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GENERAL

**Across Regions**

**DRC's M23 rebel chief in Ugandan army safe house**

The military chief of DR Congo's defeated M23 rebels, Sultani Makenga, has been placed under military protection in the Ugandan capital, a Ugandan intelligence officer told AFP Tuesday. "He is in a safe house in Kampala but for security reasons we cannot reveal the location," the officer said on condition of anonymity. He added that the Ugandan army "is providing necessary security". Makenga is wanted by the authorities in neighbouring DR Congo, and is accused of participating in several massacres, mutilations, abductions and sexual violence, sometimes against children. He is on both UN and US sanctions lists. He led the mainly ethnic-Tutsi M23 force, which mutinied from the Congolese army 18 months ago. He fled to Uganda earlier in November with virtually his entire rebel force after a bruising defeat at the hands of the Congolese army, backed by UN forces.

**AFP** - [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gete0kUWzDBeeI\_UUasPPUSR4tuA?docId=481a40d3-75bf-465c-9029-a79d18795575&hl=en**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gete0kUWzDBeeI_UUasPPUSR4tuA?docId=481a40d3-75bf-465c-9029-a79d18795575&hl=en)

**Iran forcefully deporting Afghan refugees**

Iran is forcefully deporting Afghans by the thousands in violation of its international obligation to protect refugees, said a Human Rights Watch report released Wednesday. The report included stories of fathers deported without being given a chance to tell the families they leave behind. It said a 12-year old boy was left without money at the border, forced to beg for bus fare to Afghanistan. Millions of Afghans fled to Iran and Pakistan in the 1980s to flee a bloody anti-Communist insurgency. At the peak of the war, roughly 5 million refugees lived in Pakistan and nearly 4 million in Iran. Currently the Human Rights Watch estimates about 2 million Afghans still live in Iran as unregistered refugees. But Iran has refused to register many of them, said Faraz Sanei, Human Rights Watch researcher for Middle East and North Africa. Roughly another 840,000 Afghans live in Iran as registered refugees.

**AP -** [**http://www.mail.com/news/world/2470658-report-iran-forcefully-deporting-afghan-refugees.html**](http://www.mail.com/news/world/2470658-report-iran-forcefully-deporting-afghan-refugees.html)

**Britain's Hague says believes Iran nuclear deal within reach**

Remaining differences between Iran and world powers over a potential deal to curb Tehran's nuclear programme are narrow and a historic deal is within reach, British Foreign Secretary William Hague said on Wednesday. Iranian negotiators and diplomats from the United States, Russia, China, France, Britain and Germany were due to meet on Wednesday in Geneva to discuss a proposed deal under which Iran would suspend parts of its programme in exchange for some sanctions relief. "The differences that remain between the parties are narrow and I believe they can be bridged with political will and commitment," Hague told a news conference in Istanbul.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131120125429-g5k05/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131120125429-g5k05/?source=hpbreaking)

**Climate loss and damage talks in disarray after G77 walks out**

Negotiations on setting up a controversial mechanism to deal with losses and damage caused by climate change were in disarray at climate talks in Warsaw on Wednesday, after representatives of the G77 group of developing countries staged a temporary walkout of discussions on the issue in the early hours of the morning. "Today at almost 4am, the delegation of Bolivia and all the delegates of the G77, walked out of the...negotiation because we do not see a clear commitment of developed (country) parties to reach an agreement. They are proposing solutions or texts that in some cases are not even related to the issue," said Rene Gonzalo Orellana Halkyer, head of the Bolivian delegation.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131120133536-k1a0s**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131120133536-k1a0s)

**United Nations**

**UNHCR urges governments to offer Iranian exiles haven**

UNHCR Tuesday urged the international community to give a haven to several thousand Iranian opposition members whose camps in Iraq have come under repeated attack. "Since the 1 September attack on Camp New Iraq where 52 residents died, there has been limited progress in moving the remaining residents to a third country," the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights said in a statement. "UNHCR encourages all member states to share in the international efforts, admit residents and offer them a long-term solution," it added. The UN has been searching since 2011 for countries willing to host the exiles, who are unwanted by Iraq. To date, just 300 have been taken in abroad, mostly by Albania. The UN is still seeking a new home for 2,900.

**AFP** - [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hky0vc7joEaNc\_9kALBDB3-Kn1wQ?docId=063f6405-c3f9-48d9-b13f-167d5d753a04&hl=en**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hky0vc7joEaNc_9kALBDB3-Kn1wQ?docId=063f6405-c3f9-48d9-b13f-167d5d753a04&hl=en)

**Better sanitation boosts children's test scores, decreases stunting - study**

Access to improved sanitation can increase cognition in children, according to a new World Bank study, the latest research to link stunting and open defecation. More than 2.5 billion people worldwide lack access to toilets, and one billion people practice open defecation. "Effects of Early-Life Exposure to Sanitation on Childhood Cognitive Skills", released ahead of the first official UN World Toilet Day on 19 November, studied the effects on childhood cognitive achievement of early life exposure to India’s Total Sanitation Campaign, a national government programme that encouraged local governments to build and promote use of inexpensive pit latrines. "Our research showed that six-year-olds who had been exposed to India’s sanitation programme during their first year of life were more likely to recognise letters and simple numbers on learning tests than those who were not," said lead author Dean Spears.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131119110024-oxgwu/?source=hptop**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131119110024-oxgwu/?source=hptop)

