**UNICEF OPSCEN Brief -** **Thursday, 27 June 2013**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| GENERAL | **Across Regions** | Red Cross says civilian centers abused in conflict |
|  | **Chad/Sudan** | Conditions worsen for Darfurian refugees, others |
| CEE/CIS | **Albania** | Leader concedes defeat, soothes fears of poll dispute |
|  | **Serbia/Kosovo** | Ethnic Albanian protesters clash with police in Kosovo |
|  | **Turkey** | 294 children detained during Gezi protests in Turkey |
| EAPR | **China** | Government urged to end forced resettlements in Tibet |
|  |  | Police block site of deadly China Xinjiang riot |
|  | **Mongolia** | President Elbegdorj wins vote according to preliminary results |
| ESAR | **Angola** | Country hit by severe drought |
|  | **Madagascar** | Three Madagascar candidates could face sanctions over vote row |
|  | **Somalia** | Prominent militant arrested in blow to Somali Islamists |
|  |  | At least three dead in Somali port clash: witnesses |
|  | **Zimbabwe** | Mugabe's absence stalls Zimbabwe electoral reforms |
| MENA | **Egypt** | Morsi warns Egypt could be 'paralysed' as clashes rage |
|  |  | President admits mistakes before mass rally |
|  |  | Rights Center says 359 people tortured during Morsi's rule |
|  | **Israel** | PM ready for 'painful' settlement evacuations |
|  | **Libya** | At least one dead in car bombings in the South |
|  |  | Death toll from Capital clashes rises to five, 97 wounded |
|  | **State of Palestine** | Israel reopens Gaza crossings |
|  |  | As Gaza heads for water crisis, desalination seen key |
|  | **Sudan** | Rain brings new health fears for displaced in Darfur camps |
|  |  | Tribal clashes kill dozens near gold mine in Sudan's Darfur |
| ROSA | **Afghanistan** | US expects more Taliban attacks despite peace talks |
|  | **India** | Rotting corpses spark fears of epidemic amid floods |
|  | **Pakistan** | Bombing in southern Pakistan kills 2 |
|  | **Sri Lanka** | Bleak future for female-headed households |
| TACR | **Across TACR** | Costa Rica worries about possible Nicaragua canal |
|  |  | Drug trafficking up in the Caribbean |
|  | **Brazil** | Brazil police, protesters clash near Confed match |
|  | **Chile** | Violent clashes spoil student protest |
|  | **Colombia** | Death toll rises in Catatumbo protests |
|  |  | Landmines maim and kill children, rural communities |
|  | **Haiti** | US program to build houses falls short, report finds |
|  | **Paraguay** | 800 evacuated as river floods in Paraguay |
| WCAR | **Across WCAR** | Emergency cash versus social protection |
|  |  | UN envoy warns of more Mali conflicts without Sahel aid |
|  | **DR Congo** | UN accuses Congo rebels of murdering civilians |
|  |  | Bridging the gap between relief and development |
|  | **Mali** | Coup leader asks forgiveness from Malian people |
|  |  | Country prepares for elections amid fears of low voter turnout |
|  | **Nigeria** | Nigerian billionaire donates $1 Million to fight Polio |
|  |  | Islamic extremists target civilians in Nigeria |

GENERAL

**Across Regions**

**Red Cross says civilian centers abused in conflict**

The president of the International Red Cross says his organization is gravely worried that hospitals, schools and religious centers are increasingly misused in armed conflicts. Peter Maurer says the International Committee of the Red Cross saw evidence of the rising "weaponization of medical facilities" and similar misuse of schools, churches and mosques during the past year. Maurer told reporters Thursday at Red Cross' headquarters that armed forces and rebels in Syria and elsewhere are bringing arms into such places, making them susceptible to military attack. He says the global humanitarian organization's annual report for 2012 also showed an alarming and widening gap between the staggering needs of millions of people suffering from Syria's civil war, and the world's ability to help them.

**AP -** [**http://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2013/06/27/red-cross-says-civilian-centers-abused-in-conflict**](http://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2013/06/27/red-cross-says-civilian-centers-abused-in-conflict)

**Chad/Sudan**

**Conditions worsen for Darfurian refugees, others**

A medical aid group says conditions are getting worse for tens of thousands of people who’ve fled fighting in Sudan’s Darfur region. Refugees and others have been gathering for months in the Chadian town of Tissi. Fighting in North Darfur State has been going on since January. Rival Arab tribes are battling over gold mining rights. Hundreds of people have been reported killed. Thousands have been displaced within Darfur and many others have crossed the border into Chad. Doctors without Borders, also known by the French acronym MSF, has been providing medical care in and around Tissi since April. MSF Head of Mission Jason Mills said about 55,000 people have fled violence in Darfur.

