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GENERAL

**Across Regions**

**Australia completes sending 79 boat people back to Sri Lanka**

The Australian government has returned all 79 Sri Lankans who arrived illegally in Australia by boat last month, the Australian embassy said in a statement here on Friday. The Australian High Commission in Colombo said that the last six Sri Lankans this week joined the group of 73 who were returned last month after arriving illegally by boat and being screened out of a protection assessment process. The government's new policy implementation sends a strong message that if you arrive illegally by boat, you will be sent back to Sri Lanka. "The Australian Government's policies are tougher than ever before and ensure that people seeking to come to Australia by boat without a visa do not get to stay in Australia," said Scott Morrison, Australia's Minister for Immigration and Border Protection. More than 1100 people who arrived in Australia by boat have been sent home since October 2012, according to the statement.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c\_132910724.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c_132910724.htm)

**China warns North Korea, blames Japan for tension**

China warned North Korea on Friday it would not tolerate chaos on its doorstep, while blaming Japan for the tension between Asia's two largest economies. Ties between Beijing and Pyongyang have deteriorated since North Korea conducted its third nuclear test in February. China signed on to UN sanctions in March, but remains the North's largest trading partner. "China will never allow (anyone) to cause chaos and incidents on our home's doorstep and will never accept China's process of development from being disturbed and interrupted again," Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on the foreign ministry's website.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131122121409-ofjhc/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131122121409-ofjhc/?source=hpbreaking)

**Ocean acidification will cut food and jobs in poor countries - scientists**

Soaring seawater acidity from rising levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere will hit marine species used for food and livelihoods hard, and will have knock-on impacts on coastal communities, particularly in developing countries, experts said at the UN climate talks in Warsaw. Poor coastal communities, especially those in small island states whose existence hinges on coral reefs and fishing, will bear the brunt of this change, warned Carol Turley, a senior scientist at Plymouth Marine Laboratory in the United States and a lead author of the 2007 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 4th Assessment Report. “Poor communities are highly reliant on sea resources for their food and livelihood needs but have limited options to mitigate effects if their current lifestyles become not sustainable due to what is called ocean acidification,” she said at a side event at the climate negotiations, which end Friday.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131122132751-159q2/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131122132751-159q2/?source=hpbreaking)

**Putin: Western states must bring Syrian opposition to peace talks**

Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Friday Western states must persuade the Syrian opposition to attend talks with President Bashar al-Assad's government which he said should take place as soon as possible. Russia, which backs Assad, and the US, which supports the opposition, announced plans in May to convene a "Geneva 2" conference to try to end the Syrian conflict, which has killed well over 100,000 people since March 2011. But no date has been set. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said this month that the target was now mid-December.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131122121940-u4pww/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131122121940-u4pww/?source=hpbreaking)

**Syrian, Palestinian refugees held in Egypt begin hunger strike**

Dozens of refugees from Syria detained in an Egyptian police station began a hunger strike on Friday to draw attention to their plight, several of them said. The UNHCR confirmed that 52 refugees of Syrian and Palestinian origin had refused to receive food delivered by a UNHCR-funded charity to the police station where they are held in the coastal city of Alexandria. Among the detainees are 21 children, including 14-month-old twin girls, and eight women. "We will not eat until we die or until we are allowed to go to any country that will accept us," a 52-year-old man said by phone from the police station in the coastal city of Alexandria.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131122133948-s9shn/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131122133948-s9shn/?source=hpbreaking)

CEE/CIS

**Turkey**

**Clashes erupt at Turkey trial over protester death**

Turkish police and protesters clashed on Thursday at the opening of the trial of two people charged with the death of a young man during anti-government street demonstrations this year. The trouble occurred as a crowd of about 500 people gathered to seek justice for the 19-year-old victim tried to storm the heavily-protected courthouse in Istanbul, an AFP photographer said. No-one was injured in the fracas.