CEE/CIS

**Bulgaria**

**Amnesty condemns 'inhumane' refugee camp**

Amnesty International criticized the "inhumane conditions" at an overcrowded Bulgarian refugee camp Tuesday as more than 100 asylum-seekers, many fleeing the conflict in Syria, started a hunger strike in protest. "We witnessed the deplorable conditions where some 1,000 asylum-seekers are being held in metal containers, tents and a dilapidated building of a former military complex," Amnesty researcher Barbora Cernusankova said after visiting the Harmanli camp in southeastern Bulgaria. Food was scarce and the entire camp had just three toilets and eight showers, the rights group added in a statement, calling for "urgent action" from the Bulgarian authorities to improve living conditions. A total of 1,130 people have been crammed into the camp, which has a capacity of 400 people. "It is appalling that people seeking refuge in the EU are being trapped in limbo in such awful conditions with winter rapidly approaching," Cernusankova said.

**AFP -** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/106418-amnesty-condemns-inhumane-bulgaria-refugee-camp**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/106418-amnesty-condemns-inhumane-bulgaria-refugee-camp)

**Turkey**

**Turkey parliament deadlocked over new constitution**

Turkey’s parliament is deadlocked over efforts to draw up a new constitution aimed at enshrining democratic values and replace a military-drafted charter, a ruling party lawmaker said Wednesday. A special cross-party parliamentary commission set up to write a replacement for the charter introduced by the military junta after a 1980 coup is set to be formally dissolved after failing to make any significant progress. “The parliamentary commission tasked with writing a new constitution could not produce any article over the last four months,” Ahmet Iyimaya of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) told AFP. He said it was unlikely a new constitution - a key pledge of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s latest term in office -- would be ready before a general election in 2015.

**AFP -** [**http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2013/11/20/Turkey-parliament-deadlocked-over-new-constitution-.html**](http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2013/11/20/Turkey-parliament-deadlocked-over-new-constitution-.html)

EAPR

**Myanmar**

**UN calls on authorities to keep prisoner release promise**

A UN committee on Tuesday called on Myanmar to stick to a promise to release all political prisoners by the end of the year. While welcoming major reforms started by the government as Myanmar emerges from decades of military rule, the UN General Assembly's rights committee expressed concern at new detentions of political activists. It urged the government "to continue the process and to fulfil its commitment to release them by the end of 2013, without conditions, and to ensure the full restoration of their rights and freedoms." The resolution also expressed "concern about remaining human rights violations, including arbitrary arrests and detentions of political activists and human rights defenders, forced displacement, land confiscations, rape and other forms of sexual violence and torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment."

**AFP** - [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hhEDCefABnjC8Vj3LHtgiBGQYtgg?docId=c1098b2b-c8f7-4ef1-9db5-60fb7c0df60a&hl=en**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hhEDCefABnjC8Vj3LHtgiBGQYtgg?docId=c1098b2b-c8f7-4ef1-9db5-60fb7c0df60a&hl=en)

**UN to Myanmar: Make Rohingya Muslims citizens**

The General Assembly's human rights committee on Tuesday passed a resolution urging Myanmar to give the stateless Rohingya minority equal access to citizenship and to crack down on Buddhist violence against them and other Muslims in the southeast Asian nation. The resolution passed the committee by consensus, meaning under General Assembly rules the body will unanimously pass it later this year. Myanmar emerged from a half-century of military rule in 2011, but its transition to democracy has been marred by sectarian violence that has left more than 240 people dead and sent another 240,000 fleeing their homes, most of them Rohingya. Some say the inter-communal violence presents a threat to Myanmar's political reforms because it could encourage security forces to re-assert control.

**AP** - [**http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/11/19/3764474/un-to-myanmar-make-citizens-of.html**](http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/11/19/3764474/un-to-myanmar-make-citizens-of.html)

**Philippines**

**More than 4,000 confirmed dead in Philippine typhoon - UNICEF mention**

More than 4,000 people were confirmed killed by the typhoon that ravaged parts of the Philippines almost two weeks ago, the country’s disaster relief agency said on Wednesday. The death toll now stands at 4,011 with 1,602 registered as missing since the storm swept the eastern central part of the country on November 8, injuring another 18,000, the agency said. UN aid workers have reached nearly 2 million of the 2.5 million in urgent need of food, according to the body’s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. It was not clear whether the remaining 500,000 had received aid from other sources. Basic emergency needs were now being addressed, said Daniel Toole, regional director for East Asia and Pacific for **UNICEF**. The food aid that has been pledged is enough for six months, but more was needed, he said, adding that interest from the foreign community had started to wane.

