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GENERAL

**Across Regions**

**Attacks on aid workers worldwide hit worst levels on record**

The number of attacks on aid workers soared last year to the highest level on record, with Afghanistan the most dangerous country to be a humanitarian, a report on Tuesday said. In all, 155 aid workers were killed, 171 wounded and 134 kidnapped in 2013 – a rise of 66 percent compared with 2012, according to the Humanitarian Outcomes report, published on World Humanitarian Day. It said three quarters of the attacks took place in Afghanistan, Syria, South Sudan, Pakistan and Sudan amid worsening violence. There were 81 attacks in Afghanistan alone. The death toll for 2014 shows little sign of abating. Already, 79 humanitarians have been killed this year, including several in Gaza, according to provisional figures.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-foundation-aid-attacks-idUSKBN0GJ07S20140819**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-foundation-aid-attacks-idUSKBN0GJ07S20140819)

**Fleeing Yezidi Iraqis seek safety in Turkey**

The Turkish government has publicly claimed that it has opened its doors to Yezidis. But some refugees at Silopi camp told IRIN that those who did not have passports were not being allowed in and were being turned back by Turkish soldiers. Others said they paid smugglers up to US$500 to be able to get across the border. While Habur is the official border point for those with passports, the tiny village of Ovacik, several miles south of Silopi, is the first stop for Yezidis crossing into Turkey without documents, but residents there say that for many, it is also the last.

**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report/100508/fleeing-yezidi-iraqis-seek-safety-in-turkey**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/100508/fleeing-yezidi-iraqis-seek-safety-in-turkey)

CEE/CIS

**Turkey**

**Kurdish protester killed in clashes with Turkish security forces**

A Kurdish protester died and two people were injured on Tuesday during violent clashes with Turkish security forces in southeast Turkey, an AFP reporter said. Clashes erupted when protesters gathered at a cemetery in the southeastern town of Lice to prevent Turkish soldiers from demolishing a controversial statue of a PKK founder.

**AFP -** [**http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/World/Middle-East/Kurdish-protester-killed-in-clashes-with-Turkish-security-forces/articleshow/40392919.cms**](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/World/Middle-East/Kurdish-protester-killed-in-clashes-with-Turkish-security-forces/articleshow/40392919.cms)

**Dozens more Turkish police detained as wiretapping probe widens**

Dozens more police officers were detained in Turkey on Tuesday as part of an investigation into alleged spying and the illegal wiretapping of Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan and his inner circle, local media reported. At least 20 police officers were detained in 13 provinces across the country, Turkey's state-run TRT channel reported. Over the last month, around 50 police officers have been remanded in custody pending charges that they formed a criminal organization and bugged phones, part of what Erdogan describes as a "parallel state" which plotted against him.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-turkey-police-idUSKBN0GJ0KS20140819**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-turkey-police-idUSKBN0GJ0KS20140819)

**Ukraine**

**Dozens killed in attack on convoy, Ukraine says; rebels deny firing rocket**

Dozens of people, including women and children, were killed as they fled fighting in eastern Ukraine on Monday when their convoy of buses was hit by rocket fire, military spokesmen said. Ukraine accused pro-Russian rebels of targeting the convoy, which it said was bearing white flags when it was hit near the eastern city of Luhansk. The separatists denied responsibility for the attack and one rebel leader suggested the incident might never have taken place. The convoy had been in an area of fierce fighting between government forces and the separatists when it came under fire from rebel Grad and mortar launchers, the spokesmen said.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-ukraine-crisis-idUSKBN0GI0YK20140819**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-ukraine-crisis-idUSKBN0GI0YK20140819)

**NYT -** [**http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/rebel-missile-fire-hits-refugee-convoy-in-east-ukraine-military/article20092103/**](http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/rebel-missile-fire-hits-refugee-convoy-in-east-ukraine-military/article20092103/)

**Ban ‘deeply disturbed’ by reported attack on refugee convoy in eastern Ukraine**

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is deeply disturbed by today’s alarming reports regarding an attack on a column of internally displaced persons (IDPs) attempting to leave the Luhansk region of eastern Ukraine. “He urges all sides to respect the rules governing the status of IDPs and refugees and to allow safe passage to anyone attempting to leave areas of active military operations,” Mr. Ban’s spokesperson, Stéphane Dujarric, told reporters in New York. “This tragic incident makes the urgency of a ceasefire and a diplomatic solution even more stark,” Mr. Dujarric added. According to media reports, the Ukrainian military says many people, including women and children, died when rockets and mortars hit vehicles during today’s attack.