**VoA -** [**http://www.voanews.com/content/chad-msf-26jun13/1689664.html#**](http://www.voanews.com/content/chad-msf-26jun13/1689664.html#)

CEE/CIS

**Albania**

**Leader concedes defeat, soothes fears of poll dispute**

Albanian Prime Minister Sali Berisha conceded defeat on Wednesday after losing a parliamentary election at the weekend, ending three days of public silence and soothing fears of a messy handover of power in the volatile NATO country. The concession speech to supporters in downtown Tirana clears the way for the capital's former mayor and leader of the opposition Socialist Party, Edi Rama, to take power after a landslide victory on Sunday. Berisha waited until almost the very last ballot paper was counted to appear in public, raising concern in the West that he might dispute the result. His concession will be taken as a sign of growing democratic maturity in the Adriatic nation, which has been rocked by repeated bouts of political unrest since the fall of communist rule in 1991. A smooth handover would help revive Albania's stalled bid to join the European Union.

**Reuters -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/albanian-pm-berisha-concedes-election-defeat-182153888.html#**](http://news.yahoo.com/albanian-pm-berisha-concedes-election-defeat-182153888.html#)

**Serbia/Kosovo**

**Ethnic Albanian protesters clash with police in Kosovo**

Hundreds of ethnic Albanians protesting against normalising ties with neighbouring Serbia clashed with riot police in front of the government and parliament buildings in Kosovo's capital on Thursday, a Reuters witness said. The police, in full riot gear, used pepper spray to disperse the crowd, but also tried to push it back by force to clear the entrances to the buildings. Several protesters were handcuffed and arrested. The protest in Pristina was organised by an opposition party which objects to an EU-brokered deal reached in April that would give Kosovo's Serbs a limited degree of autonomy.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20130627090924-ygovl**](http://www.trust.org/item/20130627090924-ygovl)

**Turkey**

**294 children detained during Gezi protests in Turkey**

Almost 300 children were taken into custody and one child was wounded by a bullet over the course of the Gezi Park demonstrations, according to a report. The report by the Gündem Çocuk ("Children on the Agenda") Association covered violations of children’s rights between May 28 and June 25. According to the report, a minimum of 294 children were taken into custody during the protests. The number of children detained was 78 in Ankara, 35 in Istanbul, 130 in Adana, 34 in İzmir, two in Kayseri and 15 in Mersin. The report also consisted of cases where children were exposed to tear gas, pressurized water and noise bombs, and some in which they were beaten with batons. Some were taken into unregistered custody and were subject to handcuffing and profiling.

**Daily News -** [**http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/294-children-detained-during-gezi-protests-in-turkey.aspx?pageID=238&nID=49545&NewsCatID=341**](http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/294-children-detained-during-gezi-protests-in-turkey.aspx?pageID=238&nID=49545&NewsCatID=341)

EAPR

**China**

**Government urged to end forced resettlements in Tibet**

A human rights group appealed to China on Thursday to end what it called forced "mass rehousing and relocation" of ethnic Tibetans that it said had uprooted more than two million people in the past seven years. The report, by New York-based Human Rights Watch, said Chinese authorities threw lives into disarray by denying rights to forcibly relocated ethnic Tibetans with insufficient compensation, sub-par housing and lack of help in finding jobs. More than two million Tibetans had been relocated in Tibet since 2006, as well as hundreds of thousands of nomadic herders in the eastern part of the Tibetan plateau such as in Qinghai province, the report said.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/27/us-china-tibet-idUSBRE95Q07E20130627#**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/27/us-china-tibet-idUSBRE95Q07E20130627#)

**Police block site of deadly China Xinjiang riot**

Armed police in China’s ethnically divided Xinjiang blocked the road Thursday to the site of riots that left 27 people dead a day earlier, in the restive region’s deadliest violence in years. Officers stationed 40 kilometres (25 miles) outside Turpan city’s Lukqun township checked car passengers’ IDs and barred AFP journalists from entering, citing safety concerns. A visitor in Turpan which lies about 250 kilometres from the regional capital Urumqi told AFP he saw another roadblock with armed officers and about 20 police vehicles. The Xinhua state news agency said Wednesday that “knife-wielding mobs” attacked police stations and other locations, and nine police or security guards and eight civilians were killed before police opened fire. A resident surnamed Chai said a helicopter arrived on the scene along with many police and soldiers.

**AFP -** [**http://www.khaleejtimes.com/ktarticledisplay1.asp?xfile=data/international/2013/June/international\_June876.xml&section=international**](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/ktarticledisplay1.asp?xfile=data/international/2013/June/international_June876.xml&section=international)

**Mongolia**

**President Elbegdorj wins vote according to preliminary results**

Mongolian President Tsakhia Elbegdorj won a second term, according to preliminary results on Thursday, defeating a wrestling champion and the country's first woman presidential contender in an election dominated by a debate over mining wealth. The incumbent gained 50.23% of votes, Mongolia's General Elections Commission chief Sodnomtseren Choinzon said, after announcing that all ballots had been counted. But the result of Wednesday's election would not be official until the ballot papers were counted again on delivery to the capital Ulan Bator, Choinzon said.

