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GENERAL

**Across Regions**

**World must focus on younger girls to eradicate teen pregnancy**

Governments and the international community need to rethink their efforts to tackle teenage pregnancy and improve their response to the specific needs of girls under 15, the most neglected and most at risk group, according to a report released on Wednesday. In this year’s State of the World Population report, UNFPA said some 20,000 girls under the age of 18 give birth every day in developing countries, nine out of 10 in a marriage or union. "It is the human right of a girl not to become pregnant as a child," Dr. Laura Laski, head of sexual and reproductive health at UNFPA said. Teenage pregnancy perpetuates poverty and can put the health and life of teenage girls at risk, Laski said. Every year, 7.3 million adolescent girls give birth in developing countries, 2 million of them under the age of 15, according to UNFPA. The number of pregnancies is even higher and about 70,000 adolescents die every year in the developing world of childbirth-related causes - about 200 a day.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131029173718-otz6c/**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131029173718-otz6c/)

**UN News Centre -** [**http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46373&Cr=pregnan&Cr1**](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46373&Cr=pregnan&Cr1)**=**

**Over 5,000 people flee DRC fighting to Uganda**

Over 5,000 refugees fleeing fighting in eastern DRC have escaped into Uganda this week, UNHCR officials reported on Wednesday, warning that double that number are expected to cross the border. "Fighting…is causing a large amount of displacement into Uganda," said a spokesperson for UNHCR, adding that 5,000 refugees had crossed the border since Monday. "We are predicting up to 10,000 people would have crossed by tomorrow, because the fighting seems to be going on very close to the border… People are continuing to cross even as we speak." The number of refugees will "put some strain on our resources," she added, but said that preparations had been made for up to 150,000. "The way it is going, we can imagine they will be staying for some amount of time," she added.

**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gY7JKXAwLfmyncR2hypZ8PZ-JRyQ?docId=8afefa62-8304-43ed-8631-243ec679e46f&hl=en**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gY7JKXAwLfmyncR2hypZ8PZ-JRyQ?docId=8afefa62-8304-43ed-8631-243ec679e46f&hl=en)

**Sudan/South Sudan**

**Over 99% of Abyei's Dinka vote to join South Sudan**

Residents of contested region Abyei chose overwhelmingly to join South Sudan in an unofficial referendum, election officials said Thursday, amid warnings the poll could inflame tensions in the volatile region. Only one of the two ethnic groups living in the area voted in the poll, which is not recognised by either Khartoum or Juba and which the AU has warned is a "threat to peace." "The referendum committee has announced the results, and the number of people who have chosen to become part of South Sudan is 99.9% of the vote," Luka Biong, spokesman for the Abyei Referendum High Committee, told AFP. AU chief Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma has said the vote was illegal and its organisers risk sparking a return to war between civil war foes in Juba and Khartoum.

**AFP -** [**http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/africa/2013/10/31/Over-99-of-Abyei-s-Dinka-vote-to-join-South-Sudan-.html**](http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/africa/2013/10/31/Over-99-of-Abyei-s-Dinka-vote-to-join-South-Sudan-.html)

**Abyei welcomes UN-backed referendum in disputed region**

Abyei officials welcomed a push by the AU to involve the UNSC in helping plan a referendum to resolve a dispute in the remote border region. The AU last year promised Abyei a plebiscite in October 2013 but shied away from the proposal, and has since discouraged the unilateral referendum that ended on Tuesday, with some analysts saying the outcome could trigger violence. An expected unanimous vote by Dinka Ngok people from South Sudan could antagonise heavily armed, pro-Sudan Misseriya nomads who drive their livestock

**Reuters** - [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131030075116-3qzn6/?source=hptop**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131030075116-3qzn6/?source=hptop)

**Misseriya tribe announces counter-vote in Abyei**

The Misseriya tribe has announced on Tuesday it will hold a counter-referendum in November to determine the fate of Abyei area. The announcement came as the Ngok Dinka community in Abyei start counting votes for a referendum they conducted this week. The Chairperson of the Misseirya’s Youth Association to Support Abyei, Mahmoud Abdulkarim, said in a press conference in Khartoum that the planned vote will be held north of Bahr Al-arab (river Kiir). According to Abdulkarim, the referendum will be observed by local and international observers. They called on the Dinka Ngok tribe to take part in the vote.

