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GENERAL

**United 'Palestine' casts first UN General Assembly vote**

Palestine's U.N. delegation cast its first General Assembly ballot Monday to a warm round of applause, which its ambassador called a symbolic step toward full membership in the world body. U.N. Ambassador Riyad Mansour voted in the assembly's election of a judge for the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. Koffi Kumelio Afande of Togo was elected to the court. It was the first time that a Palestinian "state" voted in the General Assembly, almost a year after the 193-nation body elevated it to non-member U.N. observer state, the same status the Vatican holds. The Palestinians now have access to U.N. agencies and international bodies, including the International Criminal Court and UNESCO. Under the statute of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the Vatican and Palestine, as non-member states, could take part in the election just like the regular General Assembly members.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/palestine-casts-general-assembly-vote-20929053**](http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/palestine-casts-general-assembly-vote-20929053)

CEE/CIS

**Bulgaria**

**More Bulgarians say Socialist-led govt should resign-poll**

Growing dissatisfaction with Bulgaria's new Socialist-led government was reflected in a Gallup opinion poll on Tuesday that showed almost half of those surveyed think the government should resign. Nationwide occupations of universities by students and lecturers have given new impetus to popular protests over alleged corruption since the government came to power in May. Some 48 percent of Bulgarians polled in November said the cabinet of Prime Minister Plamen Oresharski should step down, up from 41 percent a month earlier and the highest since the government took office, according to the poll. corruption.

**Reuters** - [**http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/11/19/uk-bulgaria-poll-idUKBRE9AI0IO20131119**](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/11/19/uk-bulgaria-poll-idUKBRE9AI0IO20131119)

**Georgia**

**Georgia swears in new president: Giorgi Margvelashvili takes office despite new constitutional changes transferring power to the PM**

Margvelashvili has pledged to strengthen the former Soviet republic's ties with the West while maintaining its commitment to NATO. The inaugration of 44-year-old Margvelashvili, a philosopher and former university rector, as president on 17 November marked the end of the decade-long presidency of Mikheil Saakashvili who put the country on the path toward integration with the European Union. Margvelashvili, who won last month's presidential election with 62 percent of the vote, expressed his commitment to democracy, EU integration and the strategic partnership with the US, in his inaugral address. He said Georgians would continue to do their part in the international fight against terrorism, despite the losses sustained in Afghanistan, where Georgia is the largest non-NATO contributor of troops to the NATO-led mission. The new president has little political experience and is seen as beholden to Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili, whose coalition drove Saakashvili's party from power in last year's parliamentary election.

**Aljazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/europe/2013/11/georgia-swears-new-president-2013111712756245793.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/europe/2013/11/georgia-swears-new-president-2013111712756245793.html)

**Ukraine**

**Ukraine again postpones Tymoshenko bill hearing**

On 19 November, Ukrainian lawmakers, despite the presence of senior EU officials, again postponed the hearing of a bill to free former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. The hearing would take place Thursday, Parliametary Speaker Vladimir Rybak said. The move deals a further blow to hopes that Ukraine is signaling its commitment to an association agreement with the European Union, which it is supposed to sign at a November 29 summit in Vilnius. EU leaders have warned Kiev that it only has a few days left to fulfill the conditions for an agreement.

**Ukraine** - [**http://en.europeonline-magazine.eu/ukraine-again-postpones-tymoshenko-bill-hearing\_305890.html**](http://en.europeonline-magazine.eu/ukraine-again-postpones-tymoshenko-bill-hearing_305890.html)

EAPR

**China**

**China on path to further reform one-child policy**

China will further ease its family planning laws after announcing last week that it would allow millions of families to have two children, a senior official from the government's family planning commission said on Tuesday. "I can only say that the direction is definite, but as to what kind of specific strategy will be chosen, we have to wait for the experts' verification of the situation at that time," said Mao Qun'an, the spokesman for the National Health and Family Planning Commission. The commission executes and advises the government on family planning policy, and as a senior official at the agency, Mao would be privy to the direction of the recommendations. The government said last week that it would allow couples in which one of the parents is an only child to have a second child. It was the most significant relaxation of the one-child policy in nearly three decades.