**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5i6qA9EJNtu1H5MXQJUq1xhYfl29A?docId=CNG.d2ca3419f7310540f04383b3ed19dcc9.231#**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5i6qA9EJNtu1H5MXQJUq1xhYfl29A?docId=CNG.d2ca3419f7310540f04383b3ed19dcc9.231#)

ESAR

**Angola**

**Country hit by severe drought**

Over 1.8 million people have been affected by severe drought in Angola that’s left crops destroyed, water in short supply and food scarce. Prolonged dry spells have severely affected the five southern provinces of Namibe, Cunene, Kuando Kubango, Huila and Benguela. Caritas Angola took part in an joint assessment trip to four municipalities in Namibe Province in early June, where staff found an estimated 250,000 people affected and 70% of crops destroyed. Families’ remaining stocks will not last until September. The greatest problem is currently access to water: most of the boreholes were not working and people have started to move in search of water and pasture for their cattle.

**Caritas -** [**http://blog.caritas.org/2013/06/21/drought-hits-angola/#**](http://blog.caritas.org/2013/06/21/drought-hits-angola/#)

**Madagascar**

**Three Madagascar candidates could face sanctions over vote row**

The European Union, the United States and the African Union proposed on Wednesday imposing sanctions such as travel bans on Madagascar's president and two other presidential candidates unless they withdrew from a planned election. The former French colony has been in crisis since 2009 when President Andry Rajoelina seized power with military support, ousting former President Marc Ravalomanana and triggering turmoil that scared off investors and tourists.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/26/us-madagascar-election-idusbre95p16y20130626#**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/26/us-madagascar-election-idusbre95p16y20130626#)

**Somalia**

**Prominent militant arrested in blow to Somali Islamists**

One of Somalia's most prominent Islamist rebel commanders has been arrested and is in the hands of a regional administration, local and government officials said on Wednesday, dealing a blow to the country's al Shabaab insurgents. Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys was detained in a coastal area of central Somalia and had been taken to a safe-house in the town of Adado, said a spokesman for the Somali Federal Government. Aweys was "linked to terrorism" by the United States shortly after the September 11, 2001 attacks on New York and Washington and is on a UN Security Council terrorism sanctions list.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/26/us-somalia-rebels-idusbre95p14f20130626#**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/26/us-somalia-rebels-idusbre95p14f20130626#)

**At least three dead in Somali port clash: witnesses**

At least three people were killed in a brief skirmish between rival militias in southern Somalia, witnesses said, the second deadly flare-up so far this month in the disputed strategic port of Kismayu. The clash between the Ras Kamboni militia and Marehan clan fighters has heightened tensions in a city already divided by rivals claiming the presidency of Kismayu and the southern Jubaland region and raises worries of a broader conflict. Witnesses speaking to Reuters by telephone from the port said Ras Kamboni fighters opened fire on a car used by members of the Marehan clan in central Kismayu, where boundaries between rival factions have been drawn after the last bout of fighting.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/26/us-somalia-fighting-idusbre95p11v20130626#**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/26/us-somalia-fighting-idusbre95p11v20130626#)

**Zimbabwe**

**Mugabe's absence stalls Zimbabwe electoral reforms**

President Robert Mugabe’s trip to Singapore for a “routine medical checkup” has caused serious concern among his rivals who had been advocating for reforms ahead of elections expected next month. Mr. Mugabe’s spokesman, George Charamba, told the national broadcaster ZBC that Mr. Mugabe is expected back in the country over the weekend. The president has dismissed reports that he has received treatment for prostate cancer saying his visits to the far-east are to treat eye cataracts. But by the time Mr. Mugabe returns parliament would have dissolved.

**VoA -** [**http://www.voazimbabwe.com/content/president-mugabe-in-far-east-electoral-reforms-in-limbo/1689734.html**](http://www.voazimbabwe.com/content/president-mugabe-in-far-east-electoral-reforms-in-limbo/1689734.html)

MENA

**Egypt**

**Morsi warns Egypt could be 'paralysed' as clashes rage**

Islamist President Mohamed Morsi warned on Wednesday that political divisions in Egypt "threaten to paralyze" the country, as at least one person was killed and scores were hurt in clashes between his supporters and opponents. In a televised speech to mark his turbulent first year in power, "Egypt faces many challenges. The polarization has reached a stage that could threaten our democratic experience and paralyze the nation." Just hours before he spoke, Islamists had been holding a rally in his support in the Nile Delta city of Mansura when opponents began throwing rubbish at them and fighting erupted, a security official said. In addition to the one person killed, another 237 were hurt, the health ministry said. Two of the injured were taken to the intensive care unit of Mansura International Hospital with live bullet wounds, medics there said.

