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GENERAL

**Across Regions**

**Six migrants drowned off Sicily 'were Egyptian'**

The six migrants who drowned off a tourist beach in Sicily were Egyptians after their boat was abandoned at sea by a larger vessel, Italian media reported Sunday, citing investigators. The six victims who jumped from a fishing boat on Saturday thinking they had arrived onshore were identified as between 17 and 27 years of age. A boat illegally transporting nearly 100 migrants had hit a sandbar about 15 metres (50 feet) from the shore, and some of them managed to swim to the beach. Others were rescued by the Italian coastguard.

**AFP -** [**http://www.france24.com/en/20130811-six-migrants-drowned-off-sicily-were-egyptian#**](http://www.france24.com/en/20130811-six-migrants-drowned-off-sicily-were-egyptian#)

**Some US embassies reopen after security alert closure**

A number of US diplomatic missions closed on August 4 over an al-Qaida security alert reopened Sunday, while others stayed shut for the Muslim holidays following the Ramadan holy month. The embassy in the UAE capital, Abu Dhabi, and the US consulate in Dubai reopened, as the holiday marking the end of the fasting month came to a close in the southern Gulf state. The embassy in Libya also reopened on Sunday. In Saudi Arabia, the Riyadh embassy and the consulates in Jeddah and Dhahran remained closed, as did the US embassy in neighboring Qatar. They are due to reopen on August 14, when the holidays end in those two nations. In Bahrain and Kuwait, the American embassies are due to reopen Monday. Washington closed of its 19 missions in the Middle East and Africa last week following a security alert.

**AFP -** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/93893-some-u-s-embassies-reopen-after-security-alert-closure#**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/93893-some-u-s-embassies-reopen-after-security-alert-closure#)

EAPR

**Cambodia**

**Cambodia election crisis deepens as opposition rejects results**

A deadlock over Cambodia's disputed election hardened on Monday as the opposition rejected official results confirming a victory for Prime Minister Hun Sen's long-ruling party and raised the prospect of further street protests. The Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) said it would not accept the latest results because the government had failed to address its allegations of widespread cheating, and called on the international community not to recognize the outcome. The crisis over the July 28 election is Hun Sen's biggest political challenge in two decades and threatens to destabilize the small, fast-growing Southeast Asian nation that has built strong economic and political ties with China in recent years.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/12/us-cambodia-election-count-idUSBRE97B02I20130812#**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/12/us-cambodia-election-count-idUSBRE97B02I20130812#)

**China**

**5.7-magnitude quake hits Tibet**

A 5.7-magnitude earthquake hit a remote area of Tibet in western China on Monday, the US Geological Survey said. The quake struck at 5:23 am (2123 GMT Sunday) 142 kilometres (88 miles) south-southeast of the city of Qamdo at a depth of 50 kilometres, the USGS said. The China Earthquake Networks Center measured the quake as 6.1 magnitude at a relatively shallow 10 kilometres, the official Xinhua news agency reported, while the Hong Kong Observatory registered it as 5.9. The USGS said the population of the region, which borders northeast India, mostly lived in buildings that were highly vulnerable to earthquake shaking but estimated there was a low likelihood of casualties and damage from the tremor. Much of western China is prone to earthquakes.

**AFP -** [**http://tribune.com.pk/story/589114/5-7-magnitude-quake-hits-tibet-usgs/**](http://tribune.com.pk/story/589114/5-7-magnitude-quake-hits-tibet-usgs/)

**Worst flood in two decades to hit NE China province**

Worst flood in two decades is predicted to hit northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, authorities with the provincial hydrology bureau said Sunday. Orange alert for severe flood was issued on Saturday night as the water level along the upper reaches of Nenjiang River in the province surpassed the warning level by 0.17 to 1.62 meters. Due to continuous downpour, the peak level at Tongmeng station of Nenjiang River between 8 am Friday and 8 am Saturday reached 169.8 meters, 0.2 meters higher than the warning level. And the water level in Qiqihar climbed to 147.88 meters, surpassing the warning level by 0.88 meters, according to the authorities.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-08/11/c\_132620469.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-08/11/c_132620469.htm)

**Indonesia**

**Evacuations from Indonesian island after deadly volcanic eruption**

Indonesian rescuers battled to evacuate thousands from an island where a volcanic eruption killed six people, with the volcano still spewing out rocks and ash at "dangerous levels". Mount Rokatenda, on tiny Palue island in East Nusa Tenggara province, was sending large clouds of red-hot ash up to 600 metres into the air. "The activity ... remains high and at dangerous levels. There are no signs it will stop erupting any time soon," Surono, an official from the state vulcanology agency, said. On Saturday the volcano threw rocks and ash 1.2 miles into the sky and sent torrents of molten lava onto a beach, killing three adults and three children as they slept.

