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CEE/CIS

**Across CEE/CIS**

**Floods affect over 1 million in Balkans, destruction "terrifying"**

Bosnia said on Monday that more than a quarter of its 4 million people had been affected by the worst floods to hit the Balkans in living memory, comparing the "terrifying" destruction to that of the country's 1992-95 war. The extent of the devastation became apparent in Serbia too, as waters receded in some of the worst-hit areas to reveal homes toppled or submerged in mud, trees felled and villages strewn with the rotting corpses of livestock.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140519145520-martt/?source=fiOtherNews2**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140519145520-martt/?source=fiOtherNews2)

**UN sends assessment team, aid to Balkans after floods – UNICEF mention**

The United Nations has dispatched an assessment team and humanitarian assistance to Serbia after flooding triggered by days of rainfall has reportedly submerged entire villages and triggered landslides across the Balkans. The world body is also rallying the international community to provide speedy assistance that can help save lives and put people on the road to recovery, a UN spokesman said at a daily news briefing held here Monday. UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos said that she was concerned by the impact on people, many of whom remained without electricity or clean water and face health problems, according to UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric. Teams from WFP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP and IOM are working with the authorities to help assess people's needs and provide food, clean water and sanitation support and debris removal.

**IANS -** [**http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/un-sends-assessment-team-aid-to-balkans-after-floods-114052000251\_1.html**](http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/un-sends-assessment-team-aid-to-balkans-after-floods-114052000251_1.html)

**Bosnia & Herzegovina  
Balkans floods trigger Bosnia's worst exodus since war**

Bosnia on Monday said it was witnessing "the biggest exodus" since the 1990s war after the worst floods in a century inundated huge swathes of the Balkans, killing at least 47 people. There were fears that dead bodies and animal carcasses could lead to disease outbreaks, while officials warned that 120,000 unexploded mines from the conflicts of the 1990s could be dislodged. "More than 100,000 people" have been evacuated from Bosnia alone, said Stanko Sliskovic of Bosnia's emergency services, with tens of thousands more displaced in neighbouring countries.

**AFP -** [**http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/603543/balkans-floods-trigger-bosnias-worst-exodus-since-war**](http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/603543/balkans-floods-trigger-bosnias-worst-exodus-since-war)

**Serbia  
Flood surge threatens power plant near Belgrade**

Serbian authorities ordered the urgent evacuation of 12 villages and towns along the raging Sava River on Monday, including one where soldiers, police and volunteers have been working around the clock to protect Serbia's main power plant. The coal-fired Nikola Tesla power plant, which supplies electricity for half of Serbia and most of Belgrade, lies in the flood-hit town of Obrenovac, 20 km upstream of the capital. Emergency crews have so far defended the power plant by building high walls of sandbags but it's not clear those will withstand the force of an upcoming river surge.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/flood-surge-threatens-power-plant-near-belgrade-151143043.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/flood-surge-threatens-power-plant-near-belgrade-151143043.html)

**Turkey**

**Police detonate suspicious package near U.S. embassy**

Turkish police detonated a suspicious package near the U.S. embassy in Ankara on Monday, according to local media. Security forces sealed off an area near the main gates of the embassy after two unidentified packages were found, the Milliyet newspaper reported. One of the packages was then detonated, the paper said, without giving further details.

**Reuters -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/turkish-police-detonate-suspicious-package-near-u-embassy-154549147.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/turkish-police-detonate-suspicious-package-near-u-embassy-154549147.html)

**Ukraine**

**Human rights violations 'increase in Ukraine'**Human Rights Organizations have warned human rights have deteriorated in eastern Ukraine and problems in Crimea are persisting. At a meeting in Vienna on Monday, organizations including the UN and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe said reports suggested both police and local authorities in eastern Ukraine were involved in illegal activities and participating in the violent seizure of towns. UN Assistant Secretary General for Human Rights, Ivan Simonovic, said armed gangs had increased tensions in the eastern and southeastern regions amid increasing protests and detentions. A total of 250 people have died in Ukraine's nationwide crisis since November of last year, according to the UN's Assistant Secretary General for Human Rights. In a separate UN press release, the security situation in eastern Ukraine was defined as "increasingly dangerous" with the potential of peaceful demonstrations turning into violent protests with the involvement of armed groups.   
**AA -** [**http://www.aa.com.tr/en/news/331001--human-rights-violations-increase-in-ukraine**](http://www.aa.com.tr/en/news/331001--human-rights-violations-increase-in-ukraine)