**AFP -** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/88402-morsi-warns-egypt-could-be-paralyzed-as-clashes-rage#**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/88402-morsi-warns-egypt-could-be-paralyzed-as-clashes-rage#)

**President admits mistakes before mass rally**

Egypt's Islamist president has underlined that he is the supreme commander of the armed forces and says the military should focus on the defense of the nation. Mohammed Morsi spoke in a nationally televised address Wednesday, days ahead of planned protests calling for his removal by his opponents, many of whom help the army will side with them. "There are some who don't want the armed forces and the presidency to have healthy relationships," Morsi said. He says "all agree" the president is the miltiary's supreme commander and "all state institutions work in harmony and with discipline under the leadership of the head of state." He also said the judiciary, with which he has had constant friction, should not engage in politics.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/egypt-president-admits-mistakes-mass-rally-215009326.html#**](http://news.yahoo.com/egypt-president-admits-mistakes-mass-rally-215009326.html#)

**Rights Center says 359 people tortured during Morsi's rule**

A human rights center report said that 217 people were killed and 359 were tortured in police stations, prisons, security camps and at the presidential palace in Cairo since Mohamed Mursi became president of Egypt in June 30, 2012 and until May 31, 2013. The causes of death varied between gunshots in clashes or at police check points and cases where there was suspected torture and mistreatment at several police stations, El Nadeem Center report said. "Systematic torture is continuing and Mursi's regime governs with the same policies as SCAF and as Mubarak's regime before him," the report said. The report, entitled "Torture in Egypt during a Year of Muslim Brotherhood Rule", is based on material published in the press, social networking sites, and accounts from El Nadeem Center, by victims of the elected president's regime.

**Aswat Masriya -** [**http://en.aswatmasriya.com/news/view.aspx?id=6d63aa25-d0ee-431c-97ea-5a68533a4a29#**](http://en.aswatmasriya.com/news/view.aspx?id=6d63aa25-d0ee-431c-97ea-5a68533a4a29#)

**Israel**

**PM ready for 'painful' settlement evacuations**

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is ready to push through a "painful evacuation" of settlements as part of a final peace deal, a minister said Thursday just hours before the arrival of Washington's top diplomat. "Netanyahu knows there will be a painful evacuation of a number of settlements that are not in the settlement blocs, and that there will be a land swap," Science and Technology Minister Yaakov Peri told army radio. "Netanyahu is much more ready than in the past, whether it's for ideological or practical reasons, for an immediate return to the negotiating table," Peri added, saying there was a "new wind" blowing.

**AFP -** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/88444-israel-pm-ready-for-painful-settlement-evacuations**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/88444-israel-pm-ready-for-painful-settlement-evacuations)

**Libya**

**At least one dead in car bombings in the South**

Three car bombs exploded Wednesday in Sebha, southern Libya, leaving at least one person dead, local officials said. "Three car bombs exploded in three different districts within half an hour," local town council member Ayoub al-Zarrouk told AFP, saying there was at least one known fatality. Libya's Lana news agency reported two people dead and 17 wounded. A security official speaking on Libyan television said the first device went off near a police station, the second in a commercial district and the third in front of a hotel.

**AFP -** [**http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/at-least-one-dead-in-libya-car-bombings-officials-113062700075\_1.html#**](http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/at-least-one-dead-in-libya-car-bombings-officials-113062700075_1.html#)

**Death toll from Capital clashes rises to five, 97 wounded**

Five people were killed and nearly 100 were wounded in clashes between rival armed militias in Libya's capital on Wednesday, Health Minister Nurideen Doghman said. Loud explosions and gunfire rocked Tripoli late into the night - the second day of violence in the battle-scarred city, highlighting the rivalries between heavily armed groups that have plagued the country since the fall of Muammar Gaddafi. In a separate incident in the southern desert town of Sabha, he said two people were killed and 17 were injured when three car bombs exploded in different areas late on Wednesday.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20130627105400-7xcu3/?source%20=%20hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20130627105400-7xcu3/?source%20=%20hpbreaking)

**State of Palestine**

**Israel reopens Gaza crossings**

The Israeli army on Wednesday reopened the two crossings into the Gaza Strip which were closed as a punitive measure after militants fired five rockets over the border, a statement said. "Kerem Shalom and Erez were reopened this morning and are operating as normal," the army said in a statement. The two crossings were closed on Monday. Kerem Shalom, which lies at the southern tip of the Israel-Gaza border, is the crossing point for all commercial goods, while Erez, which lies at the northermost point of the strip, is the terminal for travellers.

**AFP -** [**http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2013/Jun-26/221634-israel-reopens-gaza-crossings-army.ashx#axzz2XOuIzTq7#**](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2013/Jun-26/221634-israel-reopens-gaza-crossings-army.ashx#axzz2XOuIzTq7#)

**As Gaza heads for water crisis, desalination seen key**

A tiny wedge of land jammed between Israel, Egypt and the Mediterranean sea, the Gaza Strip is heading inexorably into a water crisis that the United Nations says could make the Palestinian enclave unliveable in just a few years. With 90-95 percent of the territory's only aquifer contaminated by sewage, chemicals and seawater, neighborhood desalination facilities and their public taps are a lifesaver for some of Gaza's 1.6 million residents. But these small-scale projects provide water for only about 20 percent of the population, forcing many more residents in the impoverished Gaza Strip to buy bottled water at a premium.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/26/usisraelpalestinianswateridUSBRE95P0RK20130626?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews#**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/26/usisraelpalestinianswateridUSBRE95P0RK20130626?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews#)