**UN News Centre -** [**http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48509#.U\_Mau8VdXFk**](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48509#.U_Mau8VdXFk)

**Artillery fire heard on outskirts of rebel-held Ukrainian city**

Artillery fire could be heard on Tuesday in the settlement of Makiivka, on the eastern outskirts of the rebel-controlled city of Donetsk, Reuters reporters at the scene said. Residents said it was the first time there had been shelling in the area. Two minivans and one car with about a dozen separatist fighters were heading to the area where the sound of the blasts was coming from. Two ambulances were seen coming from the neighbourhood.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140819113826-0o4fe/**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140819113826-0o4fe/)

EAP

**China**

**China's air pollution worsens in July, highest in north**

Air pollution across 74 major Chinese cities worsened in July compared to last year, according to government data released on Tuesday, showing that the government is having trouble shaking its smog problem. The 74 cities struggled with pollution on 26.9 percent of the days in July, up from 19.5 percent a year ago, data on the Ministry of Environmental Protection website said. The air was worst in northern China, where Beijing, Tianjin and seven cities in Hebei province made the list of the 10 worst cities. Air pollution was judged high on 57.4 percent of the days in July, up from 51.4 percent last year. Air pollution has figured high on the government's agenda since a choking smog dubbed the "airpocalypse" engulfed key Chinese cities in January 2013, leading Premier Li Keqiang to announce a "war on pollution" in March this year.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140819085828-wnvos**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140819085828-wnvos)

**Tibetan groups say 2 dead after police shooting**

Two people have died in a Tibetan region of southwestern China after they were injured by police gunfire while protesting the detention of a local leader, overseas Tibetan rights groups said. One protester committed suicide Sunday in police custody in the town of Louxu while another died that same day from untreated wounds, the British-based group Free Tibet and the US-based International Campaign for Tibet said Monday. Police in Ganzi prefecture, where Louxu is located, did not answer phone calls Tuesday. The Communist Party office there would not comment on the reports.

**AP -** [**http://www.omaha.com/news/world/tibetan-groups-say-dead-after-police-shooting/article\_425d5da6-8055-5245-90bc-a7c3f0fd1a49.html**](http://www.omaha.com/news/world/tibetan-groups-say-dead-after-police-shooting/article_425d5da6-8055-5245-90bc-a7c3f0fd1a49.html)

**China punishes Xinjiang official for openly practising faith**

China has reprimanded 15 Xinjiang officials for violations that include adhering to religious faith, state media said on Tuesday, amid a crackdown on what the government calls illegal religious activities in the unruly western region. One official in the southern city of Kashgar, where a state-backed imam was killed last month, had "worshipped openly", the official Xinhua news agency said, behaviour which violated rules that state workers not be religious.

**Reuters -** [**http://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFKBN0GJ0P820140819**](http://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFKBN0GJ0P820140819)

**Thailand**

**Thai military-dominated legislature to appoint PM**

Thailand's military-dominated legislature will nominate a prime minister this week, members of the national assembly said on Tuesday, a move that looks set to consolidate the army's hold on power almost 100 days since it wrested control of the country. The National Legislative Assembly (NLA) is likely to nominate General Prayuth Chan-ocha, the army chief who led the May 22 coup after months of street protests, assembly members told Reuters. NLA president Pornpetch Wichitcholchai told reporters that an interim prime minister would be appointed on Thursday.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-thailand-politics-idUSKBN0GJ0TF20140819**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-thailand-politics-idUSKBN0GJ0TF20140819)

ESA

**Across ESA**

**Al Shabaab will not stop attacks even if Kenyan military pulls out of Somalia, reveals report**

A new report by South African Security think tank group reveals that even if Kenyan military pulls out of Somalia, Al Shabaab militant group will not stop retaliatory attacks in Kenya. Think Security Africa advises Kenya to work out in her contribution towards the creation of peaceful Somalia. "The withdrawal of KDF can lead Kenya to focus on the internal security only". The report said. The report also indicated the fear of major attacks in Nairobi, Mombasa, Lamu, Garissa, Wajir, Mandera and Turkana.

**AllAfrica -** [**http://allafrica.com/stories/201408182529.html**](http://allafrica.com/stories/201408182529.html)

**Kenya**

**Kenya anti-terrorism police accused of abuses**  
An international human rights group says there is strong evidence that Kenya's anti-terrorism police unit has carried out a series of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances. A Human Rights Watch report said on Monday that research conducted between November and June documented at least 10 cases of unlawful killings and 10 cases of enforced disappearances carried out by the unit. At least 11 cases of mistreatment and harassment of suspects were also documented. The police abuse reportedly rose sharply after Kenya was hit by a series of attacks by Al-Shabab. The HRW report said suspects were shot dead in public places, abducted from vehicles and courtrooms, beaten badly during arrest, detained in isolated blocks and denied contact with their families and access to lawyers, the group says.  
**Aljazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/08/kenya-anti-terrorism-police-accused-abuses-2014818152435132300.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/08/kenya-anti-terrorism-police-accused-abuses-2014818152435132300.html)

**Somalia**

**16 Somali journalists arrested last Friday freed**

Some 16 Somali journalists and media workers have been released from detention. Among those freed are Radio Shabelle and SKY FM reporters, technicians and guards arrested on Friday following a raid that led to the shutdown of both stations. The Somali National Security Agency accused the two independent radio stations of broadcasting inciting programmes. However, three of their colleagues remain in detention, including Abdimalik Yusuf Mohamoud, the owner of Radio Shabelle and SKY FM, Mohamoud Mohamed Dahir alias Mohamoud Arab, director of SKY FM and Ahmed Abdi Hassan, Radio Shabelle Deputy Head of News Programmes. The trio are expected to appear in court but it is still unclear what they will be charged with.

