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GENERAL

**Across Regions**

**Africa peacekeeping missions struggle to find troops**

A plan to expand the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), as well as the establishment of new international missions in the Central African Republic (CAR) and Mali, has created a shortfall of over 12,000 troops. The scale of African peacekeeping operations has increased significantly over the last decade: there were around 25,000 troops serving with UN missions in Africa in September 2003, a figure that had grown to over 63,400 by the end of September 2013, according to UN figures. African countries are meeting much of this growing demand and currently provide 36,200 troops, a fourfold increase on the 8,860 they contributed in 2003. This number is increased by more than 20,000 with the inclusion of the two current African Union (AU) missions: AMISOM and the Regional Co-operation Initiative against the Lord's Resistance Army (RCI-LRA).

**IHS -** [**http://www.janes.com/article/28854/africa-peacekeeping-missions-struggle-to-find-troops**](http://www.janes.com/article/28854/africa-peacekeeping-missions-struggle-to-find-troops)

**Malaysia asked to curb Iraq, Syria visas**

Australia has asked Malaysia to remove the right to visas on arrival for Iraqis and Syrians, as they have done for Iranians, officials said Friday. The move would aim to curb the flow of asylum seekers, often facilitated by people smugglers, who use Malaysia as a transit point on their way from the Middle East to Australia. Malaysian Home Affairs Minister Ahmad Zahid "undertook to take up our request to extend the constrained visa arrangements now in place for Iranians to Iraqis and Syrians," Australian Immigration Minister Scott Morrison told reporters, after meeting with Zahid in Kuala Lumpur this week. The Malaysian Home Ministry "will form a task force to look into it," a ministry official told dpa on condition of anonymity.

**DPA -** [**http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/security/376352/australia-asks-malaysia-to-curb-visas-for-iraqi-syrian-arrivals**](http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/security/376352/australia-asks-malaysia-to-curb-visas-for-iraqi-syrian-arrivals)

**Nearly 700 immigrants rescued off Italy: official**

Nearly 700 refugees have been rescued off Sicily in five operations, Italy's coast guard said Friday, as European leaders grapple with the issue of illegal immigration at a European Union summit. Coast guard patrol boats, navy vessels and a Maltese-flagged cargo vessel rescued five boats over the past 24 hours, the biggest of which was carrying 219 people, a coast guard statement said. The 318 migrants picked up by the navy were all packed on two boats and were later transferred onto the San March amphibious assault ship taking part in a massive search and rescue operation.

**AFP -** [**http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/italy-immigration.r2n**](http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/italy-immigration.r2n)

**Sudan/South Sudan**

**Security Council ‘gravely concerned’ about highly volatile situation in Abyei**

The United Nations Security Council today called urgently on the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan to refrain from any unilateral action that could heighten tension between the two neighbouring countries or impede a solution regarding the contested, oil-rich border region of Abyei. The Council members reiterated “their grave concern about the highly volatile situation in Abyei area,” according to a press statement read by Agshin Mehdiyev, the Permanent Representative from Azerbaijan, which holds this month’s rotating presidency of the Council. The statement follows a meeting between Presidents Omar al-Bashir of Sudan and South Sudan’s Salva Kiir on 22 October in the latter’s

capital of Juba. During the meeting, which Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon had welcomed, the two Presidents expressed intent to expedite the establishment of the Abyei Administration, Abyei Council and Abyei Police Service.

**UN News Centre -** [**http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46332&Cr=abyei&Cr1**](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46332&Cr=abyei&Cr1)**=**

**Syria/Turkey**

**Turkish army fires on armed smugglers on Syrian border**

Turkish troops repelled four armed men on the border with Syria as they tried to enter Turkey illegally to smuggle goods, a military statement said Thursday. The statement, by the General Staff of the Turkish Armed Forces, said the troops spotted four smugglers on motorbikes approaching the Turkish border, who defied warnings in both Turkish and Arabic and fired on the Turkish border units near the ViranSehir town in the southern Turkish province of Sanliurfa. The statement added that the army returned the fire and the smugglers escaped back to Syria.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-10/25/c\_125595333.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-10/25/c_125595333.htm)

CEE/CIS

**Turkey**

**Turkey's Gezi Park protesters create new political party**

A group of musicians and artists have founded a new political party named after the Istanbul park that became the epicenter of nationwide protests against the Turkish government in June. The Gezi Party, named after Gezi Park in Turkey's largest city, will focus on altering the country's constitution to make it "more democratic", according to its Facebook page, and will be led by Resit Cem Koksal, 37, a rock musician. "We all want to live in a democratic country. To assert our demands, we took to the streets and lost lives," a message on its Facebook page read. "Now it's time to enter Parliament," it added. The party was officially registered on October 1 with the Turkish Interior Ministry, and will field its first candidates in legislative elections in 2015, it said. Its logo features a tree with a man with spread arms forming the trunk.