**AFP -** [**http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-08-12/evacuations-from-indonesian-island-after-deadly-volcanic-erupti/4879378**](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-08-12/evacuations-from-indonesian-island-after-deadly-volcanic-erupti/4879378)

**Malaysia**

**Eight Malaysian troops killed in clash with Kiram men**

While the Muslim community was celebrating the end of Ramadan, clashes between the Malaysian forces and the fighters of Sultan Jamalul Kiram 3rd erupted anew in Lahad Datu, Sabah. Kiram’s spokesperson reported that eight members of the Malaysian forces were killed after they were ambushed by at least 50 members of the Sultanate’s Royal Security Force (RSF) and volunteers headed by a RSF top officer. He said the incident was relayed to him by a RSF commander, brother of the Sultan. The commander leads the 1,600-strong RSF that is holed up in Sabah in an attempt to regain its claim over the territory from Malaysia. The ambush took place at Felda area in Lahad Datu,

Sabah. The spokesperson, who is also the secretary general of the Sultanate of Sulu and North Borneo, reported that the RSF decided to attack the Malaysian troops, fearing they could be outnumbered.

**Manila Times -** [**http://www.manilatimes.net/8-malaysian-forces-killed-by-kiram-men-in-sabah-ambush/28278/#**](http://www.manilatimes.net/8-malaysian-forces-killed-by-kiram-men-in-sabah-ambush/28278/#)

**Philippines**

**2 killed in Philippine military offensive against breakaway Muslim rebel group**

The Philippine military launched an offensive Saturday against a breakaway Muslim rebel group that opposes a peace deal and has claimed responsibility for a recent bomb attack that wounded seven soldiers in the country’s volatile south. At least two rebels were killed and two soldiers were wounded during “intense fighting” early Saturday between soldiers and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement in North Cotabato province’s Aleosan township, said Col. Dickson Hermoso of the army’s 6th Infantry Division. The army pounded the rebels with mortar and cannon fire to prevent them from advancing and taking control of a key highway, he said. The rebel group set off a roadside bomb Wednesday in nearby Maguindanao province, wounding seven soldiers, and warned of more attacks. The military said another roadside bomb believed to have been planted by the group exploded early Saturday in another town in Maguindanao. There were no casualties. A second homemade bomb was found and safely detonated in the same area.

**AP -** [**http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia\_pacific/philippine-military-launches-offensive-against-breakaway-muslim-rebel-group/2013/08/10/e982ea66-0184-11e3-8294-0ee5075b840d\_story.html#**](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/philippine-military-launches-offensive-against-breakaway-muslim-rebel-group/2013/08/10/e982ea66-0184-11e3-8294-0ee5075b840d_story.html#)

**Typhoon batters Philippines; 1 dead, 45 missing**

A powerful typhoon battered the northern Philippines on Monday, toppling power lines and dumping heavy rain across mountains, cities and food-growing plains. The storm killed at least one man in a landslide and left 45 fishermen missing. Typhoon Utor, described as the strongest globally so far this year, slammed ashore in mountainous eastern Aurora province with sustained winds of 175 kilometers (109 miles) per hour and gusts of up to 210 kph (130 mph). The typhoon triggered waves of up to 2.5 meters (eight feet) and left scores of fishermen missing. As of Monday afternoon, the typhoon had crossed the Philippines’ main northern island of Luzon and was off the country’s northwestern coast with winds of 140 kph (87 mph) and gusts of 170 kph (106 mph), government weather forecaster Jun Galang said. He said the typhoon may intensify over the South China Sea as it moves toward China. He said the storm carried a lot of rain but was moving fast, so the rainfall was not concentrated in one area. Utor was forecast to make landfall in Guandong, China, on Wednesday.

**AP -** [**http://www.boston.com/news/weather/2013/08/12/typhoon-batters-philippines-dead-missing/JKgIy3Bth5ysT4JRj6KYEP/story.html**](http://www.boston.com/news/weather/2013/08/12/typhoon-batters-philippines-dead-missing/JKgIy3Bth5ysT4JRj6KYEP/story.html)

ESAR

**Somalia**

**Al-Shabaab steals US $750,000 in British aid**

The British Department for International Development (DFID) has acknowledged that al-Shabaab militants stole $750,000 worth of aid to Somalia, AFP reported Saturday (August 10th). DFID's 2013 annual account report describes "theft between November 2011 and February 2012, by al-Shabaab in southern Somalia, of DFID-funded humanitarian materials and supplies from the offices and warehouses of partner organisations, to which DFID had provided funding to deliver projects and programmes." The losses appear in this year's accounts, although they took place last year, because DFID's investigation was completed in the last 12 months. Al-Shabaab has exacerbated humanitarian crises in Somalia by stealing food aid, harassing refugees and expulsing aid organisations.