**AFP -** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131121/clashes-erupt-at-turkey-trial-over-protester-death**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131121/clashes-erupt-at-turkey-trial-over-protester-death)

**Ukraine**

**Jailed Tymoshenko urges Ukrainians to rally over decision on EU**

Jailed Ukrainian opposition leader Yulia Tymoshenko on Friday called on people to go out on to the streets to protest against the government's decision not to sign a trade deal with the European Union, her lawyer said. The lawyer, Serhiy Vlasenko, read a letter from the 52-year-old ex-prime minister in which she wrote: "I am calling on all people to react to this as they would to a coup d'etat - that is: get out on to the streets." Her call, which followed a government decision on Thursday to drop plans to sign a trade and cooperation with the EU and move back to closer economic ties with Russia, had echoes of her role as co-leader of the Orange Revolution protests of 2004-5.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131122120106-1hgf4/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131122120106-1hgf4/?source=hpbreaking)

**Uzbekistan**

**Torture rife in Uzbekistan, UN watchdog says**

Torture is rife in prisons and police stations in Uzbekistan, where activists are rounded up and routinely mistreated, the UN torture watchdog said on Friday. It cited "numerous, ongoing and consistent allegations" that detainees in the ex-Soviet state were tortured, including by rape and sexual violence, in order to extract confessions. Some alleged abuses had resulted in deaths in custody. The UN Committee against Torture called on Uzbekistan to carry out prompt, impartial and effective investigations into all allegations of torture and punish those responsible.

**Reuters-** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131122124642-rkg6j/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131122124642-rkg6j/?source=hpbreaking)

EAPR

**DPR Korea**

**N. Korea threatens to turn presidential office into 'sea of fire'**

North Korea on Friday threatened to turn South Korea's presidential office into a "sea of fire" if Seoul tries again to provoke the communist country. In a statement released by the headquarters of the North's southwestern front command of the Korean People's Army (KPA), Pyongyang, citing President Park Geun-hye by name, said if the South again dares to provoke the DPRK, the country's armed forces will not miss the opportunity to show their unhesitant resolve. The DPRK stands for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the North's official name. The announcement comes a day before the three year anniversary of the North's shelling of a South Korean island in the Yellow Sea. The attack on Yeonpyeong Island -- the first military action against a South Korean territory since the 1950-53 Korean War -- left four people dead, including two civilians.

**AFP -** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/yonhap-news-agency/131121/n-korea-threatens-turn-presidential-office-sea-fire**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/yonhap-news-agency/131121/n-korea-threatens-turn-presidential-office-sea-fire)

**Philippines**

**Philippine death toll from typhoon Haiyan climbs to 5,209**

The death toll from typhoon "Haiyan " in central Philippines soared to 5,209, with 1,602 others still missing, an official from the National Disaster and Risk Reduction Management Council said here Friday. The considerable increase in the fatalities came after validation of over a thousand more deaths related to the devastation of super typhoon Haiyan, also known as Yolanda by Filipinos, National Disaster and Risk Reduction Management Council Executive Director Eduardo del Rosario said at a press briefing on Friday night. Cadavers of additional fatalities were actually recovered over the past five days, he added. Del Rosario said Eastern Visayas registered most of the casualties with 4,919 dead, 22,658 injured and 1,582 missing. The rest of 290 fatalities came from the other affected regions including Calabarzon, Mimaropa, Bicol, Western and central Visayas, Zamboanga Peninsula and Caraga.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c\_132910763.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c_132910763.htm)

**Philippines, WHO launch mass vaccination campaign in typhoon-stricken areas**

The Philippine government and WHO launched on Friday a vaccination campaign for children to prevent the outbreak of measles and polio among survivors of typhoon Haiyan, locally named "Yolanda." The Department of Health and WHO said they are targeting areas hardest hit by typhoon Haiyan in central Philippines, starting with the evacuation centers in Tacloban city and in Cebu province. Children under five years old will be vaccinated against polio and measles and will be given Vitamin A drops to boost their immune systems. WHO said the vaccination campaign will be extended to children up to 15 years old, depending on their resources.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c\_132909826.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c_132909826.htm)

**PNG**

**PNG committed to death penalty**

Enforcing the death penalty is a "necessary pathway" for Papua New Guinea's government to reduce crime, Justice Minister Kerenga Kua said in reports Friday. Kua, who is also the Pacific nation's attorney-general, shrugged off criticism of the revival of long-dormant capital punishment, saying it was a priority for the Pacific nation if it was serious about reducing rampant crime. "I maintain that it is the government's position that this was necessary pathway that we had to follow if we were serious about minimising law and order problems in the country," The National quoted Kua as saying. Kua added the legislation was only directed at a small group of people and that the "mainstream of society did not need to be too concerned about the implications of the death penalty". "If implemented properly, it should add to creating a more orderly and peaceful society that our people will enjoy," he said. Papua New Guinea moved to revive the death penalty in May when parliament passed laws allowing execution by a range of methods, including hanging,   
**AFP -** [**http://www.thesundaily.my/news/887655**](http://www.thesundaily.my/news/887655)

