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GENERAL

**Across Regions**

**Small disasters neglected despite big impact**

As Typhoon Haiyan dominates headlines and triggers a global humanitarian response, disaster relief experts at a workshop in Dubai today warned that small disasters risked losing out on attention. Such lower-scale events include the cyclone that hit northern Somalia’s Puntland region over the weekend, killing at least 140 people and up to 100,000 livestock. With such events, it is usually far from clear whether aid donors will get involved, which in turn can limit agencies’ desires to carry out assessments that could unrealistically raise expectations. Bangladesh, one of the world’s most vulnerable countries to natural disasters, has not declared an official emergency in around 10 years, despite experiencing major weather events, including the Haor flooding in August 2010, which displaced 10 million people, according to NGO estimates.

**IRIN-** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report/99123/small-disasters-neglected-despite-big-impact**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/99123/small-disasters-neglected-despite-big-impact)

**Faced with protests, Albania seeks rewards for destroying Syrian weapons**

Albania's government faced a growing chorus of opposition on 14 November to a US request that it take on the job of dismantling Syria's chemical weapons, despite a vow by the Albanian Prime Minister that the nation would be rewarded financially for carrying out the task. The Albanian Prime Minister, barely two months in the job, repeated that no decision had been taken, but indicated he was in favour. "Our 'Yes' would be linked only to a plan and agreement that will make it clear to everyone that Albania will come out of this with its head held high, the richer for it and cleaner than it is today," he said. Albania has been identified as a possible destination for the weapons stockpiles, which the Syrian President has pledged to get rid of as he seeks to turn the tide of international opinion in a more than two-year civil war. The request came under a Russian-American deal to destroy the weapons programme by mid-2014, averting US missile strikes threatened after an August sarin gas attack on the outskirts of Damascus that killed hundreds of people.

**Reuters-** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/14/us-albania-syria-chemicals-idUSBRE9AD0TO20131114**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/14/us-albania-syria-chemicals-idUSBRE9AD0TO20131114)

**Last-line antibiotics losing ability to kill superbugs in EU**

Europe faces a growing threat from superbugs that are resistant to a powerful, last-resort class of antibiotics known as carbapenems, the EU's disease monitoring agency said on Friday. It is the latest in a series of warnings about antibiotic resistance from healthcare authorities around the world who fear that in future simple infections may no longer respond to medical treatment. Overuse and misuse of antibiotics has fuelled a rise in drug-resistant infections and experts are particularly alarmed about bacteria that cannot be killed with carbapenems, the most powerful class of antibiotic drugs.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131115125201-dgqax/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131115125201-dgqax/?source=hpbreaking)

CEE/CIS

**Ukranie**

**Ukraine at risk of polio outbreak, says WHO**

Public distrust of vaccination is reducing the rate of immunisation against polio in Ukraine, putting the country at risk of an outbreak of the crippling disease, WHO and UN officials warned on Friday. The vaccination rate for children up to one year of age, the usual age for anti-polio immunisation, is now at a very low level of 30-50 percent and the risk of a polio outbreak from an imported virus has significantly increased, they said. The highly-infectious disease, which mainly affects children under five and can be prevented but not cured, has been eradicated in Europe and the developed world. Ukraine has not recorded any cases of polio for decades.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131115125201-tlsd5/?source=hptop**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131115125201-tlsd5/?source=hptop)

EAPR

**Cambodia**

**Man dies, toddler critical in new bird flu cases**

A 29-year-old man has died from bird flu in Cambodia and a toddler is critically ill with the virus after carrying sick and dead poultry from a market, health authorities said Thursday. The man died in early November in western Pailin province near the border with Thailand after being admitted to hospital with a fever, the World Health Organization and Cambodia's Ministry of Health said in a joint statement. In the other case a three-year-old boy remains seriously ill after carrying poultry from a market in central Kampong Speu province. Cambodia has reported 26 cases of H5N1 flu this year, as it battles its deadliest outbreak of the virus since it came to prominence in 2003.