**Sudan**

**Rain brings new health fears for displaced in Darfur camps**

The arrival of the rainy season has advanced the spread of diseases such as malaria, diarrhoea, urinary retention and conjunctivitis in Kalma camp near to Nyala, capital of South Darfur. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) Organisation has warned that a shortage of medicine is exacerbating the situation. Dr Saleh Ahmed Ali who works for the IRC in Kalma camp told Radio Dabanga that the spread of these diseases is a result of the deteriorating environmental situation. Especially children are vulnerable, with about 200 visiting the hospital each day. The Minister of Health for the Darfur Regional Authority, Osman Al Bushra, told Radio Dabanga that the epidemic is spreading due to large numbers of dead livestock at the drinking water resources, especially in Al Sareif Beni Hussein and Jebel Amir in North Darfur.

**Radio Dabanga -** [**http://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/rain-brings-new-health-fears-displaced-darfur-camps?utm\_source=feedburner&utm\_medium=feed&utm\_campaign=Feed%3A+ReliefwebUpdates+%28ReliefWeb+-+Latest+Updates%29#**](http://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/rain-brings-new-health-fears-displaced-darfur-camps?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+ReliefwebUpdates+%28ReliefWeb+-+Latest+Updates%29#)

**Tribal clashes kill dozens near gold mine in Sudan's Darfur**

Fighting between two Arab tribes vying for control of a gold mine has killed dozens of people in Sudan's troubled Darfur region, a tribal leader and local media said on Thursday. The clashes erupted on Wednesday, pitting the Bani Hussein against the Rizeigat, tribal groups which began fighting in January over the use of the gold mine near El Sireaf in North Darfur, Masar al-Duma Atim, a Bani Hussein leader, told Reuters. "Between 40 and 50 people were killed in El Sireaf on Wednesday," he said. "They attacked us at 9 am." The Rizeigat tribe, the army spokesman and the international peacekeeping force UNAMID could not be reached for comment.

**Reuters -** [**http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/06/27/uk-sudan-darfur-idUKBRE95Q0D120130627**](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/06/27/uk-sudan-darfur-idUKBRE95Q0D120130627)

ROSA

**Afghanistan**

**US expects more Taliban attacks despite peace talks**

The United States said on Thursday that it expected the Taliban to continue to mount attacks in Afghanistan even as the rebels hold peace talks from their new office in Qatar. Taliban gunmen and bombers using fake NATO identification attacked an entrance to the Afghan presidential palace and a nearby building known to house a CIA base on Tuesday, leaving three security guards dead. "Frankly I anticipate that Taliban will continue to try to negotiate from a position of strength," US special envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan, James Dobbins, told reporters in New Delhi. Dobbins, who is on the last stop of a tour through South Asia, said he had briefed his Indian counterparts about the uncertain peace process, which has caused concern in New Delhi.

**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iIzwY-SDAlX0cwbUoS2e5drkONhA?docId=CNG.d2ca3419f7310540f04383b3ed19dcc9.611#**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iIzwY-SDAlX0cwbUoS2e5drkONhA?docId=CNG.d2ca3419f7310540f04383b3ed19dcc9.611#)

**India**

**Rotting corpses spark fears of epidemic amid floods**

Rotting corpses contaminating water sources and poor sanitation amid devastating floods in northern India could lead to a serious outbreak of diseases such as cholera and dysentery, aid groups warned on Wednesday. The floods, triggered by heavy monsoon rains more than 10 days ago, have killed at least 822 people in the Himalayan state of Uttarakhand and forced tens of thousands from their homes. Officials say the death toll may cross 1,000 and thousands are still reported missing. Authorities have so far been focusing on rescuing thousands of pilgrims who visit the region for its sacred Hindu temples and shrines, but aid agencies, struggling to get past roads choked by landslides to local villagers, warned of another disaster unfolding in form of an outbreak of diseases.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/26/us-india-floods-idUSBRE95P0MU20130626#**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/26/us-india-floods-idUSBRE95P0MU20130626#)

**Pakistan**

**Bombing in southern Pakistan kills 2**

A senior police official says a bomb has killed at least two people in a village in an area of southern Pakistan frequently hit by violence. Fayyaz Sunmbol, the deputy inspector general of police in Quetta, says the blast Thursday morning in the village of Kuchlak also wounded five people. The village is about 22 kilometers (13 miles) from Quetta, which is the capital of Baluchistan province. Sunmbol says authorities are investigating whether it was a roadside bomb or a suicide bomber.

**AP -** [**http://bigstory.ap.org/article/bombing-southern-pakistan-kills-2#**](http://bigstory.ap.org/article/bombing-southern-pakistan-kills-2#)

**Sri Lanka**

**Bleak future for female-headed households**

Four years after the end of a 26-year civil war and with donor assistance dwindling, tens of thousands of female-headed households in northern Sri Lanka face a difficult future, though many are developing innovative coping strategies. “There is little evidence that the unique vulnerabilities faced by female-headed households are being considered in the government's policies,” said Raksha Vasudevan, author of a just published report on female-headed households in the north. Researchers and humanitarians working with female-headed households, estimated at over 40,000 by the Centre for Women & Development (CWD) in Jaffna, say the north’s patriarchal social structure, and an economy and reconstruction effort that favours males, have deepened their vulnerabilities.