**AFP -** [**http://english.al-akhbar.com/content/turkeys-gezi-park-protesters-create-new-political-party?utm\_source=feedburner&utm\_medium=feed&utm\_campaign=Feed%3A+AlAkhbarEnglish+(Al+Akhbar+English)**](http://english.al-akhbar.com/content/turkeys-gezi-park-protesters-create-new-political-party?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+AlAkhbarEnglish+(Al+Akhbar+English))

EAPR

**Cambodia**

**Cambodian opposition rally's last day draws 20,000**

About 20,000 Cambodian opposition supporters are wrapping up a three-day demonstration to petition foreign embassies and the UN for intervention in what they claim was a rigged election. The rallies, which end Friday, are the opposition's latest push to demand an independent probe into the July 28 poll, which the opposition says returned Prime Minister Hun Sen to power illegitimately. Throngs of cheering demonstrators marched through the capital this week as they delivered petitions to the French, British, US, Australian, Russian, Japanese, Indonesian and Chinese embassies and to the UN human rights office. Official election results extended Hun Sen's 28-year rule and gave his party 68 seats in parliament, compared with 55 for the opposition. The opposition says it was cheated out of a victory and that it will boycott parliament until the government has met its demands.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/cambodian-opposition-rallys-day-draws-20000-20678654**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/cambodian-opposition-rallys-day-draws-20000-20678654)

**China**

**Human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus update**

The National Health and Family Planning Commission, China notified WHO of a new laboratory-confirmed case of human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus. The patient is a 67-year-old man from Zhejiang Province. He is a farmer, and has had contact with live poultry. He became in October, was admitted to a local township hospital, and later was transferred to another hospital as his condition deteriorated. He is currently in a critical condition. To date, WHO has been informed of a total of 137 laboratory-confirmed human cases with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus infection including 45 deaths. Currently, four patients are hospitalized and 88 have been discharged. So far, there is no evidence of sustainable human-to-human transmission.

**WHO -** [**http://www.who.int/csr/don/2013\_10\_24a/en/index.html**](http://www.who.int/csr/don/2013_10_24a/en/index.html)

**Myanmar**

**Myanmar president will not seek second term**

Myanmar President Thein Sein, who has steered a wave of reforms since the end of military rule, will not be seeking a second term at the next election in 2015, the leader of his party said on Thursday. Thein Sein has been lauded internationally for his economic policies, prisoner amnesties, and peace deals with ethnic minority rebels, but last year said a second term would depend on whether the people wanted him to stay and if he was physically able to do the job.

**Reuters -** [**http://ca.news.yahoo.com/myanmar-president-not-seek-second-term-party-172700633.html**](http://ca.news.yahoo.com/myanmar-president-not-seek-second-term-party-172700633.html)

**Violence against Muslims threatening Myanmar reforms: UN envoy**

Violence against a Muslim minority in Myanmar is feeding a wider anti-Muslim feeling that poses a serious threat to the country's dramatic economic and political reforms as it emerges from half a century of military rule, a UN envoy said on Thursday. The government says at least 192 people were killed in June and October 2012 clashes between ethnic Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims, most of whom Myanmar deem illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, despite roots going back generations. The clashes led to unrest elsewhere in the country, where other groups of Muslims have been targeted, including Kamans, who are of different ethnicity from Rohingyas. An estimated 5 percent of Myanmar's population of about 60 million is Muslim.

**Reuters -** [**http://in.reuters.com/article/2013/10/24/myanmar-un-rights-idINDEE99N0HS20131024**](http://in.reuters.com/article/2013/10/24/myanmar-un-rights-idINDEE99N0HS20131024)

**Philippines**

**Earthquake creates miles-long rocky wall**

The deadly earthquake that struck the Philippines last week created a spectacular rocky wall that stretches for kilometres through farmlands, astounded geologists said on Thursday. Dramatic pictures of the Earth-altering power of the 7.1-magnitide quake have emerged as the government worked to mend the broken central island of Bohol, ground zero of the destruction. A "ground rupture" pushed up a stretch of ground by up to three metres creating a wall of rock above the epicentre, Maria Isabel Abigania, a geologist at the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, told AFP. Renato Solidum, head of the institute, said the ground fissures from the quake, which killed 198 people on Bohol and two nearby islands, were among the largest recorded since the government agency began keeping quake records in 1987.

**AFP -** [**http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/rest-of-world/Philippine-earthquake-creates-miles-long-rocky-wall/articleshow/24668329.cms**](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/rest-of-world/Philippine-earthquake-creates-miles-long-rocky-wall/articleshow/24668329.cms)

ESAR

**Across ESAR**

**South Africa has 'serious' worries about Mozambique unrest**

South Africa said violent clashes in Mozambique were a serious concern, with stability in the neighbouring country critical to the rest of the region. "It's a serious worry not only to us as a neighbour but also to the continent as a whole," government minister Collins Chabane told journalists. The unrest is "happening on our shores, just around our borders", said Chabane. "The stability of Mozambique is very critical for the stability of the region," he said, adding this was also needed for economic growth. South Africa had not been asked to assist in the matter which has seen rising tensions and skirmishes in recent months.

**AFP -** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131024/south-africa-has-serious-worries-about-mozambique-unrest**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131024/south-africa-has-serious-worries-about-mozambique-unrest)

**Zimbabwe warns Mozambique's Renamo not to resume war**

Zimbabwe has urged rebels in Mozambique not to fight, after an opposition group with military and political wings withdrew from a 1992 peace deal. Zimbabwe's Deputy Foreign Minister reported that he would not countenance a return to civil war in Mozambique. The Renamo movement, thought to have about 1,000 fighters as well as 51 MPs, ended the peace accord this week. Zimbabwe's Deputy Foreign Minister said Renamo should rejoin the political process, not threaten regional stability. He reported that Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama should "never, never" return to violence. "Southern Africa will not countenance this. We simply do not need this in this region at this juncture," he said. He added that regional body Sadc (Southern African Development Community) would consider sending troops to help the government if the security situation deteriorated.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-24635338**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-24635338)

**Eritrea**

**Eritrea's human rights record comes under fire at United Nations**

Human rights abuses in Eritrea are forcing between 2,000 – 3,000 people to flee the east African nation every month, despite a "shoot-to-kill policy" targeting those attempting to leave, a UN investigator said on Thursday. Sheila Keetharuth, the UN special rapporteur on human rights in Eritrea, said the UN refugee agency was concerned about 305,723 Eritreans who have fled over the past decade. "The most serious human rights violations are being committed" in Eritrea, Keetharuth said, including extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, extended incommunicado detention, torture, indefinite national service, and lack of freedom of expression, assembly, religious belief and movement.

