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GENERAL

**Sudan/South Sudan**

**Sudan bombs South Sudan buffer zone**

The Sudanese Armed Forces on Saturday killed two people when they bombed a South Sudanese army position close to the town of Jau, which lies in a buffer zone along the common border, South Sudan's army said. "The SAF carried out the bombing with MiG-29 fighter jets. They dropped two bombs on our defensive position in Jau yesterday," said James Kong Chuol, a major general commanding a division of the Sudan People's Liberation Army close to the border. "An SPLA soldier and his wife lost their lives. Six other people including a four-year-old girl were injured," Chuol told AFP on Sunday.

**AFP -** [**http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Sudan-bombs-South-Sudan-buffer-zone-20130908#**](http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Sudan-bombs-South-Sudan-buffer-zone-20130908#)

CEE/CIS

**Across CEE/CIS**

**Russian diplomat shot dead in Abkhazia**

A senior Russian diplomat in Georgia's Moscow-backed breakaway Abkhazia region was shot dead on Monday by an unidentified gunman, Russian news agencies reported. The first secretary of the Russian embassy in Abkhazia, Dmitry Vishernev, was shot at close range as he drove out of a garage at his temporary home in the Black Sea region's main city, Sukhumi, Interfax reported. There was no immediate word on a possible motive, and the Russia Foreign Ministry declined comment. Abkhazia, a lush coastal region that has a reputation for crime and corruption, broke from Georgian government control in a war that followed the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.thestar.com.my/News/World/2013/09/09/Russian-diplomat-shot-dead-in-breakaway-Georgian-region.aspx**](http://www.thestar.com.my/News/World/2013/09/09/Russian-diplomat-shot-dead-in-breakaway-Georgian-region.aspx)

**Turkey**

**Kurdish militants halt withdrawal from Turkey**

Kurdish militants have stopped withdrawing from Turkish soil, a website linked to the militants said on Monday, citing failures by the Turkish government to take steps agreed under a nascent peace process. The Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) guerrillas had started the withdrawal earlier this year. However, Cemil Bayik, the co-head of the rebels' political wing, told the same website, Firat News, last week that the government had failed to meet its side of the bargain.

**Reuters -** [**http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/09/09/uk-turkey-kurds-idUKBRE98807320130909**](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/09/09/uk-turkey-kurds-idUKBRE98807320130909)

EAPR

**Cambodia**

**Cambodia's ruling party wins election**

Cambodia's election committee handed victory in hotly disputed polls to the ruling party of Prime Minister Hun Sen Sunday, prompting the opposition to say it will boycott parliament and stage further protests over allegations of widespread fraud. The kingdom has been stuck in a political impasse since the July election, with the premier's Cambodian People's Party (CPP) insisting it secured a legitimate victory despite vociferous calls from CNRP leader Sam Rainsy for a probe into alleged vote rigging. The CPP took 68 seats to 55 for the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), according to the country's National Election Committee. The election authority said the CPP won 3.2 million votes to the CNRP's 2.9 million.

**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hiOsE2wsBpep6BmZwO3tb5pFENHA?docId=CNG.6e8f364aaaac26361847209ef3b5b998.b1#**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hiOsE2wsBpep6BmZwO3tb5pFENHA?docId=CNG.6e8f364aaaac26361847209ef3b5b998.b1#)

**China**

**Blast outside school in China kills at least 2**

A three-wheeled truck caught fire and exploded Tuesday outside a school in southern China, killing at least two people and injuring 17, including 10 students, state media reported. Initial reports from the scene in the resort city of Guilin described the blast as an accident, although police declined to confirm that, saying only that an investigation was continuing. One of the hospitalized students was in critical condition, state media reported. The explosion struck about 7 a.m. as children were arriving at Balijie Primary School, which is near a four-lane road in urban Lingchuan county. The other seven injured were adults who had been dropping children off at the start of classes.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/blast-school-china-kills-20196592#**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/blast-school-china-kills-20196592#)

**Philippines**

**Muslim rebels locked in standoff with Philippine army in the Southern port city of Zamboanga**

Philippine troops were locked in a standoff with hundreds of Muslim gunmen who killed six people and took at least 20 hostages in the south on Monday in a bid to derail peace talks. Armoured troops surrounded the southern port city of Zamboanga after between 200 and 300 Moro National Liberation Front gunmen entered six coastal villages on its outskirts before dawn, military spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Ramon Zagala said. President Benigno Aquino's government denounced the deadly attack, which analysts said was designed to sabotage peace talks aimed at ending a 42-year-old rebellion that has claimed 150,000 lives.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/muslim-rebel-attack-shuts-down-philippine-city-001638133.html#**](http://news.yahoo.com/muslim-rebel-attack-shuts-down-philippine-city-001638133.html#)

ESAR

**Somalia**

**Shebab claims twin blasts in capital that kill 18**

At least 18 people were killed in the Somali capital Mogadishu on Saturday when two blasts rocked a popular restaurant, police said, in attacks quickly claimed by Shebab Islamists. "There were two heavy explosions at a parking lot near the National Theatre," police officer Mohamed Adan told AFP. "At least 18 people were killed," said Mohamed Dahir, another police officer. An AFP reporter saw 12 bodies at the scene of the attack, a popular restaurant called the Village. The Al-Qaeda-linked Islamists claimed to have killed "key officials", but witnesses said the casualties they had seen looked like ordinary civilians. The attacks -- a car bomb followed by a suicide bomber who detonated his vest -- drew condemnation from the UN and the Somali president.