**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report/98285/bleak-future-for-sri-lanka-s-female-headed-households#**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/98285/bleak-future-for-sri-lanka-s-female-headed-households#)

TACR

**Across TACR**

**Costa Rica worries about possible Nicaragua canal**

Costa Rica is worried about a plan to build a canal across neighboring Nicaragua because it would affect rivers along their shared border, its government said Wednesday. Foreign Minister Enrique Castillo said that even if the canal is built along Lake Nicaragua, it would affect the riverbeds at the San Juan River, which runs along their border, and the San Carlos River in northern Costa Rica. Castillo said that Costa Rica will wait for Nicaragua to define the canal's route before raising its concerns with the Nicaraguan government. Costa Rica and Nicaragua have a two-century-old territorial dispute over a piece of land the size of Liechtenstein along the San Juan River.

**AP -** [**http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/06/26/3472529/costa-rica-worries-about-possible.html#**](http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/06/26/3472529/costa-rica-worries-about-possible.html#)

**Drug trafficking up in the Caribbean**

US Assistant Secretary of State William Brownfield says the amount of illegal drugs entering the United States from the Caribbean has risen, a sign drug cartels are looking for new routes as Mexico and Central American boost anti-drug enforcement. Brownfield says that last year about 9 percent of all illicit drugs that entered the United States came from the Caribbean, compared to about 4 or 5 percent in 2011. He says authorities should focus on promoting development in the Caribbean because logic suggests drug cartels will return to trafficking routes used during the 1980s and 1990s. Brownfield spoke Wednesday, the same day the UN Office on Drugs and Crime released its annual report saying there are indications cocaine trafficking has increased in the Western Hemisphere's Atlantic Ocean.

**AP -** [**http://bigstory.ap.org/article/official-drug-trafficking-caribbean#**](http://bigstory.ap.org/article/official-drug-trafficking-caribbean#)

**Brazil**

**Police, protesters clash near Confed match**

Brazilian police fired tear gas to disperse protesters near a stadium hosting a Confederations Cup football semi-final, as Brasilia adopted measures aimed at calming two weeks of social unrest. The unrest outside the venue in Belo Horizonte, where Brazil beat Uruguay 2-1, was the latest in a wave of anti-government protests staged in part to denounce the high costs of hosting the event and next year's World Cup. On Wednesday, the protesters secured two new concessions from the leftist government of President Dilma Rousseff, including Senate backing of a bill that would amend the penal code to make corruption a "heinous crime." Nevertheless, protests continued and labor unions pledged to go ahead with a day of strikes and work stoppages on July 11.

**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iUXOPxvccbZB6ND2mjMZLAmyvbhw?docId=CNG.3335989c2a4f82af24f3a9def90b3481.a81#**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iUXOPxvccbZB6ND2mjMZLAmyvbhw?docId=CNG.3335989c2a4f82af24f3a9def90b3481.a81#)

**Chile**

**Violent clashes spoil student protest**

Small groups of hooded protesters clashed with police, stoned cars and set up flaming barricades in Chile's capital on Wednesday, marring a largely peaceful nationwide demonstration by more than 100,000 students demanding education reform. The violence began early in the day when protesters hurled Molotov cocktails at a police station. They also looted a restaurant to use chairs for barricades, blocking rush hour traffic along some of Santiago's main roads. Police in riot gear responded with water cannons and tear gas. The number of arrests had not been released by late afternoon, but police said at least three officers were injured. Teachers, dock workers and copper miners joined students in the national protest timed ahead of Sunday's presidential primaries.

**AP -** [**http://bigstory.ap.org/article/clashes-ahead-student-protest-chile#**](http://bigstory.ap.org/article/clashes-ahead-student-protest-chile#)

**Colombia**

**Death toll rises in Catatumbo protests**

On 25 June Colombia’s national police confirmed that two more protesting peasant farmers were killed in violent clashes with its mobile anti-riot squadron (Esmad) in the Catatumbo area of Norte de Santander department. Four protestors in the Catatumbo have now died and the tensions in the area over the past two weeks are quickly turning into a political and security crisis for the central government led by President Juan Manuel Santos. The protestors, some of them coca producers (cocaleros), want the government to suspend a newly launched coca eradication programme in the area until it provides local producers with sufficient assistance to grow alternative crops. FARC has a strong presence in the Catatumbo, which extends from north-eastern Colombia into neighbouring Venezuela. Consequently, the Santos government has been hesitant to engage in talks with the protestors, as it suspects that the FARC could be behind the unrest. With the crisis deepening however, the government is under growing pressure to find a solution.