**DPA -** [**http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/world/more-than-4000-confirmed-dead-in-philippine-typhoon/article5371062.ece**](http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/world/more-than-4000-confirmed-dead-in-philippine-typhoon/article5371062.ece)

**Doctors race to fight preventable tragedies in typhoon-hit Philippines**

One man waited on a bench for his turn with doctors, the skin on both his legs - at one time raw and bloody - scabbed over, while his stitched up left palm had become unnaturally swollen. Next to him was a boy with a big lump on the top of his left foot. Many survivors of Super Typhoon Haiyan sustained relatively minor injuries when the storm whipped up a frenzy of falling cement and flying sheets of corrugated metal, but these knicks and gashes are increasingly becoming infected - and life threatening - as doctors scramble to operate, heal and save lives. “Yesterday we had a very severe case,” said Dr Johan von Schreeb, a general trauma surgeon for the medical charity Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) who has been in Guiuan for the past five days treating storm injuries.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131120053226-ozkt9/?source=hpagehead**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131120053226-ozkt9/?source=hpagehead)

**Thailand**

**Thai court ruling deals new blow to government**

Thailand's top court on Wednesday rejected the ruling party's attempt to amend the constitution, dealing a defeat to a government that has been plagued by mass street protests. The Constitutional Court's ruling, however, spared the government a worst-case scenario by turning down a request from opponents to dissolve the ruling party. In its 6-to-3 vote, the court ruled that Parliament had committed procedural errors in its bid to amend the constitution, saying that it did not allow critics sufficient speaking time during the debate and that several lawmakers had committed fraud during the electronic voting process. But it said the acts "did not meet the conditions" to dissolve the ruling party. Wednesday's ruling follows another political setback to Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra's government when the Senate last week rejected its bid to pass a political amnesty bill that critics said was designed to bring home deposed former leader Thaksin Shinawatra, Yingluck's brother.

**AP -** [**http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2013/11/20/thai-court-ruling/3648843/**](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2013/11/20/thai-court-ruling/3648843/)

**Vietnam**

**Heavy rains trigger flooding in Vietnam, leaving 42 dead**

Heavy rains and winds last week unleashed floods in south-central Vietnam, the [UN said](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UN%20Sitrep%20No%201-%20Flooding%20in%20Central%20Provinces%20in%20November%202013%20-%20Viet%20Nam.pdf) on Wednesday, leaving 42 dead, destroying more than 400 homes. Torrential rains struck from [Nov. 14 to 17](http://www.trust.org/item/20131117043720-s3dsr/), along the coastal areas from Quang Tri to Ninh Thuan and the Central Highlands, with total rainfall of 401 to 973 mm, the OCHA said. Extensive flooding has hit the central provinces of Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Da Nang, Phu Yen and Binh Dinh. The report said more than 425,000 homes were flooded, five people were missing and 66 injured. U.N. agencies and NGOs are slated to meet on Friday to update field assessments and coordinate a response if needed.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131120134533-n0xs3/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131120134533-n0xs3/?source=hpbreaking)

ESAR

**Mozambique**

**Mozambicans go to polls amid unrest**

Mozambicans are casting their ballots in local elections amid fears that a former rebel group that has threatened to resume an armed rebellion against the government may disrupt the vote. Wednesday's elections, in which voters are to choose mayors and local assembly members in 53 municipalities, pits the ruling Frelimo against Renamo, in opposition since the country gained independence from Portugal in 1975. Presidential elections are planned for October 2014. Renamo denied allegations it was planning to disrupt the vote after months of deadly clashes between supporters and government forces. "Renamo is not a party of violence. We as Renamo party never sat down to plan any kind of violence," a spokesman for the party, Fernando Mazanga, told the AFP news agency on the eve of the vote.  Al Jazeera's Haru Mutasa, reporting from the port city of Beira, an opposition stronghold, said people were also concerned about vote rigging.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/11/mozambicans-go-polls-amid-unrest-2013112062814955930.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/11/mozambicans-go-polls-amid-unrest-2013112062814955930.html)

**South Africa**

**Search for survivors suspended at collapsed S.Africa mall**

South African emergency workers said hope was fading Wednesday of finding survivors under a collapsed half-built mall near Durban as heavy machinery was called in to remove the rubble. "The search was called off 30 minutes ago to allow city engineers to use heavy machinery to remove concrete," Neil Powell of private emergency firm Crisis Medical said. Powell said the search could resume if signs of life were detected but that after nearly 19 hours into the search hope was fading. "So far there has been no sign of life, it could be that there are not people there at all or they are trapped beneath the rubble. We don't know." He said fibre optic cameras had not picked up any hint that survivors were still there. One person has died and 29 people have been rescued after the vast roof of the structure collapsed on Tuesday afternoon in the town of Tongaat.