**Reuters -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/china-path-further-reform-one-child-policy-spokesman-085051340.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/china-path-further-reform-one-child-policy-spokesman-085051340.html)

**Myanmar**

**Myanmar Kachin activists call for immediate end to clashes**

Several Kachin campaign groups called Monday for an immediate end to clashes between Myanmar troops and ethnic rebels, which have trapped hundreds of people including schoolchildren with limited food and shelter in a remote area of the state. Skirmishes have affected at least 2,300 people in the Bhamo-Mansi area, among them many who had already been displaced by previous fighting, the non-government groups said in a statement distributed by the UN in Yangon on Monday. The groups expressed particular concern for some 700 pupils after their boarding school was surrounded Saturday by Myanmar troops. "These students and their teachers... were surrounded and blockaded inside the school compound but an appeal by the Catholic Church led to their release," later that evening, the statement said. "The latest battle has also affected internally displaced persons (IDPs) located around the area... these IDPs have been displaced by earlier skirmishes," it said, calling for an "immediate cessation of hostilities" to allow humanitarian access.

**AFP -** [**http://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/myanmar-kachin-activists-call-immediate-end-clashes**](http://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/myanmar-kachin-activists-call-immediate-end-clashes)

**Philippines**

**Filipino militants abduct provincial treasurer**

Abu Sayyaf militants barged into a government compound in the southern Philippines and abducted the provincial treasurer in a daring attack, a military official said Tuesday. Two police bodyguards opened fire but failed to stop the abduction after they were overwhelmed by up to 10 Abu Sayyaf militants, who snatched Jesus Cabilin late Monday in his quarters in the provincial capital compound in Sulu province, military commander Marine Col. Jose Cenabre said. The militants, who were armed with assault rifles and pistols, fled in a van with Cabilin. The brief exchange of fire between the militants and Cabilin’s police guards alarmed Cenabre and other officers, who were at the provincial military headquarters about 1 kilometer (less than a mile) away.

**AP -** [**http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/530371/filipino-militants-abduct-provincial-treasurer**](http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/530371/filipino-militants-abduct-provincial-treasurer)

**Philippines says typhoon rebuilding cost may be up to $5.8 billion**

The cost of rebuilding houses, schools, roads and bridges in typhoon-devastated central Philippines could reach 250 billion pesos ($5.8 billion), making it likely that the government will seek cheap loans from development agencies, a senior official said on Tuesday. If the government is successful in deploying resources for post-typhoon reconstruction, the economy may even grow faster, said Arsenio Balisacan, economic planning secretary, adding the country's strong economic fundamentals remained intact. I would not be surprised if it can go as high as 250 billion," Balisacan told Reuters, commenting on the likely cost of reconstruction.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/19/us-philippines-typhoon-cost-idUSBRE9AI09P20131119**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/19/us-philippines-typhoon-cost-idUSBRE9AI09P20131119)

**U.N. disaster chief stresses long-term needs for Philippines**

The head of U.N. disaster relief visited the heart of the Philippine disaster zone on Tuesday and stressed the need for long-term planning as well as emergency relief to ensure farmers and fishermen can resume their livelihoods. Valerie Amos toured the devastated coastal town of Guiuan in Eastern Samar, where Super Typhoon Haiyan made landfall on November 8 wiping out just about everything in its path, as a government official estimated the reconstruction bill would reach $5.8 billion. "We've had people here for a couple of days and I hope that by tomorrow we will be reaching a number of those coastal communities where they still have their boats but we haven't been able to get to them with food so we urgently want to get to them with food," Amos told Reuters.

**Reuters -** [**http://in.reuters.com/article/2013/11/19/philippines-typhoon-idINDEE9AI03920131119**](http://in.reuters.com/article/2013/11/19/philippines-typhoon-idINDEE9AI03920131119)

ESAR

**Somalia**

**Somali African Union Beledweyne base hit by bomb attack**

At least 10 people have been killed in a suicide attack on an African Union base in the Somali town of Beledweyne near Ethiopia's border, witnesses say. A car rammed into the gates, exploded and gunmen then stormed the building. The BBC's Mohammed Moalimu in Somalia says it is a base for Djiboutian troops and Somali policemen. An al-Shabab spokesman, Abdiasis Abu Musab, told the Reuters news agency that the al-Qaeda-linked group was responsible for attack on the AU base. Beledweyne is a strategic town, 30km (20 miles) from the Ethiopian border on the main road to the capital, Mogadishu, and also on the major artery linking the north and south of the country. Al-Shabab militants have been driven out of Somalia's major towns by a UN-mandated African Union force (Amisom) of some 18,000 soldiers, but still control large parts of southern Somalia. Local al-Shabab commander Mohamed Abu Suleiman told AFP special commandos had carried out the attack.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-24998892**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-24998892)

