

NEWS BULLETIN

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GLOBAL

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS - While the world is on track to end extreme poverty by 2015 in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals, progress is lagging on meeting the parallel goal of eradicating hunger. The United Nations reports that economic growth in the developing world is expected to pace a reduction in the global poverty rate to less than 15% by 2015 - easily meeting the MDG target of 23%. High food prices, however, combined with limited access to food, continue to hamper efforts to reduce global hunger, according to the world body.

FOOD - Increased prices of sugar canceled out drops in the cost of wheat, corn and soya to drive global food prices up in June to almost record levels, according the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's food price index. UNFAO predicts food prices will remain high throughout the year despite increased levels of production.

ASIA & PACIFIC

BANGLADESH which emits relatively fewer polluting gases but is projected to be highly vulnerable to global warming, has embarked on a drive to introduce environment-friendly brick-making technology to curb gaseous emissions.

NORTH KOREA - Seasonal flooding and a severe winter have contributed to the severe food shortages that affect an estimated 6 million North Koreans. International donors such as the US and South Korea, however, are wary of providing food aid in light of allegations that the regime diverts most assistance intended for the poor and starving.

MIDDLE EAST

EGYPT - Only about 3 percent of Egypt's land area is cultivated but desertification, and construction work fuelled by economic activity and a rapidly growing population, are eating into this resource, posing a significant threat to domestic food production, according to experts.

LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

COLOMBIA has approved a policy that will map out plans for sustainable commercial use of its rich biodiversity resources, mainly through the development of biotechnology research.

MEXICO - The United Nations human rights chief has voiced concern over escalating violence in some parts Mexico, saying organized crime and brutality could undermine the State and threaten the people's basic rights.

WFWO's Communications Team