**Miraya -** [**http://www.radiomiraya.org/news-202/south-sudan/12352-misseriya-announces-counter-vote-in-abyei.html**](http://www.radiomiraya.org/news-202/south-sudan/12352-misseriya-announces-counter-vote-in-abyei.html#gsc.tab=0)

CEE/CIS

**Russia/North Caucasus**

**Two killed in blasts in Dagestan**

Two people were killed and at least 15 wounded Wednesday when two explosive devices went off in shops in Russia's troubled Caucasus region of Dagestan, officials said Wednesday. The national anti-terror committee said the attacks occurred on a busy street in the center of the Dagestan capital Makhachkala. The assailants managed to flee the scene, it said.

**AFP** - [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/103890-two-killed-in-blasts-in-russia-s-dagestan**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/103890-two-killed-in-blasts-in-russia-s-dagestan)

EAPR

**China**

**State media calls for strong action after Tiananmen attack**

Chinese state media demanded severe punishment on Thursday for those behind what China has said is a holy war aimed at Beijing, which it has blamed on Islamist militants from the restive Xinjiang region. The exiled leader of Xinjiang's Muslim Uighur minority called for an independent probe into a crash on Monday when an SUV burst into flames after being driven into a crowd in Tiananmen Square, one of China's most closely guarded areas. The three occupants of the vehicle and two bystanders were killed, and dozens were injured. US-based Rebiya Kadeer said she did not believe any kind of organised extremist Islamic movement was operating in Xinjiang, a view shared by rights groups and some experts. "It is almost impossible for Uighurs to organise because of China's stringent controls and attacks," she said. But police said Monday's incident was a carefully planned and organised "terrorist attack" carried out by people from Xinjiang.

**Reuters** - [**http://in.reuters.com/article/2013/10/31/china-tiananmen-idINDEE99U01R20131031**](http://in.reuters.com/article/2013/10/31/china-tiananmen-idINDEE99U01R20131031)

**Indonesia**

**Country hit with mass protests over wage hike demands**

Tens of thousands of workers went on strike across Indonesia on Thursday, in the latest industrial action to hit South-east Asia's top economy as its citizens seek a greater share of the spoils from stellar growth. Unions are calling for hefty pay hikes as the cost of living skyrockets due to surging inflation, which has been driven up in recent months due to an unpopular fuel price hike. Union leaders said that 1.5 million people took part in the strike on the main island of Java alone. Their figures are usually higher than those given by the police, which said early reports indicated 60,000 had taken part in the capital and surrounding districts.

**AFP -** [**http://www.straitstimes.com/breaking-news/se-asia/story/indonesia-hit-mass-protests-over-wage-hike-demands-20131031**](http://www.straitstimes.com/breaking-news/se-asia/story/indonesia-hit-mass-protests-over-wage-hike-demands-20131031)

**Myanmar**

**Ethnic groups begin unity conference**

Representatives from 17 Burmese ethnic groups kicked off a three-day conference in the northern town of Laiza to discuss ways to work together and engage the government in ceasefire talks. Speakers stressed the need for unity on Wednesday at the headquarters of the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO), the political arm of the main Kachin ethnic rebel group. The delegates will also be discussing strategies for changes to the national constitution that would give more autonomy to each state. Although the government was not invited to the conference, Burmese President Thein Sein sent a message wishing a good outcome for the peace process. The Wa ethnic group, which is among the most powerful of Myanmar's ethnic minorities, declined an invitation to attend.

**VoA -** [**http://www.voanews.com/content/burma-ethnic-groups-unity-conference-laiza/1780314.html**](http://www.voanews.com/content/burma-ethnic-groups-unity-conference-laiza/1780314.html)

**Philippines**

**Typhoon Krosa hits north**

Typhoon Krosa hit the northern end of the main Philippine island of Luzon on Thursday forcing around 60 families to flee, a civil defence official said. The typhoon, packing maximum winds of 160km per hour, struck the coastal province of Cagayan, about 430km north of Manila on Thursday afternoon, the government weather station said. The families who were moved were evacuated as a precautionary measure, said the area's civil defence director, Norma Talosig. "The strength of the storm is enough to destroy houses made of light materials. For people who do not take precautions, it can be deadly," she warned. There were no immediate reports of death or damage, she said.

**AFP -** [**http://www.straitstimes.com/breaking-news/se-asia/story/typhoon-krosa-hits-northern-philippines-20131031**](http://www.straitstimes.com/breaking-news/se-asia/story/typhoon-krosa-hits-northern-philippines-20131031)

**Thailand**

**Country braces for protests over amnesty bill**

Thailand braced for mass protests Thursday as parliament debated a political amnesty that opponents fear will "whitewash" the past killing of unarmed demonstrators and allow ousted premier Thaksin Shinawatra to return. Critics of the controversial legislation warn that it could unleash a fresh bout of political turmoil in a country rocked by a series of rival demonstrations since royalist generals ousted Thaksin in 2006. The opposition Democrat Party has called for a mass rally against the planned amnesty at a railway station in Bangkok on Thursday evening, predicting that thousands will attend. The ruling Puea Thai Party of Pm Yingluck Shinawatra -- Thaksin's sister -- has ordered all its lawmakers to support the bill, which would cover crimes related to political unrest since 2004. A vote is expected in the coming days, although the opposition is demanding a delay.