**10,000 people displaced in Ukraine since start of crisis: UN**

At least 10,000 people have been driven from their homes since the start of the Ukraine crisis, with Crimean Tatars the hardest-hit community, the UN refugee agency said Tuesday. "Displacement in Ukraine started before the March referendum in Crimea and has been rising gradually since," the UNHCR said. "Most of those displaced are ethnic Tatars, although local authorities have also reported a recent rise in registrations of ethnic Ukrainians, Russians and mixed families," it added.

**AFP -** [**http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/world/10-000-people-displaced/1113720.html**](http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/world/10-000-people-displaced/1113720.html)

EAPR

**Across EAPR**

**Chinese flee Vietnam as Hanoi counts cost of riots**

Nearly 1,000 Chinese citizens have fled [Vietnam](http://www.theguardian.com/world/vietnam) by sea, as Hanoi stifled fresh protests over a territorial dispute and foreign investors counted the cost of last week's riots. The passenger ship Wuzhishan left the central Vietnamese port of Vung Ang with 989 evacuees on board, [China](http://www.theguardian.com/world/china)'s official news agency Xinhua reported. It was the first of four Chinese ships, each with a capacity of about 1,000, sent to Vietnam, Xinhua said, with a further two on standby.

**Guardian -** [**http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/19/chinese-flee-vietnam-hanoi-riots**](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/19/chinese-flee-vietnam-hanoi-riots)**\**

**Myanmar**

**Resentment of China spreading in Myanmar**A flare-up of resilient hostility toward China among its neighbors has infected central Myanmar, where a Chinese company operating a copper mine has local residents seething over what they call the operator’s arrogance and the project’s seemingly unbridled expansion plans. Villagers seized two Chinese employees of the mine on Sunday, and while the company’s demand that they be released was met late Monday, local residents said they remained embittered about mining’s impact on the area, including the destruction in April of a Buddhist temple. The conflict comes at a time when overlapping territorial claims between Beijing and its southern neighbors have resulted in rising tensions, and in the case of Vietnam, violence in which Chinese-owned businesses appear to have been targeted.  
**NY Times -** [**http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/20/world/asia/anti-china-resentment-flares-over-myanmar-mine.html?partner=rss&emc=rss&\_r=0**](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/20/world/asia/anti-china-resentment-flares-over-myanmar-mine.html?partner=rss&emc=rss&_r=0)

**Thailand**

**Thailand's army declares martial law, denies coup**

Thailand's army declared martial law before dawn Tuesday in a surprise announcement it said was aimed at keeping the country stable after six months of sometimes violent political unrest. The military, however, denied a coup d'etat was underway. The move effectively places the army in charge of public security nationwide. It comes one day after the Southeast Asian country's caretaker prime minister refused to step down and follows six months of anti-government demonstrations that have failed to oust the government. Armed troops entered multiple private television stations in Bangkok to broadcast their message and surrounded the national police headquarters in the city center. The leader of the pro-government Red Shirt movement, Jatuporn Prompan, said his group could accept the imposition of martial law, but said they "won't tolerate a coup or other non-constitutional means" to grab power. On Monday, Thailand's acting prime minister insisted his government will not resign, resisting pressure from a group of senators who are seeking ways to settle the country's political crisis, and from anti-government protesters who are demanding an appointed prime minister.

**Bloomberg -** [**http://www.businessweek.com/ap/2014-05-19/thailands-army-declares-martial-law#p2**](http://www.businessweek.com/ap/2014-05-19/thailands-army-declares-martial-law#p2)

ESAR

**Malawi**

**Banda in tough race to remain Malawi's leader**

Joyce Banda, Malawi's president, is fighting to hold on to the presidency in what has been billed a tough electoral contest. Voters decide on Tuesday whether to stick with Banda, a former vice president who came to power after the death in office of president Bingu wa Mutharika two years ago. Her bid to be elected president in her own right is overshadowed by a scandal involving the disappearance of $30m from the national coffers that rocked the country last year.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/05/banda-tough-race-remain-malawi-leader-201451994322103621.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/05/banda-tough-race-remain-malawi-leader-201451994322103621.html)