**Thailand**

**Thai gov't considers extending special security law in Bangkok**

The Thai government will likely extend the Internal Security Act (ISA) for another month if the number of anti-government protesters grows, a senior security official said on Friday. Whether the government will continue tightened security depends on how many people will attend the anti-government rallying planned on Nov. 24, National Security Council chief Paradorn Pattanatabut said. Last Sunday, former Democrat MP Suthep Thaugsuban called on 1 million people to rally at Democracy Monument on Nov. 24. The 1 million might be an overstatement, according to Paradorn, who added that several tens of thousands would probably appear. If the number of protesters increases and the demonstration seems not to stop any time soon, the security act may be extended for another month from Nov. 30, he said. The act has been imposed in three districts in Bangkok since last month.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c\_132910385.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c_132910385.htm)

ESAR

**Madagascar**

**Doubt over election after Madagascar military handed control of regions**

Madagascar's government has replaced a third of the country's regional governors with senior military officers, raising concern that a run-off vote in the first presidential election since a coup in 2009 will be rigged.

European and southern African observers said polling in the first round had been free and fair. But diplomats have warned the electoral process could still be derailed. December's ballot pits against each other two aspirants backed by Madagascar's biggest political rivals - coup leader Andry Rajoelina and the man he ousted, Marc Ravalomanana.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131122134749-nkjvs/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131122134749-nkjvs/?source=hpbreaking)

**Somalia**

**Somalia arrests woman over rape allegations**

Police in Somalia arrested a 19-year-old alleged rape victim and a journalist who interviewed her about the attack, a government official told Al Jazeera. Both the victim and Mohamed Bashir, a reporter for Radio Shabelle, were arrested for defamation, government spokesman Abdirahman Omar Osman said Wednesday. The owner of Radio Shabelle, Abdi Malik Yusuf, was also arrested, but was released on “medical grounds,” according to the spokesman. Bashir and the victim have "been arrested and are being questioned by the police,” he said. The spokesman said the alleged victim and the arrested journalist will appear in court in the coming days. In a statement issued by the Somali president's office on Thursday, Omar Osman denied making the comments to Al Jazeera and said he was "misreported."

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/11/21/somalia-arrests-womanoverrapeallegations.html**](http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/11/21/somalia-arrests-womanoverrapeallegations.html)

**Uganda**

**Ugandan opposition figure charged over 'unlawful society'**

Leading Ugandan opposition figure Kizza Besigye was charged on Thursday with belonging to an unlawful society, a police official said. Besigye, who has lost three presidential elections, led mass protests in 2011 against Uganda's long- serving president Yoweri Museveni. The demonstrators complained of vote-rigging, corruption and excessive prices for basic goods. "He was produced in court today and charged with belonging to an unlawful society but he asked for bail and the court granted it," Patrick Onyango, a police spokesman told Reuters. Besigye has in the past threatened to use Arab-Spring style street protests to remove Museveni.

**Reuters -** [**http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/11/21/uk-uganda-politics-besigye-idUKBRE9AK16G20131121**](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/11/21/uk-uganda-politics-besigye-idUKBRE9AK16G20131121)

LAC

**Colombia**

**War or peace? Colombians to decide in 2014 presidential elections**

Ask any Colombian what the determining factor has been in the country’s presidential elections in recent decades, and most will answer - the FARC rebels. And it appears to hold true this time around as Colombia’s presidential election campaign officially kicked off this week, following the decision by President Juan Manuel Santos to seek a consecutive four-year term in next year’s election. Santos said he’ll run for re-election to continue a peace process he initiated with the country’s largest Marxist guerrilla group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), in the hope of reaching a peace accord to end Colombia's 50-year-old war, which has killed more than 200,000 people and displaced more than 5 million.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131122075857-eba8t/**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131122075857-eba8t/)

**Haiti**

**Haiti decries lack of int'l funds to fight cholera – UNICEF mention**

Most donor countries have failed to deliver on their promise to help Haiti fight cholera, making it difficult to combat the disease, reports reaching here quoted Haitian Health Minister Florence Duperval Guillaume as saying on Thursday. International agencies have only transferred 25 million US dollars to the island nation to combat cholera, with 20 million dollars from the World Bank and the rest from **UNICEF**, the minister said in Haiti's capital Port-au-Prince. Some 238 million dollars in promised aid were never delivered, Guillaume said, adding she was also waiting to find out how much aid would be earmarked for Haiti by a new UN program that will also help the Dominican Republic, which shares the Island of Hispaniola with its embattled neighbor. In October, Haitian PM Laurent Lamothe and UN SG agreed to set up a high-level committee to fight cholera in the Caribbean country, but the international organization has so far only appointed a special envoy and representatives for the task.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c\_132909224.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c_132909224.htm)

