sudan/South Sudan**

**2,500 new Sudanese refugees arrive in South Sudan: MSF**

Some 2,500 Sudanese from South Kordofan state have arrived in South Sudan’s Upper Nile state and are in need of humanitarian assistance, MSF said. Many of the displaced, according to MSF, are women and children, who reportedly walked for five to 10 days after fleeing from their homes south-east of the troubled state. Also of concern, the agency stressed, is the nutritional status of the displaced women and children, many of who reportedly look weak with fears that their conditions could worsen. More than 200 children under five years of age, the agency said, are now receiving treatment in the ambulatory therapeutic feeding programme in Upper Nile’s Kodok town.

**Sudan Tribune -** [**http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article48435**](http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article48435)

CEE/CIS

**Russia**

**Authorities say they foiled plot to attack chemical arms facility**

Russian authorities said on Tuesday they had foiled a plot by Islamist radicals to bomb a chemical weapons facility and had arrested two suspects from the North Caucasus. Militants have previously carried out deadly bombings in Moscow and other parts of Russia outside the mostly Muslim North Caucasus, but specific allegations of plots to attack sites holding weapons of mass destruction in nuclear-armed Russia are almost unheard of. Authorities believe the suspects planned to build a bomb and attack the Maradykovsky chemical weapons storage and disposal facility in the Kirov region, about 1,000km northeast of Moscow, the Federal Investigative Committee said.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131015075804-kebwh/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131015075804-kebwh/?source=hpbreaking)

**Turkey**

**Kurdish rebel chief urges 'meaningful' peace talks**

The imprisoned leader of the Kurdish rebels on Monday called for the start of "meaningful and deep" talks with Turkey to end a nearly three-decade-old conflict. Abdullah Ocalan's message was relayed by Kurdish lawmakers days after his rebel group, which is engaged in peace talks with Turkey, accused Turkish leaders of not taking enough steps toward granting greater rights for the Kurdish minority. The rebel group, the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, also warned it could end a unilateral cease-fire that began six months ago.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/kurdish-rebel-chief-urges-meaningful-peace-talks-20565704**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/kurdish-rebel-chief-urges-meaningful-peace-talks-20565704)

EAPR

**China  
Thousands protest flood response in eastern city**   
Arrests have been made following massive anti-government protests in an eastern Chinese city hit by catastrophic flooding, an official newspaper has said. Thousands took part in the protest on Tuesday in the Zhejiang province city of Yuyao and an undisclosed number were arrested for "radical acts,'' including pelting police with bricks and turning over government vehicles, the official English-language *Global Times* reported on Wednesday. It said residents were angered over an allegedly botched response to the flooding, the worst in decades, and the slow restoration of electricity and other basic services. The flooding caused by a typhoon earlier this month killed at least six people in Zhejiang, left 11 million people deprived of water and power, and caused $2 billion in damages to homes, business, and infrastructure in Yuyao and nearby Ningbo and Shanghai, the government said.  
**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2013/10/thousands-protest-flood-hit-chinese-city-201310165830317539.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2013/10/thousands-protest-flood-hit-chinese-city-201310165830317539.html)

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131016101846-lovh4/?source=hptop**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131016101846-lovh4/?source=hptop)

**Authorities report first new case of H7N9 bird flu since August**

China has confirmed a new case of the H7N9 bird flu, state media said, the country's first report since August of human infection with a virus that has so far afflicted 135 people. A 35-year-old man in Shaoxing in China's eastern province of Zhejiang has been hospitalized with the virus and is in critical condition, the official Xinhua news agency said on Tuesday. "Liu, a company employee from Shaoxing county, was admitted to a township hospital on 8 October," the agency said. China's National Health and Family Planning Commission said 45 people had died from the virus, which was first detected in humans early this year. Zhejiang has recorded the highest number of H7N9 infections anywhere in China. While there have been only a handful of H7N9 infections during the summer months after a surge in April, flu experts warn that the threat posed by the virus has not passed.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/16/us-china-health-bird-flu-idUSBRE99F0B720131016?feedType=RSS&feedName=healthNews**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/16/us-china-health-bird-flu-idUSBRE99F0B720131016?feedType=RSS&feedName=healthNews)