**Guardian -** [**http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/25/eritrea-human-rights-united-nations**](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/25/eritrea-human-rights-united-nations)

**Ethiopia**

**Ethiopia bans overseas employment of citizens**

The Ethiopian government has banned its citizens from travelling overseas for employment. According to the state owned Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency, the order took effect from Thursday and the government is also clamping down on foreign employment agencies. The Ministry of Foreign Affair says countless Ethiopians have lost their lives and undergone untold physical and psychological traumas due to illegal human trafficking. The latest move came after hundreds of African migrants lost their lives off the Italian island of Lampedusa at the beginning of the month. According to the Association of Ethiopian Overseas Recruitment Agencies, more than half a million Ethiopians have flown out of the country illegally the last five years and most of the migrants are underage females who are smuggled to the Middle East.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/ethiopia-bans-overseas-employment-citizens-20679665**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/ethiopia-bans-overseas-employment-citizens-20679665)

**Kenya**

**ICC says Kenya Deputy President must attend trial**

The International Criminal Court on Friday overturned a decision excusing Kenya's deputy president from attending his trial on charges of orchestrating deadly violence after his country's 2007 election. The decision by appeals judges means William Ruto must — in principle — appear at his trial, but can still be excused on a "case by case" basis. "The presence of the accused must remain the general rule," said court President, Judge Sang-hyun Song. The ruling could deepen a rift between the court and African leaders who accuse it of unfairly targeting their continent. It could also set a precedent for Kenya's president, whose trial on similar charges is scheduled to start next month.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/icc-kenya-deputy-president-attend-trial-20679054**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/icc-kenya-deputy-president-attend-trial-20679054)

**Madagascar**

**Violence mars Madagascar polls**

Violence broke out as Madagascar voted on Friday in crunch elections to restore democracy after a 2009 coup, leaving a senior government official dead and a polling station torched. The violence erupted as voters sought to end a crisis which has crippled the Indian Ocean island since strongman Andry Rajoelina, 39, ousted Marc Ravalomanana four years ago. "A district chief was killed at a polling station" in the southern town Benenitra, an interior ministry source told AFP on condition of anonymity, without giving details. Another person was kidnapped from a voting site in Bezaha, elsewhere in the south, while a polling station was burned down in the northern district of Tsaratanana. Voting was suspended until the three stations were moved but went ahead uninterrupted elsewhere. Voters were optimistic the election would allow the country to turn the page on its political crisis which has harshly impacted the economy. However some had problems voting because their names were not on the voters' roll or did not have voter ID cards.

**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jMni4BpchjJaXbAHQhsU\_bLMbDBA?docId=3f22814e-97e7-4a0a-a049-738d8ce7a3bb**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jMni4BpchjJaXbAHQhsU_bLMbDBA?docId=3f22814e-97e7-4a0a-a049-738d8ce7a3bb)

**Mozambique**

**French embassy warns against Mozambique region travel**

The French embassy in Maputo advised against travelling to the troubled central Mozambican province of Sofala, the centre of the unrest between the Renamo rebel group and government forces. "We advise against any road travel in the province of Sofala, except Beira, unless necessary," said an embassy statement. The French embassy said it was working closely with other EU member states and the US embassy to monitor political and security developments in Mozambique.

**AFP -** [**http://www.expatica.com/fr/news/french-news/french-embassy-warns-against-mozambique-region-travel\_276840.html**](http://www.expatica.com/fr/news/french-news/french-embassy-warns-against-mozambique-region-travel_276840.html)

**South Africa**

**Clashes break out in South African township**

At least two people have been shot and wounded while several illegal firearms have been confiscated following protests in the South African township of Bekkersdal. Residents of the township, about 40km west of Johannesburg, clashed with police on Thursday after demonstrations against poor municipal services quickly slipped out of control with protesters throwing rocks and police responding with rubber bullets. Some protesters were armed with iron rods and home-made machetes, while others tore down pieces of railing to create roadblocks. A police spokesperson said several people had been arrested. It was the third such day of protests and turmoil in the township. Bekkersdal residents first took to the streets more than a month ago, demanding the municipality be dissolved. Protesters are angry about what they call a lack of "'service delivery" - the term used to describe municipal services such as street maintenance, rubbish collection, and the provision of power and water.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/10/clashes-break-out-south-african-township-201310255520256536.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/10/clashes-break-out-south-african-township-201310255520256536.html)

LAC

**Across LAC**

**Haitian cholera strain spreads to Mexico**

A South Asian strain of cholera that was introduced into Haiti three years ago this month has now spread to this continent's mainland. Mexico is the fourth Western Hemisphere country to experience the cholera outbreak. It's a disease that's very hard to stamp out once it gets into an area with poor water and sanitation. Mexican health officials first picked up on the problem Sept. 9, through routine surveillance of hospital cases of severe diarrhea. Since then there have been 171 reported cases in Mexico City and states to the north and east. One victim has died. Dr. Jon Andrus, deputy director of the Pan American Health Organization, says it was all but inevitable that cholera would spread beyond the Caribbean. "It was always a major concern that it would be exported to other countries, as has recently happened in Mexico," he tells Shots.