**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jUEyENGBHmIN1hQrEdfQStc\_xENA?docId=CNG.60f9eb7dd15b18a914b328a0123f98f4.81#**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jUEyENGBHmIN1hQrEdfQStc_xENA?docId=CNG.60f9eb7dd15b18a914b328a0123f98f4.81#)

**Somalia to get 1 million kids into school to help end poverty and instability - UNICEF mention**

Somalia, taking advantage of improved security, is launching an ambitious campaign on Sunday to get one million children into school in the next three years. Fewer children attend school in Somalia than almost anywhere else in the world. Only 36 percent of girls and 45 percent of boys enroll in primary school, far fewer in the war-torn south and central regions. “There has never been a more opportune time during the last two decades than now, to act on behalf of Somali children,” UNICEF said in a statement. It will spend $117 million on school reconstruction, teacher training and salaries, textbooks and support to education ministries in Somalia and the semi-autonomous northern regions of Somaliland and Puntland. Somalia’s federal government, with the backing of African Union peacekeepers, has extended its control across southern and central Somalia over the last year. It has pushed the al Qaeda-linked Islamist rebel group al Shabaab out of several major towns in the region, increasing access for aid agencies.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20130906122708-061dz/?source=hptop#**](http://www.trust.org/item/20130906122708-061dz/?source=hptop#)

**Zimbabwe**

**Hunger looms for quarter of rural Zimbabweans**

A quarter of the rural population in Zimbabwe - 2.2 million people - is expected to lack sufficient food between October and the next harvest in March 2014, according to WFP. In a 3 September statement, WFP Country Director Sory Ouane said, "Many districts, particularly in the south, harvested very little and people are already trying to stretch out their dwindling food stocks." According to FAO Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS), the aggregate cereal harvest in 2013 was about 27% below the average of the previous five years. The WFP statement attributed the current high levels of food insecurity "to various factors including adverse weather conditions, the unavailability and high cost of agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertilizers, and projected high cereal prices due to the poor maize harvest.”

**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report/98706/hunger-looms-for-quarter-of-rural-zimbabweans#**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/98706/hunger-looms-for-quarter-of-rural-zimbabweans#)

MENA

**Across MENA**

**US believes both sides committed to Mideast peace talks**

The US remains confident that Israelis and Palestinians are determined to pursue direct peace talks revived by Washington this summer, despite Palestinian claims that negotiations had been "futile." Since becoming Secretary of State in February, John Kerry has dedicated much of his effort on restarting peace negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians, which were frozen in September 2010. After six trips to the region in four months, he met negotiators from both sides -- Palestinian Saeb Erekat and Israeli Justice Minister Tzipi Livni -- in Washington on 29 and 30 July. Secret bilateral meetings, with and without the presence of American sponsors, were then held in Jerusalem in August and early September. Kerry picked up his personal dialogue with Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas at London on Sunday. During an earlier stop-off in Paris, Kerry said he planned to meet Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu "shortly", but a State Department official said it was "premature" to talk of trilateral negotiations between the three men.

**AFP -** [**http://24allnews.com/us-believes-both-sides-committed-to-mideast-peace-talks-afp/#**](http://24allnews.com/us-believes-both-sides-committed-to-mideast-peace-talks-afp/#)

**Egypt**

**Islamist head faces new murders case**

Egypt's state prosecutor said on Sunday that Muslim Brotherhood supreme guide Mohamed Badie would stand trial in a second case over clashes in which several demonstrators were killed, judicial sources said. Fourteen people, including several top figures in the Brotherhood, the group from which ousted president Mohamed Morsi hails, will stand trial along with Badie at a date that has yet to be decided, the sources added.

**AFP -** [**http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/middle-east/Egypt-Islamist-head-faces-new-murders-case-Judiciary/articleshow/22418098.cms#**](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/middle-east/Egypt-Islamist-head-faces-new-murders-case-Judiciary/articleshow/22418098.cms#)

**Egypt army hits Sinai militants, at least 30 killed, injured**

The Egyptian army mounted a major operation against Islamist militants in North Sinai on Saturday, killing or wounding at least 30 people, security officials said. Dozens of armored vehicles backed by attack helicopters took part in the operation near Sheikh Zuweid, a few kilometers (miles) from the Palestinian Gaza Strip. Fifteen people were detained in the operation, which the officials said targeted militants responsible for attacks on the security forces. The operation comes two days after an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Interior Minister Mohamed Ibrahim in Cairo. Security officials say the militants behind the suicide bombing were linked to groups in the Sinai.

**Reuters -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/egypt-army-hits-sinai-militants-least-31-killed-161405280.html#**](http://news.yahoo.com/egypt-army-hits-sinai-militants-least-31-killed-161405280.html#)

**Sinai Islamists claim responsibility for attack on Egypt interior minister**

The Sinai-based Islamist militant group Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis claimed responsibility on Sunday for an attempt last week to kill the Egyptian interior minister in Cairo, and promised more attacks in revenge for a crackdown on Egypt's Islamists. Islamist militancy has risen sharply in the relatively lawless region adjoining Israel and the Gaza Strip and elsewhere in Egypt since the army deposed Islamist president Mohamed Mursi two months ago, following mass protests. Thursday's daylight attack was easily the most spectacular so far, as a suicide car bomber blew himself up next to Interior Minister Mohamed Ibrahim's convoy as he left his Cairo home for work in an armoured limousine. The bomber, a passer-by and an unidentified person were killed and more than 20 wounded.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/09/08/us-egypt-attack-interior-idUSBRE9870BX20130908#**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/09/08/us-egypt-attack-interior-idUSBRE9870BX20130908#)