**UN experts ask about treatment of activists**UN human rights experts say they have asked Chinese authorities for more information about reports that Chinese activists are being threatened, arrested or banned from taking part in demonstrations. Margaret Sekaggya, speaking for a group of UN special rapporteurs in Geneva, said Wednesday that these actions appear to be targeting people trying to participate in the UN Human Rights Council's review of China's human rights record, which is scheduled next week.   
**AP -** [**http://www.stltoday.com/news/world/un-experts-ask-china-about-treatment-of-activists/article\_51d2db41-0a9b-5077-8b0f-6848b49606eb.html**](http://www.stltoday.com/news/world/un-experts-ask-china-about-treatment-of-activists/article_51d2db41-0a9b-5077-8b0f-6848b49606eb.html)

**Japan  
Typhoon, mudslides kill 17; 50 missing**  
A typhoon caused deadly mudslides that buried people and destroyed homes on a Japanese island Wednesday before sweeping up the Pacific coast. At least 17 deaths were reported and nearly 50 people were missing. Hardest hit from Typhoon Wipha was Izu Oshima island, which is about 120km south of Tokyo. Rescuers found 16 bodies, most of them buried by mudslides, police and town officials said. Dozens of homes were destroyed, and about 45 people were missing. The typhoon, which stayed offshore in the Pacific, had sustained winds of 126kmh with gusts up to 180kph, before it was downgraded to a tropical storm Wednesday evening. More than 80 centimeters (30 inches) of rain fell on Izu Oshima during a 24-hour period ending Wednesday morning, the most since record-keeping began in 1991.  
**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/dead-missing-typhoon-lashes-tokyo-area-20582920**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/dead-missing-typhoon-lashes-tokyo-area-20582920)

**Myanmar**

**Small time bomb caused hotel blast**

An explosion that injured an American guest in one of the ritziest hotels in Myanmar’s main city was caused by a small, homemade time bomb placed in her room, police said Tuesday. It was the most high-profile in a series of explosions that the government alleges is an attempt to tarnish the image of the budding democracy as it emerges from decades of oppressive military rule. In less than a week, a restaurant, two bus stops, Buddhist temples and a market have been targeted. Police officer Myint Htwe said three suspects were detained in connection with the blast at midnight Monday at the Traders Hotel, located in Yangon and one of the most popular spots among foreign tourists, businesspeople and aid workers.

**AP -** [**http://www.boston.com/news/world/asia/2013/10/15/police-small-time-bomb-caused-myanmar-hotel-blast/1XU9ep6HyhpKe4L0maLvLJ/story.html**](http://www.boston.com/news/world/asia/2013/10/15/police-small-time-bomb-caused-myanmar-hotel-blast/1XU9ep6HyhpKe4L0maLvLJ/story.html)

**Rohingya kids: Hard labor, bleak lives**

The lives of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya children are growing more hopeless in Myanmar. The Muslim ethnic group has long suffered from discrimination that rights groups call among the worst in the world. But in northern Rakhine state, home to 80% of the country's 1 million Rohingya, it is more difficult now for children to get adequate education, food or medical care than it had been in the days of the junta. They have few options beyond hard labor, for a dollar a day. Muslim schools known as madrassas have been shut down, leading to crowding in government schools, where Rohingya, who make up 90% of the population in this corner of the country, are taught by Buddhist teachers in a language many do not understand.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/suffering-dogs-rohingya-kids-myanmar-20571923**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/suffering-dogs-rohingya-kids-myanmar-20571923)

**Papua New Guinea**

**7.1-magnitude quake strikes**

A 7.1-magnitude earthquake struck off PNG Wednesday, the USGS said, but there was no widespread tsunami warning issued. The quake hit at a depth of 58km at 8:31 pm (1031 GMT), 65km west of Panguna town on PNG’s Bougainville Island, and 642km west of Honiara in the Solomon Islands. The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center said there was “no destructive widespread tsunami threat” based on historical data, but seismologists warned there could be localised wave activity and damage. “The whole island (of Bougainville) would have been shaking quite strongly,” Geoscience Australia seismologist David Jepsen said.