**NPR -** [**http://www.npr.org/blogs/health/2013/10/23/239803890/haitian-cholera-strain-spreads-to-mainland-with-mexico-outbreak**](http://www.npr.org/blogs/health/2013/10/23/239803890/haitian-cholera-strain-spreads-to-mainland-with-mexico-outbreak)

**Cuba**

**Cuba developing two cholera vaccines**

Cuban researchers are working on developing two orally-taken cholera vaccines, one of which is in advanced clinical trials, experts said here on Thursday. Dr. Reinaldo Acevedo, deputy director of Cuba's Finlay Institute, told the 20th Latin American Pharmacology and Therapeutics Congress that the institute is working on a live vaccine and an inactive one. The live vaccine, in development for more than 10 years, "is composed of live cholera bacteria after extracting the virulence factors. Thus it is a strain of the disease, but is not pathogenic," Acevedo said. The vaccine elicits "an immune response" but the patient won't get sick,he said. Compared with other existing vaccines worldwide, the Cuban version has the advantage of being administered in a single oral dose that eliminates the virus in less than 72 hours, he said.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/health/2013-10/25/c\_132829450.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/health/2013-10/25/c_132829450.htm)

**Honduras**

**Health ministry confirms 27 deaths from dengue fever**

A Honduran dengue fever epidemic has killed 27 people so far this year and infected some 31,960 individuals, health officials reported. A total of 18 men and nine women have died in one of the country's worst bout of the disease in terms of fatalities, according to the director of surveillance for the health ministry. The government declared a nationwide emergency in July, when 16 people had died and more than 12,000 cases had been reported.

**AFP -** [**http://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-10-honduras-deaths-dengue-fever.html**](http://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-10-honduras-deaths-dengue-fever.html)

**Mexico**

**Mexico sweet factory hit by deadly explosion**

At least one person has died and dozens more are injured in an explosion and fire that tore through a sweet factory in northern Mexico. A boiler is believed to have exploded in the Dulces Blueberry factory at an industrial park in Ciudad Juarez, causing the ceiling to collapse. About 300 people were said to be in the factory at the time and several are still unaccounted for. Fire crews and about 30 ambulances were at the scene. Factories such as the one affected, known as maquiladoras, are located in a free trade zone between the United States and Mexico. They are estimated to employ more than one million Mexicans. The BBC's Will Grant in Mexico City says maquiladoras are often criticised by labour rights groups for their low wages and poor working conditions, as they try to compete with China to manufacture cheap goods for the US market.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-24664032**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-24664032)

MENA

**Across MENA**

**Hamas’ return to resistance camp complicated**

After the fall of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Hamas suddenly found itself isolated, its leadership scattered across the region. Any attempt to return to the resistance camp, however, will likely meet with failure. It’s unlikely that we will see any kind of reconciliation between Hamas and its former allies of the so-called resistance axis, particularly Iran and Syria. President Bashar al-Assad’s many public statements confirm this. The very idea of Hamas leaving Syria in 2011 was not even on the table before the events in Egypt last June and July that saw the toppling of Egyptian President Mohamed Mursi. At that time, the Muslim Brotherhood was on the rise in a number of countries, leading the

Palestinian movement to believe that the whole region was about to open before them.

**Al-Akbhar -** [**http://english.al-akhbar.com/content/hamas%E2%80%99-return-resistance-camp-complicated?utm\_source=feedburner&utm\_medium=feed&utm\_campaign=Feed%3A+AlAkhbarEnglish+(Al+Akhbar+English)**](http://english.al-akhbar.com/content/hamas%E2%80%99-return-resistance-camp-complicated?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+AlAkhbarEnglish+(Al+Akhbar+English))

**Algerian troops find huge arms cache on Libyan border**

Algerian troops have discovered a huge cache of weapons near the border with Libya, including surface-to-air missiles, rockets and landmines, an Algerian security source reported on 24 October. "It is an arsenal of war," the Algerian source reported. The source said the weapons found in Illizi in southern Algeria likely belonged to militants. They included 100 anti-aircraft missiles and hundreds of anti-helicopter rockets, landmines and rocket-propelled grenades. The area is about 200 kms from the Amenas gas plant, which was attacked in January by militants in an assault launched from inside Libya that killed nearly 40 foreign contractors.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/24/us-algeria-security-idUSBRE99N0T620131024**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/24/us-algeria-security-idUSBRE99N0T620131024)

**Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) update**

WHO has been informed of two laboratory-confirmed cases of Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) infection in Saudi Arabia on 18 and 19 October, and three laboratory-confirmed cases in 18 September. Of the five laboratory-confirmed cases, two died. The ages of the five patients range from 35 to 83 years old; four men and one woman; two from Medinah and three Riyadh. Four patients had underlying medical conditions. Two patients reported having no contact with a laboratory-confirmed case or with animals prior to becoming ill. Globally, from September 2012 to date, WHO has been informed of a total of 144 laboratory-confirmed cases of infection with MERS-CoV, including 62 deaths.