**Iraq**

**Four dead in attacks north of Baghdad**

Attacks north of Baghdad, including a suicide bombing at a government building and the detonation of a booby-trapped corpse, killed four people Saturday, part of a months-long surge in violence. The unrest has left more than 3,900 people dead already this year, and sparked concerns Iraq is slipping back into the all-out sectarian war that plagued it in 2006 and 2007 and left tens of thousands dead. Shootings and bombings stuck the main northern city of Mosul, as well as Baquba, Taji and Tuz Khurmatu, all north of the capital, leaving four dead and nine others wounded overall, according to security and medical officials. In Taji, a suicide bomber tried to enter the town mayoralty offices

but blew himself up at the gates to the building when police opened fire on him.

**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jK8hEF4bJ0wrUvyfAmddO\_zvvmaQ?docId=CNG.fbefd87f3ab62b5b82120edcc291e2d6.4f1#**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jK8hEF4bJ0wrUvyfAmddO_zvvmaQ?docId=CNG.fbefd87f3ab62b5b82120edcc291e2d6.4f1#)

**Al-Qaida claims bombs that killed at least 50**

The Iraqi branch of al-Qaida claimed responsibility Sunday for a wave of coordinated car bomb attacks that killed more than 50 people in Baghdad, as two new attacks killed another five in the latest outbreak of violence to hit the country. The al-Qaida affiliate in Iraq, known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, posted a message on a militant website taking responsibility for the deadly attacks last week, mostly in Shiite areas. The group claimed the attacks were a response to the arrest of Sunnis around the capital during a recent government security crackdown. "About half a million security members failed to prevent this huge wave of attacks in Baghdad," the group said. The authenticity of the statement could not be independently confirmed. It was posted on a website commonly used by jihadists and its style was consistent with earlier al-Qaida statements. The bombings were the latest in a wave of bloodshed that has swept Iraq since April, killing more than 4,000 people and worsening already strained ties between Iraq's Sunni minority and the Shiite-led government. More than 570 people have been killed so far in August.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/al-qaida-claims-iraq-bombs-killed-50-20191589#**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/al-qaida-claims-iraq-bombs-killed-50-20191589#)

**Saudi Arabia**

**Two Saudi women dead from MERS-coronavirus, two men infected-Health Ministry**

Two Saudi women have died from the MERS coronavirus and two more have contracted the disease in Saudi Arabia, the health ministry said on Saturday, raising to 44 the number of people in the kingdom who have died from the SARS-like virus. The World Health Organization said last month the number of confirmed infections worldwide in the past year was 102, of whom almost half have died.

The Saudi Health Ministry said in a statement one 41-year-old woman working in the health sector died in the capital Riyadh and a 79-year-old woman who had been suffering from other diseases died in Hafr al-Baten, a town in northeastern Saudi Arabia. The ministry also reported two men aged 30 and 47 were under intensive care in Riyadh and Hafr al-Baten.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20130907083052-0ne5d#**](http://www.trust.org/item/20130907083052-0ne5d#)

**Sudan**

**‘Air raid residue’ kills four children in Darfur’s East Jebel Marra**

Four children were reportedly killed on Friday in the Dubbo Al Omda area in Darfur’s East Jebel Marra when a bomb dropped during an alleged Sudanse Air Force raid on Thursday, exploded while they were watering their camels. Witnesses said that Antonov aircraft bombed the area on Thursday. They said that Samani Yaqoub Saleh (9), Bahradin Musa Sakin (12), Hawaa Haroun Musa (8), and Omar Ajap Mohamed (15) died when one of the unexploded bombs went off. The explosion also killed 37 camels. Also, at least seven people, including four children, are reported to have died in renewed air raids, allegedly by the Sudanese Air Force, in Darfur’s East Jebel Marra on Thursday. Several witnesses fleeing the area said that the vicinities of Kined and Silo in Shangil Tobay administrative unit, as well as and villages of Kunjara, Sharaf, Tirbo, and Vanaga, were affected.

**Radio Dabanga -** [**https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/55603#**](https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/55603#)

**‘20,000 weapons in hands of South Darfur citizens, children’: Police Chief**

The Chief of Police for South Darfur has estimated that there are 20,000 weapons (firearms) in civilian hands in the state, and says he has even seen children carrying Kalashnikovs. At a press conference in South Darfur capital Nyala on Friday, Major General Ahmed Osman Mohamed Khair that just on Thursday, he saw children carrying assault rifles. Gen Khair said that the losses that occurred as a result of recent clashes between security forces and Central Reserve Forces (Abu Tira) in Nyala amounted to four dead and five wounded, including Abu Tira leader Takrom and his driver. Osman said that there were 739 incidents of crime in the state in just two months, namely July and August, including eight kidnappings, 21 murders, and 105 armed robberies. He attributed the crime increase to “the spread of alcohol, weapons and unemployment among young people,” calling for a plan from the Khartoum regime to collect arms from the citizens.

**Radio Dabanga -** [**https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/55606#**](https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/55606#)

**144,000 people displaced by inter-tribal clashes in East Darfur: HAC**

An estimated 144,000 people have been displaced in East Darfur since renewed fighting broke out between the Reizegat and Maalia tribes in early August, according to the Sudanese government’s Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC). The figure was cited for the first time in the latest weekly bulletin from the UN’s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), ending 1 September. The majority of people have fled to the Abu Karinka and Adila localities, which have seen an influx of 83,790 and 50,000 people respectively. Smaller numbers have also fled to areas in Ed Daein locality and North Darfur state. HAC said those affected are in urgent need of food, non-food relief supplies, emergency shelter, education, water and sanitation and health assistance.