**Mexico**

**Number of bodies found in Mexico burial pits rises to 31**

The number of bodies found in 16 clandestine graves in western Mexico has risen to 31, including the body of a woman. Many of the bodies have been found bound or gagged. Some showed signs of having been tortured, according to a federal prosecutors official who spoke Thursday on condition of anonymity because he is not authorized to talk to the press. The graves are in La Barca, in a remote area by Lake Chapala, which is popular among tourists and American retirees. Local police officers who confessed to working with a drug cartel led agents to the mass graves last week near the border between Jalisco and Michoacan states. The area is the site of a turf war between the Knights Templar and the New Generation cartels.

**AP -** [**http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/world/Number+bodies+found+Mexico+burial+pits+rises/9195709/story.html**](http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/world/Number+bodies+found+Mexico+burial+pits+rises/9195709/story.html)

MENA

**Egypt**

**Egypt gives police new powers as students clash**

Egypt's interim rulers on Thursday gave police the power to enter university campuses to quell demonstrations

without seeking prior permission, state media reported, after a student was killed in clashes. The military-installed cabinet said police could now enter campuses in case of "threats and to confront protests that could harm students", state news agency MENA reported. Police previously had to obtain permission from the prosecutor general or university heads before entering campuses or dormitories to deal with any outbreaks of protests or clashes. The move came after a student was killed in clashes at a dormitory of Al-Azhar University in Cairo's Nasr City district overnight, said a security official and a medic, who added he had been hit by birdshot in the chest and neck.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/egypt-gives-police-powers-students-clash-184224222.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/egypt-gives-police-powers-students-clash-184224222.html)

**Iran**

**Earthquake strikes western Iran, no casualties reported**

An earthquake measuring 5.4 in magnitude struck western Iran near its border with Iraq on Friday morning and relief teams were sent to the area, though the extent of any damage was not immediately clear, Iranian media reported. Iran sits on major geological faultlines and has suffered several big earthquakes in recent years. In April a 7.8 magnitude quake near its border with Pakistan is thought to have killed hundreds of people. The epicentre of Friday's quake was the town of Qasr-e Shirin, the capital of Kermanshah province, lying just 10 km from the Iran-Iraq border.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131122090252-amx6j/?source=hptop**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131122090252-amx6j/?source=hptop)

**Iraq**

**Violent attacks in Iraq kill 10, wound 22**

At least 10 people were killed and 22 others wounded in violent attacks in Iraq on Friday, police said. A roadside bomb attack killed three people and wounded six others in the area of Madain, some 20 km south of Baghdad, a police source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity. Three members of the pro-government Sahwa militia were killed and three others wounded when a roadside bomb targeted their car in Tarmiya, 30 km north of Baghdad, he added. The Sahwa militia, also known as the Awakening Council or the Sons of Iraq, consists of armed groups, including some former anti- US Sunni insurgent groups, who turned their rifles against the al-Qaida network after its leaders became dismayed by al-Qaida's brutality and religious zealotry in the country. In the capital city of Baghdad, four people were killed and 13 others wounded in four separate attacks, the police source said.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c\_132910817.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c_132910817.htm)

**Saudi Arabia**

**Heavy rains kill 11, while 4 missing**

Heavy rains on Thursday killed 11 people as the search continues for four more who are missing, Saudi Civil Defense said. Among those killed, seven were in Riyadh region, two in the city of Araar, one in Al-Gunfuza and one in Al-Baha, according to a statement by the Saudi Press Agency. The statement also highlighted that Civil Defense squads successfully rescued 448 citizens and expatriates from rains and floods that down poured on all parts of Saudi Arabia this week. A spokesman of the Civil Defense said his department has received 6,800 distress calls from people stranded or businesses damaged by the flooding. He said the Civil Defense also retrieved 309 vehicles that were trapped underneath strong floods. Casualties and damage have been attributed to the poor infrastructure, especially the drainage system, according to local newspapers.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c\_132909513.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c_132909513.htm)