**AFP** - [**http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/thailand-braces-for/869334.html**](http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/thailand-braces-for/869334.html)

ESAR

**Kenya**

**Crackdown on militants troubles Muslims**

A Kenyan police crackdown on Islamists is fuelling Muslim resentment and moderate preachers say it undermines their efforts to counter recruiting by al Qaeda militants with links across the border in Somalia. Police say their tough approach, taken before Westgate but stepped up since, has limited the flow of would-be jihadists in and out of Somalia, citing a drop in the number of suspected militants they have tracked and arrested in the past year. But Islamists, former militant sympathisers, independent security experts and diplomats, some of whom acknowledge short-term benefits from the police actions, say sweeping detentions and perceptions police are carrying out extra-judicial killings have fuelled Muslim resentment in the mostly Christian nation. Police deny accusations of running anti-Muslim hit squads.

**Reuters** - [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131030184951-vfyov**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131030184951-vfyov)

**Mozambique**

**Boy's murder by kidnappers causes anger**

Mozambicans have been outraged at the government's failure to end kidnappings for ransom after a child was murdered by his abductors. A rights group has called for the interior minister to resign after about 10 abductions in the past eight days. Six people, including a presidential guard, were sentenced to 16 years in prison on Monday for their involvement in abductions. Most kidnappings have taken place in Maputo, but the port city of Beira in central Mozambique and Nampula in the north have also been affected. The 13-year-old boy, named as Abdul Rashid, was found dead on Monday in the town of Dondo, about 30km from Beira.

**BBC** - [**http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-24746833**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-24746833)

**Renamo says leader "hunted," government cracks down**

Mozambique's Renamo opposition party reported on Wednesday that the army was trying to hunt down and kill its leader after Mozambican President Guebuza said the former rebel group was threatening national sovereignty with renewed attacks. "(Renamo) President Dhlakama is being hunted down with weapons. The intention is to kill him," a Renamo spokesperson reported. Dhlakama was nevertheless alive and well in a secret location, he said. The Renamo spokesperson said Dhlakama, who has not been seen in public since the army's capture of his Sathunjira base last week, was still willing to hold talks with Mozambican President Guebuza, but only if the president called off the military offensive. The presidency said Guebuza was also willing to meet the Renamo leader but the army would continue to defend the nation's "independence, sovereignty and integrity." Government troops have also been moving against Renamo partisans in Nampula province. Suspected Renamo guerrillas ambushed a truck carrying goods and passengers on Wednesday at Caramaja in Nampula province, killing two people, a provincial police spokesperson reported. In central Sofala province, armed men also suspected to be from Renamo attacked military escort vehicles, wounding five people, local media reported.

**Reuters** - [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131030151626-f1a9u**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131030151626-f1a9u)

**Somalia**

**UN says more troops needed to fight al-Shabaab**

The UN has said the war against al-Shabaab in Somalia has "ground to a halt" and needs a surge of almost 4,400 more AU troops to succeed. The deputy secretary-general, Jan Eliasson, told the UNSC on Wednesday that an AU contingent in Somalia needed boosting by 2,550 combat troops and 1,845 ground-support troops for the next 18 to 24 months. Eliasson told the council that the current UN-endorsed AU force and the Somali military lacked "the capacity to push beyond areas already recovered" from al-Qaida linked group. Without increased support, our present - and indeed past - investment in peace, and that of millions of Somalis, may be lost," he told the council.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/10/un-says-more-troops-needed-fight-al-shabab-2013103020367483979.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/10/un-says-more-troops-needed-fight-al-shabab-2013103020367483979.html)

**UN News Centre** - [**http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46376&Cr=somalia&Cr1**](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46376&Cr=somalia&Cr1)**=**

**South Sudan**

**No polio – officials**

South Sudan and WHO officials have reassured locals and the international community that South Sudan is polio-free, after they found that three reported cases of the crippling disease were misdiagnoses. "We were given a false alarm last month when an error occurred in a reference lab in Nairobi, due to a human error," South Sudanese Health Minister Riek Gai Kok said after he was notified late last week by WHO that two patients in Northern Bahr el Ghazal and one in Eastern Equatoria who were diagnosed with the disease, did not actually have it. Gai said the mistaken diagnoses in South Sudan were discovered after the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) took the unusual step of doing a second round of tests on the South Sudan samples, seeking to confirm the outbreak. WHO officials confirmed that the original diagnoses were flawed. Gai says there are still concerns that an ongoing polio outbreak in Somalia could enter South Sudan.