**AFP -** [**http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/508419/7-1-magnitude-quake-strikes-solomon-islands**](http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/508419/7-1-magnitude-quake-strikes-solomon-islands)

**Philippines**

**Death toll from quake at 144, more people missing**

The death toll from an earthquake in the Philippines rose to 144 on Wednesday as rescuers dug through the rubble of collapsed buildings including an old church and a hospital. Nearly 3 million people were affected by the 7.2 magnitude quake on Tuesday, which caused landslides and widespread damage to infrastructure in the tourist destinations of Bohol island and the nearby Cebu islands. The number of injured rose towards 300, with at least 23 people missing. The national disaster agency said at least 134 of the dead were on Bohol island, which took the brunt of the quake. The island is located 630km south of the capital, Manila. Officials feared the toll would rise as communications with remote areas were re-established. Many of the millions hit by the quake spent the night outdoors, including patients at some hospitals, because of aftershocks. More than 840 aftershocks have been recorded, with one of magnitude 5.1, the volcanology agency said.  
**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131016101245-b5x1p/?source=hptop**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131016101245-b5x1p/?source=hptop)

**Viet Nam**

**Typhoon Nari kills five, causes major damage**

Typhoon Nari slammed into central Vietnam early Tuesday, killing five people and causing widespread damage which residents said left a popular tourist city looking like "a battlefield." Residents said it was biggest typhoon since 2006. Schools were closed Tuesday in Danang, which bore the brunt of the typhoon packing winds of up to 133 kmh, state media said. Before Nari struck, Vietnam evacuated more than 120,000 people to makeshift shelters in public buildings away from vulnerable coastal areas, according to the country's disaster authorities. Nari is the 11th tropical storm to hit Vietnam so far this year.

**AFP -** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131015/typhoon-nari-kills-five-causes-major-damage-vietnam**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131015/typhoon-nari-kills-five-causes-major-damage-vietnam)

ESAR

**Madagascar**

**Floods, locusts leave many hungry**

Erratic weather and a locust plague have taken a toll on Madagascar’s rice and maize harvests this year, leaving as many as 4 million people – 28% of households - in rural areas food insecure, according to a recent WFP/FAO report. A further 9.6 million people are estimated to be at risk of food insecurity. The joint Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission, conducted in June and July by WFP and FAO, attributed the poor agricultural season to a combination of factors including flooding caused by Cyclone Haruna earlier this year, followed by a period of poor rains. According to the WFP/FAO report, rice production declined by 21% this year, resulting in a significant national rice deficit. Maize production is also down and an estimated 28,000 metric tons of maize will need to be imported to meet domestic needs.

**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report/98940/floods-locusts-leave-madagascar-hungry**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/98940/floods-locusts-leave-madagascar-hungry)

**Somalia**

**WFP condemns ration card scam in Mogadishu**

The WFP has condemned a recently uncovered scam aimed at defrauding displaced people in Mogadishu, and urges residents of the Somali capital to beware of the illegal scheme. WFP has learned that individuals posing as WFP employees have been selling fake ration cards to IDPs in Mogadishu, claiming that these cards entitle the holders to receive food from WFP. These individuals do not represent WFP, the cards are not genuine, and payment is never required to access WFP assistance programmes.