**AfricaReview -** [**http://www.africareview.com/News/Somali-journalists-released-while-others-remain-in-detention/-/979180/2422894/-/11i1kb2z/-/index.html**](http://www.africareview.com/News/Somali-journalists-released-while-others-remain-in-detention/-/979180/2422894/-/11i1kb2z/-/index.html)

**South Sudan**

**UN demand freedom of movement in S. Sudan**

The United Nations Mission on South Sudan has called on the warring parties to respect the lifesaving work of the world body and ensure unhindered freedom of movement for its personnel as well as other humanitarian workers in the country. The appeal comes after three of UN patrols were reportedly stopped by South Sudan army (SPLA) troops, who “aggressively” behaved towards UN personnel. According to the UN mission, the situation in Bentiu and Rubkona in Unity state remained tense over the weekend, following Friday’s clashes between the pro-government army and opposition forces.

**Sudan Tribune -** [**http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article52095**](http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article52095)

**Boy wounded at UN Bentiu camp by random gunfire from army**

A five-year-old boy sheltering at the UN camp in Unity state capital Bentiu has reportedly been wounded by a stray bullet after soldiers from the South Sudanese army (SPLA) fired their guns in the air as part of celebrations marking the 59th anniversary of the Torit mutiny in 1955. According to a source working for an aid agency at the UN camp, the random shooting created panic among local residents. The aid worker accused the SPLA of deliberately targeting civilians at the camp, saying it many more had potentially been injured as a result of the gunfire.

**Sudan Tribune -** [**http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article52091**](http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article52091)

LAC

**Across LAC**

**Colombians protest Venezuela's decision to close border**

Colombian protesters Monday blocked two border crossings into neighboring Venezuela to protest the latter's decision to close its border with Colombia in its fight against smuggling. Venezuela began on Monday shutting down the border from 10 p.m. to 5 p.m. to curb the smuggling of government-subsidized and price- controlled food and fuel into Colombia. The cheap gas and food items in Venezuela has drawn smugglers to sell them abroad. The closure, however, drawn complaints from locals, with the protesters blockading the Simon Bolivar and Francisco de Paula Santander border bridges, both located in the country's northeastern city of Cucuta.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2014-08/19/c\_133566564.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2014-08/19/c_133566564.htm)

**Brazil**

**New poll shows major shake-up for Brazil election**

The likely replacement of Eduardo Campos, the Brazilian presidential candidate killed in a plane crash last week, could force a run-off vote with incumbent Dilma Rousseff, a poll has shown. The results of the poll, released on Monday, showed that Marina Silva of the Brazilian Socialist Party, known as the PSB, would come second in the first round and tie with Rousseff in the run-off, Anadolu News Agency Reported. The Datafolha poll was the first since Campos' death. It showed Rousseff would take 36 percent of votes in the first round on October 5, with Silva on 21 percent and Aecio Neves on 20 percent, meaning a second vote on October 26 between Rousseff and Silva.

**AP -** [**http://www.brecorder.com/world/south-america/189219-new-poll-shows-major-shake-up-for-brazil-election.html**](http://www.brecorder.com/world/south-america/189219-new-poll-shows-major-shake-up-for-brazil-election.html)

**Colombia**

**Colombian president says gov't, rebel to discuss final ceasefire**

Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos said Sunday that a committee of senior military officials and members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) will discuss a final ceasefire and surrender of arms by the insurgents. "At some point, given the conditions, yes (to the bilateral ceasefire). And I can tell now that this committee, created by officers at the highest level, will be installed on Friday," Santos said in an interview published on Sunday in El Tiempo daily. On the other hand, Santos said that if FARC continues its offensive against oil infrastructure, it could jeopardize the peace talks ongoing in Havana, Cuba.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2014-08/18/c\_133565087.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2014-08/18/c_133565087.htm)

MENA

**Across MENA**

**Cross-border aid reaches 12,000 displaced civilians in western Libya**

The UN refugee agency has for the first time begun sending aid into western Libya from Tunisia to help some of the tens of thousands of people displaced by weeks of fighting in the Libyan capital, Tripoli. A first convoy carrying urgently needed medical supplies and UNHCR relief items such as blankets, sleeping mats and nappies, was organized by the International Medical Corps (IMC) on Saturday. The two trucks set off from Medinine and crossed the border at Ras Ajdir before heading to the town of Zawiya, where some 12,000 people have sought shelter from the fighting in Tripoli, 45 kilometres to the east. The IMC also sent a second convoy later Saturday of essential medicines and medical supplies to the displaced, who are living in very difficult conditions. Members of the Taher Al Zawia Organization have been distributing the aid.