**AFP-** [**http://au.news.yahoo.com/world/a/19835121/man-dies-toddler-critical-in-new-cambodia-bird-flu-cases/**](http://au.news.yahoo.com/world/a/19835121/man-dies-toddler-critical-in-new-cambodia-bird-flu-cases/)

**Indonesia**

**Thousands evacuated as Mount Sinabung erupts, spews ash into the air**

Indonesia's Mount Sinabung volcano has erupted again, spewing volcanic ash that reached a height of seven kilometres. Around 5,500 people are now staying in evacuation centres. Local resident Replika Sitepu is among those staying at the sites at night but returning home during the day. Sinabung had been inactive for four centuries before erupting in August 2010. Observation post official Hendra Gunawan says after a period of calm, the volcano started a series of eruptions early this month. The Centre for Vulcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation has put the volcano's status on alert level three, recommending people not to approach the volcano within a radius of three kilometres from the crater. Sinabung is one of nearly 130 active volcanoes in Indonesia, which straddles the so-called

**ABC-** [**http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-11-15/an-indonesia27s-mt-sinabung-continues-to-erupt/5094128**](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-11-15/an-indonesia27s-mt-sinabung-continues-to-erupt/5094128)

**Myanmar**

**Myanmar frees 69 political prisoners**

Myanmar on Friday said it had released dozens of detained activists as the fast-changing country hosts top-level international visitors, including from the European Union. Some 69 inmates were freed, the latest in a series of releases that have been seen internationally as a key marker of the country's emergence from military rule. "The committee for scrutinising the status of remaining political prisoners will continue working to grant amnesty to all remaining political prisoners before the end of December 2013," a statement from the president's office said. The announcement comes as Myanmar hosts a slew of international delegations.

**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hQzypdfEcTIpLLpX4Hzq4Y5wh8hA?docId=4e5ce015-f3da-482b-bb74-f70dcc3c03dc&hl=en**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hQzypdfEcTIpLLpX4Hzq4Y5wh8hA?docId=4e5ce015-f3da-482b-bb74-f70dcc3c03dc&hl=en)

**Philippines**

**UN says typhoon death toll 4,460, Govt. disputes figure**

The UN said on Friday the death toll from a super typhoon in the Philippines was at least 4,460, citing regional officials, but the national disaster council maintained a much lower figure. OCHA said the number of 4,460 was given from the regional taskforce of the Philippines' National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council on Wednesday. But NDRMMC's spokesman Reynaldo Balido insisted the official toll from the typhoon that ripped through the central Philippines on November 8 remained at 2,360. Philippine President Benigno Aquino said on Tuesday that he estimated the final death toll would be around 2,500.

**AFP-** [**http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/un-says-philippine/887446.html**](http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/un-says-philippine/887446.html)

**Philippines struggle to identify the bodies**

A week after one of the strongest typhoons ever tore through the Philippines, bodies still lie where they fell or were washed up, the defining motif of a tragedy that has killed thousands. The stench of bloated and discoloured human flesh decomposing under the tropical sun hangs everywhere in the central city of Tacloban, where wretched survivors and rescue workers cover their mouths to keep the cloying smell from their throats. Hundreds have been collected, put into body bags and trucked off to wrecked municipal buildings to await burial in mass graves, a process that city authorities began on Thursday.

**AFP-** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5ggr8ukgnEdPaOjSSOItPN8IJWw0Q?docId=6d51ea96-55c6-4fec-b5e6-6c39a0ec7a7c**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5ggr8ukgnEdPaOjSSOItPN8IJWw0Q?docId=6d51ea96-55c6-4fec-b5e6-6c39a0ec7a7c)

**Thailand**

**Red-shirts to hold three-day rally in Bangkok next week**

Thailand's pro-government Red-shirt announced to hold a three-day rally in suburban Bangkok to closely follow the Constitution Court's ruling on charter amendment. A core leader of the United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD), said the group will start from 18 November to gather its red-shirt supporters at Muang Thong Thani in Bangkok's suburb of Nonthaburi. He claimed that he was informed that the court is scheduled to deliver its verdict on a charter review seeking to alter the composition of the Senate.