**Sudan Tribune -** [**http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article47976#**](http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article47976#)

**Syria**

**Syrian army attacks hills around Christian village**

A Syrian activist group says the army is attacking hills overlooking a rebel-held Christian-majority village near the capital Damascus. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights says fighters from the al-Qaida-affiliated Jabhat al-Nusra or Nusra Front and the Qalamon Liberation Front still control Maaloula, an ancient village that is home to two of the oldest surviving monasteries in Syria. Rami Abdul-Rahman, who heads the Observatory, said troops attacked the hills around Maaloula early Monday under the cover of heavy shelling. Rebels captured the village on Saturday. The battle has thrown a spotlight on the deep-seated fears that many of Syria's religious minorities harbor about the growing role of Islamic extremists on the rebel side in Syria's civil war.

**AP -** [**http://www.chron.com/news/world/article/Syrian-army-attacks-hills-around-Christian-village-4797784.php**](http://www.chron.com/news/world/article/Syrian-army-attacks-hills-around-Christian-village-4797784.php)

**UN will continue relief work in Syria despite dangerous conditions, top official says**

The United Nations humanitarian chief on Friday reiterated the Organization’s commitment to continue its relief operations inside Syria, as well as in neighbouring countries, adding that protecting civilians is paramount amid the spiralling violence. “Syria and its neighbouring countries are going through a humanitarian crisis on a scale we have rarely seen,” Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos told reporters in New York in a teleconference from Beirut, Lebanon. “The fighting is having a terrible impact on ordinary people. Neighbourhoods have been shelled indiscriminately and entire towns have been besieged.”

**UN News Centre -** [**http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45790&Cr=syria&Cr1=.com#**](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45790&Cr=syria&Cr1=.com#)

**Tunisia**

**Tens of thousands call for government ouster**

Tens of thousands of Tunisians on Saturday called for the resignation of the Islamist-led government in one of the largest opposition protests to date. The protest, organized by the National Salvation Front coalition of parties, marked the traditional 40-day mourning period since the assassination of opposition politician Mohammed Brahmi. His killing in front of his family plunged the country into a political crisis and prompted dozens of opposition members of the assembly to withdraw from the body, paralyzing its work of writing the country's new constitution. They announced Friday they would begin a hunger strike until their demands were met. Weeks of mediation by the main labor union between the moderate Islamist Ennahda Party and the opposition have not borne fruit.

**AP -** [**http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/09/07/3611766/tens-of-thousands-call-for-tunisia.html#**](http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/09/07/3611766/tens-of-thousands-call-for-tunisia.html#)

**4 Militants killed near Tunisian capital**

Tunisia's state news agency reports that counterterrorism forces have killed four militants outside the capital of Tunis after an intense gun battle. An official quoted Monday by the state news agency described the militants as "dangerous terrorists" and said they belonged to the North Africa branch of the al-Qaida terror network. The clash took place following a dawn raid by counterterrorism units.

**AP -** [**http://bigstory.ap.org/article/report-4-militants-killed-near-tunisian-capital**](http://bigstory.ap.org/article/report-4-militants-killed-near-tunisian-capital)

**Yemen**

**Yemen south separatists to return to national dialogue**

Yemen southern separatists agreed Sunday to return to national reconciliation talks after receiving assurances the future of their region will be discussed, the United Nations and an opposition chief said.

Representatives of the Southern Movement, an umbrella group of various factions from the former independent South Yemen, will return to the talks on Monday, UN envoy Jamal Benomar told reporters in Sanaa. He spoke following a meeting with representatives of the movement, who walked out last month demanding a Sanaa apology for past wars and that talks between Sanaa and southerners be held abroad.

**AFP -** [**http://www.france24.com/en/20130908-yemen-south-separatists-return-national-dialogue#**](http://www.france24.com/en/20130908-yemen-south-separatists-return-national-dialogue#)

**Twin roadside bombs hit air force buses in Yemen's capital**

Two roadside bombs simultaneously hit two buses belonging to Yemen's air forces near an air base in the capital Sanaa on Monday, no casualties were reported, police and witnesses said. The two bombings, less than 10 minutes apart, targeted the buses on separate ways to pick up soldiers as their daily routine. Both buses were still empty of soldiers when roadsides bombs went off, according to police officers. Police forces cordoned off both roads. Investigators at the scenes blamed al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) for the bombings as they bear the hallmarks of the terrorists.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-09/09/c\_132705024.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-09/09/c_132705024.htm)

ROSA

**Across ROSA**

**Hundreds protest deadly police shooting in Kashmir**

A protest erupted Saturday after Indian police said they killed two alleged militants and two civilians in the disputed Himalayan territory of Kashmir, while authorities maintained tight security for a classical music concert being staged amid separatist objections. Inspector General Nalin Prabhat said police were retaliating against alleged militants who had opened fire on a police camp in the area, which is about 50 kilometers (30 miles) south of Srinagar, the main city in the Indian portion of Kashmir. Police said they recovered weapons and were working to identify the militants. They said two civilians were also killed and one person was injured in the shootout.