**Malawi elections: Lack of transparency could lead to violence**  
On 20 May 2014 Malawians head to the tripartite polls for what promises to be the country’s most contested elections since the first multi-party elections were held in 1994. President Joyce Banda, the former deputy president, came to power in April 2012 following the death in office of former president Bingu wa Mutharika. She will be among a record 12 presidential candidates, with 17 political parties and hundreds of independent candidates vying for the 193-seat parliament. Although the lack of regular and credible opinion polls makes it hard to predict the outcome, analysts expect a four-way presidential dogfight. The country risks for the aftermath of the election to turn violent if the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) does not rectify problems with the voters’ roll, which is believed to have been manipulated. The total number of 7,500,000 voters that the MEC has registered has also been criticised by the Malawi Civil Society Grand Coalition as being inconsistent with the figures of the voting-age population from Malawi’s National Statistical Office. The Coalition fears the inflated figure could be used as ‘a launch-pad for rigging’.  
**Institute for Security Studies -** [**http://allafrica.com/stories/201405192366.html**](http://allafrica.com/stories/201405192366.html)

**Kenya**

**Children need more support at Kenya's Kakuma refugee camp**

Physical space and timely protection support for children are among the most pressing needs in northwestern Kenya's Kakuma refugee camp amid a continuing flood of people, for the most part minors, fleeing conflict in South Sudan. Since the eruption of hostilities in mid-December, some 36,450 people have crossed the border between the two countries. In all, some 328,000 have fled South Sudan to its various neighbouring states. Some 750 of those arriving in Kenya were children who fall into the category of unaccompanied which means they arrived with no parents or adult relatives.

**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportID=100107**](http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportID=100107)

**Somalia**

**Waiting for another famine declaration in Somalia will be too late – U.N.**

The world should not wait until famine is declared in Somalia to respond to worsening hunger caused by drought and conflict, the most senior United Nations official in the country said on Monday. Philippe Lazzarini, the U.N.’s humanitarian coordinator for Somalia, said $60 million is needed to save the lives of 50,000 children over the next two months and to deliver food and water to 857,000 people, most of whom are internally displaced. "This situation has troubling similarities with the situation which prevailed before the famine in 2011," Lazzarini said at a news conference on Monday.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140519135609-pxg8c/?source=fiOtherNews2**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140519135609-pxg8c/?source=fiOtherNews2)

**South Sudan**

**South Sudan President Salva Kiir warns of 'famine'**

South Sudan's president has warned his country faces "one of worst famines ever" unless the current conflict is ended, in an interview with the BBC. Salva Kiir also accused his sacked deputy, Riek Machar, of stoking ethnic tension and violating a ceasefire. President Kiir told the BBC's Hardtalk programme the rebels were to blame for the growing hunger crisis. "This is not our making," he said. "It is a man-made disaster and that is why we want the war to stop, [to] allow humanitarian access to the country. If Riek Machar was to understand that the civilian population is going to face one of the worst famines there has ever been, this is the time."

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-27469954**](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-27469954)

**Agencies seek $1.3 billion to avert South Sudan famine**Donors are meeting at a conference in Oslo, Norway, Monday to raise $1.26 billion to avert a looming famine in the conflict-ridden South Sudan. Five months of fighting has left a third of the population severely food insecure, according to the United Nations. As the rainy season approaches, many people are unable to farm, tend to their livestock and feed their families, with UNICEF reporting that 50,000 children were at a serious risk of dying of malnutrition, especially those who have been displaced. “The South Sudan crisis is at a tipping point. We either act now or millions will pay the price," said Mr Mark Goldring, the Chief Executive for the aid agency Oxfam. The UN Humanitarian Coordinator for South Sudan, Mr Toby Lanzer, said the conference "is the last best chance for donors to help aid agencies prevent famine and uphold rights”.  
**Africa Review -** [**http://www.africareview.com/News/Agencies-seek-funds-to-avert-South-Sudan-famine/-/979180/2320074/-/9296o0z/-/index.html**](http://www.africareview.com/News/Agencies-seek-funds-to-avert-South-Sudan-famine/-/979180/2320074/-/9296o0z/-/index.html)