**State of Palestine**

**UN warns of deteriorating Gaza humanitarian situation**

The humanitarian situation in Gaza has deteriorated one year after a truce that ended fighting between Israel and the Hamas rulers of the Palestinian enclave, UN officials said Thursday. "After 12 months the initial hopes for a significant improvement on the ground have not been realised," said James Rawley, the UN' humanitarian coordinator for the Palestinian territories. "In fact I am sorry to report that situations for Gaza's 1.7 million people is worse than it was before the hostilities a year ago" between November 14 and 21, he said. Speaking at a news conference marking the anniversary, Rawley said the fuel and energy crisis was a primary cause of the situation. Robert Turner, head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, noted the impact of the demolition of smuggling tunnels under the border since Egypt's army ousted Islamist president Mohamed Morsi on July 3.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/un-warns-deteriorating-gaza-humanitarian-situation-214331654.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/un-warns-deteriorating-gaza-humanitarian-situation-214331654.html)

**Syria**

**UN says more than 9 million Syrians need humanitarian aid**

Some 9.3 million Syrian people need humanitarian assistance, but continued fighting has constrained the aid workers, a UN spokesperson said Thursday. "Humanitarian organizations are providing assistance to millions of people in Syria but insecurity continues to threaten their lives and their ability to reach people in need," said Fahran Haq at a regular briefing at the UN headquarters. Of the estimated 9.3 million people in need, 6.5 million people are displaced Syrians, said Haq, citing OCHA. On the development of vaccination campaign in the war-torn country, Haq said that humanitarian partners have vaccinated 1.4 million children against polio and another 473,000 children against measles so far, though they face access constraints in several parts of the country.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c\_132908166.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c_132908166.htm)

ROSA

**Afghanistan**

**Afghan police kill 12 Taliban militants in 24 hours: report**

Units of Afghan police backed by the army have killed a dozen Taliban militants during series of operations across the country over the past 24 hours, Interior Ministry said in a statement released here on Friday. "In past 24 hours, Afghan National Police backed by the army and have killed 12 Taliban rebels in Kabul, Balkh, Kandahar, Maidan Wardak, Logar, Nimroz and Helmand provinces," the statement added. During the operations, three more militants were wounded and eight others made captive, the statement further said. It did not say if there were any casualties on the security forces. Taliban militants have yet to make comment.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c\_132910654.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c_132910654.htm)

**Afghanistan rejects US call for quick security deal**

The future of US troops in Afghanistan remained in doubt on Friday after a spokesman for President Hamid Karzai rejected a US call to sign a security pact by the end of the year rather than after next year's presidential election. The US has repeatedly said it will not wait until after the April 2014 vote to seal the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) and rejected Karzai's suggestion for the signing to take place next year "properly and with dignity". Without an accord, the United States could pull out most of its troops by the end of 2014, as it did two years ago when it failed to negotiate a deal with Iraq.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131122120106-fukjt/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131122120106-fukjt/?source=hpbreaking)

**India**

**7 killed as cyclone Helen hits southern India**

At least seven people were killed as cyclone Helen hit the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh Friday, bringing in heavy rainfall, disrupting power supply and destroying several homes and crops, a senior government official said. "The cyclonic storm made landfall around 2 p.m. in Machilipatnam, the coastal region of Andhra Pradesh, some 600 km from state capital Hyderabad. Winds were blowing at a speed of 120 km an hour. So far, seven deaths have been reported mainly due to falling of trees," the official said on condition of anonymity. Meanwhile, local authorities have evacuated more than 12,000 people from the affected region. Local TV channels showed footage of heavy rainfall lashing the state as well as some parts of the neighboring southern state of Tamil Nadu and scattered parts of the eastern state of Odisha. The three states have been bracing for the cyclone.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c\_132910768.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c_132910768.htm)

**Militants shoot dead gov't engineer in NE. India**

Suspected militants shot dead a government engineer in the northeast Indian state of Assam on Friday, said police. Executive Engineer Rajib Kumar Pathak, who also served as a government official, was shot at from point blank range by two suspected militants after he was called out of his office by them at the Assam Irrigation Department in Dima Hasao district. Securitymen have launched an operation to track the killers. The motive is not yet known for the murder. However, militants seeking separation from India in the restive northeast region have in the past also targeted government officials and engineers.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c\_132910734.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-11/22/c_132910734.htm)

**Pakistan**

**Pakistan on high alert after calls for protest**

ISLAMABAD: Security was boosted across Pakistan on Friday after religious groups called for protests against last week’s sectarian violence in the garrison city of Rawalpindi that killed 11 people. Schools, shops and restaurants were closed in the garrison town while roads were deserted in both Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The government has deployed thousands of police and paramilitary troops in all major cities to maintain order, with the army on call in case of any violence, a police official in Islamabad told news agency AFP.