**VoA -** [**http://www.voanews.com/content/south-sudan-polio-world-health-organization/1780469.html**](http://www.voanews.com/content/south-sudan-polio-world-health-organization/1780469.html)

**Zimbabwe**

**Court scraps controversial Mugabe insult law**

Zimbabwe's highest court has scrapped a law against insulting the president that has been used to arrest opponents and critics of veteran leader Robert Mugabe, a court official said on Thursday. In the last decade dozens of dissidents have been arrested on charges of insulting the 89-year-old ruler. However, the Constitutional Court ruled on Wednesday that the offence of undermining the authority of the President and "communicating falsehoods" ran counter to the freedom of expression enshrined in a constitution introduced in March, a court official said. The Minister of Justice has until 20 November to appeal the ruling, the official added. There was no immediate comment from the Justice Department.

**Reuters** - [**http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/10/31/uk-zimbabwe-mugabe-idUKBRE99U09S20131031**](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/10/31/uk-zimbabwe-mugabe-idUKBRE99U09S20131031)

LAC

**Mexico**

**5,000 evacuate after gasoline pipeline leak**

A geyser of gasoline spewed into the sky from a state-owned pipeline in western Mexico, forcing officials to evacuate about 5,000 people Wednesday. Authorities blamed the accident on fuel thieves tapping into the pipe. Gasoline plumed above a field close to a housing development in Tlajomulco, a town near Guadalajara, which is Mexico's second-largest city and the capital of Jalisco state. The fuel did not catch fire, and crews were able to shut down the flow of gasoline in the pipeline, which was leaking about 150 yards (meters) from some homes. There were no reports of injuries.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/mexico-evacuates-4500-gasoline-pipeline-leak-20726923**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/mexico-evacuates-4500-gasoline-pipeline-leak-20726923)

**Paraguay**

**Red Cross launches emergency appeal in response to drought**

More than 50,000 people living in the Paraguayan Chaco are currently facing one of the most severe droughts in years. The population’s access to safe water is scarce, and the critical levels the drought has reached is endangering the livelihoods of these communities, who are mostly dependant on subsistence agriculture as well as labour related to livestock and soy, sorghum and cotton farming. "In the specific case of this drought, a great number of the affected communities are currently facing the consequences of a frost that hit the region in July and August, which also proved disastrous to their livelihoods. These same communities were undergoing recovery from the floods that hit the region last year," explained IFRC's Felipe del Cid, highlighting that the impact of the consecutive emergencies has left families in a specially vulnerable situation.

**ICRC** - [**http://www.ifrc.org/en/news-and-media/press-releases/americas/paraguay/red-cross-launches-emergency-appeal-in-response-to--drought-in-the-paraguayan-chaco/**](http://www.ifrc.org/en/news-and-media/press-releases/americas/paraguay/red-cross-launches-emergency-appeal-in-response-to--drought-in-the-paraguayan-chaco/)

MENA

**Across MENA**

**Syrian refugees face hardships in Jordan's cities - UNICEF mention**

The loss of education is a problem for the more than 2.1 million Syrians who have fled their country since the outbreak of the conflict in 2011. Seven of 10 refugee children in Jordan, Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon, and Egypt are not in school, the UNHCR said. In Jordan, more than 86,000 out of 200,000 refugee children are enrolled in schools, said Michele Servadei of UNICEF. Of those not enrolled, 50,000 have been out of school too long to return to classes and need remedial classes or vocational training. The UN has set up three schools in Jordan's Zaatari refugee camp. In the cities, more than 40 schools have set up double shifts and dozens more are to follow, Servadei said. He estimated that about 30,000 refugee children work in Jordan, roughly on par with the level of Jordanian child labor. A survey in agricultural areas in the Jordan Valley indicated more than half of 3,500 refugee children who did not enroll in school were working, he said.

**AP** - [**http://news.yahoo.com/syrian-refugees-face-hardships-jordans-cities-183337546.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/syrian-refugees-face-hardships-jordans-cities-183337546.html)

**Jordan’s restrictions on refugees from Syria reveal strain on host countries**

International support is needed to help Jordan end border restrictions on refugees fleeing the armed conflict in Syria, said Amnesty International. According to a new report published today hundreds fleeing to Jordan and other neighbouring countries are being turned back at borders. The report, Growing restrictions, tough conditions: The plight of those fleeing Syria to Jordan, highlights the increasing difficulties faced by people who are trying to escape the conflict in Syria to Jordan, as well as other countries. ٍScores have also been forcibly deported back to Syria. In many cases those allowed to stay struggle to access basic services. "It is unacceptable that scores of people from Syria, including families with small children seeking refuge from the fighting, are being denied admission by neighbouring countries," said Philip Luther, Amnesty International’s Director of the Middle East and North Africa.