**UNICEF calls for $10 million to stop cholera outbreak in S. Sudan**UNICEF warned on Monday that Cholera is rapidly spreading in the South Sudan and called for $10 million to stop the outbreak. On 15 May South Sudanese ministry of health announced 18 confirmed cases of cholera in the capital Juba. However Oxfam in a report released on Monday speaks about 138 cholera cases. There are three confirmed deaths. Dozens of children are among the affected. UN agencies further report new cases in Jonglei and Upper Nile states. UNICEF has helped establish a Cholera Treatment Centre (CTC) at the Juba Teaching Hospital. It also provided life-saving supplies, including medicines, protective gear and equipment, and is expanding preventive measures to halt further spread across the country.   
**Sudan Tribune -** [**http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article51064**](http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article51064)

**Nine dead in cholera outbreak in South Sudan capital: WHO – UNICEF mention**

Cholera has broken out in the capital of South Sudan where five months of civil war has left thousands homeless and disrupted food supplies and health services, according to the World Health Organization. WHO spokesman Tarik Jasarevic said on Monday nine people were believed to have died of cholera, which can kill in days if not treated. An estimated 138 had been registered so far in and around Juba. UNICEF has supplied tents, hygiene equipment, clean water and oral rehydration solutions for a treatment centre. Hundreds of people have been trained over the past 24 hours to inform and mobilise communities, the agency said in a statement.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140519141413-71v4a/?source=jtHeadlineStory**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140519141413-71v4a/?source=jtHeadlineStory)

LAC

**Colombia**

**Dozens of children burn to death in Colombia**

At least 31 children were burned to death when a bus they were travelling in caught fire in northern Colombia, the Red Cross said. Another 25 people - including one adult - were injured and seriously burned in Sunday’s accident near the town of Fundacion, Cesar Uruena, who works for the Colombian Red Cross, told AFP news agency. The children aboard the bus were between the ages of one and eight and were returning home after a religious service.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/americas/2014/05/dozens-children-burn-death-colombia-20145194249808380.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/americas/2014/05/dozens-children-burn-death-colombia-20145194249808380.html)

**Cuba**

**Blogger to launch island's first independent digital newspaper**

[Cuba](http://www.theguardian.com/world/cuba)'s prize-winning blogger, Yoani Sánchez, is launching the island's first independent digital newspaper next week to challenge the communist-ruled country's state-controlled media. Sánchez said the online publication will be named 14ymedio, in honour of the year of its launch and the 14th-floor Havana apartment where she writes her popular Generation Y blog on daily life and politics in Cuba. Going up against Cuba's heavy media restrictions will not be easy, she admitted in an announcement on her blog on Wednesday.

**Guardian -** [**http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/15/cuban-blogger-launch-first-independent-digital-newspaper**](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/15/cuban-blogger-launch-first-independent-digital-newspaper)

MENA

**Egypt  
Gunmen kill 3 riot police during Islamist rally in Cairo; attack hits Sinai pipeline**

Egyptian authorities say a drive-by shooting has killed three policemen during a rally by Islamist students overnight in Cairo. The Interior Ministry says about 250 students from the religious Al-Azhar University took to the streets late Monday night to show their support for the country's ousted President Mohammed Morsi. The ministry says that as riot police tried to stop the demonstration, gunmen from a speeding car opened fire, killing three policemen and wounding nine. Meanwhile, the state MENA news agency says suspected militants blew up a natural gas pipeline in the restive Sinai Peninsula late on Monday.