**UNHCR -** [**http://reliefweb.int/report/libya/cross-border-aid-reaches-12000-displaced-civilians-western-libya**](http://reliefweb.int/report/libya/cross-border-aid-reaches-12000-displaced-civilians-western-libya)

**Lebanon's Hezbollah kills top jihadist in Syria: NGO**

Fighters from Lebanon's Hezbollah have killed a top jihadist from the Islamic State group in Syria who allegedly planned bloody attacks in Lebanon, a monitoring group said on Tuesday. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Hezbollah fighters had killed Abu Abdullah al-Iraqi in the Qalamun region in Syria, near the border with Lebanon. He "was one of the officials in the Islamic State in charge of preparing suicide attacks", the group said. "He was killed by a roadside bomb planted by Hezbollah that detonated as his vehicle passed by," the NGO added, saying three other jihadists were also killed in the blast. Hezbollah's Al-Manar television station meanwhile reported Iraqi's death, but said he had been killed by the Syrian army.

**AFP -** [**https://uk.news.yahoo.com/lebanons-hezbollah-kills-top-jihadist-syria-ngo-092414654.html#DvG4F3H**](https://uk.news.yahoo.com/lebanons-hezbollah-kills-top-jihadist-syria-ngo-092414654.html#DvG4F3H)

**Iraq  
Backed by US strikes, Iraq Kurds retake strategic dam: officials**

Iraqi and Kurdish forces recaptured Iraq's biggest dam from Islamist militants with the help of US air strikes to secure a vital strategic objective in fighting that threatens to break up the country, Kurdish and US officials said on Monday. US fighter, bomber and drone aircraft took part in the strikes on Islamic State positions near the Mosul Dam, the Pentagon said. The strikes damaged or destroyed six armed vehicles, a light armored vehicle and other equipment. The dam had given the militants control over power and water supplies, and any breach of the vulnerable structure would have threatened thousands of lives.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-iraq-security-idUSKBN0GH0JL20140819**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-iraq-security-idUSKBN0GH0JL20140819)

**Iraqi forces mount operation against Islamic State in Tikrit**

Iraqi forces launched an operation on Tuesday to drive Islamic State militants out of Tikrit, hometown of executed former dictator Saddam Hussein, officers in the operations room told Reuters. They were advancing rapidly from the south but were slowed by landmines, roadside bombs and snipers in the west, said an army major and a police captain.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-iraq-security-idUSKBN0GH0JL20140819**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-iraq-security-idUSKBN0GH0JL20140819)

**UN launching major aid operation for half a million in northern Iraq**

The United Nations refugee agency said on Tuesday it was launching a major aid operation to get supplies to more than half a million people displaced by fighting in northern Iraq. A four-day airlift of tents and other goods will begin on Wednesday to Arbil, Iraq from Aqaba in Jordan, followed by road convoys from Turkey and Jordan and sea shipments from Dubai via Iran over the next 10 days, UNHCR spokesman Adrian Edwards said.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140819085656-qxyag/**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140819085656-qxyag/)

**Libya**

**Renegade Libyan general claims air strikes on Tripoli**

Renegade General Khalifa Haftar's air force was responsible for strikes on Islamist-leaning militia in Tripoli on Monday, one of his commanders said, after weeks of fighting for the capital in Libya's worst violence since Muammar Gaddafi was toppled in 2011. Fighters from Misrata - east of Tripoli - have been battling militia from the western Zintan region for weeks and have thrown the North African state into anarchy. Zintanis and Misratis worked together to topple Gaddafi but have fallen out since. The fighting hitherto has been limited to ground action with artillery and rockets. None of the militias had been thought to own warplanes, while the central government has only an outdated air force, badly in need of repair.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/18/us-libya-security-idUSKBN0GI03Z20140818**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/18/us-libya-security-idUSKBN0GI03Z20140818)

**Saudia Arabia**

**Saudi beheaded for murder as Amnesty urges halt to executions**

A Saudi national convicted of murder was decapitated by the sword in the southwest of the Gulf kingdom on Tuesday, the interior ministry said. Wail al-Shehri, convicted of shooting dead Meshaal Assiri during an argument, was executed on Tuesday in Abha, capital of Assir province, the ministry said in a statement carried by the official SPA news agency. The beheading by sword raises to 33 the number of executions announced in Saudi Arabia so far this year, according to an AFP tally. Rights watchdog Amnesty International on Monday denounced in a statement what it called a "disturbing surge" in the use of the death penalty in Saudi Arabia.