**Xinhua-** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/14/c\_132888388.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/14/c_132888388.htm)

ESAR

**Angola**

**Authorities detains four for kidnap, possible murder, of two protesters**

Angolan authorities have detained four people for the suspected kidnapping and possible killing of two protest organizers who have been missing since May 2012, the prosecution service (PGR) reported. Isaias Cassule and Antonio Alves Camulingui were involved in organizing protests by former presidential guards to demand payment of wage arrears. Local and international rights groups such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have urged Angolan authorities to investigate their disappearance.

**Reuters-** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/13/us-angola-protesters-idUSBRE9AC12J20131113**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/13/us-angola-protesters-idUSBRE9AC12J20131113)

**Mozambique**

**Government confirms fresh clashes with former rebels**

Mozambique’s government confirmed skirmishes with revived rebel group Renamo this week, reiterating an invitation for their leaders to meet amid renewed conflict in the centre of the country. Presidential spokesman Edson Macuacua said soldiers had fought with Renamo militants around the Gorongosa mountains in the centre of the country, where rebel leader Afonso Dhlakama is thought to be hiding. “There have been some spontaneous attacks, but there was an efficient and effective response from security forces,” said Macuacua at a news conference in the capital Maputo. “The situation in general is calm and controlled,” he added, declining to give more details. Local media reported up to eight deaths in the clashes this week, as well as deaths in attacks on civilian vehicles on the main highway in the area.

**AFP-** [**http://www.manicapost.com/index.php?option=com\_content&view=article&id=28751:mozambique-confirms-fresh-clashes-with-**](http://www.manicapost.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=28751:mozambique-confirms-fresh-clashes-with-)

**Somalia**

**Troop surge could end al-Shabab insurgency, says AU official**

The UN approval of the troop surge in Somalia will help the AU's goal of defeating hard line Islamic group al-Shabab in East Africa, according to Erastus Mwencha, the AU's deputy chairman. He said the strengthening of AU troops (AMISOM) and support for the Somalia national army will make it possible to intensify the military campaign against the militants and expand the authority of the Somalia government. It will also facilitate the political process, which will culminate in the adoption of a federal constitution and the holding of elections. Mwencha outlined the rationale behind the AU's decision to seek the UN Security Council's approval for a troops surge in Somalia. AMISOM has succeeded in driving out al-Shabab militants from the capital, Mogadishu and some surrounding areas, but the group still controls some southern parts of the country.

**AllAfrica-** [**http://allafrica.com/stories/201311150376.html**](http://allafrica.com/stories/201311150376.html)

**Zimbabwe**

**Drug shortage crisis**

The country is experiencing a serious shortage of life-saving clinical drugs which is having an adverse effect on the health sector, according to a senior official in the Ministry of Health. Ropafadzo Hove, the national director for pharmacy services in the health ministry told journalists in Masvingo on Tuesday that the shortages have put the country’s disaster preparedness in limbo. The daily Newsday newspaper reported on Wednesday that funding for essential medicines and medical supplies is falling short of requirements as the National Pharmaceutical Company of Zimbabwe (NatPharm) was unable to meet demand. NatPharm was set up to store and distribute drugs, but cannot carry out the procurement function because of lack of funding. Government owes NatPharm $11 million and the debt has reportedly crippled most of its operations. Hove said the debt was largely for anti-retroviral treatment drugs.