**AP -** [**http://www.mercurynews.com/nation-world/ci\_24039453/hundreds-protest-deadly-police-shooting-kashmir#**](http://www.mercurynews.com/nation-world/ci_24039453/hundreds-protest-deadly-police-shooting-kashmir#)

**Pakistan militants prepare for war in Afghanistan**

Militants in Pakistan's most populous province are said to be training for what they expect will be an ethnic-based civil war in neighboring Afghanistan after foreign forces withdraw in 16 months, according to analysts and a senior militant. In the past two years the number of Punjab-based militants deploying to regions bordering on Afghanistan has tripled and is now in the thousands, says analyst Mansur Mehsud. He runs the FATA Institute, an Islamabad-based think tank studying the mix of militant groups that operate in Pakistan's tribal belt running along much of the 2,600-kilometer (1,600-mile) Afghan-Pakistan border. While militants from Punjab province have long sought refuge and training in the tribal regions, they were fewer in number and confined their hostility to Pakistan's neighbor and foe, India. All that is changing, say analysts.

**AP -** [**http://www.chron.com/news/world/article/Pakistan-militants-prepare-for-war-in-Afghanistan-4795070.php#**](http://www.chron.com/news/world/article/Pakistan-militants-prepare-for-war-in-Afghanistan-4795070.php#)

**Pakistan releases seven Afghan Taliban fighters**

Pakistan freed a group of Afghan Taliban on Saturday in an attempt to improve its troubled relations with its neighbour, but risked angering Afghanistan by not handing them over directly to the Kabul authorities. The announcement followed last month's trip by Afghan President Hamid Karzai to Pakistan, where he sought the handover of some Afghan insurgents as part of the stalled peace process. Both Karzai and the US want Pakistan to hand the insurgents directly to the Afghan authorities, but on Saturday, a group of seven Taliban was simply allowed to walk out of their cells into Pakistan. "In order to further facilitate the Afghan reconciliation process, Pakistan is releasing seven

Taliban detainees," the Pakistani foreign ministry said in a statement. A ministry spokesman separately said all seven, including a senior commander called Mansoor Dadullah, were freed on Saturday.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20130907063917-7xs58/?source=hptop#**](http://www.trust.org/item/20130907063917-7xs58/?source=hptop#)

**Afghanistan**

**Afghan MP freed in militant exchange**

A female Afghan parliamentarian was freed by the Taliban on Saturday in exchange for several militants, a provincial lawmaker said. The Taliban said the freed prisoners were "four innocent women and two children." Taliban militants often use kidnap victims as bargaining chips to gain the freedom of their fellow insurgents, and the Afghan government is generally unwilling to discuss details of what such negotiations involve. Fariba Ahmadi Kakar's abduction a month ago was also one of a string of attacks on prominent women in Afghanistan, where women's rights remain under attack more than a decade after the US ousted the Taliban government.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/official-afghan-mp-freed-militant-exchange-170900868.html#**](http://news.yahoo.com/official-afghan-mp-freed-militant-exchange-170900868.html#)

**NATO airstrike kills civilians: Afghan police**

Afghan officials say an apparent NATO airstrike has killed 15 people — nine of them civilians, including women and children — in an eastern province where the Taliban are strong. NATO, however, says 10 insurgents were killed. Kunar province police chief Abdul Habib Sayed Khaili says the airstrike hit a pickup truck soon after three Arab and three Afghan militants boarded it Saturday evening. He said some reports called it a drone strike. But NATO spokeswoman 1st Lt. AnnMarie Annicelli said Sunday that it was a precision airstrike that killed 10 "enemy forces" and that she had no reports of any civilian deaths. Police said some witnesses said a drone was used, but there was no official confirmation.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/official-afghan-lawmaker-freed-detainees-20188335#**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/official-afghan-lawmaker-freed-detainees-20188335#)

**Nine, including two children, killed in Afghan violence**

At least nine Afghans - seven Taliban fighters and two children - were killed in three separate incidents in the southern Afghan province of Kandahar, officials said Saturday. Six Taliban insurgents, part of a bomb-making squad, were killed while setting up a roadside bomb in the Arghistaan district of Kandahar on Saturday night, the governor's office said in a statement. Another lone Taliban member was also killed by his own roadside bomb as he planted it in neighbouring Panjwai district, the statement said. Meanwhile, a boy and a girl were killed and four women were injured by a Taliban mortar attack in the Maiwand district of Kandahar on Saturday night. The incident occurred when the Afghan security forces were conducting an operation against the Taliban insurgents.

**DPA -** [**http://www.thesundaily.my/news/823486#**](http://www.thesundaily.my/news/823486#)

**Karzai urges Afghan parents to send daughters to school**

Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai has urged Afghan parents to send their daughters to school.

Karzai made the remarks during a radio address on September 6, ahead of the beginning of the new academic year. The new school year kicks off in 13 provinces, mostly in southern and eastern parts of the country. Girls make up some 35 percent of the students in Afghan schools, but concerns over a lack of security have prompted many parents not to allow their daughters to go to school. Karzai also called on militants not to attack schools. Afghan officials say some 400 schools have been closed due to a lack of security in southern and eastern provinces, including Kandahar, Khost, and Paktika.