**Amnesty International -** [**http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/jordan-s-restrictions-refugees-syria-reveal-strain-host-countries-2013-10-31**](http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/jordan-s-restrictions-refugees-syria-reveal-strain-host-countries-2013-10-31)

**Report -** [**http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE16/003/2013/en/c29bdf87-a4e5-40ff-b65b-df88005298b5/mde160032013en.pdf**](http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE16/003/2013/en/c29bdf87-a4e5-40ff-b65b-df88005298b5/mde160032013en.pdf)

**Morocco withdraws ambassador from Algeria**

Morocco is recalling its ambassador to Algiers for consultations over remarks made by the Algerian president over the disputed Western Sahara region. A Foreign Ministry statement Wednesday said the decision followed "numerous provocative acts and hostilities by Algeria toward the kingdom, particular with regard to the regional dispute over the Moroccan Sahara." Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika called on Monday for human rights monitoring in the Western Sahara. Afterward, in statements in the official press, Morocco accused Algeria of exploiting human rights issues to further its own interests in the region. The regional rivals are on the opposite sides of the Western Sahara issue, with Algeria hosting the Polisario movement that is fighting for the territory's independence.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/morocco-withdraws-ambassador-algeria-20733616**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/morocco-withdraws-ambassador-algeria-20733616)

**Iraq**

**US aid needed to battle al-Qaida**

A resurgence of al-Qaida in Iraq is prompting Baghdad to ask the US for more weapons, training and manpower, two years after pushing American troops out of the country. Iraqi PM Nouri al-Maliki is expected to discuss the request for US aid with President Barack Obama on Friday. Baghdad is hoping the meeting will mark a fresh start in a complicated relationship. The Iraqi ambassador to the US Lukman Faily, said that Iraqi officials know they have major challenges in bringing their own capabilities up to standard. He says Iraq needs to gear up to deal with the terrorist threat more seriously, and needs help.

**AP** - [**http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory/iraq-seeking-us-aid-pushes-troops-20732236**](http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory/iraq-seeking-us-aid-pushes-troops-20732236)

**Lebanon**

**Army seizes van carrying arms from Syria**

Army Intelligence seized Wednesday a van transporting weapons from Syria into Lebanon and arrested three people traveling in the vehicle, security sources said. The van was halted at an Army checkpoint at the Hermel Bridge in east Lebanon as it traveled from Syria through the Bekaa, the sources said. The souces provided no further information on those arrested. A number of grenades as well as light and medium weapons were found in the van, the sources said.

**Daily Star -** [**http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2013/Oct-30/236308-army-seizes-van-carrying-arms-from-syria.ashx**](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2013/Oct-30/236308-army-seizes-van-carrying-arms-from-syria.ashx#axzz2jHiAGmzr)

**Libya**

**Authorities rescue 84 emigrants off Tripoli coast**

Libya's navy has rescued 84 African emigrants from a boat that was foundering off its coast, state news agency Lana said, after hundreds drowned this month trying to reach Europe. Navy boats and special forces picked up the Africans, who were from a number of different countries, north of the capital Tripoli late on Tuesday, Lana said late on Wednesday. They were brought to the port of Zawiya for processing by the country's department for illegal emigrants.

**Reuters** - [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131031075757-6k9kh/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131031075757-6k9kh/?source=hpbreaking)

**State of Palestine**

**UN chief deplores plans for further Israeli settlements**

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has deplored the announcements on Wednesday of further Israeli settlement plans in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, pointing out that settlement activity is contrary to international law and constitutes an obstacle to peace. "Any measures that prejudge final status issues will not be recognised by the international community," a statement issued by Mr. Ban’s spokesperson added. Israel reportedly made the announcement hours after freeing 26 Palestinian prisoners. Mr. Ban understands that Israel took "a difficult step" in continuing to release Palestinian prisoners in the face of deep domestic opposition, and appreciates this gesture, said the statement.