**AFP -** [**http://news.asiaone.com/news/world/search-survivors-suspended-collapsed-s-africa-mall**](http://news.asiaone.com/news/world/search-survivors-suspended-collapsed-s-africa-mall)

**Tanzania**

**Family planning targets likely to fall short**

Tanzania will likely fall short of its 2015 reproductive health targets, which aim to reduce the estimated one million abortions, 2.9 million unintended births, 18,000 maternal deaths and 500,000 child deaths that occur every year because of poor of access to family planning services, say experts in the field. In 2010, the government said it planned to increase the proportion of women using contraception from 27 to 60% - or from 2.1 million to 4.2 million women (or their partners) - over the next five years, part of efforts to reduce the country’s high infant and maternal mortality rates. "Our estimation indicates that this target is not achievable," said Peter Bujari, executive director of Health Development Tanzania, an NGO that monitors government spending on reproductive health programs. “The government will need to increase its investment in health, and particularly reproductive health, if Tanzania is to achieve these targets,” Bujari noted. “There is also need to ensure that funds meant for the provision of reproductive health services are disbursed in a timely manner.”

**IRIN** - [**http://www.irinnews.org/report/99159/tanzania-likely-to-fall-short-on-its-family-planning-targets**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/99159/tanzania-likely-to-fall-short-on-its-family-planning-targets)

**Zimbabwe**

**Government mismanagement, corruption risks lives of millions**

The water and sanitation crisis in Zimbabwe’s capital, Harare, places millions of residents at risk of waterborne disease, Human Rights Watch said in a report. Five years after cholera killed over 4,000 people and sickened 100,000 more, the conditions that allowed the epidemic to flourish persist in Harare’s high-density suburbs. The 60-page report, "Troubled Water: Burst Pipes, Contaminated Wells, and Open Defecation in Zimbabwe’s Capital," describes how residents have little access to potable water and sanitation services, and often resort to drinking water from shallow, unprotected wells that are contaminated with sewage, and to defecating outdoors. "Harare’s water and sanitation system is broken and the government isn’t fixing it," said Tiseke Kasambala, Southern Africa director at HRW. "In many communities there is no water for drinking or bathing, there is sewage in the streets, there is diarrhea and typhoid and the threat of another cholera epidemic."

**HRW Report -** [**http://www.hrw.org/node/120547**](http://www.hrw.org/node/120547)

**Uganda**

**Uganda to charge opposition figure with inciting violence**

Uganda's government risked spurring further opposition protests on Tuesday by signalling it would bring charges against a former presidential candidate at the heart of violent unrest in 2011. Kizza Besigye, who has lost to President Yoweri Museveni in three elections, led protests after the last presidential poll in early 2011 which were fuelled by alleged vote-rigging, corruption and high commodity prices. He has since been arrested several times at public rallies and although he stepped down last year as leader of Uganda's biggest opposition party, Forum for Democratic Change, police have kept him under close scrutiny.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131120105416-v6gli/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131120105416-v6gli/?source=hpbreaking)

LAC

**Colombia**

**Government appoints female peace negotiator**

After a year of peace talks between Colombia's government and FARC, the government has appointed a woman to be part of its chief negotiating team for the first time, in a long overdue move to ensure women's voices are heard at the Havana talks, several lawmakers said. Nigeria Renteria is expected to leave her current job as the presidential advisor on women's rights within weeks to join nine government negotiators in Cuba, where the two sides are hoping to reach a peace accord. Following Renteria's appointment as a key peace negotiator, lawmaker Alfonso Prada, said she would play an important role in brokering any possible peace deal. "Women make up half of the population and are the victims that have suffered most because of the violence. She (Renteria) will become an unparalleled complement for the success of this mission," Prada is quoted as saying in Colombia’s Vanguardia newspaper. Women and children, particularly from Afro-Colombian and indigenous groups, have borne the brunt of Colombia's long conflict and they make up the majority of those displaced by the fighting between warring factions, rights groups say.

**Reuters** - [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131119171835-o0wuv/?source=hptop**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131119171835-o0wuv/?source=hptop)

**Venezuela**

**Venezuela congress gives decree powers to Maduro**

The Venezuelan congress granted President Nicolas Maduro emergency decree powers Tuesday that will strengthen the embattled leader's hand as he goes after businesses the government accuses of sabotaging Latin America's biggest oil economy. The National Assembly's vote had been widely expected since Maduro requested a month ago to be given expanded power to enact laws without consulting congress for up to a year. The same tactic was employed four times by Maduro's mentor and predecessor, the late Hugo Chavez, to promulgate dozens of laws that dramatically boosted state control over the economy. But unlike the charismatic Chavez, who had near-absolute command over his party, doubts about Maduro's leadership have risen since he defeated opposition leader Henrique Capriles by a razor-thin margin in April's presidential election and as worsening shortages of basic goods and galloping inflation, now at 54 percent, have eroded popular support for his rule.