**RFE -** [**http://www.rferl.org/content/afghanistan-karzai-girls-school/25098260.html#**](http://www.rferl.org/content/afghanistan-karzai-girls-school/25098260.html#)

**India**

**Sectarian riots spread in North India, 28 killed**

Sectarian violence has spread into new areas of northern India despite an army-enforced curfew put in place after deadly weekend clashes broke out between Hindus and Muslims. Police say at least 28 people have been killed, with many more missing since gunfire and street battles erupted Saturday in villages around Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh state. State police inspector Ashish Gupta says rumors spread by mobile phones and social media are making it difficult to quell the violence. Shops and schools are closed Monday in Muzaffarnagar, about 125 kilometers (78 miles) north of New Delhi. Soldiers are searching homes for weapons. A state of alert has been declared for Uttar Pradesh, where the 1992 razing of a 16th century mosque by a Hindu mob in Ayodhya sparked India's worst communal clashes.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/indian-troops-halt-deadly-communal-clashes-20191294#**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/indian-troops-halt-deadly-communal-clashes-20191294#)

**31 infants die over four days in Indian hospital**

At least 31 infants have died at a state-run hospital in Kolkata, capital of the eastern Indian state of West Bengal, over the past four days, news reports said Saturday. The latest casualties took the total number of deaths at the BC Roy Post-Graduate Institute of Paediatric Sciences over the past month to more than 250, NDTV news channel reported. Angry parents have blamed the hospital authorities for mismanagement. Doctors at the hospital said most of the children who died were referred to their institute in critical state.

**VOA/DPA -** [**http://voiceofrussia.com/news/2013\_09\_07/31-infants-die-over-four-days-in-Indian-hospital-6101/#**](http://voiceofrussia.com/news/2013_09_07/31-infants-die-over-four-days-in-Indian-hospital-6101/#)

**Maldives**

**Presidential election goes to second-round vote**

The first democratically elected president of the Maldives, ousted in 2012 in what he called a coup, faces a runoff against the brother of the country's former dictator after falling short of a clear majority in the presidential election. Mohamed Nasheed, who is the candidate of the Maldivian Democratic party (MDP), received 45% of the vote on Saturday, election officials announced. He needed half of the votes cast to win outright. The veteran human rights and climate change campaigner could find it hard to secure a second-round majority if his three election opponents form an alliance for the runoff on 28 September. Nasheed won the country's first multiparty election after 30 years of autocracy in 2008. He will now have to beat Abdulla Yameen, a brother of the Maldives' former autocratic ruler Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, to retake the presidency.

**Guardian -** [**http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/08/maldives-presidential-election-second-round#**](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/08/maldives-presidential-election-second-round#)

**Pakistan**

**Blast kills two in Quetta**

A bomb blast killed at least two people and wounded six others Sunday in Pakistan's troubled southwestern city of Quetta, police said. The bomb, which was planted on a busy road, went off at around sunset when people were returning from work. "The bomb had been planted between two vehicles parked along the Sariab road. We can confirm the deaths of two people and wounds to six others as a result of this explosion," Muhammad Babar, a local police official, told AFP. Babar said police were investigating the incident and the blast site had been cordoned off.

**AFP -** [**http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/asia/2013/09/08/Blast-kills-two-in-Pakistan-s-Quetta-say-police.html#**](http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/asia/2013/09/08/Blast-kills-two-in-Pakistan-s-Quetta-say-police.html#)

**Pakistani president steps down on term completion**

Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari is stepping down at the end of his five year term, becoming the first democratically elected president in the country's history to complete his full tenure in office. His spokesman Farhatullah Babar says the presidency is holding a farewell ceremony Sunday. Zardari rose to power after assassination of his wife, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, in a gun and bomb attack in Dec. 2007. Analysts count his government's completion of a full term in a hostile political environment to his credit, as well as his strong stance against Islamic militancy. They say mismanagement of the economy and failure to tackle the country's energy crisis hurt Zardari's popularity.

**AP -** [**http://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2013/09/08/pakistani-president-steps-down-on-term-completion#**](http://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2013/09/08/pakistani-president-steps-down-on-term-completion#)

TACR

**Brazil**

**Brazil protests disrupt Independence Day celebrations**

Protesters in Brazil have disrupted Independence Day celebrations, demanding better public services and an end to corruption. In Rio de Janeiro, some 200 protesters interrupted the traditional Seventh of September military parade, shouting anti-government slogans. They clashed with police, who threw tear gas and arrested dozens of people. There were further clashes in the capital, Brasilia, where President Dilma Rousseff was giving a speech. She said there was "still a lot to be done" in Brazil and that there were "urgent problems to be addressed and the population has the right to demand changes". But she said the country had "progressed as never before in the last few years".

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-24003945#**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-24003945#)

**Chile**

**Court admits omissions during dictatorship**

Chile's Supreme Court is admitting neglect during Gen. Augusto Pinochet's 1973-1990 dictatorship that killed hundreds of people. Supreme Court President Ruben Ballesteros on Friday acknowledged "serious actions and omissions" by the court at the time. The court fell short of issuing an apology. The unprecedented statement comes days after Chile's national Association of Magistrates issued a public apology for failing to do more to prevent abuses during Pinochet's rule. President Sebastian Pinera also criticized Chile's judicial system this week for being complacent about crimes committed after Pinochet seized power in the 11 September 1973 coup that ousted Socialist President Salvador Allende.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/chile-court-admits-omissions-dictatorship-20185408#**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/chile-court-admits-omissions-dictatorship-20185408#)

**Colombia**

**FARC 'to keep weapons until referendum' - Santos**

Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos has said the Farc rebels would be allowed to keep their weapons until a peace agreement was ratified. Mr Santos said no-one could expect the rebels to give up their weapons before a peace accord had been given final approval in a referendum. He added that a ceasefire would be implemented once a deal was reached in talks under way in Cuba. Critics say a referendum should not be held until the rebels disarm. Mr Santos last month surprised the rebels when he proposed legislation demanding that any accord would have to be approved by the Colombian people in a referendum.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-23998567**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-23998567)