**AFP -** [**https://news.yahoo.com/saudi-beheaded-murder-amnesty-urges-halt-executions-100103226.html**](https://news.yahoo.com/saudi-beheaded-murder-amnesty-urges-halt-executions-100103226.html)

**State of Palestine  
Gaza truce extended by 24 hours**Israel and Palestinian leaders have agreed to extend a Gaza truce by another 24 hours, minutes before an Egyptian-brokered ceasefire was set to expire, officials on both sides have said. In Gaza a senior Palestinian official said agreement had been reached on all but two points drafted by Egypt for a wider deal, including opening Gaza's crossing to allow a freer flow of goods, and extending maritime limits in the Mediterranean Sea. Issues still not agreed upon include Hamas's demands to open a seaport and an airport, which Israel has said it would only discuss at a later stage, in addition to freeing Palestinian prisoners held by Israel and Hamas handing over remains of two Israeli soldiers killed in the war, a Palestinian official said.  
**Aljazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/08/israel-leaders-meet-as-gaza-deadline-looms-20148181990979891.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/08/israel-leaders-meet-as-gaza-deadline-looms-20148181990979891.html)

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/18/us-mideast-gaza-idUSKBN0GI12O20140818**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/18/us-mideast-gaza-idUSKBN0GI12O20140818)

**Damage in Gaza unprecedented: UN official**

A senior UN official says the Gaza Strip has suffered an “unprecedented amount of destruction” as a result of Israel’s offensive against the coastal enclave, calling for an end to the Israeli siege of Gaza. UN Mideast envoy, Robert Serry, told the UN Security Council on Monday that the reconstruction of Gaza remains the main priority once a durable truce is agreed between the Palestinian resistance movement, Hamas, and Israel. “Construction material must be allowed into Gaza to this effect -- aggregate, bar and cement. And their access to Gaza must be facilitated…,” Serry emphasized. He further said the rebuilding of Gaza, at the magnitude that is now needed, can only be addressed with the involvement of Palestinians.

**Press TV -** [**http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2014/08/19/375830/damage-in-gaza-unprecedented-un/**](http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2014/08/19/375830/damage-in-gaza-unprecedented-un/)

**Sudan**

**Rains destroy 1,196 homes, six schools in North Darfur’s El Sareif**

Torrential rains and floods have wiped away 1,196 homes and six schools in El Sareif Beni Hussein town, North Darfur. Large tracts of farmland in El Sareif locality were destroyed, and a number of livestock died. “The more than heavy rains on Friday caused unprecedented flooding in the locality,” an activist told Radio Dabanga from El Sareif town. “The floods swept away 1,125 homes of formerly displaced, who returned last year, and 71 houses in Harika district.” “The people who have lost their homes, are now living in the open, without shelter or food.” The source appealed to the North Darfur State government and relief organisations to accelerate the provision of aid to the affected families.

**Radio Dabanga -** [**http://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/rains-destroy-1196-homes-six-schools-north-darfur-s-el-sareif**](http://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/rains-destroy-1196-homes-six-schools-north-darfur-s-el-sareif)

**Syria**

**US bars all American airlines from flying over Syria**

The US Federal Aviation Administration has barred all American airlines from flying over Syria, saying the ongoing conflict poses a "serious potential threat." The FAA had previously warned American carriers to avoid flying over Syria. The new rule requires operators to contact the FAA before operating in the airspace. The agency said the move was taken after "updated assessment of risk" and a lack of airlines wishing to fly in the airspace. "The ongoing armed conflict and volatile security environment in Syria poses a serious potential threat to civil aviation," the FAA said in a statement. The FAA also said "opposition elements" had warned civilian airlines not to provide service to Syria. Armed extremist groups in the country are known to be equipped with anti-aircraft weapons that could threaten civil aircraft, the agency said.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-syria-crisis-usa-airlines-idUSKBN0GJ01320140819**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-syria-crisis-usa-airlines-idUSKBN0GJ01320140819)

**AP -** [**http://www.kansascity.com/news/government-politics/article1252491.html**](http://www.kansascity.com/news/government-politics/article1252491.html)

**ISIS recruits at record pace in Syria: activist group**

More than 6,000 new fighters joined Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in Syria last month in the militant group's fastest expansion to date, a body monitoring the war said Tuesday. ISIS, previously estimated to number some 15,000, has seized control of large areas of Syria and Iraq. Just over a thousand of the new recruits are foreign and the rest Syrian, Rami Abdel-Rahman, founder of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, told Reuters. The organization says it gathers data from all sides of the Syrian conflict.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2014/Aug-19/267694-isis-recruits-at-record-pace-in-syria-activist-group.ashx#axzz3ApuObLpU**](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2014/Aug-19/267694-isis-recruits-at-record-pace-in-syria-activist-group.ashx#axzz3ApuObLpU)