**RadioAfrica-** [**http://www.swradioafrica.com/2013/11/13/drug-shortage-crisis-hits-zimbabwe/**](http://www.swradioafrica.com/2013/11/13/drug-shortage-crisis-hits-zimbabwe/)

LAC

**El Salvador**

**Gang torches El Salvador center for missing children**

Attackers set fire on Thursday to the offices of a Salvadoran non-profit group tasked with tracking down children who disappeared during the country's civil war. Officials from the Probusqueda Association for Missing Children in San Salvador said the premises were torched by three armed, masked men. "They set fire to rooms which housed the archives, court documents and administrative papers," group spokesman Felix Melendez told AFP. Melendez said, however, that most of the documents had been backed up as computer files and could be reproduced. Probusqueda is dedicated to investigating the disappearances of hundreds of children who went missing during the 1980-1992 civil war. The group, which has located 387 children who disappeared during the conflict, is trying to determine the fates of another 520. Founded in 1994, it has also taken legal action against former government and military officials accused of abducting the children of leftists opposed to the former military regime.

**AFP-** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131114/gang-torches-el-salvador-center-missing-children**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131114/gang-torches-el-salvador-center-missing-children)

**Venezuela**

**Venezuela parliament backs Maduro rule by decree bid**

Venezuela's legislature gave initial backing Thursday to a measure granting extraordinary powers over the economy to President Nicolas Maduro, following his controversial attempt to forcibly cut consumer prices. Maduro's supporters, who hold the majority in the National Assembly, approved the measure which would allow him to govern by decree, without having to seek parliamentary approval. The measure garnered 99 votes in the 165 member chamber precisely the three-fifths vote needed for approval. The leftist leader requested the special powers last month, saying he needs them to fight corruption and combat opponents who are waging "economic warfare" against his government. A second vote to give final passage to the measure has been scheduled for Tuesday.

**AFP-** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gj\_PJx34GYgDXJAy762JURFmcUcw?docId=550c9f8a-2cbb-4afc-987e-9da94be26964**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gj_PJx34GYgDXJAy762JURFmcUcw?docId=550c9f8a-2cbb-4afc-987e-9da94be26964)

MENA

**Iraq**

**Suicide bomber attacks Shi'ite pilgrims, killing 44 people**

A suicide bomber blew himself up during a Shi'ite Muslim religious ritual in the city of al-Sadiya on 14 November, killing at least 44 people and wounding 80, a senior official and security sources said. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack, which came on the day of Ashura. The bomber, who wore a police uniform, detonated an explosives belt in a crowd of pilgrims, who were mainly Shi'ite Kurds, the sources said. Most of the wounded pilgrims were taken to hospitals in Iraq's northern Kurdistan region.

**AFP -** [**http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/world/379840/iraq-bombers-kill-43-as-millions-mark-shiite-holiday**](http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/world/379840/iraq-bombers-kill-43-as-millions-mark-shiite-holiday)

**Reuters-** [**http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/11/14/uk-iraq-violence-idUKBRE9AD0EP20131114**](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/11/14/uk-iraq-violence-idUKBRE9AD0EP20131114)

**Saudi Arabia**

**Man killed as riot attacks leave trail of destruction**

A Sudanese national was killed and 17 people were injured as riots broke out again in the Manfouha neighbourhood in the Saudi capital Riyadh. Several shops and around 30 cars were damaged as Ethiopians hurled stones and attacked Saudis and foreigners on Wednesday afternoon, local reports said. The new riots followed those that occurred on Saturday and trigged by an identity check by the local police looking for foreigners who were staying illegally in the country. Two people, one Saudi and another unidentified national, were killed in the clashes. “At around 3:30 pm, a group of Saudis had an argument with illegal foreigners that deteriorated into a violent fight,” Nasser Al Qahtani, the spokesperson for the Riyadh police, said.