**AP -** [**http://bigstory.ap.org/article/venezuelas-congress-grants-maduro-decree-powers**](http://bigstory.ap.org/article/venezuelas-congress-grants-maduro-decree-powers)

MENA

**Across MENA**

**2,200 Syrian families flee to Lebanon in 5 days**

The UNHCR says 2,200 Syrian families have fled from the latest clashes in their country and crossed into Lebanon over the past five days. A UNHCR official in Lebanon, Lisa Abou Khaled, said Wednesday that the families made it to the Lebanese town of Arsal, just across the border from Syria, in one of the largest influxes in recent months. Abou Khaled says the refugees started arriving last Friday amid clashes between Syrian forces and rebels over the strategic town of Qara, which is part of the supply line to opposition-held areas near Damascus. Syrian government troops seized Qara on Tuesday, but fighting still continues in the area. Some 1.4 million Syrians, including 800,000 registered refugees, have fled to Lebanon since Syria's conflict broke out in March 2011.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/2-200-syrian-families-flee-lebanon-5-days-091752663.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/2-200-syrian-families-flee-lebanon-5-days-091752663.html)

**Egypt**

**Suicide car bomber kills 10 soldiers in Egypt**

A suicide bomber rammed his explosive-laden car into one of two buses carrying off-duty soldiers in Egypt's turbulent region of northern Sinai, killing 10 and seriously wounding 35, security and military officials said. They said the suicide bomber struck when the two buses traveled on the road between the border town of Rafah and the coastal city of el-Arish. The explosion damaged both buses, the officials said. The 10 victims were the bus's driver, three members of a security detail and six of the off-duty soldiers, according to a statement by Col. Mohammed Ahmed Ali, a military spokesman. "The precious blood of our sons strengthens our resolve to cleanse Egypt and shield its sons from violence and treacherous terrorism," Ali wrote on his Facebook page. The wounded were being treated in military hospitals, he daid.

**AP -** [**http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2013/11/20/egypt-car-bomb/3648739/**](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2013/11/20/egypt-car-bomb/3648739/)

**Egypt police fire teargas to clear Tahrir Square**

Egyptian police fired teargas to drive protesters out of Cairo's Tahrir Square on Tuesday, breaking up a demonstration commemorating 42 protesters killed two years ago while opposing the government that took power after Hosni Mubarak's downfall. The rally was aimed against people the protesters felt had "betrayed" the revolution - Mubarak loyalists, the military council that ruled for 17 months after his fall and the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood which won subsequent elections but was ousted by the military in July. Several hundred riot police moved in shortly before midnight to clear the few dozen protesters still in Tahrir Square, a Reuters reporter said. Protesters threw rocks and fireworks but left the square shortly after the security forces moved in. A security official said the police decided to clear the square after protesters had tried to storm the headquarters of the Arab League.

**Reuters -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/protesters-hit-cairos-tahrir-anniversary-deaths-152747462.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/protesters-hit-cairos-tahrir-anniversary-deaths-152747462.html)

**Iraq**

**Flooding in central, southern Iraq kills 11**

Flooding in central and southern Iraq killed at least 11 people as rising waters swamped city streets and toppled buildings, sparking anger over the dilapidated sewage system, officials said Wednesday. Three days of driving rain led to flooding in the capital, as well as major cities in the south, including Nasiriyah, Diwaniyah and Hilla, sparking protests among residents angry over poor public services. In Babil province, south of Baghdad, two children died as a result of collapsing buildings, while more than 50 families had to take shelter at a tourist resort after their houses flooded. Authorities have in recent weeks tried to limit the damage of the rain by declaring national holidays, with one instituted earlier in the month.

**AFP -** [**https://now.mmedia.me/lb/en/mena/521663-flooding-in-central-southern-iraq-kills-11**](https://now.mmedia.me/lb/en/mena/521663-flooding-in-central-southern-iraq-kills-11)

**Wave of attacks in Iraqi capital kills at least 24**

A wave of attacks, mostly by car bombs, hit mainly Shiite and commercial areas of Baghdad on Wednesday morning, killing at least 24 people and wounding 87, Iraqi officials said. The bombings were part of a surge in violence that has rocked Iraq over the past months as insurgents seek to thwart the Shiite-led government's efforts to stabilize the country. Five of Wednesday's attacks were carried out by parked car bombs while at least one was carried out by a remotely detonated bomb, police officials said. The deadliest attack was in the central Sadria neighborhood, where a parked car bomb went off at an outdoor market, killing five shoppers and wounding 15, they said. Other attacks took place in Hurriyah, Shaab, Tobchi, Karrada, Azamiyah and Amil neighborhoods. Medical officials confirmed the causality figures. All officials spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to talk to media.