**Dalsan Radio -** [**http://allafrica.com/stories/201310141935.html**](http://allafrica.com/stories/201310141935.html) **Ten killed in fighting near Mogadishu**At least ten people reportedly died and ten others have been wounded in two separate clashes that took place on the outskirts of Mogadishu during the afternoon and the night of Sunday, Garowe Online reports. Local reports say the Somali Federal Government troops fought each other near a hospital situated outside of Mogadishu when they disagreed over the collection of tax from under construction building, leaving three soldiers dead and eight others wounded. According to the Somali government forces commander, the fighting erupted between armed militiamen disguised as military soldiers and the government forces. Separately, Al Shabaab militants attacked Arbacow vicinity, 20km southwest of Mogadishu and close to former business hub Elasha Biyaha where Somalia Federal Government troops have military bases.  
**Garowe -** [**http://allafrica.com/stories/201310150181.html**](http://allafrica.com/stories/201310150181.html)

**South Africa  
Killing of two toddlers sparks outrage**

Two toddlers were found dead inside a communal toilet in a South African slum north of Johannesburg on Tuesday, in another case of increasing brutal violence against children, police said. The bodies of the girls, aged two and three years, were discovered early in the morning by a resident of Diepsloot township. No arrests have been made, but the killings sparked rioting in the densely populated neighbourhood, where residents had blocked the streets with rocks and rubble. Last month, the body of a five-year-old girl was found in a dumpster in the same area.

**AFP -** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131015/killing-two-south-african-toddlers-sparks-outrage**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131015/killing-two-south-african-toddlers-sparks-outrage)

MENA

**Across MENA  
Israel army: 2nd tunnel from Gaza found, destroyed**

Israel's military says it has found and destroyed a second tunnel dug from the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip into Israel. The military says it blew up the tunnel on Tuesday. It says the tunnel was packed with explosives and stretched dozens of meters (yards) into Israel. On Sunday, the military announced the discovery of a long, concrete-lined tunnel from Gaza into Israel and alleged militants planned to use it to attack or kidnap Israelis.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/israeli-leader-stays-hard-line-peace-talks-20566794**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/israeli-leader-stays-hard-line-peace-talks-20566794)

**Iraq**

**Bomb near mosque in north kills 12 Sunnis**A bomb ripped through a crowd of Sunni worshippers coming out of a mosque in northern Iraq after prayers at the start of a major Muslim holiday on Tuesday, killing 12 people and wounding 24, a police official said. The attack took place in the oil-rich city of Kirkuk, 290km north of Baghdad. The bomb went off as worshippers were leaving the al-Qodus mosque after morning prayers for the beginning of the Eid al-Adha holiday. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/bomb-mosque-northern-iraq-kills-12-sunnis-20572060**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/bomb-mosque-northern-iraq-kills-12-sunnis-20572060)

**Kirkuk in limbo as law addressing political balance is scrapped**

The scrapping of part of a law encouraging political balance in Iraq’s most ethnically divided province has added to growing pessimism among residents of Kirkuk about the resolution of long-standing disputes over power-sharing. The province is home to Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen and other ethnic groups, but many argue their representation on the governing Provincial Council does not accurately reflect their percentage of the population. Provincial elections - seen by many as the solution to the perceived power imbalance - have not been held since 2005. In late August, the federal court of Iraq struck down two paragraphs of Article 23 of the Provincial Election Law, which aimed at consensus among Kirkuk’s ethno-religious groups on when and how to hold the province’s much-needed and long-delayed elections.

**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report/98942/kirkuk-in-limbo-as-law-addressing-political-balance-is-scrapped**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/98942/kirkuk-in-limbo-as-law-addressing-political-balance-is-scrapped)

**Morocco**

**Government under rights fire as UN makes new W.Sahara peace bid**

Under fire over its human rights record in the Western Sahara, Morocco is vying to regain the initiative as the UN makes a new peace push for the disputed territory. UN envoy Christopher Ross is trying to break a decades-old deadlock between Morocco, which annexed the former Spanish colony in 1975 in a move never recognised by the international community, and the pro-independence Polisario Front, which is backed by neighbouring Algeria. The envoy, whom Morocco tried unsuccessfully to have replaced last year, accusing him of bias, began his shuttle diplomacy with talks with government ministers in Rabat on Monday.