**Gulf News-** [**http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/saudi-arabia/saudi-riots-man-killed-as-attacks-leave-trail-of-destruction-1.1254938**](http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/saudi-arabia/saudi-riots-man-killed-as-attacks-leave-trail-of-destruction-1.1254938)

**State of Palestine**

**Children hurt in apparent revenge attack**

Five Palestinian children suffered from smoke inhalation when suspected Jewish extremists set fire to their West Bank home on 14 November in an apparent revenge attack, the family said. The attackers torched the front of the Dar Khalil home in Sinjil, a village northeast of Ramallah, and spray-painted the words "Regards from Eden, Revenge!" in Hebrew in blue on a wall outside the house. "Eden" is an apparent reference to Eden Atias, a soldier who was killed on 13 November by a 16-year-old Palestinian while sleeping on a bus in northern Israel. The Dar Khalil family had no apparent connection to the Palestinian attacker.

**AFP-** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jn0AMAxDlKlFqdJTKH1KlvisE26Q?docId=6d4f7909-01ed-44f6-be27-8ef5520e88a7&hl=en**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jn0AMAxDlKlFqdJTKH1KlvisE26Q?docId=6d4f7909-01ed-44f6-be27-8ef5520e88a7&hl=en)

**Sewage swamps Gaza streets as Egyptian tunnel closures cut off power**

Children waded through sewage submerging the streets of a central Gaza neighborhood on Thursday, a day after one of the blockaded Palestinian enclave's largest waste water treatment plants stopped for lack of fuel. Fetid muck, which bubbles up from manholes and overflows from the idle plant when waste goes untreated, could soon spill into the homes of tens of thousands more residents in downtown Gaza City, officials and residents said. Egypt's months-long crackdown on cross-border smuggling tunnels that used to bring fuel in cheaply has already forced Gaza's only power plant to stop, meaning two weeks of daily 12-hour blackouts for the territory's 1.8 million residents.

**VoA-** [**http://www.voanews.com/content/sewage-swamps-gaza-streets-as-egyptian-tunnel-closures-cut-off-power/1790309.html**](http://www.voanews.com/content/sewage-swamps-gaza-streets-as-egyptian-tunnel-closures-cut-off-power/1790309.html)

**Sudan**

**460,000 displaced in Darfur this year**

Tribal violence and rebel-government battles have displaced at least 460,000 people in Sudan's Darfur this year, the UN said on 14 November, as dozens reportedly died in the latest clashes. "According to humanitarian organisations, so far in 2013 at least 460,000 people have fled their homes in Darfur as a result of inter-tribal fighting and clashes between the SAF (Sudanese army) and armed movements," OCHA said in its weekly bulletin. "This is more than the number of people internally displaced in Darfur in 2011 and 2012 combined," OCHA said. The latest figure marks a jump from the 300,000 who UN humanitarian aid chief announced in May had been displaced during the first five months of the year.

**AFP-** [**http://news.yahoo.com/460-000-displaced-sudans-darfur-un-132313398.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/460-000-displaced-sudans-darfur-un-132313398.html)

**Dozens slain in renewed clashes in Central Darfur**

Dozens have reportedly died and dozens more wounded in fierce inter-tribal clashes between the Misseriya and Salamat within the town of Um Dukhun in Central Darfur. Um Dukhun residents reported to Radio Dabanga that Salamat tribesmen in Land Cruisers entered Um Dukhun on 14 November at about 7am and attacked Misseriya tribesmen inside the town. The clashes ended when the joint Sudanese-Chadian force stationed in the town opened fire on the warring tribesmen. According to the witnesses, the tribesmen used guns, RPGs and machine guns. Dozens of houses and shops were burned, as well as about 50 houses in the Um Dukhun camp for the displaced. Nearly 100 people were killed and dozens injured on both sides. The residents could not confirm whether there were victims among the citizens, because the majority of the Um Dukhun population have fled to neighbouring Chad, or to the valleys, hills and forests nearby. They have not yet returned to their homes.