**Farmers reach agreement with government to end protest**

Colombia's farm leaders agreed on Saturday to end a three-week protest that had turned violent, caused food shortages and put pressure on President Juan Manuel Santos just a few months before he must decide whether to seek a second term in office. Thousands of farmers have been manning roadblocks on major highways, preventing supplies from reaching cities, and clashing with police in a national show of anger. At least five people died in the protests. The farmers are angry at the high price of fertilizers and at free-trade agreements with the United States and Europe that made it hard to compete with cheap imports.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20130907201741-u9ex2/?source=hpbreaking#**](http://www.trust.org/item/20130907201741-u9ex2/?source=hpbreaking#)

**Guatemala**

**6.5-magnitude quake strikes off coast**

A 6.5-magnitude earthquake shook Guatemala's Pacific coastline on Friday evening, causing some adobe homes to collapse in a town near the epicenter. There were no immediate reports of injuries.

The US Geological Survey said the epicenter was 6 kilometers (3 miles) south of the small town of Pajapita, near the border with Mexico, and 168 kilometers west of Guatemala City. It had a depth of 67 kilometers (41 miles). The Central American nation's natural disaster agency said that at least three uninhabited homes collapsed, and two highways were blocked by landslides. The quake was felt strongly in the capital of Guatemala City, and caused blackouts in some areas, but authorities did not immediately report any damage there. The temblor was also felt in neighboring Mexico and El Salvador, but there were no immediate reports of injuries or damage in those countries. Friday's temblor was one of the strongest in Guatemala since a 7.4-magnitude earthquake last November killed 42 people in the country's west.

**AP -** [**http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-202\_162-57601825/6.5-magnitude-quake-strikes-off-guatemalas-coast/#**](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-202_162-57601825/6.5-magnitude-quake-strikes-off-guatemalas-coast/#)

**Gunmen kill 11, wound 18 in poor Guatemala town**

A group of men in a stolen car shot 29 people on the main street of a poor indigenous town in the mountains outside Guatemala City, killing 11 in an incident that some residents blamed on corrupt police officers. Officials blamed the attack on gang violence but that was greeted with skepticism by some residents of San Jose Nacahuil. Residents expelled the national police six years ago and set up a community police force that patrols with sticks and machetes, and officials said the community had low crime rates in recent years.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/guatemala-gunmen-kill-10-wound-19-officials-20192668#**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/guatemala-gunmen-kill-10-wound-19-officials-20192668#)

WCAR

**CAR**

**UN finds burned, abandoned villages**

A UN mission to CAR found evidence of widespread human rights violations and huge numbers of people having been driven from their homes in the north of the country. Senior UN officials have said the country is on the brink of collapse, and the conflict has prompted calls for the UNSC help fund and support an AU peacekeeping force. The UN team found seven villages that had been burned to the ground and deserted and another partially burned, its residents hiding in the bush. Local people spoke of assaults, looting, and torture by armed men, UNHCR said, echoing aid organisations and residents who say there is a complete absence of state authority outside Bangui, with roaming armed groups looting and killing at will. "There has been a complete breakdown of any semblance of security for civilians in the Central African Republic," Melissa Fleming, chief UNHCR spokeswoman, told a UN briefing in Geneva on Friday. UNHCR estimates there are more than 209,000 displaced people in the country and says more than 62,000 have fled to neighbouring Chad, Cameroon and Democratic Republic of Congo since the crisis began last September.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20130906141728-1iuhf/?source=hptop#**](http://www.trust.org/item/20130906141728-1iuhf/?source=hptop#)

**DR Congo**

**M23 rebels set conditions for disbanding**

The leader of eastern Congo's M23 rebel movement said Sunday the group will disband only if another rebel group that is composed of ethnic Rwandan Hutu fighters is disarmed and Congolese refugees return home from neighboring countries. "We are ready to disarm but for these two conditions," Bertrand Bisimwa, the M23 president, told The Associated Press by phone. He said the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda, or FDLR, should be disarmed before M23 can be disbanded. In the past Rwanda has justified military intervention in Congo to protect itself from the FDLR, some of whose core members took part in the 1994 Rwanda genocide.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/congos-m23-rebels-set-conditions-disbanding-20193720#**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/congos-m23-rebels-set-conditions-disbanding-20193720#)

**Kabila opens national dialogue boycotted by opposition leader**

Congo President Joseph Kabila opened two weeks of national dialogue with opposition parties and civic groups on Saturday, but several senior figures stayed away, accusing him of trying to seek a third term in violation of the constitution. Kabila, who is legally barred from standing in the 2016 presidential election, said the talks would address the poor functioning of state institutions and the simmering violence in the east where M23 rebels launched an uprising 18 months ago. The talks, which Kabila has tried to launch since November, come as Democratic Republic of Congo's army has scored a rare success against the rebels thanks to the support of a new UN combat brigade, boosting the president's standing at home.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20130907194539-w3epx/?source=hpbreaking#**](http://www.trust.org/item/20130907194539-w3epx/?source=hpbreaking#)

**Guinea Bissau**

**UN warns of possible delay in Guinea-Bissau poll**

The United Nations special representative to Guinea-Bissau says the country's planned November presidential election may need to be delayed. According to the UN News Center, Nobel Prize winner Jose Ramos Horta, who was president of East Timor before becoming the head of the UN peace-building office in Guinea-Bissau this year, spoke after briefing the Security Council Thursday. Soldiers overthrew the government of Guinea-Bissau in April 2012, one of several coups weathered by the former Portuguese colony in West Africa. Presidential elections are scheduled for Nov. 24.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/un-warns-possible-delay-guinea-bissau-poll-133333188.html#**](http://news.yahoo.com/un-warns-possible-delay-guinea-bissau-poll-133333188.html#)