**Aid arrives for Somalia's cyclone hit Puntland region** Food and medical supplies have begun to arrive in Somalia's northeastern Puntland region, badly hit by a ferocious storm and flooding, the United Nations has said. The UN World Food Programme has sent 340 tons of food, enough for 4,000 households for a month, while Puntland's government has sent 32 trucks of supplies. The local government in the semi-autonomous region has said as many as 300 people were feared to have been killed in the aftermath of the storm, but the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said in an update released late Monday that 80 were so far confirmed dead. "From 650 medical consultations conducted so far, information gathered confirms 80 reported deaths, mostly of children and the elderly who were most vulnerable to hypothermia and exposure," UNOCHA said. However, livestock on which the majority of rural population depend has been badly hit.

**AFP -** [**http://www.rappler.com/world/regions/africa/44089-aid-arrives-for-somalia-cyclone-hit-puntland-region**](http://www.rappler.com/world/regions/africa/44089-aid-arrives-for-somalia-cyclone-hit-puntland-region)

**Beefed-up peacekeepers may renew offensive on al Shabaab**

UN-backed AU peacekeepers in Somalia, bolstered by more than 4,000 new soldiers, may return to the attack against al Qaeda-linked militants, a senior AU commander said on Monday. The AU force known as AMISOM will have more than 22,000 troops when the reinforcements agreed last week arrive. Brigadier Dick Olum, a Ugandan commander in charge of one of the four AMISOM sectors covering Somalia, said the extra 4,000 soldiers could tilt the military balance against al Shabaab. Olum said a UN call for countries to consider supplying AMISOM with up to 12 military helicopters could prove crucial in broadening its reach and operational capabilities. Brigadier Walter Raria, a Kenyan commander in charge of AMISOM sector 2, said gathering timely intelligence for combat was one of the main problems facing Kenyan and Sierra Leone troops fighting al Shabaab in southern Somalia. Olum said AMISOM was considering which al Shabaab strongholds to target and cited the port city of Barawe as a critical area.

**Reuters** - [**http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/11/18/uk-somalia-security-amisom-idUKBRE9AH0SD20131118**](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/11/18/uk-somalia-security-amisom-idUKBRE9AH0SD20131118)

**South Sudan**

**Government 'deeply regrets' UN harassment**

South Sudan said Monday that it "deeply regrets" dozens of cases of harassment and threats against UN staff by its army and police. The government has faced pressure from the UN Security Council and the US over beatings of UN staff and other incidents in recent months. UN leader Ban Ki-moon complained in a report last week of 67 cases of "harassment, threats, physical assault, arrest and detention of UN staff" and seizure of UN vehicles between 7 May and 5 November. In one case on 19 October, a female UN staff member was "severely beaten" in the capital, Juba, and then detained following "a traffic encounter with a military pickup carrying armed uniformed men," said Ban's report. Diplomats said the case involved a convoy of South Sudan's president, Salva Kiir. "We deeply regret both the character and the number of incidents that have occurred," South Sudan's UN Ambassador Francis Deng told a UNSC meeting on his country. "The government is seriously committed to ending these violations.   
**AFP** - [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/106234-south-sudan-deeply-regrets-u-n-harassment**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/106234-south-sudan-deeply-regrets-u-n-harassment)

**Thousands displaced in Duk’s land dispute**

Authorities in Duk County of Jonglei State say more than 1,000 people have been displaced following inter-communal clashes between communities of Duk and Uror counties. Two people were killed and 6 wounded when fresh clashes broke out last week between the two communities over ownership of land in Pajut area. Duk County Commissioner, Elijah Mocnhom Wuor says 11 villages around Pajut have been exavuated and have moved to Payuel Payam in fear of reprisal attacks. “They are now suffering there in Payuel and the rest of the people went to Padit and Poktap, Patunoi and even Mareng,” Mr Mochnom said, referring to local areas in the county.   
**Miraya** - [**http://reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan-republic/thousands-displaced-duk-s-land-dispute**](http://reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan-republic/thousands-displaced-duk-s-land-dispute)

**Uganda**

**Mayor of Ugandan capital arrested over rally**

Police in Uganda have arrested the mayor of the capital city, a political opponent of the president who last week was found guilty of abuse of office. Police on Monday arrested Erias Lukwago for disobeying orders to cancel a public rally of supporters. Last week a government tribunal found Lukwago guilty of abuse of office, incompetence and misconduct. Lukwago says the ruling is part of a plot by President Yoweri Museveni to kick him out of office. Police spokeswoman Judith Nabakooba said the planned meeting was illegal because organizers did not fulfill legal requirements to hold the event. Ndebesa Mwabutsya, a political analyst at Makerere University, said the mayor's arrest demonstrates the government's attempts to use the law to attain political goals.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/mayor-ugandan-capital-arrested-over-rally-154513172.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/mayor-ugandan-capital-arrested-over-rally-154513172.html)