**RadioDabanga-** [**https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/59142**](https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/59142)

ROSA

**Afghanistan**

**Fear of anger as Afghan commission finalises election list**

Afghanistan's election authorities will soon announce the final lineup of candidates for next year's presidential election, with some disqualified nominees hoping to make it back onto the list. The bulk of NATO's 75,000 troops are due to pull out of Afghanistan by the end of 2014 and a credible election - rather than a repeat of the fraud-plagued vote of 2009 - is seen as vital to stability in Afghanistan's first-ever democratic power transfer. President Hamid Karzai, who must step down after serving two terms, has called for just two or three candidates to run, to avoid the confusion of 2009, when 40 names appeared on the ballot paper. The election committee has already whittled the initial 26 candidates for the April 5 vote down to 10, but some of those already ruled out are seeking to return to the list. Some voters have voiced disillusionment that the field is dominated by former warlords, veteran politicians and establishment insiders.

**AFP-** [**http://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/fear-anger-afghan-commission-finalises-election-list**](http://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/fear-anger-afghan-commission-finalises-election-list)

**India**

**5 new dengue cases surface**

The dip in mercury level has failed to offer respite against dengue. With 12 new cases reported on Friday, the number of dengue patients in the city touched 592 mark. Describing ongoing outbreak as the worst in the last few years, doctors said that dengue cases were being reported at hospitals in the large numbers. Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi Memorial College (GSVM) microbiology department confirmed 12 dengue positive cases on Friday. Among the newly reported cases five were from Lala Lajpat Rai Hospital while the rest were from private hospitals.

**India Times-** [**http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-11-09/kanpur/43854376\_1\_dengue-cases-dengue-patients-district-epidemiologist**](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-11-09/kanpur/43854376_1_dengue-cases-dengue-patients-district-epidemiologist)

**Nepal**

**Police arrest dozens as anti-poll protests continue**

Anti-election protesters in Nepal hurled petrol bombs at passing traffic on 14 November as part of their campaign to disrupt next week's vote, while police made dozens of arrests, an official said on 14 November. Protesters threw a bomb at a truck carrying goods in Bara district in southern Nepal, injuring the driver's assistant, police spokesperson report. A passenger bus in north-eastern Kavre district meanwhile narrowly missed being hit by another petrol bomb. "We arrested 34 protesters from across the country, five of them for making home made bombs," the spokesperson said.

**AFP-** [**http://www.straitstimes.com/breaking-news/asia/story/nepal-police-arrest-dozens-anti-poll-protests-continue-20131114**](http://www.straitstimes.com/breaking-news/asia/story/nepal-police-arrest-dozens-anti-poll-protests-continue-20131114)

**Pakistan**

**Police kill six suspected militants**

Pakistani police on Thursday shot dead six suspected militants thought to be planning a major sectarian attack and seized explosives, suicide vests and weapons in a raid in Karachi, an official said. The men who police said were members of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), a banned Sunni Muslim extremist group, were allegedly planning to attack a Shiite gathering on Friday. Pakistan's minority Shiite community will mark Ashura, the holiest day in their calendar, on Friday with processions to mourn the seventh-century killing of the Prophet Mohammed's grandson Imam Hussein. Ashura processions have been targeted in the past and security has been beefed up across the country in preparation.

**AFP-**

[**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hxnCH0sHCEwe\_GI7ul5RgccS4PHg?docId=ab5a4026-383a-4b7e-b5a8-22cc25bf5186**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hxnCH0sHCEwe_GI7ul5RgccS4PHg?docId=ab5a4026-383a-4b7e-b5a8-22cc25bf5186)

**Sri Lanka**

**Army occupation angers Sri Lankan Tamils four years after war ends**

The threats came by text message, a phone call and a delivery of two cow skulls. The message was clear: stop protesting against the army's occupation of your land or you will be killed. Four years after Sri Lanka's army crushed the Tamil Tiger guerrilla army and ended a civil war that had lasted nearly three decades, Tamils say they are blatantly repressed in Jaffna, the capital of this Indian Ocean island's northern peninsula. Newspaper printing machines have been burned, former rebels say they face extortion and sexual harassment and army spies keep a close eye on political activity. It all makes ethnic Tamils feel they are still seen as enemies of the state. As a summit of Commonwealth nations opens in Sri Lanka's capital on Friday, the nation is under intense scrutiny after a chorus of warnings from the United Nations and the West that its failure to resolve old enmity means it is losing the peace.