**AllAfrica –** [**http://allafrica.com/stories/201308120011.html**](http://allafrica.com/stories/201308120011.html)

**South Sudan**

**Attackers in South Sudan kill local MSF staff member**

A South Sudanese staff member of Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) has been killed and another wounded in an attack by armed men on their vehicle outside the country's capital, Juba, the medical charity said on Friday. MSF said the shooting occurred on Monday on a main road outside Juba in an attack on a vehicle bearing the organisation's name. The victim, whom MSF identified only as Joseph, died two days later from his injuries. Police spokesman James Monday Enoka said police officers were deployed along all major roads around Juba, but were not always able to deter

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/09/us-southsudan-attack-msf-idUSBRE9780VK20130809**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/09/us-southsudan-attack-msf-idUSBRE9780VK20130809)

**Aid agencies need $ 1.05 billion to feed South Sudanese**

Aid agencies operating in South Sudan are in need of $1.05 billion to feed three million vulnerable people across the country. According to a humanitarian funding update from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), as of 31 July, 58% of the required $1.05 billion had been realised. However, OCHA says its partners in South Sudan still need $439 million to continue their work of saving lives and building the resilience of people across the country. Jonglei state’s Pibor county is one of the areas where aid agencies say thousands of civilians displaced by conflict are in urgent need of assistance. A recent humanitarian bulletin on South Sudan predicted a

food crisis would hit the country between July and December.

**Sudan Tribune -** [**http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article47600#**](http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article47600#)

**Zimbabwe**

**Zimbabwe's president: No going back on poll result**

Zimbabwe's longtime President Robert Mugabe says his party will not yield its victory in elections that although disputed were endorsed by African observers and conducted without the violence that marred previous polls. In his first public speech since the July 31 elections, Mugabe spoke Monday at the annual Heroes' Day gathering that honors guerrillas killed in the war for independence in 1980 at a national shrine outside Harare. Zimbabwe's July 31 polls gave Mugabe 61 percent of the vote, trailed by outgoing Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai with 34 percent.

**AP -** [**http://mynorthwest.com/17/2201149/Zimbabwes-president-No-going-back-on-poll-result**](http://mynorthwest.com/17/2201149/Zimbabwes-president-No-going-back-on-poll-result)

MENA

**Across MENA**

**Gunmen shoot Lebanese mayor as Syria war ignites local rivalries**

Gunmen shot the mayor of a town in Lebanon and killed two of his companions only hours after he oversaw a hostage swap with a rival clan in an area increasingly riven by sectarian divisions, security sources said on Sunday. The attack near the border with Syria highlights how the civil war there has worsened enmity between Lebanese Shi'ite and Sunni Muslim militias that support opposing sides of the two-year-old conflict. Mayor Ali Hujeiri, a Sunni from the town of Arsal, was shot in the majority Shi'ite town of Labweh as he returned from the hostage exchange with a rival Shi'ite clan. He was transferred to hospital and doctors said his wounds were not life-threatening.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/11/us-syria-crisis-mayor-idUSBRE97A07C20130811#**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/11/us-syria-crisis-mayor-idUSBRE97A07C20130811#)

**Al Qaeda's widening North African jihad confounds foes**

Inquiries into the assault on an Algerian gas plant are uncovering increasing evidence of contacts between the assailants and the jihadis involved in killing the US ambassador to Libya nearly a year ago. The extent of the contacts between the militants is still unclear and nobody is sure there was a direct link between the attack on the US consulate in Benghazi and the attack at In Amenas, where 39 foreign hostages were killed in January. But the findings, according to three sources with separate knowledge of US investigations, shed some light on the connections between Al Qaeda affiliates stretching ever further across North and West Africa.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/09/security-qaeda-maghreb-idUSL6N0G630B20130809?type=companyNews&feedType=RSS&feedName=companyNews&rpc=43#**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/09/security-qaeda-maghreb-idUSL6N0G630B20130809?type=companyNews&feedType=RSS&feedName=companyNews&rpc=43#)

**Israel approves more than 1,000 settlement homes**

Israel's housing minister on Sunday gave final approval to build nearly 1,200 apartments in Jewish settlements, just three days before Israeli-Palestinian peace talks are to resume in Jerusalem. There was no immediate Palestinian comment, though the announcement by Housing Minister Uri Ariel was bound to deepen the atmosphere of distrust as the two sides head into talks after a five-year freeze. The Palestinians want to establish a state in the West Bank, Gaza and east Jerusalem, captured by Israel in 1967. Israel has built dozens of settlements in the West Bank and east Jerusalem that are now home to some 560,000 Israelis. In the end, Abbas agreed to enter talks without a settlement freeze. In an apparent tradeoff, Israel agreed to release 104 long-held Palestinian prisoners in four installments over several months, with the first group of 26 to be freed Tuesday.

**AP -** [**http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2013/08/11/israel-settlement-jewish-palestinians/2639967/#**](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2013/08/11/israel-settlement-jewish-palestinians/2639967/#)

**Egypt**

**Egypt postpones dispersing pro-Morsi protest camps**

An Egyptian security official says authorities have postponed a move to disperse two sit-ins by supporters of the country's ousted president to "avoid bloodshed." The official says the decision to postpone an advance against the protest camps by Muslim Brotherhood supporters came after a plan on ending the sit-ins was leaked to the media. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to reporters. The security forces had planned to form cordons around the Cairo protest sites as early as dawn Monday, according to officials who spoke earlier to The Associated Press. A move by the police would have set the stage for clashes with thousands gathered at the two Cairo sit-ins in support of ex-President Mohammed Morsi, ousted in a July 3 coup.