**AFP -** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131015/morocco-under-rights-fire-un-makes-new-wsahara-peace-bid**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131015/morocco-under-rights-fire-un-makes-new-wsahara-peace-bid)

**State of Palestinian   
Youths face Israeli abuse – UNICEF**

UNICEF has said Israel's army and police force continue to mistreat Palestinian youths during arrests and detentions, despite agreeing to test alternative treatment following international pressure. The fund's progress report, released on Monday, stated that “violations are ongoing”, seven months after an initial paper was released which highlighted widespread mistreatment of Palestinian youths arrested in the occupied West Bank. The report cited 19 sample cases of alleged abuse of youths aged between 12 and 17 in the occupied West Bank in the second quarter of 2013. In all cases, the detainees, all male, suffered physical violence, including beating, kicking and slapping, while in 17 cases they were verbally abused.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/10/palestinian-youths-face-israeli-abuse-report-2013101505225951701.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/10/palestinian-youths-face-israeli-abuse-report-2013101505225951701.html)

**Syria**

**Three Red Cross workers still held**

Officials have said a Syrian Arab Red Crescent volunteer and three of six Red Cross staffers taken hostage in Syria are free and safe. Gunmen abducted the seven on Sunday after stopping their convoy in northwestern Syria. The incident highlights an increasing problem within Syria as kidnappings are on the rise. The growing risk of kidnappings means that foreign staff have reduced their presence within the country. The security situation has got much worse in recent months, especially in August, given the rise of the influence of extremist groups directly linked to al Qaeda," said Jitka Korenkova, who works for the Czech People in Need, one of the few aid groups working in Aleppo city.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/10/four-kidnapped-aid-workers-released-syria-2013101413640975846.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/10/four-kidnapped-aid-workers-released-syria-2013101413640975846.html)

**Same urgency on chemical weapons needed on humanitarian aid**

The massive political mobilization displayed around Syria's chemical weapons, underscored by the awarding last Friday of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), must also be applied immediately to humanitarian access in the country, MSF said Monday. Many areas of Syria remain entirely under siege, sealed off from lifesaving assistance, either because access is blocked by the authorities in Damascus or because of intense fighting. In the East and West Ghouta suburbs of Damascus - areas visited by chemical weapons inspectors - medics are reporting desperate shortages of drugs and cases of malnutrition due to lack of food, yet aid has been unable to reach them. The lack of political mobilization around humanitarian access has left areas in Aleppo and the suburbs of Damascus cut off from aid, and essential medical supplies systematically blocked from crossing front lines.

**MSF -** [**http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/press/release.cfm?id=7102&cat=press-release**](http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/press/release.cfm?id=7102&cat=press-release) **21 killed as truck hit by blast in south: NGO**

A powerful blast ripped through a pickup truck in the south Syria province of Daraa early Wednesday, killing 21 people including four children, a monitoring group said. "Twenty-one people were killed in the Nawa area (of Daraa), among them four children and six women, in a blast that detonated as their vehicle went past Tal al-Jumua," where a battalion of troops loyal to President Bashar al-Assad is positioned, said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.   
**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hSEeb8z2zSp15FEKjIzEJhxjNLew?docId=2e2d0f4c-c084-4d65-a1fe-67a01023b966&hl=en**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hSEeb8z2zSp15FEKjIzEJhxjNLew?docId=2e2d0f4c-c084-4d65-a1fe-67a01023b966&hl=en)

**Tunisia**

**Opposition calls for mass protests**

Tunisia's opposition alliance called for country-wide protests next week, accusing ruling Islamists of holding up the start of negotiations and delaying the formation of a new government. Political activity has ground to a halt in Tunisia since the murder of opposition MP Mohamed Brahmi in July, amid a bitter standoff between the ruling Islamist party Ennahda and the opposition. On Monday, the National Salvation Front (NSF), a loose coalition of opposition parties, called on Tunisians "in all regions, especially the capital" to take part in a "massive demonstration on 23 October to demand the appointment of a competent government."