LAC

**Haiti**

**Anti-government protesters, police clash in Haiti**

Police fired tear gas Monday in Haiti's two main cities to disperse thousands of protesters demanding better living conditions and the resignation of President Michel Martelly. In Cap Haitien, local journalists told AFP they had been beaten by security forces on the sidelines of an opposition rally that police tried to break up with tear gas. The journalists said a protester was reported to have been wounded by gunfire. In the capital Port-au-Prince, about 10,000 protesters massed in the center of the city where clashes broke out with police who fired tear gas in response. The march shifted direction midmorning, heading for the upscale Petionville suburb where Martelly supporters were rallying. "We are not going to fight with fellow Haitians, who are our brothers even if they oppose the overnment. They are manipulated by the opposition," said an engineer in the crowd of Martelly backers.

**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5i98M4IGdB1IeMvOyg1STd07RkElg?docId=b03809f4-f709-406f-8031-ea2a25faaa1d**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5i98M4IGdB1IeMvOyg1STd07RkElg?docId=b03809f4-f709-406f-8031-ea2a25faaa1d)

MENA

**Egypt**

**22 women, girls on trial for clashes**

Fifteen women and seven girls who back Egypt's ousted president Mohamed Morsi will stand trial for participating in clashes in Alexandria, the general prosecutor's office said on Monday. The girls, all under the age of 18, will be prosecuted in a juvenile court, a statement said. The trial of all the accused will start on Wednesday, the prosecutor's office said, adding that the 22 were accused of fighting with anti-Morsi crowds on 31 October in the Mediterranean city. They fought with knives and threw rocks at their opponents during the clashes and disturbed public order, the statement charged. Five people who evaded arrest in the same case are also being tried in absentia, the statement added.

**AFP** - [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131118/22-women-girls-trial-egypt-clashes**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/131118/22-women-girls-trial-egypt-clashes)

**Protesters rally in Cairo's Tahrir Square against security forces**

About 1,000 people marched in Cairo's Tahrir Square on Monday night to condemn the actions of Egyptian security forces and some voiced rare criticism of the army chief, raising tension on the eve of planned mass protests. Large numbers of demonstrators were expected to turn out on Tuesday, extending turmoil that has dogged Egypt since the army ousted elected Islamist President Mohamed Mursi and has wrecked investment and tourism in the major, U.S.- allied Arab state. Monday's rally began in the afternoon to commemorate people killed in clashes with security forces two years ago, then turned into chanting against General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, whose forces toppled Mursi in July. Army and police who had been stationed by armored personnel carriers after sealing off Tahrir melted away by the time the protesters arrived at the square, the heart of the 2011 popular uprising that ejected autocrat Hosni Mubarak.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/19/us-egypt-militants-idUSBRE9AH0ZB20131119**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/19/us-egypt-militants-idUSBRE9AH0ZB20131119)

**Iran**

**Iran arrests those behind killing of prosecutor**

Iranian authorities have arrested those behind the killing earlier this month of a prosecutor in the country's restive southeast, according to Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani-Fazli, as cited by media Tuesday. The minister did not specify how many people had been arrested but said they were behind the gunning down of public prosecutor Mousa Nouri in Zabol, a city near the Afghan border in Sistan-Baluchestan province, on November 7. "Although the motives behind this [killing] are not clear, it has been learnt that these people were not linked to terrorists in Saravan," the ISNA news agency reported Rahmani-Fazli as saying. He was apparently alluding to Sunni extremist group Jaish-ul Adl, which has claimed responsibility for the killing.