**WHO -** [**http://www.who.int/csr/don/2013\_10\_24/en/index.html**](http://www.who.int/csr/don/2013_10_24/en/index.html)

**Algeria**

**Bouteflika seeks to curb security service power**

Algeria's President Abdelaziz Bouteflika wants to push through constitutional reforms before 2014 elections to put an end to the powerful intelligence service's role as political kingmaker, the ruling FLN party's chairman said. Any challenge to the Department of Intelligence and Security (DRS) would amount to a major shakeup in Algeria where observers say the security agency has ruled behind the scenes with members of an FLN elite since independence from France in 1962. Bouteflika's campaign, which will be seen as part of power play between his FLN faction and DRS chief Mohamed Mediene, may decide whether Bouteflika runs for a fourth term or, as many expect, steps aside.

**Reuters -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/algerias-bouteflika-seeks-curb-security-power-171954449.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/algerias-bouteflika-seeks-curb-security-power-171954449.html)

**Egypt**

**Egyptian cabinet shortens nighttime curfew**

Egypt's government has decided to again shorten a nighttime curfew put in place over much of the country because of unrest after a coup that ousted the country's president. In a statement Thursday, the Cabinet said the curfew will be four hours, from 1 am to 5 am, six days a week. On Fridays, the Cabinet said the curfew will remain 10 hours, starting shortly after sunset. Friday is the start of the weekend in Egypt and has been a day of major protests since the 2011 uprising. Now, supporters of ousted President Mohammed Morsi take to the streets in rallies Friday that often descend into clashes. The curfew, effective in a number of cities including the capital, Cairo, was announced along with a nationwide state of emergency in mid-August.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/officials-attack-egypts-sinai-kills-policeman-20666478**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/officials-attack-egypts-sinai-kills-policeman-20666478)

**Lebanon**

**Death toll from north Lebanon clashes rises to six**

The death toll on the fourth day of clashes in the northern city of Tripoli between supporters and opponents of Syrian President Bashar Assad rose to six Thursday, security sources said. President Michel Sleiman said late Thursday he instructed security forces led by the Army to redeploy and restore order as soon as possible. On his Twitter feed, Sleiman who headed earlier a security meeting at Baabda Palace addressing the volatile situation in the city, also said: "It is no longer acceptable for bloodshed in Tripoli to continue and all officials should work on saving the capital of the north." Bassam Youssef Abdallah was killed Thursday afternoon by sniper fire in Jabal Mohsen. Abdallah is a leading figure in the Arab Democratic Party, a source at the pro-Assad party told The Daily Star.

**Daily Star -** [**http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2013/Oct-24/235619-clashes-in-lebanons-tripoli-kill-one-wound-12.ashx#axzz2ij3FHi1o**](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2013/Oct-24/235619-clashes-in-lebanons-tripoli-kill-one-wound-12.ashx#axzz2ij3FHi1o)

**Libya**

**Eastern region declares autonomous government**

The leaders of a movement for self-rule in eastern Libyan have unilaterally announced the formation of a shadow government, the latest challenge to the weakened central authority. The announcement came several months after the movement, backed by some militias and local tribes, declared the eastern half of Libya to be an autonomous state, named Barqa, claiming broad self-rule powers and control over resources. The central government in Tripoli rejected the declaration. Abd-Rabbo al-Barassi, the head of the newly declared Barqa government, reported that the aim is to improve distribution of resources and undermine the hold of the centralized system that has discriminated against their region.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/libyan-air-force-colonel-gunned-benghazi-20666657**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/libyan-air-force-colonel-gunned-benghazi-20666657)

**Saudi Arabia**

**Saudi government warns women over campaign to drive**

A spokesman for the Saudi interior ministry has warned women that measures may be taken against them if they take part in a campaign against a ban on female drivers. A new campaign to give women the right to drive will culminate in Saudi Arabia this Saturday. Women are being encouraged to take to the wheel in defiance of the ban. It is the third protest of its kind; in the first in 1990, a number of women were arrested or lost their jobs. The interior ministry spokesman, Mansour al-Turki, has considerably toughened the Saudi government line on the women drivers' campaign. A previous statement on Wednesday was confusing, with both those pro- and anti- the campaign believing it favoured them.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24658753**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24658753)

**State of Palestine**

**Israeli minister calls for building 100 additional houses in Hebron**

Israel’s housing minister on Thursday called for doubling the number of Jewish settler homes in the southern West Bank city of Hebron, even as peace talks continue with the Palestinians. Uri Ariel, who leads the far-right Jewish Home party and lives in a West Bank settlement himself, told army radio he supported “concrete plans for the construction of 100 (new) homes in Hebron.” “The land for this exists, and we’re preparing the (building) project. We hope that during the coming year we can begin to build,” Ariel said. The flashpoint city of Hebron, home to nearly 200,000 Palestinians, also comprises some 80 settler homes in the centre of town housing about 700 Jews who live under Israeli army protection.

**AFP -** [**http://www.omantribune.com/index.php?page=news&id=154018&heading=Middle%20East**](http://www.omantribune.com/index.php?page=news&id=154018&heading=Middle%20East)

**Sudan**

**Rizeigat attack kills three Ma’alia farmers in Abu Karinka, East Darfur**

Three farmers from the Ma’alia tribe were reportedly shot dead by members of the Rizeigat tribe in Bakhit, Abu Karinka locality in East Darfur on Wednesday. Member of the Legislative Council of East Darfur state, Omar Musa Omar Bashir reported to Radio Dabanga that large group of Rizeigat tribesmen attacked the farm of Dafa’elsayyid Musa Hamad at Bakhit station, about 7km south of Um Rakubain the evening. Bashir described the attack as a violation of the truce signed in August by between the two tribes. He affirmed that the Ma’alia tribe has kept 100 per cent to the agreement. He explained that the main reason behind the attack is the absence of security forces in the areas of the Ma’alia and Rizeigat tribes, instead of being stationed in Ed Daein, the capital of east Darfur.