**AP -** [**http://www.startribune.com/world/259895891.html**](http://www.startribune.com/world/259895891.html)

**Iraq**

**Maliki 'set to win elections'**

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's coalition won the most seats in Iraq's parliamentary elections but fell short of a majority, leaving him in the driver's seat to retain his post despite vocal opposition. Monday’s results from the election commission showed Maliki's State of Law alliance garnered 92 out of 328 parliamentary seats, with the incumbent himself winning more than 721,000 personal votes. Both were by far the highest such figures from the 30 April election. But he still fell short of a majority, meaning he will have to win the support of rivals from across the communal spectrum, some of whom have sharply criticised Maliki and refused to countenance his bid for a third term in office.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/05/iraq-maliki-set-win-elections-201451913511590643.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/05/iraq-maliki-set-win-elections-201451913511590643.html)

**Lebanon**

**Lebanon will have 1.5M refugees by year's end: UN**

Lebanon is under massive pressure as tens of thousands of refugees fleeing the war in neighboring Syria continue to stream in, likely reaching a total of 1.5 million people by the end of the year and heightening tensions in the tiny, overburdened country, U.N. officials said Monday. The number represents one third of Lebanon's estimated population of 4.5 million, and unlike Turkey and Jordan, Lebanon has no refugee camps for Syrians, who are scattered all over in informal settlements, living with relatives or renting homes. UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said that over a million Syrian refugees are registered with U.N. agencies in Lebanon, and 50,000 new arrivals continue to sign up each month. Those figures don't include up to one million Syrians who are believed to be living in Lebanon and who have not sought help from the United Nations.

**AP -** [**http://www.news24.com/World/News/Lebanon-will-have-15m-refugees-by-years-end-20140519**](http://www.news24.com/World/News/Lebanon-will-have-15m-refugees-by-years-end-20140519)

**Libya**

**Armed group deployed in Libyan capital**

Libya's parliament chief has ordered the deployment of an armed group in the capital Tripoli, a day after forces loyal to a renegade general attacked the country's national assembly building. The deployment comes amid a deteriorating security situation, with the interim government struggling to restore order in a country where various armed groups have virtually carved out their own fiefdoms. On Monday, the security situation took a turn for the worse with an al-Qaeda-inspired group, the Lions of Monotheism (LMG), threatening to retaliate against the troops of the renegade General Khalifa Qassim Haftar. The renegade general's forces had attacked the Libyan parliament on Sunday, demanding its suspension. They accused the government of using "Islamist hardliners".

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/05/armed-group-deployed-libyan-capital-2014519135616907329.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/05/armed-group-deployed-libyan-capital-2014519135616907329.html)

**Sudan**

**Fighting in Sudan Darfur city kills four**Fighting erupted in a city in Sudan's Darfur Tuesday, killing four people and ending an uneasy calm after the region's worst unrest in a decade, residents and a medic said. "They are fighting inside El Fasher town -- heavy fighting," one resident told AFP by telephone, adding that he could not identify the combatants, although some were in uniform. Fighting had also been reported in El Fasher on Monday. In early April, El Fasher residents said that the town had been gripped with fear for a month, since government-linked paramilitaries arrived.   
**AFP -** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/131341-fighting-in-sudan-darfur-city-kills-four**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/131341-fighting-in-sudan-darfur-city-kills-four)

**Syria  
58 countries urge UN to refer Syria to ICC**Nearly 60 countries urged the U.N. [Security Council](javascript:void(0)) on Monday to refer the war in [Syria](javascript:void(0)) to the International Criminal Court for investigation of possible crimes against humanity and war crimes. France, which drafted the resolution, has called for a vote Thursday and Russia's U.N. Ambassador [Vitaly Churkin](javascript:void(0)) has already said Moscow - Syria's closest ally - opposes the measure, which means an almost certain veto. China, which also supports President Bashar Assad's government and has joined [Russia](javascript:void(0)) in vetoing three previous Syria resolutions, could make it a fourth double veto. Nevertheless, the 58 countries appealed to all 193 U.N. member states to show their support by co-sponsoring the resolution that would authorize the world's permanent war crimes tribunal to investigate allegations of heinous crimes by the Syrian government, pro-government militias, and armed opposition groups. The countries said they want as many nations as possible to join in sending "a strong political signal ... that impunity for the most serious crimes under international law is unacceptable."  
**AP -** [**http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2014/May-20/257096-58-countries-urge-un-to-refer-syria-to-icc.ashx#axzz32EvFtRd4**](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2014/May-20/257096-58-countries-urge-un-to-refer-syria-to-icc.ashx#axzz32EvFtRd4)

**Syria army fires missile at rebel town, blast kills 23 people**

Syrian activists say a surface-to-surface missile fired by the military has slammed into an impoverished residential area in a rebel-held town in the north, killing 23 people, including eight children. A local activist said on Tuesday that the attack on the town of Marea took place overnight, while people were sleeping in their homes. He says that among the 23 killed was a family of 10 people, including eight children. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights also reported the attack on Marea.