**UN News Centre** - [**http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46378&Cr=palestin&Cr1**](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46378&Cr=palestin&Cr1)**=**

**Palestinians: Israel raid in West Bank kills 1**

Palestinian police say clashes during an Israeli military raid in the West Bank killed one Palestinian man while four suspects from the Islamic Jihad militant group were arrested. The police say the fighting broke out after Israeli troops entered Qabatiya in northern West Bank on Thursday. They say a Palestinian rock-thrower was killed. The Israeli military says troops were confronted with dozens of rock-throwing Palestinians in Qabatiya and responded with riot control munitions. It says it's investigating the incident. Separately, the Islamic militant group Hamas says Israel arrested four of its senior members in Ramallah.

**AP** - [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/israel-plans-1500-settlement-homes-20730346**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/israel-plans-1500-settlement-homes-20730346)

**Sudan**

**Conditions for newly displaced in South Darfur’s Kalma camp 'catastrophic'**

New arrivals at Kalma camp for the displaced in South Darfur are reportedly living in dire conditions, complaining about a shortage of food, and a lack of health care and educational facilities. Sheikh Juma Bakhit Hamid, said there are 10,111 newly displaced people at Kalma camp’s Centre 8. He appealed via Radio Dabanga to the international community to intervene as soon as possible in order to solve the current "catastrophic situation" before "it will be too difficult to overcome." Hamid noted that he and his colleagues had been invited for a meeting with OCHA and other organisations working in Darfur, together with heads of the camp centres, youth and women. On Tuesday, however, they were notified that the organisations would deal with the newly displaced only after their budgets could be ensured, with the warning that the budgets may not be sufficient.

**Radio Dabanga** - [**https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/58019**](https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/58019)

**Syria**

**OPCW: Syria destroys chemical arms equipment**

Syria has completed destruction of critical equipment for producing chemical weapons and filling munitions with poison gas, the global chemical weapons watchdog said Thursday. The announcement by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons came one day ahead of the 1 November deadline set by the organization for Damascus to destroy or "render inoperable" all chemical weapon production facilities and machinery for mixing chemicals into poison gas and filling munitions. Destruction of the equipment means that Syria can no longer produce new chemical weapons. However, Damascus still has to start destroying existing weapons and stockpiles. The country is believed to have around 1,000 metric tons of chemicals and weapons including mustard gas and the nerve agent sarin. The OPCW said its team is "now satisfied that it has verified -- and seen destroyed -- all of Syria's declared critical production and mixing/filling equipment." It added that, "no further inspection activities are currently planned."

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/official-syria-destroys-chemical-arms-equipment-20737046**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/official-syria-destroys-chemical-arms-equipment-20737046)

**Yemen**

**'Qaeda' gunmen kill 3 in attack: official**

Suspected Al-Qaeda gunmen shot dead on Thursday two soldiers and a civilian in an attack on an army checkpoint in the southern province of Abyan, a local official said. The assailants opened fire at a checkpoint in the Ahwar area, and sped away in their car," said the official, adding that the attack left also three people wounded. "The attackers who are suspected of belonging to Al-Qaeda, managed to escape," the official said. The soldiers belonged to the 111th Brigade, whose command in Ahwar came under attack earlier this month with a car bomb that killed six soldiers and wounded 17 others. In other unrest, armed men attacked an office for intelligence services in Khor Maksar, in the port city of Aden, wounding a policeman and a passer-by, a security source said. Guards retaliated with gunfire but the assailants managed to escape, said the same source.

**AFP -** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/103953-qaida-gunmen-kill-3-in-yemen-attack**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/103953-qaida-gunmen-kill-3-in-yemen-attack)

**20 killed, 100 wounded in sectarian conflicts in north**

Conflicts between Shiite Houthi rebels and Sunnis in Yemen's northern regions erupted on Wednesday, leaving 20 people killed and more than 100 wounded, a security source said. Conflicts erupted in the Salafi-controlled northern town of Dammaj after Houthi rebels launched attacks against the Salafis in the town on Wednesday morning, the source said. "A mosque was hit by a rocket fired by the Houthi rebels while people were praying," he said, adding that "the shelling last till the evening which killed 20 people and injured more than 100." Dammaj town lies near Saada province which borders Saudi Arabia. Saada is the stronghold of the Shiite rebels, who have been in control of most part of the province since they signed a cease-fire deal with the Yemeni government in August 2010 that ended an on-and-off war since 2004. The source said the Houthis sieged Dammaj for several weeks, demanding the departure of local residents.