**AP -** [**http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=211244264**](http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=211244264)

**UN leader calls for peaceful dialog in Egypt**

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on Friday appealed to Egyptians to avoid provocations and favor dialogue amid heightening tensions between supporters of deposed president Mohamed Morsi and the interim government. Ban said he is "deeply concerned" by the political stalemate in Egypt, in a statement released by his spokesman on the occasion of the holiday marking the end of the holy Muslim fasting month of Ramadan.

**AFP -** [**http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2013/Aug-10/226858-un-leader-calls-for-peaceful-dialog-in-egypt.ashx#axzz2bZfSXeMe#**](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2013/Aug-10/226858-un-leader-calls-for-peaceful-dialog-in-egypt.ashx#axzz2bZfSXeMe#)

**Iraq**

**Car bombs kill nearly 80 people, target Eid festivities**

A series of car bombs in mainly Shi'ite areas of Baghdad killed 57 people and wounded more than 150, in what appeared to be coordinated attacks on people celebrating the end of Ramadan. The 12 separate blasts targeting markets, busy shopping streets and parks where families like to mark Eid were part of a surge in sectarian violence in Iraq since the start of the year. This has been one of the deadliest Ramadan months in years, with regular bomb attacks killing scores of people, especially in Baghdad. More than 1,000 Iraqis have been killed in July, the highest monthly death toll since 2008, according to the UN. The Interior Ministry has said the country faced an "open war" fuelled by Iraq's sectarian divisions and has ramped up security in Baghdad, closing roads and sending out frequent helicopter patrols.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/10/us-iraq-violence-idUSBRE97905Y20130810#**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/10/us-iraq-violence-idUSBRE97905Y20130810#)

**Lebanon**

**Army deploys to prevent escalation after Labweh ambush**

The Lebanese Army heavily deployed in the Baalbek-Hermel region in a bid to avert an escalation after an ambush Sunday killed one man and wounded three including the mayor of Arsal, security sources told The Daily Star. Two Syrians from notorious Arsal Mayor Ali Hujeiri’s 15-member convoy were kidnapped but one of them was later released after extensive contacts between Hezbollah and the kidnappers. Members of the prominent Jaafar and Amhaz clans – who dubbed themselves as the “Brigade of the Four Martyrs” – shot at Hujeiri’s convoy in Labweh as it was returning from Ras Baalbek, where earlier he had overseen an exchange of hostages, the sources said.

**Daily Star -** [**http://www.dailystar.com.lb/news/lebanon-news/2013/aug-12/227008-army-deploys-to-prevent-escalation-after-labweh-ambush.ashx#axzz2bjuuj4jv**](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/news/lebanon-news/2013/aug-12/227008-army-deploys-to-prevent-escalation-after-labweh-ambush.ashx#axzz2bjuuj4jv)

**Sudan**

**Sudan floods kill 36: state radio**

Flooding has killed 36 people in a region north of Sudan's capital Khartoum, official radio said on Sunday. "Thirty-six people were killed in Nile state and 5,000 houses were destroyed because of heavy rain and floods," Radio Omdurman reported. The brief report by SMS did not specify over what time period the fatalities occurred but heavy rains affected Khartoum and the surrounding region again on Friday, following earlier flooding which began on August 1. Driven by vicious winds and accompanied by lightning, the rain on Friday lasted about four hours in Khartoum, where even modern apartment buildings suffered leaks. Many Sudanese live in one-room homes built of mud bricks which can easily wash away.

**AFP -** [**http://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-floods-kill-36-state-radio\**](http://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-floods-kill-36-state-radio\)

**Tribal clashes kill 111 in Darfur**

More than 100 people have been killed since Friday in Sudan's strife-torn Darfur region in clashes between two tribes over land, tribal sources said on Sunday. Tribal sources said thousands of members of the Rezeigat tribe attacked their Maaliya rivals in a bid to seize territory. "Clashes took place on Saturday and Friday which resulted in the deaths of 41 from our side and 90 wounded," Aydam Abu Bakr, a leader of the Rezeigat tribe, said by telephone. He said 70 people on the Maaliya side were also killed.

**AP -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/11/us-sudan-tribes-idUSBRE97A0AI20130811#**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/11/us-sudan-tribes-idUSBRE97A0AI20130811#)

**Syria**

**Syrian rebels on the offensive in eastern city**

Syrian rebels launched an offensive Sunday in an eastern city near the border with Iraq in an attempt to extend their advances in the north and west of the country, activists said. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and the Local Coordination Committees said that Syrian army warplanes also conducted several air raids against rebel positions in the eastern city of Deir el-Zour.