**Syria’s chemical arsenal fully destroyed, US says**

The United States said Monday that it had completed the destruction of the deadliest chemical weapons in Syria’s arsenal, a rare foreign policy achievement for President Obama at a time when the Middle East is embroiled in violence and political turmoil. The announcement comes a year after President Bashar al-Assad of Syria used sarin gas to kill more than 1,000 people in a Damascus suburb, crossing what Mr. Obama had called a “red line” that would force the United States to respond. Facing the prospect of an American military intervention, the Syrian government agreed to a deal brokered by the United States and Russia, promising to destroy its chemical weapons program by the middle of this year.

**NYT -** [**http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/19/world/middleeast/syrias-chemical-arsenal-fully-destroyed-us-says.html?\_r=0**](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/19/world/middleeast/syrias-chemical-arsenal-fully-destroyed-us-says.html?_r=0)

**Assad forced to hit advancing ISIS in Syria**

As the US military strikes ISIS militants in Iraq, Syrian President Bashar Assad's forces have significantly stepped up their own campaign against militant strongholds in Syria, carrying out dozens of airstrikes against the group's headquarters in the past two days. On Monday, ISIS fighters were closing in on the last government-held army base in the northeastern Raqqa province, the Tabqa air base, prompting at least 16 Syrian government airstrikes in the area in an attempt to halt their advance. In the northern city of Aleppo, there is a sense of impending defeat among mainstream rebels as ISIS militants systematically routed them last week in towns and villages only a few miles north of the city. An ISIS takeover of rebel-held parts of Aleppo also would be disastrous for Syrian government troops who have been gaining ground in the city in past months.

**AP -** [**http://www.cbsnews.com/news/isis-us-airstrikes-iraq-jihadists-pose-threat-in-syria/?utm\_source=feedburner&utm\_medium=feed&utm\_campaign=Feed%3A+cbsnews%2Ffeed+(CBSNews.com)**](http://www.cbsnews.com/news/isis-us-airstrikes-iraq-jihadists-pose-threat-in-syria/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+cbsnews%2Ffeed+(CBSNews.com))

**Yemen  
Yemen capital hit by anti-government rallies**Thousands of supporters of Yemen’s Houthi movement have flooded Sanaa in a public display of strength the day after their leader publicly called for the government to be dissolved. The group’s decision to protest in the capital on Monday has raised concerns of a potential outbreak of violence between Shia Houthis and the government or its Sunni political rivals, the Islah party. In a televised speech on 17 August, Houthi leader Abdulmalek al-Houthi called for his supporters to mount protests in Sanaa and other major cities, and to reoccupy the Change Square protest encampment. Houthi demanded that fuel subsidies, which were cut significantly in late July, be reinstated. He urged for current government's dissolution, in favour of what he considers a more representative cabinet. He gave president Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi until Friday to meet the Houthis' demands, or warned that "other steps" would be taken.  
**Aljazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/08/yemen-houthis-rally-oust-government-201481812414798870.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/08/yemen-houthis-rally-oust-government-201481812414798870.html)

SA

**Afghanistan**

**Clashes kill 16 in northern Afghan province, hundreds displaced**

A total of 16 Taliban militants including two local commanders have been killed since Sunday night in the northern Kunduz province as clashes going on between security forces and insurgents in parts of the province, officials said Monday. "Security forces launched cleanup operations in Gultapa area outside provincial capital Kunduz city and Gumbaz area in Imam Sahib district last night and so 10 rebels have been killed there," provincial police spokesman Sayed Sarwar Hussaini told Xinhua. Meanwhile, six more Taliban fighters were killed in Aqtash area of Khanabad district, Kunduz province as their hideouts came under air attack on Sunday night, a local official said. "Six Taliban rebels were killed as their hideouts was attacked by unmanned plane on Sunday night in Aqtash village of Khanabad district," Hayatullah Amiri, the governor of Khanabad district told Xinhua. However, he didn't provide more details.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2014-08/18/c\_133566037.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2014-08/18/c_133566037.htm)

**Hundreds of Taliban fighters begin offensive near Afghan capital: officials**

Some 700 Taliban fighters armed with heavy machine guns are battling Afghan security forces in Logar province, just outside the capital Kabul, Afghan officials said on Tuesday. "There are some 700 of them and they are fighting Afghan forces for territorial control and they have also brought with them makeshift mobile (health) clinics," Niaz Mohammad Amiri, the provincial governor of Logar, told Reuters by telephone. No longer pinned down by U.S. air cover, Taliban fighters are attacking Afghan military posts in large numbers with aim of taking and holding ground, a shift from the hit-and-run strikes to posses of gunmen, explosives and suicide attacks.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-afghanistan-taliban-offensive-idUSKBN0GJ0SV20140819**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-afghanistan-taliban-offensive-idUSKBN0GJ0SV20140819)