**AFP -** [**https://now.mmedia.me/lb/en/international/521398-iran-arrests-those-behind-killing-of-prosecutor-media-say**](https://now.mmedia.me/lb/en/international/521398-iran-arrests-those-behind-killing-of-prosecutor-media-say)

**Iraq**

**Renewed violence as authorities execute 12 'terrorists'**

Attacks across Iraq killed eight people Monday as authorities announced they have executed a dozen men convicted of "terrorism" in the face of the country's worst bloodshed in five years. The violence was the latest in a months-long surge in unrest that has forced Iraq to appeal for international help in combatting a surge in militant attacks. It comes just months before Iraq's first general election in four years and amid fears the country is on the brink of falling back into all-out sectarian war. Monday's violence struck across Iraq, from the northern city of Mosul to the town of Hilla, south of Baghdad, as well as in and around the capital. But the deadliest attacks came near Baquba, which lies north of Baghdad and is one of Iraq's most violent cities, with shootings in the city and nearby towns killing four people, including a Sunni anti-Al-Qaeda militiaman. Violence in Hilla, Baghdad, and the towns of Madain and Abu Ghraib near the capital left four others dead.

**AFP** - [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jZuXtr3bXbs1d93OHTlzLFdQ2gBg?docId=35cddcff-6687-4fbb-a1a3-cc186e843f4d&hl=en**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jZuXtr3bXbs1d93OHTlzLFdQ2gBg?docId=35cddcff-6687-4fbb-a1a3-cc186e843f4d&hl=en)

**Lebanon**

**Strong blasts kill 22 near Iran embassy in Beirut**

A double bomb attack outside the Iranian embassy in Beirut killed at least 22 people, wounded almost 150 and caused widespread damage Tuesday in a stronghold of Hezbollah, government sources said. The powerful explosions just opposite the nine-storey embassy in the southern suburbs of the Lebanese capital caused chaos, ripping the facades off nearby buildings and setting cars ablaze. They follow two other bomb attacks this year in the southern suburbs of Beirut that are the bastion of the powerful Lebanese Shiite movement Hezbollah. The group, which is sponsored by Iran, has drawn controversy for sending thousands of fighters to support the regime of Syria's President Bashar al-Assad as he battles a 32-month-old uprising.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/7-killed-blast-near-iran-embassy-beirut-082113390.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/7-killed-blast-near-iran-embassy-beirut-082113390.html)

**Libya**

**Troops deploy in Libya capital as militias ordered out**

Regular troops deployed in Tripoli and militias began to withdraw on Monday after deadly weekend clashes sparked by a protest against the former rebels in Libya's 2011 revolt. Washington, meanwhile, said it is ready to train Libyan soldiers as part of efforts to boost security. The unrest was the deadliest in the capital since the uprising and erupted when former rebels from Misrata fired on protesters, triggering clashes that killed 43 people and wounded 450. Growing lawlessness plaguing Libya since the uprising was further compounded when gunmen on Sunday abducted the deputy head of intelligence services, Mustafa Nuh, near Tripoli airport. Nuh was released on Monday and later told private television channel Al-Naba that his captors took him to the western city of Zintan.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/libya-army-deploys-tripoli-streets-clashes-000857445.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/libya-army-deploys-tripoli-streets-clashes-000857445.html)

**Militia withdrawal tests Tripoli after clashes**

Militia fighters blamed for the worst unrest in Tripoli since the fall of Muammar Gaddafi pulled out of the capital on Monday with Libyan army units taking up positions around the city. More than 40 people were killed in street battles between rival militias in Tripoli last week, highlighting Libya's struggle to curb fighters and hardline Islamists who refuse to disarm two years after ousting Gaddafi. The latest bloodshed has increased popular anger against militias in Tripoli, where rival groups have often clashed violently over territory or in personal feuds. The withdrawal of one powerful set of fighters, though, may leave Libya's fragile government to face more competition among the militia groups that remain un the city.

**Reuters** - [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/18/us-libya-security-idUSBRE9AH0XA20131118**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/18/us-libya-security-idUSBRE9AH0XA20131118)

**Sudan**

**At least 30 killed in clashes in west**

A Sudanese news agency says clashes between herdsmen from two Arab tribes in the western Darfur region have left at least 30 people dead. The semi-official Sudan Media Center said Tuesday that the fighting took place last week in Abu Dukhin, a locality in Central Darfur State. It said security has been restored, and officials have visited the area to defuse the tension. Tribal clashes in these areas usually stem from disputes over grazing and farming rights. The African Union-United Nations peace keeping mission in Darfur (UNAMID) issued a statement Monday saying it has facilitated the travel of the government delegation to the region on Sunday. It confirmed that the area was calm.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/sudan-media-30-killed-clashes-west-20933047**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/sudan-media-30-killed-clashes-west-20933047)