The LCC and the Observatory said rebels killed seven soldiers and captured several others in the city that has been contested since last year. Rebels have been on the offensive in northern Syria where they captured the town of Khan al-Assal last month. Last week, opposition fighters captured 11 villages in the regime stronghold of Latakia province along the Mediterranean coast, a symbolic blow to President Bashar Assad.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/syrian-rebels-offensive-eastern-city-170719608.html#**](http://news.yahoo.com/syrian-rebels-offensive-eastern-city-170719608.html#)

**Tunisia**

**Opposition to propose cabinet of independents**

A coalition of Tunisian opposition parties intends to propose this week a cabinet of independents to end the political crisis shaking the country. "The National Salvation Front will continue to work toward a government of national salvation and make its proposals on independent figures to constitute it next week," said a representative from the Massar party. "The front will also set out a precise road map," she added. The front is a mixed bag of parties running from the extreme left to the centre-right that is demanding that the Ennahda party government step down. The opposition has rejected talks with the government until it steps down, while the Ennahda party that heads the coalition has ruled out any dialogue conditional on its ouster.

**AFP -** [**http://www.france24.com/en/20130810-tunisia-opposition-propose-cabinet-independents#**](http://www.france24.com/en/20130810-tunisia-opposition-propose-cabinet-independents#)

**Yemen**

**Gunmen kill 5 Yemeni soldiers at checkpoint**

Suspected al-Qaida gunmen killed five soldiers early Sunday in a southern province of Yemen, an official said, as US embassies across the Muslim and Arab world reopened after terror threat emanating from the region. On Sunday, attackers in Yemen surprised the soldiers at their post guarding oil and gas projects in the Radhum area of Shabwa province, the official said. The official spoke on condition of anonymity according to regulations. Pipelines carrying oil and gas to coastal terminals in Yemen's mostly lawless south have been repeatedly attacked by al-Qaida militants and tribes with whom they have ties. Yemeni officials also suspect tribesmen allied with former President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

**AP -** [**http://bigstory.ap.org/article/gunmen-kill-5-yemeni-soldiers-checkpoint#**](http://bigstory.ap.org/article/gunmen-kill-5-yemeni-soldiers-checkpoint#)

ROSA

**Across ROSA**

**Indian forces enforce curfew after Hindu-Muslim clashes kill 2 in Kashmir**

Indian forces have fired warning shots to push angry people back into their homes as they enforced a curfew in a town in the Indian portion of Kashmir where clashes between Muslims and Hindus during Eid celebrations killed at least two people and injured another 24. State director-general of police Ashok Prasad says the situation was tense, although no fresh violence was reported Saturday. Troops in armored vehicles drove through the streets of Kishtwar, a town 200 kilometers (125 miles) southeast of Srinagar, the main city in Indian-controlled Kashmir, where rival groups attacked each other on Friday with firearms, stones and sticks.

**AP -** [**http://www.foxnews.com/world/2013/08/10/indian-forces-enforce-curfew-after-hindu-muslim-clashes-kill-2-in-kashmir/#**](http://www.foxnews.com/world/2013/08/10/indian-forces-enforce-curfew-after-hindu-muslim-clashes-kill-2-in-kashmir/#)

**Afghanistan**

**Three NATO soldiers killed in east**

An insurgent attack in volatile eastern Afghanistan killed three foreign soldiers on Sunday, a statement said. The deaths bring the number of fatalities among foreign troops this year to 114, according to the independent icasualties.org website, which recorded 402 such deaths in 2012. "Three International Security Assistance Force service members died following an enemies of Afghanistan attack in eastern Afghanistan today," said the statement from the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). In line with ISAF policy, nationalities were not given and casualty identification was left to the relevant nation.

**AFP -** [**http://nz.sports.yahoo.com/news/nato-says-three-soldiers-killed-135748435.html#**](http://nz.sports.yahoo.com/news/nato-says-three-soldiers-killed-135748435.html#)

**Flash floods kill 21 near Afghan capital: Official**

Flash floods triggered by heavy rain and hail storms killed more than 20 people on the outskirts of Kabul, Afghan officials said on Sunday, with a mosque, houses and farmland also damaged. The flooding hit the Shakardara and Paghman districts to the north and west of Kabul after the unseasonal rains left knee-deep water across many parts of the war-battered city. Twenty people, including several children and a woman, were killed in Shakardara," Ghulam Farooq, an official at the National Disaster Management Authority, told AFP. "One person was killed in Paghman and more than 20 houses destroyed in Kabul city."