**Pakistan  
Imran Khan’s party quits Pakistan parliament**The party of Pakistan's opposition leader Imran Khan has quit the national assembly and vowed to intensify anti-government protests, a day after he called for a campaign of civil disobedience in protest at the government of Nawaz Sharif. The party is Pakistan's third largest. Khan has rallied with thousands of supporters in Islamabad in recent days, demanding the government step down and hold fresh elections and alleging fraud in last year's general election. But the protest failed to attract the vast crowds Khan had promised and other opposition parties on Monday distanced themselves from his call for a campaign of civil disobedience, leaving him looking isolated.  
**Aljazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/08/pakistan-khan-pulls-party-out-parliament-2014818141856398979.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/08/pakistan-khan-pulls-party-out-parliament-2014818141856398979.html)

**Bomb kills 2 infants, 4 adults in Pakistan**

At least six people including two infants were killed when a vehicle hit a roadside bomb in restive northwest Pakistan on Tuesday, officials said. The attack came in Salarzai area of Bajaur tribal region, which lies on the Afghan border and has recently been attacked by the militants from across the frontier. The officials said that the dead included three women who were school teachers, and two of their infant children. "According to initial reports, six civilians, including three lady teachers, two children and one passerby have embraced shahadat (martyrdom)," a security official said. Local administration official Sohail Khan confirmed the incident.

**AFP -** [**http://www.aljoumhouria.com/news/index/161646**](http://www.aljoumhouria.com/news/index/161646)

**Pakistan arrests 147 in Punjab towns as protests in capital continue**

As twin protests in Islamabad entered a fifth day on Tuesday, Pakistan police said they had arrested some 150 supporters of protest leaders overnight in Punjab province in a crackdown ahead of widening demonstrations in the capital. Opposition leader Imran Khan and firebrand cleric Tahir ul-Qadri have led tens of thousands of supporters from Punjab to Islamabad in a bid to bring down Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, whom they accuse of rigging elections and corruption. The protests have piled extra pressure on the 15-month-old civilian government already struggling to overcome high unemployment, daily power cuts and a Taliban insurgency. The protests have raised questions over the political stability of Pakistan, a nuclear-armed nation of 180 million people with a history of coups.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-pakistan-politics-idUSKBN0GJ0EZ20140819**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/us-pakistan-politics-idUSKBN0GJ0EZ20140819)

**Pakistan protesters to march on Islamabad secure red zone**

Security has been tightened in the secure zone of Pakistan's capital, Islamabad, after protest leader Imran Khan called on marchers to enter it. The government has forbidden protesters from breaching the highly secure so-called red zone housing key state buildings and foreign embassies. There are fears that any attempt by marchers to breach this order could lead to confrontation. Thousands of anti-government protesters are occupying two Islamabad highways.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-28832480**](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-28832480)

**Sri Lanka  
Rapes surge in Sri Lanka amid weak laws**Recent allegations that a naval officer in the northern city of Jaffna raped an 11-year-old girl have cast a spotlight on the growing problem of sexual violence in Sri Lanka. According to police statistics, incidents of rape have increased by nearly 20 percent in the last two years, with 4,393 cases registered during 2012-2014 as compared to 3,624 in 2010-2012. According to a 2013[UN Survey](http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2013/9/half-of-men-report-using-violence-and-a-quarter-perpetrate-rape-according-to-un-survey), which explored violence against women throughout the Asia-Pacific region, nearly 15 percent of Sri Lankan men said they had committed rape. Of those, 65 percent said they had done so on more than one occasion. But of all the men surveyed, only five percent said they had been arrested and jailed for their crimes.  
**Aljazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/08/rapes-surge-sri-lanka-amid-weak-marital-laws-201481772359790802.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/08/rapes-surge-sri-lanka-amid-weak-marital-laws-201481772359790802.html)

**Sri Lanka to refuse entry to UN investigators: President**

Sri Lanka will not grant visas to UN investigators probing war crimes allegedly committed during the island's decades-long separatist conflict, President Mahinda Rajapakse said on Tuesday. "We will not allow them into the country," said Rajapakse, who is under international pressure to cooperate with the UN-mandated investigation. Sri Lanka has refused to accept the authority of the UN Human Rights Council which voted in March to probe allegations that the military killed 40,000 civilians in the final months of the separatist war, which ended in 2009. But it is the first time that Rajapakse has said UN investigators will not be allowed into the country, effectively barring them from face-to-face access to Sri Lankans wanting to testify in the probe.