**Sudanese Air Force Bombs Buram in South Kordofan**

The Sudanese Air Force reportedly bombed the town of Buram and Tanasa village, south of Kadugli, the capital of South Kordofan. Two children were killed. According to a press release by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army-North (SPLM/A-N), a Sukhoi bomber on 17 November at about 5pm attacked Buram and Tanasa in the Nuba Mountains with "large-sized, parachuted bombs". The SPLM/A-N official spokesman, Arnu Ngutulu Lodi, stated in the press release that the "SPLA/N and other Sudan Revolutionary Front forces will not keep quiet while the ruling National Congress Party is continuing its atrocities against civilians. Our response to the ethnic cleansing of the Khartoum regime will be strong and severe." Yasir Arman, Secretary General of the SPLM-N and spokesperson for the SRF delegation currently touring Europe, commented from the Finnish capital of Helsinki, on the bombardments.

**Radio Dabanga -** [**http://allafrica.com/stories/201311182335.html**](http://allafrica.com/stories/201311182335.html)

**Sudanese complain of bread shortage in Khartoum**

Sudanese queued outside empty bread shops in Khartoum on Monday after four days of scarcity that bakers blamed on a downturn in government wheat imports due to a shortage of hard currency. Residents said bread prices had risen this week, although the government, which subsidises the food staple, has not announced any change. Three loaves now sell for one Sudanese pound ($0.18), instead of four loaves previously, they said. There were no reports of unrest due to the bread shortage. Dozens of people were killed and more than 700 arrested in violent protests in September after the government cut fuel subsidies, doubling pump prices overnight. The violence prompted the government to defer plans to reduce wheat subsidies, an official in the ruling National Congress Party said at the time.

**Reuters** - [**http://www.trust.org/item/20131118143946-ycjz6/?source=hptop**](http://www.trust.org/item/20131118143946-ycjz6/?source=hptop)

**Yemen**

**Eight police killed in south ambush**

Gunmen ambushed and killed eight policemen Monday near a gas terminal in southern Yemen, a security official said. The attack took place as the police were driving to a security checkpoint near the Belhaf terminal, in the southern Shabwa province, the official said. "Armed men in two cars opened fire on the policemen, killing them on the spot," the official said. He was unable to identify the assailants or explain their motives. Yemeni security personnel have come under increasing attack in recent months, particularly in the south and east of the country, with authorities generally blaming the assaults on Al-Qaeda. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) has taken advantage of the weakening of the central government since an Arab Spring-inspired uprising in 2011 toppled president Ali Abdullah Saleh after 33 years in power.

**AFP** - [**http://www.france24.com/en/20131118-eight-police-killed-south-yemen-ambush**](http://www.france24.com/en/20131118-eight-police-killed-south-yemen-ambush)

**Yemen Transition Will Be Beyond 2 Years**

The U.N. envoy to Yemen said Monday the country's president is likely to stay in office beyond the envisioned two-year transition period because he is facing obstruction from political opponents that is delaying progress. President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi took over from longtime leader Ali Abdullah Saleh in February 2012 after a year of protests demanding his ouster. An internationally-backed, Gulf-sponsored initiative envisioned a two-year transition that ends with parliamentary and presidential elections. But U.N. envoy Jamal Benomar told The Associated Press Hadi will remain president after February 2014 because the transition is not likely to be completed earlier due to "obstruction" from former regime loyalists. "The transition period is not over. It has been delayed of course. But why?" he said. "It has been delayed because there are systematic efforts to obstruct it."

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/yemen-envoy-transition-years-20926722**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/yemen-envoy-transition-years-20926722)

ROSA

**Afghanistan**

**Seven children killed in blast: official**

Seven schoolchildren were killed and three wounded by a roadside bomb in southeastern Afghanistan on Monday, an official said. The bomb was planted on the side of a main road in the Khairkot district of Paktika province, and exploded when the children stepped on it while playing. "This afternoon as a result of the mine explosion in Khairkot, seven children from one family lost their lives," provincial spokesman Mokhlis Afghan said. He said they were aged 7-12 and were in elementary school. The injured children were taken to hospital. **AFP -** [**http://www.brecorder.com/world/south-asia/144950-seven-children-killed-in-afghan-blast-official.html**](http://www.brecorder.com/world/south-asia/144950-seven-children-killed-in-afghan-blast-official.html)