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/10/tunisia-opposition-call-mass-protests-2013101423567680416.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/10/tunisia-opposition-call-mass-protests-2013101423567680416.html)

**Yemen**

**Police officer gunned down in south**

A police officer was gunned down in a motorcycle drive-by shooting Tuesday in a region of southeast Yemen where Al-Qaeda carries out frequent attacks, a local official said. "Two armed men suspected of belonging to Al-Qaeda opened fire at the officer, Mahmud al-Nakhii, who was in a police car in the main street of Ghayl Bawazir," a town in Hadramawt province, he told AFP. In the neighbouring province of Lahij, six soldiers were wounded as suspected Al-Qaeda gunmen attacked a camp for the security forces in Huta, a security official said. Last Thursday, an intelligence officer was assassinated in another drive-by shooting by assailants on motorcycles in the Hadramawt provincial capital of Mukalla.

**AFP -** [**http://www.france24.com/en/20131015-police-officer-gunned-down-south-yemen**](http://www.france24.com/en/20131015-police-officer-gunned-down-south-yemen)

ROSA

**Afghanistan**

**Bomb at Eid prayers kills Afghan provincial governor**

A bomb hidden in a microphone killed an Afghan provincial governor Tuesday as he made a speech at a mosque after Eid prayers in Logar, close to the capital Kabul, officials said. The explosion at the main mosque in the provincial capital of Puli Alam killed Governor Arsallah Jamal and wounded 15 people, five of them critically, said the governor's spokesman. No group claimed immediate responsibility for the blast, though Taliban militants often target government officials as well as Afghan soldiers and police.

**AFP -** [**http://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/afghanistan/officials-bombing-at-mosque-kills-afghan-governor/article1-1135285.aspx**](http://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/afghanistan/officials-bombing-at-mosque-kills-afghan-governor/article1-1135285.aspx)

**Voter card trade worrying, as presidential race begins**

There are months to go until polling day in Afghanistan on 5 April, but many presidential candidates are already alarmed by the scale of the illicit trade in voter cards and questioning how legitimate the election will be. An election marred by more fraud than the last polls in 2009 will play into the hands of Taliban insurgents and risk a breakdown of government as multinational troops pull out of the nation. The nomination process for the 2014 poll ended only days ago, but the voter card trade is already starting to worry Western diplomats instructed to monitor the election for their governments. While it may be difficult to measure the scale of fraud compared to 2009, security will clearly be a bigger threat to the process next year.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131014205013-2zzoc/?source=hptop**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131014205013-2zzoc/?source=hptop)

**India**

**Thousands marooned by floods after cyclone**

Workers are battling to rescue tens of thousands of people marooned by rising flood waters in Orissa, after the state was hit by the strongest cyclone in 14 years. Flood waters have left nearly 100,000 people stranded in Mayurbhanj and Balasore districts, officials say. The death toll from the cyclone has risen to 27 in Orissa, with four people killed in the floods. A flood alert has been also sounded in the neighbouring state of Bihar. There are fears of heavy rainfall in at least two dozen districts after the weakened storm changed course and moved towards northern parts of Bihar bordering Nepal, officials say. Cyclone Phailin crashed into eastern India over the weekend and flattened many coastal homes, uprooted trees and blocked roads in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh states. The intense storm has made more than half-a-million people homeless, state government officials said.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-24530193**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-24530193)

**How preparedness saved lives during monster storm**

As meteorologists warned last week of a monster storm ploughing towards India’s east coast, the country’s disaster preparedness teams snapped into action, pre-positioning emergency response teams and supplies, and evacuating nearly a million people - ultimately saving countless lives. Early warnings which started five days before the storm's arrival, the pre-positioning of food rations and packaged drinking water in shelters, and the orderly - and sometimes forceful - evacuation of close to one million people saved many lives, said aid workers.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131014065405-15ayr/?source=hptop**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131014065405-15ayr/?source=hptop)

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**Brazil**

**Surge in anti-press violence reported**

Anti-press violence rose nearly threefold in Brazil in 2013 as reporters covered massive street protests over substandard public services and endemic corruption, a broadcast media report said Monday. "This is one of the most violent years for the press in this country," Daniel Slaviero, president of the Brazilian Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters (ABERT), said as he unveiled a report on the assaults against journalists. So far this year, five reporters have been killed in the country, compared with six in 2012, according to ABERT. And 136 cases of anti-press violence have been recorded this year, compared with 51 for the whole of 2012, it added.