**AFP -** [**http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asia/364146/afghan-flash-floods-kill-21-near-kabul**](http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asia/364146/afghan-flash-floods-kill-21-near-kabul)

**Three Chinese murdered in capital, one missing**

Three Chinese citizens were found murdered in an apartment in Afghanistan's capital, according to a statement issued by China's embassy in Kabul carried on a Chinese state-run news agency. The report said the three were killed on Thursday but did not say the whether the victims were men or women. It said the statement was issued by the embassy late on Friday. The identity of the victims and motive for the killings were also unclear. The embassy had said two Chinese were missing after the murder but it was later quoted by China's state news agency Xinhua as saying that one has been found and taken to a safe place. A search was going on for the other missing person.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/10/us-afghanistan-china-murder-idUSBRE97901V20130810**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/10/us-afghanistan-china-murder-idUSBRE97901V20130810)

**Sri Lanka**

**Colombo mosque attack stirs tensions**

Sri Lankan police has lifted a curfew in a neighbourhood in Sri Lankan city of Colombo after a Buddhist-led mob attack on a mosque raised religious tensions and left the Muslim minority in fear. Hundreds of security forces, including anti-riot squads and commandos, remain on alert in the Grandpass district on Sunday following violence on Saturday night that wounded at least four people. "The curfew was lifted this morning, but we have a strong presence in the area," a police spokesman said. There was no immediate reaction from the government to the violence, which followed Buddhist objections to the opening of the new mosque. However, Muslim religious leaders expressed concern. The latest violence came five months after an anti-Muslim campaign culminated in the burning down of two Muslim-owned

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2013/08/201381171449190189.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2013/08/201381171449190189.html)

TACR

**Across TACR**

**Dengue epidemic looms for Central American region**

Central America is on track to have one of its worst years ever for dengue, prompting governments across the region to mobilize against the mosquito-borne virus. There have been 120,000 suspected cases of dengue reported across Central America so far in the season, which is roughly June to November. The number of cases already is about to surpass the total for all of 2012 in the seven countries from Guatemala to Panama. At least 39 people have died so far, more than the 32 for all of 2012. The disease is endemic to the region, but cases tend to surge every three to five years, and the Pan-American Health Organization says this year's looks unusually bad. Honduras and El Salvador have declared health emergencies to channel extra funds and efforts to prevent the spread of the disease. At least 17 people have died in Honduras, where more than half the municipalities have registered dengue cases. Most of Nicaragua's 2,000 cases, including six deaths, are concentrated on the border with Honduras, which has reported nearly 18,000

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/dengue-epidemic-looms-central-american-region-191518090.html#**](http://news.yahoo.com/dengue-epidemic-looms-central-american-region-191518090.html#)

**'Above normal' hurricane season coming**

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said there was a 70% chance this year’s Atlantic hurricane season would be “above normal,” predicting about six to nine hurricane-grade storms with sustained winds topping 74 mph. More ominously, the agency also said three to five of these storms could develop into major hurricanes, with winds of 111 mph or higher churning up the Atlantic Ocean and potentially threatening US coastal communities.

**CSM -** [**http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/2013/0809/Above-normal-hurricane-season-coming.-Is-New-York-ready-for-another-Sandy**](http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/2013/0809/Above-normal-hurricane-season-coming.-Is-New-York-ready-for-another-Sandy)

**Colombia**

**Colombia rebels urge army to not try rescue US hostage**

Leftist rebels engaged in peace talks with the Colombian government urged the army on Friday to refrain from any attempt to rescue a US hostage they are holding. Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) guerrillas claimed that army operations have increased in Guaviare, a central-eastern region bordering Brazil, in an attempt to rescue American Kevin Scott Sutay by force. Any military rescue attempt would be "inhumane and irresponsible, and put at risk the life of the prisoner," the FARC said in a statement posted on their website www.farc-ep.co. "We call on the government to be sensible, to avoid an unfortunate outcome such as what has already happened on previous

occasions," the group said. Sutay, a US military veteran who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, was captured on June 20

**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5g7hmNC1ujMVey4Kp2oVxB1kskR3w?docId=CNG.b0ff511a88b71613141b0719138dda55.5b1#**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5g7hmNC1ujMVey4Kp2oVxB1kskR3w?docId=CNG.b0ff511a88b71613141b0719138dda55.5b1#)

**Colombia peace talks with Farc in Cuba make progress**

The Colombian government and the country's main rebel group, the Farc, have hailed progress after the end of the 12th round of peace talks in Cuba. The government's chief negotiator, ex-vice president Humberto de Calle, said they had never got this far before. In a joint statement, the two sides say they are "building agreement" on the rebels' participation in politics, despite a tense week in Colombia. The five-decade-old conflict has claimed more than 600,000 lives. Meanwhile, President Juan Manuel Santos praised the army for killing the regional Farc leader, Jesus Antonio Plata Rios, known as Zeplin, on Friday.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-23653276##**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-23653276##)

**How FARC and mining tungsten are linked**

Amazon Indians who inhabit a region along the borders with Venezuela and Brazil, have for decades made a living exploring the rain forest for valuable rocks that contain tantalum and tungsten, both of which are used to manufacture smartphones and other mobile devices. While the Indians do the digging, they rely on another, more powerful group to get the ore to market, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The rebel army uses the cash it makes from selling metals to help finance one of the world’s longest-running guerrilla wars, the Colombian National Police reported. The FARC, in addition to charging Indians for the right to mine, operates its own tungsten mine known as Cerro Tigre, or Tiger Hill.