**AP -** [**http://www.foxnews.com/world/2014/05/20/activists-syria-army-fires-missile-at-rebel-town-blast-kills-23-people/**](http://www.foxnews.com/world/2014/05/20/activists-syria-army-fires-missile-at-rebel-town-blast-kills-23-people/)

**Tunisia**

**Tunisia forms commission to compensate Ben Ali victims**

Tunisia on Monday formed a long-awaited truth and justice commission, more than three years after the 2011 revolution, to implement "transitional justice" and compensate the victims of decades of dictatorship. The 15-member body, which was elected by the national assembly with a majority of 71 votes, will also be tasked with identifying and bringing to trial those responsible for abuses committed under the former regimes of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and Habib Bourguiba.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/tunisia-forms-commission-compensate-ben-ali-victims-173738702.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/tunisia-forms-commission-compensate-ben-ali-victims-173738702.html)

**Yemen**

**Yemen goes on alert over fears of militant attacks**

Yemen put its security forces on high alert Monday over fears of possible terrorist attacks in the capital, the Interior Ministry said. The measures came after a nearly three-week government offensive to root out suspected al-Qaida militants from southern cities and towns where they have a strong presence. In a statement, the ministry said authorities had received tips of al-Qaida plots in which militants were to attack government agencies while disguised in military uniform. It said it instructed checkpoints to inspect identification cards of military personal.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/yemen-goes-alert-over-fears-militant-attacks-173752296.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/yemen-goes-alert-over-fears-militant-attacks-173752296.html)

**25 killed in Yemen army clashes with Shiite rebels**Eleven Yemeni soldiers and 14 Shiite Huthi rebels were killed Tuesday during clashes in a stronghold of the insurgents in the north of the country, medics said. Dozens of other combatants were wounded in the gunfight that erupted on the western outskirts of Amran city, the medics at Amran hospital said. Tensions remain high in Amran where Huthis have been trying to enforce their presence through armed parades and protests against the military. But the suspected aim of the rebels is to enlarge their sphere of influence as the country is set to be divided into six federal regions, pushing out from their mountain strongholds in the far north to areas closer to the capital Sanaa. The Huthis have fought the central government in Sanaa for years, complaining of marginalisation under former president Ali Abdullah Saleh.

**AFP -** [**http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2014/May-20/257113-three-yemen-soldiers-killed-in-clash-with-shiite-rebels-army.ashx#axzz32FB89257**](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2014/May-20/257113-three-yemen-soldiers-killed-in-clash-with-shiite-rebels-army.ashx#axzz32FB89257)

ROSA

**Afghanistan**

**Three children killed by rocket blamed on Taliban rebels**

Three children were killed by a rocket that hit their house in southern Afghanistan, officials said Monday. The Helmand provincial governor blamed the rebels. "The Taliban insurgents fired a rocket Sunday afternoon which landed on a house, killing three children inside in Nad Ali district," his office said.

**Daily Times -** [**http://dailytimes.com.ng/article/3-children-killed-rocket-blamed-taliban-rebels**](http://dailytimes.com.ng/article/3-children-killed-rocket-blamed-taliban-rebels)

**Pakistan**

**Pakistani Taliban chief vows fight for Sharia**

In a rare video appearance, the chief of the Pakistani Taliban has declared that his group will continue to fight the state until Islamic law is enforced across the country, apparently scuppering the possibility of scheduled peace talks with the government. "We have accepted Allah's writ and his power, and the Pakistan army, intelligence agencies and government must also accept Allah's writ," said Mullah Fazlullah while addressing a group of about two dozen fighters. The video was released by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan’s media wing on Sunday and is the first appearance by the TTP chief since November 2013.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/05/pakistani-taliban-chief-vows-fight-sharia-201451985235689471.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/05/pakistani-taliban-chief-vows-fight-sharia-201451985235689471.html)

WCAR

**Chad**

**Measles spreading in Chad amid weak vaccination coverage – UNICEF mentioned**

A measles outbreak that is spreading across sub-Saharan Africa is showing no sign of let-up as vaccine campaigners struggle to reach all at-risk children. Some 34,105 cases have been reported since the beginning of 2014 across Chad, Benin, Cameroon, Guinea, Nigeria, the DRC and CAR, with 12,108 of them in DRC, 8,221 in Nigeria and 4,968 in Guinea.