**Latin News -** [**http://www.latinnews.com/component/k2/item/56699.html?period=June+2013&archive=3&cat\_id=791945%3Adeath-toll-rises-in-colombia%E2%80%99s-catatumbo&Itemid=6#**](http://www.latinnews.com/component/k2/item/56699.html?period=June+2013&archive=3&cat_id=791945%3Adeath-toll-rises-in-colombia%E2%80%99s-catatumbo&Itemid=6#)

**Landmines maim and kill children, rural communities**

10,413 Colombians were wounded or killed by landmines and unexploded ordnance since 1990 - 1,019 of whom were children, according to latest government figures. Colombia’s largest rebel group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) are responsible for planting many of the landmines found across the country in its nearly 50-year war against the government, according to the Colombian Campaign to Ban Landmines (CCCM). The conflict has made Colombia one of the most mine-scarred countries in the world, with one of the highest landmine casualty rates.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20130626060528-f3oey#**](http://www.trust.org/item/20130626060528-f3oey#)

**Haiti**

**US program to build houses falls short, report finds**

A US government program to build housing in Haiti after the devastating 2010 earthquake will only construct one-sixth of the homes intended because of poor planning, according to a report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released Tuesday. Plans by USAID to build housing in Haiti after the earthquake were slashed due to "faulty and inaccurate cost estimates," bringing down the number of new homes from 15,000 originally to 2,649. Efforts to assist Haiti's infrastructure, including construction of a port and power plant as well as housing, have had "mixed results" and suffered from delays and lack of oversight, according to the report which was requested by the Republican-controlled Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives. USAID originally sought to house up to 90,000 Haitians in its New Settlements program, fewer than 16,000 people were now likely to benefit, the GAO found.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20130625214918-dqx9i/?source=search&utm\_source=MailingList&utm\_medium=email&utm\_campaign=AlertNet+Weekly+Digest+26+June#**](http://www.trust.org/item/20130625214918-dqx9i/?source=search&utm_source=MailingList&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=AlertNet+Weekly+Digest+26+June#)

**Paraguay**

**800 evacuated as river floods in Paraguay**

The flooding of the Parana River, which marks Paraguay's border with Argentina and Brazil, has forced 800 residents to evacuate, authorities said Wednesday. The likely continued rise of the Parana River would lead the government to declare a state of emergency for the affected areas, Paraguay's acting President Federico Franco said. "We are considering swifter action, because the Parana River is expected to keep rising," Franco told reporters in the capital Asuncion. "We have information that this (river) could continue to rise and if this continues to get worse, we will declare a local state of emergency," Franco said. The flooding could affect 2,000 households over the next few days, Rafael

Valdez, head of Paraguay's National Emergency Secretariat (SEN), told a local radio station.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-06/27/c\_132489666.htm#**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-06/27/c_132489666.htm#)

WCAR

**Across WCAR**

**Emergency cash versus social protection**

Aid agency cash and voucher transfers in emergencies have increased significantly in recent years. WFP for example, has tripled its distributions over the past three years. The priority now must be to ensure these emergency schemes complement, rather than replace, governments' long-term social protection efforts; get governments to take on more of the financial burden; and make sure cash schemes are woven into other protection schemes, such as free school meals and health care, say aid workers. West African governments and donors currently run dozens of social protection schemes, be they cash vouchers (WFP is transferring cash in Ghana, Niger and Senegal, among other countries); longer-term social protection (World Bank and governments in Ghana, Niger, Mauritania and Burkina Faso); or government-driven food subsidies in response to high staple food prices (Senegal, Niger, Chad and Burkina Faso, among others, have experimented with these for years). If designed well, short-term schemes should complement long-term ones, said Margie Rehm, WFP's West Africa cash and voucher programme officer.

**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report/98287/analysis-emergency-cash-versus-social-protection-in-west-africa#**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/98287/analysis-emergency-cash-versus-social-protection-in-west-africa#)

**UN envoy warns of more Mali conflicts without Sahel aid**

A top UN envoy warned Wednesday that there would be more Mali-style conflict in the Sahel unless urgent action is taken to lift the region out of poverty and desperation. "Do not forget the Sahel or you will have more Malis," Romano Prodi, the former Italian PM named by the UN to produce a strategy for the impoverished bloc of countries, told the UNSC. Speaking five days before a UN peacekeeping force starts operations in Mali, Prodi said "success or failure in Mali will affect the entire region." But he added: "While focus and attention on Mali is critical, it should not be at the cost of the rest of the region." The envoy said international efforts must be made to bolster transparent and honest governance, security, humanitarian assistance and development. He wants to set up a Sahel Action Fund to concentrate on Mali, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Niger and Chad. But instead of just giving money, he wants rich nations to choose a project and commit to finish it.