**Nepal**

**3 Wounded in Bomb Blast in Nepal Poll Violence**

A bomb exploded outside a polling station in Nepal's capital Tuesday, wounding three people, including an 8-year-old boy, as elections got underway aimed at ending years of political dysfunction. Nepal is voting to elect a special assembly to draw up a long-delayed constitution, a step toward stability in a nation still reeling from a 10-year communist revolt and the overthrow of a centuries-old monarchy. Ram Dangol, an eyewitness, said the blast happened near a line of voters in Katmandu. "People had lined up to vote at the polling station and there were children also playing nearby," he said. "The boy picked something up and it exploded." Opposition activists who do not recognize the country's interim government have vowed to disrupt the polls, and at least 30 people have been wounded in small bomb blasts and other violence in the run-up to the election.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/nepal-votes-elect-constituent-assembly-20931444**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/nepal-votes-elect-constituent-assembly-20931444)

**Nepal votes to end political gridlock**

Nepal started voting on Tuesday to elect a special assembly which will draft a constitution aimed at ending years of political instability after the abolition of the monarchy, but the vote could be split and leave Nepal facing further turmoil. Nepal's neighbors, India and China, have grown increasingly concerned about its prolonged struggle to build a stable republic to replace the centuries old monarchy that was toppled by a 10-year Maoist revolt. The fear is that the small nation of nearly 27 million people dependent on tourism, remittances and aid would weaken further and become a haven for militants and criminal gangs. A previous attempt at writing a constitution after a 2008 election failed with political parties unable to agree on the form of government and the number of states to be carved out of the ethnically diverse country.

**Reuters -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/nepal-votes-end-political-gridlock-031154362.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/nepal-votes-end-political-gridlock-031154362.html)

**Pakistan**

**Court agrees to try Musharraf for treason**

Pakistan's top court on Monday accepted a government request to set up a special tribunal to try former military ruler General Pervez Musharraf for high treason, an offence punishable by death or life in prison. A spokesman for Supreme Court of Pakistan announced in a statement that the Court had received a government letter asking for the establishment of "a Special Court to try General (R) Pervez Musharraf under Section 2 of the High Treason Punishment Act" of the constitution. After receiving the letter, the head of Supreme Court, chief justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, ordered all the high courts from the country's four provinces to put forward the names of any judges eligible for the three member special tribunal by Wednesday, the statement added.

**AFP** - [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hZBdYXLrYvZNToX6DgAakZnCYEWA?docId=c08ab31f-6b87-43b9-8019-7af31caaf74a&hl=en**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hZBdYXLrYvZNToX6DgAakZnCYEWA?docId=c08ab31f-6b87-43b9-8019-7af31caaf74a&hl=en)

**Gunmen kill Shiite university director in Pakistan** Police say gunmen on a motorcycle have killed a Shiite Muslim university director and his driver in eastern Pakistan in a possible sectarian attack. Police officer Nazir Asif Rizvi says Shabbir Shah and his driver were killed in the city of Gujrat on Tuesday as he was heading to work at the University of Gujrat. He said they are still investigating the incident. Sectarian violence between Sunni and Shiite Muslims has flared in northern Pakistan in recent days. Ten people were killed when the two sects clashed in Rawalpindi city Friday. Three more people were killed Monday in Kohat city. Authorities responded by deploying troops and imposing curfews in the affected areas. A Taliban spokesman has vowed to avenge Sunnis killed in the clashes.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/gunmen-kill-shiite-university-director-pakistan-095235884.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/gunmen-kill-shiite-university-director-pakistan-095235884.html)

WCAR

**CAR**

**U.N. preparing for possible Central African Republic peacekeeping force**

The United Nations is preparing to possibly deploy peacekeepers to Central African Republic, but if the crisis there worsens quickly before such a force is ready, it could redeploy troops from nearby U.N. missions, U.N. chief Ban Ki-moon said on Monday. The landlocked, mineral-rich nation of 4.6 million people has slipped into chaos since northern Seleka rebels seized the capital, Bangui, in March and ousted President Francois Bozize. Rights groups say both sides may have committed war crimes. There is currently a 2,500-strong regional peacekeeping force in Central African Republic that was deployed by the Economic Community of Central African States. Ban said the African Union is due to take charge of that force in December and boost its size to 3,600 troops. Ban said the African Union and the Economic Community of Central African States have signaled their support for eventually transforming the African Union force into a U.N. peacekeeping operation, but not in the immediate future as they want a chance to try and combat the crisis first.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/18/us-centralafrica-un-idUSBRE9AH0Y320131118**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/18/us-centralafrica-un-idUSBRE9AH0Y320131118)

**Mauritanian police beat protesters urging poll boycott**

Mauritanian police on Monday crushed a protest by hundreds of youths demanding a boycott of upcoming elections, wounding several. An AFP reporter saw police beat the activists and spray them with tear gas as they waved placards and chanted slogans outside the offices of the election commission in the capital Nouakchott, calling for a boycott of Saturday's parliamentary and local elections. "The police violently attacked the demonstrators despite the peaceful nature of their movement, using tear gas and batons," said Idoumou Ould Mohamed Lemine, spokesman for the Coordination of Democratic Opposition (COD) that organised the protest. Around a third of its 3.4 million people are eligible to vote in the first parliamentary and local polls since 2006, two years before a coup mounted by junta chief Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz.