**AP -** [**http://www.wral.com/wave-of-attacks-in-iraqi-capital-kills-at-least-21/13132815/**](http://www.wral.com/wave-of-attacks-in-iraqi-capital-kills-at-least-21/13132815/)

**Lebanon**

**Ban and UN SC condemn Beirut blast**

The UNSC and UN SG on Tuesday condemned suicide bombs at the Iranian embassy in Beirut and called on Lebanese to stay out of the Syria conflict. The double attack killed at least 23 people and wounded almost 150 and heightened fears that Lebanon will be sucked into Syria's civil war. The 15-member Security Council and Ban released statements that "stressed the importance for all Lebanese parties to respect Lebanon's policy of disassociation and to refrain from any involvement in the Syrian crisis." The UN secretary general "calls on all in Lebanon to recognize that such appalling and indiscriminate acts of violence target all in Lebanon," said deputy UN spokesman Farhan Haq. "He urges all Lebanese parties to act with restraint and to support the institutions of the state, and particularly the security forces, as they seek to prevent further acts of terrorism."

**AFP -** [**http://www.france24.com/en/20131119-ban-un-security-council-condemn-beirut-blast**](http://www.france24.com/en/20131119-ban-un-security-council-condemn-beirut-blast)

**Saudi Arabia**

**Saudi deports 60,000 foreigners in crackdown on illegals**

Saudi Arabia has deported more than 60,000 illegal foreign workers in a crackdown over the past fortnight and more are to follow, Interior Minister Prince Mohammed bin Nayef said. Police have rounded up tens of thousands of people for deportation since an amnesty for foreign workers to regularise their status expired on 4 November. The campaign has "so far led to the deportation of more than 60,000 violators of the residency and labour system, while procedures are ongoing to deport others," state news agency SPA quoted Prince Mohammed as saying. "The campaign will continue… and is not limited to a timeframe," he added. Nearly a million migrants - Bangladeshis, Filipinos, Indians, Nepalis, Pakistanis and Yemenis among them - took advantage of the amnesty to leave voluntarily.

**AFP -** [**http://tribune.com.pk/story/634211/saudi-arabia-deports-60000-foreigners-in-crackdown-on-illegals/**](http://tribune.com.pk/story/634211/saudi-arabia-deports-60000-foreigners-in-crackdown-on-illegals/)

**State of UN Palestinian agency to stop paying wages**

The UN will stop paying wages to thousands of workers helping Palestinian refugees next month because of a growing cash crisis, a top UN official said Tuesday. UNRWA faces a "dire situation" with a $36 million deficit, under secretary general Jeffrey Feltman told the Security Council. "UNRWA will be unable to adequately fund its core services - especially in education, health and poverty mitigation - and will be unable to pay December salaries of its 30,000 teachers, medical personnel and social workers," Feltman said. The agency estimates that it now helps about five million people. The agency also faces a crisis in the Hamas-controlled Gaza territory, after Israeli authorities discovered a tunnel from the besieged strip into Israel in October. Israel suspended the entry of all construction materials into Gaza and since then 19 out of 20 UNRWA construction projects in the territory have been halted. Feltman said the halt of the building work had "put thousands of people out of work" and called on Israel to reconsider its move.

**AFP -** [**http://www.france24.com/en/20131119-un-palestinian-agency-stop-paying-wages**](http://www.france24.com/en/20131119-un-palestinian-agency-stop-paying-wages)

**Hamas allows 2 Arab media outlets to reopen**

The Gaza Strip's Hamas rulers say they will allow two Arab media outlets to reopen, months after closing them down for their coverage of the Islamist group. Ihab Ghussein, chairman of the government's media office, said Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh authorized the Arabic satellite channel Al Arabiya and Palestinian news agency Maan to resume operations. He says Haniyeh asked them to be committed to "professionalism, precision, and requirements of press work.' In July, Hamas' attorney general closed the offices for allegedly spreading rumors that harmed what he called the "Palestinian national interest." Al Arabiya had no immediate comment, while Imad Eid, the local correspondent for the West Bank-based Maan, said the agency resumed operations on Tuesday.

**AP -** [**http://www.canada.com/news/world/Hamas+allow+Arab+media+outlets+reopen+months+after+criticizing/9184756/story.html**](http://www.canada.com/news/world/Hamas+allow+Arab+media+outlets+reopen+months+after+criticizing/9184756/story.html)

**Sudan**

**Sudan rebels say mortars fired at South Kordofan capital**

Sudanese rebels have fired mortar bombs into the capital of South Kordofan state where they rose up against the government two years ago, the insurgents said on Wednesday. The shelling of Kadugli on Tuesday was in retaliation for an air raid two days earlier that killed two children, said Arnu Ngutulu Lodi, spokesman for the Sudan People's Liberation Army-North (SPLA-N). "We targeted military positions" with five mortar rounds, he told AFP. It was not immediately clear whether there were any casualties in the town, where a local resident confirmed the shelling but had no details. Government troops were responding on Wednesday with outbound fire against rebel positions, Lodi said. Two children, aged 10 and seven, were killed on Sunday when a government Sukhoi jet bombed Tanasa village, near Buram town southeast of Kadugli, according to the rebels.