**AFP -** [**http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/World/South-Asia/Sri-Lanka-to-refuse-entry-to-UN-investigators-President/articleshow/40394559.cms**](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/World/South-Asia/Sri-Lanka-to-refuse-entry-to-UN-investigators-President/articleshow/40394559.cms)

WCA

**Across WCA**

**Ebola nations urged to screen all travelers**West African nations affected by the worst-ever outbreak of Ebola have been urged to screen "all people at international airports, seaports and major land crossings" in order to stop its spread. The WHO said on Monday that authorities should stop anyone with signs of the virus from travelling, days after it warned that the magnitude of the outbreak was "vastly underestimated". The outbreak in West Africa has already killed 1,145 and infected more than 2,000.  
**Aljazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/08/ebola-nations-urged-screen-all-travellers-201481813498574142.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/08/ebola-nations-urged-screen-all-travellers-201481813498574142.html)

**Ebola kills 84 in three days: UN**

The Ebola virus killed 84 people in just three days, bringing the global death toll to 1,229, the World Health Organization said on Tuesday (Aug 19). The death toll, which passed the 1,000-mark over a week ago, soared higher between last Thursday and Saturday. The number of confirmed infections jumped by 113 over the three days, bringing the total number of cases to 2,240, the UN health agency said.

**AFP -** [**http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/health/ebola-kills-84-in-three/1320154.html**](http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/health/ebola-kills-84-in-three/1320154.html)

**West Africa Ebola toll passes 1,200, quarantine victims to get food – WHO**

Cases in West Africa's Ebola outbreak this year have risen to 2,240, including 1,229 deaths, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said on Tuesday, reporting the toll in four countries including Nigeria. The WHO said it was working with the U.N.'s World Food Programme to ensure food delivery to 1 million people living in Ebola quarantine zones in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

**Reuters -** [**http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFKBN0GJ0M220140819**](http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFKBN0GJ0M220140819)

Ebola orphans targeted by aid groups as newest victims – UNICEF mention

Orphans whose families were killed by Ebola are becoming a tragic legacy of the deadly outbreak in four West African nations, say relief organizations struggling to care for the children who may themselves be infected. They are “the poorest of the poor,” said Father Jorge Crisafulli of the nonprofit Catholic organization Salesian Missions. The group was asked to provide care for the orphans by the government of Sierra Leone and local staff are deciding today on a plan of action. Besides immediate needs such as food, the growing number of children whose families have been decimated by Ebola will likely face long-term stigma and discrimination in the future as aid groups try to reintegrate them into the community, said Christopher Tidey, a spokesman for UNICEF.

**Bloomberg News -** [**http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-08-19/ebola-orphans-targeted-by-aid-groups-as-newest-victims.html**](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-08-19/ebola-orphans-targeted-by-aid-groups-as-newest-victims.html)

**Cameroon villagers flee Boko Haram cross-border attacks**

Cameroon's border area are becoming increasingly deserted due to persistent attacks, looting and kidnappings by suspected members of the militant group. Government officials are pleading with the former residents to return, but the residents say they fear for their safety. In addition, many government workers sent to the border localities are leaving the area. Truck drivers are refusing to transport food items to the border area, and huge quantities of cotton, onions and other farm produce are piling up. Some business owners have fled for their lives.

**AllAfrica -** [**http://allafrica.com/stories/201408183184.html**](http://allafrica.com/stories/201408183184.html)

**CAR**

**More than 100 children released from armed groups in Central African Republic over past week – UNICEF**

One hundred and three children age 8 to 17 were released over the past week from armed groups in Bangui following negotiations with armed group leaders. The 103 children, 13 of whom are girls, were associated with the anti-Balaka armed groups operating mainly in Bangui and in the western part of CAR, who took up arms in retaliation for attacks from ex-Seleka forces in the last year and a half of violence. “As the conflict continues, the number of children being used in armed groups has increased dramatically,” said Souleymane Diabaté, UNICEF Representative in Central African Republic. “Recruitment of children into conflict is a grave violation of child rights, and these children have witnessed a level of violence that no child should ever have to experience.”

**UNICEF -** [**http://www.unicef.org/media/media\_74816.html**](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_74816.html)

**Liberia**

**Liberia says has located all 17 runaway Ebola patients**

Liberia has found all 17 suspected Ebola patients who fled a quarantine centre in Monrovia at the weekend and transferred them to another clinic, the information minister said on Tuesday. "We are glad to confirm that all of the 17 individuals have been accounted for and have now been transferred to JFK Ebola specialist treatment centre," said Lewis Brown. He also said that three infected African doctors who had received the experimental Ebola drug Zmapp were showing "remarkable signs of improvement", quoting an assessment by the doctor overseeing their treatment.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/health-ebola-liberia-idUSL5N0QP1IY20140819**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/19/health-ebola-liberia-idUSL5N0QP1IY20140819)

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