**AFP -** [**http://au.news.yahoo.com/world/a/19396935/surge-in-anti-press-violence-reported-in-brazil/**](http://au.news.yahoo.com/world/a/19396935/surge-in-anti-press-violence-reported-in-brazil/)

**Honduras**

**Authorities send military police to tame drug violence as vote looms**

Honduras ordered 1,000 military police onto the streets of its most violent cities on Monday, as a presidential election dominated by debate over how to tackle the wave of drug killings approaches in just over a month. This first deployment of a new military-style police force marks the latest tactic to curb an epidemic of drug violence that last year turned Honduras into the world's most murderous country with more than 85 homicides for every 100,000 people. The country has become a key staging point for drug shipments moving north from South America, and has been invaded by Mexican drug gangs. In August, Congress authorized the creation the new force made up of 5,000 officers with military training.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131015020553-l4aol/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131015020553-l4aol/?source=hpbreaking)

**Mexico**

**Cholera outbreak spreads, preventative campaign launched**

A cholera outbreak in central Mexico has risen to 159 confirmed cases and spread to four states as well as the capital, the country's health minister said on Monday. One death has been attributed to the outbreak, the ministry said as it launched a nationwide public health campaign aimed at preventing further infections. The east-central state of Hidalgo has been the worst affected with 145 confirmed cases, including the death of a 75-year-old woman. Also affected were the states of Mexico with nine, Veracruz with two, San Luis Potosi with one, and another couple in Mexico City, said Health Minister Mercedes Juan. Eight in 10 cases have been successfully treated, the minister said, while those infected with the disease in the past several weeks range in age from 3 to 86.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/14/us-mexico-cholera-idUSBRE99D0LY20131014?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/14/us-mexico-cholera-idUSBRE99D0LY20131014?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews)

WCAR

**CAR**

**Conflict exacerbates malnutrition**

For the majority of families in the CAR, subsistence farming is their primary activity. However, the recent armed conflict, which occurred during the harvest season, prevented people from accessing their farmland and therefore disrupting livelihoods and a vital activity of CAR’s economy. This was compounded by the looting of cattle, seeds, tools, and already-meagre food reserves. CAR's nutritional situation has been steadily deteriorating, with soaring food prices in the short term, food insecurity in the midterm, and devastating nutritional conditions for the most vulnerable in the long term. A recent Emergency Food Security Assessment by OCHA revealed that 484,000 people (10.5% of CAR’s total population) are at risk of food insecurity. According to the WFP, 8% of children under 5 years old in CAR are malnourished.

**IMC -** [**https://internationalmedicalcorps.org/2013\_10\_15-car-worsening-nutritional-situation**](https://internationalmedicalcorps.org/2013_10_15-car-worsening-nutritional-situation)

**Troubles could spill over - France**

French President Francois Hollande said on Monday the collapse of CAR could destabilise the region, as he sought to drum up support for increased military intervention while on a state visit to South Africa. France committed on Sunday to increasing the number of troops in its former colony by year-end, under a UN resolution, to help prevent the state spiraling out of control with the risk the power vacuum could encourage militancy.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131014141445-t23ve/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131014141445-t23ve/?source=hpbreaking) **MSF denounces 'unprecedented' violence**

MSF on Wednesday denounced the "unprecedented" violence in CAR, urging all sides to respect civilian safety and calling for urgent international aid. "Tens of thousands of villagers have fled a fresh wave of attacks summary executions, perpetrated both by armed groups and government forces in the northwest of the country," the NGO said. People were taking refuge in the brush, without protection and particularly exposed to the dangers of malaria, the biggest cause of death in the country, MSF said in its report. Hygiene conditions are "disastrous" with so many families living together, Ellen Van der Velden, head of the MSF mission in the Central African Republic said in the statement.   
**AFP -** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131016/msf-denounces-unprecedented-violence-c-africa**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131016/msf-denounces-unprecedented-violence-c-africa)