**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5ir2F7KzZzp5HeHf\_jZ8SKFXBQZ7w?docId=177e3de9-2b65-4fa5-9168-3ae4032190e3**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5ir2F7KzZzp5HeHf_jZ8SKFXBQZ7w?docId=177e3de9-2b65-4fa5-9168-3ae4032190e3)

ROSA

**Afghanistan**

**Afghan poll body announces final election list with 11 candidates**

Afghanistan's election commission on Wednesday announced the final list of candidates for next year's presidential and provincial council polls. The bulk of NATO's 75,000 remaining troops are due to pull out of Afghanistan by the end of 2014 and a credible presidential election -- rather than a repeat of the fraud-plagued vote of 2009 -- is seen as vital to stability. It will be Afghanistan's first-ever democratic power transfer. President Hamid Karzai, appointed following the US-led invasion of 2001, must step down after serving two terms. "Eleven candidates have made it to the final list for presidential election," Abdul Rahman Hotak, deputy head of the Independent Election Commission (IEC), told a news conference. More than 2,700 candidates, including 308 women, have made the the final list for provincial council election, he said. "We have done all our vetting honestly, and without accepting any pressure on us.

**AFP -** [**http://voiceofrussia.com/news/2013\_11\_20/Afghan-poll-body-announces-final-election-list-with-11-candidates-6697/**](http://voiceofrussia.com/news/2013_11_20/Afghan-poll-body-announces-final-election-list-with-11-candidates-6697/)

**Nepal**

**Voter turnout in Nepal is heavy despite violence**

Voters crowded polling stations across Nepal on Tuesday, defying attempts by a powerful Maoist group and other parties to disrupt or prevent new elections for an assembly to write a new constitution. By the end of the day 65 percent of the country’s 12 million eligible voters had cast ballots, Nepal’s chief election commissioner, Neel Kantha Uprety, said. “It is a grand success, if I may say so,” Mr. Uprety said in an interview. “We are very happy to see the participation of voters and the cool mind-set of the political parties and candidates.” Some voters walked hours to reach polling places because the election commission restricted the use of unregistered vehicles on the country’s roads for the day. “It was interesting to vote, as it was my first vote,” said Deepika Thapa, 23, one of millions of young people who were casting ballots for the first time. There were scattered reports of violence, including an explosion on Tuesday morning in Katmandu that wounded three children.

**NYT -** [**http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/20/world/asia/nepal-holds-vote-amid-scattered-violence.html**](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/20/world/asia/nepal-holds-vote-amid-scattered-violence.html)

**Pakistan**

**Suicide bombing kills 2 soldiers in Pakistan**

Intelligence officials say a suicide car bombing has killed two paramilitary soldiers in Pakistan's tribal region near the Afghan border. The two officials say the bomber rammed his car into the main gate of a Frontier Corps base in the Shawa area of North Waziristan on Wednesday morning. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to journalists. Abu Baseer, a purported spokesman for a militant group called Ansarul Mujahideen, claimed responsibility for the attack. He says it was carried out in revenge for the death of former Pakistani Taliban leader Hakimullah Mehsud in a U.S. drone strike on Nov. 1. He says the number of casualties was much higher.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/gunmen-kill-shiite-university-director-pakistan-20932822**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/gunmen-kill-shiite-university-director-pakistan-20932822)

WCAR

**CAR**

**US warns of genocide risk**

US officials on Tuesday warned against rising violence in CAR, voicing alarm that the country could be heading towards a genocide. "I do not believe we are in a genocidal situation. We are in a pre-genocidal situation," deputy assistant secretary for Africa Robert Jackson told US lawmakers. "We have begun to discuss with the UN and partners of the possibility of sanctions. We do not currently have enough information to apply sanctions to any individuals … but it is something under consideration," Jackson told the House foreign affairs committee. He added that the US did not support setting up a full UN peacekeeping mission, but believed that the current force put in place by the AU, known as MISCA, should "provide the immediate security that CAR needs first and foremost." UN SG warned Monday that anarchy in CAR risks spiraling further out of control and could need up to 9,000 peacekeepers.

**AFP** - [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hS\_96qDa1jfgLVNcOd5fZcNgpDLw?docId=bf31b6e4-d779-481b-8945-9940ebdc231b&hl=en**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hS_96qDa1jfgLVNcOd5fZcNgpDLw?docId=bf31b6e4-d779-481b-8945-9940ebdc231b&hl=en)

**New measures to curb Central Africa chaos**

The Central African Republic's interim president has announced "exceptional measures" designed to quell violence by ex-rebels. The statement issued late Tuesday by Michel Djotodia's office did not provide details on the measures, announced a day after UN chief Ban Ki-moon said the world body may have to send thousands of peacekeepers to the strife-torn country. "The president wants to assure the Central African people of his determination to hunt down all criminals, looters, troublemakers, human rights violators and their accomplices," the statement said. "Exceptional measures are being taken to restore security," it said. Since Djotodia seized power in a coup in March, the remnants of his Seleka rebel coalition have been sowing chaos across the vast nation. Government forces are struggling to assert their authority beyond the capital Bangui.