**Xinhua -** [**http://www.china.org.cn/world/Off\_the\_Wire/2013-10/31/content\_30453215.htm**](http://www.china.org.cn/world/Off_the_Wire/2013-10/31/content_30453215.htm)

ROSA

**India**

**Three killed in fresh violence in Muzaffarnagar**

Three people have been killed in fresh violence in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, which was hit by religious riots last month. While some reports described the violence as a religious clash, police said that it was sparked off by a dispute between two families. More than 60 people died in the Hindu-Muslim clashes which erupted on 7 September in the town of Muzaffarnagar. The riots were described as the worst in India in a decade. Thousands of people fled their homes in the violence which was sparked by the killing of three men who had objected to the harassment of a young woman. In the latest incident on Wednesday evening, three Muslim men were beaten to death while another was injured in clashes between local Muslim and Hindu communities at Muhammadpurraisingh village, senior local official Kaushal Raj told Press Trust of India news agency.

**BBC** - [**http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-24753494**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-24753494)

**Maldives**

**Supreme Court undermining democratic process - UN rights chief**

The repeated interventions of the Supreme Court in the presidential election process in the Maldives are undermining the country’s democracy, the UN human rights chief said Wednesday, calling on reforms to the judiciary to safeguard the rule of law. The Supreme Court nullified the first round of the election held on 7 September on the basis of irregularities in the process, despite conclusions by national and international observers that the election was free and fair. The Court also imposed on the Elections Commission a set of guidelines for the conduct of the election which are difficult to satisfy. It was on this basis that police prevented the Elections Commission from carrying out its plan to re-run the election on 19 October.

**UN News Centre** - [**http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46375&Cr=maldives&Cr1**](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46375&Cr=maldives&Cr1)**=**

**Nepal**

**Tensions mount as contentious election nears**

Protests and logistical challenges are heightening tensions before a scheduled 19 November national poll in Nepal that is seen as critical to the country’s stability and development, say analysts. Voters are to choose a new Constituent Assembly, which serves as the country’s parliament. The last assembly dissolved in May 2012 after failing to produce a much-anticipated post-war constitution. But the contentious issues that stalled its drafting, including how to structure the state and share power, remain unresolved. Meanwhile logistical challenges and threats of violence loom over the polls. Of the approximately 16 million eligible voters, 12.5 million were registered, "potentially leaving a significant section of the population disenfranchised in the next election," warned the Carter Center.

**IRIN** - [**http://www.irinnews.org/report/99031/tensions-mount-as-nepal-contentious-election-nears**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/99031/tensions-mount-as-nepal-contentious-election-nears)

**Pakistan**

**Bomb attacks leave 10 dead**

Bomb attacks in Pakistan on Wednesday left 10 people including five soldiers dead and at least 18 others wounded, officials said. A powerful bicycle bomb exploded in a crowded car repair market in the restive southwestern city of Quetta at around sunset, killing at least five people and wounding 17. Earlier in the day five Pakistani soldiers were killed in the South Waziristan tribal region near the Afghan border when a roadside bomb went off. Two soldiers died at the scene while three of the four others seriously wounded later succumbed to their injuries. There were no immediate claims of responsibility for either attack.

**AFP** - [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jYqrCe2m4PieXz1SwjbqzjB2UiCA?docId=254482c5-d2ab-4d8e-b75f-52d815a4d576**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jYqrCe2m4PieXz1SwjbqzjB2UiCA?docId=254482c5-d2ab-4d8e-b75f-52d815a4d576)

**Government says drones killed 67 civilians since 2008**

The Pakistani government said Wednesday that 3% of 2,227 people killed in US drone strikes since 2008 were civilians, a surprisingly low figure that sparked criticism from groups that have investigated deaths from the attacks.The number, which was provided by the Ministry of Defense to the Senate, is much lower than past government calculations and estimates by independent organizations that have gone as high as 300. The ministry said 317 drone strikes have killed 2,160 Islamic militants and 67 civilians since 2008. Pakistani PM Nawaz Sharif pressed President Barack Obama to end the attacks in a visit to the White House last week, but the US considers the attacks vital to its battle against al-Qaida and the Taliban and gave no indication it was willing to abandon them.

**AP** - [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/pakistan-percent-drone-deaths-civilians-20725123**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/pakistan-percent-drone-deaths-civilians-20725123)

**US drone strike kills three in NW Pakistan**

A US drone strike targeting a militant compound Thursday killed three insurgents in a northwest Pakistan tribal region near the Afghan border, officials said. The attack took place near Miranshah, the main town in the troubled North Waziristan tribal district. "A US drone fired two missiles on a militant compound, hitting a part of the house and also a vehicle parked there, killing three militants," a senior security official said. He said that fire engulfed the vehicle soon after the attack, while local people were trying to recover the dead bodies and injured trapped beneath the rubble of the compound.