**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report/100100/measles-spreading-in-chad-amid-weak-vaccination-coverage**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/100100/measles-spreading-in-chad-amid-weak-vaccination-coverage)

**Mali**

**U.S. warns of risk of renewed conflict after Mali clashes**

The United States warned on Monday that northern Mali risked sliding back into war and called for the government and Tuareg separatists to return to talks after deadly weekend clashes in a traditional rebel stronghold. Mali's U.N. peacekeeping mission MINUSMA said six government workers and two civilians were murdered inside the building during Saturday's assault, which took place during a visit by the prime minister to the northern town of Kidal.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140519133238-2u959/?source=fiOtherNews2**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140519133238-2u959/?source=fiOtherNews2)

**Protest turns violent in Mali as tensions rise**

Witnesses say demonstrators protesting against an intensifying rebellion in northern Mali now have attacked shops owned by ethnic Tuaregs and Arabs. Monday's violence in the town of Gao underscores the challenges facing Mali more than a year after a French-led war to oust extremists from power. The protest began after Tuareg separatists kidnapped 30 civil servants in the town of Kidal. Monday's rally was meant to denounce that violence and encourage Malian soldiers to try to retake control of Kidal. But Sidi Amar, an Arab merchant in Gao, said the protesters began attacking businesses. Merchants fled to an army base, fearing for their lives.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/protest-turns-violent-mali-tensions-rise-175915152.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/protest-turns-violent-mali-tensions-rise-175915152.html)

**Stern warning by Mali leader as Tuareg rebels free hostages**

President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita warned "odious crimes" that have left more than 30 people dead in northern Mali would not go unpunished even as Tuareg rebels released civil servants taken hostage in a deadly siege at government offices there. The release of the hostages came as 1,500 Malian troops poured into the town of Kidal, sent to restore government control in the bastion of Mali's Tuareg separatist movement, 1,500 km northeast of the capital. "After negotiations that took place during the night of Sunday May 18 and Monday May 19, MINUSMA recovered 32 prisoners from the MNLA and transported them to the MINUSMA camp in Kidal where a medical check-up was offered," the United Nations' MINUSMA peacekeeping force said. "MINUSMA will ensure their transport back to Bamako as soon as possible." The Malian government has blamed the clashes on Tuareg separatists but Mara said Islamist militants had taken advantage of the crisis "to participate in the chaos alongside other terrorist groups". He said before the hostage release that some of those kidnapped had been "killed in cold blood" while others were freed as they had been wounded.

**AP -** [**https://au.news.yahoo.com/world/a/23671975/stern-warning-by-mali-leader-as-tuareg-rebels-free-hostages/**](https://au.news.yahoo.com/world/a/23671975/stern-warning-by-mali-leader-as-tuareg-rebels-free-hostages/)

**Nigeria**

**President faces increasing pressure over kidnapped schoolgirls**

Campaigners for the release of more than 200 kidnapped schoolgirls in [Nigeria](http://www.theguardian.com/world/nigeria) plan to march on the office of President Goodluck Jonathan this week amid growing calls for him to stand down at the next election. There is increasing unrest over what many see as a failure to react quickly to [Boko Haram](http://www.theguardian.com/world/boko-haram)'s mass abduction from a school dormitory in the north-eastern town on 14 April. Ken Wiwa, senior special assistant to the president, admitted on Sunday: "Rather than being about Boko Haram and their atrocities, this is turning into a referendum on Jonathan's administration."

**Guardian -** [**http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/18/nigerian-president-under-increasing-pressure-over-schoolgirls**](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/18/nigerian-president-under-increasing-pressure-over-schoolgirls)

The Brief is produced by UNICEF's Emergency Operations Centre (OPSCEN) and is a daily compilation of the main humanitarian, political and security-related media stories from around the world. It aims to provide field offices and senior decision-makers with critical information related to humanitarian emergencies and staff security.

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