**AFP -** [**http://dawn.com/news/1057851/pakistan-on-high-alert-after-calls-for-protest**](http://dawn.com/news/1057851/pakistan-on-high-alert-after-calls-for-protest)

**Pakistani doctor who helped US find bin Laden charged with murder**

Pakistan on Friday charged with murder the doctor who helped the United States track down al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, in the latest development in a case that has strained ties between the two countries.

Shakil Afridi, hailed as a hero by US officials, was arrested after US soldiers killed bin Laden in May 2011 in a secret raid that outraged Pakistan and plunged relations between the strategic partners to a new low.

Pakistan arrested Afridi and sentenced him last year to 33 years in jail for membership of militant group Lashkar-e-Islam, an accusation he denies.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131122110529-0579a/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131122110529-0579a/?source=hpbreaking)

WCAR

**CAR**

**Child soldiers swell fighters' ranks in Central African Republic-UN – UNICEF menation**

The number of child soldiers in Central African Republic has more than doubled to as many as 6,000 in recent months as self-defence militia have sprung up to counter waves of attacks by former rebels, the United Nations said on Friday. World powers, led by France, are scrambling to contain a crisis that Paris and UN officials have warned could lead to genocide in Central African Republic, which slipped into chaos after rebels ousted the president in March. Some 400,000 people have fled their homes since the uprising and the tit-for-tat killings that followed. **UNICEF**, warned of a complex crisis that has seen local communities set up self-defence groups to halt abuses by the northern, mainly Muslim Seleka rebel alliance that swept to power. This has led to a spike in the number of children involved.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131122133717-nccaj/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131122133717-nccaj/?source=hpbreaking)

**Chad**

**Chad's PM, government resign ahead of censure vote**

Chad's Prime Minister Joseph Djimrangar Dadnadji resigned along with his cabinet on Thursday, a day before lawmakers from his own ruling majority had planned to examine a motion of censure against the government. Seventy- four legislators introduced a motion on Monday criticising Dadnadji for chronic instability in the government and for failing to tackle Chad's high cost of living. The prime minister has ordered five cabinet reshuffles in 10 months. "Assuming the consequences of this crisis, I present my resignation and that of my government," said Dadnadji's resignation letter to President Idriss Deby, read on state television. "The relationship with the majority, topped off by a a motion of censure, hinders the continuation of my mission."

**Reuters -** [**http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/11/21/chad-government-resignation-idUKL5N0J642620131121**](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/11/21/chad-government-resignation-idUKL5N0J642620131121)

**Mali**

**Mali votes in lawmakers to complete return to democracy**

Ravaged by war, hamstrung by political chaos and mired in poverty, Mali sets out on the road to recovery on Sunday with the first parliamentary polls since it was upended by a military coup. The election will complete the troubled west African nation's return to democracy, finalising a process which started with the election of its first post-conflict president amid joyful scenes in the capital Bamako three months ago. But the vote takes place amid an upsurge in violence by Al-Qaeda-linked rebels who stalk the vast northern desert, an ever-present danger to French and African troops who are tasked with providing security for the election alongside the Malian army. Militants shelled the northern city of Gao on Thursday, and although their rockets fell harmlessly short of the main urban centre, the attack underlined the continuing security threat.

**AFP -** [**http://reliefweb.int/report/mali/mali-votes-lawmakers-complete-return-democracy**](http://reliefweb.int/report/mali/mali-votes-lawmakers-complete-return-democracy)

**Nigeria**

**Nigeria to support human trafficking victims**

Nigeria has launched a trust fund to support human trafficking victims in the country, Minister of Justice Mohammed Adoke said on Thursday. The minister said this at the African Regional Consultation Meeting on the Rights to an Effective Remedy for Trafficked Persons in Abuja, Nigeria's capital. He said the fund was established in accordance with the Trafficking in Persons Protocol. "At the heart of our anti-trafficking strategy is human rights-based approach, to ensure adequate promotion and protection of the rights of trafficked persons," he added. "In addition, the Federal Executive Council had since 2008 approved the National Policy for the protection of trafficked persons to provide uniform guidelines for all stakeholders in Nigeria, involved in providing assistance to trafficked persons," the minister said.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/africa/2013-11/22/c\_132909514.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/africa/2013-11/22/c_132909514.htm)

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