**AP** - [**http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asia/377317/us-drone-strike-kills-three-in-nw-pakistan**](http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asia/377317/us-drone-strike-kills-three-in-nw-pakistan)

**What’s keeping the military in Swat Valley?**

More than four years after Pakistan’s army launched a major offensive against Islamist militants in Swat Valley, close to the Afghan border, security has yet to fully return to the mountainous district, once a major tourist attraction. Troops had been set to withdraw last month, but on 15 September this was put on hold when an improvised explosive device (IED) killed Pakistan’s top military commander in Swat District, part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. The 2009 offensive sparked a major humanitarian crisis that displaced more than 2.5 million people. While many locals would like to see the army stick around, others, including the newly elected provincial KP government, would like to see a phased withdrawal to return control of the valley to civilians.

**IRIN** - [**http://www.irinnews.org/report/99025/what-s-keeping-the-military-in-pakistan-s-swat-valley**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/99025/what-s-keeping-the-military-in-pakistan-s-swat-valley)

WCAR

**DR Congo**

**Army seizes Bunagana base from M23 rebels**

Government forces in eastern DRC have captured Bunagana town, the main base of the M23 rebel group, officials reported. The troops entered the town on the Ugandan border in large numbers as the rebels fled, residents reported. M23 political leader Bertrand Bisimwa was earlier reported to have crossed into Uganda as Congolese troops advanced on his base. Residents in Bunagana reported there was heavy shelling, before the town fell to government forces. "Bunagana is completely under our control. We had been fighting since the early morning," DRC's government spokesperson reported. Bunagana, a town of several thousand people and the headquarters of Bisimwa, is on the Uganda-DRC border. Bisimwa had surrendered to Ugandan security operatives after crossing the border in a convoy of two vehicles, Uganda's state-owned New Vision newspaper reported.

**BBC** - [**http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-24744548**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-24744548)

**Gambia**

**President sacks sixth minister in three months**

Gambian President Yahya Jammeh has sacked the foreign minister, the presidency announced, the sixth cabinet member removed in three months. Susan Waffa-Ogoo was "fired from her post with immediate effect," the presidency said in a short statement released late Wednesday, without giving a reason. Jammeh regularly reshuffles his cabinet in what many observers say is a sign of insecurity and runs several key ministries himself, including defence, forestry and religious affairs. Earlier in August, he fired five cabinet members including ministers of transport, energy and education.

**AFP -** [**http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/global-filipino/world/10/30/13/gambian-president-sacks-sixth-minister-three-months**](http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/global-filipino/world/10/30/13/gambian-president-sacks-sixth-minister-three-months)

**Guinea**

**Opposition agrees to abandon protests**

Guinea's opposition, which had threatened street protests to challenge results of a recent parliamentary election, announced they will follow the country's legal channels for registering their complaint. The country has been paralyzed by violent demonstrations led by the opposition. The protests stem from the country's divisive 2010 presidential election, which the ruling party won amid complaints of ethnic targeting in regions of the country favorable to the opposition. Opposition leaders say the 28 September parliamentary election, which was also won by the ruling party, was deeply flawed. Their statement released on Wednesday indicates the opposition was moved by appeals from the international community, including the UN special envoy, who has made repeated trips to Conakry to try to avert violence.

**AP** - [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/guinea-opposition-agrees-abandon-protests-20728593**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/guinea-opposition-agrees-abandon-protests-20728593)

**Mali**

**Islamists shell troop-heavy area around Gao airport**

Islamists fired shells on Wednesday towards the airport in Gao, Mali's second-largest city, but did not cause any casualties, a source from the Malian army headquarters said. "The Islamists fired shells towards the airport in Gao" where French and Malian soldiers are stationed, the source said. There were no victims and the situation had been brought under control, the source added, as French army helicopters were dispatched to chase the militants. The attack is just the latest to hit Mali's north in recent weeks.

**AFP -**

[**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jVtip-C46wjoZM98RKVwNHmWehRg?docId=65c68d13-345a-4451-b28b-fbc23671261e**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jVtip-C46wjoZM98RKVwNHmWehRg?docId=65c68d13-345a-4451-b28b-fbc23671261e)

**Niger**

**Bodies of 87 migrants, mostly children, found in desert**

The bodies of 87 migrants were found on Wednesday in Niger's desert north after they died of thirst just a few kilometres from the border of Algeria, their planned destination, sources said. The corpses of the seven men, 32 women and 48 children were in addition to five bodies of women and girls found earlier, a security source said. All died in early October after a failed attempt to reach Algeria that began in late September, the source added. A local aid organisation Aghir In'man, confirmed the death toll.

**AFP** - [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131030/bodies-87-migrants-found-niger-desert-security-source**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131030/bodies-87-migrants-found-niger-desert-security-source)

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