**DR Congo**

**Government accuses Rwanda, rebels of preparing attack**

The government spokesperson for DR Congo is accusing Rwanda and the M23 rebels of preparing more attacks in eastern DR Congo. Lambert Mende reported that Congolese authorities have "confirmed with certainty" that the rebels are backed by Rwanda and are planning to launch a fresh offensive. There was no immediate reaction from Rwanda, though the country has vigorously denied that it provides support and training to the M23 rebels. A UN group of experts, though, says that evidence shows Rwanda backs the rebels.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/congo-accuses-rwanda-rebels-preparing-attack-20566296**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/congo-accuses-rwanda-rebels-preparing-attack-20566296)

**Army, rebels briefly clash in volatile east**

Congolese government forces and M23 rebels in the volatile east fought early Tuesday in clashes that killed at least one rebel fighter and forced others to retreat farther south from the provincial capital of Goma, a rebel leader said Tuesday. Rene Abandi, who leads M23 rebels in peace negotiations in neighboring Uganda, said the Congolese army launched a ground assault on rebel positions in the Kanyamahoro area, about 20km from Goma. The rebels fought back in the attack that killed one rebel fighter and wounded two others, he said.

**AP -** [**http://www.seattlepi.com/news/world/article/Congo-army-rebels-briefly-clash-in-volatile-east-4896106.php**](http://www.seattlepi.com/news/world/article/Congo-army-rebels-briefly-clash-in-volatile-east-4896106.php)

**Mali**

**Ex-coup leader moves out of army barracks**

Amadou Sanogo, who led a March 2012 coup in Mali, has left the army barracks where he lived to move into a new residence in Bamako, defence officials reported. "It was necessary for the country's peace of mind that he leave Kati," a garrison town north of Bamako where his headquarters were located, a defence ministry official said. "He is not going back up there any time soon, we will not let that happen," the official reported. Sanogo, who leapt from the rank of captain to general in August after a presidential election, left Kati in a six-vehicle convoy and wearing civilian clothes. The Malian army immediately took control of the headquarters Sanogo had been using and of his military equipment.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/mali-ex-coup-leader-moves-army-barracks-190228165.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/mali-ex-coup-leader-moves-army-barracks-190228165.html)

**Nigeria**

**40 Boko Haram fighters killed in weekend clashes**

Nigeria's military said Tuesday it repelled coordinated attacks by Boko Haram Islamists at the weekend, killing 40 insurgents, but few details were provided and the account could not be independently verified. According to a military statement Islamist fighters, "of unknown strength attempted coordinated and simultaneous attacks," on Sunday in three remote towns in northeastern Borno state, Boko Haram's historic stronghold. Troops "successfully repelled all the attacks killing 40 terrorists in the three locations," the towns of Bama, Gwoza and Pulka, said the statement from the army's 7 Division, based in the northeast.

**AFP -** [**http://voiceofrussia.com/news/2013\_10\_15/Nigeria-says-killed-40-Boko-Haram-fighters-in-weekend-clashes-4937/**](http://voiceofrussia.com/news/2013_10_15/Nigeria-says-killed-40-Boko-Haram-fighters-in-weekend-clashes-4937/)

**Hundreds dying in detention - Amnesty**

Hundreds of people are dying in detention as Nigeria's military cracks down on an Islamic uprising in the northeast, Amnesty International said Tuesday. Some people are shot outright, some starve and others suffocate to death, it said. "Others were reportedly shot in the leg during interrogation, provided no medical care and left to bleed to death," the London-based human rights group said in a new report. More than 950 people died in military custody in the first six months of this year, according to "credible information" from a senior Nigerian army officer, it said. The killings and deaths documented by Amnesty International may help answer questions raised by an Associated Press report in August that detailed how hundreds of detainees have gone missing since the military imposed a state of emergency on 14 May on the three northeastern states that cover one-sixth of Nigeria.

**AP -** [**http://www.sandiego6.com/story/amnesty-hundreds-dying-in-detention-in-nigeria-20131015**](http://www.sandiego6.com/story/amnesty-hundreds-dying-in-detention-in-nigeria-20131015)

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