**Radio Dabanga -** [**http://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/rizeigat-attack-kills-three-ma%E2%80%99alia-farmers-abu-karinka-east-darfur**](http://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/rizeigat-attack-kills-three-ma%E2%80%99alia-farmers-abu-karinka-east-darfur)

**Syria**

**UNICEF airlifts humanitarian supplies for conflict-affected children in Syria**

A UNICEF charter plane carrying urgently-needed vaccines and complementary food for children in Syria has arrived in Beirut. Supplies will be moved by truck into Syria. The cargo plane contained around 28.6 tonnes of supplies, including 265,000 doses of Measles Mumps and Rubella vaccines, and supercereal, a complementary fortified food for children 6-23 months of age. The vaccines are needed to replenish supplies being used in the Ministry of Health-led vaccination campaign currently underway in Syria. “The campaign is especially important because it is reaching children who have already missed out on their routine vaccinations,” said Youssouf Abdel-Jelil, UNICEF Syria Representative. “Delivery of the vaccines by air was the fastest option in this case. In turn, the supercereal will help to meet urgent nutritional needs amongst some of Syria’s most vulnerable young infants.”

**UNICEF -** [**http://www.unicef.org/media/media\_70733.html**](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_70733.html)

**Millions of children in Syria and region to be vaccinated against polio, measles, mumps and rubella - UNICEF**

As Syria awaits confirmation of suspected polio cases in the east of the country, UNICEF has joined the World Health Organisation and other partners in mounting a large-scale immunisation effort aimed at protecting as many children as possible both in the country and across the region against polio, as well as other vaccine-preventable diseases. Inside Syria, a campaign led by the Ministry of Health began on October 24 targeting 2.4 million children with vaccines against polio, measles, mumps and rubella. Around 500,000 children in Syria have not been vaccinated against polio in the past two years due to insecurity and access constraints. Prior to the conflict, immunisation coverage in Syria was about 95 per cent. The conflict in Syria has caused immense displacement, with millions of children on the move, either inside the country or across borders into neighbouring countries and beyond. As a result, routine immunisation systems so critical to preventing childhood diseases have been disrupted or broken down, and children are now at far higher risk of diseases such as polio and measles.

**UNICEF-** [**http://www.unicef.org.uk/Latest/News/syria-children-vaccination-campaign/**](http://www.unicef.org.uk/Latest/News/syria-children-vaccination-campaign/)

**Tunisia**

**Tunisian protesters attack ruling party offices, 5 injured**

Tunisian protesters on Thursday attacked two offices of the ruling Ennahda party, injuring five people, in accusation of its inability to check the country's rampant violence, which killed six national guards the day before. In the northwestern governorate of Beja, the protesters set fire to the Ennahda office, which injured five supporters of the modest Islamic party, following the funeral of one national guard born there, witnesses said. Similarly, earlier in the day, the protesters attacked the Ennahda building in the western governorate of Kef despite the hefty security measures, as another national guard was being buried, local reports said.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/africa/2013-10/25/c\_132828190.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/africa/2013-10/25/c_132828190.htm)

**One wounded in gun battle with Tunis police**

One person was shot and wounded in a clash with police on Friday near a college in a district of the Tunisian capital, witnesses and a policeman said. “A terrorist was hit in the head, another arrested and one is on the run,” the policeman involved in the clash in Ennasr City district said, asking not to be named. Bloodstains were visible on the pavement at the scene, as police with sniffer dogs inspected a vehicle parked near the college to check for explosives.

The college itself was evacuated.

**AFP -** [**http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=data/international/2013/October/international\_October708.xml&section=international**](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=data/international/2013/October/international_October708.xml&section=international)

**Yemen**

**Yemeni warplanes kill 6 al-Qaida militants in south**

Yemeni warplanes carried out two air strikes against al-Qaida hideouts, killing six terrorists, including three al-Qaida commanders, in the southern province of Abyan on Thursday, a military official told Xinhua. "There were two separate air strikes launched by the air forces and targeted hideouts of the al-Qaida militants in Wadi Mahfad town in Abyan province. At least six terrorists were killed, three in each air strike," the local military official said on condition of anonymity. A senior intelligence officer in the Wadi Mahfad town told Xinhua anonymously, saying that most of the dead militants were local commanders of the Yemen-based al-Qaida offshoot.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-10/24/c\_132828031.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-10/24/c_132828031.htm)

**AQAP warns Yemen against crackdown over jailbreak bid**

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula has warned its response will be "painful" if Yemeni authorities punish prisoners from the extremist network who made a failed attempt to escape their jail. The security forces foiled an attempt on Tuesday by some 300 Al-Qaeda inmates to escape in a mutiny at their intelligence-run prison in the capital Sanaa. In a video posted on YouTube late Thursday, a top AQAP leader in southern Yemen, Jalal Baledi al-Marqashi, said: "We warn Sanaa's collaborator regime of the consequences of any attack on the prisoners due to their uprising against their jailers". Marqashi vowed that "we will not remain silent and the response will be harsh and painful." In his statement, Marqashi accused the authorities of mistreating the prisoners "from torture, beatings and insults to being held for long periods without charges or reasons as well as unfair and injust trials." Two Yemeni non-governmental groups on Thursday urged the United Nations and international watchdogs to investigate the "dangerous human rights violations" in the country's prisons.