**AFP -** [**http://www.nation.co.ke/news/africa/Mauritanian-police-beat-protesters-/-/1066/2078830/-/6nwq64z/-/index.html**](http://www.nation.co.ke/news/africa/Mauritanian-police-beat-protesters-/-/1066/2078830/-/6nwq64z/-/index.html)

**Niger**

**Niger authorities arrest 30 trafficking suspects**

The spokesman for Niger's government says authorities in the West African country have arrested about 30 people in connection with human trafficking networks. Justice Minister Marou Amadou told The Associated Press on Monday that among the suspects are two drivers of the vehicles that broke down in a remote area last month. Authorities say 92 people subsequently died of dehydration, most of them women and children. Amadou said the suspects included police officers as well as others who had taken money to help migrants travel to Europe. The area just south of the vast Sahara Desert has been used by smugglers for decades. Tens of thousands of West African migrants attempting to reach Europe in recent years have taken this perilous overland voyage, after authorities cracked down on sea routes.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/niger-authorities-arrest-30-trafficking-suspects-143406975.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/niger-authorities-arrest-30-trafficking-suspects-143406975.html)

**Nigeria**

**Irregularities mar key state poll**

Irregularities in a Nigerian state poll seen as a key litmus test ahead of 2015 general elections have forced a re-run in some areas, an official said Monday. Polls in southeastern Anambra state exposed bitter divisions within President Goodluck Jonathan's Peoples Democratic Party and marked an early test for a new opposition coalition that has vowed to take the presidency in 2015. Preliminary results have put Willie Obiano, of the small All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), in the lead but officials have held off declaring a winner, pending a new vote in some districts. The candidate from Jonathan's PDP, Tony Nwoye, and the new opposition mega-party, the All Progressives Congress (APC), have demanded all the results be scrapped. Nigeria's independent electoral commission (INEC) has said a "supplemental vote" is needed in areas that experienced significant delays and voter registration problems.

**AFP** - [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5j5r7\_FROMOYkZm2RRTLPNnrM0KvA?docId=a868ec9c-fa36-4a99-92db-9594beacb910&hl=en**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5j5r7_FROMOYkZm2RRTLPNnrM0KvA?docId=a868ec9c-fa36-4a99-92db-9594beacb910&hl=en)

**Nigerian militant group criticizes Boko Haram**

A private firm that monitors extremists says a splinter group of the Nigerian extremist network Boko Haram has criticized the larger group for September attacks that killed over 140 people. The SITE monitoring group says Ansaru wrote in a cryptic message on a jihadi website that Muslims face danger from "people from their own group making them taste the same thing that they suffer from the cruel enemy." Both Ansaru and Boko Haram were last week labeled foreign terrorist organizations by the US. Boko Haram has been blamed for thousands of deaths since 2009. Ansaru formed at the beginning of 2012 to protest the killings of Muslims by Boko Haram. Ansaru has claimed responsibility for an attack on a Nigerian military convoy to Mali and at least 10 kidnappings.

**AP** - [**http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c\_id=2&objectid=11158852&ref=rss**](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=11158852&ref=rss)

**Nigerian vigilantes accused of killing herdsmen**

Nigerian police say they are investigating the deaths of eight herdsmen allegedly killed early this month by vigilantes hunting Islamic militants near the Niger border. Borno state Commissioner of Police Lawan Tanko said the attack took place on Nov. 5 but was not reported to police for nearly two weeks because the state is virtually without mobile phone service for security reasons. Borno and two other northeastern states have been under emergency rule for over six months as the government battles Boko Haram, a militant group that has killed thousands of people in the past four years. Civilian vigilante groups sanctioned by security forces have risen up in all three states against Boko Haram. Residents say they fear the attack on the herdsmen will spark further violence.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/nigerian-vigilantes-accused-killing-herdsmen-20925993**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/nigerian-vigilantes-accused-killing-herdsmen-20925993)

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