

NEWS BULLETIN

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GLOBAL

HUMAN RIGHTS - United Nations officials turned to social media outlets such as Twitter and Facebook to mark the 63rd anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights this year. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay said popular uprisings to support reform around the world that used social media as a major tool demonstrate that human rights have gone viral.

HEALTH - People around the world with mental and psychosocial disabilities face a broad range of abuses such as inhumane living conditions, degrading treatment and physical assault, the UNWHO says. The United Nations agency is urging governments to support a new project, QualityRights, which aims to improve the quality of services available.

AFRICA

CLIMATE CHANGE - A new coalition of indigenous peoples and local communities called for a moratorium on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) programs, a key part of the negotiations for a new international climate treaty that took place over the last two weeks in South Africa.

SIERRA LEONE has designated the biodiverse Gola Rainforest as a protected national park. Authorities hope to sell carbon credits worth \$1 million annually beginning in 2013 to help finance the park's operating costs and promote economic development.

SOUTH AFRICA - Having observed changes in the sea and the life cycles of the rock lobsters that their livelihoods depend on, a group of fisherwomen from the Western Cape, South Africa are calling on government to adjust fishing seasons to adapt to what they claim are climate change-related alterations.

SUDAN - Land deals done in newly-independent South Sudan "threaten to undermine the land rights of rural communities, increase food insecurity, entrench poverty, and skew development patterns" in the resource-rich but poor nation, a new report says.

ZIMBABWE - Waterborne diseases, such as typhoid, dysentery and watery diarrhoea - all approaching epidemic levels - are creating concerns that conditions exist for a reprise of the 2008/09 cholera epidemic, which killed more than 4,000 people and infected nearly 100,000 others.

ASIA & PACIFIC

BANGLADESH - Experts warn rapid depletion of Bangladesh's underground water table could jeopardize food and water security for millions throughout the country and also endanger the biodiversity of one of the world's largest mangrove forests within the next two decades.

INDIA - Development advocates such as Sister Sudha are working to promote education of Dalit girls in the hopes of breaking a traditional cycle of poverty tied to India's caste system. Dalits, also known as untouchables, regularly marry off their daughters in their early teens ending any chance they have at receiving a complete education.

INDONESIA's disaster management officials warn severe flooding may hit the capital Jakarta this rainy season, as more than 26,000 health, public works and other emergency personnel mobilize nationwide in a larger-than-usual preparedness effort.

WFWO's Communications Team