**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gugI53RNIxsbK2olh0jMZIEA9cTw?docId=CNG.cb90d9a24fb507625779fac16a3964ad.6f1#**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gugI53RNIxsbK2olh0jMZIEA9cTw?docId=CNG.cb90d9a24fb507625779fac16a3964ad.6f1#)

**DR Congo**

**UN accuses Congo rebels of murdering civilians**

The United Nations says the M23 rebels in Congo have been conducting regular search operations in which civilians have been murdered. UN mission spokesman Col. Felix Basse said Wednesday that the M23 has mounted regular operations involving arbitrary arrests, murders and harassment of civilians. He said that at least 26 farmers had been executed between June 16 and 19 in the localities of Busanza and Jomba. The statement is among the strongest that has been made by the UN against the rebels. M23 spokesman Kabashi Amani dismissed the accusations as lies.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/un-accuses-congo-rebels-murdering-civilians-143519002.html#**](http://news.yahoo.com/un-accuses-congo-rebels-murdering-civilians-143519002.html#)

**Bridging the gap between relief and development**

Every year, for nearly two decades, the humanitarian community has responded to large-scale and complex crises in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). This year, on the assumption that the crises are likely to continue, donors have agreed to fund longer-term and more flexible humanitarian projects in DRC. For the first time, a common humanitarian fund (CHF) administered by the UN in Kinshasa will be financing projects of up to 24 months’ duration, instead of the current 12-month limit.

A review of the project proposals should be finalized in July; this year, the CHF hopes to receive US$70 million for multi-year funding (out of an $893 million humanitarian appeal for the country).

**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report/98288/bridging-the-gap-between-relief-and-development-in-drc#**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/98288/bridging-the-gap-between-relief-and-development-in-drc#)

**Mali**

**Coup leader asks forgiveness from Malian people**

The officer who led a coup last year that plunged Mali into chaos asked for forgiveness from the Malian people during a ceremony meant to heal the rift between soldiers who supported the putsch and the presidential guard who fought to defend the former president. Coup leader Capt. Amadou Haya Sanogo said that he and his brothers and sisters in green-beret uniform "want to ask for forgiveness from Malians as a whole." After the coup, the green berets led a purge of the red beret-wearing presidential guard. Many red berets were "disappeared," while others were imprisoned and allegedly tortured. Interim President Dioncounda Traore said Wednesday the ceremony marked the reconciliation of the two sides and announced that all red beret soldiers still incarcerated had been freed.

**AP -** [**http://tdn.com/news/world/africa/coup-leader-asks-forgiveness-from-malian-people/article\_b0f4af14-4122-5416-9336-983efba8acd1.html#**](http://tdn.com/news/world/africa/coup-leader-asks-forgiveness-from-malian-people/article_b0f4af14-4122-5416-9336-983efba8acd1.html#)

**Country prepares for elections amid fears of low voter turnout**

Mali plans to begin distributing millions of biometric voter cards on Saturday with just one month to go before a July 28 presidential poll. The election aims to turn the page on 17 months of political crisis after a March 2012 military coup and subsequent takeover of the north by armed groups. But there is already concern that frenzied electoral preparations won't be finished in time and that voter participation will be low. Mali was just weeks away from an April 2012 presidential election when mutinous soldiers overthrew the government. Now, one military coup, one Islamist takeover of the north, and one French-led regional military intervention later, Mali is getting ready to host a 12,000-member U.N. peacekeeping mission to help stabilize the country.

**VoA -** [**http://www.voanews.com/content/mali-prepares-for-election-amid-fears-of-low-voter-turnout/1688851.html#**](http://www.voanews.com/content/mali-prepares-for-election-amid-fears-of-low-voter-turnout/1688851.html#)

**Nigeria**

**Nigerian billionaire donates $1 Million to fight Polio**

Billionaire Sir Emeka Offor is donating $1.25 million to the Rotary Club's PolioPlus program to eradicate the paralyzing disease that attacks more people in his country, Nigeria, than any other in the world. In a statement received Wednesday the oil and gas tycoon says "polio should have no place in our world." Nigeria is the sticking point for efforts to rid the world of polio because of opposition from northern Muslim leaders who falsely preach that the vaccinations cause sterility and AIDS. The project also is opposed by Islamic extremists blamed for the killings of nine women health workers as they were vaccinating children against polio in northern Kano city in February. Offor said the number of documented cases in Nigeria rose from 62 in 2011 to 122 last year.

**AP-** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/nigerian-billionaire-million-fight-polio-19491954#**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/nigerian-billionaire-million-fight-polio-19491954#)

**Islamic extremists target civilians in Nigeria**

The group that Nigeria's government has declared a prohibited terrorist organization "declared war" last week on vigilante youths who have been arresting suspects and handing them over to soldiers fighting to crush the insurgency in the northeast part of Africa's most populous nation and the continent's biggest oil producer. The radical group that once attacked only government institutions and security forces is increasingly targeting civilians. Some 155,000 square kilometers (60,000 square miles) of Nigeria are now under a state of emergency. "Today, there are no boundaries and they are targeting the civilian population in a way that shows Nigeria is at a dangerous turning point," said Comfort Ero, Africa program director for the International Crisis Group.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/islamic-extremists-target-civilians-nigeria-091727877.html#**](http://news.yahoo.com/islamic-extremists-target-civilians-nigeria-091727877.html#)

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

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