**Reuters-** [**http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/11/14/uk-srilanka-commonwealth-tamils-idUKBRE9AD19N20131114**](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/11/14/uk-srilanka-commonwealth-tamils-idUKBRE9AD19N20131114)

**Sri Lanka rights under scrutiny as Commonwealth leaders meet**

Leaders of the Commonwealth of mostly former British colonies met in Colombo on Friday for a biennial summit that has brought with it intense scrutiny of Sri Lanka's human rights record four years after the civil war ended.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa had hoped the Nov. 15-17 meeting, which two heads of state have boycotted, would prove an advertisement for progress and economic growth in the island state of 21 million off India's southern tip. Instead, the build-up to the summit has been overshadowed by allegations of state-sponsored rape and torture, and political pressure, including from British Prime Minister David Cameron who pressed Sri Lanka on its human rights record.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131115121925-x3c9u/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131115121925-x3c9u/?source=hpbreaking)

WCAR

**Across WCAR**

**Sahel states seek to boost security against militants**

Ministers from countries across the Sahel and Maghreb agreed to create a border security training centre in a bid to confront militants-linked violence plaguing the huge desert region. Delegates hailed the proposal in the "Rabat Declaration" adopted by 19 countries at a conference in Morocco as an important step towards curbing militant unrest in the Sahara, notably in Mali and Libya. The training centre, which Morocco's Foreign Minster said could be in Rabat, would be complemented by closer intelligence cooperation and new technology at borders.

**AFP-** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131114/sahel-states-seek-boost-security-against-jihadists**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131114/sahel-states-seek-boost-security-against-jihadists)

**CAR**

**Mia Farrow says 'seeds of genocide' in country - UNICEF mention**

American actress and celebrity campaigner Mia Farrow urged the international community on Thursday to take urgent action to stem violence in the CAR. "CAR is not a forgotten crisis. The population is simply completely abandoned," said Farrow, who is a goodwill ambassador for **UNICEF**. Farrow, recently back from a visit to the conflict-ravaged nation, told reporters the "seeds of genocide" had been sown there and the world had a moral duty to take a stand.

**AFP-** [**http://www.news.com.au/world/central-african-republic-is-on-the-verge-of-genocide-warns-mia-farrow-after-unicef-visit/story-fndir2ev-1226760276862**](http://www.news.com.au/world/central-african-republic-is-on-the-verge-of-genocide-warns-mia-farrow-after-unicef-visit/story-fndir2ev-1226760276862)

**Gambia**

**Gambia says to cut diplomatic ties with Taiwan**

Gambia's government will cut diplomatic ties with Taiwan with immediate effect, a statement from the Gambian President's office said on 14 November. The country was one of a few African countries, along with Burkina Faso and Swaziland, to recognise self-ruled Taiwan.

**Reuters-** [**http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/335541/news/world/gambia-cuts-diplomatic-ties-with-taiwan**](http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/335541/news/world/gambia-cuts-diplomatic-ties-with-taiwan)

**Guinea**

**Guineans holds march for slain RFI journalists**

Around 50 Guinean journalists marched in memory of two French radio journalists who were slain in northern Mali earlier this month. Ghislaine Dupont, 57, a senior correspondent for Radio France Internationale, and sound technician Claude Verlon, 55, were grabbed outside the home of a Tuareg leader they had just interviewed in the town of Kidal on Nov. 4. Their bullet-riddled bodies were found a dozen kilometers outside the city. Authorities confirmed the kidnapper was a subcontractor for al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb. The two were veterans of Africa. In Guinea's capital, Dupont was remembered for her reporting on an army mutiny. Their colleagues walked from a roundabout to the French embassy. The House of the Press, which houses the journalist's union, plans to name a room after them.