**Bloomberg -** [**http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-08-08/terrorist-tungsten-in-colombia-taints-global-phone-to-car-sales.html#**](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-08-08/terrorist-tungsten-in-colombia-taints-global-phone-to-car-sales.html#)

**Jamaica**

**Transgender teen killed by mob**

Dwayne Jones was relentlessly teased in high school for being effeminate until he dropped out. His father not only kicked him out of the house at the age of 14 but also helped jeering neighbours push the youngster from the rough Jamaican slum where he grew up. By age 16, the teenager was dead, beaten, stabbed, shot and run over by a car when he showed up at a street party dressed as a woman. His mistake: confiding to a friend that he was attending a “straight” party as a girl for the first time in his life. International advocacy groups often portray the island as the most hostile country in the Western Hemisphere for gay and transgender people. After two prominent gay rights activists were murdered, a researcher with the Human Rights Watch in 2006 called the environment in Jamaica for such groups “the worst any of us has ever seen.” Local activists have since disputed that label, but still say homophobia is pervasive.

**AP -** [**http://globalnews.ca/news/773810/transgender-teen-killed-in-jamaica-a-symbol-of-long-standing-discrimination/#**](http://globalnews.ca/news/773810/transgender-teen-killed-in-jamaica-a-symbol-of-long-standing-discrimination/#)

**Peru**

**Strong earthquake hits off the coast of Peru**

The US Geological Survey says a strong earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 6.2 has struck off the coast of northern Peru. The quake struck at 4:49 a.m. local time and was centered 58 miles (94 kilometers) west-southwest of the city of Paita. The USGS says it was at the relatively shallow depth of 10 miles (16 kilometers). There were no immediate reports of damage or injuries.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/strong-earthquake-hits-off-coast-peru-19933477**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/strong-earthquake-hits-off-coast-peru-19933477)

WCAR

**CAR**

**UN recommends targeted sanctions**

UN secretary general Ban Ki-moon recommended to the Security Council Friday that sanctions be taken against elements of the Seleka coalition responsible for reprisal attacks in the Central African Republic. In a report that the Council is supposed take up on Wednesday, Ban said he was deeply concerned by "a total breakdown of law and order" since the rebel coalition took power in March. "This is unacceptable. The plight of the people of the CAR must be brought to an end," he said. "I call on the Security Council to consider appropriate options, including the adoption of sanctions or the establishment of a panel of experts, to ensure there is no impunity for perpetrators of gross human

rights violations," he said. The report said there had been an increasing number of abuses and incidents this year

**AFP -** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/130809/un-recommends-targeted-sanctions-central-africa#**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/130809/un-recommends-targeted-sanctions-central-africa#)

**Dozens killed in the northwest**

An international aid organization says dozens of people have been slaughtered in a remote village in Central African Republic and their bodies tossed in a nearby river. In a statement released Friday, Caritas said the violence had taken place over the last two weeks in a village called Ouhman-Bac in the country's northwest. Father Aurelio Gazzera said between 30 and 50 bodies had been dumped into the river, and other terrified residents fled the remote area. The massacre is being blamed on rebels from Seleka, an alliance that brought fighters together to overthrow the government earlier this year. Seleka officials have dismissed reports from human rights groups accusing the fighters of human rights abuses, saying the violence had been perpetrated by other armed groups.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/group-dozens-killed-central-african-republic-195730967.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/group-dozens-killed-central-african-republic-195730967.html)

**Deposed president eyes return to power**

Deposed former CAR President Francois Bozize still nurtures ambitions of returning to power, he reported, ending months of silence since he was ousted by rebel forces in March. In an interview broadcast, Bozize said he had formed, along with some compatriots, a political organization called the Front for the Return of Constitutional Order in CAR, or Frocca. He said its objective was to "follow and denounce everything that is happening in the country and inform the international community which does not yet seem to have realized the grave crisis, the drama, unfolding in Central African Republic.”

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/10/us-centralafrica-bozize-idUSBRE97908I20130810#**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/10/us-centralafrica-bozize-idUSBRE97908I20130810#)

**DR Congo**

**Congo wages war against polio**

Congo on Thursday kicked off a four-day campaign to vaccinate over 882,500 children aged between 0 and 59 months against polio. The campaign will also be used to give vitamin A to the targeted group, as polio and vitamin A deficiency account for many child deaths and paralysis in the Central African country. The country representative of the World Health Organization (WHO), Fatoumata Bintou Diallo, has appealed for the involvement of parents to make for effective vaccination.

**Afrique en Ligue -** [**http://www.charity-charities.org/news.php?artid=2377335#**](http://www.charity-charities.org/news.php?artid=2377335#)

**Where is the state in North Kivu? – UNICEF mention**

UNICEF estimates that two thirds of children in North and South Kivu provinces do not have a birth certificate, though you have to have one to be enrolled in school in the DR Congo. But it is not just the lack of an effective state bureaucracy that worries some observers - many health and education services in eastern DR Congo are funded or controlled by aid agencies. A March 2013 paper by Koen Vlassenroot and Karen Büscher of the Conflict Research Group argues that in Goma and elsewhere in eastern DR Congo, power, authority and state sovereignty have been transferred to aid organizations. One effect "of the humanitarian sector's presence and interventions is the encouragement of state withdrawal from public services and a transfer of power and legitimacy to the advantage of international actors. This sector has largely taken over education and health care, and even the rehabilitation of road infrastructure," they said. For instance, in the provinces of North and South Kivu, MSF runs 40 health centres, nine health posts, and four referral clinics and supports 11 government-owned health clinics. UNICEF appealed for nearly $6 million to fund educational activities in North and South Kivu in 2012; and $9 million for education and $2.8 million for nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene services for the whole of DR Congo in 2013.