**Mali**

**US to resume development aid: State Department**

The US will resume its development aid -- but not military assistance -- in Mali, the State Department announced Friday, two days after the country's new president was inaugurated. "Following Wednesday's inauguration, Deputy Secretary of State William J. Burns signed a determination that a democratically elected government has taken office in Mali. … The US will therefore resume bilateral development assistance immediately, but will continue to assess when and how to reengage with Malian security institutions," a statement said. The US pledged to "coordinate closely with our partners in the international community and with the newly-elected Malian government to support comprehensive and effective solutions that promote development and security throughout Mali," the statement said.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/us-resume-development-aid-mali-state-department-221551581.html#**](http://news.yahoo.com/us-resume-development-aid-mali-state-department-221551581.html#)

**Mali announces first post-war government**

Mali's first post-war prime minister has appointed a cabinet featuring a number of old hands and a new ministry charged with reconciliation in the conflict-scarred west African nation, according to a government decree published on Sunday. Oumar Tatam Ly, named as head of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita's government last week, appointed 34 ministers and deputy ministers including a number of politicians who had held portfolios in previous regimes. The new administration includes just four women, of whom the most high-profile will be Finance Minister Bouare Fily Sissoko, an economist who has worked for the World Bank.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/mali-announces-first-post-war-government-181819576.html#**](http://news.yahoo.com/mali-announces-first-post-war-government-181819576.html#)

**Niger**

**Government asks for foreign help for flood victims**

Niger's government on Friday launched an appeal for "international solidarity" to help victims of recent floods that claimed more than two dozen lives and forced 75,000 people from their homes. "The floods caused the loss of 26 human lives, affected 75,347 people, 13,000 hectares (more than 32,000 acres) of destroyed crops and damage estimated at 32 billion CFA francs (48.8 million euros / $64 million)," said a statement from the office of Prime Minister Brigi Rafini. The government said it lacked the means "to meet all the needs of the victims and to reduce the impact of this catastrophe on the population" and issued "a pressing appeal for national and international solidarity". The United Nations has meanwhile warned that Niger could face a "massive invasion" by locusts, since flooded land creates ripe conditions for the hatching of larvae.

**AFP -** [**http://www.foxnews.com/world/2013/09/06/niger-asks-for-foreign-help-for-flood-victims/#**](http://www.foxnews.com/world/2013/09/06/niger-asks-for-foreign-help-for-flood-victims/#)

**Nigeria**

**50 Islamic insurgents killed in army raid**

Nigeria's military raided an Islamic insurgent camp and launched air and ground attacks over two days, killing about 50 sect members, a military official said Friday. This came as Nigerians mourned the death of nine people who died after Boko Haram staged a highway attack on Thursday at Bulabulin-Ngabura village, 50km north of Maiduguri, the birthplace of the Boko Haram insurgency. The military's newly formed 7th division, established to quell the insurgency in the northeast, participated in the raid, spokesman Lt. Col. Sagir Musa said in Maiduguri. The attack on the camp also involved a military gunship as back up, he said. Military helicopters have been seen hovering in the skies near

Maiduguri for the past two days. Musa said the counterattack took place near Bulabulin-Ngaura and in Gajiram village, where 15 people were killed by suspected Boko Haram members who raided a local market Wednesday.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/15-killed-suspected-sect-members-nigeria-20171697#**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/15-killed-suspected-sect-members-nigeria-20171697#)

**Nigeria's Boko Haram clash with vigilantes, 18 dead**

Clashes between Islamist sect Boko Haram and government-backed civilian vigilantes killed 18 people in Nigeria's northeastern state of Borno, survivors said on Monday, as President Goodluck Jonathan struggles to contain regional violence. Boko Haram, which wants to impose Islamic law in northern Nigeria, is linked to more than 160 deaths last month and is considered the biggest security threat to Africa's top oil-exporting country. The dead in Sunday's attack in Benisheik village were five Boko Haram militants and 13 members of a civilian vigilante group, according to the survivors.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/09/09/us-nigeria-bokoharam-idUSBRE9880EY20130909**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/09/09/us-nigeria-bokoharam-idUSBRE9880EY20130909)

**Senegal**

**Poverty, transport slow treatment of hungry children - UNICEF mention**

Only 15% of the Senegalese children expected to suffer from severe malnutrition by the end of the year have been treated by the government so far, because of poor screening and weak links between detection and treatment, according to UNICEF. Despite a UNICEF prediction that more than 63,000 children under the age of five are likely to suffer from severe acute malnutrition (SAM) by the end of 2013, the government has treated only 9,341 children so far this year, the latest Senegal Situation Report says. The biggest problem is the economic and social barriers that make it hard to get parents and children through the door at the health facilities, said Xavier Crespin, head of child health at

the UNICEF Senegal country office. "Many people live far from the health centres. When their cases are identified, they get a ticket for free health care, but they don’t have the means to get to the health facilities or to stay there overnight," Crespin said. "People are ashamed of not being able to feed their child so they don’t like turning up to health facilities. However, nutrition isn’t just linked to eating properly, but to disease, to hygiene, to breastfeeding," he said.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20130906173423-zxkmr/**](http://www.trust.org/item/20130906173423-zxkmr/)

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