**AFP -** [**http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/2/9/84730/World/International/AQAP-warns-Yemen-against-crackdown-over-jailbreak-.aspx**](http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/2/9/84730/World/International/AQAP-warns-Yemen-against-crackdown-over-jailbreak-.aspx)

ROSA

**Across ROSA**

**India, Pakistan exchange gunfire over border**

At least a dozen people have been wounded as Indian and Pakistani troops exchanged gunfire over the border in the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir, officials said Friday. An Indian official said at least 10 civilians were wounded as Pakistani troops fired guns and mortar shells at more than a dozen Indian border posts overnight in the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir. A paramilitary officer said on the customary condition of anonymity that Indian guards retaliated and an exchange of gunfire lasted several hours. He said the fighting continued till Friday morning at some places in southern Jammu region. The wounded included four children in three villages, said local civil administrator Shantmanu, who uses only one name. In Islamabad, Pakistani military officials said Indian troops resorted to unprovoked firing and mortar shelling in a village near Sialkot early Friday, wounding two civilians. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity in line with military policy.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/india-10-wounded-pakistan-gunfire-20678987**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/india-10-wounded-pakistan-gunfire-20678987)

**Afghanistan**

**14 rebels lay down arms in north Afghan town**

Fourteen Taliban rebels surrendered to Afghan authorities in the country's northern Baghlan province, the latest in joining the insurgents to the government-initiated reintegration and reconciliation process, a source said Friday. "A 14-member group of armed opponents under Mullah Nasim on Thursday evening renounced violence and handed over their arms to authorities in provincial capital Pul-e-Khumir," provincial police spokesman Jawid Bisharat told Xinhua Friday morning. They were involved in anti-government activities in Dand-e- Shabuddian, a suburb of the provincial capital 160 km north of national capital Kabul, the spokesman said. With the former insurgents' surrender, peace and stability would be further strengthened in several parts of the province, he noted.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-10/25/c\_132830143.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-10/25/c_132830143.htm)

**Roadside bombing kills 6 Afghan soldiers**

A military spokesman says a roadside bombing has killed six Afghan soldiers in the country's west. Najibullha Najibi said on Friday that the six died when their vehicle struck a roadside bomb in the western Herat province's Adraskan district the previous day. The six were from a unit based at the Shindand military airport, Herat's largest. Najibi, an Afghan National Army spokesman, says those killed in Thursday's incident included two officers and four soldiers.

**AP -** [**http://www.businessweek.com/ap/2013-10-25/roadside-bombing-kills-6-afghan-soldiers**](http://www.businessweek.com/ap/2013-10-25/roadside-bombing-kills-6-afghan-soldiers)

**Bangladesh**

**Bangladesh opposition unveils strike plan**

Bangladesh opposition leader Khaleda Zia says she and her allies will stage a three-day general strike from Sunday morning to back demands for a caretaker government made up of people from outside political parties to oversee elections due by early January. Zia told a rally Friday that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has two days to agree to the demand, otherwise more protests will be announced. Such a caretaker government has been used in the past but Hasina's government scrapped it in 2011, citing a Supreme Court ruling saying the provision was unconstitutional. Hasina has proposed establishing an all-party government with herself as the leader to oversee the elections, but Zia, a former prime minister, rejected that.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/bangladesh-opposition-unveils-strike-plan-20680097**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/bangladesh-opposition-unveils-strike-plan-20680097)

**India**

**10 killed, 200,000 affected by flash flood in eastern India**

At least 10 people have been killed and 200,000 affected by flash flood in the cyclone-hit eastern Indian state of Orissa, also known as Odisha, due to continuous rains over the past few days, said local TV channel CNN- IBN Friday. The deaths were caused by wall collapses and drownings, said the report. The state was subject to a powerful cyclone two weeks ago which killed over 30. Local authorities said the state is now faced with flash flood from the heavy rains as over 130 villages are being submerged by water while the whole district of Ganjam, worst hit by the cyclone, was flooded. Three army helicopters are rescuing villagers from the water and over 50,000 have been evacuated to safe places, said local officials. Meanwhile, schools have remained closed this week in four districts due to flooding. Meteorological department said the rain will continue until Saturday at least.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-10/25/c\_132830463.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-10/25/c_132830463.htm)

**Nepal**

**Hostility between Nepal's two Maoist parties growing**

Until a year ago they were in the same party, now Nepal's two communist parties UCPN (Maoist) and CPN-Maoist have turned into each other's foe and hostility between the two parties is growing, recent activities of both parties revealed. As the November 19 election draws closer, the country is witnessing widespread clashes and verbal war between the two communist parties. CPN-Maoist, formed last year after the split in the UCPN (Maoist) in June, 2012 is launching an anti-election campaign targeting UCPN (Maoist). Senior communist leader Mohan Baidya formed CPN-Maoist due to dispute with UCPN (Maoist) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal akin Prachanda, while UCPN (Maoist) has labeled CPN-Maoist as anti- election and anti-constitution force. CPN-Maoist cadres are obstructing the election campaign of UCPN (Maoist), sources said, adding local and district wings of CPN- Maoist are organizing the Banda and strike where the top leaders of UCPN (Maoist) cadres reach.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-10/25/c\_132830133.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-10/25/c_132830133.htm)