**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hO24tAqQpSYfFi7mlh2ztWptmcdw?docId=f8491adc-336d-4a23-8413-ac005ceb26b9**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hO24tAqQpSYfFi7mlh2ztWptmcdw?docId=f8491adc-336d-4a23-8413-ac005ceb26b9)

**Thousands flee fresh fighting**

Thousands of villagers in CAR fled clashes between former rebels and local militias on Tuesday, residents said, increasing concerns about growing violence between Muslims and Christians. The latest violence began just south of the town of Bouca - 290km to the north of Bangui - early on Monday. "Seleka fighters went yesterday morning to attack the base of the anti-balaka, 10km south of town, and the fighting lasted all day yesterday and restarted this morning," said Calvain Poumale, a taxi driver who fled to the nearby town of Batangafo. "Thousands of inhabitants fled with bundles of belongings on their heads towards Bossangoa, Batangafo and into the bush," Poumale said. Officials in Bangui declined to comment. In a sign of rising lawlessness in the capital, the home of assistant prosecutor was the target of a grenade attack on Monday night which killed one person and seriously injured another. It was the second attack on a member of the judiciary in recent days after a senior magistrate and his assistant were killed by gunmen outside a restaurant at the weekend. Josue Baka, another villager who fled to Batangafo, said Seleka reinforcements had arrived in Bouca on Tuesday afternoon, but no troops from the regional peacekeeping force had arrived.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131119195837-q6jqf**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131119195837-q6jqf)

**DRC**

**DR Congo's M23 rebel chief in Ugandan army safe house**

The military chief of Democratic Republic of Congo's defeated M23 rebels, Sultani Makenga, has been placed under military protection in the Ugandan capital, a Ugandan intelligence officer told AFP Tuesday. "He is in a safe house in Kampala but for security reasons we cannot reveal the location," the officer said on condition of anonymity. He added that the Ugandan army "is providing necessary security". Makenga is wanted by the authorities in neighbouring DR Congo, and is accused of participating in several massacres, mutilations, abductions and sexual violence, sometimes against children. He is on both UN and US sanctions lists. He led the mainly ethnic-Tutsi M23 force, which mutinied from the Congolese army 18 months ago. He fled to Uganda earlier in November with virtually his entire rebel force after a bruising defeat at the hands of the Congolese army, backed by UN forces.

**AFP -** [**http://www.france24.com/en/20131119-dr-congos-m23-rebel-chief-ugandan-army-safe-house**](http://www.france24.com/en/20131119-dr-congos-m23-rebel-chief-ugandan-army-safe-house)

**Gabon**

**Gabon troops kill poacher, arrest 34 others near elephant park**

Gabonese soldiers killed a poacher and arrested 34 other illegal hunters near a national park which is home to endangered forest elephants, the government said on Tuesday. The troops pursued the men close to the northern border with Cameroon on Nov. 10 and 11 and shot dead one of them in a gun battle, according to the presidency statement. The soldiers found the carcass of an elephant and a panther at the camp used by the poachers, who had also been mining for gold, it added. The heavily wooded central African country is battling to save its forest elephants thought to account for around half of the world's remaining population of 100,000

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131119175453-agzfx/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131119175453-agzfx/?source=hpbreaking)

**Mali**

**Schools in northern Mali are barely functioning**

The occupation of parts of northern Mali by armed groups earlier this year had an alarming impact on the region’s education system, concluded a mission to the region by UNESCO and the government of Mali, which took place from 18 to 23 October. It found that schools in and around Timbuktu were barely operational, while those in Gao and Kidal had not been able to reopen at all. During the occupation, many schools in Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal were destroyed. The mission observed that much of the educational infrastructure was vandalized or pillaged. School furniture was destroyed and used as fuel; electric and digital equipment (generators, cables, servers, computers, and printers), books and laboratory material were damaged or burned. The occupation also led to the displacement of many teachers, as well as primary and secondary school students. Some moved further inland while others left for neighbouring countries such as Niger, Mauritania, Burkina Faso and Algeria. In Timbuktu, the mission noted that most teachers were still away.

**UNESCO -** [**http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/in-focus-articles/schools-in-northern-mali-are-barely-functioning-concludes-mission-by-unesco-and-government-of-mali/**](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/in-focus-articles/schools-in-northern-mali-are-barely-functioning-concludes-mission-by-unesco-and-government-of-mali/)

**Nigeria**

**Security forces capture, kill insurgents as they flee**

Nigerian security forces say they killed two insurgents and arrested two others as they fled northeastern states under emergency rule. In a statement Tuesday, security forces said the "terrorists" were captured and killed on Monday and Tuesday, in Kano State, and that they confiscated four AK-47 rifles, ammunition and a vehicle. Three northeastern states have been in a state of emergency for more than six months, as security forces battle with Boko Haram. Last week, the US labeled Boko Haram and splinter group Ansaru foreign terrorist organizations.

**AP -** [**http://www.theprovince.com/news/Nigerian+security+forces+kill+capture+insurgents+they+flee/9185018/story.html**](http://www.theprovince.com/news/Nigerian+security+forces+kill+capture+insurgents+they+flee/9185018/story.html)

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