**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportID=98543#**](http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportID=98543#)

**Mali**

**Northern rebel factions reach agreement**

Rival rebel factions from northern Mali have reached a reconciliation agreement following talks in Mauritania. The agreement announced late on 9 August is between secular Tuareg rebels and Arab militants. Both operate in the part of northern Mali they call Azawad. The National Movement for the Liberation of the Azawad, the High Unity Council of the Azawad and the Arab Movement of the Azawad all said they had "decided to open a new page in the history of Azawad based on tolerance." Malians voted on 11 August in a runoff presidential election.

**AP -** [**http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/08/09/3553266/2-mali-rebel-factions-reach-agreement.html#**](http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/08/09/3553266/2-mali-rebel-factions-reach-agreement.html#)

**Reengaging a post-conflict country**

Billions of dollars of foreign aid are poised for release following Mali's successful transition to a democratically elected president. But before donors turn on the aid spigot, they should reconsider how aid is channeled in Mali place, to mitigate the misappropriation of funds that exacerbated the conflict in the first place. Mali's new president will face the usual development challenges endemic to the region, but the political and security crises in Mali have highlighted a new set of aid priorities. This transition period presents Mali and its donors with the opportunity to address systemic issues that previously impeded development: ethnic tensions, poor governance and economic disenfranchisement. Mali is heavily dependent on foreign aid. The suspension of aid flows following the 2012 coup d'état devastated the economy, contributing to the first contraction in GDP growth since 1993, a potentially poor reflection on the resiliency of previous development projects.

**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportID=98540#**](http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportID=98540#)

**Tuareg say election alone will not bring peace**

In the birthplace of a Tuareg revolt that nearly tore Mali apart last year, residents said the election would not bring lasting peace unless a new president in the distant south gave them more freedom. The region of Kidal in the northeast has produced four rebellions since 1960. Its Tuareg people say successive governments in Bamako have excluded them from power. "The way the Malian state treated our people, before it was chased out of here last year, we cannot allow that to happen again," the elderly Tuareg clan chief Intallah ag Attaher, told UN Special Representative Bert Koenders during an election-day visit. "We have to make a thorough analysis of why earlier peace deals failed," Koenders told Tuareg leaders. "We have a historic opportunity not to repeat the errors of the past."

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20130811203437-1p8vb#**](http://www.trust.org/item/20130811203437-1p8vb#)

**Former PM favorite for president in run-off vote to heal Mali**

Poll workers in Mali began counting votes in Sunday's high stakes presidential runoff, with former Prime Minister Ibrahim Boubacar Keita tipped to claim the difficult job of stabilizing the West African nation after more than a year of turmoil. The winner of the vote will be able to draw on more than $4 billion in foreign aid promised to rebuild the country after a French-led military intervention in January routed al Qaeda-linked rebels occupying the desert north. He must also tackle deep-rooted corruption and forge a lasting peace with northern Tuaregs after decades of sporadic uprisings, problems that led to the overthrow of president Amadou Toumani Toure in a March 2012 coup and allowed the Islamists to seize the northern two-thirds of the country.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/11/us-mali-election-idusbre97a00b20130811#**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/11/us-mali-election-idusbre97a00b20130811#)

**Nigeria**

**At least 12 troops, 7 police killed in uprising**

The commander of the military joint task force fighting northeastern Nigeria's militant uprising admits 12 soldiers and seven police officers were killed in recent attacks. Earlier the military had said only two soldiers and one police officer were killed when suspected members of the Boko Haram terrorist network attacked a military base and police outpost near Nigeria's border with Cameroon on 4 August. The commander made the admission when he spoke to the Borno state governor and journalists were present.

**AP -** [**http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/08/10/3554541/nigeria-12-troops-7-police-killed.html#**](http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/08/10/3554541/nigeria-12-troops-7-police-killed.html#)

**9,000 evicted, thousands more threatened in Lagos**

Amnesty International says 9,000 people have lost homes and livelihoods and thousands more are threatened in a slum area of Lagos destroyed by armed police and bulldozers. The London-based human rights organization says a state government official claimed they destroyed "a rubbish dump." But Amnesty published satellite images Monday showing concrete and other structures in "a densely populated area" razed to the ground Feb. 23. It said residents are sleeping in the open prey to disease and bandits; children are out of school; thousands have lost livelihoods. The state government spokesman did not answer calls.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/9000-evicted-thousands-threatened-lagos-19933609**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/9000-evicted-thousands-threatened-lagos-19933609)

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