**Pakistan**

**Ideology, violence prevent polio eradication in Pakistan - UNICEF mention**

Pakistan is one of three countries left in the world where polio remains endemic, the other two being neighboring Afghanistan, and Nigeria. In Islamabad, with the help of the international community, the number of polio cases in Pakistan has dropped from 25,000 16 years ago, to just over 40 cases this year. But a Taliban ban on vaccinations and attacks on health workers mean that the highly infectious disease continues to spread. As a result, some 260,000 children are still not vaccinated and the virus is spreading once again. Per Engebak, Polio Team Leader for UNICEF in Pakistan, said the security issue is preventing eradication. “If you have pockets in the country where you have the so-called reservoirs of the polio virus where they are in circulation in the sewage water or in the environment, these are transmission sites - into other parts of the country, and if you have contact, you will have transmission,” he noted.

**VoA -** [**http://www.voanews.com/content/ideology-violence-prevent-polio-eradication-in-pakistan/1775261.html**](http://www.voanews.com/content/ideology-violence-prevent-polio-eradication-in-pakistan/1775261.html)

WCAR

**Cote d'Ivoire**

**Victims of Côte d’Ivoire’s post-electoral crisis must not be forgotten**

Victims of the violent post-election crisis that gripped Côte d’Ivoire two years ago must not be forgotten, an independent United Nations human rights expert stressed today, as he wrapped up his latest visit to the West African nation. Côte d’Ivoire’s 2010 presidential election, meant to be the culminating point in a long-running UN-backed peace process, resulted in months of violence when former President Laurent Gbagbo refused to step down after losing to Alassane Ouattara. Mr. Gbagbo finally surrendered the following April. The Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Côte d’Ivoire, Doudou Diène, said the situation of the victims of the crisis is at the core of the implementation of justice, reparation and the reconstruction of democracy in the country.

**UN News Centre -** [**http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46326&Cr=ivoire&Cr1**](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46326&Cr=ivoire&Cr1)**=**

**DR Congo**

**UN says DR Congo groups must free child soldiers**

The head of the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Martin Kobler, on Thursday urged armed groups to free their child soldiers, calling their recruitment "an atrocity". "Almost 1,000 children have been recruited by armed groups between January 1, 2012 and August 31, 2013. The children were aged from six to 17 years old," Mr Kobler told a weekly conference of the UN peacekeeping mission in the country, MONUSCO. "Concrete measures must be taken to protect children from this fate and I invite all the armed groups to free all children from their ranks," he said. "One thousand child soldiers is an atrocity, one child soldier a tragedy."

**AFP -** [**http://www.rappler.com/world/regions/africa/42162-united-nations-democratic-republic-congo-child-soldiers**](http://www.rappler.com/world/regions/africa/42162-united-nations-democratic-republic-congo-child-soldiers)

**Clashes between rebels, army in DR Congo**

Fighting resumed Friday between the army and rebels in the Democratic Republic of Congo, both sides and the United Nations said, just days after peace talks were suspended. Clashes took place some 25 kilometres (16 miles) to the north of the strategic eastern city of Goma, said rebel spokesman Vianney Kazarama. Both sides accused each other of starting the fresh outbreak of fighting. "The army attacked our positions at 4:00am (0200 GMT)," insisted Kazarama. But Olivier Hamuli, spokesman for the army in the flashpoint province of North Kivu, said: "They attacked us." A source from the UN peacekeeping mission in the country, MONUSCO, said the rebels carried out the first attack. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

**AFP -** [**http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/rest-of-world/Clashes-between-rebels-army-in-DR-Congo/articleshow/24692304.cms**](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/rest-of-world/Clashes-between-rebels-army-in-DR-Congo/articleshow/24692304.cms)

**Mali**

**Armed forces in 'large-scale' operation against extremists**

French, Malian and UN troops have begun a “large-scale” military operation aimed at preventing a resurgence of Islamist organisations in Mali, the French military said Thursday, following a recent upswing in violence in the West African country. A “large-scale” military operation against jihadist forces in Mali has been launched by French, Malian and UN troops, a spokesman for the French armed forces said Thursday. The operation aims to “avoid [a] resurgence" of "terrorist organisations” in the country, Colonel Gilles Jaron told reporters. He said "several hundred" French soldiers were involved in the operation alongside Malian soldiers and members of the UN's MINUSMA mission, adding: "It is the first time we have seen forces of significant size working together." France launched a military intervention in its former colony in January this year after Islamist forces exploited a rebellion by Tuareg separatists to seize control of the north of the country.

**AFP -** [**http://www.france24.com/en/20131024-france-launches-large-scale-military-operation-against-mali-islamic-extremists**](http://www.france24.com/en/20131024-france-launches-large-scale-military-operation-against-mali-islamic-extremists)

**Nigeria**

**Pirates kidnap two US sailors off coast**

Pirates attacked an oil supply vessel off the Nigerian coast and kidnapped the captain and chief engineer, both US citizens, an American defense official and security sources reported on 24 October. The US-flagged, C-Retriever, a 67 meter vessel owned by US marine transport group Edison Chouest Offshore, was attacked on 23 October, UK-based security firm AKE and two security sources said. A US defense official said the State Department and FBI were leading the American response to the incident. A second defense official said the US Marine Corps has a small training unit in the region but it was not clear if it would get involved.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/24/us-nigeria-piracy-idUSBRE99N0GT20131024**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/24/us-nigeria-piracy-idUSBRE99N0GT20131024)

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