**AP-** [**http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c\_id=2&objectid=11157457**](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=11157457)

**Mali**

**Rebel backers sack buildings in Kidal**

Malian rebels laid waste to public buildings in the northeastern town of Kidal on 14 November, in protest at a decision by separatist leaders to leave occupied state premises, residents said. The protesters included dozens of women and youths who had been holding a sit-in outside the governor's offices and the local TV and radio offices of state-owned ORTM, which the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) had occupied for about nine months. Young people set fire to part of the governor's offices and sacked the public treasury and a nearby state education facility, according to witnesses. "I can see a governorate wall that has been torn down and I also saw the treasury go up in flames," one civil servant reported. There were no immediate reports of casualties. The MNLA had on 9 November pledged to "leave the governor's offices and the radio on 14 November, in line with the terms of the framework accord signed under the aegis of the international community" in June, the movement said in a statement.

**AFP-** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/105746-tuareg-rebel-backers-sack-buildings-in-north-mali-town**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/105746-tuareg-rebel-backers-sack-buildings-in-north-mali-town)

**Easing UXO dangers - UNICEF mention**

Explosives experts are clearing Malian villages of weapons left over from the recent conflict. The weapons and explosive devices have killed or injured around 100 civilians - half of them children - so far this year in the country's central and northern regions, areas seized by Islamist rebels in 2012 and later targeted by international forces. Earlier this month, a child was killed in Konna area, in central Mali, while he was handling unexploded ordnance (UXO). Four other civilians were killed when their vehicle hit an improvised explosive device (IED) in the northern Kidal region, according to UNMAS. Experts have surveyed 257 villages in Mopti, Segou, Timbuktu and Gao regions. Forty of the villages have been found to be contaminated with remnant weapons. More than 400 UXO and some 6,500 pieces of small arms ammunition have been cleared in those regions, reported a programme officer with UNMAS. The risk education, which is spearheaded by **UNICEF**, includes information about how to identify UXO, common types of abandoned weapons and munitions, warnings not to tamper with the objects, and instructions to report to authorities whenever residents stumble upon the weapons, Darrieux explained.

**IRIN-** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportID=99119**](http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportID=99119)

**Senegal**

**Senegal to air trial of ex-Chadian leader live**

Senegal's justice minister says the upcoming trial of former Chadian President Hissene Habre will be aired live on television and radio. The announcement was made Wednesday by Justice Minister Sidiki Kaba while his Chadian counterpart was visiting the Senegalese capital. Habre, who has lived in exile in Senegal for more than two decades, is facing trial on charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity and torture during his rule in Chad. In May 1992, a Chadian truth commission reported that Habre's government was responsible for an estimated 40,000 deaths. Defense lawyers have dismissed the special tribunal that will try Habre in Senegal as a political tool of his enemies.

**AP-** [**http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c\_id=2&objectid=11157517**](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=11157517)

**5 women charged under Senegal's anti-gay law**

A prosecutor in Senegal says five women have been charged under the country's anti-gay law that imposes prison sentences of up to five years for homosexual acts. Mamadou Thiam confirmed the charges late Wednesday, two days after the women were arrested during a birthday party at a restaurant in Dakar's Yoff district. Senegalese President Macky Sall has said the country is "not ready" to decriminalize homosexual acts. The women's rights group Women's Smile says the latest arrests highlight a hostile environment for lesbians, who it says are being targeted more frequently by police. The suspects include an assistant director of Women's Smile, the only group in Senegal to advocate for lesbians' rights. Ndeye Kebe, the group's president, said Thursday the women had not yet found a lawyer.

**AP-** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/women-charged-senegals-anti-gay-law-20885489**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/women-charged-senegals-anti-gay-law-20885489)

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